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**THE COMPLETION OF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND
METHODS FOR THE QUALITY OF COMMUNE-LEVEL CIVIL
SERVANTS IN QUANG BINH'S CURRENT SITUATION**

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LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS OF THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS

1. Doan Nhan Dao (2013), "Some issues on civil servant leadership examination in current situation in Viet Nam", *State Organization Journal*, Ministry of Home Affairs, (8) Ha Noi.
2. Doan Nhan Dao (2013), "Quang Binh's promotion in training and retraining commune-level cadres and civil servants", *State Management Review*, National Academy of Public Administration, (212), p.82-85.
3. Doan Nhan Dao (2014), "The completion of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants from the basis of the development of legal regulation system", *State Organization Journal*, Ministry of Home Affairs, (6), p.51-54.
4. Doan Nhan Dao (2014), "Assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants to meet requirements in public administrative reform", *State Management Review*, National Academy of Public Administration, (222), p.21-25.
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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

First and foremost, due to the significance and importance of the assessment and the completion of criteria and methods for assessing the quality of commune-level civil servants, this is a vital factor in civil servant management. An inaccurate assessment may lead to arbitrary use and loose motivation of each person. In some bad cases, it even causes confusion of the whole community.

Secondly, Vietnam's Communist Party and State have issued guidelines and policies to improve the effectiveness in the evaluation of the quality of civil servants, including developing and completing assessment criteria and methods.

Recognizing the importance of the evaluating the quality of civil servants, Viet Nam's Communist Party make resolutions about the assessment for the quality of public servants in general and of civil servants in particular, and drawn lessons from this issue. Besides, the issue of regulations on quality assessment is regarded as the primary measure to assess the quality, qualifications and competence of cadres and civil servants. Also, Viet Nam's Communist Party and State also focus on modifying, supplementing and promulgating procedures of quality assessment of civil servants to ensure the democracy, equality, openness, accuracy and responsibility for this assessment.

Thirdly, in fact, the system of criteria and methods for evaluating the quality of civil servants in current which are not really scientific and reasonable has affected the effectiveness of the quality assessment of commune-level civil servants.

On the other hand, there are limitations and shortcomings in the quality assessment of commune-level civil servants. The assessment does not base on a specifically quantified measure but basically on general and unscientific criteria. The major quality assessment usually bases on comments and review, which are emotionally affected.

This current situation requires comprehensively theoretical and practical researches on assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants. From that, issues and solutions for the completion of those criteria and methods are proposed to meet new requirements of society. Because of the larger number of local governments at commune-level, however, only commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh, a province in the middle Viet Nam, are chosen as the analysis to complete the assessment criteria and methods. Quang Binh has 8.063,7 square kilometres with 159 commune-level administrative units. In which, there are 10 awards, 9 towns and 140 communes. Quang Binh's communes converge all features of different lands, including delta communes, mountainous communes, and communes near the sea or in islands.

Because of above reasons, the author choosed the topic: “*The completion of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh's current situation*” as his research dissertation. The research brings about not only theoretical but also practical implications in current situation.

2. Aims and Objectives of the study

2.1. Aims of the study

By investigating theoretical background of the assessment criteria and methods of the quality of commune-level civil servants and evaluating the application of these assessments Quang Binh's current situation, the study will raise several viewpoints and solutions with the aim of fulfill assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh's current situation.

2.2. Objectives of the study

Firstly, the study analyzes and clarifies theoretical background on the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants.

Secondly, the study analyzes and evaluates the application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants from Quang Binh's current situation.

Thirdly, the study raises several viewpoints and solutions with the purpose of fulfill the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Viet Nam to meet demands in current situation.

3. Object and scope of the study

3.1. Object of the study

Assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

3.2. Scope of the study

- *Content*: To examine criteria and methods for evaluating commune-level civil servants.

- *Space*: The study investigates in several communes and towns in Quang Binh.

