

A Comparison of Occupational Skill Appraisal Mechanism Between Mainland and Taiwan in China

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Abstract

Occupational skill appraisal is a kind of assessment based on occupational skills. A perfect mechanism of Occupational Skill Appraisal can bring its superiority into full play in social economy. The study is aiming at a comparison of three mechanisms between mainland and Taiwan in China. They are respectively the mechanism of power distribution among governments, the mechanism of application and that of selection among contractors. Besides, The reflection of current situations on occupational skill appraisal in Chinese mainland appeal for further improvement in the distribution of authority among central and local governments, regulation of employment admittance as well as the cooperation between government and society.

Key words: Occupational skill appraisal; Mechanism; Government

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INTRODUCTION

Professional qualifications and Occupation skill appraisal belong to national certificate system. Based on vocational criteria, indentifying institutions authorized by goverment make an objective and scientific assessment with justice on the abilities of the workers. Occupational skill appraisal can advance the well-organized

fluidity of workers and make them qualified. Not just that, it served as an critical constituent of technical and vocational education assessment system and a booster to the revolution of vocational curriculum, the cultivation of students' vocational competences, the improvement of vocational faculty, as well as the construction of practical training bases. Since mainland formed occupational skill appraisal mechanism in 1993, the regulation of which is hard to earn praise. Although Taiwan also faces the same problems, such as narrow implementation of certificates, variable criteria of assessment and vague direction of expansion, continuous amendment and supplement in these years make the mechanism in Taiwan operate in a more mature way (Cheng, 1997). Based on Taiwan's occupational skill appraisal law is named "Verification and Certification Measurement on Skills Appraisal" (It will be called for short "Measurement") and that of mainland is named "Regulation of Occupational Skill Appraisal" (It will be called for short "Regulation"), the mechanism of power distribution among governments, the mechanism of application and that of selection among contractors will be compared for the purpose of drawing experiences from Taiwan.

1. THE MECHANISM OF POWER DISTRIBUTION AMONG GOVERNMENTS ON THE MANGEMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL SKILL APPRAISAL

Mechanism of power distribution among governments on the management of occupational skill appraisal is the distribution of ordered power among administrative services divisions at all levels according to settled standards in the process of management of occupational skill appraisal affairs. In mainland China, the national administrative services division which regulates occupational skill appraisal is the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of the People's Republic of China and the regional one is Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security in the respective provinces, autonomous region and municipalities. In Taiwan, the supreme management department of occupational skill appraisal is the Ministry of Labor, and regional ones are local administrative sectors. Although Taiwan and mainland's occupational skill appraisal are under macro-control of the supreme administrative department while in charge of details, local government play a coordinating role, two sides share a very different mechanism of power distribution. Power range from Taiwan authority to regional administrative sectors reflects a decline trend and they are responsible for different affairs with accurate power boundary by "measurement". In mainland, "regulation" don't quantificate power of central and regional administrative departments. Taking central administrative department for example, it takes an integrated management of the whole country's occupational skill appraisal affairs while regional administrative department manages all the affairs related to regional occupational skill appraisal.

Besides, power of formulation in receipts and expenses, qualification of assessors, place as well as appraisal project formulation belongs to regional administrative department while those are formulated by Taiwan authority. As thus, problem of overlap in central and regional administrative departments comes up. Therefore, power isomorphism and ambiguity of duties among governments are features of mainland. (Power isomorphism means nearly unifying unanimous relation among governments in functions and institution setting. Therefore, regional governments are almost reprint of central government and they share equal power.)

It is seemingly that mainland and taiwan governments' power in managing occupational skill appraisal affairs are ruled by law, the difference exists in the details of requirements. In essence, feasible practicability make "regulation" give place to administrative authorities to distribute power. Therefore, the power is distributed by law in taiwan while by administrative department in Mainland (Zhu, 2005). Former one is systematic and scientific while later one is characterized by administrative subjectiveness and casuality. Besides, principle part of power distribution in the former one is administrative department while that of later one is the legislative body. Therefore, mainland governments at all levels have the feature of power isomorphism. Thus based on power boundries regulated by law, governments of different sorts and levels take in charge of affairs respectively. So there's no cross on duties of governments.

