

Merit-Based Recruitment in Civil Service: Prospect and Problems in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) is the most prestigious and demanding job in Bangladesh. Country's meritorious graduates want to join the BCS - the most respected and secured job, with a view to serve the nation. However, brilliant graduates avert from BCS as maximum public employees in Bangladesh join the service with bestow of the quota system. Consequently, demoralizes them and results an inefficient public administration. Hence, the recruitment system of BCS requires a reform. The study tries to analyze the present recruitment system and attempts to find out the problems within it. The study collects the details explanation and opinion from few present and prospective civil servants. Finally, based on the data and responses of the target group, the study gives some suggestions for the relevant stakeholders.

Keywords: Merit, Recruitment, Civil Service, Problems, Prospect

1. Introduction:

Bangladesh, since its inception in 1971 as an independent state is providing some privilege into her Civil Service to the backward section of the society as per the constitutional provisions. The Greater portion of civil servants in Bangladesh is entering into the service with blessings of the quota system. As a result, not only denying the talented people to the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), but also producing poor quality services and results for the state. After more than forty years of independence, the provision for quota nowadays is contradictory to the spirit of equality and requires reform. Civil service an essential organ of the public sector but gets less attention from analysts and politicians for reform. However, Bangladesh needs admin-

istrative reform, but like other developing countries, it also struggles in this field due to various socio-politico-economic challenges (Sarker, 2004). Nevertheless, change can bring an effective administration, which is crucial to attaining the goals of national development (Khan, 1998). For this, BCS needs to recruit and retain competent personnel who can pave the way of bureaucratic efficiency and effectiveness (Khan, M. R., & Ara, F., 2005). Therefore, Bangladesh must create a meritocratic system and a congenial environment for the recruitment process of BCS. A government's duty is to find out genuine merit that can serve the nation best. Consequently, a truly meritorious civil servant can produce maximum outputs using minimum inputs and can do a job better than an employee who has the blessing of quota in joining BCS.

The scope of the study confines with the BCS Cadre service only and the target group is the present and future civil servant. This study attempts to evaluate the present recruitment system of BCS and critically examines the opinion and attitude of the target group regarding recruitment, promotion and overall administrative system of Bangladesh. The study also aims to observe the attitude of target groups towards prevailing quota system. Finally it intends to find the way out of the problems of the recruitment system of BCS.

2. Context and Importance of the Study:

Every country dreams to be prosperous – economically, politically, environmentally and globally. However, it is not an easy task, to make it happen; the country needs some sound elements like an efficient government, political stability, motivated and hardworking citizen and so on. Nonetheless, the most important ingredient is a dynamic civil service, which has a critical role to unite all other components and utilize in such a fashion that ensures good governance and balance development. Bangladesh, though a small country, also dreams to reach the apex of development and be in the same position where most developed countries are now. Bangladesh achieved its independence in 1971 by a nine-month long bloodshed war from the then West Pakistan (at present Pakistan). Since then it is been 44 years now, the country realized many milestones and many to attain. Whatsoever, Bangladesh lacks the crucial element; it needs a meritocratic, vibrant and efficient civil service.

As states by Mohammad Mohabbat Khan (2009),

The Civil service continues to play a significant role in Bangladesh society and affects political, social and economic sphere. In spite of its overarching role, the civil service remains totally inadequate, ineffective, corrupt and out-of-tune with the present reality (Khan, 2009, p. 129).

Historically, BCS is not entirely merit based. Until today, the quota remains and dominates in the recruiting process of BCS though the degree of quota is changing as time goes. Bangladesh was under the British rule until 1947. Then it became one important and largest part based on the size of the population of Pakistan named "East Pakistan". In this circumstance, to ensure adequate representation of each part into the civil service, the constitution of 1956 provided the safeguard for a 15 years period (Yesmin, 2010). At that time, the civil service was known as Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP). However, there were other provincial services as well.

