Critique of the "Up-or-Out" System in Universities located in City C from the Perspectives of Path-Goal Theory, Goal-Setting Theory and Immaturity-Maturity Theory

2023, Vol.4 No.3
© Economics & Management Review 2023
DOI: 10.37420/j.emr.2023.10
https://masonpublish.org

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Abstract

The "up-or-out" system has been implemented in Chinese universities for more than two decades, and its advantages and disadvantages have become increasingly evident. This study aims to critically evaluate the system within universities located in City C, employing various organizational behavioral theories, including path-goal theory, goal-setting theory, and immaturity-maturity theory.

Keywords

up-or-out, path-goal theory, goal-setting theory, immaturity-maturity theory

Overview or background

Since the introduction of the "up-or-out" system from the US into China first by Tsinghua University in the 1980s, this system has gradually radiated into the majority of Chinese universities, especially the ones on the "985" "211" "double first-class" projects, requiring the newly employed assistants and young scholars to be promoted in their academic titles within a certain period of time ("up"), or else either the contract between them and the university will be terminated, or they will get transferred to a non-academic position in the university.

Along with the cancellation of the "authorized strength" guaranteeing a lifetime of a secure position, the "up-or-out" system has indeed helped to eliminate those who either lack academic capabilities or are too lazy to contribute anything to the university, as a result boosting the corresponding university's world ranking. For example, the QS world ranking of Tsinghua University in 2012 was no. 48, whereas in 2022 it soared up to no. 17. (https://www.qschina.cn) On the other hand, however, it also inflicts great pressure on the "young scholars". This dissertation will explore into the cause of their pressure and the problem sourcing it in depth.
The "up-or-out" system was first proposed by Harvard University in 1716. In order to stimulate the academic potential of newly hired young scholars, Harvard University reformed the tenure of junior young scholars, assigning them a three-year employment period. It was later on extended to 8 years, after which if the lecturers were promoted to the title of associate professor, they would obtain a lifetime employment contract (long-term employment contract), or else they would be dismissed and leave. The disadvantage of this reform measure was that the university had too much power. Under the young scholars' awareness of rights and

self-protection, Harvard actually did not strictly implement the "up-or-out" system for more than 100 years, and "up" was almost settled as the norm, forming a situation in which fixed-term young scholars and tenured professors coexisted for many years. It was not until 1860 did Harvard University proposed that new young scholars must be promoted within a certain term of employment, otherwise they would not be reappointed. Since then, the "up-or-out" system has been formally formed and implemented, which other universities have followed suit. This is considered to be the predecessor of the division between the probation period and the lifelong tenure (Chait et al., 1982).

In the meantime, Yale and Brown University applied a different model – an assistant professor was one of the candidates for highly selective professorship. At that time, less than half of Yale's teaching assistants became professors, and all six professors served as Yale's assistant professors. The significance of this model was to regard the position of junior academic staff as the first step of the academic ladder, and then moving up to senior professional titles.

Both of the abovementioned models constantly mingled into each other, and gradually formed a dual-track approach – some young scholars obtained the tenure after a probation period, while those who failed to get promoted managed to be reemployed as young scholars or assistant professors over and over again, who in regards to the service time could match that of their colleagues with senior titles, which became a factual tenure. This method had also been followed by many US universities. Both of the above models had coexisted for a long time.

The "up-or-out" system came into China way later than in the West – it was first introduced to Tsinghua University in the 1990s, and then Peking University in 2003. In order to build a first-class academic staff in line with the international standards and fully stimulate the vitality and competitiveness of young scholars, Peking University reformed the appointment and promotion system of young scholars. Following the hierarchical elimination system of Harvard University, different types of appointment contracts are signed according to different professional titles. Professors are given long-term teaching posts, associate professors and lecturers are given fixed term teaching posts, and if the latter fail to "move up" on the ladder of professional titles within the specified period appointed in the contract, the university will not renew the contract with them. Although the reform plan has been opposed by many young scholars, the university carries out anyway – after some modifications. By and by, other Chinese universities included in the "985" and "211" projects have applied the "up-or-out" system. Although the specific criteria differ in different universities, the main aim remains the same – to strengthen the assessment of academic staff within the termed period, and "kick out" those who fail to meet the academic demands from the university.

