



# The Concept of Public Service and the History of Its Formation

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Submitted: 02-Jan, 2026

Accepted: 15-Feb, 2026

Published: 03-Mar, 2026

Vol. 3, No. 1, 2026. Sociometrics.us

Sociometrics: Journal of Social  
Measurement and Analysis

## Abstract

This article presents views on the history of the development of civil service activity from ancient times to the 20th century. The formation of the civil service in ancient times and its development in subsequent periods, the specific forms of tasks and powers of managerial and civil service employees in Western and Eastern countries are analyzed. The views of scientists on the topic and the essence of their research are comprehensively covered.

**Keywords:** *Civil service, duty of a civil servant, Confucianism, "Arthashastra" tax system, military service, bureaucracy, "Rang Table".*

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## Introduction

Public service is a professional activity aimed at exercising the powers of state authorities and administration, which is of great importance in the period of transition from a strong state to a strong civil society, in the process of liberalization of all spheres of public life, in the correct organization and conduct of public service in fulfilling the main tasks facing society and the state. By studying the history of the development of the civil service, the possibilities of its improvement, an opportunity is created to acquire rich historical experience in ensuring the effectiveness of the civil service in the current period, increasing the professional competence of civil servants. The fact that the issue is of great importance both theoretically and practically shows that the state personnel policy is a decisive factor in increasing the effectiveness of public administration in modern conditions. After all, the formation and implementation of state personnel policy is a complex and multifaceted process, in which special attention should be paid to the development of modern approaches based on rich experience in the development of theoretical and conceptual foundations.

The history of civil service activity is inextricably linked with the development of society. A thorough study of this history allows us to understand the evolution of the management system. Through historical experience, the stages of formation of state institutions become clearer. It is known that in each period, the state service changed in accordance with the needs of society. Knowledge of its history helps to correctly direct modern reforms. The history of public service reflects the development of management culture. Traditions and values in this field have been passed down from generation to generation. Through historical analysis, effective and ineffective management methods are identified. This serves to avoid repeating mistakes in the future.

The history of civil service also illuminates the evolution of personnel policy. In ancient times, positions were assigned on a hereditary basis. Subsequently, the principles of choice and qualification were formed. This process reflects the development of democratic values. The concepts of responsibility and accountability in public service have also evolved over time. Historical sources allow us to analyze the rights and obligations of civil servants. The history of public service reveals the relationship between society and the government, which is important in ensuring stability and trust. Through historical knowledge, we understand how the principle of openness was formed in public administration. This creates an opportunity to contribute to the development of civil society. The history of the activities of the civil service also helps to study the stages of development of the idea of the rule of law.

The principle of the rule of law was not formed overnight. It is the product of long and complex historical processes. Along with the rule of law, moral norms and the processes of their formation are equally important. The principles of honesty and justice become important categories as the basis for the effectiveness of public service. At the same time, historical experience contributes to the improvement of effective methods of combating corruption. Another important significance of studying the history of civil service activity is that it is connected with the traditions of national statehood, serves self-awareness through the history of national management models, and allows for comparison with international experience.

Comparative analysis increases the effectiveness of modern reforms. The history of civil service is an important source in planning institutional reforms. It creates a scientific basis for making strategic decisions. Through historical processes, the stages of centralization and decentralization of the state apparatus are studied. These processes contribute to the improvement of territorial administration. The history of public service shows changes in leadership styles. Differences between different management methods are identified. Historical analysis, in turn, illuminates the process of formation of the principles of social justice.

## **Methodology**

In the laws of statehood, whose historical roots go back thousands of years, the factor of personality has always been paramount. When describing the classification of power, Max Weber emphasizes that state structures reflect the political processes of that time. Strives to interpret the concept of public service in conjunction with bureaucracy. When assessing the quality and effectiveness of public service, he uses the concepts of "rational-legal power" and "bureaucratic apparatus." According to Weber, public service should be analyzed as a professional, rule-based system. Karl Marx viewed the state apparatus as a means of class domination. Marx analyzed bureaucracy in the context of socio-political relations. It is aimed at proving socialist and communist views in terms of class struggle and the priority of economic factors. Future US President and politician Woodrow Wilson put forward the idea of separating public administration from politics in his work "The Study of Government" (1887).