Quotas distributed based on size of the population in CSP are in the table below,

Table 1: Rates of Quota applied in civil service at Pakistan Regime

Region	Percentage of Quota
East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh)	40%
Punjab and Bahawalpur	23%
Sind, Khairpur, North-west Provinces	2%
Frontier, Tribal areas, Baluchistan, Azad Kashmir and Kashmir refugees	15%
Merit	20%
Total	100%

Source: (Yesmin, N., 2010).

It is visible in Table 1 that East Pakistan used to enjoy maximum quota because of its larger population. However, after 1971, the quota remains the dominant in recruiting civil servants. The logic behind quota is to ensure the representation of a backward section of the society and region of the country. Percentage of quota used change time-to-time following different orders and rules promulgated by the govern-

ment, as the compilation of different rules shows the policy used so far in Table 2.

Table 2: Percentage of Merit and Quota in BCS (For Class 1 and Class 2 officers)

Policy tool	In 1972	1976	1985 to present
Merit	20%	40%	45%
Freedom fighters (Outside district quota)	30%	30%	
War affected women	10%	10%	
District Quota:	40%	20%	30%
a. Wards of Freedom Fighters			10%
b. Women			5%
c. Tribal			10%
d. District Merit			
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: (Wahhab, 2009)

Table 2 shows the quota supersede merit even after such a long period. Bangladesh has prospered a lot; the light of education and touch of development left no region or section of people much backward as was in the childhood of the state. The quota system started on the humanitarian ground, however, now it becomes the inhuman tool for many brilliant graduates. Quota, nowadays, is affecting badly and posing threats to the future of country's overall development. Using quota is an unfair treatment for the meritorious and brilliant people. In this era of IT, Internet and Globalization, the quota cannot defeat merit principle. Hence recruitment policy of BCS requires changes to have a dynamic civil administration in Bangladesh.

Moreover, Bangladesh wants to materialize the goals of "Vision-2021". It entails being a middle-income country by 2021 along with higher per capita income. Better education and justice, more equitable socio-economic environment, sustainable development, better protection of climate vulnerability, human rights, the rule of law and so on are the goals of the vision (Planning Commission, 2010). Conversely, the path is not so smooth to make the dream true. Bangladesh needs real geniuses who are patriotic, full of potential, meritorious, capable of handling future challenges, hardworking and innovative to turn the stone into the right track.

Thus, Bangladesh needs a big push - change or reform, more specifically administra-

tive reform. However, administrative reform in Bangladesh always faces many obstacles that range from lack of political commitment, bureaucratic resistance, interest conflicts of cadres, corruption to lack of proper vision. Nonetheless, the exact aim of the reform is to prepare a skilled and efficient government workforce (Schiavo-Campo, S., 1996).

Many pieces of research and reports are there on this issue, and experts gave many valid recommendations. They mainly use the secondary data, emphasize on the needs of reform and find out the causes of failure of the reform initiative. However, this study depends on the primary data and uses qualitative analysis to know the problems of the present recruitment system. The research tries to decipher the attitude of present and prospective civil servants towards merit-based recruitment and its prospects. The uniqueness of the study lies on the method as it collects data openly in a case study format.

3. Related Concepts and Literature:

3.1 Concepts:

Merit:

By commonsense, merit means to say some unique qualities of an entity – human or non-human. As an example, the merit of an electric generator is to produce maximum electricity at minimum cost or merit of a farmer is to grow the best quality and the maximum amount of rice with best efforts. Therefore, Merit is the inner quality of a person that separate one from others in doing a particular function and attaining organizational and social goals most effectively and efficiently. In this study, merit refers to the inner quality and working ability of a present or future public servant.

Recruitment:

Recruitment is an essential part of Human Resource Management (HRM). Whatever the organization public or private; large or small; national or international; production or service-oriented it needs recruitment of the employee to attain the desired objectives of that particular organization. However, HRM is a vital part of the management function. K Aswathappa (2005) wrote, "HRM is also a management function con-

cerned with hiring, motivating and maintaining people in an organization" (Aswathappa, 2005). Here in this write-up, recruitment means to say about the selection process of government officials of Bangladesh.