From then on, the "up-or-out" system became one of the key reforms of the personnel system in Chinese universities (Liu, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

The "up-or-out" system is relatively new in Chinese academia, although it has been hotly discussed and there have been many national and provincial projects researching on it, there hasn't been many researches on it applying managerial theories. Current papers searched so far include one applying Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory (Qin, 2022), but such related works are rarer than common. Most searched papers are discuss-

ing this matter in either psychological (Wang & Pang, 2022, et al.) or political contexts (Liu, 2022). Considering such, and combining with the current situations regarding the "up-or-out" system in China, this dissertation aims to explore the pros and cons of the system from the perspectives of path-goal theory, goal setting theory and immaturity-maturity theory.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Path-goal theory of motivation

People make choices that reflect their preferences in terms of the relative utility for them, suggesting that individuals will be motivated to produce when they perceive that their efforts will lead to successful performance and the attainment of desired rewards, managers should thus focus on clarifying a subordinate's "path" to a desired goal or objective. (Bowditch, Buono & Stewart, 2008)

It was first proposed by Peter G. Northouse in his work Leadership: Theory and Practice. In Northouse's view, the path-goal theory is a kind of incentive theory, which discusses how leaders motivate their subordinates to achieve the specified goals. He believes that the path-goal theory is intended to explain how leaders choose specific behaviors that are most suitable for their subordinates' needs and work situations to help them keep approaching their goals. By choosing the appropriate behavior style, leaders improve their subordinates' expectations of success and satisfaction. (Northouse, 2000)

Generally speaking, leaders can motivate their subordinates from two aspects. The first is the result incentive, that is, after the employees complete the established tasks, they will be given a certain amount of compensation. In this case, leaders consider how to increase the amount or type of compensation and play an incentive role through the enrichment of compensation. The second is process motivation, which is the means to implement motivation in the path of employees to the established goals. The incentive means in the process involve all aspects of completing the task. For example, it can provide employees with a relaxed working environment, train employees' professional skills, and play an incentive role by clearing the path obstacles to the goal. Path-goal theory is a theory that focuses on process motivation.

According to Northouse's research, different types of behavior patterns of leaders will have an impact on the motivation results, and the actual effect of motivation is related to the personality characteristics of subordinates and the complexity of tasks.

Goal-setting theory

basic premise:

i) Goals direct our thoughts and actions.

ii) A person's conscious intentions (goals) are the primary determinants of task-related motivation. (Ibid.)

Specific goals appear to result in higher effort than generalized (or no) goals, and compared with easy goals, reasonably difficult goals induce greater effort and persistence as well as make self-satisfaction conditional on a higher level of accomplishment, whereas goals that are too difficult (i.e. unrealistic) could be worse than no goals at all. (goal-difficulty effect)

In the 1950s and 1960s, most behaviorists regarded motivation as an external factor, and its manifestation

was reinforcement or punishment. As a non-behaviorist, McClelland et al. (1953) put forward a series of internal motivations, including achievement motivation. However, these motives are considered to be subconscious and can only be measured through projection tests. These theories emphasize that introspection cannot effectively understand human motivation, so it is impossible to study the conscious regulation of behavior. As early as in 1944, Lewin and others studied conscious goals, also known as the level of ambition. However, Lewin and others believe that the level of ambition is a dependent variable, not an independent variable. With the coming of cognitive revolution, Ryan (1970) proposed a simple fact that human behavior is affected by conscious purposes, plans, intentions, tasks and preferences. These influencing factors are called first-level interpretative concepts, which are the direct motivational reasons for most human behaviors. The cognitive theory of motivation attaches great importance to the role of goals in behavioral motivation, and believes that goals are the future events that are expected by individuals to give them motivation and enable them to overcome various temporary effects.

Mace (1935), an Englishman, was the first scholar to study how different types of goals affect job performance. The motivation of industrial / organizational psychology research is mainly to reveal the behavior motivation of normal individuals in the work environment, and its ultimate purpose is to improve productivity. Locke et al. The main goal of this theory is to reveal the relationship between conscious performance goals and task performance levels, and to explain, control and predict individual performance in the organization or when completing the given tasks, so as to provide useful information for the management behavior of the organization or project managers. This points out a new direction of future research in the field of motivation at the theoretical level, and can provide strong operational guidance for human resource management at the application level.

Goal-setting theory defines goals as objects or behavioral goals within a specific period of time, such as achieving a certain proficiency level (Locke et al., 1990). This theory systematically analyzes the function of goals and the mechanism of goal setting affecting work performance, discusses various factors that affect the role of goals, and proposes that the goal set by individuals is an intermediary variable that external incentives affect individual work performance.