- *Time*: from 2003 until now

4. Methodology and methods of the study

4.1. Methodology

In the process of conducting this study, the author has approached issues under concepts of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, Ho Chi Minh Thought; as well as the views, guidelines and policy of the Viet Nam's State and Party on the assessment, assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants.

4.2. Research methods

To get the research results, the author of the reseach applies several methods as follows.

- *Document research methodology*
- *Methods of sociological surveys*
- *Statistical and comparative methods*
- *Analysis and synthesis methods*
- *Professional Methods*

5. Scientific hypotheses

The study addresses the following questions:

Question 1: What are the theoretical issues about criteria and methods for assessing the quality of commune-level civil servants?

Question 2: How is practical application of criteria and methods of evaluating the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh's current situation?

Question 3: What are the ideas and solutions to fulfill the criteria and methods of evaluating the quality of commune-level civil servants?

6. Significance of the study

The study makes important contribution in systemizing and analyzing theoretical and practical issues in the assessment, and assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants. Especially, through practical researching from Quang Binh, the study raises issues and specific solutions to fulfill these assessment criteria and methods.

7. Theoretical and practical significance of the study

The study offers significant contribution to the theory about state administration, public service, civil service and civil servant management, and commune-level civil servants management. In addition, this research enriches scientific background in terms of both theory and practice in evaluating the quality of civil servants, as well as assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants.

At the same time, the result of the research can be used as additional reference in lecturing and studying public service and public servants for students and cadres who are in charge of human resources.

8. Design of the study

The study is composed of four main parts.

Chapter1: Literature review

Chapter2: Theoretical background on assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

Chapter3: Practical application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh's situation

Chapter4: Viewpoints and solutions for the completion of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Geneneral view on other studies related to this topic

1.1.1. *Researches in Viet Nam*

1.1.1.1. *Researches on civil servants and local government in general*

There are researches related to the topic in different perspectives and aspects such as several ones as follows.

The book entitled "*Theoretical and practical background in developing civil servants and cadres*" written by two authors including Thang Van Phuc PhD., and Nguyen Minh Phuong PhD., released by National Politics publishers in 2004. The book named "*Some theoretical issues about legal regulations for civil servants*" by Assoc.Prof. Dr Luong Thanh Cuong and published by National Political and Administrative Publishing House in 2011.

Another book named "*Innovation of activities of local authorities in the market economy and international economic integration*" written by Ky Huu Duc Nguyen and Dinh Xuan Ha, National Political and Administrative Publishing House (2012).

1.1.1.2. *Researches on civil servants and cadres at commune level*

The book named "*Law on cadres and civil servants at commune authorities in Viet Nam - theoretical and practical issues*" by Nguyen Minh San, National Political and Administrative Publishing House, 2008. In addition, there is another book entitled "In the progress of the improvement of regimes and policies for commune-level officials and civil servants" by Nguyen The Vinh and Dinh Ngoc Giang, National Political Publishing House, 2011.

Master Thesis of Jurisprudence "*Completing law on cadres and commune-level civil servants in Viet Nam's current situation*" by Nguyen Thi Thanh (2006), Ho Chi Minh City University of Law - Institute of State and Law.

The study named *"A research on the development of training and retraining commune-level civil servants and cadres in Mekong Delta in the period 2007 - 2015"* by the Ministry of Home Affairs (2009).

1.1.1.3. Research on civil servant quality assessment

The book entitled *"A plan and evaluation of cadres"* by Do Minh Cuong, National Political Publishing House (2009).

Another referential document entitled *"The innovation and completion of operating organization and procedures of State administrative agencies at different levels"* by Nguyen Khanh, Labour Publishing House (2003).

In the assessment of commune-level cadres and civil servants, Do Thu Huong chose the topic named *"The completion assessment for the quality civil servants"* for her master's degree thesis in public administrative management in 2011.

In addition, there have been different scientific articles referring to this subject, including *"Innovations in the regulations on evaluating commune-level civil servants"* by Pham Tat Thang, in State Management Review No. 8/2010; The article *"Criteria for assessing the quality of civil servants"* by Dao Thi Thanh Thuy, State Organization Journal, No. 12/2010; Hoang Mai also had *"Completing the decentralization model in the assessment of state administrative civil servants,"* State Organization Journal No. 10/2009, etc.