Civil Service:

The dictionary meaning of public service has a connection with general people but not with armed forces or judiciary section of a country. In this perspective, civil service means the service rendered to the mass people of a country by the government. All the civilian employees of the state are included in a civil service (Massey, 2011). It means no civil employee is a member of an army or related forces or the judiciary. However, civil service in this research means the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS). The BCS is consists of 28 cadres, some of which are termed as general cadres while some are professional or technical cadres.

Civil Servant:

Those who are working within the boundary of Civil Service System (CSS) are civil servants. All the rules, regulations and laws that guide CSS are imposed upon civil servants as soon as they join. They are the change-maker and agent of the government who can take their country to the apex of development. Every government of a country has some commitments to the general people, and civil servants discharged and full-filled these commitments (Pruthi, 2005). Civil servants have the authority of state and act as the guardian of public interest (Massey, 2011). They will guide the government in setting such policy that goes in favor of the majority of people in their country. Civil servants play a crucial role not only in the formulation, but also in the implementation of those policies. By the term civil servant, the study refers the public employee of Bangladesh. According to the statistics of civil officers and staff, 2013 compiled by Statistics and Research Cell of Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA), the total number of civil servants is 11,94,449. However, the sanction posts are 14,71,036; so still 2,76,587 posts are vacant (MOPA, 2013).

Cadre:

Cadre means a group of trained people doing the same job. When a service is formed under some law, rules and in a structured format, then it is called the cadre service (Jahan, M. 2012). Officials of different cadres are working under different ministry like BCS Information officers are under the umbrella of Ministry of Information. No matter which department they work, they need to go through the path of same hierarchy.

3.2 Literature:

The quota system in BCS is very complex and hard to understand. The BPSC recommended reforms to the system in its Annual Report 2013, terming the policy very complicated and hard to implement. The report shows the difficulties to select the right candidates with 100 percent accuracy because of the quota system. Hence, simplification of the existing system is essential to select the right candidates who will lead and manage the public administration of our country. Moreover, BPSC suggests freedom fighters, women and tribal quota from the national level means those quotas will not to further distribute based on district or division, and cannot limit by the size of the population. These quotas need to distribute among the successful candidates who enjoy quotas based on national merit (BPSC, 2013).

However, Mohammad Mohabbat Khan (2009) analyzes the various reform initiatives taken in Bangladesh and clearly describes the results. He states that Bangladesh needs a work-oriented culture to motivate and welcome an amendment. He also demands for the politicians' commitment to use the merit in all aspects of the BCS. There is no scope to compromise with merit and no justification to ignore the merit as the backbone of the Bangladesh Civil Service. Merit should be the sole criterion based on which all decisions should be made regarding civil service recruitment. Moreover a motivational approach to handsome pay, swift promotion, and other benefits can bring bright people into the public service (Khan, 2009).

Similarly, Nuzhat Yasmin (2010) refers "the civil service as an executive arm and backbone of the government" (Yasmin, 2010). She identifies, the civil service respon-

sible for policy implementation. She argues that the civil service needs to be modernized to face the complexity and challenges of the present era and perform their functions efficiently and effectively. She also mentions that meritocratic recruitment and promotion system correlates with the effectiveness of the civil service (Yasmin, 2010). In another paper Momtaz Jahan (2012), describes the recruitment and selection process of BCS critically. Terming merit an important element for civil service, the author regrets that the merit principle in Bangladesh does not get the full significance. However, she claims that a high-quality BCS is crucial for proper mobilization and utilization of resources. At the end of the paper, she recommends, recruitment should follow merit rather than the quota principle (Jahan, M., 2012).

Bangladesh needs reforms in many sectors and policies as in the recruitment process of BCS. However, development is a continuous and painful process not welcome conveniently in a set organizational structure by the stakeholders and interest groups (A. A. Khan, 2010). Many gaps, uncertainty and fear of loss of interest work in the mind of related parties with reform, so they resist alteration. Researchers warn that government avoids any amelioration because they do not want to lose popularity and vote bank.

