

# **Gender Streaming in Bangladesh Civil Service: A Critical Study of Women Quota Utilization**

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By

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that the research work entitled "**Gender Streaming in Bangladesh Civil Service: A Critical Study of Women Quota Utilization**" has been carried out under the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Dhaka in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. I have composed this thesis based on original research findings from field study acquired by me along with references from published literature. This has not been submitted in part or full for any other institution for any other degree.

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## Certificate

This is to certify that Ms. Momtaz Jahan has worked under our supervision in preparing the thesis entitled '**Gender Streaming in Bangladesh Civil Service: A Critical Study of Women Quota Utilization**' submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Public Administration, University of Dhaka. The thesis has been prepared on the basis of original research work carried out by Ms. Momtaz Jahan alone to the best of my knowledge. No part of the thesis has been submitted anywhere for any other degree or diploma.

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## Abstract

Limited or unequal access of women to public employment is a common phenomenon in the developing countries. The issue of empowering women and bringing them to the mainstream has already found a place in our policy agenda. Over the last four decades, emphasis has been given on mainstreaming gender issues through various policies and strategies to ensure gender equality in public service. Recently women's employment has increased in Bangladesh but compared to men, the number of women in the 27 cadres of Bangladesh Civil Service is still negligible in spite of 10 percent women quota.

This study intends to see the position of women civil servants in terms of number as a lens of measuring women quota utilization effectiveness. It uses policy implementation theories and models to study the factors affecting women quota utilization i.e. the effectiveness of women quota policy implementation.

The data are collected using triangulation of methods, questionnaire, in depth interview and informal discussion, and also documentation. The findings are based on the analysis of the results of 240 questionnaires received, 40 key informants' interviews and informal discussions with 20 respondents as well as the examination of the status of women in Bangladesh and the civil service through documentation.

The study assumes that quota policy implementation depends on the policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political condition and social condition. But it finds that there are some other factors (which were not included in the study) which may facilitate or impede women quota utilization. Many internal and external factors hinder the process of implementation.

At the personal level, socio economic background, educational achievements, parental encouragement, spouse's support and to some extent the quota policy facilitate women to enter the civil service. While potential barriers to their entry are spouse's career, and their disinterest or negative attitude towards civil service jobs because of the very nature and characteristics of the jobs. Fifteen percent of the women respondents admitted that women quota favored them to get jobs while 32.71 percent females supported that women are not motivated to pursue career in

civil service. Posting to remote locations and different places of posting of spouse were mentioned as greatest barrier to women's joining and continuing in the service by the respondents.

At the organizational level, women are denied equal opportunities through complex distribution of quotas, limited opportunities of political networking, absence of women in important decision making bodies, gender biased selection process, discriminatory organizational practices and lack of women friendly work environment. The findings has revealed that women quota utilization is hampered because of the existence of certain gaps in the process of implementation.

The masculine cultural norms, values, and perceptions about the role of women in society, low level of gender development and gender empowerment are the major societal factors that adversely affect women's entry in the civil service. Two major barriers counteracting women's career aspirations to civil service are work family conflict and institutionalized discrimination.

The study reveals that women quota utilization does not depend only on the four variables i.e. policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political conditions, and social conditions addressed in this study. There are some other factors which prohibit women to enter in the civil service. The study makes several policy recommendations to facilitate women aspiring for careers in civil service which include capacity development of women, gender supportive workplace, institutionalized child care facilities, changes in stereotypical thinking and mindset of both men and women about women's career, balanced representation of women in decision making bodies and proper monitoring of the implementation of quotas. Consideration of these issues in case of designing strategic plan and in implementation process can bring a positive change towards gender mainstreaming in Bangladesh Civil Service.

## Table of Contents

<b>Declaration .....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>Certificate .....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>Acknowledgement .....</b>	<b>III - IV</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>V - VI</b>
<b>Table of contents .....</b>	<b>VII - X</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>XI -XII</b>
<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>XII</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations and Acronyms Used .....</b>	<b>XIII - XIV</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1-17</b>
Background of the Study .....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Research Questions.....	5
Objectives of the study.....	5
Justification of the study .....	6
Objectives of the study.....	5
Research methods .....	8
Data Collection tools .....	9
Population and Sample .....	12
Analytical Framework.....	12
Organization of the study.....	14
Limitations of the study.....	16
<b>Chapter 2: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework .....</b>	<b>18-58</b>
The Conceptual Foundation .....	18
Sex and Gender.....	19
Gender Relations .....	20
Inequality and Women.....	21
Gender Equality and Gender Equity.....	23
Gender Mainstreaming .....	24
Theoretical Framework.....	28
Policy Implementation: A Conceptual Framework.....	29
Why does implementation matter?.....	32
Policy Implementation Theories.....	33
Models on Implementation Studies.....	38



Van Meter and Van Horn's Model .....	38
Mazmanian and Sabatier's Model .....	40
Matland's Model.....	43
Grindle's and Thomas's Model .....	43
Winter's Model.....	45
Analytical Framework.....	47
Variables in the Study.....	48
Policy Characteristics.....	49
Implementing Agency's Characteristics.....	50
Political Conditions.....	52
Social Conditions .....	54
<b>Chapter 3: The Civil Service in Bangladesh Policy Characteristics .....</b>	<b>59-91</b>
Civil Service: The Concept.....	59
Genesis of Bangladesh Civil Service .....	61
The British Indian Era.....	62
The Pakistan Era.....	65
The Bangladesh Era .....	68
The Present Civil Service System in Bangladesh .....	72
The Structure of Civil Services.....	72
General Features of the Civil Services .....	73
Cadre Service .....	74
Recruitment in Bangladesh Civil Service.....	77
Recruitment Policy and Procedure.....	78
Methods of Recruitment .....	79
Conditions of Eligibility .....	80
Pattern of BCS Examination .....	80
Allocation of Post.....	83
Recruitment Agency.....	84
MOPA .....	84
BPSC.....	85
Genesis of BPSC.....	86
Constitutional and Legal Framework.....	88

Organizational Structure.....	88
Scope and Function .....	90
<b>Chapter 4: Quota System in Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment.....</b>	<b>92-114</b>
Quota: The Concept .....	92
Quota versus Merit: An Analysis.....	95
Historical Evolution of Quota System in Bangladesh .....	97
British Period.....	97
Pakistan Period.....	98
Bangladesh Period.....	99
Legality of the existing Quota System .....	103
Background of Women Quota .....	100
Justification of Women Quota .....	109
Arguments for women Quota.....	109
Arguments against Women Quota.....	112
<b>Chapter 5: Status of Women in Bangladesh .....</b>	<b>115 -134</b>
Status of Women: The Present Scenario in Bangladesh.....	116
Education .....	117
Health and Nutritional Status.....	120
Employment.....	122
Political Power.....	125
Influence of Culture on Women's Lives in Bangladesh .....	128
<b>Chapter 6: The Status of Women in Bangladesh Civil Service .....</b>	<b>135-163</b>
Laws, Policies and Institutions Promoting Women Participation in Bangladesh.....	136
Constitutional Mandates .....	137
National Women Development Policy, 2011 .....	139
National Action Plan.....	140
Government's Commitment to Women Development In its long term Plans .....	141
Gender Issues SDGs.....	149
Gender Issues in MDG <sub>s</sub> and PRSP .....	150
Institutional Arrangement .....	150
International Frameworks .....	152
Women in BCS: Present Scenario .....	154
Numerical Distribution of Candidates (by sex) Recommended for Recruitment .....	158
Women Quota utilization in the Civil Service .....	160

<b>Chapter 7: Presentation of Empirical Data</b> .....	164-190
The Respondents and the Data .....	164
Demographic Analysis of the Respondents.....	166
Personal and Socio economic Profile of the Respondents.....	167
Views of the Respondents to the Career .....	173
Respondents Perception of Quota (Women) Policy Implementation .....	180
<b>Chapter 8: Factors Affecting Women quota Utilization and Representation of Women</b> .....	191-232
Analysis and Interpretation of Empirical Findings.....	193
Personnel and Socio Economic Characteristics .....	193
Career Context .....	198
Factors affecting Women Quota Implementation .....	202
Policy Characteristics.....	202
Implementing Agency’s Characteristics.....	205
Political Conditions.....	211
Social Conditions .....	213
Existing Constraints of Women’s Entry into BCS.....	218
<b>Chapter 9: General Observations and Conclusion</b> .....	233-249
Observations in the Light of Empirical Findings .....	233
Quota Utilization and Independent Variables of the Study .....	238
Other Factors Affecting Women Quota Implementation.....	242
Conclusion.....	243
Recommendations .....	245
Implication for further Research .....	249
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	50-272
<b>Appendix</b> .....	273-280
Questionnaire.....	273

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 3.1	Distribution of Marks of BCS Written Examination and Viva Voce	81
Table 4.1	Regional Quota System in Central Government in Pakistan, September, 1948	98
Table 4.2	Regional Quota System in Central Government in Pakistan, November, 1949	99
Table 4.3	Changes in Quota System in BCS	101
Table 4.4	Quota Characteristics in Bangladesh	101
Table 5.1	Current Situation and Future Projection of literacy rate (< 7 years of age) by sex	118
Table-5.2	Enrolment Statistics at Different Educational Institutions (2011)	118
Table 5.3	Completion Rate and Dropout Rate (2011)	119
Table-5.4	Women Members in Party Hierarchies of Major Political Parties in Bangladesh	126
Table 6.1	Class Wise Number of Male and Female in BCS (as of 17 September, 2015)	155
Table 6.2	Rank / Position Wise Statistics of Male/Female in the Secretariat	156
Table 6.3	Women's Participation at Field Level	157
Table 6.4	Cadre Wise Breakdown of Recommended Male and Females in Different BCS Examination	158
Table 6.5	Statistics of Recommended Male and Females in different BCS Examinations	159
Table 6.6	Ratio of Male and Female Candidates at Different Stages of BCS Examination	160
Table 6.7	Analysis of the Results of Women Candidates from 27th to 34th BCS	161
Table 6.8	Women Quota Utilization in Selected BCS Examinations	162
Table 7.1	Respondents' Designation	166
Table 7.2	Distribution of Respondents according to Age	168
Table 7.3	Marital Status of the Respondents	168
Table 7.4	Living Situation of the Respondents	169
Table 7.5	Educational Qualification of the Respondents	169
Table 7.6	Parental' Occupation of the Respondents	170
Table 7.7	Spouse's Occupation of the Respondents	171
Table 7.8	Rural –Urban Background of the Respondents	172
Table 7.9	Social Class of the Respondent's Family	173
Table 7.10	Motivators for Joining Civil Service	174
Table 7.11	Contributing Factors for Career Choice	175
Table 7.12	Barriers at the time of Joining	176
Table 7.13	Problems Facing at Work	177

Table 7.14	Problems Facing at Home	179
Table 7.15	Percentages of Responses Regarding Clarity and Relevance of Policy Objectives	181
Table 7.16	Percentage of Responses Regarding Implementing Agency's Characteristics	183
Table 7.17	Percentage of Responses Regarding Political Conditions	187
Table 7.18	Percentage of Responses Regarding Social Conditions	188

#### **LIST OF FITGURES**

Figure 1.1	Influence of different factors on policy implementation effectiveness.	14
Figure 2.1	Intergovernmental Policy Implementation Model of Van Meter and Van Horn	39
Figure 2.2	Mazmanianand Sabatier's Model	42
Figure 2.3	Influence of different factors on policy implementation effectiveness.	47
Figure 4.1	Existing Quota System	102
Figure 8.1	Fathers' Occupation of Women Civil Servants	195
Figure 8.2	Spouse's Occupation of Women Civil Servants	196
Figure 8.3	Rural-Urban Background of the Respondents	197

#### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED**

ACFOA	Australian Council for Overseas Aid
AL	Awami League
ARC	Administrative Reorganization Committee
ASRC	Administrative and Service Reorganization Commission

BCSWN	Bangladesh Civil Service for Women Network
BFPA	Beijing Platform for Action
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BPSC	Bangladesh Public Service Commission
CARR	Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSP	Civil Service of Pakistan
DWA	Department of Women Affairs
EIC	East India Company
FFYP	First Five Year Plan
FSP	Foreign Service Pakistan
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
ICS	Indian Civil Service
IFS	Indian Foreign Service
IGS	Institute of Governance Studies
IPS	Indian Police Service
JMS	Jatiyo Mohila Sangstha
JP	Jatiyo Party
MCQ	Multiple Choice Question
MDG <sub>s</sub>	Millennium Development Goals
MLC	Martial Law Committee
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOPA	Ministry of Public Administration
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MP <sub>s</sub>	Members of Parliament
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPD	National Academy for Planning and Development

NCDW	National Council for Women's Development
NGO <sub>s</sub>	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPC	National Pay Commission
NPM	New Public Management
PARC	Public Administration Reform Commission
PATC	Public Administration Training Center
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSP	Police Service of Pakistan
SFYP	Second Five Year Plan
TFYP	Third Five Year Plan
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
TYP	Two Year Plan
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
UNESCO	United Nation Economic and Social Council
WID	Women in Development

**Title of the Thesis: 'Gender Streaming in Bangladesh Civil Service: A Critical Study of Women Quota Utilization'.**

**Name of the Researcher: Momtaz Jahan**

**Name of the Department: Public Administration, University of Dhaka.**

### **Abstract**

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At the personal level, socio economic background, educational achievements, parental encouragement, spouse's support and to some extent the quota policy



facilitate women to enter the civil service. While potential barriers to their entry are spouse's career, and their disinterest or negative attitude towards civil service jobs because of the very nature and characteristics of the jobs. Fifteen percent of the women respondents admitted that women quota favored them to get jobs while 32.71 percent females supported that women are not motivated to pursue career in civil service. Posting to remote locations and different places of posting of spouse were mentioned as greatest barrier to women's joining and continuing in the service by the respondents.

At the organizational level, women are denied equal opportunities through complex distribution of quotas, limited opportunities of political networking, absence of women in important decision making bodies, gender biased selection process, discriminatory organizational practices and lack of women friendly work environment. The findings has revealed that women quota utilization is hampered because of the existence of certain gaps in the process of implementation.

The masculine cultural norms, values, and perceptions about the role of women in society, low level of gender development and gender empowerment are the major societal factors that adversely affect women's entry in the civil service. Two major barriers counteracting women's career aspirations to civil service are work family conflict and institutionalized discrimination.

The study reveals that women quota utilization does not depend only on the four variables i.e. policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political conditions, and social conditions addressed in this study. There are some other factors which prohibit women to enter in the civil service. The study makes several policy recommendations to facilitate women aspiring for careers in civil service which include capacity development of women, gender supportive workplace, institutionalized child care facilities, changes in stereotypical thinking and mindset of both men and women about women's career, balanced representation of women in decision making bodies and proper monitoring of the implementation of quotas. Consideration of these issues in case of designing strategic plan and in implementation process can bring a positive change towards gender mainstreaming in Bangladesh Civil Service.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

The introductory chapter of the study provides the background message of the research. An attempt has been made here to highlight the background and the rationale of the research, the research problem to be investigated, research objectives, research questions, significance and methods of the research. Furthermore, the end of this chapter presents an outline or structure of the dissertation and limitations of the study.

### **Background of the Study**

Limited or unequal access of women to public employment is a common phenomenon in the developing countries. Relative to their share in the population, women are underrepresented in bureaucracies. So equity has become a key concern in this context. Equal participation of women in public life is no longer viewed as a human right issue alone, it has become a basic building block for achieving sustainable development (Mahtab, 2014:19).

In recent times, 'gender equality' and 'women's empowerment' has been two of the most pervasive and noteworthy themes in development. Gender and minority issues in the employment of public service in most developing countries are very significant and need critical analysis from various perspectives. In most of these countries, the disparity between male and female representation in public service is pervasive, though government is a major employer. Usually constitutional provisions in most countries of the developing world proclaim equality between men and women and prohibit any discrimination on the basis of sex or other considerations in the recruitment and promotion of public personnel. Yet social, cultural,

educational and security constraints prevent women from fully enjoying their constitutional rights and guarantees (Rahman, 2001:57).

To increase representation of those segments of the society, especially women – whose participation has been minimal in the civil service, some developing countries, for example, Nepal, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and others have made due provisions. The constitutions of those countries have empowered the state to reserve a certain percent of their vacancies in the public sector for women, to make the public service more representative and to minimize the disadvantages faced by women. Despite such provisions women's presence in public service is still discouraging in numbers, grades and positions. Thus gender equality in the public service has become a key concern of the governments of developing countries. They contend that development, apart from economic growth, connote "equity, social justice, and the effective exercise of basic human rights" (cited in Zafarullah, 2000:198).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In most countries of the third world, women find themselves under represented in public service. They have little or unequal access to public employment (Zafarullah, 2000:197). Unequal participation of the sexes in the domain of public service has become increasingly difficult to ignore.

"In a democratic system power emanates from and rotates round the legislature, the parliament, the government or the executive or bureaucracy. Therefore, power moves around politics and bureaucracy where only a few women so far could make their entry possible" (Huq et.al., 1995:11).

It has been recognized nationally as well as internationally that women, who have been occupying half of the total population must have active participation in political as well as administrative decision making level. Obviously women's empowerment will not be ensured without a massive influx of women in the decision making ranks of civil service that

dominates bureaucracy. This fact has received recognition and mandate through different global conferences and United Nations (UN) conventions such as World Conference on Women held in Mexico City, Copenhagen, Nairobi, and Beijing, the UN Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen, the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) etc. Bangladesh along with other developing nations is committed to reduce gender discrimination as a part of their social development programs.

The issue of empowering women and bringing them to the mainstream has already found a place in our policy agenda. In Bangladesh, over the last four decades, emphasis has been given on mainstreaming gender issues through various policies and strategies to ensure gender equality in public service. Bangladesh is a developing country of the third world where gender disparity prevails in every sector and women's educational opportunities, their prospects for jobs and the enjoyment of their basic human rights remain scarcely satisfactory (Khan, 1995:64). In an effort to redress the situation of women and bring them at par with men, a quota system or reservation of posts was introduced in the public employment sector immediately after liberation. The main motive behind the policy was to increase participation and expand improved access to women in the civil service.

In spite of the provision of women quota (10% for class I and class II posts, 15% for class III and class IV posts), women are not represented in the civil service in proportion to their population. At present, the total strength of female in public service is 18.83% (Kabir, 2013: 142) but important to mention that among them over 90% are class III and class IV employees, i.e. the vast majority of women in the civil service are low paid, clerical staff.

Representation of women in the class I cadre service is only 9.77% (Kabir, 2013:142) though there is a 10% quota for women.

After the introduction of women quota in 1976, women's representation in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS)<sup>1</sup> was raised only 1% in ten years. Records of Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC, here in after referred as PSC)<sup>2</sup> indicate that, in the 1970s there were no female applicants for many cadres and number of women who qualified in the BCS was less than the quota entitlement. As late as 1985, PSC was able for the first time to select women recruits for the full quota requirement. The Annual Reports of the PSC show that, over the years government could not fill the posts which were reserved for women. There was significant variations in the percentage of quota filled from one year to another and the government has failed to accommodate women in the civil service cadres in spite of the fact that 10% of the posts are reserved for them (Jahan, 2007:56).

The situation of women in the civil service has not demonstrated any impressive success so far. Women are still marginal in the BCS. In the 27 cadres<sup>3</sup> most of the women are at the lower levels. Therefore, women are not represented in high government positions, executive positions are generally occupied by men. Despite the women quota, the numerical strength of women is very trivial compared to the cadre strength, too small to produce an impact on the civil service.

Based on the above concern it can be said that, the impact of government policies pertaining to mainstreaming gender in the civil service has not been realized significantly. The obvious result is that very few women secure

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<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh civil service, more popularly known by its acronym BCS, is the elite civil service of the Government of Bangladesh which has 28 cadre services.

<sup>2</sup> Bangladesh Public Service Commission has been operationally defined in this study to refer to the implementing agency, which is responsible for conducting recruitment examinations and executing the quota policy of the government in the civil service recruitment.

<sup>3</sup> A cadre system entails organization of civil servants into semi-functional occupational groups or cadres.

positions in the civil service and fewer women occupy key decision making positions. Women's low representation, both overall and at different hierarchical levels has itself serious implications for the advancement of women. Unless women move from a token presence to a balanced share in the civil service positions, they are most likely to face a hostile organizational environment in a male dominated civil service.

## **Research Questions**

Bangladesh has been practicing the quota policy for more than 40 years; therefore, the fundamental question of this research is:

### **To what extent is the policy effective to include women in government bureaucracy?**

Keeping in view the study issues, the study attempts to probe the following specific research questions.

1. What are the major policies so far adopted to achieve gender equality in BCS?
2. To what extent has the quota policy delivered its declared goals of gender equality and representativeness?
3. What are the formal institutional arrangements of the recruiting agencies in BCS?
4. To what extent the political, cultural and socio-economic contexts of Bangladesh influence the implementation process of the quota policy?
5. What are the key factors which support or create barriers to bring women in the civil service?
6. How can greater and effective utilization of quota be ensured?

## **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this research is **to assess the implementation status of quota policy for achieving gender equality in the civil service and analyze the factors behind underutilization of quota set aside for women.**

In view of this broader objective, the specific objectives of the study would be to:

1. Provide a comprehensive picture of the female employment situation in BCS;
2. Review the government policies and practices related to increase women's participation in the cadre service;
3. Explore and identify the views and opinions regarding various issues of quota system in the recruitment policy of the government;
4. Evaluate the extent of utilization of women quota and assess the gaps between the quota policy and its implementation modality;
5. Find out the barriers/problems behind the low representation of women in BCS;
6. Suggests measure to improve the overall situation.

### **Justification of the Study**

Entry of women in civil service and its consequences in developing country like Bangladesh needs special consideration and analysis. BCS represents the arena where key policies are shaped and implemented. While there has been a growing concern that women are underrepresented in the civil service and not represented at all in the top administrative positions in the civil service hierarchy, no concerted effort has yet been made to find out what restricts them from entering the service. After the introduction of quota, little efforts have been made to examine and assess empirically the utilization of women quota. Now there are wide controversies whether quota should be abolished or continued. Although continuation of quota has been challenged by many on the ground that quota undermines merit and affect the efficiency of civil

service, opinion in favor of quota for women has also been put forward with a plea that it will allow women to participate on equal terms with men (Jahan, 2014:1).

Realizing the gravity of the problem and the consequences there of, it is therefore, important to assess the impact of women quota in terms of changes in the personnel structure in the bureaucracy. Only after the detection of the factors that are impeding women's opportunities to join BCS, progress could be made towards managerial equity, vital for transforming gendered organizations into gender neutral organizations.

Despite realization of the importance and priority of having a representative civil service by all concerned, academic inquiry into this field seems to be inadequate. A number of works have been done on women in BCS, but there is no significant and in-depth study in Bangladesh, highlighting the major factors affecting women quota implementation, which is a prime area of this study. Since the introduction of quota, the only study in this field (exclusively on women quota) was conducted by Kashem, et. al. in 2002. Although the study focused on review of quota and documented the extent of quota implementation, it covered a wide range of categories of women employees like cadre and non-cadre female officers, officers of autonomous bodies and corporations, primary school teachers and bank officials. As the study did not focus particularly on the female cadre officials, their quota implementation status and analysis of problems therewith was not covered properly and thoroughly.

Another study on the quota system for BCS recruitment was done by Khan and Ahmad in 2007 which analyzed the effects of different types of quotas. The basic focus of this study was district quota. The issue of women quota was not analyzed in depth in this study.



Zafarullah (2010) in his study titled 'Policy and Politics of Preference: The Quota System in the Bangladesh Civil Service' discussed the background to the introduction of quota system in BCS, its current status, implications and the political rationale behind the continuation of some controversial preferential categories. He worked on all forms of quotas. Therefore women quota needs to be studied with due importance to correct the gender imbalances within the civil service.

The present study tried to explore the factors that affect proper implementation of women quota policy in BCS. Hence, the findings of the study will be significant in bridging the existing knowledge gaps of government policies and existing realities to achieve gender equality in BCS. Understanding such problems of implementation might aid policy practitioners in developing strategies to remove barriers and put the policy into practice successfully. It will help the government to bring positive changes in policy decisions.

## **Research Methods**

This study was based on a one time and cross sectional survey of civil servants in the civil service of Bangladesh. Basically survey method was used in this research for primary data collection. In addition, content analysis method was used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem from the secondary sources.

## **Survey Method**

The first and major research method of the study was survey method which is most widely used in social science research. This method has a long history in social science research. In social sciences, it refers to the technique of collection of data through interview, questionnaire, and secondary sources in the light of a specific research objective (Aminuzzaman, 1991:39). Survey

method is specifically recommended when a population is too large to be observed directly or is widely separated geographically. It is also appropriate to apply this method when the purpose is to collect information from people about their perceptions, attitude, aspirations, values, and social, educational and economic background. Considering these points, this study employed this method to collect data from the respondents.

### **Content Analysis**

Content analysis method is helpful to give insight about the research topic from the secondary sources. It "critically and objectively reviews the published or printed facts, figures, opinions, observations, generalizations in the light of its content value"(Wilkinson,1982: 56, cited in Aminuzzaman,1991:35). Therefore it acts as a base and directs the research in a proper direction. The status of women in Bangladesh in general and the civil service in particular has been examined in this study through the secondary sources.

All the relevant literature, documents, records, reports, government circulars, annual reports of PSC and other published materials in the field were thoroughly reviewed and analyzed for this study. Moreover, individual academic works were perused as far as practicable. Articles published in newspapers and journals were also scrutinized, when they were considered to be of sufficient academic worth. Internet facilities have also been availed for collecting data from secondary sources.

### **Data Collection Tools**

Questionnaire, In-depth interview and informal discussion--these were the three main methods of primary data collection for the study. Data was collected on both quantitative and qualitative basis. While the survey data was gained from the population samples, in-depth interview data was gained from interviewing the key informants.

## **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a very effective instrument that facilitates in collecting data from large, diverse and widely scattered group of people. A semi structured questionnaire survey was administered among the male and female class I cadre officials to gather objective, quantitative data as well as accruing information of qualitative nature. The questionnaires were distributed as widely as possible to the target group and the respondents were allowed enough time to answer the questions. The questionnaire asked a wide variety of questions that could be answered anonymously so that the respondents feel free to answer the stated questions. The questionnaires were usually completed by the respondents in their homes or offices. The questionnaire was designed to investigate the factors that impede or facilitate entry of women civil servants in the service.

## **In- depth Interview**

In-depth interview, as a qualitative research technique, is a two-way communication that involves intense individual interviews with a small number of key informants to explore their opinions on a particular situation (Yoddumnern-Attig et. el., 1993: 45-46).

The primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they provide much more detailed information about a person's thoughts. In this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with some key informants involved directly or indirectly in government recruitment process. The present chair, present and ex members of PSC, directors of PSC secretariat, gender specialists, academicians/researchers working on WID (women in development) issues and civil service management and a good number of civil servants (both men and women) of the secretariat were interviewed to get in- depth knowledge and insights to supplement the information collected through survey method.

Since the goal of the interview was to deeply explore the respondent's point of view, experiences, feelings, and perceptions regarding the utilization of women quota in BCS, this research employed standardized open-ended questions with the interviewees.

Interviews were based on an 'interview guide' to help the researcher during the interview process. It consisted of questions that kept the interviewer on track and helped to maintain consistency across the interviews with the different respondents. But at the same time the participants were encouraged to tell their own stories, experiences, and observations in a relaxed atmosphere, which helped the researcher further understand the phenomenon. The interview really helped the researcher to obtain invaluable qualitative information from the key informants.

All interviews took place at the offices (except two which took place at homes) of the interviewees and all of the interviewees were formally notified in advance before the interview. The researcher assured the interviewees that full confidentiality would be maintained and their names would not be used in the study. While conducting interviews the researcher did not record the interviews; instead she took notes. Moreover, relevant quotes were written down and marked important, matched with the research objectives. Interview was bilingual, preferably in Bengali and later translated to English.

### **Informal Discussion**

The researcher also elicited information from informal discussion. Some civil servants who have close contacts and friendly relations with the researcher and some respondents of the survey who agreed to participate further in the research were particularly chosen for this purpose. The discussions were very much informal in nature and the discussants expressed their free and frank opinions and observations regarding the issue and pointed out very useful suggestions for the researcher.

The findings of afore cited research methods provide the basis for the analysis and discussion of the factors affecting the implementation process of the quota policy (women quota) in the civil service recruitment in Bangladesh.

## **Population and Sample**

### **Population**

In this study civil service denotes the class I cadre services. The population of this study was both male and female civil servants who hold positions in the 27 cadres in BCS.

### **Sampling**

Random sampling<sup>4</sup> method was employed in this research in order to select samples from the population. A sample of 240 civil servants was drawn from the population on the availability of the persons. Both male and female officers were considered for gender balancing. Data was collected from the officers of different cadres of BCS which cover both general and professional or technical cadres.

### **Analytical framework**

This research is mostly qualitative and descriptive. The prime objective of this study is to provide an assessment on the status of women quota utilization in BCS and to focus on the impact of quota practices in terms of increasing women participation in bureaucracy.

### **Unit of Analysis**

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<sup>4</sup> Random sampling may be defined as a method of selecting a sample from statistical population in such a way that every possible sample that could be selected has a predetermined probability of being selected.

The factors affecting the effectiveness of policy implementation with specific focus on quota policy for women in BCS recruitment constitute the unit of analysis of this research. The argument in this study is that, Bangladesh has significant constitutional provisions and affirmative policies guaranteeing women's equal rights but there is an 'implementation gap' between these policies and practices.

## **Hypothesis**

Based on the analytical point of view the hypothesis of this study is:

**Despite some achievements, due to ineffective policy implementation government has not been able to make full utilization of women quota as well as to address the problem of low participation of women in the civil service.**

## **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variables for this study are the problems created by ineffective policy implementation which include underutilization of women quota and low representation of women in BCS.

## **Intervening Variables**

Ineffective policy implementation ('implementation gap' between government policies and practices related to increase women representation in BCS) is the intervening variable of the study which is creating the problems. For the purpose of an operational definition of this study, effective policy implementation is regarded as the accomplishment of government's policy objective i.e. gender parity in BCS which is assessed through the percentage of female civil servants in the civil service hierarchy. This study intended to see the position of women officers in terms of number as a lens of measuring gender mainstreaming policy implementation.

## Independent Variables

The independent variables are the factors which might affect the policy implementation process of the government i.e. employment of women and their participation in the civil service.

A total of four independent variables were selected to explain the dependent variables. These are:

1. Policy Characteristics
2. Implementing Agency's Characteristics
3. Political Conditions
4. Social Conditions

The dependent variables and independent variables of this study are presented in figure 1.1.

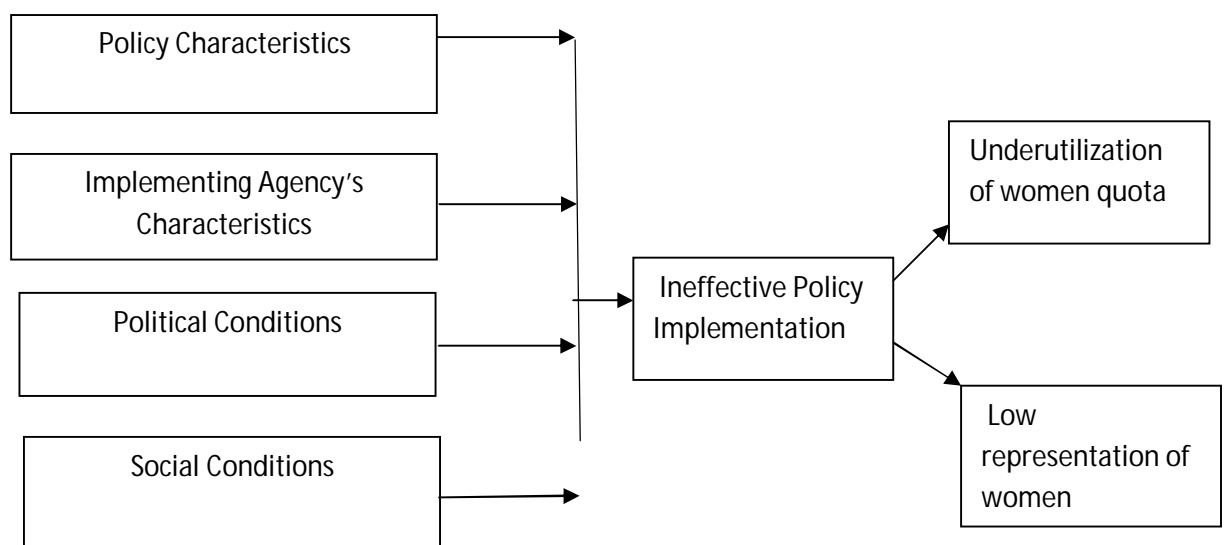


Figure 1.1: Influence of different factors on policy implementation effectiveness.

## Organization of the Study

This dissertation consists of nine chapters.

## Chapter One: Introduction

The introductory chapter discusses the background of the research, defines the research problem to be investigated, lists specific research objectives, highlights the significance of the research and describes the unit of analysis and methods of the research.

## Chapter Two: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

After the introductory chapter, the second chapter reviews the concept of gendermainstreaming and relevant theories and prevailing literature regarding policy implementation through which an analytical framework was developed for the study.

## Chapter Three: The Civil Service in Bangladesh

This chapter discusses the civil service system in Bangladesh from historical perspective, its present structure, feature, its current recruitment process and the structure and function of PSC as the main recruiting agency of the government.

## Chapter Four: Quota System in Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment

The fourth chapter traces a brief history of quota in civil service from the British period, notes its salience to women's participation in BCS, assesses its working and examines the arguments for and against women quota.

## Chapter Five: The Status of Women in Bangladesh

A review of the general situation of women in Bangladesh is presented in this chapter in order to examine the individual and social characteristics of women in the society.

## Chapter six: The Status of Women in the Civil Service of Bangladesh

This chapter focuses on the constitutional rights and provisions of women with particularreference to participation in the civil service. It also highlights



the national policy for the advancement of women in Bangladesh and different five years plans to integrate women in the mainstream of development.

The numerical strength of women in different levels in the civil service hierarchy, their representation in different cadres, gender composition and female quota utilization of different BCS examinations are also depicted here. This chapter is based on a review of literature as well as primary data collected by the researcher.

### Chapter Seven: Presentation of Empirical Data

This chapter introduces the empirical data of the survey and interview and informal discussion on which the analysis of the study is based upon.

### Chapter Eight: Factors Affecting Women Quota Utilization and Representation of Women

It attempts to examine the factors responsible for low participation of women in BCS in the light of the analytical framework of policy implementation as outlined in chapter Two.

### Chapter Nine: General Observations and Conclusion

Chapter nine summarizes major findings and conclusion of the research work. The chapter also provides some suggestions to increase women participation in the civil service of Bangladesh and provides implications for further research.

## **Limitations of the Study**

One of the major constraints of this study was the non-availability of information. The literature and other printed materials on quota utilization or issues related to quota were scant. The researcher found it difficult to obtain

up to date and sex disaggregated data. The available data on the status of women in Bangladesh and the civil service is not current. The data on indicators of educational and employment status of women and men in Bangladesh used in various documents and reports were three to four years out of date and some was estimate based. A conscious effort has been made to provide the up to date data while using the data from different sources but due to the non-availability it could not be done.

In addition to these problems, the available official documents<sup>5</sup> covered only a section of the information with regard to the successful candidates. There is a serious scarcity of information with regard to quota, sex and cadre specific data. The various annual reports published by the PSC did not provide sex disaggregated data on the selection of employees based on merit and quota from the beginning of BCS examination in Bangladesh. Gradually PSC has become more systematic in presenting and analyzing data in its Annual Reports. However the same quality of analysis is not available in its earlier reports. As a result, the trend of the utilization of women quota and representation of women in BCS since the beginning could not be identified. However, various ministries and departments do publish some data on their websites which is not often disaggregated by sex and much of it are incomplete.

As the respondents of the study were widely scattered groups of people it was very difficult to collect empirical data. It was not possible to collect data from all 27 cadre officials. In addition, the low response rate in general and from senior civil servants in particular might also limit the generalization of the study. The sample size was small compared to the population size to draw overall generalization. The response of filled in questionnaire was poor and disappointing instead of repeated reminders. Several high officials in the PSC and some senior bureaucrats in the secretariat were reluctant and several

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<sup>5</sup> PSC Annual Reports, published results and gazette notifications on new appointments to BCS cadres.

refused to give interview on the plea of their hectic office schedule. The data collected through questionnaire, interview and informal discussion was largely perceptual. So there might have been an element of subjective bias and that is why explanations strictly in the sense of cause and effect have been deliberately avoided. As a result the study is based on descriptive analysis of the data.

# Chapter Two

## Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

### Introduction

This chapter discusses the conceptual and theoretical base of the research. As stated earlier, the study is trying to assess the gender mainstreaming policy implementation (the progress of women civil servants in terms of number) within the BCS. So in this regard this chapter analyzes some relevant theories explaining the role of various factors in the policy implementation process and outlines the variables which were used in this study for analyzing 'implementation gap' between governmental policies and practices regarding increase of women representation in BCS.

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to clarify concepts, to review some of the approaches and to identify key variables for policy implementation and to explain the implementation models used in this research.

To do so, this chapter is organized into three sections. The first section briefly explains the basic terms and concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming. The second section focuses on some views about policy implementation and attempts at defining implementation. Then it briefly presents some selected models of implementation studies which provide the fundamentals of the framework for this research. These models are developed by **Grindle and Thomas, Winter, Mazmanian and Sabatier**, and **Van Meter and Van Horn**. The third section deals with the analytical framework adopted in this study.

### 1. The Conceptual Foundation

Understanding the differences between women and men, and how they are determined is of key importance in understanding why a gender perspective is

so important for development (Jahan, 2007:42). This section briefly explains the basic terms and concepts of gender and development, as they are currently understood and used by gender and development practitioners.

## **Sex and Gender**

Differences between women and men are determined by biology, on the one hand, and the society on the other. Women and men are different biologically. Sex refers to biological differences between males and females defined in terms of the anatomy and physiology of the body, while gender refers to the socially determined personal and psychological characteristics associated with being male and female namely, masculinity and femininity (Garrett, 1992: vii, cited in Khan, 2005:254).

So whilst often used interchangeably, 'sex' and 'gender' are in fact distinct terms. Sex is a fact of human biology, gender is not. A person's sex is biologically determined as woman or man according to certain identifiable physical features which are universal. Sexual differences are the same throughout the human race. But all cultures interpret and elaborate these innate biological differences of male and female into a set of social expectations about what behaviors and activities are appropriate for a male and female and what rights, resources, and power they possess. When gender is used in feminist analysis, it is traditionally defined in relation to sex, gender is the cultural or social construction of sex.

Gender is a set of meanings that sexes assume in particular societies. According to de Beauvoir (1988), "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (cited in Mahtab, 2012: 121). The concept of gender is used to describe all the socially given attributes, roles, activities and responsibilities connected to being a male or a female in a given society. Our gender identity determines how we are perceived, and how we are expected to think and act as women and men, because of the way society is organized (March et. al.,

1999:18). So gender is used to designate social relations between the sexes that is between women and men. Bradley (1996: 205) defined gender in the following way:

“Gender refers to the varied and complex arrangements between men and women, encompassing the organization and reproduction, the sexual divisions of labour and cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity”.

Gender is generally defined as how a person’s biology is culturally valued and interpreted into locally acceptable ideas of what is to be a woman or man (Reeves and Baden, 2000:30). It has also been argued that gender refers to both women and men and to the interactions between them (HDC, 2000:24). However, being a social construct, gender is not something fixed, but something that varies according to time, place and culture. These roles are learned, change over time and vary widely within and between cultures (Haider, 1995: 35).

Another important point considering the term is that gender as a social construct is ‘politically deployed’. This means the usage of the term is persistently bound up with the power relations between women and men (Mahtab, 2012: 122). Women’s marginalization has often been seen as ‘natural’ and a fact of their biology (Reeves and Baden, 2000:30). However these biological differences cannot explain why women have lower status than men and less access to power. To understand the cultural values placed on someone’s sex, we need to look at the relational concept of ‘gender’ (Kabir, 2013:12).

## **Gender Relations**

These are the social relationships between men as a sex and women as a sex. Gender relations describe the social meaning of female and male and thus what is considered appropriate behavior or activity for women and men. (Haider, 1995:35, cited in Jahan, 2007:42). These relations are concerned with

how power is distributed between the sexes. As March et. al. (1999:18) observed:

“Gender relations are simultaneously relations of cooperation, connection and mutual support, and of conflict, separation, and competition, and of difference and inequality”.

They create systematic differences in men’s and women’s position in a given society. Like race, ethnicity, and class, ‘gender’ is a social category that largely establishes one’s life chances, shaping one’s participation in society and in the economy. Some societies do not experience racial or ethnic divides, but all societies experience gender differences and disparities to varying degrees (Bhattacharya, 2014:70).

Gender differences in every society have been created and reproduced through socio-cultural, religious, political and economic factors (HDC, 2000:24). One of the major findings of the recent research is that gender differences are mostly learnt (Garrett, 1992: vii). Gender relations vary according to time and place, and between different groups of people and other social relations such as class, race, ethnicity, and so on. These are also affected by geographical, economical, and political environment.

Categorically stated by Oakley (1997), women are much more rigidly constrained by gender than by sex. Correa (1994) finds that in all cultures, gender arrangements transform biological differences and sexuality into power relations and human agency (cited in Haider, 1999:36). Gender differences, based on the social construction of biological sex distinctions govern the allocation of power, authority and resources. So without focusing on gender, the situation of women in all aspects of life cannot be properly understood and problems pertaining them cannot be remedied and improved upon (Khan, 2005:254, cited in Jahan, 2007:42).

## **Inequality and Women**

Although half of the world's population consists of women, throughout the world they are treated unequally and less value is placed on their lives because of gender. They have a subordinate position, in all spheres of life. In many societies women are discriminated against by law and by custom, rendering them among the vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups. Gender discrimination may be defined as, the systematic, unfavorable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies their equal rights and opportunities. Women's differential access to power and control of resources is central to this discrimination in all institutional spheres, i.e. the household, community, market, and state (Mahtab, 2012:125).

Today, it is widely accepted that gender – like class and race/ethnicity, is a source of inequality (Mahtab, 2012:44) and this inequality exists in most parts of the world. Gender inequality refers to the disparities between women and men in society in terms of their visibility in social, economic and political spheres and shares in decision making at all levels in the society. Within the household or the family, women and girls can face discrimination in sharing of household resources and basic facilities such as food, schooling, and health care and so on. In most developing countries usually every family is biased towards son. At its most extreme, gender discrimination can lead to preference of the son, expressed in sex selective abortion or female infanticide. In the labor market, unequal pay, occupational segregation into low skill and low paid work limit women's earning in comparison to those of men of similar educational levels (Kabir, 2013:14). Women face inequality in terms of ownership of property and even basic assets such as home and land. Gender bias in professional training, employment and promotion are examples of professional inequality to women. Women's lack of representation and voice in decision making bodies in the community and the state perpetuates the inequality.



