

**HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

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**QUALITY OF DISTRICT-LEVEL ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT  
CIVIL SERVANTS IN HANOI**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS  
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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Rationale of the Dissertation Topic

In public administration, civil servants act as the core agents of governance, determining the effectiveness and efficiency of state management from the central to local levels. President Ho Chi Minh emphasized that “Cadres are the root of all work” [34, p.309]. Therefore, the effectiveness and efficiency of state management largely depend on the integrity and competence of the civil service. At the local level, district-level economic management civil servants serve as a segment of the broader public service, primarily acting as intermediaries in the implementation of central and provincial policies and legal frameworks. They are responsible for transmitting regulatory information from provincial to communal levels, monitoring and supervising commune-level governance in the economic domain, and making decisions on delegated matters. However, they typically do not hold authority to promulgate policies or regulatory mechanisms.

While numerous studies have addressed civil servant quality in various sectors and administrative levels across the country, comprehensive research focusing specifically on district-level economic management civil servants remains limited. Existing studies tend to approach civil servant quality from the perspective of “inputs” such as physical, intellectual, and emotional capacities; only a few combine both “input” and “output” dimensions. To ensure a holistic assessment, evaluating the quality of district-level economic management civil servants must encompass both dimensions, incorporating indicators of attitude, knowledge and skills, and performance outcomes. In the new era of national development and innovation, creativity has emerged as a critical driver for rapid and sustainable progress. Consequently, civil servants are required to possess a proactive and innovative mindset. This imperative should be integrated into the assessment framework of civil servant quality, serving as a basis for managerial entities to identify and foster motivational strategies that promote innovation among civil servants.

Hanoi, the capital of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is not only the political-administrative center of the nation but also a major hub for culture, education, economics, science and technology, and international trade. It plays a pivotal role in the development of the Red River Delta, the Northern Key Economic Region, and the nation as a whole. Despite sustaining a relatively high economic growth rate and rising per capita income, Hanoi continues to face notable shortcomings. As cited in Resolution No. 15-NQ/TW, “Many of the capital’s potential and advantages have yet to be fully assessed, exploited, and utilized. Economic growth remains unsustainable. Hanoi has not yet clearly asserted its role as the center and engine of growth for the Red River Delta, the Northern Key Economic Region, and the country; its competitiveness remains low, particularly compared to the region and the world.” [6]

One key cause, as noted in Resolution No. 15-NQ/TW of the Politburo dated May 5, 2022, lies in “the insufficient competence and sense of responsibility of a segment of cadres and Party members; poor service attitude toward citizens and businesses.” Moreover, the structure of 30 districts, towns, and urban units in Hanoi primarily functioning as intermediaries between the city and the commune levels has limited the initiative and creativity of civil servants, resulting in operational delays.

To achieve the strategic goal of developing Hanoi into a “civilized – cultured – modern” capital by 2030, as stipulated in Resolution No. 15-NQ/TW, it is essential to “build a highly qualified, virtuous, dynamic, and innovative cadre who dare to think and act, fulfilling mission requirements — a decisive factor in success” [6]. In line with this, the restructuring toward a two-tier local government model (commune and provincial levels), with the reduction of the intermediary (district) level, has been set forth in Conclusion No. 137-KL/TW (dated March 28, 2025) of the Politburo and the Secretariat, as well as Decision No. 759/QĐ-TTg (dated April

14, 2025) by the Prime Minister. Under this arrangement, commune-level authorities will assume the responsibilities currently held by both district and commune administrations. Consequently, district-level civil servants will be reassigned to the commune level. This transition underscores the urgency of a comprehensive assessment of the current quality of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi, providing a critical foundation for policy reform aimed at improving civil service quality in alignment with new administrative responsibilities at the grassroots level.

Accordingly, the doctoral candidate has chosen the topic: **“Quality of State Management Civil Servants in Economic Management at the District Level in Hanoi City”** as the subject of this dissertation, aiming to address both theoretical inquiries and practical demands in the current context.

## **2. Research Objectives and Tasks**

### ***\* Research Objective***

The dissertation aims to clarify the theoretical framework regarding the quality of district-level economic management civil servants. On this basis, it seeks to assess the current state of such civil servants in Hanoi and propose appropriate solutions to improve their quality—particularly those previously serving at the district level—so that they can effectively fulfill the functions of economic management at the commune level under Vietnam’s forthcoming two-tier local government model, which comprises only provincial and communal levels.

### ***\* Research Tasks***

To achieve the above objective, the dissertation focuses on the following specific tasks:

- Review relevant literature to identify research gaps and define the direction of the dissertation;
- Systematize, supplement, and clarify the theoretical foundations regarding the quality of district-level economic management civil servants;
- Develop a conceptual model and assess the impact of various factors influencing job performance—an essential component of civil servant quality;
- Identify the activities undertaken by provincial-level governments to improve the quality of district-level economic management civil servants;
- Analyze experiences from other localities in enhancing the quality of economic civil servants and extract lessons applicable to Hanoi;
- Evaluate the current state of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi, identifying achievements, limitations, and root causes;
- Analyze the new governance context, in which Vietnam transitions to a two-tier local government model (provincial and communal), and the corresponding quality requirements for commune-level economic management civil servants;
- Propose viewpoints, orientations, and solutions to enhance the quality of former district-level civil servants who will be reassigned to commune-level roles in Hanoi by 2030, with a vision toward 2035.

## **3. Research Subject and Scope**

### ***\*Research Subject***

The primary subject of this dissertation is the quality of district-level economic management civil servants.

### ***\* Research Scope***

- *Scope of Research Subjects*

District-level economic management civil servants are those working within the administrative apparatus of districts, including various departments and specialized agencies. However, this dissertation specifically focuses on civil servants working in four specialized departments of the district-level People's Committees in Hanoi: the Urban Management Division, the Finance and Planning Division, the Economic Division, and the Natural Resources and Environment Division.

These four departments are selected for the following reasons:

- These are critical areas of economic governance that urban administrations in general—and Hanoi's administration in particular—must prioritize, especially under the pressures of industrialization and urbanization, which place increasing demands on the competency of economic management personnel at the district level;
- The state management apparatus for economic affairs is extensive. Limiting the research to four key departments ensures that data collection and analysis are feasible within the capabilities of the doctoral candidate. Such narrowing is necessary to guarantee specificity, feasibility, and academic rigor.

In line with the national policy of administrative streamlining and reducing intermediary levels of governance—stipulated in Conclusion No. 137-KL/TW (dated March 28, 2025) and Decision No. 759/QĐ-TTg (dated April 14, 2025)—the functions and duties of the former district-level government will be delegated to the commune level, following the principle: “localities decide, implement, and take responsibility.” Accordingly, most district-level civil servants are expected to be reassigned to commune-level positions. Therefore, in proposing orientations and solutions (Chapter 5), this dissertation primarily addresses the quality of former district-level civil servants as they transition to commune-level roles.

#### *- Scope of Research Content*

The quality of district-level economic management civil servants is evaluated based on the following dimensions:

- **Attitudes:** reflected in responsibility, teamwork, and a spirit of innovation in public service;
- **Knowledge and Skills:** including academic qualifications, political theory, state management proficiency, IT and language competencies, and technical expertise relevant to job performance;
- **Job Performance Outcomes:** evaluated through state management results, annual civil servant ratings, and citizen satisfaction with service delivery.

Job performance is considered a critical component of civil servant quality. Therefore, the dissertation builds a model to analyze the factors influencing job performance. However, this model is intended primarily to supplement qualitative findings.

The orientations and solutions proposed in Chapter 5 focus on improving the quality of former district-level economic management civil servants in anticipation of their transition to commune-level responsibilities within the new two-tier local governance framework.