Seeing that Akbar Ali Khan (2010) rightly mentions,

Bangladesh's performance in implementing important governance reforms such as civil service reforms, judicial reforms, police reforms, decentralization, people's participation, etc. was much more disappointing. Despite an incessant pressure of development partners, no government in Bangladesh initiated any meaningful step to reform Bangladesh administration that was riddled with inefficiency, corruption, and anachronisms. The irony is that every government declared its intention to reform administration and ceremoniously appointed commissions or committees to prepare a blueprint for reforms. (A. A. Khan, 2010, pp. 30-31).

In this context, Mohammad Mohabbat Khan (2009) mentions almost every government and major donor agencies tied with Bangladesh recommended reform strate-

gies for the civil service of Bangladesh time to time. Various committees formed for the advancement of BCS. For example, The Administrative and Services Reorganization Committees (ASRC) in 1972, The Pay and Service Commission (P&SC) in 1976, The Martial Law Committee (MLC) in 1982. Again The Committee for Administrative Reorganization/Reform (CARR) in 1982, The Public Administration Reform Commission in 1997, The Public Administration Reform and Monitoring Commission (PARMOC) in 2000. However, donor agencies like USAID, UNDP, DFID, ADB, World Bank they all formed different committees and provided suggestions to the Government of Bangladesh for administrative reform. The core and the main thrust of these committees and commissions was reform for merit-based recruitment and promotion of the civil service (Khan, 2009). However, very little is implemented from those suggestions though advancement is essential for BCS, especially on the issue of meritocratic recruitment.

4. Methodology:

The study is qualitative in nature. It collected primary data from working and prospective civil servants. A questionnaire composed of some open-ended question was delivered to six running and two prospective public employees to know their views about the present recruitment system of BCS. In addition, some other related questions were also incorporated there. The present civil servants know more about the administrative system than prospective employees do. Therefore, greater numbers of cases are taken from them. The civil servants are from different cadres' services though the study could not reach representative of all cadres. In some cases, respondents filled in and e-mailed their responses to the researchers to complete the study. The researcher summarizes and presents their responses as case study format. Finally, the researcher puts some way forward based on the replies from the respondents.

5. Cases:

5.1 Civil Servants (CS):

Case 1:

Mr.'X', Senior Assistant Secretary in Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his nine years

length of service, he first joined in the Ministry of Information under 24th BCS and in 2008 changes his cadre by 27th BCS. His age is 34 years.

The respondent is satisfied with his present post at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since he can represent the country abroad. He finds the working environment congenial. However, he is not fully satisfied with the salary he receives, and it is very difficult to maintain a family with this. He also thinks at least 50% increase in salary is needed, and salary structure needs to revise every 6/7 years considering the economic condition. The respondent suggests starting health insurance, education allowances for children of civil servants and food rationing. Most importantly, he demands benefits based on different requirements for different services. Prestige is the sole factor that motivates him to join the Service of the Republic.

Answering to a question on the present system of recruitment reform requirement, he replies,

"I do not agree with the current recruitment policy. Cadres should be divided into three categories like

- i. Bangladesh superior service (Administration, Police, Foreign Affairs, Customs, and Taxes)
- ii. Bangladesh civil service (rest of the general cadres)
- iii. Bangladesh technical service (all technical cadres)

This system of dividing cadre service into three parts as above will decrease the dissatisfaction level when a candidate gets a cadre, which was one of his least choices. He becomes demoralized and cannot deliver entirely from his current position. If we categorize the services, then the incumbents are competing for one category of services and will be satisfied at that level.

Moreover, following observations may be considered:

- i. The Quota system should be up to 10%.
- ii. PSC will only recommend the number of passed candidates for general cadres. Cadre wise selection may be done based on the performance in Foundation training courses.

- iii. The physical structure needs to consider for selective services, like police, Ansar, foreign affairs.”

He thinks 30 years is the last age, and a candidate must complete a 4-years graduation with at least 50% marks to apply for the BCS examination. Merit is the only selection criteria to him with only 10% quota – 5% for women and tribal each. He points out, because of improved communication, free flow of information, easy access to mobile and internet knowledge sharing becomes easy therefore, no need for quota anymore. However, university entrance examination is also not using quota.