As a result women and men do not have the same benefit of growth and development. Statistics reveal the following:

Women perform 67 percent of the world's working hours.

Women earn 10 percent of the world's income.

Women constitute two thirds of the world's illiterate.

Women own less than one percent of the world's property. (Mahtab, 2012: 132).

### **Gender Equality and Gender Equity**

Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes<sup>6</sup>, rigid gender roles and prejudices. It means that different behavior, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male and female (ILO, 2000: 48). The goal of gender equality is to treat everyone the same. But the principle of equal treatment ignores the fact that people differ in their capacities, resources and experiences. Thus, equality means that different behavior, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favored and do not give rise to different consequences that reinforce inequalities (European Commission, 2004).

However, sometimes, even if men and women are accorded equal quantities of resources, equality may not be achieved because of prior disadvantages or historical discrimination, which cannot be erased within a short time (Mahtab, 2012:130). The concept of equality acknowledges that, differential treatment

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<sup>6</sup> Gender stereotypes are beliefs held about typical characteristics, traits and activities that are deemed appropriate for men and women in a society.

of women and men may sometimes be required to achieve sameness of results, particularly where there are glaring instances of persistent discrimination against women, and inequality between women and men because of the different life conditions. Gender equality can be achieved through gender equity.

### **Gender Equity**

This means fairness of treatment for men and women according to their respective needs. Equity has the goal of providing everyone with the full range of opportunities and benefits. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities (ILO, 2000: 48). Gender equality is the goal, while gender equity is the practice which help in achieving the goal. Outcomes reflecting similar or equal inputs, just and fair evaluation of men and women's efforts lead to gender equity, justice and fairness, according to Mahtab (2012: 131).

### **Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender mainstreaming is currently seen as the dominant conceptual model for promoting social justice and equality for women. It is based on the recognition that gender inequality operates at all levels and in all sectors in society, and thus needs to be addressed in the mainstreams where choices are considered and decisions are made that affect economic, social and political options.

A mainstreaming strategy is concerned with achieving a more equal balance in the relative position of women and men through creating space for everyone in the organization as well as in the communities. It attempts to ensure that women and men benefit equitably from all, that society has to offer, and are equally empowered to affect its governance and decisions. It is a process of ensuring that all our work, and the way we do it, contributes to gender

equality by transforming the balance of power between women and men (ACFOA, 2004).

The United Nations' Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) pointed out in details the meaning of gender mainstreaming:

“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.” (UN ECOSOC, 1997:2, cited in Khan, 2005:256).

At the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, gender mainstreaming was established as the internationally agreed strategy for governments and development organizations to promote gender equality. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) adopted the policy of mainstreaming which tells that:

“In addressing the inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision making at all levels, governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively” (UN, 1995).

Consequently, in Bangladesh, government and non-governmental organizations(NGOs) took steps to implement mainstreaming policies to increase female participation and to ensure that institutions, policies and programs responds to the needs and interests of women as well as men, and distribute benefits equitably between them to achieve just results for all citizens.

Thus gender mainstreaming implies the integration of gender equality concerns into every aspect of an organization's priorities and procedures and

this has increasingly come to signify that gender equality goals can be achieved by increasing the number of women within organizations and in positions of decision making. But gender streaming does not mean only having an equal number of women and men in the organization or supporting exclusively for women, although it includes these aspects.

It can be seen as a strategy for bringing about gender equality through creating space for everyone---women and men, in the organizations as well as in communities to contribute to the process of articulating a shared vision of sustainable human development and translating it into reality (UNDP, 2000). It is not simply about integrating or including women in development agendas. While representation of women is an essential element in gender mainstreaming, increasing the number of women is not enough (UN, 2003). Gender mainstreaming involves changing policies and institutions so that they actively promote gender equality. It is a long-term, transformative process that involves rethinking of socio-cultural values and development goals. It entails challenging the status quo--rethinking development priorities and mechanisms, in lights of the needs and perspectives of both women and men in support of the goal of gender equality (Schalkwyk et.al., 1996:15). It reveals the need for changes in goals, strategies and actions to ensure that both women and men can influence, participate in, and benefit from development processes (UN, 2001). That is why this may require changes in organizations---structures, procedures and cultures---- to create organizational environments, which are conducive to the promotion of gender equality (UN, 2002, cited in Ahmed, 2012:6).

Gender mainstreaming encompasses all aspects of planning, implementing and monitoring any social, political or economic action (Mehra and Gupta, 2006, cited in Ahmed, 2012:21). A common understanding is that implementation involves changes in both 'internal' organizational and 'external' operational procedures. The former refers to changes needed

within organizations to embrace the goals and values of gender mainstreaming and to alter systems and procedures to meet these goals. Changes may include staffing and personnel policies such as hiring more women or appointing a particular percentage to leadership positions or more structural elements such as changing the 'culture' of the organization through gender equality mandates to make the workplace more egalitarian. The 'external' dimension generally pertains to the steps needed to mainstream gender into development operations such as design, implementation, and evaluation. These steps may include influencing goals, strategies, and resource allocations at the start and providing specialized gender technical input such as gender analysis and technical assistance for the design, implementation, and evaluation phases (Ahmed, 2012:22).

Kardam (1998) stated that, mainstreaming gender is both a technical and political process which requires shifts in organizational cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures and resources allocation of international agencies, government and NGOs. An important aspect of this process is the increased involvement of women in decision making processes (formal and informal) and planning in order to influence the entire agenda. This goes beyond the participation of women in equal numbers as beneficiaries of current initiatives to a form of participation that enables women as well as men to influence the entire agenda and basic priorities (Schalkwyk et. al., 1996:7).

Gender mainstreaming is a political process that alters the balance of power, it is inherently "complex and resistance will come in many forms" (Schalkwyk et. al., 1996:5). Power is challenged not only because mainstreaming promotes women as decision makers, but also because it supports women's collective action in redefining development agendas. Thus, gender mainstreaming has the potential to be transformative in nature.

According to Rao and Kelleher (2002), gender mainstreaming involves the development and implementation of processes, capacities and techniques, as well as shifts in structural and normative dimensions such as beliefs, norms and power. They suggest three dimensions in which changes are needed ----in gender infrastructure, within organizations and in institutions. Gender infrastructure involves putting in place gender policies, gender units, increased female staffs and managers and additional resources for women's programs. Organizational changes refer to improving the work-family balance and equalizing power relations within organizations. While institutional changes refer to broader societal shifts needed to change embedded power relationships and gender roles and relationships throughout the social structure in families, communities, markets and the state.

Mainstreaming gender into our organizational culture, structure and work necessitates not only understanding what this goal should be, but also how it can be achieved. According to Maya Buvinic:

“The task of ‘mainstreaming’ gender in organizations needs attention on three issues: the internal and external political processes in which a particular development organization and its members may be engaged; the setting up of the so-called machineries, entrusted with the task of incorporating women and /or gender issues into the design and implementation of policies; the development of appropriate tools and technical capabilities” (Buvinic, 1984:21).

Recent reviews and evaluation show a huge gap between policy commitments made at Beijing and actual implementation (Hannan, 2004 and Moser and Moser, 2005). In fact, evaluators assert that policy commitments to gender mainstreaming ‘evaporated’ or became ‘invisible’ in planning and implementation (MacDonald, 2003, cited in Ahmed, 2012:23). The essence of gender mainstreaming makes it a challenge to implement. The task is formidable not only because of the inherently political nature of its transformative potential, but because of the challenge of scale in terms of

range and the nature of change required (Hafner-Burton and Pollack, 2002 cited in Riley, 2004, 111).

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

This section deals with the theoretical framework used in this study. As this research tried to assess the gaps between gender streaming policy of the government (quota reservation) and its implementation modality, obviously this study has considered the policy implementation theory.

### **Policy Implementation: A Conceptual Framework**

In its simplest sense, policy refers to a board statement, which reflects future goals and aspirations and provides guidelines for carrying out those goals. When a government takes a decision or chooses a course of action in order to solve a social problem and adopts a specific strategy for its planning and implementation, it is known as public policy (Anderson, 1975, cited in Osman, 2004:35).

Public policy making has been disaggregated into a series of stages referred to as policy cycle. It involves (1) agenda setting (ii) policy formulation and adoption (iii) policy implementation and (iv) policy evaluation. Implementation has been considered as the most critical phase of policy process by the policy scientists.

Literally 'implementation' means putting policy into effect. Policy implementation denotes translation of promises, hopes and aspirations of a polity into concrete outputs and outcomes. According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:23), policy implementation is the process of interactions

between the setting of goals and the actions geared to achieving them. Proper implementation requires government officials to translate broad agreement into specific decisions. Furthermore the degree of goals accomplished through specific decision could be a measurement of the success of policy implementation (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973:26).

A more specific definition of policy implementation is from Van Meter and Van Horn (1975: 447), who state that:

“Policy implementation encompasses those actions by public and private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions”.

This definition includes both one term effort to transform decisions into operational terms, and continuing efforts to achieve large and small changes mandated by policy decisions. In general, the task of implementation is to establish a link that allows the goals of public policies to be realized as outcomes of governmental activity. It involves, therefore, the creation of a ‘policy delivery system’, in which specific means are designed and pursued in the expectation of arriving at particular ends (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975:446).

O’Toole and his colleagues stated that policy implementation refers to the connection between the expression of governmental intention and its results (O’Toole et al. 1995:43). Policy implementation includes output and impacts. Policy outputs are the tangible manifestations of policies, the observable and measureable results of policy adoption and implementation. Policy impacts are the effects that policy outputs have on society. These are the policy’s consequences in terms of the policy’s stated goals as well as of the society’s fundamental beliefs.

Bardach (1980:30) views policy implementation as part of the business of the political process. He gives the opinion that policy implementation is likely to



be related to politics which is a struggle among interest groups. In this process, various special interests interact with each other "all pursuing their goals, which might or might not be compatible with the goals of the policy mandate" (Khan, 1987:32).

Grindle (1980:5) also views implementation as a political and administrative process and says that policy implementation especially in the developing countries are very much affected by its 'policy content and policy context'.<sup>7</sup> He also tries to explain how policy outcome is being affected by these two factors.

Another scholar, Kerr (1981:362) defines policy implementation as the study of an organization's capability in utilizing resources to reach policy objectives. Chandarason (2005:129) also provided a definition of policy implementation by emphasizing the implementing organization. The organization must exercise all of its resources and mechanisms to achieve policy objectives. The implementation stage involves assigning the program to an agency and giving it the money and authority to hire personnel and make other operational decisions about tasks to be performed and procedures by which the program will be operated. Overall, policy implementation is defined as the carrying out of activities by implementers to achieve the set policy's objectives and goals.

In simplest way policy implementation includes what goes on between the pronouncement of a policy and its actual effect (Sapru, 1998). It has been labeled as a tension generating force in society. Tensions are generated between and within four components of the implementing process: idealized policy, implementing organization, target group and environmental factors. The tensions result in transaction patterns which may or may not match the expectations of outcome of the policy formulators. The transaction patterns

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<sup>7</sup> Implementing activities are influenced by content of policy which includes( interests affected, types of benefits, extent of change envisioned, site of decision making, program implementers, resources committed) and context of implementation which includes (power, interests and strategies of actors involved, institution and regime characteristics, compliance and responsiveness).

may become crystallized into institutions. Both the transaction patterns and the institutions may generate tension which, by feedback to the policy makers and implementers, may support or reject further implementation of the policy (Smith, 1973:197, cited in Chowdhury, 2011:136). Therefore, it is important to look at policy implementation not solely in terms of putting policy into effect, but also in terms of observing what actually happens.

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983:20-21) provide an inclusive definition of implementation. They explain it as:

“The carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute but which can also take the form of important executive orders or court decisions. Ideally, that decision identifies the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued, and in a variety of ways, “structures” the implementation process. The process normally runs through a number of stages beginning with passage of the basic statute, followed by the policy outputs (decisions) of the implementing agencies, the compliance of target groups with those decisions, the actual impacts-----both intended and unintended----- of those outputs, the perceived impacts of agency decisions, and finally, important revisions(or attempted revisions) in the basic [policy].”

Grindle and Thomas (1991:21) pointed that, “the process of implementation leads to outcome quite different than those intended and anticipated by analysts and decision makers.” The content of the policy as well as its impact may be substantially modified at the implementation stage. A great deal of policy is modified in the implementation process through resistance, acceptance and ignorance, all of which create ‘implementation gap’ and reduce the significance of policy decision (Osman, 2004:197).

The term ‘implementation gap’ coined by Dunsire (1978) refers to the missing link that exists between the policy and its subsequent delivery i.e. the discrepancy between what works in theory and what is done in practices (Burke, et. al., 2012:19). In other words it is the missing link or the gap that emerge between the intent and action.

## **Why does implementation matter?**

There is broad agreement that implementation is a complex, interactive and dynamic process. It is not necessarily a coherent, continuous process, instead, it is frequently fragmented and interrupted (Walt and Gilson, 1994:361). Varieties of unpredictable things may happen in the process of carrying out the policy decisions. A wide variety of factors can and do frequently intervene between the statement of policy goals and their actual achievement in the society (Grindle, 1980:3). In some instances, it may be difficult to measure the degree of importance of certain factors. In any policy implementation study, one tends to find myriad implementation variables. The key to implementation performance is to understand the specific situation where the policy initiative is to be put into practice.

Implementation involves an ongoing process of decision making by key actors who work in complex policy and institutional contexts and face pressures from interested as well as opposing parties (Nakamura and Smallwood, 1980:46, Grindle and Thomas, 1991:68, Calista, 1994:32, cited in Mthethwa, 2012:38). As such, the motivation, flow of information, and balance of power and resources among stakeholders influence policy implementation processes (Bressers, 2004:210).

Unanticipated changes in the social, political and economic environments may pose problems, organizational and procedural arrangements may work contrary to the intended strategy, and resources may be insufficient to effectively meet policy objectives (Palumbo and Calista, 1990: 4, cited in Zafarullah and Haque, 2012:241). The dynamic nature and style of implementation is also shaped by different behaviors by the political and administrative role-players concerned (Brynard, 2009:557).

Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2005:44) argue that the policy implementation process is at least as political as it is technical. It is complex, highly interactive

and calls for consensus building. Thus it can be pointed out that implementation does not always happen automatically and, as a result, it can be either successful or unsuccessful, altered after a decision to pursue it has been made, and removed from the agenda because those responsible for implementing it are convinced that it cannot be carried through (Mthethwa, 2012:38).

## **Policy Implementation Theories**

There is no definitive theory of implementation or no single framework commonly accepted in the field. Since 1970s, the 'process in between policy making and effects' (i.e. implementation) became the object of policy research and since then, implementation studies have elaborated frameworks and models on the basis of diverse sets of explanatory variables; yet, no general theory of implementation has emerged (Winter, 2003: 205- 207).

The literature on implementation is usually organized into three main strands: top-down and bottom-up approaches, and synthesizing attempts.

### **Top-down Approach**

The top-down approach is hierarchical in nature and looks at implementation as a mere administrative execution of political decisions. This approach assumes that policy goals can be specified by policy makers and that implementation can be carried out successfully by setting up certain mechanisms (Palumbo and Calista, 1990:13). A vital point is the policy-makers capability to exercise control over the environment and implementers see implementation as concerned with the degree to which the actions of implementing officials and target groups coincide with the goals embodied in an authoritative decision (Paudel, 2009:39). Statutory decisions (e.g., those contained in a law) are made by the decision-makers located at the top of the central government, and direct the lower-level process of implementation

that takes place within bureaucracy (at the bottom) (Andresen et. al., 1995: 10, Barrett, 2006: 19, and Matland ,1995: 146).

Key academics of this theory include Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), Bardach (1977) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979, 1980 and 1983). The top-down researchers focus on a specific political decision, normally a law. They follow the implementation down through the system, with special interest with higher level decision makers. This approach is characterized by its hierarchical and control themes (Mthethwa, 2012: 39) in order to structure the implementation process and to minimize the number of decision points that could be vetoed (Winter,2003: 213).

The most relevant limit of the top-down approach is the emphasis on the capability of central policy makers to control the whole process of implementation, and the lack of attention on the role of policy implementers and target groups (Howlett and Ramesh 2003: 189, 190; Matlland 1995: 147-148). This approach assumes that clear objectives from top officials will lead to successful implementation. Top-downers neglect the reality of policy modification or distortion at the hands of implementers. From a normative perspective one argues that local service deliverers are the experts and have the knowledge of the true problems and therefore, they are in a better position to propose purposeful policy (Paudel, 2009: 41). This approach has been accused of seeing implementation as a purely administrative process and of failing to realize the political realities that account for policies with multiple goals, vague language and complex implementation structures (May,2003:224).

In the top-down approach, policy making is highly centralized, statist in orientation, exclusive in its composition, oblivious of non-state actors and policy subsystems, and insensitive to local demands (Sabatier, 1986, cited in Zafarullah and Huque, 2012: 244).

## **Bottom-up Approach**

Such lack of attention was addressed by the bottom-up approach, which developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s in response to top-down studies. Rather than focusing on leadership and control, the bottom-up approach emphasized negotiation and consensus between policy makers and administrative implementers, and participatory mechanisms (Barrett 2006: 20; Najam 1995: 12; Parsons 1995: 469). Many research studies suggest that policy outcome is not necessarily related to policy objectives. Therefore, outcome and objectives may not have causal relations.

The bottom-up theory begins with those directly involved in policy implementation. The academics of this approach tries to conceptualized implementation as an open and dynamic process, where the bottom of bureaucracy (i.e. the actors directly involved in policy delivery, often referred to as 'peripheral actors', 'service deliverers', 'local implementers', etc.) as well as the policy receivers ('target groups') become relevant (Andresen et al. 1995: 10; Maarse 1984: 1; Matland 1995: 148-150). The aim of bottom-up approach is to explain what actually happens when policies are implemented. This approach is dependent upon the interaction among actors in the local sphere and the implementers sought to achieve greater allegiance between policy making and policy delivery. Key academics of this approach includes Lipsky (1980), Elmore (1978) and Hjern (1981).

Lipsky (1980) claims that street-level bureaucrats (i.e. the front line staff in delivery agencies) are the real policy makers (Winter, 2003:214) because they have a better understanding of what clients need as it is they, who have direct contact with the public. He focuses on the discretionary decisions that each street level bureaucrats makes in relation to individual citizens when they are delivering policies to them. This discretionary role in delivering services or enforcing regulations make street level bureaucrats essential actors in

implementing public policies (Paudel, 2009:41) and shape the whole implementation process. Hjern and Porter (1981) went beyond administration's walls and emphasized the importance of interactions between various organizations involved in implementation (i.e. 'implementation structures'), both public and private actors. In the bottom-up approach the decision inputs are provided by junior officials at the local level as well as relevant non-state stakeholders. It is premised on community participation, grassroots movements, and local decision making (Zafarullah and Huque, 2012: 244).

However, the bottom-up approach does not provide satisfactory solutions to the problems of public policy, as its rejection of the authority of policymakers is questionable in the light of standard democratic theory. Although the bottom-up approach has made an important contribution in showing the full complexity of the implementation process, bottom-up academics have overemphasized the role of local implementers and neglected the borders of the policy frame decided by the policy designers (Matland 1995: 150). It is difficult to think of ways to change the street-level behaviour in the context of this model, and no thought is given how to use discretion as a device for improving the effectiveness of policies at street level (Elmore, 1978:208, cited in Paudel, 2009:42). This approach cannot successfully explain why coping strategies occur and why they vary.

As for the critique of top-down and bottom-up theories Lane (1995:30) states that, the models lack perspective and challenge. The reason is that the top-down models overemphasize responsibility by sticking to the outlined structure of control, while the bottom-up models overemphasize trust in the implementer's discretion in handling uncertainty.

## **Synthesis of Both Perspectives**

The acknowledgement of implementation as a complex process which stands between 'central guidance' and 'local autonomy'<sup>8</sup> characterized the "re-discovering' of implementation studies, which took place in the late 1990s. New approaches developed as attempts to combine top-down and bottom-up models by synthesizing the variables proposed (Matland 1995: 150; O'Toole 2000: 265-272) which view policy implementation as a bargaining, exchange and negotiation action. The aim of this approach is to explain how policy is viewed as the product of bargaining and negotiation among interests (Mthethwa, 2012:39).

Authors like Sabatier (1986)<sup>9</sup> and Matland (1995) have tried to synthesize part of the variables studied in the previous approaches. Some other synthesizers of both the perspectives include Goggin (1990), Grindle and Thomas (1991) and Winter (1990 and 2003)<sup>10</sup>.

For a parsimonious recombination of variables this research has not relied only on implementation literature from its different theoretical perspectives (top-down, bottom-up, synthesis of both), but also on works focusing on third world countries (as in Grindle) in order to analyse the variables used by implementation studies in these countries.

## **Models on Implementation Studies**

Numerous models have been developed by policy researchers to help understand the policy implementation process. The models reveal

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<sup>8</sup>"The preferences of street-level bureaucrats and the negotiations within implementation networks have to be taken into account to the same extent as centrally defined policy objectives and efforts of hierarchical control" (Pülzl & Treib xxxx: 17, cited in Ferraro,2008: 9).

<sup>9</sup>Paul Sabatier (1986) in the second half of the 1980s opens his top-down approach to some bottom-up assumptions and moves to the advocacy coalition framework (see also Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993) where, nevertheless, the emphasis is rather on policy change than policy implementation (based on Hill & Hupe 2002 and Winter 2006).

<sup>10</sup> The model was presented in 1990 and elaborated in 2003.



relationships among various factors which may cause the failure or success of policy implementation. "No single model captures the full complexity of the implementation process" (Elmore, 1978: 129). In the absence of a grand theory of implementation, some selected models of implementation studies which provide the fundamentals of the theoretical framework for this research are briefly reviewed in this section. Both top-down and synthesis approaches were used in explaining implementation in this research.

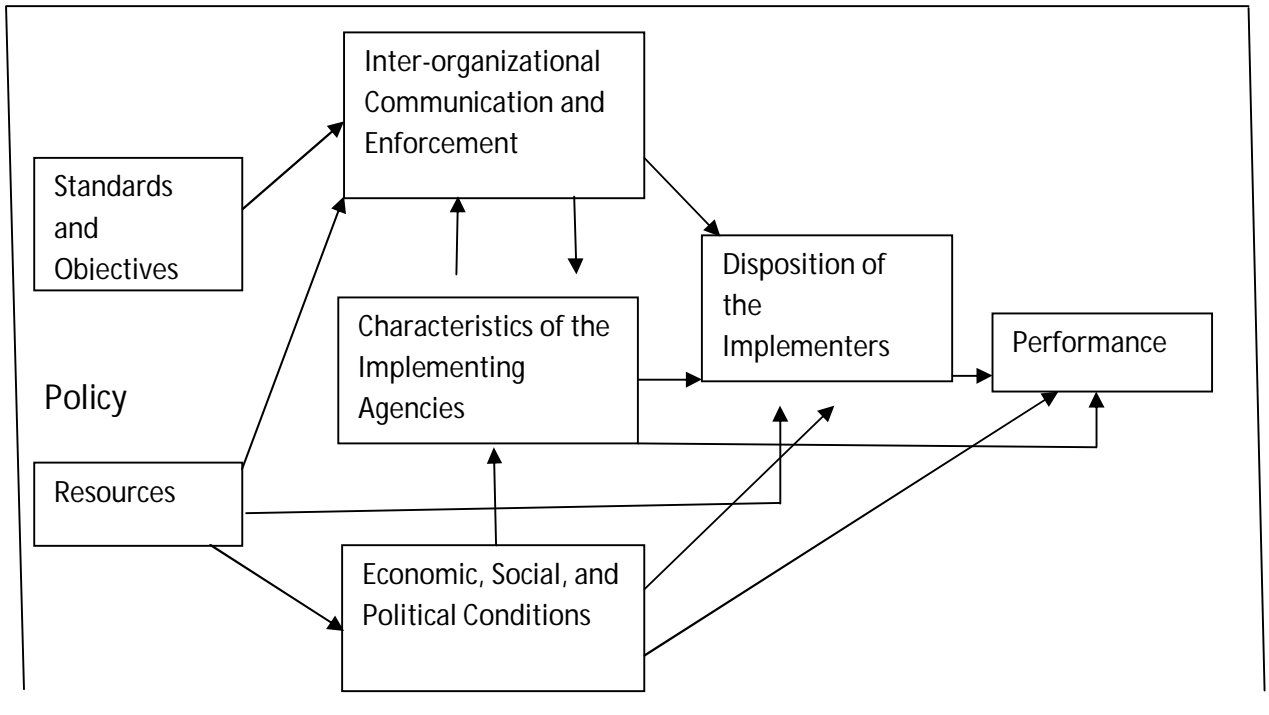
## **Van Meter and Van Horn's Model**

The first elaborate analytical framework of top-down approach for examining the policy implementation was advanced by Van Meter and Van Horn which they called **Intergovernmental Policy Implementation Model**.

According to them (1977:104), the model directs attention to a set of variables and their interrelations that determine policy performance within a particular jurisdiction. This model includes eight variable clusters that influence implementation efforts to achieve policy performance. In this model two areas are clearly distinguishable: the policy area and the performance area. There is a third in the middle without a specific name given by the authors, which we can call the intermediate area or the intervening area. For this study this is a very important area but equally important is how this area links with the other two areas.

The six variables clusters of intervening area are: inter-organizational communication and enforcement, characteristics of the implementing agencies, economic, social and political conditions and disposition of the implementers and how they link to the policy area through standards and resources (Figure-2.1).

Figure 2.1 Intergovernmental Policy Implementation Model of Van Meter and Van Horn



Source: Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 403

The model recognizes the interrelationships that exist between the three areas. To them, the model's utility can be illustrated by employing the three general explanations for unsuccessful implementation first proposed by Kaufman (1973:2). These are:

**The Communication Process:** Effective implementation requires that implementers know what they are supposed to do. As messages pass through any communication network, distortions are likely to occur producing contradictory directives, ambiguities, inconsistencies in instructions and incompatible requirements. Even when directives and requirements are clear, problems may arise as implementers fail to comprehend fully what is expected of them.

**The Capability Problem:** Successful implementation is also a function of the implementing organization's capacity to do what is expected to do. The ability to implement policies may be hindered by such factors as overworked and

incompetent staff, insufficient information, political support and financial resources, and impossible time constraints.

**Dispositional Conflicts:** Implementation effort may fail because implementers refuse to do what they are supposed to do. Dispositional conflicts occur because implementers may reject the goals of their superior.

## **Mazmanian and Sabatier's Model**

This top-down model is comprehensive in explaining the variables involved in policy implementation. Mazmanian and Sabatier developed a model with 16 independent variables related to three broad categories of tractability, ability of statute to structure implementation, and non-statutory variables that affect implementation. The independent variables are then linked to five dependent variables (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1989:20-39).

### **Independent Variables**

#### **1. Tractability of the problem**

Tractability means the ability to manage policy related problems. The four variables in this category are:

Technical difficulties;

Diversity of prescribed behavior;

Target group as a percentage of the population;

Extent of behavioral change required.

#### **2. Ability of statute to structure implementation**

It means how the policy formulators structure implementation in the statutes. The seven variables in this type are:

Precision and clear ranking of legal objectives;

Validity of the causal theory;

Initial allocation of financial resources;

Hierarchical integration within and among implementation institutions;

Decision rules of implementing agencies;  
Official's commitment to statutory objectives;  
Formal access by outsiders.

**3. Non – statutory variable affecting implementation**

The non- statutory variable affecting Implementation incorporate five contextual and environmental factors which are:

Socio-economic conditions and technology;  
Public support;  
Attitudes and resources of constituency groups;  
Support from sovereigns;  
Commitment and leadership skill of implementing officials.

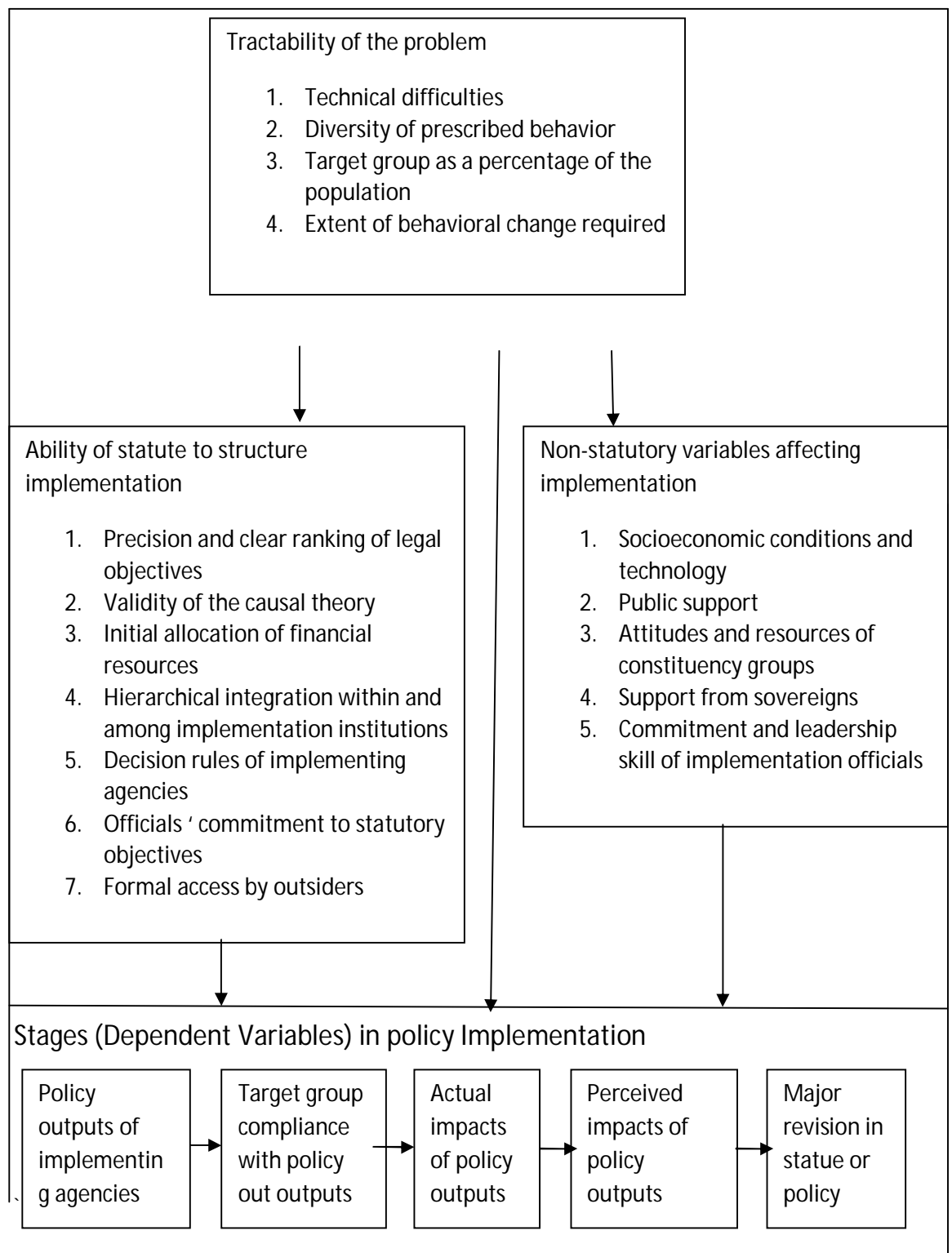
**Dependent Variables**

The five dependent variables in the model are:

Policy outputs of implementing agencies;  
Target group compliance with policy outputs;  
Actual impacts of policy outputs;  
Perceived impacts of policy outputs;  
Major revision in statute or policy.

The model is presented in the following figure (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Mazmanian and Sabatier's Model



Source: Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1980: 454.

For Mazmanian and Sabatier clear and consistent policy objectives, a sound causal theory, capacity at the implementation level, extraneous conditions

irrelevant to policy objectives, local and legislative support throughout the implementation and avoiding conflicting public policies along the way are important for ensuring effective implementation.

### **Matland's Model**

Matland presents the **Ambiguity and Conflict Model** as a combination of the top-down and bottom-up perspectives. He spells out how ambiguity and conflict affect policy implementation. Depending on the degree of ambiguity in goals and means of a policy and the degree of conflict, Matland (1995:145) proposed four policy implementation paradigms: low conflict-low ambiguity (administrative implementation), high conflict-low ambiguity (political implementation), high conflict –high ambiguity (symbolic implementation) and low conflict –high ambiguity (experimental implementation).

### **Grindle and Thomas's Model**

Grindle and Thomas (1991) proposed an **Interactive Model of Policy Implementation**<sup>11</sup> which assumes that “a state of equilibrium [i.e. acceptance of policy arrangements by target groups and state interests] surrounds an established policy set” (Grindle and Thomas 1991: 125). The content of a reform initiative ('policy characteristics') can generate opposition in the public or bureaucratic arena ('arena of conflicts'), which obliges policy makers to mobilize a certain amount of resources to counter reactions and allow implementation (Grindle and Thomas 1991: 149).

Their framework for policy study looks at “how reform proposals get on the agenda for government action, what factors influence the decision makers and the linkages between agenda setting and decision-making process”. The central element in the model is that a policy reform initiative may be altered

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<sup>11</sup> The model is interactive in the sense that it shows how policy reform is a process, rather than a series of phases in a linear model (Grindle and Thomas, 1991:50).

or reversed at any stage in its lifecycle by the pressure and reaction to it (Paudel, 2009: 44). This model views policy reform as a process, one in which interested parties can exert pressure for change at many points. The whole framework develops around "the importance of policy elites in the policy process and the way in which state and societal interests interact in producing – or inhibiting – policy and organizational changes" (Grindle & Thomas 1991: 95 - 96).

This model is structured around three main elements: policy characteristics, arena of conflict, and resource requirements (Grindle and Thomas, 1991:127).

### **Policy Characteristics**

The policy characteristics or the policy content in Grindle (1980) refer to the characteristics of the specific policy decided which include 'policy issues' (some problems being more tractable than others), 'policy types' (how are costs and benefits distributed) and 'policy design' ('a set of objectives', 'a causal theory' and 'an implementation framework') (Winter,2003:208). For a good implementation, objectives must be clear, feasible and supported and the policy must be based on a valid theory of cause and effect linking objectives, outputs and outcomes (Sabatier,1986:314) and must contain a precise definition of the implementation framework (strategy, machinery and instrumentality) (Dunsire,1990:17; Winter,2006:155-156).

### **Arena of Conflict**

According to the characteristics of the policy, Grindle and Thomas (1991:201) expect two possible types of replies during implementation, a response within bureaucracy and a reaction from target groups, which define the arena of potential conflict.

## Resource Requirements

The level of resources required also influences implementation: when a low amount of resources is needed, policies can be more easily implemented (Grindle and Thomas, 1991:137). Under the term resources the authors distinguish between political resources (e.g. legitimacy of the political regime) and bureaucratic resources (which include financial, managerial and technical resources).

## Policy Environment

The authors also develop some considerations about the policy environment. Political and cultural factors together with social and economic components, and all other factors which cannot be controlled and predicted (i.e. media attention, public support, emergence of outside threat etc.) constitute the policy environment or otherwise said the non-statutory variables by other implementation scholars like Sabatier and Mazmanian and Winter. Policy environment cannot be neglected in the study of implementation.

## Winter's Model

One recent approach at consolidating key elements of top-down and bottom-up literature has been provided by Winter. Winter elaborated an **Integrated Implementation Model**, which represents a "framework of analysis presenting key factors and mechanisms that affect implementation outputs and outcomes" (Winter, 2003: 210). It synthesizes the most important variables analysed in implementation studies and is meant to have a general applicability (across countries and policy areas), according to Ferraro (2008:10).

The first set of variables is **policy formulation**, because roots of implementation problems can be found at this stage. For example, policy



formulation can be affected by conflicts and the search for compromise, which can lead to an unclear or inadequate policy design (Winter 2003: 208).

The second factor which affects the implementation process is, indeed, the **policy design** which briefly includes policy objectives, casual theory, and implementation framework (i.e. strategy, machinery and instrumentality) according to Winter (2003: 208-209).

The third set is represented by the **implementation process**. This relates to different degrees of commitment and coordination at various levels: intra- and inter-organizational behaviour, street-level bureaucrats' behaviour, and target groups' behaviour. Policy implementation often involves state and local governments, or various agencies at the state level; the response of these organizations to policy mandates and the coordination among them is a prerequisite for avoiding implementation failures. Therefore, like Van Meter and Van Horn, Winter brings in the same cluster both the comprehension/acceptance of policy objectives by the implementing agencies, i.e. 'agency disposition' or 'commitment', and the inter-organizational collaboration, both horizontal and vertical.

Implementation is also influenced by the discretionary power of street-level bureaucrats (as in Lipsky, 1980) and by the response of groups targeted by the policy at stake (as in Hjern and Porter, 1981).

Finally, a fourth component is considered, the **socio-economic context**, which brings together non-statutory variables (as in Sabatier 1980), policy environment (as in Grindle and Thomas) and economic, social and political conditions (as in Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975).

From the previous implementation models presented, it can be seen that the key factors in policy implementation consist of theoretical and practical problems. Theoretical problems are related to conceptual aspects i.e. the unclear independent factors influencing policy implementation. As for

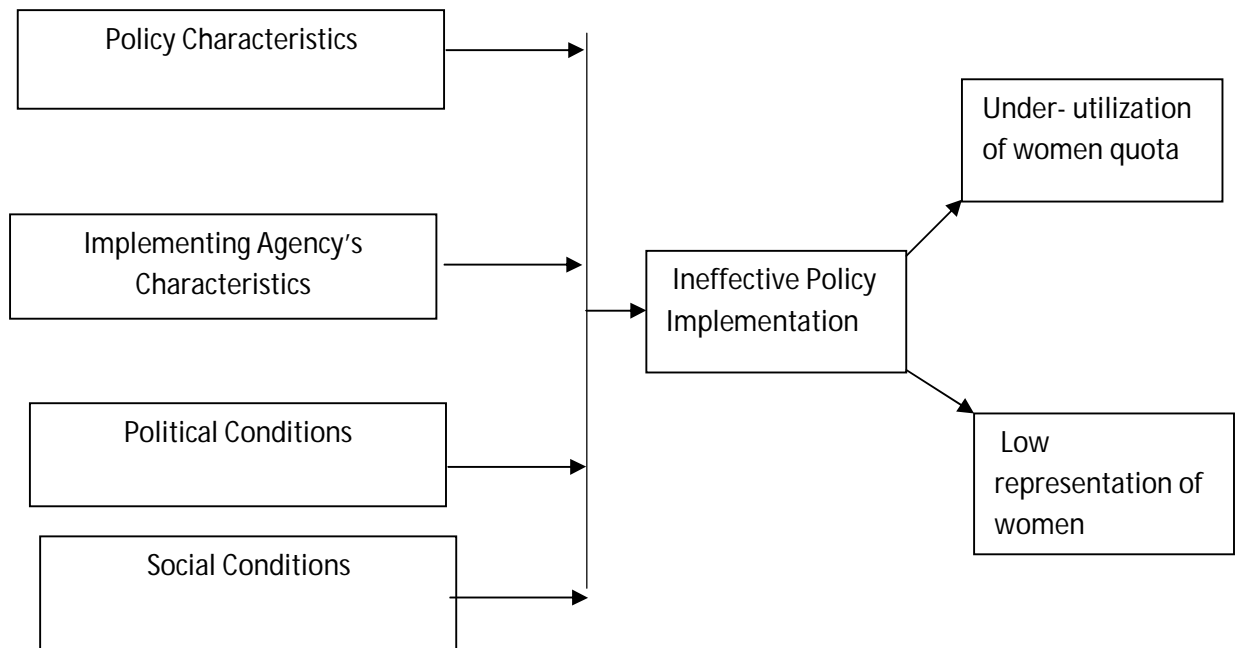
practical problems, Coombs (1980:890-891) has proposed the key obstacles against successful policy implementation as follows: 1) Unclear communication system; 2) Insufficient resources; 3) Implementer's attitude toward the policy; 4) Doubts towards action methods; 5) Conflict of interest; 6) Legal authority of policy-making unit.

### **3. Analytical Framework**

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to arrive at an understanding of the theoretical approaches to policy implementation and the factors that act as barriers to effective implementation. Since there are numerous policy implementation models, depending on the context of the research, the researcher has applied those models, particularly variables deemed suitable for this research. After carefully studying all selected policy implementation models and related studies, it was observed that many implementation models shared some important variables. Based on this theoretical validation, the models of **Winter, Grindle and Thomas, Mazmanian and Sabatier**, and **Van Meter and Van Horn** were chosen as the main references for this research which ultimately relied on the following analytical framework (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Influence of different factors on policy implementation

effectiveness.



For this study, four sets of independent variables from the aforementioned implementation models were selected for the analysis of the 'implementation gap' between government policies and practices related to achieve gender equality in BCS. The independent variables are: policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political conditions and social conditions. All the above mentioned issues/variables seemed to be directly or indirectly linked with the main spirit of top-down and synthesizing approach of policy implementation.

## **Variables in the study**

All the variables, those have been used in this study are described in details as follows.

## **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variables for this study are the problems created by ineffective policy implementation which include underutilization of women quota and low representation of women in BCS.

## **Intervening Variables**

Ineffective policy implementation ('implementation gap' between government policies and practices related to increase women representation in BCS) is the intervening variable of the study which is creating the problems. For the purpose of an operational definition of this study, effective policy implementation is regarded as the accomplishment of government's policy objective i.e. gender parity in BCS which is assessed through the percentage of female civil servants in the civil service hierarchy.

## **Independent Variables**

Four independent variables were selected for this study to explain the dependent variables. These are: policy Characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political conditions, and social conditions. The Independent variables are the factors which might be responsible for the ineffective policy implementation of the government i.e. employment of women and their representation in the civil service.

### **1. Policy Characteristics**

The policy characteristics indicate the specific form of the policy decided, which corresponds to 'policy design' present in the model proposed by Winter. The policy design is usually understood as including a set of 'objectives' and an 'implementation framework' (Birkland, 2001; Winter, 2003 and 2006) or 'means' (Matland, 1995: 158- 159; cited in Ferraro, 2008:17). Therefore, policy characteristics has two dimensions: policy objectives and policy means.

Policy characteristics may be defined as either 'strong' or 'weak'. A policy has strong characteristics when: the problem at stake is not difficult to solve, the objectives are clear, feasible and supported, the theoretical assumption is correct, and the implementation framework is well defined. On the contrary,

weak policies implying wider objectives, pursuing substantial change, affects more interests, actors, sectors and increase the level of conflicts (Grindle, 1980:8).