1.1.1.4. Researches on assessment criteria and methods for the quality of civil servants in general and commune-level civil servants in particular.

Several related researches could be listed as follows. A research at ministry-level *"The completion of assessment methods for the quality of cadres and civil servants every year"* by Nguyen Ngoc Hien (2002); The coursebook named *"Organization of State Administrative Personnel"* by

National Academy of Public Administration, Science and Technology Publishing House, Ha Noi (2010); Ministerial-level study entitled *"Innovation of assessment methods for the quality of civil servants in state administrative agencies"* by author Ha Quang Ngoc (2011).

Pham Tat Thang with his article named *"Innovations in regulations on the assessment for the quality of cadres and civil servants"* published by State Management Review, No. 175, August 2010.

PhD thesis entitled *"Completing institutional management of civil servants in Viet Nam in condition of development and international integration"* by Tran Anh Tuan (2010). At locals, in addition, there is a number of the researches on this subject, in which one of the most typical ones is: *"Developing annual assessment criteria and methods for annual assigned-task performance of civil servants in Can Tho City"* by Vo Duy Nam.

1.1.2. Oversea researches

There have been a number of foreign researchers studying on civil servants and public servants assessment which refers to the criteria and methods of assessment of civil servants as follows.

"Performance management in Government; Performance Measurement and Results-oriented Management" PUMA (1994), OECD referred to performance management in the civil service of the government activities.

"Performance Appraisal Handbook", U.S. Department of the Interior (2004). This is a handbook of the United States Department of the Interior for managers, supervisors and employees. This book shows that managing the results of employees' work is as important as managing financial resources and inputs.

"Performance Related Pay Policies for Government Employees", OECD (2005), is a book presenting an overview reports on result-based pay policies of government employees in 14 countries during the last two decades.

"Ten steps to a surveillance system and evaluated based on the

results", Jody Kusek and Ray C. Rist ZALI (2005), Publisher of Culture and Information. The book refers to difficulties of the developing countries in building evaluation system based on results.

State Personnel Manual of North Carolina (2007), "*Performance Management System*", giới thiệu về hệ thống quản lý thực thi trong đó có nội dung đánh giá kết quả thực thi được thực hiện thông qua bản đánh giá kết quả thực thi nhằm xếp hạng công chức,...

"*Performance Management System*", State Personnel Manual of North Carolina (2007), introduces performance management systems in which evaluation components are recognized through assessment results to rank enforcement officials.

1.2. The issues raised for further studies

Firstly, focus on researching to clarify the assessment, assessment criteria and methods for the quality of those civil servants in general and in Quang Binh in particular in association with specific titles and positions of public employment commune officials.

Second, examine and analyze the system of legal documents adjusting evaluation civil servants, criteria, assessment methods since the time commune-level civil servants were formed under the Ordinance amended and supplemented a number of articles from 2003 until present. Also, evaluate the practical application of assessment criteria and methods prescribed by law in the assessment of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh province. From that, suitable assessment criteria and methods in line with reality are defined.

Third, examine solutions in order to develop assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in current situation.

Finally, propose some recommendations to ensure the completion of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants to meet current practical situation.

CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON THE ASSESSMENT
CRITERIA AND METHODS FOR THE QUALITY OF
COMMUNE-LEVEL CIVIL SERVANTS IN STATE
MANAGEMENT

2.1. Several theoretical issues on assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

2.1.1. Communal level and commune-level authorities

Communes, wards and townships are the final administrative level in the four-level administrative system of our country, which directly implements guidelines and policies of the Viet Nam's Communist Party and State's laws. In addition, it is responsible for the promotion of society welfare and perform economic tasks at the local.