At viva voce level, the interviewee thinks that there is a chance of corruption, and he proposes to publish the result with marks after written, as well as viva examination. On the other part, he does not think that merit-based recruitment can stop corruption rather motivation, competitive salary, accountability and efficient punishment system may decrease crime at a tolerable level. In addition, strong political will, proper education, and social custom not to accept corruption can eradicate corruption, he added.

He agrees that brilliant candidates with their innovative and contemporary ideas can cope up with the fast-changing world and can bring good result in public administration. However, he emphasizes the discipline at all level or merit can do nothing. Performance is the primary yardstick to him for promotion. He says if an official fails to get a promotion twice, he/she should offer to leave the job with service benefits, and that can assure the discipline in the service. According to him, the retirement age is different for different posts as, Secretaries: 60, Additional Secretaries: 58, Joint Secretaries: 55, Deputy Secretaries: 48. Sr. Assistant: 42.

Replying to another question on system of public administration, he says, we need,

“Generalization first and then specialization. There should be a pool of similar types of Ministries. After serving at the field level, when the officer joins at the Secretariat, considering his quality and performance he/she should serve in Ministries of the pool up to a joint secretary. Additional Secretaries and Secretaries should not have any pool.”

About the qualities that an official should have, he notes,

- discipline
- dutiful
- knowledgeable about rules and regulations
- keep updated information about needs of society and goal of the government
- innovative and so on.

Case 2:

Ms 'Y', an Assistant Commissioner (Land), joins BCS (Administration) in 29th batch on 2011. The 30 years old woman has more than three years service experience.

The respondent is satisfied with her job description because of its social status and prestige. She thinks it gives her a chance to serve the nation directly that motivates her to join the service. However, she is not satisfied with the salary hence demands increases of salary and benefit. She finds the present recruitment system of BCS is good except the quota system. She also argues, to use merit 80% and quota 20%. She subdivides quota as, 3% of backward district people, 3% of female, 7% of freedom fighters and 7% for ethnic groups. To her, 30 years is the last age to apply for BCS, and main criteria are merit with knowledge, smartness and ability to manage an unexpected situation.

She does not agree that there is corruption in the recruitment process rather thinks corruption as the output of the system. High salary, benefits, and motivation can prevent the curse of corruption. However, she has the same opinion that recruiting brilliant candidates can bring bright performances by dint of the innovative ideas of that recruit in the policy making process. She finds the qualities of patience, intellectual ability, communication skills, knowledge of related laws and affection to the job are important for a civil servant.

She describes the retirement age as,

“57 were right but 59 are enough. Self-retirement age should be 20 years of the length of service. In this country, there are many youths join in the workforce. For them, we need to create job/posts. After retirement, the persons can work as a resource person as their skills,(as outsourcing other public/private organization.)”

However, she likes the mix of generalization and specialization system for the public administration of Bangladesh. She also thinks job rotation is critical to know all sorts of jobs. Nevertheless, she insists for reform for efficient public administration. She suggests, minimizing the cadre numbers to seven or eight. For example, Administration, Foreign Affairs, Police, Customs, Tax, Engineer, Doctor, and Teacher and then merging the other cadres like postal, information, economic, trade and so on with those.

Case 3:

Ms 'Z', Deputy Director of Mass – Communication Department under Ministry of Information, she joins the service on 2006 by 24th BCS (Information General Cadre). The 38 years old official has nine years length of service. Honor, work – life balance, job security and scope to serve the nation pulled her in this service.

She is satisfied with her job description as it relates to her educational background, and she can apply the lessons in her job. On the contrary, she is not quite happy with the salary, as it does not match with a price hike and inflation going on now in our economy. She thinks the basic salary should Starts from 30,000 BDT. 'Z' finds the recruitment system okay, unless any political pressure comes in. She further adds, recruitment needs to be free from all biased and lobbying and security should tighten that the questions of BCS exam are not leaked.