2. THE MECHANISM OF APPLICATION TO OCCUPATIONAL SKILL APPRAISAL

The mechanism of application to occupational skill appraisal is the regulation of the applicants who are qualified to apply occupational skill appraisal. Mainland and Taiwan share a same process of application, but difference exists in application requirements. In Taiwan, anyone can apply if they suit the strict requirements covering certificates level, academic qualification, training duration as well as working time. As is shown, Taiwan takes applicants' theory and practice base for application into consideration. Strict as the requirements are, time, energy, money as well as resources needed in the appraisal are greatly saved. At the same time, improvement in appraisal's quality can be seen. In mainland, however, although "regulation" authorize the power of formulating application requirements to regional administrative departments, they fail to assume the duties. Taking Chongqing for example, the only requirement Chongqing corresponding administrative instrument is to abide by national criteria. Nevertheless, "regulation" reads that:

There are three type of people who can apply occupational skill appraisal, and they are students graduated from vocational school or training institution, apprentices ended their apprenticeship in enterprises or institutions, workers in enterprises or institutions as well as all categories of people in society.

about what “regulation” read, it is hard to be seen as a criteria, it is no more than category of applicants.

It seemingly that Taiwan and mainland find their difference in the quality of requirements as refer to the mechanism of application to occupational skill appraisal. But in essence, it’s a problem of a management in occupational certificates market. In mainland, Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security fail to grasp the connotation of the system of employment admittance and follow administrative procedure that requires taking advices widely and making experiments before generalizing, resulting in an enlargement of occupations with admittance (Li, 2012). Then, occupations that don’t need occupational skill appraisal are mixed with those have to be tested. Low requirement of some occupations makes them incomparable to occupations that have to obtain admittance. Therefore, the disordered occupational quality market lead to disunity in the requirement to applicants for occupational skill appraisal. Although cleaning up and regulating work are mandated to finish before a certain deadline, it is delayed due to path dependence, expensive cost of regime change and block from bureaucracies and stakeholders. Premature time to set criteria for skill appraisal is the very cause to hinder a general threshold for applicants from forming.

3. THE MECHANISM OF SELECTION AMONG CONTRACTORS OF OCCUPATIONAL SKILL APPRAISAL

The mechanism of selection among contractors is the regulation of the process and criteria in the process of selecting topic assigners, assessors, places as well as devices for occupational skill appraisal. The general process of the mechanism in Taiwan is quite strict. Firstly, authority publishes selecting criteria. Secondly, institutions or people apply for being a contractor. After that, those who are qualified and pass verification will get trained. Finally, certificates will be awarded to them. Taiwan authority authorizes contractors applicants ranging from social group, schools, profit organizations or persons the right to assume occupational skill appraisal instead of arranging everything by its own. But in mainland, tasks of occupational skill appraisal are assumed by skill appraisal center affiliated with the government and are appointed to assume occupational skill appraisal affairs. So we can see no process of rigorous selection. The criteria in Taiwan are specific and strict. According to preliminary, secondary and superior levels of skills, Taiwan authority distinguish the criteria of topic assigner, assessors, places and devices. But in mainland, central administrative department set criteria of place and device while regional administrative department set criteria for topic assigners, assessors. Those criteria not only do nothing to distinguish skills at 5 levels, but also be characterized by vague declaration. Besides, maintain regional governments differ in their criteria to a large extent.

Taking the training of assessors for example, the regulation is paid much emphasis in Guanzhou, but is missed in Chongqing.

Due to different measure taken by government when govern occupational skill appraisal, Taiwan and mainland differ so much in the mechanism of selection among contractors who assuming occupational skill appraisal affairs. Central government governance is taken by the mainland while decentralized governance is taken by Taiwan. Former one means national power is served as the main body to manage public services and society is directly controlled by government. Therefore, there is no sign that the person of organization without relation to government can join in management of occupational skill appraisal affairs. Besides, skilled guidance center and skill appraisal sectors are affiliated to Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and under control of governments. Therefore, market, the third sector is absent in public services while government take full control of occupational skill affairs with unlimited authority in mainland. Since contractors are appointed by government, there is no need to set criteria to select contractors. In Taiwan, government entities, private organizations, the third sectors and other social self-organizations are main bodies to govern public services (Tang, 2006). Those institutions are independent when tackling with occupational skill appraisal affairs. But that doesn't mean government will keep out of the affair. In hope of assuring equitability and quality, Taiwan authority will formulate criteria, implement examination and even offer subsidies. In other words, with limited liability of government, the relation between Taiwan administrative departments and society is under the cooperation and supervision.

4. A REFLECTION ON MECHANISM OF OCCUPATIONAL SKILL APPRAISAL IN MAINLAND

Three mechanisms explored above reflect three problems in occupational skill appraisal in mainland. Firstly, boundaries between governments of all sorts and at all levels are ambiguous. Secondly, unordered occupation certificate market blocks occupational skill appraisal from setting criteria for applicants. Thirdly, government's power is unlimited.