Fritz Morstein Marx engaged in a comparative analysis of public service systems. Samuel Eisenstadt analyzed the evolution of historical-comparative sociology and state institutions. He

studied the difference between traditional and modern state apparatus. Charles Tilly, studying the history of the formation and centralization of the state, put forward the theory that the emergence of states through various wars, the achievement of certain borders by states, leads to wars ("War made the state, and the state made war" concept). Michael Mann developed the theory of infrastructural and despotic forms of state power, while Joseph Stryer analyzed the formation of the medieval European state apparatus and conducted a comparative study of state positions and powers in the development of statehood. It served to analyze the history of public service in Europe using the example of the system of public administration and activities of the civil service during the reign of the French King Philip IV the Beautiful (1268-1314). He argued that during the reign of Philip IV, the balance of loyalty shifted from local authority to a secular, sovereign state. The central administration became so powerful and so effective that it became a model for many other European countries. Historian-Hindologist Hermann Kulke studied the history of Eastern statehood and administrative institutions using India as an example. His "**Kings and Cults**" is devoted to the formation of statehood and religious legitimacy in India and Southeast Asia.

## Main Part

**Civil service and civil servant in ancient times.** The concept of civil service emerged simultaneously with the formation of statehood in human society. With the emergence of the first states, the need arose to govern society, maintain order, and ensure common interests. In ancient communities, power was primarily concentrated in the hands of tribal leaders and elders. They made decisions on behalf of the team and performed certain management functions. This situation indicates the emergence of the first elements characteristic of public service. Public service was initially manifested in the form of collective obligations. In ancient times, there was no separate salary or privileges for service. The concept of a civil servant was not yet clearly formed. However, serving the authorities was perceived as a sacred duty to society.

The states of the Ancient East occupy a special place in the history of public service. The first centralized state systems were formed in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. In these states, a governing apparatus emerged. The king or pharaoh was considered the highest source of power. Civil servants acted on behalf of the ruler. They were engaged in tax collection, population census, and enforcement of laws. A civil servant was obliged to be personally loyal to the tsar. Loyalty was considered one of the main requirements in public service.

In Ancient Egypt, the civil service was organized at a high level. The development of writing in Egypt led to an increase in the number of servants. Literate people who knew how to write were the main pillars of public service. They kept records, made calculations, and wrote down decrees. Literacy was a high status and considered the main condition for entering public service. The civil servant underwent special training. This indicates the first signs of professionalization of the civil service.

The state service system also existed in the states of Mesopotamia. Hammurabi's laws outline the legal basis of public service. Laws define the responsibilities of officials and require them to be fair in fulfilling their duties. Self-interest and abuse were severely punished. This shows that the civil service is based on the principle of accountability. A civil servant was considered a person responsible to the king and society.

Issues related to the activities of the civil service in ancient India are reflected in the "Arthashastra" (BC. 4th century) is widely covered. It outlines the basic principles of royal governance and the activities of officials. Civil servants are divided into different levels according to their duties and powers. Every official had specific duties. A civil servant was obliged to protect the interests of the state. It is important to note that anti-corruption measures and ethical procedures for civil servants have been established since ancient times.

In ancient China, it was highly developed even during periods of fragmentation into small independent city-states. At the same time, public administration and the activities of the civil service played a special role in the development of the civil service system. In the process of strengthening the centralized state, the possibility of selecting the most optimal procedures for public service was created. Confucius (BC. VI-V centuries BC) defined the moral character of civil servants. According to Confucius, a civil servant should be educated, honest, and beneficial to society. He is an assistant to the king to exercise God-given powers in the state, authorized by the father (the king), and is responsible for the protection and well-being of the children (people, citizens), responsible for the peace and order of the state. In contrast to the early reigns, the practice of admission to the Chinese civil service through an examination system emerged in later periods. This is an important innovation in the history of public service not only in Asia, but also in the practice of the whole world. The quality of service and the stability of the state are ensured by the organization of the civil service not on the basis of heredity, but on the basis of ability. Moreover, this system persisted for thousands of years, even during the reign of various dynasties.

In the states of Ancient Greece, the civil service was democratic. In Athens, citizens directly participated in state governance. The civil servant was directly selected from among the citizens. Positions had specific deadlines and powers. This ensured responsibility and accountability in public service. The civil servant served the interests of the public. Greek philosophers expressed theoretical views on public service. Plato and Aristotle emphasized the supremacy of morality and law in state governance. In states, the separation and independence of the legislative and executive branches of government have developed as a fundamental value.