Policy is objective-based to serve as a guideline for implementation by the state's implementer (Anderson, 1975:3). Policy makers should ensure that there is complete understanding of, and agreement upon, the objectives to be achieved and that these conditions persist throughout the implementation process (Hill and Hupe, 2001:50). A policy must contain standards related to clarity, consistency and accuracy. A critical feature of the policy is the degree of conflict or consensus over its goals and objectives. According to Grindle and Thomas (1991:122), the characteristics of a particular policy determines the type of conflicts or opposition that surrounds its implementation.

Implementation will be most effective if there is high goal consensus among the implementers (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975:464). For this study, the clarity of the objectives of the policy on the part of the implementers and their relevance to the problems were considered.

### **i) Clarity of Objectives**

For a policy to be successful, it is important that policy objectives should be clear and well defined. Without the clarity that specific definitions offer, objectives become less clear and a policy can be ambiguously understood and implemented. In order to facilitate implementation, objectives must be clearly stated.

In broad perspective Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has policy on gender equality and this is: "Ensure equality between men and women at all levels of national life". To implement this broad policy and to increase women representation in civil service government has adopted the quota policy in case of direct recruitment to the BCS. So it is necessary that the objectives of quota policy for women in BCS recruitment should be clear in terms of

implementation. Implementers' cognizance (understanding of the policy) is critical for effective implementation. Clear objectives not only enhance 'administrator comprehension' of the intervention – which will improve the execution process – but also leave less space to discretion in action ( Barrett, 2006: 20).

## **ii) Relevance of Policy Objectives to the Problem**

The relevance of policy to the problem being studied is important and requires a theoretical framework as a basis for analysis by identifying correctly the causes of and possible solutions to the problems (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980:542).The policy decision must contain a precise definition of the means, or implementation framework, in order to help its execution (Sabatier & Mazmanian 1979: 492). The implementation framework includes a 'strategy' (or theory), the 'machinery' (or organizational structure), and 'instrumentality' (the policy tools) (Dunsire 1990: 17; Mitchell 1990: 34).

Firstly, the whole design must be based on a valid theory of cause and effect. Simply defined, a casual theory is "a theory about what causes the problem and what intervention [...] would alleviate the problem" (Birkland 2001: 161). A causal assumption (linking means to goals, and objectives to outputs and outcomes) conceived in the wrong way might lead to implementation failures (Sabatier 1980: 541; Winter 2006: 155).

Secondly, the organizational structure charged with carrying out the goals (the 'machinery' or 'intermediaries') should be clearly identified and its responsibilities precisely defined (Dunsire 1990: 17; May 2003: 229; Mitchell 1990: 34; Najam 1995: 39; Winter 2006: 155- 156).

Thirdly, 'instrumentality', which refers to the policy tools selected, must be appropriate (Dunsire 1990: 17; Mitchell 1990: 34; Najam 1995: 39; Winter 2006: 155- 156). A policy tool(or instrument) is a method (or device) through which governments address a specific problem and seek a policy objective

(Howlett and Ramesh 2003: 87). More extensively, Schneider and Ingram (1997, quoted in Birkland 2001: 163) define policy tools as “elements in policy design that cause agents or targets to do something they would not do otherwise” (behavioural change), with the intention of solving public problems and attaining policy goals (Schneider and Ingram 1997, quoted in Birkland 2001: 163).

The target group<sup>12</sup> should align with the policy’s goals and objectives. Awareness of target groups about existing problem and related policies is also needed. So the social, cultural, economic conditions of women whose situation is attempting to ameliorate through the quota policy should be taken into consideration. The objectives of the policy should be in line with the socially disadvantaged position of women in Bangladesh. The connectivity of social conditions and other conditions is crucial for analysis to find out the root cause of the problem and finally to find a solution.

## **2. Implementing Agency’s Characteristics**

Implementing agency’s characteristics is an important factor in terms of bringing effectiveness to policy implementation. Two groups of factors--endogenous and exogenous, exert influence on the way an implementing agency works. Endogenous factors are considered internal forces for example, personnel, resources, leadership, administrative structure, technical resources, employee satisfaction and so on which exert influence internally on the implementation performance of the agency. While exogenous factors are considered external forces and occur entirely outside the agency. Such as public opinion about the policy issue, political system, cultural factors together with social and economic components, interest groups, media, inter organizational collaboration, outside threats and all other factors which cannot be controlled and predicted are exogenous in nature.

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<sup>12</sup> Those groups that benefit from the policy.

Part of successful policy implementation comes from a strong implementing agency which possesses a proper and sufficient structure, resources, manpower and equipment. The formal and informal characteristics of the organization responsible for implementation affect its ability to carry out the policy objectives. Certain features of the agency's staff, structure and relations with other officials and units of government tend to limit or enhance the prospects for effective implementation. According to Van Meter and Van Horn (1977:114):

"An organization without sufficient financial and political support and without the necessary independence to make decisions and hire qualified personnel will face severe problems in administering programs."

The strong characteristics of the agency has a greater chance of effectively implementing the policy. Implementers need to have the commitment that can lead to successful implementation of the policy. In addition, the characteristics of implementing agencies is determined by the extent to which these agencies are willing to do the work (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975:455). Actually, implementing agency's characteristics is viewed as consisting of both the formal structural features of organizations and the informal attributes of their personnel. In successfully implementing the policy, leaders of those agencies need to possess leadership<sup>13</sup> in such a way that can create good teamwork among members of the organization.

For this study, implementers' attitudes (combined with their commitment, competence and leadership skills) and the independence of the agency to work towards the policy goal were included as part of the implementing agency's characteristics. In this case PSC is the implementing agency as it is the sole authority to select suitable candidates to be appointed to civil service positions.

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<sup>13</sup> The capacity to provide direction and vision for implementation and overcoming challenges that occur during the process.



### **i) Attitude**

In addition to the professional competence the attitude of implementers plays an important role in the success or failure of a policy. Policy directives may be clear and very well communicated but negative orientations of implementers toward policy may affect implementation. The goals of a policy may be rejected for a variety of reasons: they may affect implementer's value systems, extra organizational loyalties, sense of self interest or existing and preferred relationships (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975:472). Therefore, for front line implementers or street level bureaucrats that do the execution of the daily work, their compliance with the policy is crucial for policy implementation effectiveness.

The selection of women cadre officers largely depends on the attitude and gender sensitivity of the chair and members in the viva boards of BCS examinations. In this case, implementer's attitude was measured in terms of their gender sensitivity, positive orientation towards women employment and acceptance of the quota policy.

### **ii) Independence**

Outside interference or control over implementing agency's activities might affect its implementation capability. In this study, independence refers to the extent to which the PSC is autonomous from the executive's control. The relationship between PSC, Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) and the other ministries/divisions/departments has been investigated on this account.

## **3. Political Conditions**

It is inevitable that politics and external environment have impacts on implementation performance. Political conditions reflect the political circumstances in which the policy is being implemented and might have a

profound effect on the performance of implementing agencies. According to Hogwood and Gunn :

“The term ‘political’ includes but is certainly not limited to party politics: rather, it refers to patterns of power and influence between and within organizations” (Hogwood and Gunn 1984: 15, quoted in Morgan 1990: 52 and Ferraro,2008:30).

Even when policies are adequately designed, policy implementation can fail if it does not take into account the realities of ‘power’, defined as “the ability of groups opposed to the policy to block the efforts of its supporters (Hogwood and Gunn 1984: 15, quoted in Morgan 1990: 52).The amount of support and who it comes from like lobbyists or interest groups or political parties matters. The extent of support for or against the policy by political elites and by public and private individuals and groups influences implementation efforts and results, regardless of the positions of the implementers or the capability of the agency implementing the policy. If a policy is too politically contentious, socially sensitive, and economically burdensome, obtaining legitimacy and thus implementation would be difficult. It then becomes critical to mobilize support and promote the policy (Zafarullah and Haque, 2012:243).

Public and elite opinions and mobilized interest groups in support or opposition to a policy are important determinants of the policy implementation process according to Van Meter and Van Horn (1975:472). ‘A variety of pressures’ shape the whole implementation process – political elites (at national, regional and local level), implementing agencies, economic interests, beneficiaries, etc. (Grindle, 1980:11-13). Therefore, a political perspective must be kept in mind while analysing implementation.

In this study, how the party in power try to influence the policy implementation process has taken into consideration.

#### **4. Social Conditions**

To what extent and how will prevailing social and economic conditions be affected by implementation of the policy in question, might have a profound effect on the performance of implementing agencies. Social conditions especially the culture of a society plays a strong role in the field of women employment.

Culture can be defined as, "the body of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits constituting a distinct complex of tradition of a racial, religious or social group" (Webster's Third New International Dictionary). In other words, culture is a complex typical of behavior or standardize social characteristics peculiar to a specific group, occupation, profession, sex, age, or social class. A more comprehensive definition of culture was adopted at the World Conference on Cultural Policies (Mexico, 1982):

"Culture.... Is ..... the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs."<sup>14</sup>

Thus beliefs, behaviors, norms, values that shared by the members of a society which are distinctive to that particular group can be considered as culture.

Culture is part of the fabric of every society. It shapes the way things are done and our understanding of why this should be so. Culture influences our daily lives in the way we eat, dress, greet and treat one another, teach our children, manage organizations and solve problems. Humans are not born with a culture but rather born into a society that teaches us the collective ways of life we call culture (Robertson, 1981:59-60, cited in Kabir, 2013:30).

Basically culture means a way of life in a particular society or a group and it is carried on from one generation to the next continuously. Culture is valued by

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<sup>14</sup> See UNESCO website on Culture and Development  
<[http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/mexico/html\\_\\_eng/page1.htm](http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/mexico/html__eng/page1.htm)>.

society and has provided people with ideals for living (Suthasasna, 1976:132-133).

Gender identities and gender relations are critical aspects of culture because they shape the way daily life is lived in the family as well as in the wider community and the workplace. Gender like race and ethnicity, functions as an organizing principle for society because of the cultural meanings given to being male or female. This is evident in the division of labor according to gender. Cultural factors like religion, community structure and patterns of family life of a country have a profound influence over the employment policy of that country.

Culturally, Bangladeshi society shows features of a masculine culture. According to Hofstede:

“A society is called masculine when gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be decisive, tough and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede, 2005:120).

The general pattern of gender relations in Bangladeshi society reveals that women have less personal autonomy, fewer resources at their disposal, and limited influence over the decision making processes that shape the society and their own lives. The people in general in Bangladesh expect that women should consider domestic work as their primary duty and career as secondary regardless of occupational qualifications. Women are socialized to abandon careers if conflict with family needs arise (Ilays, 1997:39).

Therefore, a society's culture can either support or oppose women's career aspirations of becoming civil servants. Organizational culture<sup>15</sup> and organizational support<sup>16</sup> in the civil service might work contrary to the intended strategy. Some cultural or gender barriers prevent women to behave

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<sup>15</sup> The norms, values and beliefs that exist within an organization.

<sup>16</sup> Structures and systems within an organization that are aligned with, and which promote effective implementation.

in the desired fashion i.e. from utilizing the existing facilities (women quota). For this study the masculine cultural pattern was studied to see its effects on policy implementation related to increase women's share in BCS.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter is based on a review of literature. It has analyzed various conceptual issues and the major theories of policy implementation in order to devise a framework of analysis of the women quota implementation policy in the recruitment of BCS. It also identified the factors which affect the policy performance. It should however be noted here, that the presence of the above variables do not necessarily result in successful implementation or the mere existence of these variables will not lead to ineffective policy performance. There is a need for searching some interaction pattern or the way of structuring the process of implementation to achieve a high probability of policy accomplishment which will be explored in the following chapters. Before making a relationship between policy (women quota) and policy outcomes (women quota utilization) it is important to know about the civil service system of the country which is addressed in the next chapter.

# Chapter Three

## The Civil Service in Bangladesh

### Introduction

The BCS, being at the top of the bureaucratic structure, is the principal instrument for planning, executing, supervising and monitoring the tasks of government (Zafarullah, 2011:25). The government depends on the efficiency and performance of the civil service to make its rule credible to the people. The presence of an efficient and quality oriented civil service is considered an important indicator of good governance.

This chapter attempts to present a brief overview of the civil service system in Bangladesh: its genesis, present structure and features, the present recruitment policy and procedure, and the organizational structure and functions of the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) and PSC as the main recruitment agency of the government.

### Civil Service: The Concept

The term CivilService emerged in statecraft during the late eighteenth century when the British East India Company (EIC)<sup>17</sup> acquired political status and power in the Indian sub- continent and its trading operations were replaced by governmental functions. The term was first used in 1785 to distinguish covenanted civilian employees from the military personnel of the EIC, and also, later, the uncovenanted civil service of India (Ali, 2004:11).

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<sup>17</sup> Starting as a monopolistic trading body, the company became involved in politics and acted as an agent of British imperialism in India from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to the mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The term 'civil' meaning 'non –military' continued through the early part of the nineteenth century in the context of the British Civil Service. In 1931, the Tomlin Commission defined civil service as,

“Servants of the Crown, other than holders of political or judicial offices, who are employed in a civil capacity and whose remuneration is paid wholly and directly out of moneys voted by Parliament”.

This definition convey that judges, magistrates and other judicial officers as well as the members of legislature and other elected officials are not included as part of the civil service.

As stated by Finer (1941),

“Civil service is a professional body of officials permanent, paid and skilled. Policy formulation is the function of cabinet/ministry, but policy implementation, the main aspect of development is the function of the civil servants”.

According to Rai and Singh, the civil service means a professional body of neutralexerts in administration dedicated to service without regards to its own gains or without reference to party political views or class interests (Rai and Singh, 1979:26).

Thus the civil service is the people’s service set up to do nothing more than people’s will. Its vital characteristic is that it is professionally inspired and politically neutral, irrespective of government’s political color.

Morgan and Perry (1988:84) also define civil service as “mediating institutions that mobilize human resources in the service of the affairs of state in a given territory”.

The Russian Federation’s 1995 Law on the Basic Principles of Civil Service (Article II) defines civil service as “the professional activities aimed at facilitating the exercise of the authority of the state bodies”. In this definition,

the civil service is rather construed as a body of benefits emanating from governmental authority (Rashid, 2004:14).

Thus it can be said that the term civil service includes all functionaries of the government excepting those in defense service. A member of civil service is not also a holder of political or judicial offices. The elected officials and members of the legislature are excluded from this term. However, all these definitions and descriptions of civil service are not precise. The imprecise use of the term is also present in the Bangladesh context. In the constitution of Bangladesh the term civil service or civil servant is not used. Only two different terms are defined in the constitution and these are 'the service of the Republic' and 'public officer' (Ali, 2004:12).

It would be sufficient for the present purpose to say that the term civil service used narrowly in the Bangladesh context to denote a particular class or classes of services, recruitment to which is made on the basis of open competitive examination by the PSC, a quasi-judicial body of the government. In Bangladesh, there is now one civil service with as many as 27 cadres based on distinct functions performed across the public sector. All civil servants are public servants and/or government servants. The reverse, however, is not the case. All public servants and/or government servants are not civil servants. It is in fact a popular term used in conversations to mean a person who is a member of any of the 27 cadre services (Ali, 2004: 12-13). BCS serves as the administrative arms of the government that 'has constitutional responsibility to serve the people' (GOB, 2000b) and is managed by 'non-statutory laws, enacted by the executive' (Zafarullah, Khan and Rahman, 2001:25).

## **Genesis of Bangladesh Civil Service**

Everywhere in the world, human institutions have their deep roots in the past. The roots of the present civil service originated in the prehistoric era. The



Mauryan era (321 -185 B.C.), the Gupta Dynasties (185 B.C. – 700 A.D.), the Sultanate Period (1206 – 1526 AD) and the Mughal Administration (1526 – 1707) set the foundation of an organized administrative system in India before the British conquest (Islam, 2013:5 -6).

Present day Bangladesh was part of the British Empire for almost two hundred years. In 1947 Pakistan rulers replaced the British and dominated the area then known as East Pakistan until a bloody war in 1971 brought about an independent Bangladesh. Consequently, Bangladesh bears a colonial legacy in its entire public administration system. The structure of civil service in Bangladesh, as part of the administrative system, is a legacy of the British colonial rule, later altered by the Pakistani rulers.

The structure has undergone many changes during three distinct periods (Ali, 1993:1-35): The British Indian Era (1757-1947); The Pakistan Era (1947 -1971); The Bangladesh Era (1971 – onward).

### **The British Indian Era (1757 – 1947)**

In British India, the civil service was the product of an evolutionary process. During the mercantile stage of operations of the EIC, the company's service was adequate for the requirements of trade and commerce. The progressive ambit of activities of the empire subsequently made it necessary to develop a civil service that could administer the country (Morshed, 1997: 74). The mercantile service of EIC was transformed into a well-organized Covenanted Civil Service<sup>18</sup> when the company became the ruling power with administrative responsibilities (Chaudhuri, 1963, cited in Islam, 2013:6).The structure and organization of civil service during the British colonial rule has

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<sup>18</sup> On appointment the new recruits known as 'writers' were to sign covenants which embodied their condition of services, rights and obligations. Hence, the service was known as the 'Covenanted Civil Service'.

undergone changes in many phases in terms of recruitment functions, promotion, and discipline.

The administrative system during the company rule in India was primarily geared to the task of establishing a firm control in the sub-continent and the system largely succeeded in this task. A fairly efficient regional management for administrative functions was put in place. There was a more or less stable structure for land management. The system also introduced several other useful traits of modernity – English education in a limited scale, railway, telegraph and postal services. The administrative officials in many places became successful in projecting the beneficial image of the Company Raj. Following the Sepoy Mutiny<sup>19</sup> of 1857 the company's rule came to an end and the company's reign was taken over by the Crown in 1858. Queen Victoria was crowned as the Empress of India the following year. The affairs of India were now to be handled by the parliament. The administration of the colony was made subject to the British Government.

On recommendation of the Aitchison Commission in 1886, civil services were divided into three groups – Imperial, Provincial and Subordinate. The First was the Civil Service of India, better known as the Indian Civil Service (ICS), successor to the Covenanted Civil Service. A subordinate service was constituted with clerks and others, who could be promoted to positions of the other services by dint of exceptional merit and abilities. Thus covenanted civil service became the 'Imperial' Civil Service – sanctioned, framed, nurtured, and guided by the British Government. The top echelon imperial service was the ICS, a name that gained singular prominence in the following decades (Rashid, 2004: 39 -41).

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<sup>19</sup> Widespread rebellion against British rule in India by Indian troops (sepoy) which begun in Meerut and spread to Delhi, Agra, Kanpur and Lucknow. It is also known as Indian Revolt of 1857 which shook British rule in India.

Consequent upon the constitution of the Provincial Civil Service, the scope for larger employment of Indians in public service increased. But it did not, however, lead to an end of the problem due to much lower representation of the Indians in superior posts since the entry examination into the ICS used to be held in England. Another problem ran across racial and communal representation in public service, between Indians against Europeans and Anglo-Indians and between Hindus and Muslims.

To deal with the increasing political demand for larger representation of Indians the Islington Commission was appointed. The Commission recommended that 75 percent of the vacancies in the ICS should be filled in England by open competition, where the rest were to be filled in India through nomination. It also recommended equal status to civil servants promoted to higher posts from lower ranks, alongside the regular recruits. In addition to suggesting the creation of four categories of services (Imperial, Central, Provincial, and Subordinate), it recommended rationalization of the salary structure (Rashid, 2004:41).

The Lee Commission appointed in 1924 recommended that 20 percent of the All-India<sup>20</sup> civil service posts should be filled by promotion from the Provincial Civil Service and the rest be recruited through a competitive examination on the basis of parity between British and Indian candidates. For different services, the Commission recommended different ratios of British and Indians for recruitment, with a view to eventually achieving parity. However, the much talked-about parity was not achieved (Rashid, 2004:42-43).

The services in British India received ample attention in the 1930s. The Simon Commission, the Round Table Conference, a Joint Select Committee of the Parliament reviewed the situation of the civil service in India. Recruitment on an All-India basis to ICS and Indian Police Service (IPS) by the Secretary of

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<sup>20</sup> Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Foreign Service (IFS) was regarded as All-India Services.

State, needs for Indianization, impartial character, a strong English element, and equitable representation of different Indian communities and adequate safeguards for civil servants were the main tenets of suggestions made by these bodies (Rashid, 2004:44).

The Government of India Act 1935 sought to accommodate these views and it provided for a federal type of representative government in India, albeit with the balance of power tilting in favor of the central government in Delhi (Rashid, 2004:44). The Act made provision for establishing a Federal Public Service Commission. Competitive examinations for recruitment in the civil service continued to be held in India and there was a quicker pace of its Indianization. Hence, at the end of 1942, there was a clear edge in the number of Indian officers over their English Colleagues of the ICS – 625 Indians against 573 English civilians (Sapru, 1985:118). The trend continued during the last years of the British Raj. The ICS remained the kingpin of the imperial administration.

Nonetheless, by the time when the British departed in 1947, India had one of the most developed civil services system in the world. During this period the civil service also became a protected service, as in 1861 the first Indian Civil Service Act was passed which gave many privileges to the then civil servants, including their recruitment, promotion, termination, pension and salaries. In ancient India the civil servants acted as personal servants of the rulers, in the medieval age they became the state servants as they were in state employment, and in British India the civil servants became public servants (Kabir, 2013: 72). The civil servants in British India, particularly the members of the ICS, and other Superior Services set up an excellent tradition and a very high reputation for integrity, honesty, morale, initiative, objectivity and efficiency (Morshed, 1997:75). The ICS was described as the 'Steel-Frame' of Indian administration (Chaudhuri, 1969:44, cited in Morshed, 1997:75).

## **The Pakistan Era (1947-1971)**

In 1947, with the creation of India and Pakistan as two separate independent states in the sub-continent, Pakistan began to be ruled under the Indian Independence Act 1947, based on representative government. In 1956, the first constitution of Pakistan introduced a parliamentary form of government under a federal structure. The constitution was abrogated in 1958 by the country's first martial law regime, which introduced the second constitution.

The Pakistan era, was more or less a continuation of the British colonial period. During Bangladesh's union with Pakistan for about 24 years (1947-1971) as a province, the civil service especially the central bureaucracy continued on the British tradition. Members of a highly elitist and strictly career-oriented higher general civil service, the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP), controlled key policy positions and served as vital inputs to the decision making process. A self-regulatory bureaucracy framed personnel policies and rules which were clearly biased toward promoting their interests. Both internal (political) and external (overseas) pressures for change were carefully subverted by this group who, for several reasons, were bent upon self-preservation (Khan, 1980; cited in Zafarullah, Khan and Rahman, 2001:28).

Pakistan was a federal type of state. Hence there were both central and provincial governments and services and different functional and technical services at the provincial level. Apart from the CSP, there were several other central services as well as provincial services. The central services were classified into three types: the generalist-administrative service such as the CSP, the functional services such as the audit and accounts service, taxation service, custom and excise service etc. and the specialist services such as health, engineering etc. The central services were also classified into several classes depending on the levels of authority, responsibility, job specifications

and pay ranges. The CSP was the pivotal service around which the entire administrative edifices, central and provincial were organized. The CSP like the ICS was autonomous. In fact, the CSP controlled its own recruitment, training and indoctrination, disciplinary procedures, performance ratings, promotions, transfers and administrative investigations (Braibanti, 1966:381, cited in Morshed, 1997:76).

Entry to all the services was through the system of open competitive examination, but it was not as open as it should have been because competition was limited by the quota system. Up to 20 percent of the vacancies were reserved for recruitment on the basis of merit, and the rest were distributed among the provinces (Chowdhury, 1983:64, cited in Morshed, 1997:76).

To sum up it can be said that, during the Pakistan era the CSP sought to perpetuate the ICS legacy and regarded itself as an elite minority, detached from and better than the other segments. The incumbents of other services, especially those of technical and professional departments, felt alienated and thought they could not participate in the formulation of state policy (Mahmood, 1990:35). The elitism and protectionism for CSP and a colonial legacy showed negative outlooks toward politicians. The elite civil servants considered politicians as no more than mob leaders and unfit for complex state affairs (Rashid, 2004:48).

Studies on Pakistan's bureaucracy advocated substantive shifts in its structure and orientation. The Pay and Services Commission in 1962 held that the main feature of the elitist CSP was mediocrity, and their call for an end to the preeminence and reservation of positions for CSP officers and for induction of officers from professional services were not implemented, due to pressure from those who declined to abdicate their positions (Khan, 1980:123, Mahmood, 1990:48).

The public administration in Pakistan was a clear case of injustice and imbalance. Even with an absolute majority of the country's population, East Pakistan was very poorly represented in the bureaucracy. In 1956, none of the 19 Secretaries to the Government were from East Pakistan. In the next three senior positions, there were only 51 officers from East Pakistan as against 722 from the West (Chaudhuri, 1969:56, cited in Rashid, 2004:48). Things did not improve notably in the following years. The civil service was under the effective grip of the CSP, which was joined by the Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), to constitute the All-Pakistan services. The CSP and PSP officers served both central and provincial services. During the last days of United Pakistan President Ayub Khan heavily depended on the bureaucracy for his Basic Democracy, which soon became an anathema in East Pakistan. The Yahya interregnum following Ayub's decade old regime, was based on bureaucratic governance. The war of independence in 1971 was a sequel to the politico-bureaucratic abuses in the province (Rashid, 2004:50).

### **The Bangladesh Era (1971 – onward)**

Bangladesh inherited the civil service system developed in Pakistan which had all the hallmarks of a modern bureaucracy. The elite civil servants of Bangladesh, who began to dominate the economic policy making bodies as well as the administrative system were the lineal descendants of the CSP with all of the values and orientations this implied (Morshed, 1997:76).

It was anticipated that some of the negative elements of the bureaucracy, such as elitism, conservatism and inertia would be gradually eliminated to make the civil service more effective, responsible and responsive. Reform was in order to adjust to the new scenario, to recognize the several inherited services and to establish a new personnel management system that would cater to the demands of bureaucrats as protected professional civil servants (Zafarullah, Khan and Rahman, 2001:29).

During the tumultuous years immediately following the independence the government faced many urgent problems with the result that it could not initiate any major changes in the administrative system. At that time the services were disorganized and civil servants were in a labyrinth (Morshed, 1997:76).

Prior to framing of any definite policy regarding formation of regularly constituted cadre service this newly born country started its civil administration with three categories of officers and employees. They were firstly, the persons engaged in administration within the country. Secondly, those who actively participated in the war of liberation while in exile or took jobs under the government in exile. Thirdly, those who were stranded in Pakistan and later on repatriated and absorbed in the services of Bangladesh. Initially the government face many problems in creating a coordinated and harmonious relationship among these categories of officials in respect of service seniority, fixation of pay and allowances and absorption in due posts which caused discontent and frustration among the affected incumbents (Morshed, 1997:76-77).

Bangladesh inherited three main categories of regularly constituted services from Pakistan, namely, (i) the former All-Pakistan Services; (ii) the former Central Superior Services; and (iii) the former Provincial Services. The Administrative Service (former CSPs and EPCS) had been dominant in the overall administrative structure in both central and provincial governments in the past and this created a deep rooted discontent among the members of the functionalist and specialist service which ultimately formed a strong demand for a rational service structure in Bangladesh (Morshed, 1997:77-78).

Bangladesh inherited an archaic and colonial administrative structure and embarked on the administrative reform initiatives shortly after its independence to meet the demands of a changing society. Successive



governments constituted 17 reform Commissions or Committees with a view to reorganize/reform civil service and public sector (Kim and Monem, 2008:9-10). Each tried to change the administrative system to make it more dynamic, efficient and representative. Two of them, Administrative and Services Reorganization Commission (ASRC) and Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganization (CARR) went beyond “the domain of the traditional administrative system and pleaded for democratization of administration and devolution of power to elected local governments” (quoted in Jahan, 2006:7).

The ASRC recommended for a single civil service structure covering all the services in ten grades. The National Pay Commission (NPC) in its report in 1973 also recommended ten national scales of pay<sup>21</sup>, to match the ten service grades recommended by the ASRC. In fact, the recommendations of these two reports could not satisfy the elite civil bureaucrats of the country and the government also was not able to take any positive step in which multidimensional bureaucratic interests were involved (Morshed, 1997:78).

In 1976 the military regime appointed a new Pay and Services Commission (Rashid Commission) to conduct a fresh inquiry into the services and pay structure and suggest necessary reforms. On the basis of the recommendations the government introduced a new civil service system, a Unified Cadre Service with 14 functional cadres and 14 sub-cadres. Officers of all cadres now belong to one service called the BCS. It was stated by the government that the new service structure was primarily designed to create a ‘class-less’ bureaucracy in the country.

The Ershad regime (1982-1990) introduced some measures including administrative reform with an emphasis on decentralization and the process of transition from military to civilian rule. Two major reform and reorganizing measures during the regime were taken. The Martial Law Committee (MLC)

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<sup>21</sup> Salary structure of the civil service according to seniority.

recommended improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of civil service officials working in the secretariat and attached departments/directorates, resulting initially in the reduction of the number of ministries/divisions and manpower in the secretariat and 'rationalization' of the charter of duties of the civil servants working in the secretariat (Khan, 1991, cited in Azizuddin, 2008: 74). On the other hand, the Committee for Administrative Reorganization/ Reform (CARR) recommended the administrative reorganization and institutionalization of a local government system in the country.

As a result of the parliamentary election of 1991 the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) formed the government and felt the necessity of administrative reform for a newly established democratic environment. During this regime (1991-1995) four reports were produced. The first such report was carried out by the UNDP by a team of public administration experts, providing new proposals for administrative reform in the country. Simultaneously, the report titled "Towards Better Government in Bangladesh" identified anomalies and suggested changes in the civil service. The government subsequently appointed the Cabinet Committee of Administrative Reform which submitted its report in August, 1995 which is also known as Four Secretaries Report. Subsequently, the Administrative Reorganization Committee (ARC) was appointed by the government to review the size and scope of public administration, so that the machinery of administration would be dynamic in its operation (Azizuddin, 2008: 74-75).

The following Awami League (AL) regime (1996-2001) appointed Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC), the main focus of which was improving transparency, efficiency, accountability, and effectiveness of public administration and bringing institutional and procedural changes and improvement of service delivery to ensure value for money at all levels of

administration in the light of New Public Management (NPM) (UNDP, 2004, cited in Kim and Monem, 2008: 11).

After the end of this regime, from 2001 to onward, no government constitute any significant commission or committee for reforming public sector but some policy initiatives were taken by subsequent governments for introducing and practicing some elements of NPM and good governance which were influenced by previous recommendations of PARC report and some other reports of donor agencies (Mollah, 2014: 35).

## **The Present Civil Service System in Bangladesh**

### **The Structure of Bangladesh Civil Service**

The government of Bangladesh has a two-tier administrative system. The upper tier is the central secretariat at the national level consisting of the ministries and divisions to provide policies and to perform clearinghouse functions. The other tier consist of 'line' department/directorates attached to the ministries and divisions that are mainly responsible for general administration, service delivery to citizens and implementation of various government development programs at the sub-national level. (Ahmed, 2002:327, cited In Jahan, 2006:3).

At present,there are 39 ministries and 26 divisions in Bangladesh (bdnews24.com<sup>22</sup>, January 11, 2017). There are also a good number of departments and statutory bodies. The internal organization structure of a ministry reflects a hierarchical order. A minister is in charge of a ministry and is normally the 'political head' of that ministry. A ministry consists of at least one division. A secretary or, in his/her absence an additional secretary, is

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<sup>22</sup> Bangladesh's first internet newspaper.

considered the 'administrative head' of the ministry. She/he conducts and looks after the duties of a division, which includes routine operation, supervision of its staffing and organizational processes. She/he is also the adviser to the minister regarding policy and administrative issues. A division can further be divided into wings. A joint secretary is the head of a wing and has the power to submit cases directly to the minister for decisions. In practice, such cases are first submitted to the secretary/additional secretary for his/her consideration before being placed before the minister. A wing is composed of branches. The head of a wing – a joint secretary – supervises the activities of the branches within his/her wing. Each branch is under the charge of a deputy secretary. Below the branch is the section. Headed by an assistant secretary, it is the basic working unit of a division. An assistant secretary disposes all cases based on clear precedents. Below the level of assistant secretary, there are a considerable number of office personnel (Zafarullah, 1998: 83-87, cited in Jahan, 2006:4).

Departments are also attached to each ministry/division. The department determines the blueprint for implementing various decisions taken by the ministry/division by providing technical information and advice. Who heads these departments or directorates depends on their importance. In some cases, an officer enjoying the pay grades and benefits of a secretary heads a department while on the other cases it is headed by an officer enjoying the pay grade and benefits of a deputy secretary, joint secretary or an additional secretary (Ahmed, 2002:329).

### **General Features of the Civil Service**

The BCS has several features in its organization, composition and classification. (Morshed, 1997:77). It 'contains complex structural features with an equally complex terminology' (Azizuddin, 2008: 37) which is discussed briefly in the following.

## **Class**

The civil service has been classified horizontally into four categories, namely class-I, class-II, class-III and class-IV, based on such variables as levels of responsibility, educational qualification and pay range (Ahmed and Khan, 1990:29). It helps distinguish officials by rank in an operational context. Thus, low ranking support staff such as messengers, cleaners are classified as class IV. The differentiation between the classes is strictly maintained and inter-class movement is discouraged and extremely difficult. So those who belong to the lower ranks of the public service i.e. more specifically classes III and IV are usually considered as scheduled castes within the public service system. The situation of those belonging to class-II is relatively better (Khan, 1995:69). The category class-I is the highest category of civil servants (Jahan, 2007:44). These four classes of services are adjusted to 20 different pay scales and grades of service on the basis of individual seniority.

## **Grade**

These are the titles and rank attached to particular jobs within a given group or class. In 1977, the government abolished the class system and replaced it with a unified grade system and a national pay scales, which were to apply to all personnel in the public service. However, the concept of class and the structure it represents seems to have persisted in use (Azizuddin, 2008; 38).

## **Gazetted/Non -Gazetted**

All government employees are broadly classified into two broad categories, i.e. gazetted and non-gazetted. The employees whose appointment, transfer, promotion, posting and so on, is notified on the official gazette<sup>23</sup> are known as

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<sup>23</sup>An official document published periodically by the government to document all appointments, postings and transfers of civil servants. The names of the concerned persons are mentioned in this document. Orders of the government, which are not only for internal use, but also for public information, also fall in this category (Ali, 2002:290-291).

gazetted officers. All class-I and most class-II government servants are treated as gazetted officers. In case of non-gazetted no such reference is printed in the gazette. The gazetted officers can authenticated documents and give character certificates that are sometimes required for appearing at any examination for a civil or military post. They are normally invested with high powers and responsibilities and consequently enjoy greater privileges than the non gazetted employees (Ahmed, 1986:185).

### **Cadre Service and Cadre/ Non-Cadre**

Within the public service a very small number of civil servants belong to the cadre service. Cadre service means the organization of civil servants in well-defined groups, services or cadres. The term cadre brings the issue of confusion in respect of terminology between a service and a cadre. In fact there is no difference between them. Cadre is a small group within the larger civil service such as police service, education service within the BCS. Cadre service generally exists in the countries with the British colonial heritage.

Cadre is the distinct functional sub-division of the government bureaucracy. Cadre services are those services, which are constituted under law with a number of positions or structure and recruitment and promotion rules. On the other hand, non-cadre services are mostly based on position, with no definite structure of mobility either horizontally or vertically (Morshed, 1997:77). Members of the cadre services can be moved from one department to another, whereas the non-cadre personnel have to serve in the particular department to which they were originally recruited. In the cadre system, every post is borne clearly against one or another cadre and no member of a particular cadre is expected to be posted in the post borne against another cadre. This implies that a civil servant who becomes a member of a particular cadre is clearly aware about his own lines and prospect for promotion (Khan, 1998:58). All cadre civil servants are class -1 officers but not all members of

class-1 category belong to the cadre service. Cadre constitutes a relatively small but distinctly elite subset of the civil service. The cadre officers compared to other class 1 officers enjoy more facilities and benefits, prospect for relatively rapid promotion, better training and varied job assignments (Khan, 1998:49, cited in Jahan, 2007:46).

Cadre distinguishes particular occupational groups to which civil servants might belong, either at the time of recruitment or subsequently through lateral entry. In 1980, the GOB issued the BCS (Reorganization) order to create 27 cadres under 14 functional areas. In 1985, two more new cadres were created i.e. the Cooperative cadre and the Family Planning cadre. In 1986 the functional cadres were reorganized again to create 30 independent cadres. Later on, BCS (Secretariat) and BCS (Administration) cadres were merged together and BCS (Administration) was reconstituted, thus there were 29 cadres. In November 2007, the Judicial cadre was abolished naturally after the separation of judiciary from the executive (Islam, 2013:15). As a result BCS (Judiciary) has become a separate service known as Judicial Service and it is no more a cadre of the BCS.

Currently there are 27 cadres in BCS to run the activities of the government. The name of the cadres are: BCS (Administration), BCS (Agriculture), BCS (Ansar), BCS (Audit and Accounts), BCS(Cooperative),BCS (Customs and Excise),BCS (Economic),BCS (Education : General),BCS (Education : Technical),BCS (Foreign Affairs), BCS (Forests), BCS(Food),BCS(Fisheries),BCS(Family Planning), BCS (Health) ,BCS (Information),BCS (Livestock), BCS (Public Works), BCS (Public Health Engineering), BCS (Police), BCS (Postal), BCS (Railway Engineering), BCS (Railway, Transportation and Commerce), BCS (Roads and Highways), BCS (Statistics), BCS (Trade), BCS (Taxation). [Bangladesh Gazette Notification, 18 September, 2014, MOPA].

Some cadres are general, while others are professional/ technical, and some are both general and technical. The general cadres (i.e. Administration, Foreign Affairs, Police, Customs and Excise, Audit and Accounts, Taxation, Economic) of BCS are regarded as the most prestigious cadres in the civil service, as there is ample scope to exercise administrative authority in the administration. The professional/ technical cadre posts of BCS are restricted to the candidates with certain academic background. Specialization is necessary for a professional cadre. The names of the professional cadres are: BCS Agriculture, Livestock, Health, Family Planning, Public Works, Roads and Highways, Public Health Engineering, Railway Engineering, Statistics, Forests, Fisheries, Education, and so on. BCS (Information) cadre is both general and technical. It is believed that persons belonging to the professional cadres have little scope and opportunity to play roles in making policy decisions.

Recruitment to the cadre services is made through the PSC on the basis of open competition. Subsequent to the completion of the selection process, direct recruits to the BCS are assigned to an occupational cadre on the basis of performance, vacancies and preference of candidates. A civil servant usually remains a member of his/her chosen cadre throughout his/her career. Consequently, the job types, posting and promotional prospects are determined, by the cadre to which one belongs.

This study focuses on the cadre services which are also known as class-1 higher civil service. After Bangladesh came into being after a bloody war, a void created due to leaving a sizeable number of West Pakistani civil servants. To fill this gap a number of ad hoc recruitments were made without framing new recruitment rules. (Ali, 2004) and were thus unsystematic, irregular and chaotic. (Khan, Kar and Bhiyua, 1992). In 1976 recruitment rules for the appointment of superior positions were framed. Prior to framing the rules of recruitment to various services and positions, an Interim Recruitment Policy



was announced by the government through executive order in 1972. This has undergone changes from time to time (Ali, 2004:124).

## **Recruitment in Bangladesh Civil service**

The recruitment and selection process of civil servants in Bangladesh have been and is significantly molded by the Constitution as well as governed by the policy pronouncements of the government from time to time in the form of executive orders (Khan and Zafarullah, 1983:13). In the British colonial period, access to civil services was limited to young university graduates, belonging to the rich upper class. This pattern continued throughout the Pakistan period. After liberation, the Bangladesh constitution established that equal opportunity for all citizens should be the guiding principle in public service recruitment. Based on the constitutional provisions, the government also made special arrangements – a quota system – to create special opportunities for disadvantaged groups. However, no system was developed to regulate the induction of personnel at the base level of the higher civil service until 1977; it was regulated by ad hoc arrangements. It may be noted here that recruitment policy was first introduced in Bangladesh by an executive order in September 1972 called Interim Recruitment Rules 1972 before the constitution came into existence in December of that year (Islam, 2013:51).

Before 1979 no competitive examinations for BCS, in present sense, were held in Bangladesh. Civil servants were then recruited either only with interview or with short written examinations and interview by the PSC. Regular competitive examinations began to hold since 1979. In fact, 1979 was the first batch after independence to be recruited through competitive examination and in 1981 there was another batch also recruited through competitive

examination<sup>24</sup> (Islam, 2013:51). Afterwards, Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment Rules 1981 was framed to recruit the officials for 27 cadres of the civil service. The first BCS examination was held in 1982 following the Bangladesh Civil Service (Recruitment) Rules, 1981 (Zafarullah, 1988:130-33, cited in Jahan, 2006:9). At present, all BCS officials are recruited under the Bangladesh Civil Service (Age, Qualification and Examination for Direct Recruitment) Rules 2014 which is in Bengali.<sup>25</sup>

### **Recruitment Policy and Procedure**

In BCS the principles of merit<sup>26</sup> and equity<sup>27</sup> both are used in the recruitment procedure. Therefore, BCS recruitment policy is the admixture of merit and quota. Merit system with certain variations, now prevails in all progressive countries. The term 'merit system' is commonly used not only to convey a form of selection for entrance to the service but also to embrace other aspects of the personnel system such as promotion on merit, pay related to the nature of the job and desirable working conditions, etc. The principle of merit has been modified in Bangladesh. The recruitment system in BCS is characterized by the reservation of posts for specific groups or backward areas to ensure their adequate representation in the civil service. In Bangladesh special attention has been given to the freedom fighters, women, tribal population and backward areas while determining the quota system.

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<sup>24</sup> The name of the examinations were Superior Post Examination.

<sup>25</sup>The GOB promulgated an order to abolish the BCS (Age, Qualification and Examination for Direct Recruitment) Rules 1982 and through the circular SRO No-231/Law/2014 dated 18/9/2014, the rules were reformulated in Bengali (PSC Annual Report, 2015: 10).

<sup>26</sup> Merit entails a process whereby the very best are selected, thereby placing emphasis especially on competitive excellence (Zafarullah and Khan, 1989: 80).

<sup>27</sup> Equity implies that, public sector positions are distributed approximately, proportionally to or representative of, the population at large (Zafarullah and Khan, 1989: 80).

The present quota system reveals that in the civil service 45 percent of the posts are directly recruited on the basis of merit and the rest are distributed among different quotas.<sup>28</sup> The quota system constitutes a major departure from the system of recruitment on the basis of merit alone (Morshed, 1997:84).

## **Methods of Recruitment**

BCS has certain practices and policies regarding recruitment. According to the current policy, there are three methods of recruitment:

- 1) Recruitment by direct appointment through open competitive examinations;
- 2) Appointment by promotion;
- 3) Appointment by transfer or deputation (Ali, 2007:45).