The respondent opines that 32 years is the age limit to enter BCS exam because students complete their masters' degree at the age of 27 – 28 years due to various reasons in Bangladesh. To her 100% official should be recruited by merit because the country needs brilliant and sharp government officials. In fact, she keeps no place for quota. If needs, only a small percentage of quotas, she allows for women and tribal people. In addition, she believes, there are chances of corruption in recruitment system of BCS ranging from preparing questions to publishing results. However, 'Z' wants an entirely fair and secure system for the sake of having an active government. She also feels that the quota system gives the ingredients of corruption, and the meritocratic system can prevent it.

She completely agrees that recruiting brilliant candidates can change the weak status of government machinery. She especially emphasizes on officers with knowledge and skills of English and computer literacy. Performance, efficiency in English and skills in computer and IT are the factors to her for the promotion of officials. She refers; 59 to 60 years of age is the time to retire from the job and vacant place for the young generation.

The interviewee thinks; a government officer must be well-educated, wise, smart, cooperative, patient, good listener, a good manager, soft-spoken, presentable, patriot and most importantly honest. She finds generalization fine except some cases like doctors and engineers; however, generalization gives the opportunity to work in the center stream of administration. In addition, she likes job rotation as it can bring out the hidden potentials of an official and breaks the monotony of working in a single place for long.

While asking a question on civil service reform she replies,

“Civil Service Reform is needed to have an efficient Public Administration. At present, it is at the average standard. In the new one, there should have the privilege of performance, skill in English and computer, training and finally on different service related examinations.”

Case 4:

Mr. 'S', a 35 years old, a Deputy Director joined BCS (Audit and Accounts) on 2006; he has nine years of working experience. Family expectation brings him to the service.

The respondent is not satisfied with his job and reasons for his dissatisfaction as he mentions,

1. Salary: penniless
2. Job environment: not fair. Unequal distribution
3. Others benefits: inadequate to maintain social status
4. Decision-making: Always from top, guided or structured
5. Knowledge: there is very little chance to implement own knowledge and
6. Noncooperation"

However, he thinks the salary needs changes as such that one can maintain social status and current market price. He also thinks present recruitment system of BCS is not perfect as there are some chances to manipulate especially in Viva, and it is a lengthy process. He suggests 32 years of the last age for applying into BCS as in Bangladesh completion of graduation takes a long time due to many factors. In addition, he selects 60 years as the retirement age from the job.

The interviewee claims 100% merit based recruitment in BCS. If necessary, he allows only 10% quota only for ethnic people. He thinks there is always a chance of corruption, and meritocratic recruitment can prevent fraud. He agrees that recruiting brilliant candidates can bring perfect output. He opines to consider honesty and performance of an employee while enact promotion.

Nonetheless, he goes for specialization and says,

“We know the minister is the chief of the ministry. Minister is the person who is elected by the people. Ministers will general. He is the best person of the locality. He may not be special. So his/her ministry should not be public. Their particular knowledgeable officials will help him/ her to conduct the ministry. We need Cluster ministry system.”

Finally, he demands a full reform of the administrative system to make it logical, realistic and up to date.

Case 5:

Mr. 'K' a member of 25th BCS Administration cadre joins on 2006, now serving as the Senior Assistant Secretary, MOPA. He is 35 years old, and his length of service is eight years. The Family expectation has drawn him into this service.

Respondent is not satisfied with the service or salary structure. He thinks the pay needs to make double. To his opinion, present recruitment system of BCS is not good because it does not measure the quality of a candidate. He claims, 27 years as the last age to enter into the BCS exam and feels that people coming into the job at more age are relatively more corrupted. He says 100% merit needs to use as quota deprives the brilliant candidates. He demands the elimination of Quota system.

'K' does believe that corruption may take place in the recruitment process, especially in viva exam. He shows an example while correlating recruiting brilliant candidates with bright performances as,

“History is in favor of this statement. The earlier example shows that the recruitment process of 81 batch was very standard. And most of the officers from this batch demonstrated their competency.”

He suggests considering the combined grade lists of BPSC and academic background for promotion. However, he recommends 57 years as the retirement age that next generation can come to the service. He thinks a public employee should have the quality of honesty, dedication, perseverance, loyalty to the service and so on.