The first is the difficulty of the goal. Industrial psychology pays special attention to the relationship between goal difficulty and job performance. Specifically, which is better for the goal with moderate, high or low difficulty? Atkinson (1958) believed that the relationship between task difficulty and work performance is the inverse function of the curve. If the difficulty of the goal is at the medium level, the individual's effort level reaches the highest level. On the contrary, if the difficulty of the goal is at a very high or very low level, the individual's effort will reach the lowest level. However, the results obtained by meta-analysis show that there is a positive linear correlation between target difficulty and job performance, and the change range of target difficulty effect size is 0.52 to 0.82 (Locke et al., 1990). When reaching the limit of personal ability or when individuals no longer make efforts to achieve a difficult goal, work performance will decline (Erez, 1986).
The second is the clarity of objectives. Compared with putting forward clear and difficult goals, the incentives commonly used in organization setting, such as "trying the best", which can have a greater effect on improving work performance. The meta-analysis results show that the change range of the effect value of goal difficulty ranges from 0.42 to 0.80, that is, clear and difficult goals will lead to better work performance (Locke et al., 1990). This is because the goal of "doing well" does not provide an external reference, so the range of

acceptable performance levels is large. Of course, clear goals themselves do not necessarily lead to high performance, because the difficulty of clear goals varies greatly. But when an individual can fully control his / her work performance, the clearer the goal, the smaller the change range of personal performance.

Generally speaking, the mechanism of objectives affecting work performance, or the function of objectives, includes the following four aspects. First, the goal has a guiding function. The goal guides the individual's attention and willpower to point to activities related to the goal and stay away from activities unrelated to the goal. This function of goal occurs at both cognitive and behavioral levels. Locke et al. Second, the target has the function of activating energy. Characters who can show this function have the following characteristics: physical effort required, simple cognitive tasks repeated, measurement of subjective will effort, and physiological indicators of will effort. Third, the goal has the maintenance function. If the subject is allowed to decide how long it will take to complete a task on his own, the subject will spend more time to make willpower efforts under the more difficult target conditions. Nevertheless, people often have to balance the relationship between work time and effort intensity in the work situation. When facing a difficult goal, people may do it faster and more attentively in a short period of time, or do it less quickly and less attentively in a long period of time. The results of laboratory research and field research show that people's work pace is faster when the task duration is tight than when the task duration is loose. Fourth, the target has wake-up function. The goal makes the knowledge and strategies related to the task awakened, discovered or used, thus indirectly affecting the individual's actions (Wood et al., 1990)

These findings show that any action is the product of the interaction of cognition and motivation. More importantly, the interaction between cognition and motivation is complex. The research results of goal setting theory on this aspect can be summarized into six points. First, people will automatically use the relevant knowledge and skills they have mastered before when facing the task objectives. Second, if the goal cannot be achieved by using only the automated skills, people will extract some skills from the various skills that have been used in the relevant situations and apply them to the current situation. Third, if the task goal is something that people have never touched before, then people will consciously develop some strategies that help to achieve the goal. Fourth, people with a stronger sense of self-efficacy are more likely to develop effective task strategies. Fifth, when people face complex tasks, encouraging people to "do the best" will enable people to develop better strategies than setting clear goals of high performance. The former makes people search for strategies in a disorderly and unsystematic way because they are too eager for success, so they cannot find effective strategies. Sixth, if people have received training on how to develop appropriate strategies, when an individual is assigned specific high-level performance goals, he / she will be more likely to use these strategies, and the performance level will inevitably improve.

Locke et al. (2002) believed that there are three main factors that affect the role of goals: goal commitment, feedback information, and complexity of tasks.

First, goal commitment. When people devote themselves to a goal, the relationship between goal and performance reaches the highest value. The goal commitment questionnaire designed by Seijts et al. (2000) has high reliability and validity. When the goal is very difficult, the commitment to the goal is very important and relevant, because this kind of goal requires people to make great efforts, and at the same time, compared with the goal with low difficulty, the probability of success to reach the goal with high difficulty is lower. Two

important conditions conducive to the formation of goal commitment are: (1) the realization of goals (including what individuals expect as the result of work) is very important to individuals, that is, the importance of goals; (2) People believe that they can achieve their goals, that is, self-efficacy.