With such specific features, commune-level authorities play an important role in political and administrative system of Viet Nam. It directly connects state governmental system with citizens and implements state management activities in fields of economy, culture, society, law and order, safety at local society according to decentralized authority to ensure that the guidelines and policies of the Viet Nam's Communist Party and State's laws are implemented thoroughly.

1.1.2. Commune-level civil servants

2.1.1.1. Definition and characteristics of commune-level civil servants

Commune-level civil servants are Vietnamese citizens who are recruited to hold specialized titles in commune-level, Committees, included in the payrolls and salaried from the state budget.

This indicates that ccs has following characteristics:

Firstly, regarding quality criteria for commune-level civil servants, commune-level civil servants include individuals who meet certain requirements of qualification, professional skills, virtues, politics and

health, etc. to implement state management tasks in the areas under the jurisdiction of the Commune People's Committee.

Secondly, regarding activities, commune-level civil servants working in Commune People's Committees is the grassroots level in the system of administrative agencies, which are associated with the village community and self-regulatory organization of citizens.

Thirdly, commune-level civil servants continuously and stably addresses daily job at comunal level. However, in comparison with public servants, commune-level civil servants are less stable because there is usually a rotation, maneuvering or reorder jobs after each election.

Fourthly, commune-level civil servants are responsible of too much work at the same time. Despite being trained specialized major, commune-level civil servants have to take part in other tasks which are unrelated to their specialization.

Fifthly, most of commune-level civil servants are local citizens who live in their own land and have advantages in understanding culture, customs, traditions, citizens' feelings and thought. Therefore, are quite successful in broadcast propaganda about implementing guidelines of Viet Nam's Party, law policies of Viet Nam State and local regulations.

Finally, there are differences in responsibilities among communes, wards and towns.

2.1.1.2. Commune-level civil servants' roles in state administrative management at local authorities

Firsly, commune-level civil servants directly implement plans on the development of economic and social affairs at local.

Secondly, they are regarded as the connection between state agencies and local citizens.

Thirdly, on behalf of state agencies, they conserve and maintain typical cultural values of locals as well as eliminate negative habits.

2.1.1.3. Standards for commune-level civil servants

Standards for commune-level civil servants are defined according to

Viet Nam's Law on Cadres and Civil servants dated November 13 2008, Law on militia dated November 23 2009, Communal Public Security Ordinance dated November 21 2008.

Under above legal documents, there are general standards as well as specific ones.

2.1.1.4. Commune-level civil servants' responsibilities

Commune-level civil servants' responsibilities were regulated from Article 3 to Article 9 of Circular No. 06/2012/TT-BNV dated on October 30 2012 by Ministry of Home Affairs instructing responsibilities, specific standards and recruitment of commune-level civil servants. From that, each specialized title of commune-level civil servants perform different tasks under Viet Nam's laws and chairmen's directions at Commune People's Committee.

2.1.2. Assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants

2.1.1.1. Notion of assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants

"Assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants is one part of commune-level civil servants management with the aim of clarifying political qualifications, ethics, competence, professional qualifications, professional skills and the assigned-task performance of commune-level civil servants. This provide basis for arranging, using, promoting, training, awarding, punishing and implementing polices on commune-level civil servants".

2.1.1.2. Purposes of assessing the quality of commune-level civil servants

The research aims to clarify the nature of politics, ethics, competence, professional qualifications, skills, and assigned tasks performance of civil servants.

2.1.1.3. Components in assessment of the quality of civil servants

Components in assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants include working results; professional qualifications and skills; potential abilities and motivation of civil servants.

2.1.1.4. Guidelines for the assessment of the quality of civil servants

The first is the principle of ensuring objectivity, fairness, accuracy.

The second is the principle of democratic centralism.

The third one is that the assessment must be explicit and follow all assessment procedures.

The fourth is legal principles.

2.1.1.5. Assessor

There are assessors including civil servants who assesses themselves, colleagues; superiors; citizens.

2.2. Assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

2.2.1. Assessment criteria for the quality of commune-level civil servants

2.2.1.1. Definition

"Assessment criteria for the quality of commune-level civil servants is a system of hallmarks that the evaluator uses to review and evaluate political quality, morality, competence, professional qualifications and professional performance of assigned tasks of commune-level civil servants".