The respondent prefers a mix of generalization and specialization for the public administration of Bangladesh. A Civil servant needs knowledge of both generalization and specialization to compete with the global pace. Moreover, he finds job rotation is a necessity to develop the competency of the civil servants.

Finally, he comments that public service reform is needed to make the present system up to date and emphasizes on the political commitment to reform.

Case 6:

Mr. 'T', Deputy Director under Ministry of Information, join the service on 2005 by 24th BCS. He is 36 years old and has nine years working experience. Social status drives him to join this service.

The respondent is frustrated and disappointed with his job as he says,

“There are some reasons for the dissatisfaction of the situation, firstly the salary and other facilities are far below the standard level. Secondly the job environment and working processes are still in the ancient stage; it is not time befitting and modern enough. Thirdly, the irregularities and corruption make me frustrated to stay in the job.”

He suggests changing the salary in line with the social living standard and opines that the pay should be higher or at least equal to that of a corporate job.

'T' points out that the recruitment system requires change as now it depends on the memorizing ability of the candidates rather it should test the genuine merit. Due to session jam in universities and increase in the average age of people, he recommends last age of entry into BCS exam is 32 years. However, he highlights quality and standard of merit as the principle criteria for recruitment. He cancels the quota as it is the highest level of recruitment, and the recruits will implement the government agenda, so they must be equally meritorious.

He says that corruption in the recruitment process depends on the politicians and BPSC personnel; they can help prevent it, not meritocratic recruitment alone. Nonetheless, he believes that brilliant recruits can perform the best for the government. Performance and merit are the decisive factors for him for promotion. He thinks a public employee should be honest, meritorious, have enough planning capacity, helping and so on. He finds the mixed system is good for Bangladesh public administration. He does not like too much job rotation or transfer as it cannot ensure a good experience for a person.

In conclusion, he urges to have civil service reform on an urgent basis.

5.2 Prospective Civil Servants (PCS):

Case 1:

S. C. completed her Masters in Population Sciences from the University of Dhaka. She is 30 years old and wants to join BCS to utilize her education to serve the nation and people with quality service. She is motivated to join BCS, as it is most prestigious and honorary job with great responsibility.

She thinks the recruitment system of BCS needs to change according to the needs of national interests and benefits. To her, merit is the main criteria for recruitment; however, she wants 80% merit compare to 20% quota in BCS. She demands a quota for freedom fighters, women, and tribal people and for physically disable person. She thinks there is little chance of corruption in the recruitment process of BCS; nonetheless, fair process with a strong regulatory body can prevent fraud.

The interviewee agrees with the statement "Recruiting brilliant candidates can bring bright performances in public administration" and says,

"They will provide prudent and feasible solutions and policy for sustainable development."

She finds the quality of knowledgeable, patriotism and professionalism is necessary for a public employee. She thinks an official should retire from the job at the age of 60.

The respondent selects specialization is the best system for public administration in Bangladesh. She mentioned the reason behind this is that an official needs the opportunity to give the best of the best service in his/her related field where he/she has the expertise. Job position needs to create based on the specialization and educational background. In addition, she likes job rotation for gathering relevant knowledge on the job.

In the end, she comments that civil service reform is needed, especially in the examination system, and she demands standard and transparent evaluation system to apply equally to all candidates.

Case 2:

A.H. the 26 years candidates, just completed her Masters from Home Economics College-affiliated with the University of Dhaka. She wants to join BCS as the respect, job security, and family expectation motivate her in this regard.

She thinks the present system of recruitment in BCS requires a change for an efficient public administration. The optimal age range is 30 to 35 years to apply for BCS as she opines. To her, merit is the best and only principle of recruiting future administrator of Bangladesh. She also suggests for 80% merit and 20% quota to use while the quota is for women and disable persons.

The respondent believes that there is a possibility of corruption in the recruitment of BCS, but the only meritocratic system is not enough to prevent fraud. We need to change our mentality and ethical behavior to eradicate corruption. However, she thinks, recruiting brilliant people for BCS can return a vibrant administration. She

mentions that while promoting civil servants, performance needs to consider first. According to her, an official should be honest, hard working and tactful. She suggests 60 years of the retirement age.