There are many ways to convince people that the realization of goals is very important. For example, the public way of making a goal commitment will strengthen this commitment, because this way makes the individual's behavior subject to the joint supervision of himself and others (Holenbeck et al., 1989). Or, if the leader introduces some kind of incentive vision plan to the subordinate and provides relevant support, the subordinate's goal commitment may be strengthened. Another example is to allow subordinates to participate in the process of goal setting. Theoretically, the second method makes the goal more important to the individual, because the individual has at least partially owned the goal. The relevant research results are contradictory. The research of Latham et al. (1983) shows that if the task difficulty remains unchanged, there is no significant difference between the performance of individuals involved in goal setting and those assigned to goals. Erez (1986) made the opposite discovery. The explanation for this inconsistency is that, from the perspective of motivation, if the intention or reason for setting a goal is explained to people in advance, the above two goal setting methods have the same effect. However, if the words are concise and no explanation is given when assigning goals, the performance level is significantly lower than that of participating in goal setting (Latham et al., 1988).

According to the valence-instrumentation-expectancy theory put forward by Vroom (1964), the motivation of behavior comes from the combination of valence-instrumentation-expectancy theory (expected satisfaction), tool theory (belief that performance will bring rewards) and expectation theory (belief that effort will produce required performance). Other factors, such as equity and expectation, have a linear positive correlation with performance. Considering that the possibility of achieving goals with different difficulties is different, the theory assumes that the expectation of achieving goals successfully is negatively related to performance. On the surface, the viewpoint of the goal setting theory is inconsistent with the hypothesis of the valence - tool - expectation theory. Locke et al. (1986) solved this contradiction by distinguishing two types of expectations. These two types of expectations are expectations within a certain goal and expectations between different goals. According to the hypothesis of the theory of valence - tool - expectation, if the target level remains unchanged, the higher the expectation level, the higher the performance level. However, if there are multiple target levels, the lower the expectation level, the higher the corresponding target level, and the higher the performance level.

According to Bandura (1997)'s social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is measured by evaluating all possible (but not one) performance results. Self-efficacy is an important concept of goal setting theory. If the goals are set by individuals themselves, then compared with individuals with low self-efficacy, individuals with high self-efficacy are more difficult to set goals, and are more willing to design goals, find and use better strategies to achieve goals, and respond positively to negative feedback information (Seijts et al., 2001). High sense of self-efficacy is more likely to produce goal commitment, so it is an important responsibility of leaders to improve the sense of self-efficacy of their subordinates. The following ways can be adopted: (1) ensure that sufficient training is provided to improve the ability of employees; (2) design or find roles or patterns that subordinates can identify with; (3) talk to employees to show that they believe their subordinates can achieve the goal, or provide them with information about strategies to achieve the goal.

Second, feedback information. In order to make the goal effectively promote performance, individuals need to obtain comprehensive feedback information to explain the progress of actions related to the goal. If people do not know whether they are doing well, they are unlikely to adjust their efforts or direction, or adjust their behavior strategies to meet the goal requirements. The reason why this comprehensive feedback information can affect the effect of the goal is that the goal plus feedback information is more effective than the simple goal (Bandura, 1997). Although control theory also emphasizes the importance of goal setting and feedback to behavior motivation, it is essentially a mechanical model based on control engineering and can be regarded as a mechanical version of Hull's drive reduction theory. Control theory assumes that the source of motivation is a negative feedback loop, which is used to eliminate the inconsistency between goals and behavior. However, the machine itself does not have an internal motive state, nor does it have its own goal. In addition, the elimination of inconsistencies between goals and behavior should be the result of goal-oriented behavior rather than the cause. Bandura believes that goal setting is a process that produces inconsistency. In addition to feedback on past behaviors, motivation also requires control over the future. Once people have achieved their goals, they usually set a higher goal. This behavior of accepting higher-level goals will produce, rather than reduce, inconsistencies in motivation. Therefore, "self-motivation includes a double-cycle process. In this process, the imbalance of inconsistency is followed by the reduction of balance". (Bandura, 1989)

Third, the complexity of the task. As the complexity of the task increases, and higher levels of skills and strategies have not yet been automated, the impact of the goal depends on the ability of individuals to find appropriate strategies. Because of individual differences in this ability, the role of goal setting in complex tasks is weaker than that in simple tasks. The meta-analysis results show that the effect value of target difficulty is 0.48 under the most complex task condition and 0.67 under the simplest task condition (Wood et al., 1987). Compared with simple tasks, people use more kinds of strategies when facing complex tasks, so the correlation between strategy and performance is greater than that between target difficulty and performance. If an effective strategy is used, there is interaction between the goal and the strategy, and the influence of the goal reaches the maximum value (Durham et al., 1997). Kanfer et al. (1989) conducted an experiment simulating air traffic commanders (extremely complex tasks) was conducted, and it was found that performance (result objectives) would indeed hinder individuals from mastering the necessary knowledge. But if people were only asked to "try the best", they would perform better.