#### *- Temporal Scope*

The assessment of the current status of district-level civil servants spans the period from 2019 to 2023. Recommendations and proposed solutions target the period up to 2030, with a vision toward 2035, in the context of Vietnam's implementation of the two-tier local government model.

#### *- Scope of Stakeholders*

The key stakeholder responsible for improving the quality of district-level economic management civil servants—particularly those transitioning to commune-level roles—is the municipal government of Hanoi.

This includes decentralization and delegation of authority to both the former district and the new commune-level administrations.

*- Geographical Scope*

The research was conducted in Hanoi and employs a stratified random sampling method based on socio-economic criteria. It covers 16 districts, towns, and urban areas out of the city's total 30 district-level administrative units.

**Table 0.1: List of Districts, Towns, and Urban Districts in Hanoi Selected for Research According to Socio-Economic Stratification**

<b>Socio-Economic Stratification</b>	<b>Districts, Towns, and Urban Districts by Stratification</b>	<b>Selected for Survey</b>
Urban Districts	Hai Bà Trưng, Hoàn Kiếm, Đống Đa, Ba Đình, Tây Hồ, Cầu Giấy, Hoàng Mai, Hà Đông, Long Biên, Nam Từ Liêm, Bắc Từ Liêm, Thanh Xuân	Hoàn Kiếm, Ba Đình, Tây Hồ, Cầu Giấy, Long Biên, Hà Đông
Town	Sơn Tây Town	Sơn Tây Town
Rural Districts	Đông Anh, Hoài Đức, Đan Phượng, Gia Lâm, Thanh Trì, Mỹ Đức, Ứng Hòa, Sóc Sơn, Phú Xuyên, Chương Mỹ, Quốc Oai, Thanh Oai, Thường Tín, Phúc Thọ, Mê Linh, Thạch Thất, Ba Vì	Đông Anh, Hoài Đức, Chương Mỹ, Thanh Oai, Quốc Oai, Thường Tín, Sóc Sơn, Ứng Hòa, Ba Vì

Source: Compiled by the PhD Candidate.

*- Research Approach*

The dissertation adopts an approach grounded in the perspective of economic management. Within this framework, district-level economic management civil servants are considered as the subjects responsible for implementing state economic governance. The assessment of their quality is treated as a managerial activity in itself. The evaluation of the current situation is approached as the result of initiatives undertaken by the Hanoi municipal government to improve the quality of its district-level economic civil service.

#### **4. New Contributions of the Dissertation**

*\* Theoretical Contributions*

The dissertation identifies and clarifies three key content areas and evaluation criteria for assessing the quality of district-level economic management civil servants: attitude, knowledge and skills, and job performance outcomes.

*\* Practical Contributions*

The dissertation evaluates the current status of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi for the period 2019–2023, identifying both achievements and shortcomings as well as the underlying causes. Notably, the study emphasizes limitations arising from the intermediary role of district-level authorities.

The dissertation proposes the required quality standards for commune-level economic civil servants in the new context, wherein Vietnam implements a two-tier local government model.

It also puts forward a set of practical solutions aimed at improving the quality of former district-level economic management civil servants upon their reassignment to commune-level positions, ensuring they can meet new demands as Hanoi transitions to the two-tier local governance system in accordance with Conclusion No. 137-KL/TW (2025) and Resolution No. 60-NQ/TW (2025) of the 13th Party Central Committee.

## **5. Structure of the Dissertation**

In addition to the Introduction and Conclusion, the dissertation is organized into five chapters:

Chapter 1: Literature Review on Research Related to the Dissertation Topic

Chapter 2: Theoretical and Practical Foundations for Assessing the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants

Chapter 3: Research Methodology for Studying the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi

Chapter 4: Current Status of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi

Chapter 5: Orientations and Solutions for Improving the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi in the New Context

### **Chapter 1**

#### **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC**

##### **1.1. Overview of Research Works Related to the Dissertation Topic**

###### **1.1.1. Studies Related to the Quality of Civil Servants and the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants**

The dissertation reviews a range of domestic and international studies including works by Nguyen Phu Trong, the Human Capital Theory by Gary Becker (1964), the Competency Framework by Richard E. Boyatzis (1982) [125], the New Public Management theory by Osborne and Gaebler (1992), as well as contributions by Tran Xuan Sam (2001), Ta Ngoc Hai (2016), Bui Van Minh (2020), Dang Phuong Nga (2018), Benjamin Bloom (1959), Le Quan (2016), Nguyen Thi Hai Van (2022), Nguyen Trong Binh (2022), Le Thi Hanh (2019), Cao Khoa Bang (2012), Trinh Van Khanh (2020), Thanh Cuong (2017), Le Xuan Cu (2016), Sinnakhone Doungbandith (2021), Nguyen Xuan Tien (2025), and Tran Quang Ninh (2025).

###### **1.1.2. Studies Related to Factors Influencing Civil Servant Quality, Economic Civil Servants' Performance, and Public Service Delivery Outcomes**

Referenced studies include those by Dao Thi Thanh Thuy (2019), Suharno Pawirosumarto et al. (2016), Anastasios D. Diamantidis et al. (2018), Tuffaha Mohand (2020), Yousef Alsafadi and Shadi ALTAHAT (2021), Memon Muhammad Salih (2021), Riyanto Setyo and Johan Hendri Prasetyo (2021), Nguyen Ngoc Duy Phuong and Tran Hoai Nam (2019), Nguyen Ngoc Hung (2023), Nguyen Thi Thu (2020), and OECD (2016).

###### **1.1.3. Studies on Improving the Quality of Civil Servants and District-Level Economic Civil Servants**

The dissertation surveys works by Dang Xuan Hoan (2020), Luu Thanh Cuong (2023), Dao Thi Thanh Thuy (2017, 2019), Do Thi Thu Hang (2018), Co Nhu Dung (2019), Tran Thanh Nga (2023), Peter F. Drucker (2003), John C. Maxwell (2015), Tran Dinh Thao (2017), Bui Duc Hung (2018), Ngo Huu Loi (2022), Tran Duc Luong (2020), Vo Xuan Hoai (2020), Nguyen Manh Truong (2023), Nguyen Manh Quan (2022), and Tran Thi Ngoc Quyen (2024).

##### **1.2. General Evaluation of the Research Works Related to the Dissertation Topic**

###### **1.2.1. In Terms of Content**

First, the research subjects in these studies are primarily cadres and civil servants working at the provincial level, within specific sectors or localities.

Second, most authors have proposed evaluation frameworks for assessing the quality of civil servants in general, and of economic management civil servants in particular, typically structured around three

categories: physical capacity, intellectual capacity, and emotional capacity. Some studies focus solely on "input" factors, while others explore both "input" and "output" dimensions.

Third, a significant number of studies explore factors affecting civil servant quality, work efficiency, and the outcomes of public service delivery in the public sector. These influencing factors are often categorized into three groups: those intrinsic to the civil servant, those related to the organizational structure, and those arising from external mechanisms and policy environments.

### **1.2.2. In Terms of Research Methodology**

Most studies adopt qualitative methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, sociological investigation, and expert interviews. However, few studies include direct surveys of public service recipients, which could enhance the credibility of evaluation findings. A minority of studies incorporate quantitative methods to assess civil servants' job performance and competence.

## **1.3. Research Gaps and the Dissertation's Research Direction**

### **1.3.1. Identified Research Gaps**

In terms of theory: There is a scarcity of comprehensive studies addressing the quality of district-level economic management civil servants across the dimensions of attitude, knowledge and skills, and job performance.