4.1 Clarify Liabilities Among Central and Regional Governments

Clarification of liabilities among central and regional governments can improve working effectiveness. Depending on laws, Taiwan clearly distributes powers among Taiwan authority and regional administrative departments in a specific way. Therefore, in order to tighten up the legal system, mainland can embark on from three aspects. In the first place, obstacles from allocation of functions need to be removed. On the whole, system obstacle, imorphism of institutional settings and self-interest of governments are three main obstacles to the allocation of functions.

So undue intervention of administrative authorities over the market and the third sectors should be reduced, overlaps of functions and institutional settings among governments should be removed and rent-seeking of governments should be controlled by mainland (Cao, 2008). The next, way to distribute power should be changed. According to a rule that functions and power are decided by law, way to distribute power should be modified to make sure exclusive power of central and regional governments and construct a functional frame of relationship between central and regional governments. Once more, “regulation” should be supplemented to manifested power’s “observed meaning” which means through reading the letter of the law, people can directly understand its meaning. “observed meaning” of law should be single, specific and clear. However, ambiguous regulation and implementation of governments’ power are based on merely one’s own supposition, only to cut down the cost of misdeeds. In essence, the progress of rigidity in legislation contribute to an improvement in the quality of laws related to occupational skill appraisal. Therefore, phases of legislation from preparation, proposed law to perfection of legislation should be paid much attention to guarantee democracy and effectiveness. Then, to advance practicality is the key issue to improve the quality of occupational skill appraisal law.

4.2 Promote an Order Development of Vocational Certificate Market

Recently, mainland need to strengthen the execution of the system of employment admittance in the hope of constructing vocational criteria structure covering preliminary, secondary and superior skill levels and promoting an orderly development of vocational certificate market. In the first place, to step up the law of employment admittance. Perfection of the system of employment access not only make vocational certificate market operate in a normal way, but also help to establish a reasonable and clear vocational criteria. A law of employment admittance should contain statue, role of the system of employment admittance, responsibilities and obligations of governmental departments, industry organizations, enterprises, workers as well as supervision and punishment of vocational qualification system and the system of employment admittance. Therefore, governments should cooperate with each other and widely absorb suggestions from all sides. Besides, accelerating the construction of the law of employment access, through which to tackle with unhealthy conditions of the system of employment access. The next, to bring the law of value and market competitiveness into play. Employment admittance are needed in reducing administrative effect over vocational qualification system and letting the market decide occupations. Cooperation among industry, enterprise, vocational school and government should be put emphasis on to assure theory and practice base for vocational certificates, clear of the relationship of academic qualification,

vocational skill levels, vocational certificates and improve criteria for occupational skill appraisal applicants.

4.3 Set Up a Shared Governance Between Government and Society

A sound relationship between government and society can boom the competition, rigorousness and quality of occupational skill appraisal. Holding a standpoint that the relation between government and society is not oppsite, Taiwan take three measures to set up a fine-tuned balance between them. First of all, Taiwan depends on the law to regulate goverment's power, encourage competition and divide sphere of social liabilities to avoid broad and strict interference from government on occupational skill appraisal. Secondly, Taiwan transforms goverment's role and function to reduce governance and management functions of goverment to service affording while raise functions of society in cooperative govenance. Thirdly, Taiwan unifies the third sector since 2000, societal forces gradually become an assistance which goverment must depend on (Yang, 2008). Therefore, Taiwan authority authorizes social groups to assume occupational skill appraisal affairs and play its role as regulator and supervisor. In this regard, mainland could embark on from three aspects. In the first place, healthy legal enviroment should be constructed and concrete, operative behavior of goverment should be cultivated and the way to leave administrative institution and policy document in command should be transformed. The next, a sound market economy system should be amplified to transform goverment's function and establish a service-oriented goverment. It's a good way to form the boundary between market and society. Once more, dependent third sectors need to be strengthened. In mainland, due to institutional enviroment, the third sectors in mainland mainly are affiliated with the goverment and they are speechless. Besides, dependent ones are depressed to a marginalized. Indeed, boom of the third sector not only do good to regulate market conduct and order, but also can weaken burden by reasonable transfer of goverment's function (Yu, 2007). Therefore, to realize empowerment under law and put enterprise, social group, market intermediary organization's role in occupational skill appraisal to full play is away to be studied in-depth.

CONCLUSION

Three mechanisms of occupational skill appraisal of mainland and Taiwan are carefully compared. The comparison not only shows us exterior differences between mainland and Taiwan in occupational skill appraisal, but also dig into the essential origins of those differences. In the final analysis, institutional difference between the two sides results in allocation of power among goverments, operation of occupation certificate market and ways of governance. Through perfecting

health legal environment, a sound market economy system and strengthen the third sectors, problems of occupational skill appraisal in the mainland are expected to be relieved.

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