She likes generalization and job rotation as an officer can understand and get the experience of every sector. Finally, she demands a merit-based public administration that can take the country to its desired targets.

6. Findings and Recommendations:

- Among the CS, some are satisfied while others are not. However, all want increase in salary as the cost of living is going up day by day. Nonetheless, recently the government has declared a new pay scale for the public employees. However, government should set up a permanent pay commission that will recommend time to time; the needed adjustment in salaries of government servants based on the prevailing economic condition.
- All the respondents of both CS and PCS demand a meritocratic recruitment and promotion system for BCS, with a small, around 10% quota available for the backward section of the society. The study also primarily suggest to recruit 100% public official based on merit but for constitutional safeguard a 5-10% quota may be used. However, the study suggests using merit as the main criteria for BCS Cadre Officials and for other services like 2nd, 3rd or 4th class, employee government can use quota at a higher degree.
- Few CS recommend making pools of service where related cadres will merge and work with satisfaction (Case 1, Case 2). The government can make three or four streams where all the 28 cadres will be grouped and work within their group. It will give the employee greater opportunity to work into a wide range and to avail the promotion timely. The study believes this system can increase the level of job satisfaction.
- All the interviewee says that only meritocratic recruitment cannot prevent corruption rather strong action by government and political will can help in this regard. Nevertheless, government must take necessary actions to prevent corruption, leakage of question of BCS examination and other forgeries. However, they all believe

that recruiting brilliant candidates can bring good result for public administration because they can face the challenges of present dynamic world and can contribute in making and implementing sound policies for country's development. The study thinks that if meritorious graduates can join BCS then they will create a suitable working environment where corruption is minimum, and efficiency is maximum. Therefore, merit is the right choice.

- The majority of the respondents think that mix system is best for public administration of Bangladesh. In fact, in some services in BCS like engineers or doctors need specialization while others require generalization. Moreover, when a civil servant reaches at the top of their service, that official must know all the aspects of that job. Therefore, generalization at the beginning of service is helpful for a public employee and as time goes, specialization and experience will come into action.
- In addition, the respondents think, a government official should have the quality of discipline, dutifulness, and patience. Furthermore, a government official needs to have communication skill, dedication and patience. They must know the rule-regulation well, keep updated information, and should know goals of government. In addition, they should be patriot and most importantly honest. Whereas, the study considers meritorious along with the aforementioned quality is essential to be a good civil servant.

7. Conclusion:

The study aims to evaluate the present recruitment system of BCS analyzing the view of present and future public servants. However, law binds the civil servants thus, they cannot comment openly on the prevailing government system. Despite the time and distance limitation, the study tried to reach representative of different cadres. Conversely, it could not get the views of all cadres and opinion from students of all renowned educational institutions. Nonetheless, the study found many problems with the recruitment system of BCS and those problems need solution. The study thinks that the new generation civil servants and graduates are very concerned about and preventive against the corruption. They know the value of an effective and dynamic public administration. Accordingly, the study believes that Bangladesh should bring the meritorious people who are imbued with patriotism and willing to

serve the nation with integrity and dedication. The recruitment should be based on fully fair and open but competitive examination that can judge the intellectual and interpersonal qualities of a civil servant. Then it may be possible to take the country to the pinnacle of development.

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推薦文

本稿の要旨は、バングラデシュの公務員制度は、独立運動の子孫等がクォーター制で優先的に入れるが、もっと実力主義に変えていくべきであるというシンプルで論理一貫したものである。本来、このようなテーマでは、公務員採用試験の変革に関する審議会や報告書の内容、議会での過程等の詳細な検討がされることが望まれよう。

とはいえ、本稿の元となった修論は、膨大な資料を調べて体系的によく整理した上でアンケートやインタビュー調査を実施しており、本国での事前のプレゼンテーションでも極めて高い評価を得ていたということが本学の担当教授からも報告されている。既に本国の公的な雑誌に本稿の姉妹論文が掲載されることになっているとのことで、今後本国での公共管理にも資するものであろう。山口経済学雑誌に掲載される価値があるといえよう。

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