In terms of practice: No study has thoroughly assessed the quality of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi, especially within the emerging context of transitioning away from intermediary-level (district) governance toward a two-tier local government system.

### **1.3.2. Research Direction of the Dissertation**

The dissertation aims to evaluate the current state of district-level economic management civil servants based on a sound theoretical framework. From this foundation, it proposes solutions for improving civil servant quality within the new governance context that includes only provincial and communal levels.

In terms of theory: The dissertation will investigate, clarify, and expand the theoretical foundations for evaluating district-level economic management civil servants, specifying relevant content and criteria. The author develops a model outlining factors that influence the job performance of such civil servants, recognizing performance as a vital component of civil servant quality.

In terms of practice: The dissertation evaluates the current quality of district-level economic civil servants based on the developed content and criteria. These findings provide an important empirical foundation to support Hanoi's civil service reform initiatives, as well as a basis for proposing practical solutions to improve the quality of former district-level civil servants transitioning to commune-level roles in line with Vietnam's implementation of the two-tier local governance model.

In terms of methodology: The dissertation combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It analyzes the impact of various factors on job performance—considered a core component of civil servant quality—through surveys conducted with district-level economic management civil servants and public service users.

### **1.3.3. Analytical Framework of the Dissertation**



## Chapter 2

### THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE QUALITY OF DISTRICT-LEVEL ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT CIVIL SERVANTS

#### 2.1. Theoretical Foundations for the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants

##### 2.1.1. Conceptualizing the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants

###### *Concept of Civil Servants Concept of Economic Management Civil Servants*

By inheriting and building upon existing theoretical frameworks, this dissertation defines: “Economic management civil servants are a segment of the state civil service, who are recruited and appointed to specific ranks, positions, and titles that correspond to job placements within the state economic management apparatus, and who perform functions related to state economic governance.”

###### *Concept and Characteristics of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants*

Drawing on previous research, this dissertation defines: “District-level economic management civil servants are a subset of the state civil service, recruited and appointed to ranks, positions, and titles in accordance with job placements within the district-level state economic management system, and responsible for performing functions related to state economic governance at the district level.”

Accordingly, the dissertation focuses specifically on civil servants working in four specialized departments of the district-level People’s Committees of urban and rural districts and towns in Hanoi: the Finance–Planning Division, the Economic Division, the Urban Management Division, and the Natural Resources and Environment Division.

District-level economic management civil servants, within the scope of this research, exhibit the following characteristics:

*First, they share common features with general administrative civil servants:*

- They form a major part of the local administrative civil service workforce.
- Their recruitment occurs via open competitive examinations, direct appointment, or selection for managerial leadership positions based on job requirements approved by competent authorities.
- Their work is institutionalized and geared toward achieving the collective goals of their organizations.

*Second, they possess distinctive features:*

- They operate within the economic management apparatus of districts, towns, and cities under provincial or centrally administered municipal authority, predominantly functioning as intermediaries.
- They serve as advisors to district-level People’s Committees on economic activities—an area of strategic importance at the local level.
- They are required to have specialized knowledge and skills directly relevant to the field of economics.

###### *Concept of the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants*

Grounded in foundational theories such as Human Capital Theory by Gary Becker (1964), the Competency Framework by Richard E. Boyatzis (1982), New Public Management theory by Osborne and Gaebler (1992), and Bloom’s (1956) ASK model, the dissertation also synthesizes national and international research to propose the following definition: “The quality of district-level economic management civil servants is a composite of factors including attitude, knowledge, skills, and job performance, closely associated with the specific job position held by the civil servant within the district-level state economic management apparatus.”

### 2.1.2. Evaluation Contents and Criteria for Assessing the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants

Based on Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), the Competency Framework (Boyatzis, 1982), Performance Theory (Campbell, 1990), New Public Management Theory (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), the ASK Model (Benjamin Bloom, 1959; Parry, 1996; McLean, 2006), and an array of studies on civil servant quality—both general and sector-specific—the dissertation identifies three key content areas for evaluation: attitude, knowledge and skills, and job performance. Each of these components is operationalized into specific content indicators and measured using corresponding evaluation criteria. Notably, the dissertation integrates the analysis of civil servants' readiness and proactiveness in innovation, enabling managerial stakeholders to identify the status quo and develop strategies to foster an innovative spirit among personnel.

**Table 2.1: Contents and Criteria for Measuring the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants**

Content	Specific Content	Evaluation Criteria	Source
<b>Attitude toward Public Duties</b>	Sense of responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Willingness to accept assignments</li> <li>- Willingness to perform duties</li> <li>- Willingness to take responsibility for outcomes</li> </ul>	Boyatzis (1982); Bloom's (1959); Osborne & Gaebler (1992); Tạ Ngọc Hải (2016); Nguyễn Trọng Bình (2022)
	Teamwork spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Willingness to assist colleagues</li> <li>- Willingness to share information and experiences</li> <li>- Willingness to coordinate with colleagues</li> </ul>	Same as above
	Innovative spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively seeks new approaches to improve work efficiency</li> <li>- Actively seeks solutions to new or complex problems</li> <li>- Proactively proposes feasible ideas</li> </ul>	Proposed by PhD candidate, based on: Boyatzis (1982); OECD (2022); Đoàn Văn Tình (2021); Nguyễn T. Ngân & Trần T. T. Phương (2021)
<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	Professional qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degrees</li> <li>- Major matches job position</li> </ul>	Boyatzis (1982); Gary Becker (1964); Bloom's (1959); Bùi Văn Minh (2016); Nguyễn Trọng Bình (2022); Tạ Ngọc Hải (2016)
	Political theory qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High, intermediate, or basic political theory degrees, or none</li> </ul>	Bùi Văn Minh (2016); Tạ Ngọc Hải (2016)
	State management certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior, principal, or general civil servant certification</li> </ul>	Tạ Ngọc Hải (2016)

Content	Specific Content	Evaluation Criteria	Source
	Practical knowledge and skills in duty performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of guidelines, laws, and policies</li> <li>- Planning and implementation skills</li> <li>- Information gathering and processing skills</li> <li>- Document drafting skills</li> <li>- Teamwork skills</li> </ul>	Osborne & Gaebler (1992); Gary Becker (1964); Bloom's (1959); Trần Thanh Cương (2017); Nguyễn Trọng Bình (2022); Tạ Ngọc Hải (2016)
Dimension: Job Performance	Annual performance classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Classified as "Excellent", "Good", "Satisfactory", or "Unsatisfactory"</li> <li>- Rewards and disciplinary actions</li> </ul>	Osborne & Gaebler (1992); Campbell (1990); Nguyễn Trọng Bình (2022)
	Citizen satisfaction with civil servant performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attitude of civil servant in duty performance</li> <li>- Competence of civil servant in duty performance</li> </ul>	Osborne & Gaebler (1992); Campbell (1990); Bùi Văn Minh (2016); Parasuraman (1991)
	State management results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management outcomes in the assigned area of responsibility</li> </ul>	Osborne & Gaebler (1992); Max Weber (1978)

Source: Compiled by the PhD Candidate.

### **2.1.3. Factors Influencing the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants**

#### ***2.1.3.1. Factors Related to Local Government***

- General guidelines and policies of the Party and the State concerning district-level economic management civil servants, which local governments are responsible for implementing within their jurisdictions.
- Special local policies formulated under the authority of local governments to support and enhance the performance of district-level economic management civil servants.
- Administrative discipline and compliance mechanisms enforced by the local government.

#### ***2.1.3.2. Factors Related to the External Environment***

- The processes of globalization and international integration.
- Socio-economic development conditions specific to the locality.
- The scope and extent of decentralization and delegation in economic management at the local level.