Recruitment at the entry level is done through direct recruitment. Therefore, only the first of these three methods of recruitment is addressed in this study as class 1 officers are recruited directly by the PSC through an open competitive examination<sup>29</sup> into 27 cadres.

## **Conditions of Eligibility for the Examination**

The qualification for participating in the BCS examination is open to candidates who have obtained at least a second class bachelor's degree from a recognized university of Bangladesh or abroad. He or she must be a citizen of Bangladesh. Candidates who are married or committed to marry or there by engaged to a person who is not a citizen of Bangladesh is debarred from

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<sup>28</sup> The quota system is described in details in the next chapter.

<sup>29</sup> The BCS is a nationwide competitive examination in Bangladesh conducted by the BPSC for recruitment to the various civil service cadres and the examination is conducted in three phases. The BCS is considered as the top most competitive job examination in Bangladesh.

applying for a position in the civil service. The minimum age limit has been set at 21 and the maximum at 30 years. The upper age limit was relaxed later for three categories of candidates: freedom fighters children, candidates of health cadre and tribal candidates for only general education cadre. In case of a person already in government service or in the service of the local authority, such person must apply through his superior official.

The current recruitment system of BCS is that the MOPA gathers staff requirements from different ministries and government bodies to determine the number of new officers to be recruited. It then transmits the same to the PSC to conduct the competitive examination. Receiving the requisition from different ministries the PSC advertises the number of vacant posts through the newspapers inviting eligible candidates to apply against the available posts. The information and documents provided by the candidates with the application forms are then checked by the PSC. Generally, after this initial screening the eligible candidates are asked to appear at the BCS examination.

## **Pattern of BCS Examination**

There are three successive stages in BCS examination. These are preliminary examination, written test, and viva voce examination.

### **Preliminary Examination**

The preliminary examination through multiple choice questions (MCQ) is a screening test of 200 marks and time for this test is two hours. Previously, the preliminary examination was of 100 marks. From the 34th BCS marks have been increased to 200 and detailed syllabus for each subject of the preliminary test has been incorporated. Every year a huge number of candidates apply for the BCS examination and this qualifying test is usually held to screen out the huge number of applicants. Subjects and allocation of marks in preliminary test are shown in the following table (Table-3.1).

**Table-3.1 Subjects and Allocation of Marks in Preliminary Test**

Serial No	Subjects	Marks
01	Bengali Language and Literature	35
02	English Language and Literature	35
03	Bangladesh Affairs	30
04	International Affairs	20
05	Geography (Bangladesh and World), Environment and Disaster Management	10
06	General Science	15
07	Computer and ICT	15
08	Mathematical Reasoning	15
09	Mental Ability	15
10	Ethics, Values, and Good Governance	10
	Total	200

Source: BCS (Age Qualification and Examination for Direct Recruitment) Rules, 2014.

### Written Examination

When the open competitive examination for BCS recruitment started in 1982, each candidate had to sit for an examination of 1600 marks in total. But it was reduced to 900 marks in 1984 and again it was increased to 1000 in 2005 (including viva marks of 100). At present the candidates appear in a written test consisting of 900 marks. The distribution of marks in the BCS written examination and viva-voce are shown in Table-3.2.

**Table 3.2 Distribution of Marks of BCS Written Examination and Viva Voce**

Subject for General Cadres	Marks	Subjects for Professional/Technical	Marks
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		Cadres	
Bangla	200	Bangla	100
English	200	English	200
Bangladesh Affairs	200	General knowledge Bangladesh Affairs	200
International Affairs	100	General Knowledge International Affairs	100
Mathematical Reasoning and Mental Ability	100	Mathematical Reasoning and Mental ability	100
General science and Technology	100	Job Related subject	100
Viva	200	Viva	200
			200
Total	1100	Total	1100

Source: BCS (Age Qualification and Examination for Direct Recruitment) Rules, 2014.

A candidate securing less than 30 percent marks in any subject deemed to have secured no marks in that subject. The candidates obtaining 50 percent marks in aggregate in written test are qualified for the viva examination.

### **Viva Voce**

Currently the total marks for viva is 200 while it was 100 before the 34th BCS. The minimum qualifying marks for viva is now 50 percent which was 40 percent before September, 2014. If a candidate fails in viva, he/she will not be considered for final selection. The viva board is made by the direction of PSC Chair consisting of a Member as Board Chairman, a Departmental Representative holding minimum Joint Secretary status of the government and an expert selected by the PSC from any academic institution or eminent personalities of the country.<sup>30</sup> In selecting the suitable candidates the viva board attaches particular importance to the intelligence of mind, vigor and strength of character of the candidates. The board also takes into consideration candidate's extra- curricular activities.

### **Allocation of Post**

<sup>30</sup> Interviews with the chairman of PSC.

- 1) Candidates who have achieved pass marks in the written and viva voce entered into the merit list. The position of each candidate on the merit list is determined by the sum of the marks obtained in written test and viva voce.
- 2) Candidates who have applied for both general and technical cadres will have two merit list scores, first one for the general cadre preferences and the other one for the technical cadre preferences.
- 3) The cadre preferences given by the candidates, merit and the quota system are the three main factors involved in determining which post will be allotted to which candidate.
- 4) The candidates are dealt with the merit list order with the general aim that candidate higher up the merit list should be allotted their first preference if available. If a candidate's first preference is not available, then she/he should be allotted the second preference if available.
- 5) According to the government rules 45 percent posts are allocated on merit and 55 percent posts are allocated on different types of quota. Within a quota group selection is made on merit,
- 6) The candidates who have passed the viva voce but cannot be selected for the cadre post because of having no vacancies are sorted in a group named BCS non-cadre. (Available from: [www.bpsc.gov.bd/site/page/4bc95017-18d6-412b-8c4f-76d3e1599d8e/bcs-examination](http://www.bpsc.gov.bd/site/page/4bc95017-18d6-412b-8c4f-76d3e1599d8e/bcs-examination), accessed on 19 September, 2016).

The PSC is required to operate a quota system that reserves appointment to class 1 posts for specified groups. The quota system in BCS recruitment has been described in details in the next chapter (Chapter Four). By calculating the different number of quotas the PSC finalize the merit list of potential candidates to recruit and sends the final list of selected candidates to MOPA.

## **Medical Examination and Police Report**

Candidates who are selected by PSC are required to appear at a medical board for physical examination. At the same time they are required to have a police report in order to know whether there is any criminal report against them and whether the candidates are engaged in any activity subversive of the state.

Police verification and medical check-up of the selected candidates is arranged by MOPA, respectively with the support of Home Affairs Ministry and Health Ministry (TIB, 2007:34, cited in Jahan, 2012:32).

## **Final Recommendation**

Getting medical report from the Ministry of Health PSC then send the final recommendation list to the MOPA.

## **Appointment**

Getting satisfactory medical report and police report of the selected candidates MOPA sends the list to the President for approval and after getting the approval appointment letters are issued to the selected candidates by MOPA directing them to join their respective ministry. Finally the MOPA appoints officers from the list supplied by the PSC through notification.

## **Recruitment Agency**

In Bangladesh there are two key agencies – the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) and the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) for handling the personnel affairs of the civil service.

## **Ministry of Public Administration**

The MOPA, an executive arm of government, is the premier agency for all critically important decisions pertaining to the management and coordination of the civil service and is responsible for initiation and execution of any



legislation relating to the terms and conditions of the service. Rules, regulations and instructions concerning recruitment emanate from the MOPA which was formerly known as Ministry of Establishment. This ministry is the sole authority to give final appointment of BCS cadre officials recommended by the PSC.

MOPA is mandated to manage all the human resources in civil service of Bangladesh under different ministries and divisions. The MOPA is responsible for personnel policy within the BCS and has also direct responsibility for a number of key human resources and organizational management functions, particularly in relation to officers of the administrative cadre that comprises the higher level civil service. The overall purpose of the MOPA are to :

- (1) Ensure Ministers are supported by an appropriately trained and experienced secretariat of higher level civil servants;
- (2) Maintain the extensive public administration of Bangladesh based on a network of District and Divisional Commissioners, known as the 'field service';
- (3) Ensure that civil servants in the Secretariat and Service Directorates are appropriately trained; and
- (4) Decide and enforce personnel policy, systems, rules and regulations for the administrative cadre and the wider civil service.

The MOPA performs its functions under seven wings: Administration Wing, Appointment, Promotion and Deputation Wing, Career Planning and Training Wing, Discipline and Enquiry Wing, Regulation Wing, Organization and Management Wing, and Confidential Record and Development wing.

## **Bangladesh Public Service Commission**

The PSC, an independent and quasi-judicial body, is primarily responsible for conducting open competitive examination for the selection of suitable

persons for appointment to the civil service and for offering advice generally on matters relating to personnel affairs including those of disciplinary actions. In course of discharging these responsibilities it is not the Commission but the Ministry which constitutes the ultimate central personnel authority (UNDP, 2000:12).

Since the focus of the present study is on PSC and its quota operation policy, a brief overview of its evolution and historical antecedents would be pertinent.

### **Genesis of Public Service Commission**

The genesis of PSC in Bangladesh can be traced back to the British rule in India when a central board holding competitive examination, designated as the Civil Service Commission was established in 1955 based on the recommendation of the Macaulay Committee as well as the Northcote–Trevelyan Report. They laid down two basic principles, highlighting the ethos of merit in recruitment to the civil services. These were;

- The Commission should be detached from the political government.
- The recruitment to service should be by open competition, based on the ideals of a non-partisan career civil service (Ali, 2004: 13).

The rationale behind such a step was significant, viz. (1) for the protection of merit in the recruitment of superior services and (2) for the protection of services from political influence (Ali, 2002: 14).

The Royal Commission of Superior Civil Services in British India known as the Lee Commission made a recommendation that the members of the PSC should be men of the highest standing and, to the extent practicable, dissociated from all political associations. It had further laid down that out of the four members, at least two should possess high judicial or legal qualifications (Ali, 2002: 15). It was also recommended that,

“The Members of the PSC would not be eligible for further employment in the service of the Crown in India. However, the member of the provincial services PSC(s) could be eligible for further employment in the central PSC or another provincial PSC”.

On the basis of the report of this commission, the first Public Service Commission was established in October 1926 in this sub-continent. After the partition of British India in 1947, successive regimes in Pakistan, following the British tradition, reinvigorated the proposition that a PSC under the leadership of experienced civil servants can act as an effective recruiting authority on very vital and complicated service matters. The status of the Commission continued to be an advisory, as well as quasi-judicial body in dealing with recruitment, promotion and disciplinary actions of the civil services throughout the entire era of the Pakistan period (Ahmed, 1990; Ali, 2002).

After independence in 1971 the constitution of Bangladesh, which came into effect from December 16, 1972 contained almost the same provisions as the President's Order No. 34 of 1972. The order formally constituted two separate commissions, the PSC (first), which consisted of a chairman and three other members and the PSC (second), which comprised of five members including a chairman (Ahmed, 1986: 283). To give effect to the relevant constitutional provisions relating to PSCs, the government promulgated an order called the Bangladesh Public Service Commission's Order, 1973 (President's Order No 25 of 1973) in March, 1973, which in effect formally regularized the establishment of the two PSCs already in existence since May 1972. According to the Order, the PSC(first) should consist of not less than four but not more than twelve members, including a chairman, and the PSC(second) should consist of not less than five but not more than 15 members including a chairman. Subsequently in November 1977, the government promulgated the Bangladesh Public Service Commission Ordinance 1977, with a view to establish one single PSC in place of the existing two commissions. The ordinance came into effect on December 22, 1977, and the Bangladesh Public

Service Commission was established to perform all functions previously entrusted to the PSC first and the PSC second (Ahmed, 1986: 287). The PSC was entrusted with the responsibility to keep partisan considerations and nepotism out of appointments to the civil service and to safeguard the merit system in recruitment.

BPSC, like the FPSC during British India and CPSC and EPPSC during Pakistan period, is a constitutional body with advisory status and functions. In order to understand the activities of the PSC, it is imperative to have an overview of the constitutional and legal mandate available for the PSC.

### **Constitutional and Legal Framework**

The position, status, scope and functions of PSC have been clearly determined by the Constitution of Bangladesh. Articles 137-141 of the Constitution of Bangladesh set out in clear and unambiguous terms the scheme for the establishment of the Commission(s), appointment and re-appointment of chairman and members, conditions of appointment, terms of office, provisions of resignation, functions of the Commission, and annual report. Any sort of addition, alteration, substitution of the existing provisions can only be made through act(s) passed by the national parliament through certain special amendment procedures specified in the Constitution (Ahmed, 1990:175).

The chairman and such other members as shall be prescribed (maximum 15 including a chairman) constitute the commission. The tenure of the chairman and members is five years or 65 years of age whichever comes earlier. The chairman and members are appointed by the President of the Republic. The Chief Justice of the country administers the oath for chairman and the members of the commission. As a constitutional body its members enjoy security of tenure comparable to that enjoyed by a judge of the Supreme Court. It is supposed to be a body independent of the executive branch of the government.

## **Organizational Structure**

The PSC consists of the commission and a secretariat headed by the chairman. The chairman is solely responsible for PSC's administration and overall management. The chairman also issues necessary orders for making the work schedule and distribution of work among the members and officers of the commission's secretariat after due consultation with all other members.<sup>31</sup> Currently, the BPSC consists of a chairman and thirteen members.

There is also a fully-fledged secretariat to assist the commission. While the commission consists of the chairman and members, the secretariat consists of a secretary assisted by a joint secretary, deputy secretaries, assistant secretaries and other related supporting officers and staff. This is the main administrative set-up of the commission. The secretary is the administrative head of the commission's secretariat. The chairman and members of the commission, in fact, give all sorts of policy decisions/directions to the secretariat of the commission. The PSC secretariat is responsible for implementing the decisions taken by the commission. The MOPA sends all correspondences to the chairman and members of the commission through PSC secretariat. There are other organs under the secretariat consisting of the controllers of examination, chief psychologist, directors, deputy directors, assistant directors, administrative officers, personal officers and related other supporting staff who are engaged in assisting the commission in discharging their constitutional obligation.

There are 12 functional units/sections under the secretariat to assist the commission in discharging their constitutional responsibilities. These are, administrative unit, recruitment unit, two examination units, confidential unit, computer unit, accounts unit, psychology unit, research unit, BCS cadre unit etc. There is also a library. The research section prepares the annual Report of

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<sup>31</sup> The Bangladesh Public Service Commission (Conduct of Business) Rules, 1981.

the commission. The computer section performs a major role in processing the results of different examinations maintaining a high standard of security and accuracy. The computer section is headed by a senior system analyst along with system analyst, programmer, assistant programmers and other related staff ([www.bpsc.gov.bd/platform/node/29.bpsc 2012.pml](http://www.bpsc.gov.bd/platform/node/29.bpsc%2012.pml) accessed on 12/11/2015).

### **Scope and Functions**

As already mentioned, the recruitment to the post of various cadres is made on the recommendations of the PSC, which is responsible for conducting tests and examinations for such recruitment. It works under the provision of Articles 137-141 of the Constitution of Bangladesh and certain other rules and regulations made by the government from time to time. The scope and functions of the PSC is limited to giving recommendations and advice on civil service management related issues. In practice, it has remained as an advisory body, its executive functions being limited to holding of tests and examinations (Ali, 2004:130).

The major functions of PSC are as follows:

To give advice to the various ministries/divisions and attached departments on framing recruitment-related rules.

To select the suitable persons and give recommendations for appointment to the concerned ministry or departments. Since 1972, this is being done through: examinations, interview, promotion, transfer and *Ad Hoc* appointments.

To carry out departmental inquiries into disciplinary and appeal matters of the public services and gives recommendations to the concerned ministries for necessary departmental actions.

Preparing annual report on the performance of commission's functions and then submitting it to the President of the Republic is a mandatory function of the PSC (TIB, 2007: 23-25).

According to the existing constitutional and legal provisions, PSC is essentially an advisory, consultative and 'quasi-judicial' body rather than an executive one.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter provides a brief understanding of the civil service system in Bangladesh from a historical perspective. From the above discussion it can be said that Bangladesh bears a colonial legacy in its entire public administration system. Colonial imprint persists in Bangladesh especially in its administrative arrangement.

In BCS, the principles of merit and equity both are used in recruiting civil servants. The BCS examination is seen as the gateway to enter into the service. While Bangladesh largely follows a closed entry system, there is a provision for ten percent so called 'lateral' entry into the civil service, which is, recruitment directly from outside the service to the more senior grades (Kim and Monem, 2008:9). BCS recruitment policy is an admixture of merit and quota. The policy makers are trying to maintain a balance between merit and equity in order to make the civil service system more representative. The PSC is required to operate a quota system that reserves appointment to class 1 posts for specified groups as follows: 30 percent reserved for the children of the freedom fighters; 10 percent reserved for women; 5 percent reserved for members of tribal groups; 10 percent reserved for those living in district areas

and 1 percent for physically challenged people<sup>32</sup>. This leaves 45 percent of the total available posts for recruitment through open competition (merit-based recruitment).

Since the objective of this study is to assess the utilization of women quota in BCS recruitment, it is important to discuss the different issues of the quota system, which is discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>32</sup> It is not preserved initially. After applying the other quotas i.e. freedom fighters, women, and tribal, if there are any vacancies then one percent of that is given as disable quota. Interview with PSC members.



# Chapter Four

## Quota System in Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment

### Introduction

This chapter begins with the conceptual clarification of the term 'quota'. It narrates the historical evolution of quota in the public service since the British period and summarizes the main features of the present quota system in BCS. Then it presents a detailed analysis of women quota and the justification of this quota in the civil service of Bangladesh.

### Quota: The Concept

It is not uncommon to hear about preferential treatment given to disadvantaged people in public employment around the world. In public service the policies of favoring members of backward groups in society are variously known as 'affirmative action' (in USA and Australia), 'positive discrimination' (in UK), 'employment equity' (in Canada), 'preference for the bhumiputra or son of the soil' (in Malaysia), 'reservations' (in India and Nepal) and 'quota' (in Bangladesh) or 'group preference' (in a few). All the expressions generally mean the same thing (Sowell, 2004, cited in Khan and Ahmed, 2007:1 and Zafarullah, 2010:92).

Quota system in the BCS means setting aside a certain percentage of posts through a stipulated regulation for those segments of the society who are backward and under-represented in the civil service. In every democratic society, existing or aspiring, public policies are being shaped to politically incorporate traditionally underrepresented, disadvantaged groups in state structures, especially, in the public bureaucracy (Zafarullah, 2010:90). The

vulnerable groups. But in the real sense, it is to increase representation of some backward sections in government employment by providing preferential treatment (Yesmin, 2010:9, cited in Jahan, 2014:2). As Deshpande (2005:5) mentioned, affirmative action is a deliberate measure to encounter the longstanding deprivation of certain common logic behind such policies is to eliminate discrimination against some groups in society from gaining public employment and to remove 'continuing discrimination and persistent disparity' between privileged and disadvantaged groups.

From the legal point of view, Conrad (1976:135) defines quota system as,

“a rule of redistribution of a benefit or burden among at least two groups on the basis of a fixed percentage or share for such groups”.

There are two essential characteristics of quota system. First, social groups in the quota system may be divided into two groups: the preferred group and the non-preferred group. These groups have to be defined in terms of certain characteristics such as ethnicity, sex, language, place of origin, caste etc. These are known as 'quota characteristics'. Secondly, quota is based on fixed percentage for each group (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:25).

Quota characteristics are usually divided into two categories: vertical and horizontal. Vertical categories split the entire population into preferred groups and non-preferred groups. Horizontal categories prescribe preferences within each of the vertical categories. (Khan and Ahmed, 2007:25).

Quota system is one of the tools of affirmative action that aims at narrowing the gap between the privileged section and the disadvantaged section of people in the society. By creating greater employment opportunities for those formerly and presently excluded from public employment, affirmative action policies increase the representativeness of bureaucracies (Evans,1974:628) and bureaucracy which truly represents all segments of the population can

more greatly serve the interests of the people (Nigro, 1976, cited in Kabir and Jahan, 2007:4).

The political theory of bureaucracy asserts that bureaucrats should reflect society at large and public bureaucracy must be a reasonable cross-section of the body politic (Kim, 1993:403; Lewis, 1988; Peters, 1994; Rosenbloom, 1974; cited in Kabir, 2008:41). Women's presence in public organizations on some 'quota' basis is often advocated on the notion of a 'representative bureaucracy'<sup>33</sup> which argues that organizations perform better if their workforces reflect the characteristics of their constituent population. As Donald Kingsley (1944: 185) argued:

"In a democracy competence alone is not enough. The public service must also be representative if the state is to liberate rather than enslave."

As well, in a democracy civil servants are said to be "exercising a public trust" and therefore are expected to be "representative.....of the people as a whole" (Rosenbloom, 1989: 11) and thus the state has the responsibility to provide opportunities to everyone irrespective of their social, economic, gender and ethnic attributes to enter public offices. Improved access to public employment can empower disadvantaged people, women and minorities, enhance their influence and facilitate participation in government and thus democratize the bureaucracy (Kranz, 1976; Krislov, 1991; Niskanen, 1994; cited in Zafarullah, 2010:10).

In different countries, different historical traditions, social, and political context and ethical demands have summoned distinctive policies and application strategies relating to social inclusion. Disadvantaged people, less fortunate ones and minorities have been the recipients of special consideration in their quest for public jobs. Generally, the principal reasons have been the pursuit of fairness, equity and social justice as the mere

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<sup>33</sup> A term first articulated by Donald Kingsley in 1944 in response to what he observed in the British Civil Service during World War II.

provision of equal employment opportunity does not guarantee liberty and equality and therefore is unable to eliminate discrimination against specific groups in filling positions in the public bureaucracy (Zafarullah, 2010:91). He also added that,

“State policies have been specially packaged to benefit them for upholding civil rights, for maintaining social balance and reversing or reducing past discrimination, inequalities and social exclusion, and for making the bureaucracy less elitist and more representative” (Zafarullah, 2010:92).

Concerns relating to equality and participation are the core of the concept of inclusion.

Societies have been found to be fragmented over religion, gender, ethnicity, race, color and culture since long. This is why we cannot find a state where justice has been fully realized by each and every people. People feel justice when they get equal access to power, resource and opportunity created by the state. In order to increase this access, the notion of inclusiveness has been introduced. Reservation or quota is one of the tools of inclusive policy and the main motive behind the policy is to increase participation and expand capacities of the marginalized communities in the civil services (Dhakal, 2010:4).

### **Quota versus Merit: An Analysis**

The quality of civil service is very much dependent on the caliber of individuals recruited. Here lies the importance of recruiting the best and the brightest candidates for civil service, who can make the bureaucracy an efficient, innovative, dynamic, and powerful force to respond to the needs of the society (Jahan, 2012: 29). The achievements of government's mission and vision depends on highly qualified civil servants in the right place. Because an organization's performance is highly dependent on the quality of its workers.

The rationale of merit recruitment has been clearly mentioned by Mosher (2003), who emphasizes that government decisions have tremendous influence upon the nature and development of our society, and policy. The bulk of the decisions of our government are determined by the bureaucrats, whose decisions and actions are conditioned by their capabilities, orientations and their values, which are dependent upon their backgrounds, training and education (Mosher, 2003).

Merit system implies recruitment of government officials on the basis of knowledge, skill, and ability, thereby placing emphasis especially on competitive excellence. Merit employs best men in a particular job. The importance of merit based recruitment system for civil service is beyond description. An effective and efficient civil service has a close relation to meritocratic recruitment of the civil servants. A quality civil service is not byproducts of training and experience rather the most important thing is to find the quality and able human resources who can bring a positive result for the nation (Zaman, 2015: 98).

However, modern bureaucracy must also reflect the realities of changes occurring in the world, for example, the greater demand for diversity, equity, and participation in the affairs of the government which has been discussed earlier in this chapter. Bureaucracy needs to be representative to the population at large because it represents not just special interest but the whole nation better than any other political institution. Bureaucracy has an important role as a representative body, nevertheless, the demand for diversity and participation must not sacrifice the merit system in recruitment. If the government can hire the best people in terms of talent, ability, knowledge, effort, and so forth, then those recruits can serve the citizens and states to their full capacity.

## Historical Evolution of Quota System in Bangladesh

### British Period

The British rulers introduced open competitive examination and recruitment on the basis of merit to ICS by the Charter Act of 1893. However, both the British rulers as well as the minorities in India (Muslims, Sikhs and Christians) had reservation on the merit principle due to racial prejudice. (Moon, 1989, cited in Khan and Ahmed, 2007:4). The British Raj wanted to restrict the benefits of merit to Anglo-Saxon male candidates and was in favor of excluding the qualified Indians on one pretext or another. On the other hand, the minorities in India were alarmed by the prospect that recruitment on the basis of merit would lead to domination of upper caste Hindus. In 1879, the system of nomination was introduced by the British in the ICS which was purely arbitrary. A candidate had to meet the minimum requirements and to qualify in the open competitive examination to avail of quota benefits but the nominated candidates did not sit in an examination.

Initially there was no communal quota for the nominated candidates. An implicit quota for the Muslims was introduced in 1925, to reserve 'some places' for the Muslims in ICS which is known as 'Muddiman Pledge.'<sup>34</sup> Most of the Muslims who entered the ICS during 1922-1943 were nominated. Out of 87 Muslims who entered the ICS, 58 (68 percent of the total) were not successful at the competitive examination but were nominated in order to redress communal inequalities (Potter, 1996, cited in Khan and Ahmed, 2007:4). The quota for minorities was formally introduced in 1934 on the basis

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<sup>34</sup> It refers to an undertaking given by Sir Alexander Muddiman, in the Council of State in 1925, to reserve some places for Muslims to ICS (Khan and Ahmad, 2007: 4).

of an executive order. Under this order, 16.5 percent seats in ICS, other class I, class II and subordinate services were reserved for Muslims and 8.5 percent seats were earmarked for other communities. The reservation for scheduled caste was introduced in 1943 (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:4).

During the British period, the system of open competition was relaxed for preferred groups and nomination system was introduced. The quota was based on the basis of religion and caste to protect the interest of underrepresented communities.

### **Pakistan Period**

The birth of Pakistan in 1947 introduced a new dimension to the quota policy. The problem of communal discrimination was solved but regional disparity became a central issue in Pakistan administration as the Eastern wing was economically backward. In 1948, long before a constitution was adopted in Pakistan, a regional quota system was introduced (Table- 4.1). There was no quota for merit. All appointments were made against regional quota. This distribution was unequitable and was biased against East Pakistan and smaller provinces of West Pakistan. A quota was set apart for potential migrants which was inconsistent with regional quota system. This quota was meant as an inducement to attract Muslim migrants from India as the migrants had been recruited on the basis of their present domicile and not on the basis of their past domicile (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:5).

**Table -4.1 Regional Quota System in Central Government in Pakistan, September, 1948**

Regional/Province	Quota (in %)	Percentage of regional population in total population
East Bengal	42	56.75
Punjab	24	28
Karachi	2	1.5
All other provinces and princely	17	13.75

state of West Pakistan		
Potential Migrants from India	15	0

Source: Waseem, 1997, Khan and Ahmad, 2007:5.

This quota system was modified in 1949 (Table-2.4). The new quota system reserved 20 percent posts for merit and abolished the quota for potential migrants.

**Table-2.4 Regional Quota System in Central Government in Pakistan, November, 1949**

Category	Quota (in %)
Merit	20
East Bengal	40
Punjab (including Bhawalpur)	23
Karachi	2
All other provinces and princely states	15

Source: Waseem, 1997, Khan and Ahmad, 2007:6.

This new quota system reserved 20 percent posts for merit and abolished the quota for potential migrants. This system remained the basic pattern of quota in Pakistan till the share for East Pakistan was raised to 50 percent in 1967. When the provinces in West Pakistan were combined into one unit, the quota of West Pakistan was fixed by adding up the quota of the component provinces.

Apart from the quota at federal level, the provincial governments prescribed separate quota rules. The Government of East Pakistan reserved 20 percent of vacancies in all provincial and subordinate service to be filled up by direct recruitment from non – Muslims. Out of 20 percent reserved posts, 10 percent was allocated to Scheduled Caste, 1 percent for Buddhists and 9 percent for caste Hindus and other minority communities (East Pakistan Establishment Manual, p.92, cited in Khan and Ahmad, 2007:6).

## **Bangladesh Period**



After independence, one of the first tasks of new government in Bangladesh was to reorganize the administrative system which it inherited from Pakistan. Responding to the demands of a newly founded state based on the ethos of democracy, the political leadership was keen to de-bureaucratize the administrative system and make it more effective, responsible and responsive. This goal was difficult to achieve with an institutionalized and elitist bureaucracy as its members, being products of a rigorous open competitive selection process, were insensitive to alternatives to meritocracy, such as equity and representativeness (Zafarullah, 2010:94). But reform became imperative both from political and administrative standpoints. As mentioned by Zafarullah (2010:94-95),

“Politically, the country, for the first time after years of authoritarian rule, was under a democratically-elected government representing a mass-based party that had provided leadership to the war of independence. Administratively, the new state required a well-organized civil service system that would ‘effectively respond to a new set of social, political and economic demands’ and help build the war-torn economy and undertake a wide array of development programs.”

After independence, the GOB found that, women, ethnic and religious groups and some of the regions were under represented in the public service. Recognizing the urgency of the problem, the government adopted quotas which was reflected in the Interim Recruitment Policy of 1972 and is still followed by the government with various modifications from time to time (Jahan, 2007:49).

The Interim Recruitment Policy was first amended in 1976 and was further amended in several stages which is depicted in table-4.3. Thus under the current recruitment policy in the case of BCS, 55 percent of the posts are filled up through various quotas – the children of freedom fighters (30 percent), women (10 percent), districts (10 percent), tribal (5 percent) and physically challenged (1 percent). Therefore, 45 percent of the total recruitment is merit

based and the remaining 55 percent is done under quota provisions of different categories mentioned above. Changes made in the quota system from time to time and the quota characteristics in BCS are summarized in Table -4.3 and Table-4.4 respectively.

**Table -4.3 Changes in Quota System in BCS**

Categories of Quota	For Class -I Services (percentage)			
	1972	1976	1985	2013 – till date
Merit (Outside District Quota)	20	40	45	45
Freedom Fighters	30	30		
War affected Women	10	10		
District Quota	40	20		
Children of Freedom Fighters			30	30
Women			10	10
Tribal			05	05
District Merit for the general candidates of the district			10	10
Physically Challenged				1
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Compilation from different Recruitment Policies.

**Table-4.4 Quota Characteristics in Bangladesh**

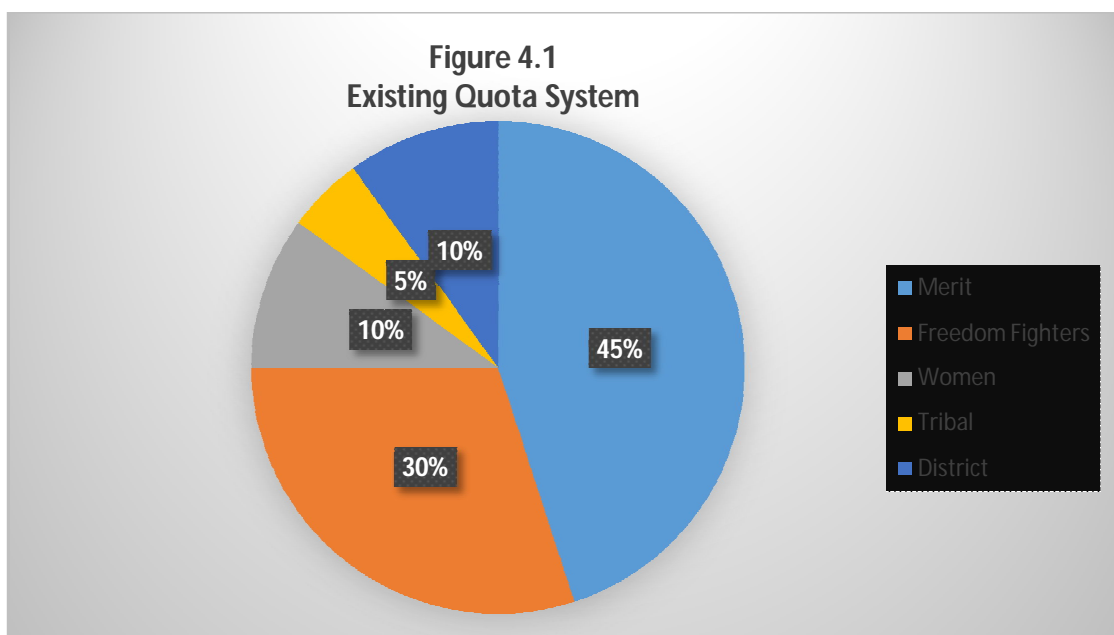
Vertical Quota Characteristics	Basis	%	Horizontal Quota Characteristics	Basis	%
1. Merit 2. 64 Districts	Regional	44% 56%	1. Freedom Fighters/Children of Freedom Fighters 2. Women 3. Tribes 4. Physically Challenged Persons	Recognition  Sex Ethnicity Disability	30%  10% 5% 1%

Source: Khan and Ahmad, 2007:26.

The present quota system reveals the following arrangements.

1. If the vacant posts are less than the number of districts then the posts would be distributed on the basis of the old districts or division wise.

2. Special quota like women, freedom fighters and tribal would be adjusted from the district quota.
3. Different special types of quotas would be distributed among the qualified candidates on the basis of their merit in their respective group.
4. The percentage reserved as a special quota would be calculated on the basis of the total number of vacant posts.
5. Merit quota would not be affected by any other special or district quota.
6. After distribution of vacant posts on the basis of special quotas, the rest of the posts would be distributed among the candidates of respective district after adjustment with the special quota distribution (GOB, 1995).



Therefore, at present, 45 percent posts in civil service are recruited on the basis of merit at national level whereas the rest 55 percent are distributed to all of the 64 districts according to their population size. Then the portion of a district is distributed to all the quotas of freedom fighters, tribal people,

women and general candidates (other than quotas) of that district (Mia, 2010:256-261). After applying the quotas for freedom fighters, women, and tribal, if there are any vacant posts, then one percent of that is given to physically challenged people.<sup>35</sup>

## **Legality of the Existing Quota System**

The Bangladesh Constitution was not adopted when the Interim Recruitment Policy was introduced. When the Constitution came into force, the legality of some parts of the quota system in Bangladesh has been challenged in the light of the provisions of the Constitution that guaranteed employment equality for all citizens and shunned discrimination against 'any backward sections of citizens' and especially women.<sup>36</sup> However the creation of a proper arrangement to secure equality and representativeness was implied in the Constitution but not binding upon the government.

There is no provision in the Constitution for proportional representation of districts in the Services of the Republic. A quota could be provided for any backward section of citizens. A district cannot be construed as a backward section of citizens. Article 152(1) of the Constitution describes a district as 'an administrative unit'. Certainly, the phrase 'backward section of citizens' does not indicate any administrative or geographical unit, such as a district, to warrant inclusion as a quota category unless the area, by virtue of its social or economic makeup, can be designated as wholly composed of citizens who are marginalized socially and economically (Zafarullah, 2010:98). A district contains both affluent and backward citizens. So a district or a group of

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<sup>35</sup> Interview with members of PSC.

<sup>36</sup> See Articles 28 and 29 of The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

districts (division) cannot be specified as a unit for taking advantage of quotas. As Khan and Ahmad (2007:14) argued,

“The social goal for quota will not be served if the upper classes of a backward district are benefited by a quota system.”

The constitution permits the use of quota not for proportional representation in the public service on the basis of population for each district rather the principal intent is to secure adequate representation of backward citizens. The government can reserve posts for a backward district (assuming all citizens in that district are backward) but it has no power to restrain competition among non-backward districts. The proportional representation limits competition among candidates from advanced districts (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:15).

The existing population weighted district quota is counterproductive for securing adequate representation for backward areas. It goes against the basic intent of infusing representativeness for the smaller districts/divisions as invariably the unavailability of adequate number of positions for all the districts or divisions of the country leads to the districts/ divisions with larger populations benefitting from the allocation. Khan and Ahmad (2007:16,quoted in Zafarullah, 2010: 98) provide an illustrative scenario:

“if there are two posts, one will be recruited on merit basis and another will be recruited from Dhaka division (which has the largest population) even if the candidate from Dhaka division fails to secure the second place. If a candidate from Barisal division occupies the second place in the competition, he will not get the job because of quota. If backwardness is judged on the basis of hardcore poverty, Barisal is the most backward division in Bangladesh (35.6% hardcore poor) and Dhaka division is the second least backward division (19.9%). Ironically, the job..... goes from the most backward to the less backward region because of the operation of the quota system that was designed for helping the backward section of citizens.”

Unless there are a large number of vacancies, districts with small population, despite their place in the country's economic barometer, have always lost out in getting their residents into the civil service. The district quota has now

actually become divisional quota and we are not promoting any backward group of citizens through this quota. So it is extremely difficult to make a convincing case for constitutionality of district quota.

The continuation of the quota for the offspring of the freedom fighters remains the most debatable issue. The main justification of freedom fighter's quota was to reward those who made sacrifices for the liberation of the country. However, the Constitution does not make any provision for rewarding any group of citizens despite their noble contributions and supreme sacrifices. Again, the freedom fighters do not necessarily belong to backward sections of citizens, though a case could be made out for the eligibility of quota for affected women and disabled freedom fighters. So there is hardly any reason to have such a huge percentage of vacancies (30 percent) reserved for freedom fighters which now covers the children of freedom fighters as they already crossed the minimum age requirement to start a career in the civil service.

Freedom fighters and their wards constitute much less than one percent of total population. The quota for freedom fighters is disproportionately larger (30 percent) than their share in population and this is why adequate candidates from this category is not available and candidates whose performance is poorest in comparison with other quota categories fill up the posts in the category of freedom fighters (Khan and Ahmad,2008:43). It was originally believed that with the passage of time quota for freedom fighters will be phased out which was not the case. Continuation of freedom fighter quota among their children is highly controversial, and to some extent a violation of Article 29 of the Constitution of Bangladesh. The students of the tertiary level educational institutions demonstrated a wide scale organized protest against the quota system in its existing form in 2013 which made the current quota policy a vital political issue. The legality of the freedom fighters

quota should be reviewed and it should be gradually reduced and eventually phased out.

According to Zafarullah (2010:108),

“Obtaining social equity and representativeness were the underlying factors in giving preferences to some of the disadvantaged groups and so-called ‘backward’ regions. But not all such groups, which have less representation in the civil service and were subject to discrimination in the past, have had the privilege to be assigned a quota. And, those who have, for instance, women almost equally sharing the country’s population, are poorly represented. On the contrary, sheer sentimentalism continues to favor the freedom fighters or their children with a higher quota percentage than their numbers deserve.”

The quota for tribal population is five percent. The tribes are ethnically different from the rest of the population and their interests and demands are different, perhaps because of the neglect they suffered for a long time, especially the lack of access to the same format of primary, secondary and tertiary education and improved life style. They still feel aggrieved and left out of the mainstream. So it can be said that they deserve the benefits of the ‘backward section of citizens’ as prescribed by Article 29(3) of Bangladesh Constitution though the provision is not specific about the tribal people.

The tribal population is miniscule, yet they have been granted relatively significant percentage of quota (Zafarullah, 2010:108). But the actual recruitment under the tribal quota is far short of the official target of 5 percent because of their physical isolation and lack of educational access.

Khan and Ahmad (2007:44) suggested that:

“The present quota is a hindrance for tribal candidates. Their priority in the district quota is the lowest; as a result, they would not get jobs even though their performance is better than other quota candidates from the district. They are likely to benefit more if one percent post is earmarked for them nationally rather than reserving five percent posts for them within the district quota.”

The ethnic minorities are the worst affected by the quota system and fivepercent quota for them is so low that hardly any post could be earmarked for them unless the number of vacancies is large.

In most developing countries there are affirmative action programs for people with disability. BCS need the quota for the disabled because no qualified person, by reason of physical disability, is officially barred from gaining equal access to public employment but this does not ensure them entry unless supported by positive discrimination (Zafarullah, 2010: 106). Therefore, surely this group deserve some preference. In Bangladesh, the policy makers seemed to be oblivious of the requirements of this group but finally the government came up with a concrete policy upholding the employment rights of disabled people. From 2013 the government has reserved one percent posts in the civil service for the people with some forms of disability. However, it is not preserved initially. After applying the quotas for freedom fighters, women and tribal, if there are any vacant posts, then one percent of that is given as disable quota.<sup>37</sup>

There is ten percent quota for 50 percent women of the country. Since the focus of this study is women quota it is essential to discuss in details the background of this quota and its salience to women's participation in BCS.

## **Background of Women Quota**

Before independence very insignificant numbers of women were able to enter the civil service due to administrative barriers (Jahan, 2014:1-5). The ICS was the sole monopoly of male as no woman entered up to 1935. During the British colonial period females, as a rule were considered unfit for administrative job. Since independence in 1947, the constitution of India allowed women to enter into the administrative services in the public sector. However, government was empowered to demand the resignation of a female

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<sup>37</sup> Interview with members of PSC.



officer after marriage on the grounds of efficiency. This provision was present in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) till 1971 (Swarup and Sinha, 1991:16 cited in Kabir, 2011:115).

The CSP continued its progress bearing the trend and tradition of the ICS. Although the 1956 and 1962 constitutions of Pakistan ensured equality of opportunity for all citizens with regard to public employment, the real scenario was quite different. It was mentioned in the recruitment rules of civil services that women will be considered only for audit and accounts services, railway accounts service, military accounts service, income tax and postal services. Even if any woman could enter in any of these services in which women were entitled to get jobs she had to quit job after marriage or remarriage. The then Pakistan government was of the opinion that a married female would be unable to keep her skills up to the standard level. By means of this Article of Recruitment Rules, educated women in Pakistan were deprived of their basic right to enter a profession.

Due to decisions that women could not serve with other cadres, women were not allowed to join certain prestigious services namely the CSP, the FSP and the PSP and these services were totally devoid of women (Mahtab, 1995:90). These services were considered unsuitable for women based on the perception that women might face difficulties to cope with the job environment in these services which involve public dealings, frequent posting and transfers, assignments in hard areas, and field postings home and abroad. Women got entry into different branches of civil administration only after 1972 though the progress was very slow (Khan, 1995:74).

Prior to the liberation of Bangladesh, the jobs in the public sector were an exclusive preserve of the male. Consequently, in independent Bangladesh it was found that the civil service was grossly underrepresented by women. This prompted the government earmarking for 10 percent jobs for women with

the objective of effectively drawing them into the mainstream of public bureaucracy.