2.2.1.2. Assessment criteria of the quality of commune-level civil servants

In general, according to management science, criteria used in the assessment can be qualitative or quantitative, including:

- *Quantity criteria:* This quantity criteria includes the entire jobs that civil servants have taken.

- *Quality criteria:* The working quality of commune-level civil servants can be measured by determining their performance of assigned tasks in comparison with the original target, or with the results of others' in similar conditions to define the working effectiveness.

Currently, assessment criteria for the quality of commune-level civil servants comply with the provisions of Decree No. 56/2015/NĐ-CP on

September 6, 2015 about the assessment and classification of civil servants, cadres and civil servants annually.

2.2.1.3. The completion level of assessment criteria for the quality of commune-level civil servants

The completion level of assessment criteria for the quality of commune-level servants is to meet the following requirements.

- *The specification and comprehension*
- *The systematic characteristics*
- *The uniformity*
- *The suitability*

2.2.2. Assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

2.2.2.1. Notion of assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

This is a system of official techniques that the assessor uses in accordance with certain procedures to review and evaluate political qualifications, ethics, competence, professional qualifications, professional skills and the assigned task performance of commune-level civil servants. The assessment results is the basis for the arrangement, use, appointment, training and retraining, reward, disciplines and the implementation of policies for civil servants.

2.2.2.2. Assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

In the process of evaluating the quality of civil servants in general or of commune-level civil servants in particular, following assessment methods are usually applied:

- (1) Scoring, rating according to criteria, comparing with certain objectives:
- (2) Voting (or taking comments)
- (3) Evaluating based on reports
- (4) Evaluating based on remarkable events (method of storage)

(5) Observing behaviors

(6) Interviewing

2.2.2.3. Completion level of assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

The completion level of assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants is guaranteed by the requirements of:

- *Implementation of the objectives of assessing the quality of commune-level civil servants*

- *Diversity and systematization*

- *Formality and unified process*

- *Economic and easy-to-use*

2.3. Experience and lessons from several countries and regions in the assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants

1.3.2. Experience of several countries and regions in the assessment of commune-level civil servants

2.3.1.1. Experience of several countries

- *Experience of America*

In assessing the quality of civil servants at province, town, district and commune (or village) in America, they are always active and have rights to raise their recommendations on assessment components and the assessing report their superiors has made. Besides, there are differences in time of evaluating the quality of ccs among states of the United State of America. Of total 50 states of this nation, 13 states evaluate every 2 years, 4 states every 3 years, and 2 states every 5 years. These states consider that if the assessment takes place often, it may lead to nervous and hesitating feelings. Consequently, they will be passive and less creative. Other states evaluate the quality of commune-level civil servants once a year.

- *Experience of Japan*

Japan care for the quality of commune-level civil servants more than the quantity. Commune-level civil servants are regularly trained and retrained. Especially, with “Lean Production” theory (Kichiro Toyoda and

Taiichi Ohono), inappropriate civil servants in Japan are retrained before being “re-used” in the state administrative apparatus at the locals.

- *Experience of China*

Assessment components are comprised political qualification and assigned-task performance of civil servants. Final decisions on personnel assessment are approved by all members.

- *Experience of New Zealand*

Grassroots Civil servants are divided into three categories with different forms of assessment.

2.3.1.2. Practical experience of several regions

Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City, Quang Ninh and Ha Noi are particular locals in Viet Nam having advanced assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants.

2.3.2. Drawn lessons

- To get right the assessment, it is necessary to develop specific measurable assessment criteria.

- To get proper assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants, it is necessary to establish a system of specific and measurable assessment criteria.

- Periodically review the evaluation criteria of the quality of commune-level civil servants when appearing changes to managing objects.

- Many units have combined several assessment methods to get valuable information from different sources in order to make the assessment results more objective and accurate.