#### ***2.1.3.3. Factors Related to the Efforts and Awareness of Individual Civil Servants***

- A continuous commitment to moral development and political integrity as a safeguard against corruption and misconduct in public service.

- A strong sense of self-directed learning and professional development, along with effective participation in training and capacity-building programs.
- Levels of job satisfaction, occupational stress, and commitment to one's duties and responsibilities.

#### **2.1.4. Activities for Improving the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants**

##### ***2.1.4.1. Recruitment of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

##### ***2.1.4.2. Placement and Utilization of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

##### ***2.1.4.3. Performance Evaluation of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

##### ***2.1.4.4. Training and Capacity Building for District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

##### ***2.1.4.5. Formulation of Incentive and Compensation Policies for District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

#### **2.2. Practical Experiences in Enhancing the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants and Lessons for Hanoi**

##### ***2.2.1. Experience from Singapore***

##### ***2.2.2. Experience from Ho Chi Minh City***

##### ***2.2.3. Experience from Da Nang City***

##### ***2.2.4. Lessons for Hanoi***

First, it is essential to establish a competency framework and job descriptions corresponding to each job position prior to recruitment, placement, utilization, and evaluation of civil servants.

Second, district-level economic management civil servants should be appointed and utilized appropriately, in the right roles, at the right time, in line with their competencies and strengths.

Third, civil servant evaluations must be accurate and focused on measurable job performance outcomes, with additional income and benefits tied to effectiveness and productivity.

Fourth, training and development programs for district-level economic management civil servants should be demand-driven and closely aligned with post-training deployment and career progression.

Fifth, robust policies and mechanisms must be implemented to attract and retain talent in the public sector, motivating district-level economic management civil servants to dedicate themselves, innovate, and enhance performance efficiency.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF DISTRICT-LEVEL ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT CIVIL SERVANTS IN HANOI**

##### **3.1. Methods for Collecting and Processing Secondary Data**

##### **3.1.1. Methods for Collecting Secondary Data**

##### ***3.1.1.1. Purpose of the Method***

- To provide an overview of existing research related to the dissertation topic, thereby identifying research gaps and defining the research direction of the dissertation.
- To construct a theoretical framework for assessing the quality of district-level economic management civil servants, in combination with expert interviews, and to identify a model of factors affecting the job performance of such civil servants.
- To compile and analyze experiences in improving the quality of district-level economic management civil servants in various localities, and to extract relevant lessons for Hanoi.

- To identify activities already implemented by the Hanoi municipal government to enhance the quality of district-level economic civil servants.
- To support and complement primary data collection and processing methods in evaluating the current quality of district-level economic management civil servants.

### ***3.1.1.2. Means of Secondary Data Collection***

Secondary data are collected from the National Library, local libraries, libraries of government agencies, institutions, universities; reports from the Department of Home Affairs, People's Committees of districts and towns in Hanoi; and official domestic and international websites.

### **3.1.2. Methods for Processing Secondary Data**

The dissertation uses Excel software to compile, analyze, and compare secondary data in pursuit of the research objectives described above.

## **3.2. Methods for Collecting and Processing Primary Data**

### **3.2.1. Methods for Collecting and Processing Primary Data to Assess Aspects of Civil Servant Quality Not Captured by Secondary Data**

#### ***3.2.1.1. Primary Data Collection Method for Evaluating the Quality of Civil Servants on Aspects Not Measurable by Secondary Data***

##### *\* Purpose of the Method*

To assess the quality of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi in aspects that are difficult to measure directly, such as attitude toward public service execution, and knowledge and skills (excluding formal qualifications in professional training, state management, foreign language, and IT—which are captured through secondary data). Additionally, this includes evaluating citizen satisfaction with the performance of civil servants, which is a component of job performance and one of the three core content areas for civil servant evaluation identified in section 2.1.2. The primary methods employed are expert interviews and structured surveys.

##### *\* Implementation Methods*

##### *Expert Interview Method*

- **Purpose:** To consult experts in identifying content and criteria for evaluating the quality of district-level economic management civil servants, and to clarify solutions for improving such quality.

- **Target respondents:** Experts, leaders, and managers with extensive experience related to the dissertation's topic.

- **Sample size:** 12 interview forms distributed to relevant organizations using convenient sampling.

##### *Survey Method*

- **Purpose:** To assess civil servants' attitudes, knowledge, and skills, as well as citizen satisfaction with civil servants' performance in the field of economic state management at the district level in Hanoi.

- **Target respondents:** Civil servants working in the four specialized departments previously defined in the research scope, and local citizens or service users who have used public services in those departments.

- **Sample size:** For civil servants: According to Hair et al. (2014), the survey included 256 questionnaires, with 226 valid responses. For citizens and service users: Based on Yamane Taro (1976), a total of 480 respondents were surveyed.

- **Sampling method:** For civil servants: Stratified random sampling based on socio-economic characteristics was applied in 16 districts, towns, and urban areas of Hanoi. For citizens and service users: Stratified random sampling was conducted in 8 selected districts and towns of Hanoi.

### ***3.2.1.2. Methods for Processing Primary Data for Aspects Not Measurable by Secondary Data***

The doctoral candidate used SPSS and Excel software to process the primary data. The results were then integrated with analyzed secondary data to evaluate the quality of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi for the period 2019–2023. These evaluations form the empirical foundation for proposing solutions to improve civil servant quality by 2030, with a vision toward 2035, in the context of the newly implemented two-tier local government model.

### **3.2.2. Methodology for Collecting and Processing Primary Data to Construct a Model and Assess the Impact of Factors Influencing Job Performance of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

#### ***3.2.2.1. Method for Collecting Primary Data to Construct the Model and Assess the Impact of Factors Influencing Job Performance of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi***

As analyzed previously, job performance is one of the clearest indicators of the quality of district-level economic management civil servants and constitutes a core component of civil servant quality. Accordingly, the dissertation constructs a model and analyzes the extent to which various factors influence job performance. However, the findings derived from this model serve primarily to support qualitative assessments and act as one of the bases for proposing policy recommendations.

##### *\* Purpose of the Method*

The method is applied to construct a model and assess the degree to which factors affect the job performance of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi.

##### *\*Model Construction*

##### *- Expert Interviews*

- **Purpose:** To consult experts regarding the development of a model identifying factors that influence the job performance of district-level economic management civil servants, and to assist in designing the questionnaire.

- **Respondents, number of questionnaires, implementation method, and timing:** As specified in Section 3.2.1.1.

##### *- Model Specification*

Drawing on Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), the Competency Framework (Boyatzis, 1982), Performance Theory (Campbell, 1990), New Public Management Theory (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), Employee Engagement Theory (Kahn, 1990), and subsequent extensions by Macey & Schneider (2008), along with relevant empirical studies, the dissertation proposes a model comprising seven factors that positively influence job performance. These include training and capacity building, incentive policies, performance evaluation, administrative discipline, leadership style, innovation, and job engagement.

##### *\* Questionnaire Design / Scale Construction*

Based on the research objectives, expert consultations, and prior studies, the dissertation develops a measurement scale for the identified factors. Reverse-coded items and control questions are included in the questionnaire to facilitate data cleaning and the elimination of inconsistent or invalid responses, thus enhancing the reliability of the survey data.

##### *\* Survey Implementation: Two-Step Process*

##### *Step 1: Pilot Survey*

- **Purpose:** To assess the suitability of observed variables and the reliability of the measurement scale.

- **Sample:** 80 civil servants working in the four specialized departments across selected districts following socio-economic stratification, as outlined in the introduction. A total of 53 valid responses were collected.

- **Preliminary Analysis:** Cronbach's Alpha > 0.6 and Corrected Item-Total Correlation > 0.3. The scale is thus deemed reliable for use in the official survey.