One factor that helps to improve individual performance in novel and complex tasks is to use the approximate goal closest to the real goal. The goal of "trying to be the best" is more effective than the goal of minimal importance. If you set the most similar outcome goal in addition to the outcome goal of minimal importance, then compared with setting the goal of "trying to be the best" or just setting the outcome goal of minimal importance, the individual's self-efficacy and work efficiency will be significantly improved. In a situation full of changes, it is important to actively search for feedback information and react quickly to achieve the goal. At this time, the error is often due to the failure to set an approximate goal effectively. This kind of approximate goal is helpful for individuals to manage the wrong behavior, because the feedback information about the error makes people know whether their description of reality is consistent with the understanding required to achieve the goal.

With the advent of the information society, knowledge, information and creativity constitute new strategic resources. Human capital has replaced the financial capital in the industrial society as the dominant factor in

organizational competition. The primary task of industrial/organizational psychology is to improve the efficiency of organizational activities, and the effective tool is human resource management. The goal setting theory analyzes the impact of goal setting on performance, and provides an important reference for exploring new effective ways of human resources management in the organizational environment.
Personnel selection

Latham et al. developed the situational interview method to evaluate candidates. Simply put, present the candidate with situational questions designed according to job analysis. Each question consists of a dilemma. The purpose is to evaluate the goal or intention of the candidate's possible actions in the face of these situations. Using the theory of goal and task motivation can effectively analyze the goal set by the candidate. The meta-analysis shows that the average value of criterion validity of situational interview is higher than that of other interview methods (Wod et al., 1999).

Goal and subconscious motivation

McClelland believes that achievement motivation is subconscious. If you accept this view, then whether there is a connection between conscious goals and achievement motivation? Howard et al. (1988) analyzed the thematic apperception test (TAT) data obtained from 25 years of research on AT&T company managers, and found that there is no significant correlation between managers' motivation patterns and the number of managers who actually get promoted. In the long run, professionalism can significantly predict the number of managers who will be promoted. Based on this, we can draw two conclusions to be further verified. First, from the perspective of long-term prediction function, conscious goal setting is more reliable than motivation, and is more directly related to behavior. Second, there is no correlation between the conscious and subconscious aspects of achievement motivation. Conscious winter can affect people's performance and job satisfaction.

In a word, goal-setting theory is an effective and highly operational theory in psychological research on the motivation of organizational members. At the same time, we must admit that the inadequacy of goal setting theory is that the research on subconscious is not deep enough. People often do not have to be fully aware of their motivations or the knowledge that affects their decisions when they act. This also points out a new research direction for researchers, that is, how the subconscious affects the activation of goals, and how this activation affects the use of subconscious knowledge.

Immaturity-maturity theory

Chris Argyris's developmental psychological approach: analyzes behavioral differences from childhood to adulthood, including 7 basic personality changes necessary for people to develop into mature individuals: (Ibid.)

Immature, Childlike Behavior	Mature, Adult Behavior
1. Passivity	Activity, increasing self initiation
2. Few ways of behaving	Many ways of behaving
3. Dependency on others	Relative independency, but acknowledging healthy dependencies
4. Erratic, shallow, quickly dropped interests	Deeper, more challenging interests
5. Short time focus, mainly on the present	Extended time focus, on past, present, and future
6. Subordinate in relevant hierarchies (family, society)	Equal or superordinate in relevant hierarchies
7. Lack of self-awareness	Aware of self, has self worth, own decisions determine outcome of effort

Figure 7-2 Argyris's Immaturity-Maturity Continuum

Source: Adapted from Chris Argyris, *Personality and Organization* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1957), pp. 50–53.