Since in ancient times the state service was mainly aimed at maintaining power and ensuring order, the main task of the civil servant was to protect the interests of the tsar or the state. The social needs of the population were secondary. Nevertheless, public service plays an important role in the development of society, and the implementation of laws is ensured through public service. Taxes were collected, and the state treasury was formed. Personal loyalty and morality were of great importance. A civil servant was considered the face of the state. His behavior was perceived as an assessment of the entire government. In the civil service, the foundations of moral values and competence have been created. These foundations served as the basis for the development of public service in subsequent centuries.

**State service and civil servant in the Middle Ages.** The Middle Ages are an important stage in the development of the history of public service. During this period, the forms of statehood became more complex. As the system of power expanded, the administrative apparatus also developed. By this time, the civil service began to manifest itself for the first time as a relatively stable system. In the Middle Ages, public service was largely based on traditions and religious rules. A civil servant was seen not only as an administrative person, but also as a person with moral responsibility.

In Europe in the Middle Ages, a predominantly feudal system prevailed. Public service depended on the feudal hierarchy. The king or king was considered the supreme source of power. Vassals and officials served around him. Public service was often carried out in exchange for land. A civil servant received a certain fee or privilege (len) in exchange for service. This situation, along with determining the economic foundations of the civil service, led to the fact that the civil service began to acquire an inherited character. Court officials played an important role in medieval Europe. Chancellors, treasurers, and court officials constituted the main links of the civil service. They ensured the full implementation of royal decrees in the regions. A civil servant was obliged to be personally loyal to the king. Even during this period, treason against the head of state was considered treason against the state. The Christian Church also played a major role in public service. Many church officials participated in state affairs. Bishops and abbots influenced political decisions.

Church laws were incorporated into state administration. A civil servant is required to observe religious rules. This situation strengthened moral control in the civil service. At the same time, the institution of religion was a factor ensuring the legality of public service.

In the Islamic world, the civil service is highly developed. During the period of the Arab Caliphate, the civil service system was fully formed. The Caliph was considered the supreme head of state, and a system of diwans was established under him. Divans dealt with finance, military affairs, postal and judicial affairs, and other important tasks. Department employees were considered civil servants. They received wages at a predetermined cost and were provided by the state. In Islamic countries, civil service has a legal basis, and Sharia law regulates the activities of civil servants. Justice was a fundamental principle in public service. Judges and muftis, as civil servants, enjoyed great authority in society. They monitored the implementation of the law. A civil servant was obliged to protect the interests of the people and preserve the authority of the ruler.

We can see that the civil service in Central Asia developed even in the Middle Ages. During the reigns of the Karakhanids, Seljuks, and Khwarazmshahs, the management system was fully formed, and emirs and governors constituted the upper stratum of civil servants. They independently governed the provinces on behalf of the central government. The civil service was military-administrative in nature. The civil servant was also forced to serve in the military.

During the Timurid era, the civil service was further developed. Amir Timur paid great attention to state administration. He defined ability and loyalty as the main criteria in the selection of civil servants, and the duties of officials were clearly indicated in the "Temur's Code." A civil servant was obliged to ensure law and order. During this period, the civil service became a centralized system. In general, by this time, the civil servant had formed as a separate stratum in society. His rights and obligations are defined by tradition. Public service gave social status in society. A civil servant was a mediator between the government and the people. At the same time, due to the strengthening of personal interests in public service, cases of abuse and corruption have emerged.

**Professionalism of the civil service and civil servant in the modern era (17th-19th centuries).** The new era is a turning point in the history of public service. This period was marked by the disintegration of the feudal system and the formation of centralized national states in its place. In this case, state power is somewhat strengthened. The scope and size of the management apparatus have expanded. The civil service began to manifest itself as an independent social institution. The idea was formed that a civil servant should act not on the basis of personal loyalty, but on the basis of official duty. The era of absolutism in Europe had a strong influence on the development of public service. With the absolute centralization of royal power, the state apparatus operated on a permanent basis. The number of civil servants has increased sharply. They are provided with a special salary. Public service is defined as an official duty. A civil servant was considered an executor of royal laws.

France has accumulated extensive experience in the formation of the civil service system. Under Louis XIV (1638-1715), a centralized bureaucratic apparatus was created. Officials were subordinate to a strict hierarchy. The position of civil servant is legally enshrined. Education and experience played an important role in hiring for public service. This was a sign of the professionalization of public service. In Germany, the Prussian civil service system was improved. In Prussia, discipline and order prevailed. Civil servants strictly adhered to the laws. Public service is interpreted as serving the interests of the state. A civil servant was considered a person responsible to society. The Prussian model later became a model for many European countries. In England, the civil service developed evolutionarily. The parliamentary system influenced the civil service. Civil servants were subordinate to the king and parliament. The rule of law is ensured in public service. Positions gradually lost their hereditary nature. A civil servant is accepted as a person performing civic duty.