#### *Step 2: Official Survey*

- **Purpose:** To analyze the extent to which the identified factors influence the job performance of district-level economic management civil servants.

- **Target respondents, sampling method, number of questionnaires, data collection process, criteria for excluding invalid responses, and survey duration:** As described in Section 3.2.1.1.

#### **3.2.2.2. Method for Processing Primary Data to Construct the Model and Assess the Impact of Factors Influencing Job Performance of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

The doctoral candidate employs SPSS software to conduct the following analyses:

- (1) Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha;
- (2) Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA);
- (3) Pearson correlation analysis;
- (4) Linear regression analysis.

**Multiple Regression Equation:**  $Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + \dots + B_nX_n + \varepsilon$

Where:

- **Y:** Dependent variable representing the outcome influenced by other variables.
- **X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub>, ..., X<sub>n</sub>:** Independent variables that influence the dependent variable.

In summary, the processed results from both primary and secondary data are integrated throughout the analysis of the five main chapters of the dissertation. The quantitative model and its findings serve primarily to clarify qualitative results and contribute a partial empirical foundation for proposing policy solutions.

### **Chapter 4**

#### **CURRENT STATUS OF THE QUALITY OF DISTRICT-LEVEL ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT CIVIL SERVANTS IN HANOI**

#### **4.1. Overview of the District-Level Economic Management Apparatus and Activities to Improve the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

##### **4.1.1. General Overview of the Geographic and Socio-Economic Conditions of Hanoi**

Regarding geographical location and natural conditions, Hanoi occupies a strategic position in northern Vietnam, serving as the political, cultural, and economic center of the nation. Its favorable topography, climate, and transportation networks have contributed to its socio-economic development.

In terms of socio-economic conditions, Hanoi is one of the major growth poles of the country. It has witnessed consistent GDP growth, improving per capita income, infrastructure modernization, and increasing attraction of domestic and foreign investment. However, disparities remain between urban and rural districts, posing challenges for balanced development.

##### **4.1.2. Overview of the District-Level Economic Management Apparatus in Hanoi**

###### **\* The District-Level Economic Management Apparatus**

The district-level economic management apparatus forms a constituent part of the state administrative system and comprises various governmental agencies performing state economic management functions. Within the scope of this dissertation, focus is placed on four out of twelve specialized divisions under the

People's Committees at the district level in Hanoi: the Economic Division, the Finance and Planning Division, the Urban Management Division, and the Natural Resources and Environment Division.

***\*Number of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

With a total of 30 urban and rural districts and towns, Hanoi has the largest number of district-level administrative units in the country. As a result, the number of economic management civil servants at the district level represents a significant proportion of the total administrative civil service workforce at the sub-provincial level.

**4.1.3. Overview of Activities Undertaken by the Hanoi Government to Improve the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants**

***4.1.3.1. Recruitment of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

***4.1.3.2. Placement and Utilization of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

***4.1.3.3. Performance Evaluation of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

***4.1.3.4. Training and Professional Development for District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

***4.1.3.5. Development of Incentive Policies and Talent Attraction Mechanisms for District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants***

**4.2. Current Status of the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

The current status of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi reflects the effectiveness and efficiency of the policies and initiatives undertaken by the municipal government to improve the quality of its civil service.

**4.2.1. Current Status of Attitudes Toward Public Service Execution among District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

***\* Sense of Responsibility and Collaboration***

Survey data indicate that district-level economic management civil servants demonstrate a relatively high level of responsibility and collaboration, generally meeting performance expectations. However, the average scores remain slightly below 4 on a 5-point scale—below the threshold considered “good.” This finding is consistent with the assessment stated in Resolution No. 15-NQ/TW and the mid-term report on Program 01-CTr/TU by the Hanoi Party Committee and several district authorities, which noted that “a portion of cadres and Party members lack sufficient accountability, and their service attitude toward citizens and enterprises remains inadequate. Some continue to avoid offering policy advice, recommendations, or expressing personal viewpoints.”

***\* Spirit of Innovation and Creativity***

The survey results reveal that most district-level economic management civil servants demonstrate readiness and proactiveness in innovation to improve job performance and address complex or novel problems. However, a minority of civil servants still exhibit hesitation and resistance to change. This aligns with findings from the mid-term report on Program 01-CTr/TU by the Hanoi Party Committee, which stated that “a portion of cadres and Party members still lack innovation and a strong sense of responsibility.”

Notably, the primary motivation for innovation among these civil servants is their personal desire to enhance work effectiveness and pursue self-development. This suggests that existing policies by the Hanoi government are not yet sufficiently strong or compelling to encourage creativity and long-term commitment. While attitude levels vary slightly across different departments, the differences are not statistically significant.



#### **4.2.2. Current Status of Knowledge and Skills Among District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

##### ***\* Educational Qualifications and Alignment with Job Positions***

###### ***- Educational Attainment***

Statistical results indicate that a relatively high proportion—approximately 43%—of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi hold a master’s degree or higher. This figure has steadily increased over the years and surpasses the average for both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. However, the number of civil servants holding a doctoral degree remains very limited, and there are still some civil servants with only college or intermediate-level qualifications.

###### ***- Variation in Educational Background Across Fields***

In practice, inconsistencies in educational qualifications persist across different areas of management and among the various districts and towns of Hanoi. Notably, civil servants in the field of urban management have the highest proportion of master’s degree holders.

###### ***- Knowledge and Skills as Demonstrated in Public Service Execution***

Civil servants demonstrate sound knowledge of public administration and legal regulations related to their assigned sectors. Skills in official document drafting, information gathering, planning and implementation, and teamwork are also assessed at relatively high levels.

###### ***- Relevance of Educational Background to Job Position***

Overall, the educational background of district-level economic management civil servants is generally aligned with their job placements. However, some cases remain where job assignments do not match the civil servant’s academic training or areas of professional strength. This observation is consistent with the assessment presented in Resolution No. 04-NQ/TU.

##### ***\* Political Theory, State Management, and Foreign Language Proficiency***

In 2023, the proportion of district-level economic management civil servants holding an intermediate certificate in political theory was relatively high. However, the percentage of those with advanced-level political theory training was lower than the average for all district-level civil servants in Hanoi.

While most district-level economic management civil servants formally meet the legal requirements regarding foreign language proficiency—evidenced by their diplomas and certificates—their actual ability to use foreign languages in practice remains limited and insufficient to meet job demands.

#### **4.2.3. Current Status of Job Performance of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

##### ***\* Performance Classification Results***

Annual performance classifications of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi show that over 98% are rated as having fulfilled their tasks well or better. However, a small number of civil servants are only rated as having “met expectations,” or even “failed to fulfill duties,” with some cases resulting in disciplinary action or criminal prosecution.

There is a noticeable discrepancy between official annual classifications and actual performance as reflected in survey results. This indicates the persistence of formality and leniency in evaluations, lacking objectivity and alignment with real performance. These issues were explicitly acknowledged in Resolution No. 04-NQ/TU.

##### ***\* Outcomes in Public Management Tasks for Which Civil Servants Are Responsible***

In general, the four specialized departments fulfill their assigned responsibilities. Nevertheless, annual socio-economic reports of localities highlight persistent limitations in budget management, infrastructure investment, and, most critically, land administration.

#### **\* Citizen Satisfaction Levels**

According to annual SIPAS (Satisfaction Index of Public Administrative Services) data, citizen satisfaction with public services has improved over time. However, satisfaction levels in land use right certification and construction permit issuance remain below average.