The continuous flow theory of "immaturity and maturity" has two theoretical assumptions: X theory based on the hypothesis of the "economic man" and Y theory based on the hypothesis of the "self-realization man". (McGregor, 1957)

X theory based on the hypothesis of the "economic man"

The "economic man" hypothesis holds that all human actions are to maximize personal interests, and the motivation of work is to obtain economic rewards. The X theory is based on this, and its basic viewpoints include:

(1) Most people are very lazy and always try to avoid work.

(2) Most people are unwilling to take responsibility and are willing to be guided by others.

(3) Most people are irrational, unable to control themselves and easily influenced by others.

(4) Most people work to meet basic needs. Only money and status can stimulate them to work hard.

The management mode of X theory is to make employees obey and make performance with economic reward, and protect the organization and guide employees with power and control system; Its management feature is to use money to stimulate morale, and at the same time severely punish those who are slack in work.

Y theory based on the hypothesis of the "self-realization man"

The so-called self-realization means that people need to exert their potential and show their talents. Only in this way can they feel the greatest satisfaction. It is summarized as Y theory, and its basic viewpoints include:

(1) Most people are diligent. If the environment is favorable, work is as natural as play or rest.

(2) People can guide and control themselves, so coercion and punishment are not the only means to achieve organizational goals.

(3) Under appropriate conditions, ordinary people are not only willing to take responsibility, but also willing to actively seek responsibility.

(4) Most people can display a high degree of imagination, wisdom and creativity when solving difficult problems in the organization.

(5) People often take the achievement of organizational goals as the maximum reward for their commitment to achieving goals.

Managers who accept the Y theory will give employees more work freedom and encourage them to be creative. Its management feature is that employees are mainly self-controlled and motivated by the satisfaction caused by the challenge of the work itself.

The explanation of the relationship between the two premises

The theories of X and Y are opposite to each other, but they also have similarities. First of all, the purport of X theory is the same as that of Y theory, which is to achieve actual management performance. The "carrot and stick" model is only the means of X theory (although it is the only means) rather than its purpose. Secondly, from the perspective of theoretical conditions, Theory X is applicable to the situation of low economic level and poor working conditions. On the contrary, the restrictive statements such as "under appropriate conditions" in Theory Y, and the statements that "coercion and punishment are not the only means" imply the co-

existence of multiple choices, all prove that Theory Y recognizes that most people's human nature is "elastic". So a conclusion can be drawn: when the environmental conditions deteriorate, the inherent flexibility will make the individual characteristics of people change accordingly, that is, the employees become more "economic humanized", so the management mode needs to be adjusted accordingly. It can be seen that the theory of X and Y may be combined, and the two are in a relationship of unity of opposites (it may be expressed as "X-Y theory"). This also explains why the "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory can take X and Y as its own premise at the same time.

The reconstruction of the logic framework of "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory based on X-Y theory

According to the previous review of X and Y theories as well as the figure cited above, we can find that the continuous flow theory is very similar to the transition from immature to mature. From the basic point of view of continuous flow theory, X theory corresponds to the extremely "immature" state in the process of personal growth, while the very "mature" state in the same process corresponds to Y theory. Therefore, we can make the following assumptions about the logical framework of the "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory: The "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory describes a personal growth process with X theory and Y theory as the boundary. X theory and Y theory are the "origin" and "end" of this process respectively. The growth of healthy people under ideal environmental conditions generally deviates from X theory and approaches the continuous development of Y theory.

The proof process of this hypothesis is as follows:

As stated at the beginning of this section, the logical starting point of the "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory must lie in the basic assumptions of human nature. As the boundary of the continuous flow theory system, these assumptions should have certain stability, scale function and universal applicability. Super Y theory (Z theory) and contingency theory have made some explanations for the reality of dynamic diversity of ordinary people, but both have failed to form a standardized system, which is easy to fall into the awkward situation of fragmentation and randomness in research and application. Compared with them, both X theory and Y theory have strong stability due to their purity. When X-Y theory is regarded as a whole of opposites and unity and overcomes their respective defects, its scale function and universality produced by quantitative and qualitative changes are also significantly better than other theories. Therefore, X-Y theory meets the basic boundary conditions needed to reconstruct the logical framework of "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory. Under the conditions required by the continuous flow theory, people in the X theory may experience a change process and then apply to the Y theory.

At the same time, taking the "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory as the link of combination is also the need of X and Y theory itself.