In independent Bangladesh, 10 % women quota was first introduced in 1972 for war affected women only. In 1976 same percentage of quota was reserved for women subject to the fulfillment of basic qualification. No war affected women came to avail of the benefit of the quota, perhaps because of not having minimum requisite qualification or stigma or being socially recognized as war affected. In 1985, only one woman came under the provision who preferred to be identified as a freedom fighter rather a war affected woman (Yesmin, 2010:21). In 1985 the war affected quota was abolished and the government reserved 10 percent of total posts at the gazetted level and 15 percent non gazetted post for women in the civil service.

Women did not enter the mainstream civil service in Bangladesh before early eighties. PSC has been recruiting personnel since 1973 where first woman was recruited in 1982 (Afroza, 2008). The entry of women to police cadre was banned for many years on the ground that they were not physically suitable for the job. However, the police administration appreciated the usefulness of women in police work and women recruitment in police cadre was started from the 18th BCS (Kashem, et.al., 2005:35). Since 1982 women have been recruited in all cadre services regularly and their participation in BCS has been increasing day by day, but it has not reached the expected level yet.

### **Justification of Women Quota**

Article 28 and 29 of the constitution justified the quota for women. However, the purpose of preferential treatment for women in these two Articles is different. The provision of quota under Article 28(4) is provided for the advancement of women whereas the provision of quota under Article 29(3) is provided for the adequate representation of women.

Though women comprise half of the total population in Bangladesh, they are not only under-represented in the civil service, but also tend to be concentrated in the bottom of the hierarchy (UN, 2004:14). Their share in the higher civil service is very insignificant. The current inequalities of women representation in the civil service is the result of past practices of systematic discrimination against women as discussed above. One way of reducing this existing wide disparity caused by persistent past discrimination, is by giving preferential treatment to women.

### **Arguments for Women Quota**

Considering the history of the country, there have been barriers for female participation in civil service for a long time starting from the colonial period. Again for centuries women have been subjected to male domination, religious sanctions and virtual social incarceration (Kabir, 2011:122). They have long been deprived of education, training, assets, and all other opportunities as a result of the traditional social values. As women have lower status due to deprivation and discrimination, women's access to powerful positions seems to be limited in number and their occupational choices are also narrower than those of men. So it is not justifiable to expect that women would compete in all sectors like their counterparts. Their participation in the civil service is minimal due to low educational rates, restricted mobility, lack of security and traditional social values as mentioned in many studies. In order to compensate this basic hurdle to women's advancement and historical wrongs made by state, one functional solution would be to reserve posts for women's employment (Jahan, 2014:6, Jahan, 2007:50-51). The rationale behind this protectiveness towards women was perhaps the fact that in a milieu of patriarchy and poverty the need for a woman's job was always considered a low priority compared to her male counterpart's. And therefore, even with

requisite qualification, a woman often fails to get her due share in a highly competitive and male biased job market (Khan, 1988:47).

Unlike their male counterparts, women face enormous hardship in aspiring and gaining entry into the civil service because of both systemic and subjective discrimination (Zafarullah, 2010: 100). Historically, civil service was male oriented and the organizational rules, culture and environment were designed for men and not for women (Jahan, 2014:6). Discriminatory institutions and structures, ideology, social and cultural norms continue to limit women's progress. As a result their participation remains lower than that of men in the civil service. So it is necessary for the society to compensate for this in order to alleviate discriminatory attitude towards women. Some special benefits must be created so that women are not compelled to compete with men from an uneven context forced on them (Jahan, 2014:6). Women may underinvest in their own human capital if they believe that civil service career opportunities are unavailable. Through providing incentive or the opportunity, quotas can encourage women to pursue higher education and consider BCS as their future career potential.

The state has a special responsibility to adopt a public employment strategy that will, on one hand, ensure equity through compensatory and distributive justice, and on the other, enhance representativeness by providing access to and increasing the participation of both advantaged and disadvantaged segments of the community (Tummala, 1989:6-7, cited in Zafarullah, 2000:198).

According to Zafarullah (2010:92-93),

“Distributive justice implies that nobody, regardless of their personal attributes like race, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental impairment and even religious and ideological beliefs, should be denied the opportunity to take equal advantages under fair and unprejudiced conditions. Compensatory justice on the other hand, demands recompense for past injustices (or their

continuing deliberative effects) perpetrated on certain individuals or groups in society by either direct state policies/actions or their indirect upshots”.

In accordance the Constitution of the Republic not only outlawed discrimination on the ground of gender, but also provided enabling authority to the state to prescribe quota in favor of women or any ‘backward section of citizens’ to secure their adequate representation in the civil service (GOB, 1994). The GOB introduced the women quota to offer everyone both male and female a fair and equitable chance on a level field. Article 28(3) and 29(3) of the constitution validate such a measure (discussed in chapter six). Thus women quota has a legal, logical, and practical basis. The main motive behind the quota policy is to increase participation and expand competitive capacities of the women in the civil service.

As most of the government policies are affected and determined by bureaucracy, adequate women in various positions of the civil service is needed to prevent gender biased service delivery. Women and men should be equally represented in any decision making institution. As women hold specific interests, values and ideas that are different from men, they can bring new insights and perspectives and thus make bureaucracy to better serve the interests of the people (Jahan, 2014:6). Advocates of induction of women in public service on quota basis strongly argue that this will not only bring about ‘gender justice’ in public employment but also bring in other non-bureaucratic values which will qualitatively improve public administration (Rai,2005:). In this regard women quota can play a vital role to redress the situation of women and bring them at par with men in the civil service.

## **Arguments against Women Quota**

Women quota in the civil service is being criticized by opponents who identify it as a barrier to merit and administrative efficiency. They argue that quota in

recruitment process restricts the range of selection to mediocre in preference to the brighter ones and exacerbates the problem of quality civil service. Thus, the capacity of the civil service in Bangladesh is declining. Quota system is weakening the foundation of our administrative system by providing employment to poor quality people. On the other hand it is creating despair and frustration among the bright and meritorious candidates who are deprived of the opportunity.

It is also stated that, quota system supports underestimation of abilities, discriminates gender specific standards of females. This is also assumed that these effects could lead to further discrimination of women. (Kashem et.al., 2002:48; cited in Jahan, 2014:7). A general perception is that quota appointees are always looked down upon by their peers and superiors. As a result women who are selected through quotas may be stereotyped as less qualified by colleagues which might not be the case. A quota can also reduce a woman's incentive to invest if she believes her path towards entering the service has been made easier with a women quota.

Furthermore, it is often said that civil officers are mainly recruited from the graduates of universities and there is no female quota for admission to the universities of Bangladesh. Both male and female students get admission to the universities on merit. A large number of female students are pursuing their studies in the universities and they are doing well. So there is no justification of women quota in civil service recruitment (Wahhab, 2009:9).

Women quota is further criticized on the ground that, women are given undue privileges through the system while there are severe problems of unemployment faced by men and it is more important for males than the females to get jobs (Kashem et.al., 2002:49; cited in Jahan, 2014:7). Women's work is always regarded as less valuable and therefore subsidiary to the male in the social system in Bangladesh.

If we consider the above views, it is clear that although there are some arguments against the quota system, there are also strong arguments for the women quota system. Quota in the recruitment process in the civil service has been a question of quality. But it is not true that, women who were hired through the women quota are hired without required qualifications. Rather they have to show their competence by appearing in different phases of the BCS examination, the same as their male counterparts. At present, a candidate gains the advantage of the quota system accruing to him or her, only after succeeding in preliminary, written and viva-voce examinations. A quota system may be explained here as a way, whereby some eligible female candidates are getting an added opportunity to enter into the civil service (Kashem et.al., 2002:48, cited in Jahan, 2007:51).

As mentioned earlier in a democratic society competence alone is not enough, a public bureaucracy must be representative of the people they serve. As Zafarullah (2000:197, quoted in Kabir and Jahan, 2007:1) mentioned:

“But the merit principle was narrowly interpreted to favor a small group of people who had the opportunity, with the backing of prevailing social values, to gain entry to institutions of higher learning to develop their competence for governmental jobs. High entry standards and certain other prohibitions deprived a large segment of the population, especially women, from serving society.”

## **Conclusion**

This chapter traced a brief history of the women quota, noted its salience to women's participation in the civil service and examined the pros and cons of quota system by exploring the equity and efficiency arguments surrounding this particular type of quota.

Women were late starters in the civil service but it was not their choice rather it was determined by the patriarchal society. The limitations of the social opportunities for women were not properly analyzed rather it was seen as

women's shortcomings. Therefore, setting aside quotas for women is not a question of charity or concession to women rather a compensation for the discrimination they have suffered at the hands of men for centuries. Existing socio-economic inequality has been a major hindrance in ensuring an equal share for women in BCS.

In order to analyze the utilization and working of women quota the individual and social characteristics of women in Bangladeshi society need to be examined in further depth which is considered in the next chapter.



# Chapter Five

## Status of Women in Bangladesh

### Introduction

The presence of affirmative action is a significant determinant of equal employment opportunity but the effect of affirmative action is constrained by contextual variables, such as organizational characteristics, socio-economic conditions and political situations as Kellough pointed out (Kellough, 1990:557, quoted in Kim, 2003:65). The theoretical framework for this study identifies social conditions as a variable which might affect the employment opportunity of women in the civil service. This is based on the premise that women face personal, organizational and societal barriers in entering and / or career advancing in the civil service as a result of social attitudes against them. The extent to which women face these barriers in a particular country depends upon the role and status of women in society at large.

This chapter explains the role and status of women in Bangladesh within the cultural realities of the society to provide a basis for understanding personal, organizational and societal implications for women in Bangladesh in general and the civil service in particular. The term status of women refers here to the social, economic and political roles women play in the society. The society of Bangladesh is masculine<sup>38</sup> in nature where women are likely to confine in household works and men are responsible for the family income. The position of women vis-à-vis men has been measured in terms of education, health and nutrition, employment, and access to political power in order to investigate the status of women in Bangladesh.

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<sup>38</sup> In a masculine society careers are compulsory for men, optional for women and there is low share of working women in professional jobs and in elected political positions (Hofstede, 2005).

## **Status of Women: The Present Scenario in Bangladesh**

It is to be acknowledged that the condition of women in Bangladesh and their opportunity to empower themselves gradually improved over the past decades in some selected social indicators. Significant achievements have been made in terms of increase in female literacy, life expectancy rates and reduction of mortality rates. Nevertheless, the status of women lags behind men in almost all respects.

In the entire 'developing' world, women are at a disadvantaged position in terms of enjoyment of legal, social, and economic rights. Gender gaps are widespread in access to and control of resources, in economic opportunities, in power and political voice. Women and girls bear the largest and most direct costs of these inequalities but the costs cut more broadly across society, ultimately harming everyone (Bhattacharya, 2014:69).

Bangladesh is historically a traditional patriarchal society, where male domination and supremacy is an accepted reality. Violence, injustice and other forms of discrimination against women are a common phenomenon in Bangladesh due to the traditional patriarchal socio-economic system, structure and mindset of its people (Aminuzzaman, 2011:5). The concept of 'patriarchy' denotes a society where men control resources, allocate values, exercise ownership over property and family. This complete supremacy is made possible by men's control of economic power. Traditions, religious interpretation, powers of state structures and agencies reinforce this control.

Discrimination between male and female starts at birth and continues throughout the family and societal life leading to deprivation of access to all opportunities and rights. Continuing disparities between women and men in life expectancy, health status, employment and income opportunities, education, control over assets, personal security and participation in the political process and decision making reveals that development programs do

not benefit women equitably and inequitable distribution hinders the process of women's advancement ( Asaduzzaman and Hossain, 2002: 335; cited in Jahan and Kabir, 2006:165). Empowerment of women in economic, political, administrative and social fields is considered one of the preconditions for ensuring equal participation of women in all sphere of life. If women can hold socio-economic and political power, then they will be able to gain control over their lives and social institutions those regulate all aspects of their lives (Islam, 2013:7).

However, to present a composite picture of the status of women in Bangladesh<sup>39</sup>, their education and health profile and their access to employment opportunities and political power have been investigated in this chapter.

## **Education**

Women's access to education is universally accepted as a key to the enhancement of the status of women in society. Traditionally, women education has been accorded a low priority in Bangladesh due to poverty, social directives for female seclusion and the low value of girls in the society. The social history of the country, various socio religious taboos have jointly resulted into a context in which women are put outside the so called mainstream of the society. However, the situation has been changed during the past two decades.

The literacy rate<sup>40</sup> in Bangladesh is lower for females (60.68%) compared to males (65.77%) according to 2014 estimates for population aged 7 and over. The literacy of male (<7 years of age) was 49.5 percent in 2000 at national level which has increased to 61.12 percent in 2010 with an annual average

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<sup>39</sup> The data provided on this chapter is not up to date and some of it are estimate based.

<sup>40</sup>Using the 1972 UNESCO's definition of literacy, a literate is a person who can read and write a short statement in everyday life with understanding in any language.

increasing rate of 1.16 percent. Whereas, literacy rate of female at national level was 40.1 percent in 2000 which has increased to 54.8 percent in 2010 with an annual average increasing rate of 1.47 percent. Continuation of this rate indicates that the literacy rate of male might be increased to 65.77 percent and of female might be 60.68 percent at national level by 2014. There are also high rural-urban variations in case of literacy rate by sex (Table 5.1).

**Table- 5.1: Current Situation and Future Projection of literacy rate (< 7 years of age) by sex**

	Female			Male		
Year	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
2000	40.1	36.1	55.3	49.5	45.5	64.9
2005	48.1	42.9	63.2	55.8	50.4	72.1
2010	54.8	50.21	67.67	61.12	56.67	73.1
2014	60.68	55.85	72.61	65.77	61.14	76.38

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics; Ferdaush and Rahman, 2011:10.

Over the years the government has undertaken various pro-women activities and strategies to encourage girls and women's participation in obtaining education and has achieved significant progress in regard to increasing girls' access to both at primary and secondary schools.

This section presents women's educational profile based on three indicators: adult literacy rate, enrolment rate in different educational institutions and completion versus dropout rate at various levels of education.

**Table- 5.2: Enrolment Statistics at Different Educational Institutions (2011)**

Educational Institutions	Girls (percent)	Boys (percent)
Secondary Schools	53.61	46.39
Colleges	47.47	52.53
Madrasas	53.23	46.77

Vocational/Technical Education	27.02	72.98
Professional Education	36.42	63.58
Public and Private Universities	30.00	70.00

Source: BANBEIS, Bangladesh Educational Statistics, 2011.

Table 5.2 depicts that in general the enrolment of girls has surpassed the number of boys at secondary level but the percentage of girls' drops in the higher secondary level. Again, girls' enrolment is higher than that of boys at Madrasa level which is 53%. The opposite picture is observed at technical education where the enrolment of girls' is only 27 percent. Technical disciplines are regarded as men's domain and female student population in these disciplines does not provide a bright picture about women. Gender disparity is significantly high in tertiary level of education. In 2011, among the total number of students combined in public and private university, only 30 percent were female while 70 percent students were male.

**Table 5.3: Completion Rate and Dropout Rate (2011)**

Level and Type of Education	Completion Rate			Dropout Rate		
	Both Sex percent	Boys percent	Girls percent	Both Sex percent	Boys percent	Girls percent
Secondary Level (School)	43.75	47.78	40.16	56.25	52.22	59.84
Secondary Level (Dakhil)	51.57	58.75	44.33	48.23	41.25	55.67
Higher Secondary Level (College and Madrasa)	74.23	73.66	74.93	25.77	26.34	25.07

Source: BANBEIS, Bangladesh Educational Statistics, 2011.

From table 5.3, it is observed that, at all levels of education, completion rate of education of boys' is always higher than that of girls', except at higher secondary level where completion rate of girls' is slightly higher than boys'. The same picture prevails in the case of girls' dropout rate. At secondary level, both in School and Dhakil, girls' dropout rate is higher than the boys but at

higher secondary level, dropout rate of boys' is higher than the girls'. A positive development trend has been observed in the increased enrolment of girls at the secondary level. Particularly, in rural areas, free education and stipends for girls might be worked as a catalyst in this regard.

In recent years, the rate at which female enrolment in secondary level has increased, the enrolment in higher education has not been increased at the same pace. Girls' enrolment is rising but there are significant gaps in enrolment and completion rates. Women's continuation with education is breaking down due to various socio-economic and cultural reasons. Due to financial constraints the rationale in the Bangladeshi family to educate a boy over a girl still persists. Other impediments to educational attainment for women include early marriage, religious orthodoxy and increasing incidence of sexual violence and harassment against girls (Ferdaush and Rahman, 2011:11). Early marriage diminishes girls' chance to stay in the education and Bangladesh has the second highest rate of child marriage in the world according to UNICEF (2016) statistics.

Women's participation in higher education is also restricted by the location of college and universities in urban areas. For the vast majority of female students of rural areas it is not possible to come and stay in urban areas to pursue higher studies. Even in cases where rural girls have successfully completed secondary education, college and university education is not considered for them. All these are identified as contributing factors behind girl's dropout of the school system.

It has also been observed that, enrolment ratio for the rural women are far lower than that of their urban counterparts and male counterparts as well. The proportions of women going on to tertiary and further education have been much lower and the pattern of female entry to this level has essentially been limited to the socio-economically privileged (Aminuzzaman, 2011:7).

These findings demonstrate that low socio economic status of the parents are the major deterrent against equal participation of females in higher education.

## **Health and Nutritional Status**

Good health enhances human potential and capacity for participation in gainful economic activities. Bangladesh has achieved some progress in the health sector. However, the overall picture of the health status of women in Bangladesh is not very encouraging.

The condition of women in terms of nutritional status and access to health care facilities is poorer than men in Bangladesh. Biases in parental care, feeding patterns, intra familial food distribution, and treatment of illness are all in favor of males. As a result, girl child mortality, malnutrition, morbidity and maternal mortality are high. The systematic devaluation of women is manifested in their lesser claim to subsistence resources within the household.

Girls are often considered to be financial burdens on their family, and from the time of birth, they receive less investment in their health care. Within the household, women and girls often face discrimination in sharing of foods. A number of studies of household food distribution show that women are most likely to suffer a shortfall in their daily caloric requirements and to suffer from severe malnutrition. Inadequate intake of food and poor diet are the primary causes of malnutrition among women. Studies show that a large percentage of women suffer from low body weight and height. The nutritional status of girl child, especially of rural girls, is worse than for boys. The urban population living in the slum areas do not have adequate sanitation, water and health facilities which results in poor health. Women and children are the worst sufferers in these places.

While the family's health is regarded as primarily the responsibility of women, they have access only to the traditional village based forms of medicine. Various researches show that, health care for women is still restricted to their reproductive health and general health of women at all ages remains quite neglected. Women are married at a much lower age than men. Pregnancy is the decision of a man and women have the least power in reproductive decisions. Maternal health and mortality is linked with women's low status in the household and their restricted mobility. In rural Bangladesh women's mobility is greatly limited and their decision making power is often restricted. Women's long child bearing span and high birth rate aggravates women's nutritional status which is already poor due to inadequate food intake.

Many women are denied freedom to seek help at a hospital or health care center because their husband or husband's family makes the decisions about their health care. Despite an increase in health facilities, normally 85 percent of deliveries still take place at home and less than a quarter of births is attended by skilled health personnel (UNICEF, 2010) which ultimately results in high maternal mortality. Widespread absence of doctors (especially female doctors), lack of sensitivity towards female patients, distance of the health centers, rising cost of services discourage women to avail of health services.

Poverty, lack of knowledge and information, limited access to and use of health services coupled with early marriage, pressure for early child bearing, multiple pregnancies and poor nutritional status are the influential factors for the overall lower health status of women in Bangladesh (Ferdaush and Rahman, 2011:11).

## **Employment**

The level and kind of women's participation in gainful employment is an important indicator of the economic status of women in a society. In Bangladesh, women lag behind men not only in overall employment



participation but also are less represented in important occupations. Gender inequality is also evident in sex segregated labor market where women are more likely to be involved in low paid jobs and non-standard work. The poor situation of women in the job market is often assigned to their lack of capabilities. But it is not pointed out that society itself stands against them in the process of achieving the required education, skills and training. Traditional practices have put the women out of the educational institutions. This practically limits the opportunities of women in important occupations.

Women in Bangladesh are engaged in many work activities, from domestic work inside the home, to outside paid work. There are clear patterns of 'women's work' and 'men's work' both in the household and in the wider community---and cultural explanations of why this should be so. Women work harder and longer hours than men. Their work is often undervalued and underreported as women are mostly engaged in household or non-remunerative activities, whereas men are engaged in income earning or remunerative activities. Most of the employed women fall into the unpaid family helper category. Their participation in paid employment has been low due to socio-cultural and religious conservatism. Limitations on women's physical mobility have confined them to the informal, undervalued, and hidden margins of the labor market. But men are free to pursue the most remunerative forms of employment, commensurate with their skills, available in the wider economy. The difference is that the choices available are much broader for men because of the absence of social constraints on their mobility.

Gender disparities in the employment sector are more pronounced when rural and urban comparisons are made. In urban areas, the employment scenario has been encouraging (52.9 percent for women versus 62.2 percent for men), while in rural areas, women have been /were at a disadvantage when compared with men (34.1 percent for women versus 42.7 percent for men).

About two-thirds women are absent from the employment scenario as stated by Aminuzzaman (2011:8). The reason behind these differences is that in rural areas, women's level of education is low and they have fewer skills. If women are to compete in a free market with men, women will need large scale capacity building interventions in order to overcome the economic, socio-cultural, and mobility related constraints they face due to their present differential capacities.

Labor force participation for women in urban areas has been driven primarily by the growth of export industry jobs in textiles and the spread of micro financing operations by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Women in large numbers are going in the readymade garments industries and micro-enterprises. Women's participation in the industrial sector is largest in the construction industry where many work as manual laborers. Local textiles, shoes, cosmetics and such other consumable production units have also employed women. In the manufacturing sector, the export oriented industries such as electronics, garments and shrimp processing have attracted women. The garment manufacturing sector is the largest employer of women in Bangladesh. Women's economic participation is greater in the non-formal sector and has increased substantially due to the success of self-employment generating credit programs run by the government and NGOs.

However, women's participation in high skill, managerial and government executive positions has increased only to a limited extent. Due to quota provisions at the entry level, women's participation rate in the public sector has increased to some extent. However, there are still very few women at the management or policy making level.

Income inequalities between women and men are still existent in Bangladesh. Generally, there is little gender disparity in salaries/wages in the public sector for skilled labor, but there is a bias towards employing women for low-paid or

part-time service oriented jobs. In the agriculture sector, the daily wage rates of female laborers (semi-skilled and unskilled) were 25 percent less than the male wage rates in 2000 (BBS, Statistical YearBook of Bangladesh- 2000). The 2012 Human Development Report shows that, in the small business sector, for every dollar earned by a male, women make 12 cents in comparison (The World Bank, Human Development Report, 2012[3]). This may be due partly to women's low level of education, their multiple roles and their dual burden of household work but also to the perception that, as women, they were incapable of working as hard as male and thus, deserved less as mentioned by Aminuzzaman (2011:9).

Furthermore, various researches show that there is a lack of women friendly employment opportunities and women friendly work environment in the country. Women do not have the right kind of facilities of a good work place. Moreover, the prejudicial attitude of employers is also responsible for women's limited entry into better jobs and higher administrative positions.

Under these circumstances, there exists an immense inequality between the male and the female in Bangladesh as far as employment status is concerned. However, over time there is some progress in the recent years but it is lower than that of expected.

## **Political Power**

Access to political power is an important indicator of gender empowerment considered necessary for the enhancement of women's status in society. In Bangladesh, the role of women in politics is extremely limited as compared to men despite the fact that, both the prime minister and the leader of the opposition are women who, collectively, have ruled back and forth for more than two decades. Furthermore, the speaker is also a woman. This may give the impression that women are extremely prominent in the national parliament in Bangladesh. But the reality is quite to the contrary. Participation

of women in politics has remained by and large confined to a small group of women who come from well-to-do urban and educated background. Many women politicians including the Prime Minister hail from influential political families.

Currently, the percentage of women members of parliament (MPs) is only 6.6 percent that is 20 out of 300 through direct election. However, including the reserved seats for women, their percentage is 25.7 percent. In Bangladesh, quotas or reservations are seen as practically the only way through which women can get into the legislature, making women dependent on the quota system alone. Political parties do not normally nominate female candidates. As a consequence only a few women have been elected as parliament members. Again most of the women parliamentarians have had a political background or family connection.

The presence of women in national parliament does not really reflect the level of political consciousness of the women of the country. Participation of women in policy formulation is an indication of their status in society. It may be said that when women participate in politics in large numbers, then they are in a position to influence policies and decisions made in the political field, which are important because they affect the lives of people.

Women have very nominal existence in the political parties. The scope is limited for women to participate in the politics because the major parties do not exercise democratic values within the parties. None of the major parties in their manifestos or constitution has given any special focus on the political empowerment of women. Political parties largely remain defender of male power. They play the role of 'gatekeeper' keeping women on the outside. Women face discrimination within the party they belong. The representation of women in the decision-making bodies of the political parties is very

insignificant (Table-5.4). Most of the women at the higher level of the party hierarchy have had a family connection.

**Table-5.4: Women Members in Party Hierarchies of Major Political Parties in Bangladesh**

Name of Party	Committees	Total members	Female members
BNP	Advisory Committee	34	0
	National Executive Committee	116	6
AL	Central Executive Members	72	9
	Advisory Committee	32	2
JP (Ershad)	Presidium Member	41	1
	Central Executive Member	91	3
Jamaat	Majlish-e-Shura	141	0
	Majlish-e-Amla	24	0
JSD	Executive Committee	112	4

Source: From the websites of all the political parties, accessed on May, 2014.

The condition of women's participation in local level politics is sometimes worse than it is in national politics. Though there are provisions for direct elections to reserved seats for women in local level elections there are some serious lacunas in gender balancing both in terms of governance policy and in reform agenda. Many social activists argued that still there are few factors which mostly undermine women's active and effective participation in local government such as:

Long tradition of gender hierarchy (social-cultural) and structural problems;

Unequal mode of representation;

Lack of proper power and resources and

Absence of proper guiding rules and regulations (Annual Report, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, 2012:1-7).

The patriarchal social systems limit women from becoming active in politics. Inadequate education and training, lack of access to resources and information, financial hardship, unemployment mostly dispirits women to involve in politics. The family, particularly the husbands and other male members of the family do not like the participation of women in political activities. Society does not take it as a positive phenomenon in certain cases. Lack of security also works as a great factor in this regard. Allegations of corruption and criminalization of politics impedes women's participation and discourages women to participate in politics. Besides in Bangladesh, one requires huge amounts of money to participate in politics, especially electoral politics. As an outcome, only people with access to adequate financial resources can enter the political arena and women again lag behind.

Though changing, family and society still feel that women's role are closely tied to reproductive and household activities only. So, they do not get adequate opportunities to participate in political activities due to the cause of non-cooperation of family, social pressure cum prejudices, and religious obstacles. The political environment is not friendly enough to support the elected women members to discharge their responsibilities properly. Generally most of the women members are excluded from major decision making arenas and have no participation in committees and sub-committees.

In fact most of the problems faced by women for getting involved in politics are embedded in the socio-economic, religious, and cultural system, which has given women a subordinate status in the family, the society, and the state. These types of norms and expectations restrict women's political action and economic activities. As an outcome, women become the prey of inequality.

It is clear from this brief statistical overview that although the GOB has made great strides in reducing the gender gap in every sector, there is still much to be done to be achieved equality for both sexes. Women in Bangladesh today

are less educated and less healthy than men, have limited access to economic opportunity, and are less represented in positions of power and authority relative to men. Gender inequality is further reflected in inheritance laws—under Muslim law women are only entitled to half of what their male counterparts inherit from a parent's estate and under the prevailing Hindu law of Bangladesh, women, have extremely limited right to inherit parental property. In Bangladesh women are very often “ignored socially and politically, deprived legally and exploited economically” (Halim, 2001). The reasons why these gender disparities present in Bangladesh are diverse and complex.

## **Influence of Culture on Women's Lives in Bangladesh**

While the constitution of the country guarantees equality of rights and opportunities for women, the country's old cultural traditions and patriarchal values still influence gender relations and accord women a lower status in the society. Gender inequality is not necessarily differential access to material resources but it is mostly emerged from the gender identities shaped by gender norms and stereotypes.<sup>41</sup>

Women are subject to discriminatory customs, traditions and social practices deep rooted in the culture those are not in conformity with the ideals of the state outlined in the constitution. Tradition depicts women as physically weak and intellectually poor requiring constant protection of the men who were in turn depicted physically strong and intelligent (Hasan, 2007: 9). The origin of these customs and traditions can be traced back to the history of the sub-continent.

In our tradition bound society a woman has an identity problem throughout her life and is known by her father before marriage and by her husband after

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<sup>41</sup> A stereotype is a belief that can be held by anybody about specific types of individuals or certain ways of doing things, but that belief may or may not accurately reflect reality.

marriage. When a man is allowed an independent existence, a woman's survival is not socially conceivable without the family. The influence of images about the role and status of women and gender ideologies that impact adversely on women are still predominant in present day rural Bangladesh. Informal social, cultural and religious traditions still define the rural Bangladeshi women as docile daughters, compliant wives, and dependent mothers.

The patriarchal social system and institution of marriage and religious bindings place women in an unequal and disadvantaged position. People in our society like to see women as submissive, sacrificing, affectionate, family-oriented, non-competitive, and dependent. The patriarchal family places the responsibility of the domestic sphere primarily on women. The socialization process in the family encourages women to possess the domestic and child rearing skills to cope with their basic roles of mothers and housewives. Child bearing and child rearing reduces women's capacity to move freely and opt for better jobs.

Marriage is considered the ultimate goal in a young woman's life. Parents try to prepare their sons for the job market while daughters are prepared as prospective brides for marriage market. The burden of making the marriage successful lies solely on the woman. Motherhood is a supreme goal which is socially celebrated. An overemphasis on the reproductive role<sup>42</sup> of women in Bangladeshi culture has serious consequences for gender mainstreaming as it restricts women's access and participation in education, employment and other social activities. Thus while the family throttles women's aspirations towards positions of power and equality, it also places significant responsibilities on them.

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<sup>42</sup> This role encompasses the care and maintenance of the household and its members, such as cooking, washing, cleaning, nursing, bearing children and looking after them. This work is necessary, yet it is rarely considered of the same value as productive work and is mostly done by women (March et al., 1999: 19).



Socio cultural norms have implications for other factors as well. The masculine cultural pattern assigns specific sex role in the society as a consequence of which many female students are now coming out of the universities with good results without any career planning. The cultural norms forces women to be indifferent to career. They complete their education not for a good career or self-dependency. Again, women's preferences for those jobs which are perceived to be more feminine (e.g., nursing, teaching, desk- oriented jobs) and a corresponding avoidance of the so called male jobs are in part influenced by socio-cultural norms (Kabir and Jahan, 2007:11-12). Similarly, the preferences shown by girls for the so called female subjects in colleges and universities is also influenced in part by these norms.

The phenomenon of girls going for primarily soft courses in arts, humanities and social sciences limits their occupational choices and chances. There is no denying that these choices are dictated by the actual or expected adult roles of girls in our society, as mothers and wives. Given this situation, women either enter general arts colleges or primary teaching, nursing, and other white collar jobs at the lower rung of the occupational hierarchy. An analysis of the occupational structure (modern sector) indicates that education fits women for occupational roles which are extensions of their female nurturance assisting role within the patriarchal family. As a result, there are more women as primary teachers and men as university professors. Nurses are largely female and doctors predominantly male.

The social stereotypes of the roles expected of men and women are naturally reflected in the media and in the educational curriculum. It is possible to ignore the implications of socio-cultural norms and values but society's small messages play a significant role in an employee's personal and career development, long before employment. It is important to recognize the strong, persuasive, and conflicting socio-cultural images about women employees in society, and the impact of these stereotypes on the evolution of

the female employee's self-concept, role-development and decision –making patterns (Lungue, 1989:179. cited in Kabir and Jahan, 2007:12).

Women's health continues to suffer because of their avoidance to adopt birth control measures which is not a matter of their own choice rather it has its basis in the cultural norms where a male child is preferred over a female child. A woman keeps on bearing children until a son is born. Women's lack of authority in decision making about their reproductive health, immobility, and their hesitation of discussing their ailments even with doctors are some of the cultural reasons that have direct bearing on women's health.

In Bangladesh purdah<sup>43</sup> is manifested as the strict limitation of women's mobility outside their homestead. By restricting women's mobility, purdah places severe limits on women's ability to participate in gainful employment and to attain economic independence. The ideology of purdah constricts women in the domestic sphere for reproductive role and places men in productive role as breadwinners who move through public space. The segregation of the sexes makes the labor market virtually off limits to women.

As observed by Kabeer (1989:102),

“In economic terms, the differentiation between male and female space represented by purdah underwrites a division of labor which confines women's legitimate sphere of activities to the boundaries of the homestead, serving both to obscure the value of the labor which they perform within the household and to restrict their access to mainstream employment opportunities”.

However, while purdah continues to be a powerful cultural ideal, its practice has been modified in the wake of the social upheavals and economic crisis of recent decades.

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<sup>43</sup> Purdah is a religious and social practice of female seclusion prevalent among some Muslim communities.

Masculine culture and values do not encourage active participation of women in politics. Sex segregation as a cultural norm impedes women's ability to fully participate, in local level politics. Other cultural norms such as women being subservient to men severely curtail women's chances of sharing power and authority with men in public affairs.

The above review of the position of women generally describes an average Bangladeshi woman but without mentioning the class and regional differences. However, women is not a collective identity rather there are particular groups or classes of women. The economic class a woman belongs to and the area (rural or urban) where she lives make a significant difference in her life in Bangladesh. In rural areas, most of the women have very limited interaction with people outside their home. Men make decisions on almost all the aspects of women's lives. Women are not allowed to go outside their home alone and talk to unknown male persons. These isolate women from development activities as well as from generating knowledge, skill, income etc. As a result women become socially and economically dependent on men. A woman of upper economic class whether in urban or rural areas is relatively less vulnerable to social and cultural restrictions than a woman who comes from other economic classes. Again, urban and upper economic class of women have relatively greater access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities especially, in the big cities and are less deprived than that of other average women in Bangladesh.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, women in Bangladesh lag behind men in all indicators of human development including education, health and nutritional status, employment and political power. While analyzing the influence of culture in gender disparities, it has been observed that the inferior position and negative image

of women is deep rooted in Bangladeshi culture and is the root cause of low socio-economic status of women. The different manifestations of violence against women have the same premise of deep-rooted attitudes and beliefs that are perpetuated by the cultural institution in Bangladesh. The culture had such a strong hold on people's perception of women's role that even state sponsored gender development policies and initiatives do not yet benefit women equitably. Existing socio-economic inequality has been a major hindrance in ensuring equal advancement for women to live a dignified life. However, recent studies have indicated that education, employment and access to an independent income over which women have control have empowered women both in the family and in society.

Despite the fact that gaps in gender issues are slowly narrowing, gender discrimination remains pervasive in many dimensions in the life of a woman in Bangladesh. The gender development process does not seem to have empowered women adequately to challenge the existing socio-cultural practices of negative values about women by promoting equality of women and men.

The social and cultural practices have divergent impacts on women's development in Bangladesh. Socio-cultural influences along with the religious misinterpretation have resulted in an imbalanced society in Bangladesh. The above discussion points towards the fact, that mere figures are not enough to indicate the exact position of women's status in society. The indicators need to be constructed in a manner that would also reveal if there have occurred attitudinal changes regarding women. Concerted efforts are required to raise awareness and educate on gender equality at all levels of the society—from grassroots initiatives to governmental policies. Moreover, women must be empowered to challenge the social norms that are detrimental to the human rights of women.

# **Chapter Six**

## **The Status of Women in Bangladesh Civil Service**

### **Introduction**

This chapter basically reviews the legal mandates and government policy instruments affecting gender balance and gender equality within public administration and then presents a statistical profile of women in BCS. The chapter is divided into two sections.

The first section deals with legal mandates and government policies on women's employment equality in general and civil service in particular. Specifically, in this section, the constitutional mandates, national women development policy and development plans, institutional arrangement for women's advancement, Bangladesh government's commitment at international level for achieving gender equality are taken into account together with different public administration rules and policies on women's employment equality. Other national policies affecting work-life balance and enabling measures are also discussed in this section.

The second section provides a statistical overview of the current gender balance and trends. This section is based on available statistics as well as primary data collected by the researcher from MOPA, PSC and interviews with key informants.

### **1. Laws, Policies and Institutions Promoting Women Participation in Bangladesh Civil Service**

Since 1972 women have been participating in the civil service but they did not enter the mainstream civil service in Bangladesh before early eighties. Till 1980, there were no women in administration, judicial, postal, and communication cadre, only one woman was in the revenue department of finance division, four women were in foreign service and six women were in information department (Haque and Bala, 1988, cited in Mahtab, 1995:13). Prior to 1982, there were very few women in the civil service but the fact is that women in Bangladesh were never prohibited to join the civil service except the police cadre. Women's entry was restricted to the police service as they were considered unsuitable for the service. It was believed that, women were not physically suitable for the job (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:18) and in a Muslim populated country participation of women in police enforcement would not be accepted by the people at large (Karim, 2008:6). This restriction was withdrawn from 15th BCS (held in 1993) (Karim, 2008:6) and some female officers joined this cadre through 18th BCS (Kashem et.al. 2002: 35). It is regarded as a major breakthrough for women's entry into the all cadres of BCS.

Therefore, there is no legal bar on the entry and progression of women in the civil service in Bangladesh, rather the country has significant constitutional provisions to provide equal employment rights and opportunities for both males and females. Moreover, the government made special arrangements to enhance female participation in the civil service by adopting quotas (reservation of posts) for women in entering the service and took many policies not only to increase women representation in the civil service but also to integrate women into the mainstream of development (Jahan, 2007 : 48).

### **Constitutional Mandates**

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has vested all powers of the State in the people and service to the people is a constitutional obligation of every public servant of Bangladesh.

The Constitution also guarantees equality of women and men (Articles 10, 11, 19, 27, 28 and 29). There are constitutional guarantees for equal job opportunity for women in Bangladesh. Article 29 of the constitution ensures equal opportunities to all citizens and protects women from discrimination in public employment by stating:

(1) There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment in the service of the Republic.

(2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the Republic.

(3) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from---

(a) Making special provision in favor of any backward section of citizens for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic;

(b) giving effect to any law which makes provision for reserving appointments relating to any religious or denominational institution to persons of that religion or denomination;

(c) Reserving for members of one sex any class of employment or office on the ground that it is considered by its nature to be unsuited to members of the opposite sex.

Therefore, the constitution of Bangladesh promulgated legal mandates to ensure equal employment opportunities for all citizens regardless of sex, religion, ethnicity and region in the civil service of the Republic as fundamental rights. It also does not prevent the state from making any special provision in favor of the minorities for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic.

### **Quota Policy<sup>44</sup> for Civil Service Recruitment**

In line with the constitutional provision 10 percent gazetted posts and 15 percent non-gazetted posts in the civil service are exclusively earmarked for women with the objective of effectively drawing them into the mainstream of public bureaucracy. The quota policy is seen as the affirmative action taken by the government to enhance women's representation in the civil service of Bangladesh.

### **Rules for Providing Posting of Husband and Wife at the Same District**

Civil service is a transferable job and officers are frequently transferred from one place /posting to another place/posting. There is rule to provide posting of an officer in a place where his/her spouse works, if the spouse of the officer is also a government officer. However it is not maintained in all cases due to non-availability of posts at the same place.

### **Six Month Maternity Leave**

The state has recognized motherhood as a social obligation (Jahan, 2007: 63).The government has increased the maternity leave for female employees up to six months with full salary and without a break in service from the previous four months. At the beginning it was three months.

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<sup>44</sup> The quota policy for civil service recruitment has already been discussed in detail in chapter Four.



## **The Government Servants Conduct Rules**

Without women friendly environment in the office and gender sensitive behavior by the colleagues and bosses, it is difficult for women to adapt fully in the office and to be dedicated to their service. The rule 27a of ***The Government Servant Conduct Rules, 1979*** contains provision for initiating disciplinary action

for improper behavior with women by their male colleagues. This provision is a safeguard for women in office environment.

## **National Women Development Policy, 2011**

This policy document has emphasized on ensuring full and equal participation of women in the mainstream socio-economic development and establishing gender equality in all areas of activities.

In fact the GOB has undertaken several initiatives in the field of women's development. The 1997 National Policy for Advancement of Women, as well as the National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women aimed at eliminating gender disparities in key areas of law, economics, politics and family. A new version of the National Women's Development Policy was developed in 2004 during the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government, which had considerably weakened the 1997 policy, including with regards to women's equal rights in the areas of adoption, implementation of economic policy, ownership and control of resources and inheritance rights. When the revision was known, there was strong protests from women's groups and civil society advocates. A new National Women's Development Policy was formulated by the Caretaker Government in March 2008, with progressive provisions for equal rights in many key areas. But this policy was vehemently opposed by the rightist political parties and the fundamentalist groups and no progress was made in implementing the policy (Aminuzzaman, 2011:31). The

Awami League (AL) government unveiled a new National Women Development Policy in 2011. This policy has traced the national priority given to women's representation in national administration and politics.

Section 33 of the policy deals with administrative empowerment of women and addresses the issue of increasing the number of women at senior levels of public service through lateral entry and contractual appointments. It mentions that more women will be appointed to administrative, policy-making and constitutional posts (33.2) and that women will be nominated to various international and UN posts and assignments (33.3).

Clause 33.4 also states that, in order to increase the number of women at all levels including at entry level, quotas for women should be increased, for gazetted and non-gazetted posts. In recognition of the fact that quotas are now not always fulfilled, it recommends that quotas be fulfilled and the quota system be fully implemented (MOWCA, 2011b, clause 33.4). The policy foresees that quotas should be introduced in all autonomous and statutory state authorities and that non-government and voluntary organizations should be encouraged to have similar quota.

The National Policy also refers to the UN recommendation that, in order to ensure women's full and equal participation in policy and decision-making, special effort will be made so that not less than 30 percent of posts at such levels are filled by women (MOWCA, 2011b).

## **National Action Plan**

The National Action Plan (NAP) was declared by the government in 1998. It has provided the role of 15 concerned ministries and some other relevant ministries in the plan for increasing female participation in the public sector and decision making levels. Moreover the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs and the Ministry of Labor and Manpower were assigned

to take action for recruiting women in judicial and senior management positions (Kashem et al., 2002:45; cited in Jahan, 2007:53).

The NAP has the following goals:

- To make women's development an integral part of the national development program;
- To establish women as equal partners in development with equal roles in policy and decision making in the family, community and nation at large;
- To remove legal, economic, political, or cultural barriers that prevent the exercise of equal rights by undertaking policy reforms and strong affirmative actions;
- To raise/create public awareness about women's different needs, interests and priorities and increase commitment to bring about improvements in women's position and condition (Mahtab, 2012:305).