Survey results indicate that most citizens are generally satisfied with services provided by the four specialized departments. However, 7.5% to 8.7% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “civil servants handle tasks quickly and effectively” in the areas of finance–planning, urban management, and economic affairs. Notably, this dissatisfaction rate rises to 15.3% in the field of natural resources and environment.

These findings are consistent with limitations reported in Hanoi’s official socio-economic reports, as well as those of districts and towns. The root causes are largely objective and tied to the nature of the field: land in Hanoi is a high-value asset, making it prone to disputes; furthermore, the city’s large population and rapid urbanization significantly increase the administrative burden related to land management.

#### **\* Impact of Factors on Job Performance of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

After analyzing the relevant indicators, the regression model was found to be statistically significant, with all independent variables having a measurable impact on the dependent variable and no multicollinearity detected.

##### **Regression Equation**

Unstandardized form:

$$KQ = 0.434 + 0.141DT + 0.076KK + 0.181DG + 0.099LD + 0.14KL + 0.119ST + 0.136*GK + \varepsilon$$

Standardized form:

$$KQ = 0.179DT + 0.119KK + 0.238DG + 0.153LD + 0.19KL + 0.147ST + 0.169*GK + \varepsilon$$

##### **Key Conclusions**

From the standardized regression equation, it is evident that all independent variables have a positive impact on the job performance of district-level economic management civil servants, albeit to varying degrees. The strongest predictor is performance evaluation (DG), with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.238, followed by administrative discipline (KL,  $\beta = 0.19$ ), training and capacity building (DT,  $\beta = 0.179$ ), job engagement (GK,  $\beta = 0.169$ ), leadership style (LD,  $\beta = 0.153$ ), innovation capacity (ST,  $\beta = 0.147$ ), and finally, incentive policy (KK,  $\beta = 0.119$ ), which has the weakest impact. These findings are consistent with the results of several previous studies on factors influencing public sector performance.

#### **4.3. General Assessment of the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

##### **4.3.1. Achievements**

The attitude of district-level economic management civil servants toward public service execution is generally positive. Although there are differences across various sectors, they are not substantial.

The knowledge and skills of district-level economic management civil servants have shown improvements over time. The proportion of civil servants holding a master’s degree is higher than the overall

average for both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. However, there are disparities across different areas of specialization.

Overall, most district-level economic management civil servants fulfill their assigned tasks satisfactorily and receive a generally high level of satisfaction from citizens.

#### **4.3.2. Limitations**

In terms of attitude toward public service execution, there remains a segment of civil servants who are hesitant or unwilling to take on new responsibilities and are resistant to innovation.

With respect to knowledge and skills, some civil servants still fall short of meeting professional qualification standards. In certain cases, there is a mismatch between the civil servant's training background, professional capacity, personal strengths, and the job position.

Regarding job performance, limitations in public administrative effectiveness persist. Some citizens and service users still believe that civil servants do not handle tasks in a timely, efficient, and effective manner—particularly in the field of natural resources and environment.

#### **4.3.3. Root Causes of the Limitations**

While many factors contribute to the limitations in the quality of district-level economic management civil servants, this dissertation—approaching the issue from the perspective of economic governance—identifies the following core causes:

##### ***\* Causes Related to the Hanoi Municipal Government***

- There is a lack of breakthrough recruitment mechanisms for civil servants.
- In some cases, civil servants are placed in positions that do not align with their academic background, capacity, or expertise.
- The current performance evaluation criteria issued by the city do not fully reflect the orientation of placing citizen satisfaction at the core, as emphasized in the 13th Party Congress, nor are they tailored to the specific job positions within each agency or unit.
- Formalism and leniency remain prevalent in evaluations; in some localities, evaluation results are not used as the basis for calculating performance-based income.
- Training and professional development are sometimes overly theoretical and not closely linked to real-world needs; training evaluation lacks comprehensiveness.
- The city has yet to concretize talent attraction policies under the 2024 Capital Law or operationalize incentive mechanisms to encourage and protect civil servants engaged in innovation.
- Discipline and administrative order are inconsistently enforced, with occasional lapses in oversight.

##### ***\* Causes Related to the Specific Characteristics of Hanoi's Socio-Economic and Political Context***

As the capital city, Hanoi's district-level economic management civil servants often face a heavy workload, resulting in increased pressure and challenges in policy advising and execution.

##### ***\* Causes Stemming from the Three-Tier Local Government Model***

Under the existing three-tier governance structure, district-level governments—especially the People's Committees at the district level—function mainly as intermediaries. This intermediary role limits the autonomy and creativity of civil servants and may contribute to delays in public service delivery due to the need for approval through a middle administrative level.

## Chapter 5

### ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF DISTRICT-LEVEL ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT CIVIL SERVANTS IN HANOI UNDER THE NEW CONTEXT

#### **5.1. Orientation for Improving the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi Under the New Context**

##### **5.1.1. New Context and Quality Requirements for District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi**

###### *\* General Context of the World, the Country, and the Capital*

- The global and regional situations are evolving rapidly and unpredictably.
- The world, Vietnam, and the capital Hanoi are still experiencing the aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*\* Vietnam and Hanoi are entering a new era of national advancement and public sector reform, marked by a streamlined administrative system and a shift away from the three-tier local government model, in which the district level mainly serves as an intermediary.*

In light of the inefficiencies associated with the intermediary role of district-level governance under the three-tier model, the Politburo has reached a consensus to implement a two-tier local government model—comprising only the provincial and communal levels—under Conclusion No. 137-KL/TW dated March 28, 2025. This will be accompanied by enhanced decentralization and delegation under the principle: “local authorities decide, act, and take responsibility.”

Accordingly, the function of economic state management will be largely transferred to the commune level. Communal governments will assume both their traditional responsibilities and those previously held by the district level. This requires the establishment of specialized divisions under the communal People’s Committees, responsible for assisting in the implementation of state administrative functions. As a result, district-level economic management civil servants must be reassigned to communes and must meet the qualifications and performance expectations of communal-level civil servants—capable of handling both commune- and former district-level responsibilities.

###### *\* Unique Context of the Capital City of Hanoi*

- Hanoi, as the capital, still lags in competitiveness.
- The 2024 Capital Law introduces extensive authorities, responsibilities, and unique mechanisms for managing and utilizing public officials, which must be concretized and implemented.
- Hanoi has the largest number of district-level administrative units in the country.
- The city has a large population, rapid urbanization, and serves as the location for numerous governmental agencies, educational institutions, hospitals, enterprises, and major production and business entities—placing significant pressure on civil servants.

###### *\* Development Vision for the Capital*

According to Resolution No. 15-NQ/TW issued by the Politburo in 2022, the goal is that by 2030, Hanoi will become a “Cultured – Civilized – Modern” city; a central driving force for the Red River Delta, the Northern Key Economic Region, and the entire nation; deeply integrated into the global economy; and competitive at both the regional and international levels—on par with capital cities of developed countries in the region.

*\* Quality Requirements for District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi Under the New Context*

In accordance with Conclusion No. 137-KL/TW, former district-level economic management civil servants are to be reassigned to the commune level, where they will be responsible for both commune-level and former district-level administrative functions. Therefore, these civil servants must now meet the qualifications required of communal-level economic managers. Based on Competency Theory (Richard Boyatzis, 1982) and New Public Management Theory (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), and in light of Vietnam's shift toward a two-tier local government model, the quality requirements for commune-level economic civil servants should include the following—emphasized especially for those working in the capital:

*First, Attitudes Toward Public Service*

- Civil servants must demonstrate a willingness to take on responsibility, accept accountability, embrace challenges and change, and be adaptable to new tasks and environments.
- They must be proactive, pioneering, and willing to propose solutions to practical issues arising from their roles at the grassroots level, prioritizing public interest over personal gain. As capital city officials, they are expected to set a higher standard for exemplary conduct and leadership.
- They must possess a high tolerance for work-related pressure, particularly in Hanoi, where the administrative workload is heavy due to the consolidation of commune and former district-level functions.
- Civil servants must be close to the people, regularly interacting with citizens, and responsive to their concerns—especially important at the commune level, where officials directly serve the population.