For a long time, a large number of criticisms on management philosophy and management practice have pointed at the X theory, and people seem to have agreed that the X theory has long been invalid. Lillian Gilbreth (1912) put forward that a person's thought is the control factor of his efficiency. Through education, an individual can make full use of his ability. The scientific management method advocated by Taylor has repeatedly recognized that only well-trained and highly motivated workers can make its system work. Evi-

dence from both theory and practice shows that the scientific role of theory X can only be brought into play if part of theory Y is introduced to some extent. This requires the inclusive (previously pointed out) "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory as the medium.

Comparing the X theory with the Y theory, we can see that some of the management functions such as supervision, control and incentive exercised by the managers in the X theory are assumed by the employees themselves, that is, the transfer of responsibilities has occurred. How to ensure that this part of responsibility is protected from erosion during the transfer process and effectively performed after the transfer is completed is a problem that Y theory and its management practice must face. Drucker believes that the Y theory puts forward much higher requirements for both workers and managers by handing responsibility to workers. Maslow pointed out that only the strongest and healthiest people can meet the requirements of Y theory in terms of responsibilities and achievements. Moreover, even strong and sound people need to be guaranteed by order and command. From this point of view, Y theory cannot completely replace X theory in practical value. Jim Collins pointed out in his book Evergreen Foundations that "many managers and entrepreneurs still assume that people can't fully believe it. The distrust, coercion, and the combination of hard and soft management all show that the vitality of X Theory is still very strong". Therefore, Y Theory also needs to draw on some of the views of X Theory (such as the incentive effect of material rewards, etc.), which is similar to the introduction of X Theory to Y Theory, it can also be achieved through the compatibility of the "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory.

So far, it has been proved that the logic framework of the "immaturity-maturity" continuous flow theory based on X-Y theory has been reconstructed. This also makes the face of the continuous flow theory itself clearer.

Conclusion of reviews

The change of lecturer employment policy in colleges and universities depends on institutional logic, and the core of institutional logic is legitimacy. (Zhang, 2013) Compared with the United States' well-established academic autonomy mechanism, strong professional growth support mechanism, smooth talent flow channels, cultural identity mechanism and other legitimate resources, Chinese universities are facing the particularity of cultural tradition, institutional environment and social environment. Zhou Guangli (2021) believes that the governance of universities in New China has mainly gone through two stages: political governance (1949-1991) and corporate governance (1992-2011), and is currently trying to build a comprehensive governance model. In the first stage, under the metaphor of the university as the government, the role of university lecturers is defined as national public officials, and the appointment system of lecturers is appointment system and lifelong system; In the second stage, under the metaphor of university as enterprise, based on the presupposition of an "economic agent" and employees, colleges and universities implement the full employment system; In the stage of comprehensive governance, the new era requires the establishment of a modern university system with Chinese characteristics. The attributes of a "social person" and an "academic person" of university young scholars are gradually highlighted. The US lifelong teaching system based on the "up-or-out" system has been followed, and the "probation-tenure" system has been widely implemented in research universities. However, the governance model of the second stage still has great influence, and academic capitalism has led to the identity crisis of the "probation-tenure" system. To overcome this path dependence, a realistic and

necessary way may be to first change the value orientation of the efficiency priority of the lecturer employment system in the concept, consolidate the legal legitimacy foundation of "up-or-out", optimize the selection mechanism design based on the academic position, and improve the lecturer evaluation system.

The first is to consolidate the legal legitimacy foundation.

The original social system and cultural environment are the soil of system construction, and only the system construction rooted in the soil can have legitimacy. (Luo & Ye, 2005) From the perspective of legal regulation, we can see that China's colleges and universities are "going up or getting out". "In the case of a low degree of corporate governance, it is more suitable for China to establish the appointment system through legislation." (Lou, 2015) Specifically, first, we should make clear the legal relationship between universities and lecturers and the legal nature of university employment contracts through legislation. In the absence of explicit provisions in legislation, we can consider allowing the issue of "up-or-out" to be included in the scope of judicial review. The second is to balance the rights and obligations between colleges and universities and lecturers. For the employment contract disputes and personnel disputes of colleges and universities, except mediation, arbitration and civil litigation, different relief means can be selected according to the specific circumstances to avoid the exclusion of administrative litigation relief.

Secondly is to optimize the selection mechanism based on the academic position.

Compared with the actual life-long system of all staff, the "up-or-out" system is an efficient mechanism. Compared with the full employment contract system, it respects the academic professional characteristics and university tradition, and is a legitimate mechanism. One of the most important differences between China's "probation-tenure" system and the United States lies in the screening process and assessment standards. (Song, 2022) In fact, this difference is mainly reflected in the basis and extent of system guarantee, which requires optimizing the design of employment mechanism.