In the modern era, the theory of public service has been formed. German philosophers developed scientific views on the state and bureaucracy. Max Weber, commenting on the ideal model of public service, characterized bureaucracy as a rational system based on law. The idea was put forward that a civil servant should be free from personal feelings. This has formed the principle of neutrality in public service.

Public service in the Russian Empire is associated with the reforms of Peter I (1672-1725). In 1722, Peter I introduced the "Color Table" into the civil service system. This system distributed civil servants by position. On the basis of a total of 14 categories (classes), instead of the system of hereditary positions of the former nobility (boyars), a system of selection based on the qualifications and abilities of the employee was created, which was in effect until the beginning of the 20th century. Through public service, it was possible to achieve social status. The incoming civil servant swore an oath to serve the state. This system combines loyalty and professionalism in public service.

**Modern image of the civil service and civil servant in the 20th century.** The 20th century marked a qualitatively new stage in the history of public service. In this century, fundamental political, social, and economic changes took place in the world. Monarchies began to be replaced by republics. Public service was enriched by the idea of serving the people. The people were recognized as the source of state power. At the same time, the essence and objectives of the civil service were revised.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the civil service was formed as a professional system. Civil servants began to undergo special training and training. Personnel training has been elevated to the level of state policy. Consistency and stability were ensured in the civil service. The principle has been established that a civil servant must fulfill their duties regardless of political changes. This, in turn, led to the formation of the concept of civil service.

In democratic states, public service is regulated by law. The rights and obligations of civil servants were clearly defined, and they were recognized as legally responsible persons. The principles of openness and transparency have been implemented in the system. The practice of hiring on a competitive basis has become widespread. This served to ensure equality and justice in public service. During this period, the concept of a social state emerged. The functions of the civil service have expanded. A civil servant has become not only a manager, but also a person providing social services. The spheres of education, healthcare, and social protection became part of the state service. The main focus of the civil service was on improving the well-being of the population.

In totalitarian states, the civil service developed differently. The civil servant served the dominant ideology. Political loyalty was prioritized over professionalism. Public service has become a means of control and punishment. This has led to abuse and violations of the law in public service. From the mid-20th century, the inefficiency of such systems began to manifest itself. In the Soviet Union, public service was closely linked to the party system. The civil servant worked as an executor of party policy. Political trust was the main criterion in the selection of personnel. At the same time, order and discipline are ensured in the civil service. The state apparatus was comprehensive. Public service has penetrated all spheres of public life.

In the second half of the 20th century, reforms began in the civil service. Administrative reforms were implemented in many countries. The goal was to increase the effectiveness of the civil service. The responsibility of the civil servant has been strengthened. The principle of result-oriented management was implemented. Information technologies have begun to be used in the civil service. At the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries, the civil service is developing in cooperation with civil society. The civil service has become an open and accountable system. A civil servant is perceived as a person accountable to society. The effectiveness of this public service is an important factor in the development of the state.

## Conclusion

The concept of public service has undergone a long historical development since ancient times. In the early days, public service was based on personal loyalty, but in the modern era, it relies on the law and public interests. A civil servant plays a decisive role in the development of society. Public service serves to ensure the stability of the state and the well-being of the people. Public service is an integral part of human civilization. The views of Eastern and Western scholars on public service played an important role in defining the basic principles of modern public administration and public service. Public service is taking shape in modern states as an important institution of justice, transparency, accountability, and serving the interests of the people.

The history of public service is inextricably linked with the forms of state power and the development of society. The process from the official systems of the ancient Eastern states to the administrative practice of the ancient world, centralized monarchies of the Middle Ages, and national states of the modern era demonstrates the gradual institutionalization of public service. In particular, the formation of the ideas of industrialization and the rule of law in the 19th-20th centuries transformed the civil service into a sphere of professional activity. At the present stage, the public service is being updated on the basis of the principles of openness, transparency, digitalization, and citizen-oriented management. Globalization, information technologies, and the strengthening of public control are redefining the content and tasks of public service.

Thus, it can be concluded that the history of public service is not only the history of administrative systems, but also the history of society's striving for justice, efficiency, and responsibility. The history of its development reflects the deepening and complication of relations between the state and society. In the future, the civil service institution must develop on the basis of a combination of innovation, professionalism, and social trust.

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