*Second, Knowledge and Skills*

- Civil servants must have appropriate qualifications in their professional fields, political theory, and state management aligned with their new job positions.
- They must have in-depth knowledge of economics and the specific fields for which they provide advisory services, as well as a multidisciplinary understanding of related areas.
- They must be proficient in digital transformation and information technology applications relevant to public service delivery—particularly important in the new context, where civil servants manage tasks across multiple formerly independent communes.
- They must possess deep knowledge of the localities they serve, especially given the dissolution of the intermediary role previously held by district-level officials.
- They must demonstrate strong competencies and soft skills that meet the demands of the new governance environment.

*Third, Job Performance*

Civil servants must make significant efforts to successfully fulfill their assigned tasks in a new organizational setting, assisting commune-level People's Committees in addressing local challenges within their administrative domains.

### **5.1.2. Perspectives and Orientations for Improving the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi under the New Context**

*\*Perspectives*

First, the reassignment of district-level economic management civil servants must ensure that only those with sufficient qualifications and capacity are deployed to commune-level positions.

Second, it is essential to maintain connectivity and coherence between the commune-level and city-level civil service systems.

Third, enhancing the quality of commune-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi must be treated as a matter of strategic priority—requiring a long-term vision, and implementation through regular, continuous, and well-planned programs.

Fourth, improving the quality of commune-level economic civil servants is a shared responsibility of the entire political system in Hanoi.

Fifth, this improvement must be grounded in the practical needs and requirements of the new context, as Vietnam transitions to a two-tier local government model, and must reflect the distinctive characteristics of the capital city.

Sixth, solutions to improve the quality of commune-level economic management civil servants must be implemented synchronously. Special attention must be paid to concretizing and realizing the unique policy mandates and powers granted to Hanoi under the 2024 Capital Law.

***\* Orientation Toward Improving the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi to 2030, with a Vision to 2035, under the New Context in Which These Civil Servants Are Reassigned to the Commune Level***

First, there is an urgent need to define which functions of the former district-level government will be transferred to the commune level in accordance with the principle “localities decide, act, and take responsibility.”

Second, the city must swiftly develop a competency framework, job descriptions, and job classifications that reflect the decentralized responsibilities now assigned to the grassroots level.

Third, recruitment, evaluation, training, rotation, and appointment of civil servants should be aligned with the established competency framework and job descriptions approved by competent authorities.

Fourth, it is necessary to foster a spirit of innovation and enhance the digital transformation capacity of former district-level economic civil servants so they can meet the demands of the two-tier government model and contribute to building the digital economy.

**5.2. Solutions to Improve the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi under the New Context**

As previously analyzed, most district-level economic management civil servants are now being reassigned to the commune level. Therefore, based on the identified limitations and root causes, the analysis of influencing factors, quality requirements for commune-level economic civil servants under the new context, and lessons learned from Singapore, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City, the dissertation proposes the following key solutions to improve the quality of former district-level economic management civil servants in alignment with the requirements of their new roles:

**5.2.1. Develop Job Descriptions and Finalize the Competency Framework for Each Civil Servant Position in the Commune-Level Economic Management Apparatus in Accordance with the Two-Tier Local Government Model**

**Step 1:** Identify all commune-level job positions for economic management civil servants under the new two-tier local governance framework, along with detailed job descriptions for each position.

**Step 2:** Develop a competency framework tailored to each identified job position at the grassroots level.

**Step 3:** Apply the finalized competency framework in the management and utilization of civil servants, aiming to reduce staffing by at least 25% by 2030 through streamlining and improved efficiency.

### **5.2.2. Reform the Content and Format of Civil Servant Recruitment by Combining Written Examinations and Interviews; Operationalize the Special Mechanisms under the 2024 Capital Law**

Following administrative streamlining, the number of civil servants is expected to exceed staffing quotas for the next five years. Hence, recruitment should only proceed when the apparatus has been stabilized and actual need arises.

First, clearly identify job positions that require recruitment, and conduct hiring based on the approved competency framework and job descriptions for each position.

Second, innovate the content and format of recruitment exams to align with job requirements—specifically, implement a combination of written exams and interviews in the second round of recruitment for grassroots-level economic management civil servants.

Third, promote the application of information technology in the recruitment of economic management civil servants.

Fourth, operationalize the special mechanisms under the 2024 Capital Law for managing and utilizing civil servants when necessary.

### **5.2.3. Effectively Assign and Utilize Civil Servants Based on Approved Job Descriptions and Competency Frameworks Under the Two-Tier Local Government Model**

First, conduct an objective and comprehensive review and assessment of former district-level civil servants, which serves as a critical basis for personnel allocation during administrative streamlining.

Second, regularly assign tasks to former district-level economic civil servants to assess whether post-restructuring placements are appropriate and whether adjustments are needed.

Third, closely manage and monitor the rotation and reassignment of civil servants; adopt effective measures to challenge and cultivate civil servants through practical exposure.

### **5.2.4. Specify Evaluation Criteria for Each Job Position and Use Performance Results as the Basis for Additional Income Payments**

First, define clear evaluation content and criteria tailored to each job position, incorporating citizen and client satisfaction into civil servant evaluations.

Second, diversify civil servant evaluation methods—giving particular attention to KPI-based performance appraisal and 360-degree feedback methods for former district-level economic civil servants now reassigned to the grassroots level.

Third, hold evaluators accountable and establish sanctions for negligence in civil servant evaluation. Fourth, implement performance-based income as authorized under the 2024 Capital Law, which may be split into two parts: one based on salary scale, grade, and position; the other based on annual performance classification of “well-completed tasks” or higher.

### **5.2.5. Reform the Content and Format of Training and Capacity Building Programs, with Emphasis on Economic Knowledge and Digital Competency; Comprehensively Evaluate Post-Training Outcomes; Operationalize Training Policies under the 2024 Capital Law**

First, conduct input assessments and design training programs based on job requirements, competency frameworks, and practical needs.

Second, prioritize training in economics and digital transformation competencies, particularly IT application skills.

Third, place emphasis on scientifically and comprehensively evaluating the “output” or outcomes of training programs.

Fourth, expand both the target groups and number of civil servants eligible for postgraduate financial support, and operationalize the training and capacity building policies defined in the 2024 Capital Law.

#### **5.2.6. Propose Salary Increases for Civil Servants Post-Streamlining and Operationalize Talent Retention Policies Under the 2024 Capital Law**

First, propose salary adjustments for civil servants following apparatus streamlining and the elimination of the intermediary level.

Second, urgently implement policies to attract and retain talented personnel based on the unique mechanisms authorized by the 2024 Capital Law.

#### **5.2.7. Operationalize Mechanisms to Encourage and Protect Civil Servants Who Innovate for the Public Interest Under Central Regulations and the 2024 Capital Law**

First, develop evaluation criteria for innovation initiatives.

Second, respect innovative ideas and create an enabling environment for economic management civil servants to engage in innovation.

Third, proactively review, assess, and evaluate both the idea and its implementation.

Fourth, establish mechanisms to protect civil servants who engage in innovation for the common good.

#### **5.2.8. Strengthen Discipline and Administrative Order in Public Service Execution**

First, Hanoi and relevant agencies must issue clear, comprehensive, and detailed internal rules and working regulations.

Second, increase unannounced inspections and audits.