## **Government's Commitment to Women's Development in its Long-Term Plans**

There is a growing recognition in Bangladesh at the critical importance of women's participation in development, and at the same time the severe discrimination women face in all spheres in life. Women are considered as a target group in all development plans in Bangladesh. A planned development process started in Bangladesh in 1973 which has since been followed and women's concerns were integrated in the national development planning process highlighting the relevant issues in the macro policies as well as in the sectoral ministries as it is well recognized that those concerns cannot be isolated from the pursuit of the totality of national development objectives, targets and strategies.

A comprehensive review and analysis of women's share in the development components of the past five year plans illustrates the extent of the government's commitment to incorporating gender equality.

### **First Five Year Plan (1973-78)**

The First Five Year Plan (FFYP) emphasized a welfare oriented approach to enhance the role of women as mothers and focused on rehabilitation of the war affected women and children. During the plan period it was emphasized that women were a distinct category that had to be separately considered and then integrated into development policy and planning. As a result, a special Women's Affairs Division in the President's Secretariat was created in 1978.

The FFYP did not visualize the broader role of women. Though some programs were initiated towards the end of the plan to improve women's conditions, the overall situation remained unchanged. There was no women's affairs sub-sector or a separate budget allocation and no reflection of women's concerns in national development in the FFYP period (Aminuzzaman, 2011:22).

### **First Two Year Plan (1978-80)**

The 1978-80 Two Year Plan (TYP) were a short –term plan to cover the interim period between FFYP and the second Five Year Plan (SFYP). During this period international events, such as the UN Decade for Women 1976-85 and the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), further influenced women's development issues. For the first time women's development was given special priority and the TYP was characterized by a shift from welfare to development efforts. The main emphasis of the TYP was on the following fields:

- Vocational training, and income generating projects;
- Agricultural-based rural development programs;
- Establishment of cottage industries;

- Production and sales center and creation of facilities for working women and their children.

Other important development initiatives taken in favor of women's development during this plan period were as follows:

- Establishment of a separate Ministry of Women's Affairs;
- 10 percent of posts in the gazetted ranks of civil servants and 15 percent in the non-gazatted posts were reserved for women;
- 50 percent of posts for primary teachers in government schools were reserved for women;
- 30 seats were reserved for women in the National Parliament, to be filled by indirect election;
- Taka 10.56 crore was allocated for women's development programs. The actual expenditure was Taka 4.62 crore. The utilization was 44 percent (Aminuzzaman, 2011:23).

### **Second Five Year Plan (1980-85)**

The second Five Year plan (SFYP) was the first to deal explicitly with women's concern and need to create a gender responsive developed environment – a congenial atmosphere for increased participation of women.

The SFYP programs for women covered diverse fields and emphasis was given to expand educational opportunities for women and on skill training and micro credit program for self-employment of women.

Ratification of CEDAW in 1984 was a big step towards recognizing the persistent discrimination against women and the concept of measuring women's advancement not in terms of physical development alone but also in terms of their empowerment (Khan, 2003:216).

The plan developed a multi-sectoral model involving population, health, education and the employment sectors to increase the participation of

women in nation-building activities. Some special laws were created and legal reforms were made to safeguard the interest of women. Such as deterrent punishment for violence against women, Anti- Dowry Measures, Family Law Ordinance – 1982, Family Court etc. were introduced. Further emphasis on women's development as economic agent was recognized through diversification of programs. However, a review of the projects targeted for women within the plan period included:

- Establishment of poultry farms at the local level;
- Establishment of a weaving factory and a radio and watch-repair factory for the rehabilitation of deserted women;
- Feasibility study for a textile and food processing industry for women.

No follow-up action was taken for these projects during the SFYP period. Limited achievements were made in the fields of women's non-formal education, production-cum-training centres and day care centres. However, no programs were undertaken in the field of research, establishment of small industries or leadership training for women despite provision of them in the SFYP. Taka 31 crore was allocated in the plan period, in which the expenditure was 19.26 crore. Thus, the utilization was 62.13 percent.<sup>45</sup>

### **Third Five Year Plan (1985-90)**

The Third Five Year Plan (TFYP) had a specific objective to reduce gender disparity and had created a more elaborate program on women's development which emphasized the need for women's participation in the mainstream of social and economic activities. At the very beginning of the implementation of TFYP, the third UN World Conference on Women occurred in July, 1985 where the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies were adopted. Equality between men and women, women's rights, acknowledgement of women's unpaid work, development of women's employment and provisions

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<sup>45</sup>

for better facilities for health, family planning and education were included in the strategies. TFYP therefore, emphasized women's health, education, training and rural women's employment through the appointment of female teachers in primary schools.

In the TFYP period, the projects that were implemented were:

- Development of Day Care Services;
- NGO's Community-Based Services for poor women and children;
- Socio-economic Development Project for Women;

TFYP had also included two agriculture projects to train rural poor women in agriculture and agriculture related activities.

- Agriculture Training Centre for Women,
- Agriculture-Based Program for Rural Women.

TFYP had emphasized the growing problems of prostitution, begging and other anti-social activities, and supported increasing the awareness about the legal rights of women and indicated a major shift in attitudes to identify critical areas of concern for women.

Projects included:

- Establishment of Legal Aid Centre,
- Employment Information Centre,
- Sales-cum-Display Centre in Dhaka.

The important policy decisions taken during the plan period, which influenced women's development issues were:

- 1990 declared as the Year of the Girl Child;
- Free education for girls up to Class VIII;
- Free lifelong education for the only female child in the family;
- Special scholarship scheme for girls.

In the TFYP period around 60,000 women were trained in different vocational skills and other human resource development activities, around 2 lakh women were given non-formal education and many women were provided with credit facilities for self-employment. Five hostels for career women and 35 day care centres for working mothers' children were established. In the TFYP, a sum of Taka 50 crore was allocated for women's affairs sub-sectoral programs in which the expenditure was around Taka 40 crore. Hence, the utilization was 80 percent (Aminuzzaman, 2011:25).

### **Fourth Five Year Plan (1990-95)**

The Fourth Five Year Plan (4thFYP) placed women within the context of a macro framework with a multi-sectoral thrust and focused more on the development of poor and disadvantaged women. During the plan period a basis for women's development activities was established through undertaking studies on gender-related issues, which made the government more attentive towards women's issues. In a memorandum to the Bangladesh Aid Group (1989-90), the government declared its policy of mainstreaming women into development efforts.

The objectives of the 4thFYP were designed to develop women as complete persons to realize their potentials and establish themselves in their legitimate position in the society through education, employment and political participation. Different development sectors in the 4thFYP included women's issues in their plan and incorporated gender concerns in development projects. The 4thFYP included a separate chapter for the women's affairs sub-sector and emphasized the following objectives:

- Poverty Alleviation;
- Increased Education, Training and Skills Development;
- Self-Reliance of Women.



A total of 20 development projects were undertaken under the women's affairs sub-sector to achieve the plan's objectives. As many as 86,000 women were given non-formal education and other services, and over 34,000 distressed women were brought under credit programs for self-employment. Taka 54.5 core was spent during the 4<sup>th</sup> FYP period for the advancement of women and children. The utilization was 62 percent of the original allocation (Aminuzzaman, 2011:27).

### **Fifth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)**

The Fifth Five Year Plan (5thFYP) had emphasized the reduction of gender disparity through the integration of women into the mainstream of development. This had a multi-sectoral approach involving different sectors related to economic and social development, governance and participation in public life.

Rights issues like sharing of power and decision-making at all levels and reforms in law, policy and attitude to eliminate discrimination against women in family, community and state therefore, featured as the priority objectives of the plan.

An attempt to set quantifiable target in encouraging, supporting, protecting and empowering women and women's right to be recognized was first found in the 5<sup>th</sup> FYP. The key strategic concerns envisaged in the plan regarding women's development were:

- Initiate steps to implement CEDAW.
- Ensure women's legal rights in property inheritance and other related laws.
- Promote gender equity and improve status of women.
- Protect and promote women's human rights and raise awareness of men and women about these rights.

- Promote equal rights of women and men in all spheres of development, including access to information, skills, resources and opportunities.
- Promote equal rights of women in access to education, health, nutrition.
- Increase women's participation in decision-making both at the national and local levels.
- Increase women's representation at all levels in the public service.
- Promote greater participation of women in employment.
- Adopt measures to eliminate trafficking in women and violence against women.
- Ensure reflection of gender equality in texts books.

The objectives of the Fifth Plan for the first time adopted a rights-based approach where achieving gender equality and empowerment of women were considered major goals. However, due to lack of resources, inadequate focus on macro policy and poor institutional mechanisms, there was a noticeable gap in the actual performance of the plan in achieving its declared objectives or in translating strategies into actions, except in the areas of skill development training and micro credit program (Khan, 2003:222).

### **Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-2015)**

The Sixth Five Year Plan (SFYP) 2011-2015 in line with the National Development Policy 2011 provides for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and ensures their rights and equal partnership in development.

Accordingly, establishing equal opportunities for women in all sections of the society with an objective of integrating them into social and economic sphere is a major strategic element underlying the SFYP. The SFYP strategy embeds the critical role of women in nation building and thus ensures that their needs,

rights, entitlements and contributions are appropriately reflected in the plan document (Aminuzzaman, 2014:13).

It is also recognized in the plan that women are a heterogeneous groups such that their situations, deprivations and needs vary according to their locations within various communities, religions and regions. Thus, along with promoting rights and entitlements of women the SFYP envisages to cater all these differential and specific requirements.

In addressing gender based discrimination, the SFYP has opted for a two-pronged approach. Firstly, gender will be integrated into all sectoral interventions. Secondly, attention will be given to remove all policy and social biases against women with a view to ensuring gender equality as enshrined in the national constitution (GOB, 2011:163, cited in Aminuzzaman, 2014:13). The plan identified that the main problem with gender governance is the implementation of the existing laws, rules, regulations and stated policies (GOB, 2011:154).

Chapter Nine of the plan does mention a strategy for strengthening the capacity of public administration, but it does not mention any gender specific issues. In Chapter Six on Participation, Social Inclusion and Empowerment, there is a section on 'Women's Advancement and Rights' which refers to various objectives of the National Policy for Women's Advancement, including 'promoting an enabling environment at the workplace, setting up day care centres for the children of working mothers, career women hostels, safe accommodation for working women' (GOB, 2011:154-155).

## **Gender Issues in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

SDGs otherwise known as the Global Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. The SDGs officially known as

'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' is a set of 17 global goals with 169 targets between them. Paragraph 51 of the official agenda for sustainable development adopted on 25 September 2015 outlines the 17 SDGs. 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls' is the fifth goal of SDGs. It says that providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefits societies and humanity at large. Though goal five is the gender equality stand-alone goal, it was also mentioned that the SDGs can only be successful if women are completely integrated into each and every goal of the SDGs ([www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html)).

### **Gender Issues in Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)**

The Government has included the women development agenda in national poverty reduction plan which is known as 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper' (PRSP), and also in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). 'Promoting gender equality and empowering women' is the third goal of MDGs in Bangladesh. The PRSP has been updated and in order to achieve good gender governance, the government aims at attaining certain other goals like: ensure women's full participation in mainstream economic activities; ensure social protection for women against vulnerability and risks; enhance women's participation in decision making; ensure women's concern in international forums; strengthen institutions for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality issues (GOB, 2005: 146-148). These goals are expected to eliminate discriminations against women in Bangladesh.

### **Institutional Arrangements**

The Government has taken encouraging steps towards building institutional arrangements to promote women's advancement. In this regard, the establishment of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA), Department of Women Affairs (DWA), National Council for Women's Development (NCWD) (which consists of 44 members from different ministries and public representatives from the national parliament with the Prime Minister as the chair), Inter Ministerial Implementation and Evaluation Committee, WID (Women in Development) Focal Points in different Ministries, WID Coordination Committee at District and Upazila<sup>46</sup> levels and Jatiyo Mohila Sanghstha (JMS) are worth mentioned.

The MOWCA has been assigned as the lead agency for women's development. The Allocations of Business were modified, so that the ministry is responsible for national policy regarding women's development, programs for the welfare and development of women, matters relating to women's legal and social rights, problems and affairs relating to women, programs for the enlistment of women, and matters relating to the DWA, JMS, NCC and women's voluntary organizations. This ministry has a mandate to advocate for women's interests, which includes monitoring WID activities of ministries through designated WID Focal Points/ Associate and Sub-WID Focal Points who are joint secretaries of the ministries or joint chiefs in charge of planning and development (UNDP, 2011:30). There are 47 WID Focal Points in different ministries and agencies responsible to work for gender issues. Their job is to mainstream women's development in respective sectors (Jahan and Kabir, 2006:163-164).

There is also a Parliamentary Standing Committee to advise the government to take necessary measures for the advancement of women. The committee is also responsible for evaluating women development programs of the nation

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<sup>46</sup> A geographical region in Bangladesh used for administrative or other purposes which was formerly called Thana (police station). It functions as sub units of a district.

from time to time and for making recommendations (Jahan and Kabir, 2006:163-164).

However, only institutional structures are not enough to conduct the work required to bring about women's development. It is essential that these institutions be staffed by competent and efficient personnel committed to carry on the tasks put forward for them. With a view to strengthening the institutional mechanisms, increase the leadership capability and work efficiency of the concerned officials necessary for the advancement of women the GOB has implemented three projects (Mahtab, 2012: 312). These are:

- 1) Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality (PLAGE)
- 2) Strengthening the Management Capability of the DWA
- 3) Capacity Building for Local Governance Project, NGOs and Their Institutional Development.

Like the government, there are several NGOs who have responded with a great deal of commitment to increase the contribution of women to the development process. New women's organizations have been established and older ones have increased their levels of organizational units, activities and assertiveness in support of strengthening the position of women in Bangladesh (Mahtab, 2012: 313).

## **International Frameworks**

The GOB has also declared its dedication to women's advancement and gender equality at the international level through its commitment to United Nations (UN) Declarations. In fact, increasing global awareness and the pressure of the international organizations on gender issues have greatly influenced women's advancement in Bangladesh (Mahtab, 2012: 283).

As part of the commitment, government has ratified the UN 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women' (CEDAW) in

1984 and then has ratified 'Optional Protocol' on CEDAW in 2000. Bangladesh is also a signatory to the Beijing Declaration and endorsed its Platform for Action in 1995.

## **Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

Bangladesh ratified CEDAW in 1984.

The CEDAW committee has raised the issue of low representation of women in decision making in the review of the Third and Fourth Combined Reports (in 1997) and also during the review of the Fifth Periodic Report in 2004. In 1997, the concern was that, 'The number of women in decision making positions was still small'. The corresponding recommendation was that,

"The continuance of affirmative action measures such as quotas for women in parliament, in local bodies and in the civil service. This should be accompanied by capacity-building and skills training"(UNDP, 2011:31).

In 2004, the concern was again raised that, 'The number of women in decision making positions remained low and there was a lack of a women friendly environment in the service sectors'. The recommendation was to

"adopt proactive policies for women's increased participation at all levels [.....] and establish effective policies and a timetable to increase the number of women in decision-making positions in all spheres [and] that the State Party introduce legislation providing for the direct election of women to the National Parliament [to] promote a women-friendly environment that would encourage the participation of women in the public life of the country"(UNDP, 2011:31).

## **Beijing Platform for Action**

This was established at the Beijing conference in 1995 and has a number of important strategic objectives and actions recommended for national

governments and other actors. The strategic objectives are: 1) Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, 2) Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership (UNDP, 2011:32).

Since the Beijing Conference the Bangladesh Government has committed to increasing the number of women at decision-making levels. During the subsequent drafting of the National Action Plan for Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), during the formulation of the National Women's Policy and in negotiations with UNDP regarding a sector-wide program on gender mainstreaming, the government has agreed to support the enforcement of the 30 percent target for women in decision-making which is a very positive step towards gender mainstreaming (UNDP, 2011:32).

## **2. Women in Bangladesh Civil Service: Present Scenario**

The representation of women in BCS has increased gradually over the last three decades (1984-2014) but still it is far behind the actual representation of the female population of the country. After the introduction of women quota in 1976, women constituted around 8 percent of the total employment strength until 1985 (Khan, 1988:5). Thus women representation was raised only 1 percent in 10 years after the introduction of quota. In 1994 it was around 9 percent (Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh, 1996:166), in 2002 it was 11 percent (Ministry of Establishment, GOB, 2002) and it was 19 percent in 2008 (Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh, 2008, cited in Jahan, 2014:5).

### **Class Wise Representation of Women in the Civil Service**

According to the statistics above, women's representation has gradually increased in the civil service of Bangladesh but the position of women vis-a-vis men in terms of number is still insignificant. The total female participation in



all classes of civil service is currently 27.34 percent. Table-6.1 presents the numerical distribution of male and female in all classes of public sector employment.

**Table 6.1: Class Wise Number of Male and Female in BCS (as of 17 September, 2015)**

Class	Ministries / Divisions		Departments / Directorates		Autonomous Bodies / corporations		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Class I	2523 (80.53%)	610 (19.47%)	57873 (80.14%)	14345 (19.86%)	15784 (64.52%)	8682 (35.48%)	76180 (76.32%)	23637 (23.68%)
Class ii	1771	370	42657	48149	45294	4522	89722 (62.85%)	53041 (37.15%)
Class iii	2322	415	509294	748302	80564	7389	592180 (70.58%)	246812 (29.42%)
Class iv	2321	400	140476	42537	83799	4154	226596 (82.80%)	47091 (17.21%)

Source: Collected and prepared by the researcher from Public Administration Computer Center (PACC) of MOPA (on December 8, 2015).

In a class wise comparison, the female participation is highest in class- II (37.15%) and lowest in class- IV (17.21%). Women representation is 29.42 percent in class-III. If we take class-I as the top level of decision making, then women make up just 23.68 percent, well under the recommended of minimum 30percent. As the focus of this study is the women in the higher civil service<sup>47</sup> in Bangladesh, it categorically concentrates on the women cadre officials whose percentage is much lower than the percentage of class-I women officers.

The ministries/divisions collectively known as the secretariat is the decision making unit and is considered as the nerve center of the government. In this central decision making arena, the number of women officers is insignificant. Currently, in the various ministries and divisions, out of 3133 class-I officers, only 610 (19.47%) are females. They are also tend to be concentrated in the bottom of the hierarchy. It should be noted here that, BCS has quota for

<sup>47</sup> The higher civil service in Bangladesh is vertically categorized into 27 cadres and horizontally into six ranks.

women only at the entry level, it does not have quota for women to enter into the higher levels of the services through lateral entry or whereas promotion is concerned. According to Kabir (2011:128), this might be the reason why BCS has more women at the entry level, but less in the higher level.

### **Rank /Position Wise Representation of Women in the Secretariat and the Field Level**

The following tables (Table -6.2 and Table-6.3) shows the rank /position wise distribution of male and female in the secretariat and at the field level of the civil service respectively.

**Table 6.2 Rank/Position Wise Statistics of Male and Female in the Secretariat**

Position or Rank	Number of Total Officers	Number of Male Officers	Number of Female Officers
Secretary	61	56 (91.80%)	5 (8.20%)
Additional Secretary	410	353 (86.10%)	57 (13.90%)
Joint Secretary	904	797 (88.16%)	107 (11.84%)
Deputy Secretary	1303	1117 (85.73%)	186 (14.27%)
Senior Assistant Secretary	1392	1077 (77.37%)	315 (22.63%)
Assistant Secretary	1409	988 (70.12%)	421 (29.88%)

Source: Collected and prepared by the researcher from Public Administration Computer Centre of MOPA (on December 8, 2015).

In line with the constitutional provision, 10% of civil services are reserved for women at the initial stage of recruitment. As a result the ratio of female officers is highest in Assistant Secretary Level which is the entry level lowest rank in the hierarchy of the civil service. It is clear from Table-6.2 that though

the position of women at the entry level and at the next level (Senior Assistant Secretary) improved in terms of numerical number, women's representation at the top level policy making posts (Secretary and Additional Secretary) of the civil service is almost negligible. A recruit in the civil service cadre normally takes 15 to 20 years to rise to superior decision making echelon which includes Secretary, Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary in the ministries/divisions which are decision making units, and Heads of Departments/Directorates that are executing/implementing agencies under the ministries/divisions. Due to their late start and being grossly outnumbered by men in the cadres, women are yet to ascend to these positions (Islam, 2003:3).

**Table 6.3: Women's Participation at Field Level**

	Total	Male	Female	Percentage of Female
Divisional Commissioners	8	8	0	0
Additional Divisional Commissioners	17	14	3	17.64
Deputy Commissioners	64	61	3	4.68
Additional Deputy Commissioners	196	178	18	9.18
UNO	524	439	85	16.22

Source: Official Website of MOPA, GOB, retrieved on 17/12/2015.

Numerical distribution of male and female in every positions mentioned in the above table also shows high discrepancies. Despite the efforts that the governments have taken to stimulate the entrance and upward mobility of women civil servants in the career ladder, their overall figures are not impressive. Women are poorly represented both at the secretariat and field level and all echelons of the civil service, starting from the entry level of Assistant Secretary (or equivalent) to the apex position of Secretary, implying

that their voice is hardly counted in the process of policy formulation and decision making. Perhaps the one arena where women have yet to become a predominant force is in decision making positions, especially, within the civil service.

### **Cadre Wise Representation of Women**

If we consider the cadres-wise distribution of men and women, then the situation will appear as even bleaker. Among the 23637 women officers in class-1 category, a fewer number in fact belong to the cadre services. The numerical strength of women is very trivial compared to the cadre strength, too small to produce an impact on the civil service. Furthermore, majority of the female officials are found in the stereotyped cadres i.e.; general education and health. It is observed from the following table (Table-6.4) that, all though women participation in technical cadre was higher than in general cadre in different batches of BCS, but actually there was lower participation of women because the health cadre comprise most of the women of the professional/technical cadre. Women participation in other technical cadres is very low, especially in the sectors relating to engineering and technical education. The representation of women in the general cadre posts of the civil service also does not in any way reflect the actual representation of the female population of the country.

**Table 6.4: Cadre Wise Breakdown of Recommended Male and Females in Different BCS Examination**

Name of Cadres						
Name of BCS Exam	General Cadre		Technical Cadre		General Education Cadre	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
27th BCS	445 (76.46%)	137 (23.54%)	1447 (73.60%)	519 (26.40%)	525 (75.78%)	166 (24.02%)
28th BCS	509 (80.41%)	124 (19.54%)	711 (65.41%)	376 (34.54%)	300 (68.18%)	140 (31.82%)
29th BCS	319 (74.19%)	111 (25.81%)	913 (70.67%)	379 (29.33%)	538 (71.54%)	214 (28.46%)
30th BCS	550 (73.53%)	198 (26.47%)	689 (67.29%)	335 (32.71%)	-	-

31st BCS	575(74.68%)	195(25.32%)	518(65.82%)	269(34.18%)	364(71.09%)	148(28.91%)
32nd BCS	-	-	438 (48.56%)	464 (51.54%)	314(40.62%)	459 (54.38%)
33rd-BCS	422 (71.06%)	180 (28.94%)	4023 (59.79%)	2705 (40.21%)	711 (69.16%)	317 (30.84%)

Source: Collected and prepared by the researcher from Annual Reports of BPSC.

### **Numerical Distribution of Candidates (by sex) Recommended for Recruitment**

In terms of recruitment, more women are entering the BCS, as can be seen from the following table (Table-6.5). This increase may correspond to the increase in numbers of women graduating from universities who are entering the job market both in the private sectors and the government.

**Table 6.5: Statistics of Recommended Male and Females in different BCS Examinations**

Batch of the BCS	Number and Percentage of Male	Number and Percentage of Female	Total Number of Candidates Recommended
22 <sup>nd</sup> BCS	1903 (81.5%)	432 (18.5%)	2335
23 <sup>rd</sup> BCS	46 (64.79%)	25 (35.21%)	71
24 <sup>th</sup> BCS	3809 (72.90%)	1416 (27.10%)	5225
25 <sup>th</sup> BCS	2029 (74.54%)	693 (25.46%)	2722
26 <sup>th</sup> BCS	703 (66.13%)	360 (33.87%)	1063
27 <sup>th</sup> BCS	2417 (74.62%)	822 (25.38%)	3239
28 <sup>th</sup> BCS	1520 (69.41%)	670 (30.59%)	2190
29 <sup>th</sup> BCS	1232 (71.54%)	490 (28.46%)	1722
30 <sup>th</sup> BCS	1623 (68.57%)	744 (31.43%)	2367
31 <sup>st</sup> BCS	1457 (70.42%)	612 (29.58%)	2069
32 <sup>nd</sup> BCS	752 (44.90%)	923 (55.10%)	1675
33 <sup>rd</sup> BCS	5176 (61.78%)	3202 (38.22%)	8378
34 <sup>th</sup> BCS	1400 (64.37%)	775 (35.63%)	2175

Source: Collected from Annual Reports of BPSC

It was also found from Table-6.6 that the dropout rate of women in attending and qualifying at the preliminary and secondary stages of BCS examination was higher than that of men, which can be attributed to high expenses and difficulty to mobility to take part in the examinations, familial responsibilities and social limitations. Another reason might be that there is a lack of self confidence among the women on their own ability to compete BCS examination and they think BCS as a very difficult examination to succeed. At present women are doing very well in the public examinations as well as in the tertiary level of examinations but they lag behind men in the BCS examination. Low mobility and poor access to the information network are responsible for the lack of general knowledge among women which results in high female dropout rate at BCS preliminary examination (Jahan, 2007:61).

Through analyzing the results of the BCS examinations of last ten years (from 24th BCS to 34th BCS), it was found that most of the candidates recommended for appointment were male and among the appointees about 70 percent in average were male. In spite of 10 percent quota for women, 65 to 70 percent of the successful candidates were male. In 33rd and 34th BCS the highest number of female candidates were selected for appointment but that percentage was also slightly more than 38 percent. The 32nd BCS was a special BCS conducted only for the unfilled reserved posts of women, tribal and freedom fighters in the posts of technical and professional cadres and naturally women were more (55.10%) than men (44.90%) in that BCS.

**Table 6.6: Ratio of Male and Female Candidates at Different Stages of BCS Examination**

Batch of the BCS	No of Eligible Applicants		No of Candidates Passed in Preliminary Examination		No of Candidates Passed in Written Examination		No of Candidates Recommended for Jobs	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
34 <sup>th</sup> BCS	67.65%	32.35%	76.04%	23.96%	74.71%	25.29%	64.37%	35.63%
33rd BCS	67.72%	32.28%	73.55%	26.45%	72.13%	27.87%	61.78%	38.22%
32nd BCS	30.53%	69.47%	33.77%	66.23%	32.28%	67.72%	44.90%	55.10%
31st BCS	68.79%	31.21%	82.22%	17.78%	81.30%	18.70%	70.42%	29.58%
30th BCS	68.24%	31.76%	78.90%	21.10%	78.21%	21.80%	68.57%	31.43%
29th BCS	69.36%	30.64%	80.58%	19.42%	79.78%	20.22%	71.54%	28.46%
28th BCS	68.48%	31.02%	79.15%	20.85%	78.52%	21.48%	69.41%	30.59%

Source: Collected from Annual Reports of BPSC

### **Women Quota Utilization in the Civil Service**

Though the share of women in class I posts increased significantly, it is doubtful whether it could be attributed to women quota. Now women also enter through merit and available data suggest that women's share is much more than what would have been warranted by 10 percent quota as women are performing well in the BCS examinations (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:40). The following table presents a numerical distribution of women selected through merit and quota from 27th to 34th BCS.

**Table 6.7: Analysis of the Results of Women Candidates from 27th to 34th BCS**

Batch of BCS	No of Females Selected on Merit	No of Females Selected on Women Quota	No of Females Selected on Other Quotas	Total No of Females Selected	Total No of Males Selected	Total No of Candidates Selected
27th BCS	567	173	82	822	2417	3239
28th BCS	329	257	84	670	1517	2187
29th BCS	245	175	87	507	1240	1747
30th BCS	340	292	131	763	1622	2385
31st BCS	290	235	96	621	1475	2096
32nd BCS	-----	201	722	923	752	1675
33rd BCS	2086	846	323	3255	5252	8507
34th BCS	404	247	124	775	1400	2175

Source: Personally collected by the researcher from the PSC.

Records of PSC indicate that, in the 70s there were no female applicants for many cadres and number of women who qualified in BCS was less than the quota entitlement. As late as 1985, PSC was able for the first time to select women recruits for the full quota requirement (Jahan, 2007:55). It is observed that, over the years government could not fill the posts which were reserved for women except a few BCS examinations and there were significant variations in the percentage of quota filled from one year to another. The following table (Table-6.8) shows women quota utilization from 28th to 33rd BCS examinations.

**Table 6.8: Women Quota Utilization in Selected BCS Examinations**



Name of the Batch	Posts Reserved for Women under Women Quota	Number of Women got Service under Women Quota	Percentage of Quota Filled in
28th BCS	302	257	85.09%
29th BCS	256	175	68.36%
30th BCS	324	292	90.12%
31st BCS	296	237	80.07%
32nd BCS	211	201	95.26%
33rd BCS	908	848	93.39%

Source: Bangladesh Public Service Commission

The main cause for the underutilization of women quota in different years as mentioned in the annual reports of the PSC was the non-availability of qualified women in the technical cadre posts. Posts related to engineering like telecommunication, railway engineering, roads and highways and technical education cadre posts were not filled at all. The vacant posts were kept empty to be filled up by another examination only to recruit candidates on quota and PSC arranged 32nd BCS to recruit 211 reserved posts under women quota in technical and professional cadres. Unfortunately this special BCS also could not fully fill the quota for women.

## Conclusion

Finally, it can be said that, the equal and equitable participation of women in the civil service of Bangladesh is a fundamental right. However, from the above facts and figures it can be said that, in spite of constitutional arrangement and statutory laws women do not enjoy their rights exactly as they would desire. The fact is that, women constitute roughly half of the

country's population, but their representation is not adequate in institutions that affect economic and social development.

The number of women in the top civil service is not a desirable reflection of ideal gender balancing. Not alone in top management, women are not even fairly represented in the lower echelons of the civil service, in spite of 10 percent reserved posts for them at the recruitment level. Even the quotas for women are not always being met. Thus the women quota policy in civil service recruitment seems to have insignificant impact on overall employment situation of women.

On one hand, Bangladesh has significant constitutional provisions and affirmative policies guaranteeing women's equal employment opportunities, but, on the other hand, there is an 'implementation gap' between these policies and practices. The above discussion reveals that the constitutional and legal mandates, national policies, strategies and plans and even the quota policy or affirmative action for women could not ensure equal employment opportunities for women in BCS. Therefore, it can be said that, the declared national objective of the GOB 'to bring women into the mainstream of national development' has remained unfulfilled.

# **Chapter Seven**

## **Presentation of Empirical Data**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the empirical data collected by the researcher. In doing so, the chapter briefly presents the data collected through questionnaire survey, in depth interview and informal discussion. To avoid repetition, it just provides a brief account of the data. Only the respondents' composition and distribution have been presented in this chapter. The research is mostly qualitative and descriptive. The qualitative analysis of data is presented in the next chapter. The information gathered from interview and informal discussion is used here in the form of views and comments wherever applicable. The empirical data for the study has been collected from July 2015 to May 2016.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section one briefly discusses how the empirical data has been collected by the researcher. It also discusses about the respondents and presents their personal and socio-economic profile. The second section discusses the views of the respondents towards their career in the civil service and the third section presents the perceptions of the respondents about women quota policy and its implementation.

### **1. The Respondents and the Data**

#### **The Respondents**

As mentioned in the introductory chapter 240 respondents both male and female officers of the field level and secretariat level of different BCS cadres were taken for questionnaire survey. The researcher has tried to cover the

maximum number of cadres both general and professional or technical. The selection of respondents was random to some extent.

Interviews have been conducted with 40 key informants. Among them, one was PSC chair, six were either ex or current members of the PSC, five were directors of PSC secretariat, six were researchers and academics working in the relevant fields (gender and civil service management), the Rector of PATC, the President of Bangladesh Civil Service Women Network (BCSWN) and 20 upper level (Joint Secretary and above) male and female officers of different ministries.

Moreover, some qualitative information was also collected through informal discussions with 20 respondents. Civil servants who have close contacts with the researcher and some respondents of the survey who were interested to participate further in the research were the informal discussants who made thoughtful comments.

## **The Data**

The study mainly depends on the primary data collected through survey method. The questionnaire has been prepared by the researcher under the guidance of her supervisors. A structured questionnaire with both open and closed ended questions has been used in this survey. Sometimes it has used symbolic scales and ranking measurements for multiple variables in the same question. There are two parts in each questionnaire. The first part asked respondents' demographic information and second part asked their perception regarding all four independent variables of this study marked in the analytical framework.

The researcher distributed and collected the questionnaires from the respondents personally by visiting fields with a research assistant. Some questionnaires were also distributed through email. But the response was

poor and disappointing instead of repeated reminders. Of the 500 questionnaires distributed, a total of 298 questionnaires were returned. From the returned questionnaires only 240 were found useful after scrutiny and selected for analysis.

As the respondents of the study were widely scattered groups of people, the researcher targeted and distributed questionnaires to the participants of the Foundation Training Course, Advanced Training Course on Administration and Development (mid-level) and Senior Staff Course (senior level) at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), taking prior permission from the Rector. Questionnaires were also distributed to the trainee officers of the health cadre at National Academy for Planning and Development (NAPD) and trainee officers of the administration cadre at BCS Administration Academy. Targeting the trainee officers at different training institutes greatly helped the researcher to get a large number of respondents at a time-efficient and quick way. Participation in this survey was completely voluntary.

Besides the survey, 40 key informants have been interviewed purposively to suit the purpose. In addition information was also collected from informal discussion with 20 civil servants from the survey respondents. Their opinions are used here in the form of views and comments wherever applicable.

### **Demographic Analysis of the Respondents**

240 civil servants of different cadres and designations were surveyed with the questionnaire. Assistant secretary/ or Senior Assistant Secretary (equivalent) s are the majority number of respondents which are 82%, 10.42% are of the rank of Deputy Secretary and 7.5% are Joint Secretaries. Therefore, the major portion of the respondents is from the bottom ranks of the hierarchy which is shown in Table-7.1.

**Table 7.1: Respondents' Designation**

Designation	No of Male	No of Female	Total
Joint Secretary	16 (12.03%)	2 (1.87%)	18 (7.5%)
Deputy Secretary	23 (17.29%)	2 (1.87%)	25 (10.42%)
Senior Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary	94 (70.68%)	103 (96.26%)	197 (82%)
Total	133	107	240

The researcher tried to cover almost all the cadres based on the availability of the cadre officers. Regarding cadre distribution the highest representation(25%) is from the administration cadre, the second highest is from agriculture and health cadre which is 7.92%. There was none from BCS (Technical Education) and BCS (Trade) cadre.

## **Personal and Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents**

This section presents a brief description of the personal and socio-economic profile of the respondents which include gender, age, marital status, living situation, educational level and family background in terms of parental and spouse education and occupation, rural-urban background and social class.

### **Gender**

Out of the 240 respondents 133 are males and 107 are females, thus males comprised 55.42 percent while females made up 44.58 percent of the respondents.

### **Age Group**

The respondents of this study are of different ages and that is in between 25-57. So for this study the ages of the respondents are classified into seven age groups. Referring to Table 7.2 it is found that more than half (52.08%) of the respondents belong to the 25-30 year age group. There are more women in this age group which indicates that they are newly recruited in the civil service. As a result they belong to the youngest age group. The respondents aged 31-35 years account for 27.08 percent, those aged 51-55 years account

for 10 percent and the remaining 11 percent belong to the other four age groups.

**Table 7.2: Distribution of Respondents according to Age**

Age Group	Number of Male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total number of Respondents
25-30	52 (39.09%)	73 (68.22%)	125 (52.08%)
31-35	40 (30.07%)	25 (23.26%)	65 (27.08%)
36-40	1 (0.75%)	2 (1.87%)	3 (1.25%)
41-45	2 (1.5%)	2 (1.87%)	4 (1.66%)
46-50	11 (8.30%)	3 (2.80%)	4 (5.83%)
51-55	23 (17.29%)	1 (0.93%)	24 (10.00%)
56-60	4 (3.00%)	1 (0.93%)	5 (2.08%)

### Marital status

With regard to marital status, an overwhelming majority (78.33%) of the respondents are married. But the proportion of married female is considerably less than that of married male which is depicted in Table – 7.3.

**Table 7.3: Marital Status of the Respondents**

Marital Status	Number of Male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total number of Respondents
Married	107 (80.45%)	81 (75.70%)	188 (78.33%)
Unmarried	26 (19.55%)	26 (24.30%)	52 (21.67%)

### Living Situation

With regard to living situation, over half of the respondents (54.17%) reported that, they are living with spouse and/ or with spouse and children. Thus majority of them live in nuclear families. While 13.75 percent live in households where parents/parents-in-laws or other adults like distant relatives or unmarried sister/sister-in-law are staying with them. A considerable percentage (17.92%) is living alone in their posting place, while

13.34 percent are living in the 'other'<sup>48</sup> category. One male and one female reported that they are the sole adults in the household living with their children.

**Table 7.4: Living Situation of the Respondents**

Living Situation	Male	Female	Total
Living Alone	27 (20.30%)	16 (14.95%)	43 (17.92%)
Living with Spouse and/or with Spouse and Children	75 (56.39%)	55 (51.40%)	130 (54.17%)
Living with other Adults	20 (15.04%)	13 (12.15%)	33 (13.74%)
Sole Adults with Children/Dependents	1 (0.93%)	1 (0.75%)	2 (0.84%)
Others	10 (7.52%)	22 (20.56%)	32 (13.34%)

## Educational Attainment

The educational statistics of the respondents in Table–7.5 suggest that majority of the civil servants have more educational qualifications than they required. The minimum educational qualification required for the general cadre is a graduation degree and for the professional cadre a master degree with honors in the field of specialization. The technical cadres on the other hand require a graduation degree in their respective fields.

**Table 7.5: Educational Qualification of the Respondents**

Educational Level	Male	Female	Total
Graduate	3 (2.26%)	1 (0.93%)	4 (1.67%)
Masters	98 (73.68%)	73 (68.22%)	171 ss(71.25%)
Technical/Professional Degree (Engineering, Medicine, Agriculture)	24 (18.05%)	31 (28.97%)	55 (22.92%)
M.Phil.	7 (5.26%)	1 (0.93%)	8 (3.33%)
Ph.D.	1 (0.75%)	1 (0.93%)	2 (0.83%)

<sup>48</sup>

Living in working women's hostels, messes, or as paying guests.



The above table shows that, only 1.67 percent of the respondents hold a simple graduate degree which is the minimum educational requirement for entry into the civil service. About 71.25 percent received master degree and almost 23 percent hold professional degree in engineering, medicine or agriculture, while a few earned M.Phil. and Doctoral degree. While 7 males have completed their M.Phils. (5 from abroad) only one female holds M.Phil. degree. Two male officers have obtained double masters. However, more male (3) than female (1) are only graduates. Again, there are no differences in case of PhD holders. So it can be said that, women civil servants are not in any way less educated than male civil servants

During interviews, one of the members of the PSC acknowledged that relatively higher quality of female candidates are appearing in the BCS examination by saying that:

“Women are doing extremely well in the viva-voce examination. They are being selected for the elite cadres like Administration and Foreign Affairs but the problem is that not many women appear in the examination”.

## **Family Background**

The respondents in this study are asked about their parents' education and occupation, spouses' education and occupation, rural–urban background (place of birth and schooling) and the socio-economic status (social class) of their families for understanding their family background and to see how this influences the career choice of civil servants in particular. Table 7.6, 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9 illustrate an overall picture of the respondents' family background.

## **Parents' Occupation**

**Table 7.6: Parental' Occupation of the Respondents**

Occupation	Parents of Male Respondents		Parents of Female Respondents		Parents of both the Sexes	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Government Officers or officers in Armed Forces	38 (29.45%)	2 (1.55%)	55 (52.38%)	9 (8.57%)	93 (39.74%)	11 (4.70%)
Other Professionals	46 (35.65%)	8 (6.20%)	32 (30.48%)	16 (15.24%)	78 (33.34%)	24 (10.26%)
Business	18 (13.95%)		18 (17.14%)		36 (15.38%)	
Farmers	23 (17.83%)				23 (9.83%)	
Other clerical or technical jobs	4 (3.10%)				4 (1.71%)	
House wives		119 (92.25%)		80 (76.19%)		199 (85.04%)

With regard to parents' profession, most fathers (39.74%) are either government officers or officers in the armed forces, 33.34 percent are professionals (lawyers, bankers, engineers, doctors and NGO or private service holders), 15.38 percent are businessmen and only 9.83 percent are farmers. Among the mothers, 4.70 percent are government officers, 10.29 percent are professionals and the vast majority (85 percent) are housewives. Four males and 2 females of the sample did not respond.

There are significant gender differences in parents' occupation when fathers and mothers of the male and female respondents are compared. More fathers of the female respondents are government officers (52.38%) than fathers of the male respondents (29.45%). Likewise, a greater number of mothers of the females are found in government services (8.57%) and in other professions (15.24%) as compared to the mothers of the male civil servants (1.55%) and (6.20%) respectively.

### **Spouse's Occupation**

**Table 7.7: Spouse's Occupation of the Respondents**

Occupation	Spouses of Male Respondents	Spouses of Female Respondents	Total Number of Spouses
Government Officers or officers in Armed Forces	30 (22.56%)	34 (31.78%)	64 (26.67%)
Other Professionals	20 (15.38%)	40 (37.38%)	60 (25%)
Business	4 (3.01%)	7 (6.54%)	11 (4.58%)
Other clerical or technical jobs	3 (2.56%)		
House wives	39 (29.32%)		
Students	11 (8.27%)		
Unmarried	26	26	

In terms of spouse's occupation, it has been found that a large number of spouses (26.67%) stand in the category of government officers, 25 percent are other professionals and 16.25 percent fall in the category of housewives. The rest are businessmen and students. Majority of the male respondents' spouses are housewives (29.32%), followed by government officers (22.56%). On the other hand, majority of the female respondents' spouses are in professional occupations (37.38%), followed by government service (31.78%).

### **Rural-Urban Background**

It is assumed that city, town or village background of the respondents would definitely have its impacts on their upbringing which in turn would have influenced the opportunities for choosing their career.

**Table 7.8: Rural –Urban Background of the Respondents**

Place of Birth and Schooling	Number of Male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total Number of Respondents
Village	52 (39.10%)	7 (6.54%)	59 (25.58%)
Upazila	20 (15.04%)	10 (9.35%)	30 (12.50%)
District Town	31 (23.31%)	43 (40.19%)	74 (30.83%)
Metropolitan city	13 (9.77%)	12 (11.321%)	25 (10.02%)
Capital City	17 (12.78%)	35 (32.71%)	52 (21.67%)

It is observed from the table that the majority of the respondents come from urban areas. Out of 240, 151 respondents resided in urban and attended schools in district towns, metropolitan cities or capital city despite the fact that most of the people in Bangladesh live in rural areas. Only 37 percent respondents resided in rural setting (village and upazilas) during first 20 years of their lives.