- To improve the role and responsibilities of the entities involved in the assessment.

- The assessment of ccs must base on the responsibilities and assigned-task performance. It is necessary to clarify strengths, weaknesses, shortcomings and limitations in the quality, capacity and qualifications of cadres, civil servants and public servants to ensure objectivity, fairness and accuracy.

CHAPTER 3

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND METHODS FOR THE QUALITY OF COMMUNE-LEVEL CIVIL SERVANTS IN QUANG BINH'S SITUATION

3.1. An overview of the communal authorities and commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

3.1.1. Economic-social situation in Quang Binh

Quang Binh has a total of 159 commune-level administrative units, including 10 wards, 9 towns and 140 communes. In the province, there is one town in each district, but Le Thuy and Bo Trach have two towns per district. These communes have the characteristics of the terrain, such as: plain communes, mountainous communes, sea and islands communes. In different periods, geographical, climate features, and the formation of community and social change process of local communes in Quang Binh have created a system of natural tourist values, diversity and rich human cultural values.

3.1.2. Commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

In 2012, there were 1,305 commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh. The rate of commune-level civil servants who were under 30 years old accounted for 34.4%, who were 31 to 45 years old accounted for 44.52%, and from 46 to 60 years old accounted for 20.6%, over 60 years old accounted for 0.38% (5 people). Majority of Quang Binh commune-level civil servants' education level was from high school graduation upwards (1270/1305, accounting for 97.3% in 2012).

Quang Binh commune-level civil servants' qualification was mostly middle-ranking, accounting for 65.21%. Many commune-level civil servants were untrained (33 people). There were no commune-level civil servants who had postgraduate qualification. The percentage of commune-level civil servants who had university degrees increased over the years. Specifically, there was 130 people having a university degree in 2005, 146 people in 2006,

163 people in 2007, 203 people 2008 (20.1%), 251 people in 2009 (22.3%) and 330 people in 2010 (26.6%), 351 people in 2012 (27%).

3.2. Practical application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

3.2.1. Process of assessing the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

From 2010-2012, there were 159/159 communes (100%), wards and towns implementing the annual assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants in their units. The periodical annual assessment is the most important activities in the assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants. This is the basis for rewarding and discipline, recognizing achievements to promote, transfer, appointment of commune-level civil servants.

3.2.2. Practical application of assessment criteria for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

3.2.2.1. The system of legal regulations on the content of assessment criteria for commune-level civil servants

a) From 2003 to 2010

In this stage, the assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh was implemented under the Ordinance on cadres and civil servants amended and supplemented in 2003; Decree No. 114/2003/ND-CP dated October 10 2003 of the Government and Circular No. 03/2004/TT-BNV dated January 16 2004 of the Ministry of Home Affairs guiding the implementation of Decree No. 114/2003/ND-CP; Decision No. 11/1998/QD-TCCP-CCVC date December 12, 1998 of the Minister, Head of the Government Committee of Organizing - Personnel issued regulation on the annual assessment of civil servants.

b) From 2010 to present

Assessment criteria's components of commune-level civil servants in the province were implemented by Law on Cadres and civil servants in 2008; Decree 92/2009/ND-CP dated October 22, 2009 regulated the

specialized titles, quantity, policies for civil servants at communes, wards and towns; Decree No. 112/2011/ND-CP dated December 05, 2011 on commune-level civil servants at communes, wards, towns and Circular No. 06/2012/TT-BNV dated December 30, 2012 of the Ministry of Home Affairs providing guidelines on responsibilities, specific criteria, tasks and recruiting civil servants at communes, wards and towns.

By systematizing, and analyzing legal regulations on assessment criteria of commune-level civil servants as above, we can assess the completion level of the assessment criteria when applying in Quang Binh as follows:

- In terms of specificity and comprehensiveness:

The assessment criteria's components of commune-level civil servants more and more regulate specifically, particularly since the Government issued Decree No. 56/2015/ND-CP on the criteria for evaluation and classification of cadres, civil servants and public employees. However, these criteria are not quantitative, general, qualitative, therefore it will not be guaranteed accurately in practice, such as: criteria on "good political behavior", "good ethics"; "right lifestyles",... they are not specific, so it will be difficult to assess accurately the quality of commune-level civil servants.