Third, strictly discipline violations of administrative rules and accountability standards.

### **Conclusion**

Cadres and civil servants are the decisive factor in the success or failure of any revolutionary endeavor. The effectiveness and efficiency of state economic management at the local level depend significantly on the quality of the civil service, including district-level economic management civil servants. However, these civil servants primarily fulfill the functions of an intermediary level, which may result in administrative delays, limit autonomy and innovation, and increase the burden on the state budget.

Recognizing these limitations, on April 12, 2025, the 11th Plenum of the 13th Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam issued Resolution No. 60-NQ/TW, formally approving the policy to restructure the local government model into two tiers, thereby eliminating the district-level government in the near future. With 30 district-level administrative units, Hanoi has the largest number of such units nationwide. As such, the capital is inevitably part of the broader movement toward administrative streamlining. Under the two-tier model, the economic management functions of former district-level governments will be transferred to the commune level, consistent with the principle of “local authorities decide, act, and take responsibility.” Consequently, district-level economic management civil servants must be reassigned to grassroots positions. To provide a solid foundation for proposing practical solutions to improve the quality of these reassigned civil servants, this dissertation has constructed a theoretical framework and conducted an empirical assessment of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi during the period from 2019 to 2023. Based on the new national context, the specific circumstances of the capital, and the policy direction toward streamlining and two-tier governance, the dissertation proposes quality standards for commune-level civil servants and corresponding solutions for improving the quality of former district-level economic civil servants in light of their new roles.



**First**, the dissertation identifies the core dimensions and evaluation criteria for assessing the quality of district-level economic management civil servants. Specifically, the evaluation is structured around three main dimensions: attitudes, knowledge and skills, and job performance. Each dimension is broken down into specific components and measured using clear criteria. The evaluation also integrates the civil servants' readiness for innovation and emphasizes citizen satisfaction as a critical metric of public service quality.

**Second**, the dissertation develops and applies a model to assess the impact of various factors on job performance among district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi. Job performance is regarded as the most tangible evidence of public servant quality. By identifying the influence of seven key factors on performance, the dissertation contributes both qualitative insights and quantitative evidence, offering a basis for Hanoi's government to formulate more effective strategies to improve public service delivery and governance outcomes.

**Third**, the dissertation provides a comprehensive assessment of the current quality of district-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi during the 2019–2023 period. Findings show that while most civil servants meet general expectations, disparities exist across sectors—finance and planning, economic affairs, urban management, and natural resources and environment—especially in terms of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and job performance. The study also explores the underlying causes of these differences.

**Fourth**, the dissertation proposes quality standards for commune-level economic management civil servants in Hanoi under the new two-tier government structure, along with corresponding solutions to improve the quality of reassigned district-level personnel. As previously analyzed, these civil servants will assume both commune- and former district-level responsibilities. Therefore, the proposed standards emphasize the unique expectations placed on public servants in the capital and the commune level alike. Solutions are suggested to ensure that the reassigned civil servants are well-equipped to fulfill their new roles under the evolving governance model.

While the research has made substantial efforts, certain limitations remain due to resource constraints and challenges in data accessibility. Moreover, the Party's policy decision to eliminate the district-level government was issued when the dissertation had already been largely completed. As a result, future research should aim to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of commune-level civil servants following administrative restructuring, allowing for more in-depth and well-rounded proposals to improve public sector quality at the grassroots level. Additionally, further validation of other potential influencing factors on job performance is needed to support local governments in designing more holistic, evidence-based policies for strengthening the public service workforce—particularly commune-level economic management personnel.

### **Recommendations**

To effectively implement the proposed solutions, particularly in the context of Vietnam—and Hanoi in particular—undergoing a comprehensive administrative streamlining and the transition to a two-tier local government model, following the principle of “reforming while operating,” this dissertation proposes several key recommendations to competent central-level authorities:

**First, Urgently revise the Constitution, the Law on Organization of Local Government, the Law on the Capital, and other relevant legal documents.**

There is an urgent need to revise the Constitution and the Law on Organization of Local Government along with associated legal instruments. These revisions should clearly define the working relationship

between the provincial and commune levels, and specify how the functions of the former district-level government will be transferred to the commune level.

Additionally, as the two-tier model is implemented, some of the special mechanisms under the Law on the Capital regarding the management and utilization of civil servants may become obsolete. It is therefore essential to amend the Capital Law to allow for stronger decentralization to the commune level.

**Second, Revise and supplement the Law on Cadres and Civil Servants and relevant guiding documents to provide a legal basis for post-restructuring personnel management.**

With administrative streamlining in progress, the Law on Cadres and Civil Servants (2008, amended in 2019) should be revised to institutionalize a system that enables smooth transitions and interoperability between commune-level and provincial/central-level civil servants. Amendments should also include clearer definitions of the rights and obligations of civil servants, thereby institutionalizing Party policies that encourage and protect dynamic, innovative, and accountable public servants working in the public interest. In addition, it is necessary to establish regulatory frameworks for civil servant screening and re-evaluation to restructure, streamline, and enhance the overall quality of the civil service—ensuring the development of a capable, ethical, and competent workforce in service of the Party, the nation, and the people.

**Third, Recommend the establishment of additional specialized departments under the commune-level People’s Committees, tailored to the unique characteristics of Hanoi.**

Article 9 of the 2024 Law on the Capital authorizes the Hanoi People's Council to “Regulate the establishment, restructuring, or dissolution of specialized departments and administrative organizations under the district-level People’s Committees in cases not otherwise covered or diverging from higher-level state regulations, provided this is done in line with streamlined, efficient, and effective governance goals.” However, the number of specialized departments must not exceed 10% more than the ceiling set by the central government.

Given the rapid urbanization, large population, high volume of organizations and enterprises, and concentration of central government agencies in Hanoi, the administrative workload is exceptionally heavy. It is therefore recommended that the Capital Law be amended to empower Hanoi to establish one additional specialized department at the commune level—even if not stipulated or deviating from central regulations—in order to reduce pressure and improve administrative performance and service delivery at the grassroots level.

**Fourth, Reassign existing district-level civil servants to commune-level positions in line with the new two-tier government model.**

According to Decision No. 759/QĐ-TTg dated April 14, 2025, issued by the Prime Minister, the newly structured commune-level government will take on the responsibilities currently handled by both district and commune governments. In alignment with the orientation toward citizen-centric governance—bringing public services closer to the people—the reassignment of district-level civil servants to commune-level positions is both necessary and urgent

## LIST OF SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1. Do Thi Thuy Hang (2024): *Motivating Innovation among District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi*, Economic Forecast Review, Special Issue, December 2024 (893), p.213.
2. Do Thi Thuy Hang (2024): *Experiences from Several Localities and Lessons for Hanoi in Improving the Quality of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants*, Economic Forecast Review, No. 18, September 2024 (884), p.189.
3. Do Thi Thuy Hang (2024): *Research Model on Factors Affecting the Job Performance of District-Level Economic Management Civil Servants in Hanoi*, Economic Forecast Review, No. 14, July 2024 (880), p.68.
4. Do Thi Thuy Hang (2021): *PAPI, SIPAS Indices and the Requirements for Building the Economic Management Cadre of Hanoi*, Economic Forecast Review, No. 22, August 2021, p.79.
5. Do Thi Thuy Hang (2021): *Urban Government Model and Its Impacts on Public Officials in Hanoi*, Journal of Economics and Management, No. 38/2021, p.43.
6. Do Thi Thuy Hang (2021): *Promoting the Training of Officials and Civil Servants in Hanoi to Meet the Requirements of Socio-Economic Development and International Integration*, Journal of Teaching and Learning Today, May 2021 issue, p.30.