Again, some significant gender differences are noticeable in terms of respondent's rural-urban background. While 39.10 percent of the males are from village level, 32.71 percent of the females are from the capital city and 11.21 percent are from metropolitan centers.

### **Social Class of Family**

**Table 7.9: Social Class of the Respondents' Family**

Social Class	Number of Male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total Number of respondents
Upper	2 (1.50%)	1 (0.93%)	3 (1.25%)
Upper-Middle	18 (13.54%)	25 (23.36%)	43 (17.92%)
Middle	85 (63.91%)	74 (69.16%)	159 (66.25%)
Lower – Middle	28 (21.05%)	7 (6.54%)	35 (14.58%)
Lower	None	None	

In terms of the socio-economic class of the family, majority of the respondents (66.25%) reported themselves belonging to the middle class. Whereas, very few (17.92% and 14.58%) think them belong to the upper-middle and lower-middle class. Only three respondents told that they belong to the upper class and there was none in the lower class.

There are slight differences between male and female respondents on their social class. While, more women than men reported them belong to upper-middle (female -23.36%, male – 13.91%) class, more men, on the other hand

reported them belonging to the lower-middle class (Male – 21.05%, Female – 6.54%).

Thus it can be said that most of the civil servants in Bangladesh especially the women civil servants comprise an elite group having high education at reputed educational institutions, urban upbringing and sound family background.

## 2. Views of the Respondents towards their Career in the Civil Service

### Motivation for Joining Civil Service

To find out the motivators and the extent of motivation in choosing civil service as their careers, the respondents were asked to rate six motivators – salary, benefits, job security, power or influence, social status and public service. They rated these motivators on scales ranging from Exceptionally High, Very High, High, Average, and Not at All. Table -7.9 presents the percentage of the respondents who rated the motivators as Exceptionally High.

**Table 7.10: Motivators for Joining Civil Service**

Motivators	Percent of Response		
	N=133 Males	N=107 Females	N=240 Total
Salary	3.01	1.87	2.5
Benefits	3.01	6.54	4.58
Job Security	48.87	48.60	48.75
Power/Influence	13.53	15.89	14.58
Social Status	54.14	45.79	50.42
Public Service	51.88	46.73	49.58

\*Percentage may not add to 100 because of multiple responses

Most of the respondents mentioned social status, public service and job security as important motivators for being in the civil service. So it can be said that, they were basically attracted by the prestige, social position, opportunity

to serve the people, security and comfort the government service could bring. It can also be assumed that, this category did not have any economic liabilities. Only a negligible percentage of respondents reported salary (2.5%) and benefits (4.58%) of the job highly motivated them to join the service.

Security of the job is the most important motivator for the women for joining the service while for men it is the social status. It might be for the reason that social insecurity in women's minds bring them in the civil service where job security is guaranteed which is otherwise not possible in private jobs.

### **Contributing Factors for Career Choice**

To investigate the contributing factors for choosing civil service as a career the respondents were asked to mention the factors they feel have contributed to their career choice. The following table represents their opinions regarding the contributing factors.

**Table-7.11: Contributing Factors for Career Choice**

Contributing Factors	Number of male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total No. of Respondents
Education	93 (75.61%)	85 (79.44%)	178 (74.17%)
Attitude, Self-confidence, Motivation	105 (85.37%)	77 (71.96%)	182 (75.83%)
Family Influence/Position	53 (43.09%)	57(53.27%)	110 (45.83%)
Family Support	56 (45.53%)	67 (62.62%)	123 (51.25%)
Political Connection	01		
Luck	30 (24.39%)	34 (31.78%)	64 (26.67%)
Government Policies (Quota)	12 (9.76%)	16 (14.95%)	28 (11.67%)
Other	01		

\*Percentage may not add to 100 because of multiple responses

It can be seen from the table that most of the respondents (75.83%) feel that education, right attitude, self-confidence and motivation have contributed to

their entry in the civil service. In fact, they were self-motivated to choose their career. 74.17 percent feel that education helped them to achieve this career. A considerable percentage (51.25%) of respondents opine that they got strong support from their family throughout their life which helped them to get the job while 45.83 percent said that they were encouraged to be a member of the civil service because of the influence or position of their family members like parents, in-laws, spouses or other relatives who are/were in the civil service. 26.67 percent of the respondents mentioned 'luck' and 28 percent mentioned 'quota policy of the government' as the factors which favored them to get jobs. Only one male honestly confessed about political connection.

One of the female respondent said that her university friends (mostly males) were preparing for the BCS examination and inspired her for the same. Influenced by her friends she decided to take the examination. She took it as a challenge and got the administration cadre.

### **Barriers at the time of Joining**

To find out the barriers for entering into the service the respondents were asked "Was there any barrier you had to overcome at the time of joining in the civil service"?

**Table 7.12: Barriers at the time of Joining**

Barriers	Number of Male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total Number of respondents
Did not face Barrier	12 (90.98%)	102 (95.33%)	223 (92.92%)
Faced Barrier	12 (9.02%)	5 (4.64%)	17 (7.08%)

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (92.92%) said that they did not face any barrier. More male (9.02%) than females (4.67%) reported they faced

barriers. Some gender differences also are observed in relation to the barriers. Most of the males (5 among 12) are dissatisfied with the quota provision and considered it as a barrier. Two males described it as the 'ugly quota system'. The other barriers noted by the males are: biased and corrupt selection process, and lengthy, time consuming, traditional examination system of the BCS.

Out of 5 females one mentioned police verification, one graduation from private university, one 'cumbersome and monotonous' process of the BCS examination as barriers in joining the service. One female said that, she was selected for the administration cadre and at the time of joining she was pregnant. She was worried about her field posting and was suffering from indecisions whether to join or not.

Another female shared that, she was in education cadre. Second time she took the BCS examination and got customs and excise cadre and preferred to join. But her husband was very much reluctant about her joining in that cadre resigning education cadre and for the shake of a peaceful family life she did not join. It reveals that, still in our society the predominant general view is that females should be in professions relating to teaching, health and social services as these professions are deemed suitable for females.

## Problems Facing at Work

**Table 7.13: Problems Facing at Work**

Facing Problems or Not	Number of Male Respondents	Number of Female Respondents	Total Number of Respondents
Facing Problems	49 (36.84%)	71 (66.36%)	120 (50.00%)
Not Facing Problems	84 (63.16%)	36 (33.64%)	120 (50.00%)

While asked whether they are facing problems at work or not, half of the respondents opined that they are not facing problems at their work and half



of them admitted that they are facing problems. An overwhelming majority of the females (66.36%) and 36.84 percent of the males reported different kinds of problems they are going through.

Many of the problems they mentioned are of a general nature, but there are some which are particular to their sex. Women have to face some unwanted problems at their work that the males need not. Besides they also claimed that they face discrimination in regard to plum posting, promotion and foreign training. They think other than their gender, politicization of bureaucracy is also responsible for this type of discrimination. Male respondents also reported about politicization.

The basic problems that women face because of their gender are: negative attitudes of males colleagues, bosses, clients and general people towards them, lack of women friendly work environment, work family balance, unsuitable places of posting and lack of security, discrimination in promotion, and pressure of household works. Most of the female respondents posted in the field levels opined that they face more problems as being women and being posted in the fields. Three females commented that they are treated as 'women officers' not as 'officers' and have to face the bias attitude of the men.

It is quite relevant to mention here the view of a male officer of the administration cadre. He thinks females as problem makers at work and stated that:

"Females get much more opportunities than male. Bosses are biased and give more privileges to the females. Females are selfish and escapist."

The female respondents were also asked that being females how much comfortable they are with their male colleagues in their jobs? Majority of them (60.75%) replied that they feel moderately comfortable, 19.63 percent feel less comfortable. One woman said that she feels not comfortable at all.

## Problems Facing at Home

The respondents were also asked to check the problems (five problems were mentioned in the questionnaire) which they face at home. More than half of the males (52.36%) and 15.89 percent of the females did not check any problem. The majority of the males (55.56%) checked different places of posting of working spouses as the major and most common problem. Some of them (28.57%) think child care or bringing up children as a problem while the unmarried males who live alone think excessive pressure of household works as a problem.

Among the females, 84.11 percent face problems at home and like the males, majority of them (67.78%) checked different places of posting of themselves or their working spouses as the most serious problem. Besides excessive pressure of household works, child care, non-co-operation of husbands and other family members are significant problems for them as they have to play the dual roles of mothers and professionals.

**Table 7.14: Problems Facing at Home**

Problems	Percent of Response		
	N=133 Males	N=107 Females	N=240 Total
To bring up children	28.57%	35.56%	32.68%
Excessive pressure of household works	25.40%	50.00%	39.87%
Lack of cooperation from spouse	3.17%	10.00%	7.19%
Noncooperation of other family members	4.76%	11.11%	8.50%
Different paces of posting of working spouses or the respondents	55.56%	67.78%	62.75%

\*Percentage may not add to 100 because of multiple responses

## Thought of Quitting Civil Service

Among the males 25.56 percent said that they have thought of quitting civil service, while a lesser percentage of females (14.02%) thought about the case. The reasons specified by the males and females for quitting the service are quite different.

The most common and major reasons as noted by the males are: politicization, inter-cadre discrimination, and non-cooperation and officious attitude of the seniors. Some of them said that, their expectations are not fulfilled from the service and for that reason they are thinking of switching their career. On the contrary cultural or social issues are the most common reasons noted by the females.

### **Main cause of not fulfilling the Women Quota**

When the respondents were asked about the causes of not fulfilling the women quota at various BCS examinations majority of males (45.86%) and females (38.32%) opined for lack of suitable/qualified women candidates. 29.32 percent males and 32.71 percent females supported that women are not motivated to pursue career in civil service. 28.31 percent males and 26.71 percent females believe the quota is not distributed in a proper and transparent way as per rules. 'Attitude of the authority to appoint a female', 'family resistance to join a service which requires remote posting', 'women at that age get involved in family matters mostly', 'women are now more interested in joining private service' are some of the other reasons specified by female respondents.

During interview, some civil servants both male and female said that they are not informed enough to comment on this issue. Five male and one female officer spoke negatively regarding women quota and stated that women quota is not needed. Some respondents also commented that now a day's women quota does not remain unfilled.

While interviewing, the members and directors of the PSC pointed that, in general cadres now the quotas are almost met but in technical cadres still the quotas remain vacant because of unavailability of suitable women candidates.

### **3. Respondents' Perceptions of Quota (women) Policy Implementation**

In this section the respondents' perceptions about women quota implementation are sought and their views are presented against each independent variable of the study. Responses are classified into three levels/extents (instead of five mentioned in the questionnaire), namely, 'strongly disagree'/'disagree', 'not sure' and 'strongly agree'/'agree' to correspond with the agreement level of the respondents. This combination has made for easier interpretation as both responding levels (strongly agree or agree and strongly disagree or disagree) indicate either support or disapproval of the questionnaire statements, and of that of the variables. Details of the descriptive statistics of the independent variables<sup>49</sup> from the civil servants' views are presented in the following tables.

#### **Policy Characteristics**

The policy characteristics in this research include clarity of the policy and relevance of policy to the problems. The first four statements (a-d) of the questionnaire tried to seek respondents' opinion regarding clarity and relevance of policy objectives.

**Table 7.15: Percentages of Responses Regarding Clarity and Relevance of Policy**

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<sup>49</sup> The independent variables have been described in details in Chapter Two.

## Objectives

Statements	Strongly Disagree/Disagree			Not Sure			Agree/Strongly Agree		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
a) In general reservations/quota policy (exclusively for women) in case of BCS recruitment is clear and relevant to social conditions and problems of women in Bangladesh.	31.57	21.49	27.88	24.81	24.30	24.58	43.61	54.21	48.33
b) PSC chairmen and members have full understanding of quota policy objectives.	20.30	14.95	17.92	33.08	33.64	33.33	46.62	51.40	48.75
c) Ministries/divisions/departments of Bangladesh government have full understanding of quota policy objectives.	30.08	19.63	25.42	33.08	39.25	35.83	36.84	41.12	38.75
d) Quota practices are in line with the socially disadvantaged position of women in Bangladesh.	33.83	29.91	32.08	22.56	28.04	25.00	43.61	42.06	42.92

According to the responses in Table- 7.14, 48.33 percent respondents (male - 43.61%, female – 54.21%) agreed about the relevance of the quota policy. More than half of the target group (women) whose situation has been tried to ameliorate by the policy are align with the policy's goals and relevancy and confirmed that quota practices are in line with the socially disadvantaged position of women in Bangladesh. Furthermore, 48.75 percent opined that, PSC chairman and members as implementers have full understanding of quota policy objectives, while 38.75 percent agreed that different ministries/divisions/departments also have understanding of the same. As a whole, majority of respondents supported that women quota in case of BCS recruitment is clear and relevant in line with the social context in Bangladesh.

It has been found from the interviews with the key informants and the gender experts that most of them are in favor of quota reservation for women. They opined that, women have to fight the active male psyche and social constructs from a centuries old weaker position. In our society the presence of women is very negligible in all of the areas like administration, parliament, judiciary, higher education, sports, financial institutions, business or what so ever. This reality confirms that our social structures do not represent an ideal order and

hence deliberate reconstitution of the system becomes a practical necessity for the establishment of gender parity.

Nonetheless, a few of them disagreed. One ex member of PSC told that,

“Women are entitled to get public service mainly on two counts-----on the basis of their merit and on the basis of their sex. Again, they may also claim a share from other specific quotas like freedom fighters wards, tribal if they happen to be member of any of these groups.”

He recalled that during his tenure a women of 2030 serial in the merit list got the administration cadre through availing the advantage of women, freedom fighter and district quota. He also mentioned that thus the quota system has brought a decline in the standard and quality of human resources in the civil service and damaging the efficiency of the civil service. He does not think that quota which compromises the principle of merit is the right course to make the civil service gender representative.

Another present member commented,

“The situation of women in Bangladesh has changed today. The quota system validates the discrimination that prevails against women in our society and thereby degrades their positions in the society.” He also added, “The quota system is an additional process of discriminating women from getting their usual share through merit.”

In this regard a male civil servant stressed that,

“Merit should be the only criterion for recruitment in the civil service if we want a quality civil service. The quota is frustrating and demoralizing for the true merit. As a result, the new generation is averting from civil service, rather they like to join in multinational organizations. Quota for women cause resentment among male candidates”.

However, the quota policy in BCS recruitment has been recognized in our society in line with the socially disadvantaged positions of women with the objective of effectively drawing them into the mainstream of national

development. But at the same time the academics and experts also conceived that, quota cannot continue for perpetuity, it should have some ending point. Proper education, training, mindset changing can truly increase the representation of women in the civil service.

### Implementing Agency's Characteristics

For this study, implementer's skills, their attitudes combined with their commitment and the independence of the agency to work towards the policy goal are included as part of the implementing agency's characteristics.

**Table 7.16: Percentage of Responses Regarding Implementing Agency's Characteristics**

Statements	Strongly Disagree/Disagree			Not Sure			Agree/Strongly Agree		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
e) The chairmen and members of PSC are capable and willing to carry out the implementing activities effectively	16.54	11.22	14.17	29.32	25.32	27.50	54.14	53.55	58.33
f) They have a positive attitude towards women employment.	6.01	12.15	8.75	33.08	18.69	26.67	60.91	69.16	64.58
g) They are gender sensitive and do not discriminate women in the selection process because of their gender.	6.77	9.35	7.92	34.58	16.82	26.67	58.65	73.83	65.41
h) PSC can work as an independent implementing authority, free from all executive influence.	40.60	31.77	36.67	26.32	26.17	26.25	33.08	42.06	37.08
l) Government do not pay due attention to recommendations of PSC.	35.34	44.86	39.58	27.07	30.84	28.75	37.59	24.30	31.67

The statistics reveal that most of the respondents (58.33%) agreed that the chair and members of PSC are quite capable of knowledge and skills to carry out the implementing activities. Concerning their attitudes towards women employment 64.58 percent supported that they have a positive attitude while

only 8.75 percent disagreed. It is interesting to note here that a vast majority of females (69.16%) agreed that PSC chair and members possess positive attitudes towards women. In addition, 73.83 percent of females feel that, they are gender sensitive and do not discriminate women in the selection process (viva board) because of their gender. However, 9.35 percent opposed it. But we got a quite opposite picture while interviewing the female civil servants. Almost all of them expressed their dissatisfaction about the issue.

One female officer of administration cadre was very much dissatisfied with the attitudes of the viva board members and stated,

“To face the viva was a horrible experience to me. The members of the board could not hide their hostile attitudes to me and I think the only reason was that I was a woman. In spite of that I was fortunate to get the job as I performed very well. ”

In general, majority of both males and females perceived that the implementers are gender sensitive and possess a positive attitude towards women employment.

All the ex and present PSC members and chair interviewed assured that they never discriminate women and as chairs of the viva boards they always keep control so that other members of the selection board from outside the PSC cannot do that. Three of them admitted that, some board members especially who come from the relating ministries/cadres sometimes tend to be biased against women candidates and sometimes the opposite also happens. Some members want to give special considerations to the women candidates. The chair and members said that they always try to ensure that candidates are being selected on merit with no unfair discrimination against any group.

It is also important to be noted here, that a considerable percentage (26.25) of survey respondents said that they are not sure when asked about the independence of PSC. Among the remaining, half agreed and half disagreed



about independent working of PSC remaining free from all executive influence.

The common argument of the interviewees who disagreed with the independent working of PSC is that, the chair and members of PSC are appointed on the basis of political affiliation of the party in power and the nature of this type of appointment does not allow the institution to function with full freedom remaining outside the executive control.

A similar view was presented by an academic and ex-member of PSC who said that,

“The appointment criteria of PSC chairs and members affect the independence of the institution.”

Most of the PSC members, one ex-member and directors of the PSC secretariat commented during interview that, theoretically PSC is an autonomous body but in practice it cannot properly assert or establish its independence. It has to consult with the MOPA and the Ministry of Finance (MOF) over any decisions which undermine its independence. Most of the interviewee considered PSC as an ‘attached department’ of the MOPA as the PSC is used to perform all its duties through MOPA.

A member commented that:

“The procrastinated attitude of the officers of MOPA made PSC’s activities difficult to conduct.”

While another ex-member put a negative argument by saying that,

“It depends on the PSC leadership. If the chairs and members of the PSC are strong, able, willing and honest, they can do everything. Competent and strong leadership is necessary for PSC to uphold its constitutional status.”

It is a widespread opinion of the key informants that both civil servants with excellent academic background and academics with vast knowledge about

dealing with administrative matters should be appointed as PSC chairs and members. Two key informants (present members of PSC) argued that the status of PSC chair and members in the Warrant of Precedence undermine their ability to operate effectively as a constitutional body.

Almost 40 percent respondents disagreed with the statement, that government does not pay due attention to the recommendations of PSC, whereas 31.67 percent agreed with the statement and 28.75 percent did not have a clear perception about this. But while interviewing with the key informants almost all of them remarked that PSC's annual reports are placed before the parliament but these are not discussed in the parliament and the recommendations of the PSC are not given due attention and implemented by the government.

In this regard the PSC Chair told that:

"We repeatedly request the government to ease the quota system. The commission placed a proposal in March 2009 to ease the existing quota application system. But it has made no headway in seven years. Now it is the matter for the government to take a decision in this regard."

## **Political Conditions**

Political conditions reflect the political circumstances in which the policy is being implemented and it might have a profound effect on the performance of implementing agencies. It is already mentioned in the second chapter that the extent of support for or against the policy by political elites or interest groups influence implementation efforts and results, regardless of the positions of the implementers or the characteristics of the agency implementing the policy. In this study, attempts to analyze the consequences of political pressure placed on the PSC and how these pressure influences the policy implementation process of the government and indirectly affects the quota policy implementation for women has taken into consideration.

**Table 7.17: Percentage of Responses Regarding Political Conditions**

Statements	Strongly Disagree/Disagree			Not Sure			Agree/Strongly Agree		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
o) Political pressure obstructs the proper implementation of the quota policy.	27.82	19.63	24.17	29.32	24.30	27.08	42.86	56.07	48.75
p) PSC is a politically backed weak institution which cannot implement decisions properly.	30.07	37.38	33.33	26.32	31.78	28.75	43.61	30.84	37.92

The above table depicts that 48.75 percent of the survey respondents (male- 42.86%, female 56.07%) perceived that, political pressure obstructs the proper implementation of the quota policy while 24.17 percent (male- 27.82%, female- 19.63%) disagreed with them. 27.08 percent respondents did not have a clear idea about the matter.

Slightly more than one third of the respondents (37.92%) supported that PSC is a politically backed weak institution which cannot implement decisions properly, while one third respondents (33.33%) disapproved the view.

Moreover, during informal discussion with the civil servants, most of them described the PSC as “absolutely politicized” and supported the view that PSC is politically backed weak institution which cannot make decisions of its own because of its weak institutional character. While being interviewed most of the academics and experts agreed with this view. In this regard they commented that,

“The appointment of the chair and members of the PSC based on their political loyalty has made the institution a victim and a tool of political pressure”.

They also agreed that political pressures play a major role in case of civil service recruitment and affect the implementation of the quota policy.

Though the political influence is not directly linked with gender it indirectly influences the participation of women in the civil service.

However, the PSC chairs' and members' opinions differed on this issue as all of them believe that no political pressure is imposed on them while discharging their functions for civil service recruitment.

## Social Conditions

The masculine cultural practices of Bangladeshi society is studied in this study to see the effect of social conditions on policy implementation related to increase women's share in BCS.

**Table 7.18: Percentage of Responses Regarding Social Conditions**

Statements	Strongly Disagree/Disagree			Not Sure			Agree/Strongly Agree		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
l) Masculine culture affects women's career aspiration and career choice.	24.82	14.02	20.00	21.80	10.28	16.67	53.38	75.70	63.33
m) Social norms and values limit the scope for women to pursue civil service careers even after having obtained the necessary qualifications.	29.32	17.76	24.17	18.05	30.08	15.83	52.63	69.16	60.00
n) People prefer a male officer than a female officer.	28.58	27.10	27.92	21.80	9.35	16.25	49.62	63.55	55.83

The information of the above table reveals that, majority of the respondents (63.33%) perceive that masculine culture affects women's career aspiration and career choice. An overwhelming majority of the female respondents (75.70%) support this view, while 53.38 percent males are also the supporter

of this view. In general 60 percent of the respondents agreed that social norms and values limit the scope for women to pursue civil service careers even after having obtained the necessary qualifications. This view is confirmed by 69.16 percent females and 52.63 percent males. On the other hand 24.17 percent of total respondents disagreed with that social factors inhibit women's career as civil servants.

While interviewing, a gender specialist commented:

"The space of women is deeply embedded in our society and conditioned by our culture. A woman's role, position is determined and constructed by the patriarchal social structure. Still we are not ready to accept the position of women holding positions in public office and this is a manifestation of our male dominated society and culture."

In discussion with the female civil servants it is found that, the complex socio cultural structure of the Bangladeshi society de-motivates female to join the civil service. Social attitudes towards female work and the predominant role of women as mother and wife create low career interest among women. An interesting comment was made by a female officer of the administration cadre in this regard. She said that:

"Different life cycle events, such as getting marriage, pregnancy, child rearing have a profound impact on a woman's career choice. An important factor that inhibits career development for women is family obligations. A woman with equal talent of a man would never be as successful as that of a male officer because of social norms and taboos, work family conflict and attitudes that a woman has to encounter in her job."

Among the survey respondents 63.55 percent female and 49.62 percent male held the view that people prefer a male officer than a female officer whereas, 17.76 percent female and 29.32 percent male disagreed with them. 16.25 percent of the total respondents stated that they are not sure about this. It was generally claimed by most of the women civil servants that they are not always valued properly in the service by their male colleagues, bosses and general people. A woman officer's efficiency and commitment to the service is

always questioned in regard to her dual role as family maker. They also mentioned that despite having the qualifications and fulfilling the prerequisites, only a minimal number of female officers are promoted to the highest policy level positions in the civil service.

## **Conclusion**

The composition of the respondents and the primary data collected from survey, interview, and informal discussion have briefly been presented in this chapter. 240 civil servants of different cadres and designations were surveyed with the questionnaire. The male comprised 55.42 percent while females made up 44.58 percent of the respondents. The major portion of respondents is from the bottom ranks of the hierarchy i.e. from Assistant secretary and/ or Senior Assistant Secretary (equivalent)s. Regarding cadre distribution the highest representation (25%) is from the administration cadre, the second highest is from agriculture cadre and health cadre which is 7.92%.

Majority of women are newly recruited in the civil service and the proportion of married female is considerably less than the married male. The educational qualifications for the males and females are more or less same. But the female civil servants are socio economically more privileged than the males. There are also some differences between male and female civil servants regarding the various issues towards their career context. The perception of the respondents about the quota policy implementation on the basis of four variables outlined in the analytical chapter (policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political conditions, and social conditions) have also been depicted in this chapter through facts and figures.

The data gathered through interview with key informants and informal discussions with civil servants supplements the survey data further in the forms of comments. The next chapter contains the illustration of all these research data and findings.

# Chapter Eight

## Factors Affecting Women Quota Utilization and Representation of Women

### Introduction

This chapter examines and identifies the variables which affect women quota utilization and low representation of women in the civil service of Bangladesh based on the empirical data presented in the previous chapter (chapter seven). The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the implementation gap between governmental policies and practices in regard to increase women representation in the civil service. In doing so this chapter illuminates and interprets the survey results in conjunction with the findings of the interviews and informal discussions with the key informants as well as the civil servants and the academics /researchers.

Although women have been in the civil service in Bangladesh even before the independence of the country, it was not until 1982, when the regular recruitment of women began in most cadre posts in the BCS. A statistical profile of the current gender balance and trends have been presented in chapter six which shows that there is a steady progress of women representation in the civil service over the years. It was observed that the number of the new entrants in the civil service gradually increased over time. Before 1976 women constituted 6.6 percent of the total public service employment and after introduction of quota in 1976 women constituted around 8 percent of the total employment strength (Khan, 1988:56). It gradually increased to 27 percent in 2015 (data collected by the researcher from MOPA as on 8 December, 2015). This is very encouraging and, although it is not clear exactly what the causes are, the sheer increase in numbers of

women graduating from universities and entering the job market, both in the private and government sectors, has probably contributed to the increase in numbers of women in the civil service (UNDP, 2011:14).

So the questions are:

Is it a proportionate increase according to the male- female population ratio in Bangladesh?

Is this increase in numbers of women due to the successful implementation or utilization of the women quota policy of the government?

The answers to these questions are negative. Though women cover half of the total population in Bangladesh their present share in the BCS does not reflect an ideal gender balancing. According to the statistics presented in chapter six, there is a gradual and slow increase in women's participation in the BCS but the picture is not satisfactory. Women are still marginal in BCS. Currently, women's participation is 27 percent but if only class 1 officers of the civil service is considered, then women make up just 23 percent and among the women officers in class-I category a fewer percentage in fact belong to the cadre services. Moreover, women's presence in the top level of decision making remained very low, well under the recommended minimum of 30 percent. As a whole the numerical strength of women is still very insignificant compared to their male counterparts.

Furthermore, it was found in the annual reports of the PSC that, over the years' government could not fill the posts which were reserved for women. In other words, the government has failed to accommodate women in BCS in spite of the fact that 10 percent of the posts are reserved for them. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the key factors affecting the proper utilization of women quota and low representation of women in BCS and assess the existing gap between policies and practices.



## **Analysis and Interpretation of Empirical Findings**

### **Personal and Socio economic Characteristics**

The data presented in chapter seven suggest that male and female civil servants in Bangladesh differ in their personal and socio economic profiles. The age data of the serving civil servants reveals that there are more women in entry level in our civil service and entry into the BCS in large numbers is a very recent trend for women. It is also observed that the higher the age group, the lower is the number of females which implies that in the higher ranks of the civil service the number of women officers are fewer. This corresponds with the fact that the representation of women in the policy level posts in civil service of Bangladesh is very low.

Regarding marital status, the proportion of married female is considerably less than that of married male. As most of the unmarried female officers are found at the entry level of the service, apparently it might be said that they decided to get marry after entering a profession as they thought it would be very difficult for them to be prepared for the competition of getting a civil service position due to marital responsibilities. Another reason might be that, as working women they prefer to remain single because of the work family conflict<sup>50</sup> which might interfere with their careers. Whatever, the reason is, this is an index of modernity, in tradition bound Bangladeshi society where early marriage of the girls is a social reality.

According to UNICEF statistics (2016), has the highest percentage of child marriage among Asian countries. About 66 percent of Bangladeshi women are married before the age of 18 (which is the minimum legal age of marriage for women) and 18 percent of those by the time they turn 15( bdnews24.com, 27 February, 2017). Recently the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 was passed in

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<sup>50</sup>Working women have to cope with simultaneous demands from the work and family domains. Participation in the work role makes it difficult to participate in the family role and vice versa. This difficult situation is defined as work family conflict.

the parliament which has kept the legal age of marriage as 18 for women and 21 for men but includes a provision of exception in 'special cases' or for in the 'best interests of the adolescent' with parental and court consent. It does not specify the minimum age of marriage and the campaigners said the changes to the law would effectively mean that Bangladesh has a 'zero minimum' age of marriage. MPs have stated that, allows girls and boys to marry in special circumstances will endure they are not being ostracized or discriminated in communities.

Under age marriage diminishes girls' chance to stay in education by forcing them into a life of servitude and dependence. Bangladesh has been accused of taking a 'devastating step backward' in the fight against child marriage by introducing a legal loophole that sets no age limit for wedlock (Independent, 8 March, 2017).

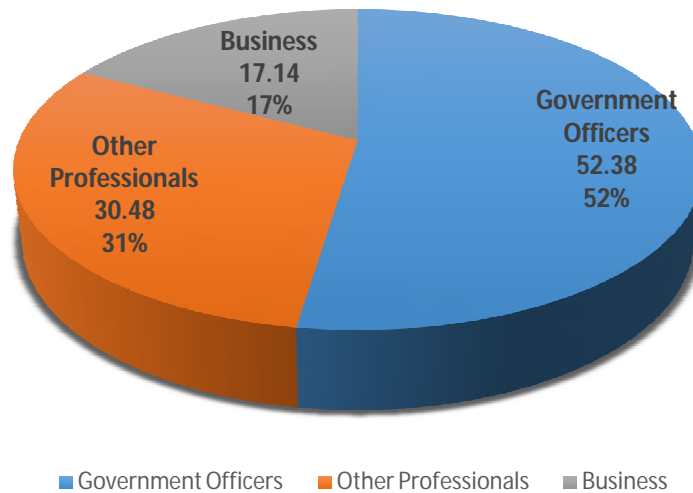
With regard to living situation of the civil servants, it is observed that few women (14.95%) live alone compared to men (20.30%). Women who are unmarried generally live with either their parents or relatives or make other arrangements like paying guests or working women's hostels than to live alone. It is not very common for unmarried women who do not have any relatives near the working place to rent a house independently. In many cases they have to travel a long distance, which is not only inconvenient in terms of security, time and energy but also very expensive. The reason is that in our culture it is not considered appropriate for single women to live alone due to security concerns. Breaking the social barrier, the women who live alone for the purpose of a job are largely considered as deviants or violators of the cultural norms by the society. But men do not face such cultural restrictions.

In terms of educational status women civil servants are not in any way less educated than male civil servants and presently a good number of women are getting job through merit. More women (28.97%) than men (18.05%) hold

professional degree which implies that more women are now entering into the non-conventional fields relating to engineering and agriculture breaking the stereotyped norms of female profession. It is worth mentioning that until the last decade's women in BCS used to prefer education and health cadres but currently women candidates are opting for all cadres. This trend is good and optimistic.

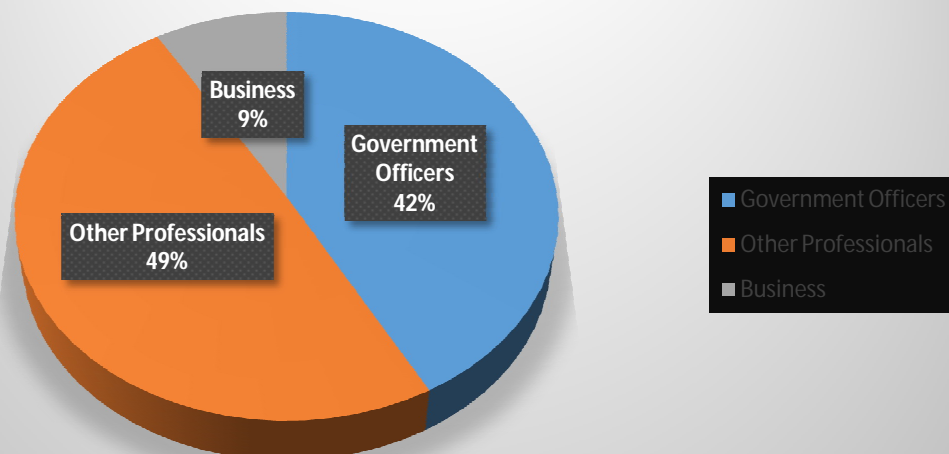
The male and female civil servants also differ in their family background. The parents of women civil servants are more educated and have/had professional backgrounds as compared to those of male civil servants. With higher level of education of the parents among the female respondents, there was greater propensity to aspire to higher education, a professional career and delayed age at marriage, irrespective of the gender of their children. The analysis of the respondents' parental background gives an indication that, father's profession is an important factor in determining the career of their children, especially daughters. Females who have/had their fathers in the civil service are more likely to choose civil service as their careers. Similarly, mothers who are/were well-educated and have/had a professional background have positively influenced their daughters' education which lead them to become civil servants.

**Figure 8.1**  
**Fathers' Occupation of Women Civil Servants**



Similarly, the spouses of the female respondents are more qualified and have good jobs as compared to those of male respondents. The data also indicate that, government officers prefer to marry government officers and women who get entry into the civil service have highly educated and well provided husbands who might have supported their wives in the pursuit of their career in the civil service. This also supports the view that educated and professional people have more positive attitude towards women's work.

**Figure 8.2**  
**Spouse's Occupation of the Female Civil Servants**

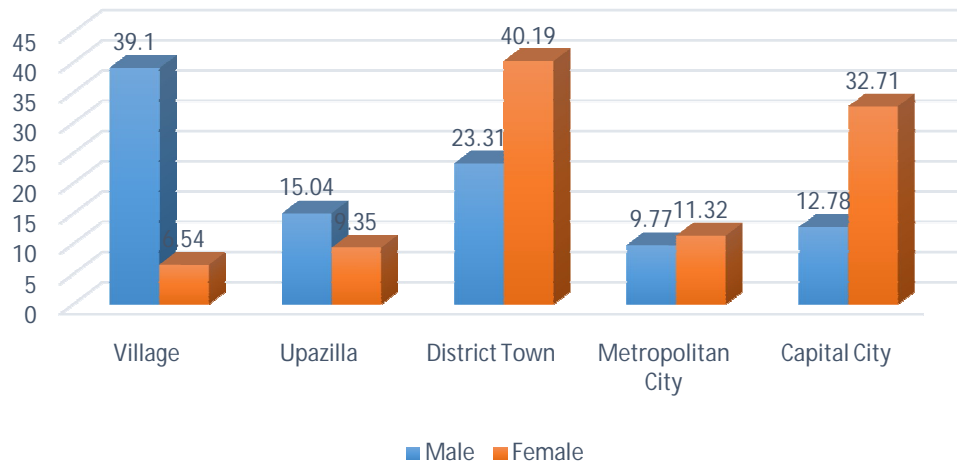


Most of the women who entered the service after marriage admit that they had supportive families and spouses. However, the opposite picture was also found. During interview and informal discussion, several female civil servants stated that their husband's career acted as a barrier while entering in the service as their husband's working stations were far away from their posting places.

More women officers have reported themselves belonging to the upper middle class when compared to male officers. In fact women in BCS are not like the average women of Bangladesh. Generally they possess different outlook as they come from elite families. Apparently, this finding tends to support the view that being born in an elite family or high socio economic class makes a significant difference in a woman's life and positively supports her in her career paths. Because the socio economic status of a family affects the schooling of the children either positively or negatively. The higher the socio economic status of the family, the more likely it will motivate their children to learn, educate them highly and thereby preparing them for highly regarded jobs.

This study also finds the number of female civil servants coming from rural areas to be negligible. Most of the women had an urban upbringing compared to their male counterparts. Only seven females are from villages and ten are from upazilas (sub districts) which is quite consistent with the view that female from the rural areas are not being able to avail the benefits of the women quota or enter into the civil service in comparison to their urban counterparts.

**Figure 8.3**  
**Rural - Urban Background of the Respondents**



Females in urban areas have acquired better education than those living in the rural areas and thus gained access to enter the civil service. This is due to the fact that people in urban areas have better educational facilities and opportunities than the people in rural areas.

In this regard the comment made by a female civil servant provides an illustrative scenario:

“BCS is a very tough competitive examination and it is more difficult for a woman to come out successful crossing the hurdles of three layers of examination. I have undergone coaching for the BCS examination in a coaching center at Dhaka and could come out successful. The number of candidates getting into BCS from Dhaka is more as they start preparing for the competitive examination from their third or fourth years of honors level study and get more facilities and opportunities than their rural counterparts”.

Thus from the above analysis, it can be said that most of the civil servants in Bangladesh comprise an elite group having high education at reputed educational institutions, urban upbringing and sound family background. Although the number of women participating in the civil service examination and entering the service has been increasing, they are especially those coming from the urban areas. The majority, actually those representing the rural areas are left out. Especially the participation of women in BCS has remained,

by and large, confined to a group of women who come from well-to-do urban, educated and socio-economically privileged family background.

Family background is considered to have a profound influence on the career choice and career advancement of people, in one way or the other. It is an important factor not only in providing motivation and encouragement for women to attain higher education and to choose career, but also in providing the resources necessary for the attainment of higher education and entering a profession.

### **Career Context**

Most of the female respondents have joined the service because of social security of the job while for male it was social status. It might be for the reason that social insecurity in women's minds bring them in the civil service where job security is guaranteed which is otherwise not possible in private jobs. On the other hand, as men in a masculine society generally aspire for status and prestige, most male respondents perceive social status as the most important motivator behind joining the civil service. Family influence and family support was found to be a dominant contributing factor for women rather than men for choosing civil service as their career.

Only 15 percent women affirm that the quota policy for women has contributed to their career choice. Most of the male respondents express their dissatisfaction with the quota (women) and think it as a barrier for the male for joining the civil service. Again, almost 10 percent male said that quota policy (district quota) contributed to their career choice. Some women respondents also express their dislikes about the quota system and stated that women are able enough to compete with men and they do not want to hide their capabilities behind women quota. Furthermore, they also stated that women who are selected through quota are stereotyped as less qualified by their colleagues although that might not be the case.

There are varying perceptions on whether women quota should be continued or not. Regarding this issue, a mixed response was found, with some respondents feeling that more women would be able to enter the BCS through their own merit if there is no quota and other feeling that quotas are still necessary for some time to counterbalance the inequity and therefore access to entering BCS. It should be noted here that the members (who were interviewed by the researcher) of Bangladesh Civil Service Women's Network (BCSWN) have discussed the need to keep or even increase the women's quota and to ensure monitoring of proper implementation of quotas.

UNDP's (2014) report on Gender Equality in Public Administration shows that women face multiple barriers at entry level. These include biases against recruiting women because of their gender, fewer promotion opportunities especially at senior levels, lack of gender sensitivity and discriminatory attitudes among management and colleagues, and inadequate family support. Men do not face these barriers.

Most of the females reported different kinds of problems they are going through at their work as civil servants. Many of the problems they mentioned are of a general nature, but there are some which are particular to their sex. Most of the women mentioned male biased attitudes of bosses and colleagues, lack of congenial work environment for women, work family conflict, and remote postings which separate them from family as the major problems which they are facing at work.

Child care is a critical concern for the women civil servants having infants and small kids at homes. During interview the respondents said that there is no day care center in the government offices except secretariat and strongly emphasized the need for child care facilities.

One respondent honestly confessed,



“When children were young it was harder for me to give concentration to my job.....as I had to leave them in the house under the care of a paid maid. I was not satisfied with this arrangement and always felt worried ..... Now I can give more time to my job. They are now less dependent on me and now I can concentrate more to my career.... But I was not less committed when I could not. Now the children do not affect my commitment but when they were younger they did”.

Women officers generally think that people are treated differently at work because of their gender. They sometimes feel discriminated in regard to promotion, posting, transfer, foreign training, deputation etc. They think other than their gender, politicization of bureaucracy is responsible for this type of discrimination as all these career related aspects of the civil servants have loopholes and are mainly done on the basis of personal contacts and political connections. These results are consistent with the findings of another study (Kabir, 2013:170) which finds that:

“Relationships with politicians/high officials’ nowadays have strong influence in any kind of promotion, transfer or deputation in Bangladesh and in present situation one has to have political affiliation as an added qualification along with merit to get promotion.”

Despite having professional careers female civil servants are found equally committed to their families. In the vast majority of cases the burden of household works and baby caring is only for the females because of the traditional gender role. Sharing of household chores by male members of the family is not very common in Bangladesh. Balancing dual duties in both family and office is a great challenge for women officers. Participation in the work role makes it difficult to participate in the family role and vice versa. During interview it was revealed that women are less likely to take postings, promotions or training opportunities that may enhance their career prospect at the cost of their family commitments as most of the women respondents said that family is the first priority to them, not the career. Again many of them view spouse’s career (different places of posting of working spouse) and

noncooperation of family members as impediments to their career aspirations. In many cases, women are allowed to work according to the choice of the family only. The participants also mentioned several cases of women where those women had to quit job because they were not allowed to live outside the family.

The respondents were asked whether they ever thought of quitting the civil service. Fourteen percent women replied that they have thought about the issue. They mentioned that the situations that persuade them against remaining in BCS are: transfer and posting in remote areas which causes separation from family, lack of proper office facilities like day care centers, transport, accommodation in the field and separate restroom facilities, absence of proper evaluation and recognition of their work and uncertainty of promotion. Although there is no written rules discriminating against women they feel that there are institutional bias and discriminatory organizational practices against women in the civil service. There is a negative attitude towards them from the colleagues, authority and the community and women's ability as civil servants is constantly put in questions. They mentioned that all these factors also play a vital role in discouraging one from sitting for the BCS examination. On the other hand a very small percentage of male who answered "YES", mentioned about the problems of inadequate salary, lack of infrastructural facilities and politicization of the service as reasons that discourage them to remain in BCS.