- In terms of the systematic and consistent level of evaluation criteria of the quality of commune-level civil servants:

There still exist contradictions: while assessment criteria's components are concretized by Departments of Home Affairs, followed by Decision No. 11/1998/QD-CCVC, and classification in accordance with the construction of Law on Cadres and Civil Servants in 2008. Therefore, it was not logical and inconsistency in implementation between local governments.

- In terms of accordance of evaluation criteria with the job position of commune-level civil servants.

The evaluation criteria were regulated for all civil servants, including

commune-level civil servants. Consequently, it was not based closely on commune-level civil servants' implementation in accordance with the law, such as to advise and assist the People's Committee of Commune and Chairman of People's Committee of Commune in administrative management in local government; in implementation directly of state management, and in performing public service at the grassroots as well; in directly implementing of the provision of public services to the people and organizations in the communes.

3.2.2.2. Practical application of assessment criteria of commune-level civil servants from the sociological survey

It is shown from the survey results that:

Regarding number of assessment criteria: Among 300 respondents were 56/300 (approximately 18.7%) said that the current assessment criteria are not concrete and negligible, 44% number of respondents said that the amount of current assessment criteria is average; 112/300 respondents (equivalent to 37.3%) suggested that there are too many assessment criteria, so components of assessment criteria are overlap and duplicate.

Regarding quality of assessment criteria: There are 189 respondents claiming that the quality of the current assessment criteria is low, confusing and difficult to apply in practice (equivalent to 63%); 4.3% of respondents said the current criteria are relatively simple to implement, and 98/300 (equivalent to 32.6%) respondents said the current criteria meet the requirements of the assessment. There are a lot of respondents expressing that it's hard to put many assessment criteria into evaluation, such as "learning attitude to improve qualification", "social ethics", or "behavior and style of work", etc.

3.2.3. Practical application of assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

3.2.3.1. The system of assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants applied in Quang Binh

The assessment methods applied in evaluating the quality of

commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh are mainly reflected in each stage of the assessment process, of which three main methods mainly applied were assessment by reporting, assessment by voting and assessment by ranking of criteria points.

3.2.3.2. Practical application of assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants from the sociological survey

By designing the questionnaires (as Section 3.2.3.2), the author has surveyed with results reflects the current situation and the trend in assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh. Thereby, it is revealed from the results that Quang Binh used assessment methods for ranking points based on criteria with evaluators' participation and voting method. The evaluation methods reflect civil servants' soft skills as behavior observing method, method based on notable events rarely used (only 6%).

Besides, it can be reflected from the survey results that the possibility of applying online assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants in some localities [with sample questions 19 - Appendix 3.2] was inexpensive and convenient (with 154/300 respondents, equivalent 51.2%).

However, there are still 84/300 respondents (equivalent 28.1%) had doubts of the feasibility of the methods, in which there is a number of respondents claiming that the method is was suitable for a number of people who are knowledgeable about the internet and information technology. Moreover, the method requires modern equipment and synchronized systems with reasonable instructions to be deployed effectively.

3.3. General assessment of the practical application of these assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh

By the practical application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh, we can raise overall assessment on practical application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Viet Nam with its strengths and limitations as follows:

3.3.1. Strengths

- The legal basis of the assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants and the development of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants was issued quite specifically.

- In recent years, the application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of civil servants in general, and the quality of commune-level civil servants in particular have been implemented seriously and regularly by authorities, especially commune-level authorities follow legal regulations.

- The application of assessment criteria is more and more suitable in practice; at the same time, it can overcome superficial implementation in the past.

- The assessment methods were applied reasonably for each step of the evaluation process of the quality of commune-level civil servants. The assessment methods are mainly traditional ones such as: reporting method, voting method, and criteria ranking-point method.