Firstly, strict selection criteria and raise the threshold for selection. According to the survey of the National Science Foundation (NSF) on doctoral workers in the United States in 2019, only 50% of doctoral graduates have the opportunity to apply for the lifelong tenure track. The application screening intensity of many universities in China is relatively low, and the phenomenon of "staying in position" is still common. There is even the phenomenon of "high graduates" whose graduation level is lower than that of the employing universities. The second is to scientifically formulate the promotion proportion by reference to the foreign award orientation. The tenured teaching position in the United States is positioned at associate professor or above, and it can be expected to be promoted through "up-or-out". From 2003 to 2011, 50% of the 84% associate professors of Harvard University obtained tenure. 40 MIT's promotion rate is similar to this, with Penn State University accounting for 58% and University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign accounting for about 60%. Third, ensure academic resources and improve the training mechanism. Independent academic autonomy, non-competitive financial support, equal treatment for equal work and equal pay, and the cultivation mechanism centered on the inclination of academic resources constitute the important features of the American "up-or-out" mechanism. Colleges and universities in China need to reflect on how to make the selection process more reasonable and predictable, provide lecturers with an institutional environment to effectively play to their true academic level, enhance the controllability of goal completion, establish a friendly exit mechanism,

and achieve an incentive process in which "up-or-out" is mainly based on incentives and supplemented by constraints.

The third is to improve the lecturer evaluation system.

The heated debate and negation caused by China's "up-or-out" system largely stems from the query on the scientificity and fairness of young scholars' evaluation, which is mainly reflected in two issues: the first is "inbreeding". If the evaluation standard is the lecturer-student relationship, the legitimacy of "up-or-out" will face a fundamental crisis. According to the survey, in 2014, the "inbreeding" rate of doctoral degrees of Chinese university lecturers reached 39%. (Shen, 2018) In 2021, there will still be a serious phenomenon of "inbreeding" in most departments of CUHK, Wuhan University, Nanjing University and Sichuan University. (Song, 2022) The second is the evaluation system. From the perspective of evaluation form, both China and the United States have adopted peer review to "move up or get out", following the "three levels and one boundary" (Zha, 2020) procedure of department, college, university review committee and external review recommendation letter. However, there are huge differences in the subject of evaluation, evaluation criteria, weight of recommendation letter, and evaluation responsibilities of campuss and departments. As for the subject of the review, the American candidate has the right to put forward the recommended list and the withdrawal list of the review experts, provided that they are top scholars in the industry. In terms of evaluation criteria, the dean of the department shall provide several "reference objects" for comparison by external audit experts. On the recommendation letter, American research universities generally require more than five letters, and strictly implement the withdrawal system. The number of letters required by colleges and universities in China is much lower. Wuhan University requires three, while Nanjing University and Sichuan University require two. Sun Yat-Sen University does not specify. In terms of the rights and responsibilities of the campuss and departments in the University, the American Center for Campus Academic Committee. The college and department first inspected, understood the candidate application materials, prudently recommended, and insisted on not being held accountable by the campus. The campus conducted a long and in-depth review on the basis of the college and department. Chinese colleges and universities hand over the main audit power to the departments, which will submit the report in equal amount according to the post allocation indicators. Colleges and departments generally have complex interpersonal relationships with candidates, which leaves a "gray space" for human relations evaluation and relationship evaluation. From the perspective of evaluation mechanism, classified and hierarchical evaluation is the premise of scientific and effective evaluation of lecturers. Without considering the differences between disciplines and universities, the relationship between teaching and scientific research, and the different series of lecturers, it is easy to lead to the simplification of evaluation indicators and the unfairness of evaluation.

Recommendations

Due to the pandemic situation and the short period of time, this research is highly limited. It studies less than 10 universities and in only 1 city, making the sample too small to reflect the overall implementation of the "up-or-out" system in all of China.

It is suggested for future researchers in this area, therefore, to expand the spatial range to at least several if not all provinces, and sampling survey two or three universities in each province chosen. In these universi-

ties, two or three young scholars of each discipline field (sciences, humanities, arts, etc.) can be interviewed. In this way, the findings of the research will better resemble the overall situation re the "up-or-out" system in Chinese universities, thus less imprecise.

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