3.3.2. Limitations and causes

3.3.2.1. Limitations

- *Firstly*, sometimes, the assessment has not been taken really seriously in some places

- *Secondly*, the assessment criteria have not been really scientific, suitable and correct. Therefore, the evaluation is effected by emotional factors.

- *Thirdly*, the assessment methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants are inflexible and uncreative.

3.3.2.2. Causes of limitations

- Several commune-level civil servants did not have right awareness of the importance of the evaluating the quality of commune-level civil servants.

- The system of legal documents guiding the implementation of the Law on Cadres and civil servants in 2008 and other legal documents on evaluation of the quality of cadres and civil servants were slowly issued.

- The assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants was supervised by unqualified civil servants on specializing assessment. The assessment was mainly instructed by Department of Home Affairs, Division of Home Affairs and managers, and other civil servants.

- The application of assessment criteria and methods for evaluating commune-level civil servants' performance was unprofessional, and inconsonant in practice. The causes of the current situation started from the agricultural habits and psychology at local authorities.

- In many localities, the evaluation results of the quality of commune-level civil servants were not used as a basis for their career development, promotion, appointment and transferring.

CHAPTER 4

VIEWPOINTS AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND METHODS FOR THE QUALITY OF COMMUNE-LEVEL CIVIL SERVANTS

4.1. The viewpoints for the completion of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

4.1.1. Increasing public awareness of the Communist Party of Viet Nam's viewpoint in developing commune-level cadres and civil servants

4.1.2. Ensuring the goal of developing the commune-level civil servants and cadres to be honest, powerful, professional and modern

4.1.3. Basing on the specialized titles, responsibilities, assigned-task performance of each commune-level civil servant

4.1.4. Ensuring objectivity, fairness, accuracy and democracy, and engage citizens' supervision in the assessment of the quality of commune-level civil servants

4.1.5. Being suitable with commune-level civil servants' characteristics

4.2. The solutions to fulfill assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in current situation

4.2.1. Increasing public awareness of the importance of the evaluation as well as the necessary of the fulfillment of the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in current situation

4.2.2. Continuously completing regulations on the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants

4.2.3. Applying the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants flexibly and creatively to be suitable with each specialized title of commune-level civil servants as well as specific conditions of regions or locals

4.2.4. Making pilot quality assessment of commune-level civil servants

4.2.5. Ensuring the necessary conditions for an effective application of criteria and methods to assess the quality of commune-level civil servants

CONCLUSION

Public servants in general and commune-level civil servants in particular are those who work directly with the citizens the most. Hence, commune-level civil servants play an important role with specific characteristics. It could be considered that all guidelines and policies of Viet Nam's Communist Party and State are adopted cadres and commune-level civil servants. With the help of commune-level civil servants, citizens show their rights and obligations in a most directly way. They are also able to reflect and express their thoughts and aspirations directly, accurately and quickly.

It could be referred that commune-level civil servants are regarded as the connection between state agencies and local citizens.

In chapter 2, the author has systematized theoretical issues of

commune-level authorities and civil servants, and assessment criteria and methods for the rationale of researching the development and application of those criteria in the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Quang Binh's situation in recent years.

In chapter 3, the researcher of the study systematizes the results of working performance of commune-level civil servants; the practical application of those assessment criteria and methods in Quang Binh's current situation. From that, the author generalizes and evaluates the application of assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in Viet Nam in current situation.

From the analysis and evaluation presented in chapter 3 and chapter 4, the author has raised issues and specific solutions with the aim of developing the assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants to meet new requirements for innovation and improving quality of commune-level civil servants in current situation.

Due to time limitation and sources of material restriction, the study may have some unavoidable drawbacks. Therefore, any suggestions and comments will be welcomed and considered seriously. The author hopes that this study has successfully made significant contribution in providing scientific theories in the process of finalizing assessment criteria and methods for the quality of commune-level civil servants in the coming periods, and meeting the increasing requirements in the public administrative reform of Viet Nam in current.