Thus the above findings suggest that women who have entered into the civil service are exceptional and nontraditional women who have joined the civil service profession through their personal efforts (education, attitudes, self-confidence, motivation) and guidance of their supportive family members (parents, husbands, in-laws). However, they still feel constrained because of the discriminatory cultural and organizational practices in the civil service and

the society at large, that affects their career and some of them still think about quitting their career in the civil service.

## **Factors Affecting Women Quota Implementation**

The four independent variables (policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political conditions, and social conditions) proposed in the analytical framework of the study are explained here based on the empirical data.

### **Policy Characteristics**

It is already mentioned in chapter two that for a policy to be successful, it is important that policy objectives should be clear and well defined. Without the clarity that specific definitions offer, objectives become less clear and a policy can be ambiguously understood and implemented. Inconsistent, confusing and unclear policy objectives create problems that will sleep into the policy delivery system (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1977:107).

In broad perspective the GOB has policy on gender equality and this is: 'Ensure equality between men and women at all levels of national life'. To implement this broad policy and to increase women representation in civil service, government has adopted the quota policy in case of direct recruitment to the BCS. The discussions in chapter six points out that there is no ambiguities between government policies relating to increasing women representation in the civil service and the country's five year macro policies or the national women development policies. All the policy decisions of the GOB support the quota policy in clear term to ensure equitable female participation in the civil service.

Again, the objectives of the policy should be in line with the social realities and social status of women in Bangladesh. So the social, cultural, economic and political conditions of women should be taken into consideration. Women of

Bangladesh are not one homogenous group but are rather consist of diverse groups and varied concerns. There are rich, poor, urban, rural, tribal, Muslim and non-Muslim women and there are inequalities among them. Some women enjoy better social, economic, political status compared to other women. However, discrimination against women exists in all spheres of life and these discriminations manifest themselves in different degrees and forms among women with different social, cultural, religious, regional, ethnic and economic backgrounds.

Glaring discrimination against women is also evident from socio-economic indicators on gender inequality discussed in chapter five. Women in Bangladesh, especially rural women have much less opportunities for higher education than men. The existing socio-economic status of general women and their current share in public employment as well as the empirical findings suggest that quota policy in civil service recruitment has relevance to social conditions of women and is in line with the socially disadvantaged position of women in Bangladesh.

However, the quota policy for women have some problems of its own. The complicated distribution method of quota on the basis of population often works against women's interest. After the merit quota is filled up, the rest of the posts are distributed among districts according to population. The present system of distributing jobs on the basis of proportionality of population discriminates against less populous districts and divisions. If there is no qualifying female candidate in a particular district, the post allocated to that district would be distributed among general qualifying candidates of the relevant greater district according to merit. Even if there are qualified female candidates from other district for which no posts are available against women quota, they are not eligible for recruitment (Annual Report of PSC, 1996, cited in Jahan, 2007:56).

As for example a highly deserving female candidate from Khulna division or from Khalishpur district could not be accommodated since that division or district had no share of women quota due to their lesser population size. This negates the very concept of quota system and is against the preferred group's (women) interest (Ahmad and Khan, 2007:23). All the quota posts which remain unfilled are transferred to merit category which are known as special merit quota. It is ironical that many jobs which are earmarked for women this way eventually go to men when qualified women could not avail the benefits of quota reserved for them. Distribution of quota on the basis of population, therefore, not only fails to achieve the major objective behind the policy, but also transfers the rightful share of a deserving candidate to a relatively less deserving one<sup>51</sup> (Khan,1988:54).

The allocation of quota is much more complex when the number of posts are small. Women with 10 percent quota do not get any earmarked vacancy in competition with freedom fighters, who enjoy 30 percent quota. In addition, under the existing recruitment policy, the women quota is not enforced when the number of vacant positions fall below four. Therefore, ten percent of women quota does have little impact after merit, district wise and within district different specific quota distribution. As quoted by Ahmad and Khan (2007:40), "It is obvious that ten percent quota for 48 percent population is grossly disproportionate and inadequate."

The Constitution of Bangladesh clearly spells out that socially and economically marginalized community has to bring into the civil service and hence the policy objective of women quota is socially desirable. In this regard, the basic question is:

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<sup>51</sup>In 1986 a female candidate from Netrokona district failed to get a particular job having secured 70 percent marks, which then went to another candidate of Mymensingh who secured only 45 percent marks because the post was part of his district's share due to its higher population size (Khan,1988 :54).

Did the targeted women become able to be selected through the BCS examination?

The socio economic background of the women civil servants reveal that, more advanced women due to family background and culture were able to be selected for civil service rather than the marginalized women. Quota favored those women who were from well- off families. This portrays how far the quota policy is really successful in drawing the socially backward women in the civil service of Bangladesh although it is in tune with the disadvantaged position of women in Bangladesh. Women quotas had very little effect in redistributing jobs to backward women from the more privileged. Rather according to Zafarullah (2000:203), it has

“limited the opportunities for women to enter the civil service and..... failed to eliminate not only discrimination against women, in general, but also discrimination between different categories of women--the advantaged urban and disadvantaged rural/ semi-urban women”.

One of the key informant echoed the same:

“Quota had not served any useful role in improving the lot of the preferred groups. In most of the cases quota has served the interest of the socio economically privileged class of women who could have their position in BCS, even if, they would not get a quota”.

## **Implementing Agency's Characteristics**

The implementing agency's characteristics is an important factor in terms of bringing effectiveness to policy implementation. Implementer's knowledge and skills, their attitudes and commitments towards the policy, the independence of the agency and its relations with other officials and units of government tend to limit or enhance the prospects of effective implementation.

Interviews with civil servants and experts as well as existing literature and respondents perceptions found that PSC is in an ambiguous position that

undermines its ability to carry out its mission effectively. Although most of the survey respondents perceive that the chair and members of PSC are quite capable of knowledge and skills to carry out the implementing activities, at the same time they believe that government followed political and personal allegiance while appointing them as members and chairs of the constitutional body, which hampers impartiality and independence of the institution.

It is well known that in the PSC, the most significant role is played by the chair. It is the chair, who deals with administrative matters, who is in charge of budget preparation and in reality, sets the tone for the institution (IGS, 2007, cited in Jahan and Shahan, 2008:316). Therefore, the appointment of the chair, i.e., his/her qualifications, eminence, capability and integrity as well as those of the members is of utmost importance.

The central problem regarding PSC as reflected in existing literature is the appointment procedure of PSC chair and members which is largely based on political consideration. Under the existing constitutional mandate the appointment for these constitutional positions completely depend on the sweet will of the Chief Executive of the country. It is no secret that a considerable number of chairmen and members of PSC over the years have been appointed on political grounds (Zafarullah and Khan, 2005:104-105). Due to lack of specific selection procedure and qualification criteria, protagonist bureaucrats (civil and military) and university professors having close connection, loyalty or trust of the ruling party have been appointed as chairs and members of the Commission since the beginning. The post 1990s democratic government instead of appointing persons of highest integrity and capability as chair and members of the commission, deliberately appointed those persons who hold strong political affiliation with the ruling parties (TIB, 2007, IGS, 2007).

According to a research conducted by IGS, the academic background of the university professors was not sufficient to provide them with the knowledge of administrative procedures, rules and regulations. As PSC has to deal with the bureaucracy in a number of matters, it is not possible for an academic to know the ins and outs of the bureaucracy, similarly, it is not possible for a career bureaucrat to deal with everything related with the BCS examination such as syllabi, question paper etc.( IGS, 2007:77). Thus the existing literature as well as the experts have a somewhat different view from the survey respondents regarding the knowledge and skills of the implementers.

As regard to implementers' attitude towards women, the study found two conflicting views. Majority of the respondents and the members and chair of the PSC assert that, in spite of being the members of a masculine society, the implementers (PSC chair, members and members of BCS viva boards) possess a positive attitudes towards women and women employment. They are gender sensitive and do not discriminate women in the selection process because of their gender.

On the contrary, some female civil servants express their dissatisfaction regarding this issue and one director (female) of the PSC secretariat and three gender experts who were once members of the BCS viva boards comment that:

“Women candidates sometimes faced uncomfortable questions as well as noncooperation and rude behavior from the board members”.

Therefore, involvement of gender insensitive male persons as PSC chair, members and viva board members and their negative attitudes towards women might hinder the entry of women in the civil service.

An earlier research confirmed such findings. Misconduct with women candidates, and giving poor marks in the viva voce were normal phenomena in 11th-17th and 22nd-25th BCS examinations. At least one third of the



members (out of 11) of the PSC during 2000--2006 were reputed for their antagonistic attitude towards the female candidates during viva voce of BCS examinations (Karim, 2008: 9). This discriminatory behavior against the female examinees indirectly affect the proper implementation of women quota.

Regarding independence, the empirical findings and also the existing literature suggest that, although a constitutionally mandated body, PSC in Bangladesh does not enjoy much independence. In order to be independent PSC should be free from control of other ministries/ departments. Theoretically PSC is an autonomous body but in practice it needs to liaise with the MOPA and the MOF over any decision for administrative and financial purposes which undermines its independence.

The interview with the key informants reveal that MOPA acts as an administrative ministry of the PSC and PSC is used to perform all its duties through MOPA. Most matters of its organization, administration and finance are subject to the final scrutiny and control of the MOPA. It does not have the autonomy to act independently even in the area where it is supposed to be the expert i.e., assessment processes (recruitment rules). There is a communication gap between the PSC and the ministries and departments in respect to procedures in framing rules for recruitment and processing the vacancies of direct appointments.

Furthermore, according to the Warrant of Precedence, the chair and members of PSC hold the lowest status among the constitutional bodies of Bangladesh. One ex- member opined that his rank was equivalent to that of the additional secretaries to the government. As a result the senior bureaucrats were quite reluctant to listen to his advice. This undermined position has created opportunities for interference by the senior bureaucrats of MOPA upon PSC in discharging its duties. However, another ex-member and an academic pointed that,

“It does not matter what is stated in the Warrant of Precedence. What it matters is who the chair is, and who the members are.”

An important mechanism through which MOPA exercises a certain degree of influence on PSC is the appointment of civil servants on deputation. As the terms and conditions of officers on deputation of PSC secretariat are determined by MOPA according to the Rules of Business, it allows MOPA to exert control over PSC. Thus the commission has no authority in disciplinary matters about the officers on deputation.

The commission has no freedom in its budgetary and financial matters. PSC members noted that generally PSC prepares its own budget estimates, then submits it to the MOPA and its budget is approved by the MOF. Finally the allocated budget for the PSC comes through MOPA. All financial issues relating to PSC's revenue expenditure including capital expenditure for any development scheme is controlled by the MOPA. PSC receives from time to time an advance grant only to defray its contingent expenses as cost for entertaining the members who attend of various interview boards and honorariums paid to expert members of these boards. All income of the PSC (e.g., application fees and examination charges realized from the examinees) goes to the government treasury (TIB, 2007:5). One member said that, PSC needs to constantly ask for the sanction of the MOPA and the MOF for even the smallest action involving expense. Moreover, the PSC always have to depend on the MOPA for sanctioning the house rent, travelling allowances and medical benefits for its chairs, members and staffs (Ahmed, 1999:141). To be independent PSC should be able to make its own budgetary and procurement decisions.

However, from the above analysis it is quite clear that, by controlling the administrative and financial matters of PSC, the independence of the commission is denied and PSC cannot work independently free from all executive influence.

It is clearly stipulated in the Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment Rules that “No appointment to a service by direct recruitment shall be made except upon the recommendation of the commission”. However, it is noteworthy that the gazette notifications of different BCS reveal that all the candidates recommended by the PSC were not appointed. For instance based on the collected gazette notifications of 19th BCS examination, it was observed that 8.43 percent BCS examinees recommended by the PSC finally did not get BCS job (TIB, 2007:32). It seems that appointing ministries might not like certain candidates recommended by PSC and therefore refused to give final appointments to them. Thus it stands that, sometimes PSC’s recommendation could be violated or overlooked by the government. But the key informants including several present and ex members assured that this is not the case. The recommended candidates who were refused to give final appointment usually had problems with police verification. But in a rare case if it happens, in such instances, PSC cannot do anything except pointing out this matter in its annual report.

PSC submits its annual report to the President. The recent studies conducted on PSC have pointed that, after submitting this report to the President what happens to it, is in fact, a mystery that is yet to be solved (TIB, 2007:13, Siddiqui, 2006:160, IGS, 2008:17). PSC’s reports are not discussed in the parliament and it almost became a custom for the government not to pay any attention to the recommendations of PSC. For instance, it took PSC ten years to make the government understand the importance of a simple modification of the quota reservation policy (Ali, 2004:124-126, cited in IGS, 2007:12). In spite of repeated recommendations from PSC as well as from other administrative reform commissions and committees formed from time to time, to reallocate the freedom fighters quota in view of extreme shortage of candidates belonging to that category, no government showed enough courage to take any policy decision so far. As Khan (1995:79) remarked, “In

fact government policy in this regard is characterized by indecision, confusion, delay and play-safe attitude". As a result, the interest of the mass populace has largely been sidestepped.

To sum up, while PSC is notionally independent through its constitutional position, it cannot properly assert or establish its independence as noted by many observers (UNDP, 2007:24). It is supposed to be a body independent of the executive branch of the government and to have strong capability to carry out its activities independently. But in practice its capability is limited due to the interference of MOPA over many of its activities. PSC seems to fit into the category of an independent constitutional body with advisory status but whose powers and functions are quite restricted (Khan, 2005:107).

## **Political Conditions**

The study finds that PSC fell victim to the control of political party in power. Most of the respondents of the study believe that politicians are the most powerful group in Bangladeshi society and they have a certain extent of control even to determine who will join the civil service. As mentioned by Rahman (2001:55):

"The public personnel process is essentially a political process, and the civil service as the main instrument or agent of public action will always have the pressure to be biased in favor of individuals or groups who wield controlling political power, and who would also like to have civil servants in their favor."

Roughly half of the civil servants perceive that political pressure obstructs the proper implementation of the quota policy and quota systems are used to promote one group over others. According to the civil servants and experts interviewed, the appointment of PSC members and chair based on their political loyalty is responsible for this. Their argument is that the members and chairs of PSC decide to bend before political pressure as they are recruited on the basis of political allegiance/affiliation to the party in power.

A similar view was found in an earlier research conducted by Jahan and Shahan (2008). The study finds that,

“Since the beginning of the democratic era, the PSC itself became both a victim and a tool of political mishandling. Whereas in the past, people with the highest integrity and competence were appointed as PSC chairs and members, during this period, inclination towards the ruling party substituted integrity, and absolute loyalty to that party replaced competence as the criteria required for appointment in these constitutional posts.”

In most cases when a government changed, the chair and members of PSC are also reshuffled. The appointment of party loyalists in important constitutional positions like the PSC allowed the ruling political party to take control over the recruitment procedure. Several civil servants recalled that in their BCS viva examinations all sorts of political questions were asked to find out their political views. The existing literature also suggests that the government tried to manipulate the recruitment process of the civil service by letting in candidates with links to the student wing of the party (Khan, Rahman and Zafarullah, 1997). The emphasis was placed on recruiting ‘party men bureaucrats’ irrespective of their qualifications. This politicization of the recruitment process reveals the fact that competent candidates with no political linkage had no entrance in the civil service. Political connections and which party an individual belongs to largely influence the recruitment and the promotion system in the BCS at present day Bangladesh. In this case males naturally receive all the favor. Because women are less integrated within powerful political networks. Women in general lack political grounding and therefore they do not have political strength required to assert their claim and eligibility to hold and to exercise power. As women in Bangladesh are lagging behind in politics, *tadbir*,<sup>52</sup> and social networking they are unable to compete on an equal footing with the males in Bangladesh’s politicized bureaucracy.

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<sup>52</sup> According to the analysis of Jamil (2007: 18), ‘*tadbir*’ is an act of lobbying that influence decision making in the civil service in an unlawful manner and it has both positive and negative sides. The positive side of ‘*tadbir*’ has a humanitarian motive and is employed by an individual either for himself

Though the current chair and members of PSC did not admit that they face political pressure while discharging their recruitment functions, existing literature as well as analysis of the empirical study findings reflect that over the years in Bangladesh, fresh recruitments in civil service have been characterized by irregularities, inconsistencies and political interventions. Most often pressure from political elites to carry out their illegal orders force PSC chair/members to ignore professional ethics. As a result some kind of political influence acts on PSC from the very beginning which might indirectly affect women entry into the civil service because of the political weakness of women in the political arena.

As the GOB has made no effort to maintain a roster for all cadre posts and vacancies available against different quotas it has created a widespread public perception that there is serious manipulation and irregularities in the distribution of quotas. Generally the civil servants believe that the existing quota system never followed transparency as they did not get any adequate information about the quota system applied. Moreover, experts and researchers opine that, present quota system inspires corruption and political interference as no clear information regarding quota in BCS are made public so far.

## **Social Conditions**

The findings of the survey and interviews clearly reveals that social, cultural and structural barriers of the organizations and the society affect career aspirations of women and create problems with the implementation of women quota.

As discussed in the fifth chapter, in Bangladesh, society still determines women's role in the reproductive sphere. Therefore women's competencies,

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or to help or assert someone. The negative side of '*tadbir*' is associated when it used to break, bypass or manipulate rules in order to acquire unlawful gains for oneself or others. In this regard corruption is usually associated with '*tadbir*'.

potentialities and aptitudes are not valued properly which give women an extremely limited scope for employment opportunity. Participation of women in the civil service especially from rural areas has been very minimal due to limited educational opportunities, and social prejudices of the parents in continuing their daughters' higher education. Cultural norms and familial restrictions continue to inhibit women to take higher studies for the requirement of the civil service and to be ambitious enough to join the service. Those who complete the higher studies do not get enough time to prepare for the tough and competitive BCS examination which requires intense preparation. As stated by one female officer,

“Being a woman and married makes the tough BCS examination even tougher for prospective women candidates as most of the women enter family life at that age. Unlike their male counterpart most women do not have the time to keep them engaged solely on study. Instead they are so busy fulfilling their social role of the wife, the daughter -in -law and the mother that there is no time to study for the examination and ultimately either they do not sit for the examination or cannot come out successful in the examination.”

The ratio of successful male and female candidates in different stages of BCS examination (depicted in chapter six) corroborates with her view.

Career and family have traditionally been conceived as separate spheres within Bangladeshi culture. Social attitudes towards female work create low career interest among female. For a Bangladeshi woman being a good wife and good mother is the main socially acceptable role. Family initiatives are particularly important to women because it is women, who in the vast majority of cases take key responsibilities for child and family care. So if a woman decides to join the civil service she has to perform the dual role of a homemaker and a government officer. Reconciliation between these two duties sometimes become very difficult to manage. In fact, women's career are not smooth and continuous since they have family obligations and have to take breaks due to different life cycle events like marriage, pregnancy etc. One

of the joint secretary of Finance Ministry considered initial period of her married life as the most crucial part of her life. Several women officers commented that,

“Women are more likely to give up their career due to being a mother and career continuity is particularly problematic for women during child rearing years.”

Besides civil service jobs are transferable in nature and are rotational alternating between field level and central government. Specially, in BCS administration, agriculture, health and some other cadres, all entry level officers are posted at the field level according to the service rules. The timing of field service and the start of married life and family responsibilities are often simultaneous for the women. It is acceptable for men to be posted in various locations and it is expected that their families will join them, but this is not the case for women civil servants. Sometimes it hampers the normal family life as the women officers are separated from their family, even from their kids which makes them frustrated. For this reason, many university graduates are less interested to pursue their career in the civil service as field level posting is not attractive to them and sometimes their families do not encourage them to do so. That is why the percentage of female doctors actually active in government service is lower compared to their graduation rates in spite of the fact that health cadre is preferred and considered suitable as female profession. Many qualified women doctors do not take up their first posting. Most of them prefer working in private medical colleges, hospitals and clinics and doing private medical practice instead of joining the government service with its obligatory field postings<sup>53</sup>.

In a tradition bound society like Bangladesh, where a woman has identity problem and is known by her parents before marriage and by her husband after marriage, parental and spouse's support are critical to women's entry

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<sup>53</sup>Informal discussion with the trainee officers of the health cadre at National Academy for Planning and Development (NAPD),



into the civil service. The respondents mentioned four cases of women civil servants who were forced to resign from jobs as they had to choose one between family and career. They also stated cases of two women doctors who eventually did not take up their posts as their first postings were in remote locations. It is disclosed from the findings that most of the women respondents give priority to their children and family than their career. One of the respondents commented "At first I am a mother and wife, then comes my career". This type of attitude of women, basically, because of gender socialization indirectly hamper the process of quota policy implementation as some women do not take up their first postings because of family dislocation.

Because of the cultural orientation there exists a notion starting from the employer to the common people that women are unsuitable for administrative and challenging jobs. Social prejudices and traditional attitudes created by cultural conditioning as well as norms, values and socialization process has developed closed mindedness in both males and females (Kashem et.al.2002:94). As a result women are not accepted as a police officer by the public in our society and women entry into the police cadre was banned for many years in the civil service.

Culturally as we still consider men's work much more important than women's work, the work-space, and work-patterns are completely male oriented in our country. Proper infrastructural arrangements for women like day care centers, separate rooms, separate restroom facilities, adequate transport facilities and residential accommodation in field posting are absent in government offices as identified in several research works (Jahan,2007:59). The absence of appropriate and supportive work environment makes women uncomfortable to work in the office which might be one of the reason which demotivate women to some extent to join the civil service. In this regard a Joint Secretary of the Finance Ministry said,

“The environment is not fully in favor of women, however they have to face the challenges with courage to make the situation in favor of them.”

The biggest challenge a woman has to face is to fight with the mindset of people in society towards working women. Women civil servants suggest that one of the major problem is the negative attitude towards them from the community, colleagues and the authority. Men do not like to share power with women. They are not mentally oriented to accept women as bosses and colleagues. The male want to see women in the typical ‘female image’ and think women are not competent enough to be in top positions, to take challenges, to make decisions. A similar picture emerged in a policy colloquium<sup>54</sup> organized by North South University where eminent high level female officials of the GOB shared their journey in the civil service. They shared that generalized statements of incapability or unprofessionalism are made on women by referring to few exceptional and rare cases (NSU, 2015:20). Their ability as civil servants is constantly put in questions and they have to put extra effort to prove their competence. If a single woman could not do better it will defame the whole of female population which is not the case for male.

Organizational policy, structure, norms and values also help to shape the behavior and attitudes of people and help to develop a culture within the organization to encourage women at work. Despite women’s entry into the civil service its organizational culture is still largely governed by masculine norms and values. There are discriminatory organizational practices and women do not get the same opportunities as men for career advancement.

It was noted by the respondents that in many cases, female officers receive unequal treatment in case of distribution of responsibilities, posting, training, and promotion and so on. Most of the female respondents remarked that despite having the qualifications and fulfilling the prerequisites, a bare

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<sup>54</sup> North South University organized a Gender Colloquium titled ‘Policy Colloquium: Gender and Development’ on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Dhaka.

minimal number of female officers are promoted to the top level positions. The numerical distribution of the women in the civil service hierarchy corresponds with this view. During interview and discussion, two women officers admitted that due to family obligations they are being unable to meet their promotion requirements. On the contrary, it was also found that most women are extremely committed to and seriously dedicated towards their work. They are keen to advance their career. But it is generally claimed by the women officers that they are not always valued properly when appraising their work and their work is not given proper recognition. As is evident from earlier studies (Zafarullah, 2000: 205), women civil servants expressed concern that their colleagues believed they have been promoted only because of their gender and not for their qualifications or good performance. The tendency to treat women civil servants in a gender biased fashion creates negative impression among women towards civil service jobs which ultimately affect the process of women quota implementation.

However, the findings suggest that despite considerable progress to overcome many barriers impeding women's career aspirations, certain impediments still exist in Bangladesh due to a variety of personal, socio-cultural, political and organizational factors which affect women quota utilization in BCS. Weak institutional characteristics of PSC as an implementing agency is also a critical factor in this regard which indirectly influence women entry in BCS.

### **Existing Constraints of Women's Entry into BCS**

Therefore, based on the perceptions of the civil servants along with the opinions given by the key informants, academicians and researchers, it is clear that quota policy for increasing women participation in the BCS has some problems at the implementation level. Quota policy implementation process is affected by a number of constraints and limitations that influence implementation efforts to achieve policy performance. These are:

## **Complex Operation of the Quota System**

The present quota distribution system in the BCS is very complex and difficult to understand. No candidate can understand the system while applying for the BCS and even a civil servant does not know it very well. As stated by Khan and Ahmad (2007:48), "Bangladesh has one of the most complex quota systems in the world". While interviewing the chair of the PSC admitted that:

"It is very complex, difficult as well as time consuming to implement the existing policy regarding the quota system. It is almost humanly impossible to select eligible candidates hundred percent perfectly due to the complexity of the present quota related regulations."

It has already been noted that the quota system for women is not applied at the national level. Jobs are allocated on the basis of region and distribution of population. The existing rules on district quota discriminate against territorial units with low share of population and the administration of women quota and other quotas within the district quota framework often deprives women benefiting from the policy (Khan, 1995:79).

Instead of facilitating women's recruitment, in many cases such quota has worked as a ceiling when less or equally qualified men got the jobs originally meant for women which were distributed on the basis of regional population density. As there was no female quota for the particular geographical area, the job eventually went to a male candidate (Khan, 1988, cited in Khan, 1995:80). It is more likely that quota discriminates against the women candidates from small districts and divisions. The problem of small vacancies is more pronounced as the quota is distributed on cadre basis rather than the total number of posts in the BCS examination (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:49). This has made the system difficult to administer and has left it open to political and bureaucratic manipulation. In the annual report of PSC (2016) it was mentioned that, "The commission thinks it is indispensable to ease the

existing quota application system to select suitable candidates through BCS examination.”

Women constitutes about 50 percent of the total population and the quota set aside for them is 10 percent. The impact of the quotas is, however, negligible unless the number of vacancies is large. That is, all qualified women in the same district could not avail the opportunity of quota if the number of vacant posts is found to be less than the number of qualified women. Women in many cases are harmed by the complex quota distribution system. The quota for freedom fighters and their wards is disproportionately larger than their share in population (which is less than one percent). As a result most of the reserved posts remain unfilled owing to lack of qualified candidates and these unfilled posts are transferred to general merit quota. Khan and Ahmad highlighted (2007) how the PSC was failing to fill up the reserved quotas for freedom fighters wards owing to the lack of suitable candidates who could not qualify the three stages of the recruitment process. It has harmful effects on women's quota because where the number of vacancies are small, the posts are reserved for the category of larger quota and the smaller women quota are crowded out (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:43).

Moreover, available data suggest that the performance of women in BCS examination is improving and a disproportionately low quota for women (10 percent for 50 percent population) is likely to pose a barrier to entry of qualified women to civil service. A significant number of key respondents think that the system of quota is an additional process of discriminating women from getting their usual share through merit.

### **Inadequate Monitoring of the Quota Policy**

Without proper and timely monitoring, it is not possible to judge the efficacy of any policy. Since the introduction of the quota policy there is no inbuilt mechanism in the recruitment system to monitor that the policy is being

implemented and the policy objective is being met. Although the GOB has shown a strong commitment to gender equality at policy level, there has been a failure to consistently translate the commitment into actions.

On the basis of interviews and informal discussions held with the civil servants it was found that most of them are not exactly sure as to whether the quota system has been followed appropriately or accurately as per rules in the selection of women candidates. Several of them also believe that the quota system has never been implemented in a transparent and responsive way. As reported by Khan and Ahmad (2007:46),

“There are two types of complaints about manipulation of quota: giving a more coveted job to an undeserving candidate on the pretext of quota or recruiting somebody who would not have got a job at all by misinterpreting the quota rules.”

The general people and the BCS examinees never know whether the existing allocation of the quotas for the female candidates is implemented properly or not, as the gazette notifications of the MOPA do not have data regarding quota of the BCS cadre officials (Karim, 2008:10). Neither the MOPA nor the MOWCA could provide correct information on this matter. The MOWCA could monitor the progress of women quota but the annual reports of this ministry however, do not shed much light on the implementation status of the women quota. This may be taken as an indication of government's lack of interest in assessing the efficacy of the quota policy.

In addition, the role of the parliament in monitoring the implementation of quota is very limited. The annual reports of the PSC are hardly discussed or debated in the parliament. The member of parliaments do not at all show any interest in the enforcement of quota and ever bother to ask questions on implementation of quotas and its impact on the civil service and its performance, which do not bring the issues to the attention of the public. The Standing Committees on Establishment for all types of quotas including women, freedom fighters and tribal communities have been balked in

effectively playing their part in enforcing accountability by their overly politically biased approach in evaluating problems (Ahmed,2006; Hasanuzzaman,2007; cited in Zafarullah,2010:102).

The PSC annual reports are brought out regularly but they do not provide adequate information and statistics on implementation of quotas on a systematic and regular basis. In fact no measure has been undertaken so far to evaluate the impact of women quota and as a result women remained insignificantly represented in the civil service.

### **Partisan and Weak Institutional Character of PSC**

PSC is fully responsible for the distribution of different quotas fixed for certain categories of people and various regions. As with all quotas there have been administrative problems relating to equitable treatment. It has been reported that the quota system “benefits some groups at the cost of other groups. As a result, affected groups try to subvert the enforcement of quota rules” (Khan and Ahmad, 2007:20).

It was found that the PSC has always been influenced by ruling party machinations to enable its preferred supporters and activists to enter the civil service (Zafarullah, 2010:99). The political appointments of the PSC chair and members allow the ruling political party to take control over the recruitment procedure which eventually tarnished the image of PSC as a constitutional body (IGS, 2007). It is mentioned earlier that as an autonomous implementing body PSC is not very strong. Majority of the respondents view the PSC as the puppet of the government rather than an independent body dedicated to carry out its functions in an impartial manner.

As discussed earlier there are some loopholes in the quota system. Many positions reserved for women and other categories remain unfilled because of procedural faults. PSC knows the loopholes and the ruling political party takes

its advantages and it is misused in favor of politics and interested groups which might affect proper implementation of women quota.

Allegations of abusing the selection process and corruption have been widespread which have significantly eroded the credibility of BCS examinations. Even test results have been maneuvered by the politicized individuals of the constitutional body to benefit candidates supportive of the ruling party (Zafarullah, 2010:99). PSC has become a highly debatable institution (UNDP, 2007) because of its inability to administer a complex and unwieldy quota system in a transparent manner. It is reported that quota has always been implemented without transparency (TIB, 2007). Quota policy implementation is affected by PSC's partisan and weak institutional character. Though it is not directly linked with gender it indirectly influences the entry of women in BCS as it discourages many bright candidates from joining the civil service.

### **Politicized Recruitment**

Overtly politicized PSC leadership resulted in politicized recruitment. The findings of the study support that the recruitment of the civil servants on the basis of political connection (loyalty to the executive or party in power) is putting barriers to attracting qualified individuals especially women to government services. In a patriarchal society like ours politics is regarded as men's world and male dominate the whole political process. Role of political party is important to increase political empowerment of women. But women face discrimination within the party they belong as the norms, traditions, conventions, and practices of politics are typically masculine in nature.

The major political parties in Bangladesh are not gender sensitive and do not exercise democratic values within their party structures. So the scope is limited for women to participate in politics and there is not very strong networking of women within the internal power structure of the party. The



very nature of politics itself is a barrier to women to participate in it. Thus it is more difficult for women to participate in large numbers or to play an important role in political decision making.

An earlier research conducted by (Jahan and Shahan, 2008) reflects that during 1991-2006 PSC turned into a gateway of party loyalists within the civil service. During this period linkage with the student wing of the ruling party could provide one with a place in the BCS. Leakage of question paper of BCS examination became common and the real beneficiaries of this question leakage practice were the activists of the student wing of the ruling party. As women are not much politically affiliated and lag behind in liaison, *tadbir*, lobbying and networking most of them remained outside the track. A potential finding of the empirical study is that politicized recruitment is undoubtedly one of the core factors that might discourage females from sitting for the BCS examination. This also has the propensity of pushing the good achievers at the tertiary levels toward private jobs, which are more lucrative in financial terms, or creating in them the urge to leave the country for higher education or better employment opportunities (Zafarullah, 2010:106).

PSC needs to act to defend the allegation regarding leak of question papers, corruption in evaluation in viva voce examinations against it, to uphold its image and must act independently to ensure the recruitment of meritorious candidates.

### **Patriarchal Nature of the Social System**

Most of the problems faced by the women in Bangladesh in their endeavor to participate in the civil service are embedded in social and institutional structures of the country dominated by patriarchy. Many of the problems are imposed by the patriarchal society and are based on existing notions about women's role model in the family and the society. Rich defines patriarchy as:

“A familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force , direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law and language, custom etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male” (Rich,1977:57, cited in Kabir, 2013:171).

Patriarchy as a system, an ideology and practice impacts in different ways on the lives of women wherever they are. It constructs the hierarchy of gender relations where men are privileged (Eisenstein, 1984, cited in Bari, 2005:3). Patriarchal values and views see women as subordinate to men.

“The discrimination starts from the birth where boy child is desirable, girl child is not. The upbringing process is also very unequal. From feeding to education, from attire to movement, everything is different and designed to put the girls behind the boys. Girls are groomed to be tender, soft, loving, submissive, home bound and introvert” (Jahan, 2010:46).

The prevalence of social norms severely restricts women’s freedom of movement, limit their access on resources and information and thus keep them in a vulnerable position and affect women’s self- confidence. So they do not show interest in joining the civil service which ultimately affect women quota utilization. Again, as women grew up with some society imposed barriers, while they enter the civil service they enter with that fixed mindset. Attitudes of the bosses, colleagues and environment of the workplace reinforce this mindset and all these make women shaky and less confident. The following comment of a female civil servant depicts the scenario.

“There is a pre conceived notion among all (including women also) that women are more emotional and less professional”.

Most of the academicians and researchers agreed that patriarchy as a system of male domination limits women’s representation in the civil service.

### **Educational Imbalances**

In apatriarchal society where gender division of labor is an accepted norm, women’s access to appropriate educational training is extremely limited. As

reported in chapter five, currently, primary, secondary and higher secondary school enrollment has significantly increased for female students in Bangladesh but gender gaps still continues because of high dropout rates of female students particularly in the rural areas. The situation is worse for women in higher and technical education. Lack of qualified women caused the underutilization of the women quota in the technical cadres as mentioned in the annual reports of the PSC. The empirical findings also reveal that, in some cases women are forced by their husbands or family to choose employment in those cadres that are less challenging and are considered more suitable for women.

There is also a big gap between the educational needs and the actual opportunities available. Statistics provided in chapter six presents the fact, that success of women candidates in different stages of qualifying tests of the recruitment process is poor in comparison to the male candidates. It has also been observed that the female dropout rate in attending the preliminary test and written test is high which might be due to the problems of low mobility of women and expense burdens to the examination centers. On the other hand, at the preliminary test the percentage of successful women candidates are lower than the male candidates as portrayed in different BCS examinations (chapter six). Poor access to the information network are responsible for the lack of general knowledge among women which results in high dropout rate at preliminary test which adversely affect the utilization of women quota (Jahan,2007:61).

### **Culturally Prescribed Roles and Stresses of Work Family Conflict**

In Bangladesh, women's preoccupation with the reproductive roles and cultural expectations restrict their participation in social and economic life. In our tradition bound society marriage and motherhood are regarded as important aspects of women's lives and often take priority over their career

demands. One of the major factors that hinders women's entering into job and continuing it is the role conflict that is created by a woman's two equally demanding and important roles-----her role as a mother/housewife and as a professional. If a woman involved in service she needs the help of other family members to manage her family responsibilities. Most of the respondents of the study stated with great regret that usually a woman has to perform the dual role as housewife and civil servant without the required support system.

Motherhood and child care is the most problematic aspect of female civil servants. Though parenting depends on both the father and mother, due to our social norm and cultural expectation women have to take the full burden of the children and the family. In this respect a female civil servant made an interesting comment:

“While a married working woman is constantly made conscious of the neglect of her prime responsibilities as a wife and mother, an unmarried working woman is criticized for her unacceptable marital status”.

Society at large perceive women's role as mothers and still holds the view that if women assume outside responsibilities children's interests are neglected. In this connection a male respondent mentioned,

“I do not believe that every women should go outside for job because women's first and primary responsibility is to maintain a happy family. Women only can enter into a job if the situation permits her to do that job. If every woman opts for job neglecting her family responsibilities on the basis of the idea that men and women are equal, then it will create a negative impact on the family and ultimately on the nation.”

Actually women's work in our society is accepted as long as the comforts of the family are not hampered and safety of women is not questioned. While there is probability of any deviation from the patriarchal cultural norms, traditional mindset comes out (Jahan,2010:50).Especially when a female civil servant is posted to a distant place she is not expected to go that place rather the family is more likely to move to follow the husband's posting place. It is the

wife who make sacrifices even of her career for the sake of her spouse's career. Such cultural expectations discouragewomen to take civil service as a career as frequent transfer is the very nature of a civil service job. Sometimes they have to compromise with their career or quit from the jobs to fulfill their motherhood role. The empirical study findings reflect that majority of the females give priority to their family than their career because of gender socialization. Therefore it is quite understandable that women may willingly forgo career opportunities as civil servants if it requires relocation or time away from family.

### **Transferable Nature of Job and Field Posting**

The empirical data reveals that the major barrier for women entering the civil service is the separation of women from their families due to field posting in remote areas and the transferable nature of the civil service jobs. According to the service rules just after joining in the service, officers of some cadres like agriculture, administration and health are posted in the field level for at least two years and even after two years it is very difficult to get posting in the place where the family members of an officer live. Again, if both the husband and wife are civil servants, it is not always possible to be posted them in the same workstation or near each other as per rule due to non-availability of the required post. Apprehension of getting posted in remote areas and frequent transfers in government service make women less interested to pursue a career in civil service (Jahan, 2007:58). Posting to remote locations and different places of posting of the working spouses were mentioned as the greatest barrier to women's joining and continuing in the civil service by the female as well as male civil servants. It was found that several women had to quit job because either they were not allowed or were not interested to live outside the family. Culture press women to be family oriented,not career oriented.

## **Gender Unfriendly Work Environment**

A sufficiently attractive organizational environment to entice the women candidates is absent in BCS. Inadequate provision of some basic physical facilities in the workplace such as separate room to work, separate rest rooms, day care center, canteen, transport, accommodation create less interest among women to join the government sector. This is also related to the lack of security<sup>55</sup> of those who are posted in the remote areas. As long as the governments are not willing to accommodate the critical needs of women, the position of women will not improve within the civil service.

Again the human environment<sup>56</sup> also is not women friendly. The male officers still uphold the traditional bias against women and expect that they would always be docile and dependent on their male colleagues. Men considers themselves to be superior to women in all aspects of work as they are usually more connected with the authority. Women are portrayed as weak, passive, feminine, compliant and less capable. Regarding the relationships with male colleagues, bosses and subordinates the women civil servants are satisfied to some extent but they think that they are not treated equally. They mentioned that sometimes their professional achievements are interpreted in different ways. The male officers are often found to have told the females that "You will get promotion and better posting as you are a woman".

Stereotyped mindset, negative and reluctant attitudes of males make women frustrated and some women do not want to continue their jobs. In this regard a Joint Secretary of Finance Ministry said,

"The environment is not fully in favor of women, however, they have to face the challenges with courage to make the situation in favor of them."

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<sup>55</sup>Lack of security refers to the protection of women's privacy as well as protecting abuse and harassment (Kashem et.al. 2002: 92, cited in Jahan, 2007: 60).

<sup>56</sup>Human environment focuses on the attitudes and behavior of the colleagues and bosses with the women officers.

Unless the women officers find a healthy and supportive environment in the workplace, it will be difficult for them to make the expected contribution and to pursue their career in the civil service.

### **Institutional Bias against Women**

Bureaucracy in Bangladesh is gender biased in terms of demography. In fact women are controlled by a legacy of socio-economic inequality in Bangladesh which are reinforced by an overwhelmingly male dominated administrative structure. Occupational segregation on the basis of sex is deep rooted in the bureaucratic structure of Bangladesh. Certain cadres in the BCS like Police, Foreign Service, Administration, and so on have traditionally been regarded as suitable only to male because of the perceived masculine nature of functions of these cadres. The members of these prestigious cadres have bright career prospect and have greater chances of reaching to the top positions in the civil service hierarchy. The empirical findings of the study reveal that, in some cases women are forced by their husbands or family to choose employment in those cadres that are less challenging and are considered more suitable for women. Thus gender discrimination takes place at the entry point which restricts women from joining the more prestigious cadres whose members have bright career prospect and have greater chances of reaching to the top positions in the civil service hierarchy. Consequently women have no representation in the important bodies where decision on personnel policy, like recruitments and promotions are taken.

Women are not only less in number in BCS, but also are less empowered as a result of being absent from positions of authority and power. A Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Industries commented that:

“As there is no equal number of women intakes as men, the gender gap or imbalance in the highest policy level position would not be narrowed down readily.”

There should be appropriate and adequate representation of women at the policy level positions to address the gender imbalance in BCS. Women's low representation at the top hierarchical levels has itself critical implications for women in the civil service. The fact that there are few women in decision making bodies means that these women have to work within styles and modes acceptable to men. Women's token presence makes it difficult to evolve a women friendly culture in the civil service.

As a result women have very limited scope or no scope at all to take part in policy formulation and influence decisions. They cannot give due attention to the necessity of integrating women issues and concerns in the planning and development process. A woman can better realize the problems of women to some extent and thus the male biased environment within civil service might obstructed to increase the women intake in the service. As Kabir observed (2013:212), once women obtain a critical mass of at least 25 percent of top administrative jobs and are not required to behave like tokens, the overall mix of administrative style will change. Recruitment and promotion of women then will become easier which in turn will play effective role in attracting more women to be employed in the civil service.

### **Discriminatory Organizational Practices**

There are discriminatory organizational practices in the civil service that affect women's career aspiration and career advancement. In comparison to men, women are often not recognized or appreciated for their contributions or capabilities and are perceived as persons with lower caliber. So always they have to prove their competence. Non cooperative and negative attitudes of men, and systematic constraints in career building and advancement have critical implications for women's morale, motivation and performance. Thus, it



is evident that women in BCS have to break both the 'brick wall'<sup>57</sup> and the 'glass ceiling'<sup>58</sup> to enter, work, survive and advance their career because of subjective discrimination at the workplace which is not an easy task in a male dominated civil service system (Mahtab, 2014:32).

It is found from the investigation that women have had to face negative attitudes from their bosses and are discriminated against promotion, posting, training and so on. In fact, these are not practiced according to the equality policy of the organization. Most of the women civil servants believe that there are some gaps between the policy and its practical implementation and a 'glass ceiling' still limits their career advancement. Women are not less qualified than men but are blocked by discriminatory selection, assessment and opportunities that favor men rather than women and this discrimination takes place in a covert form which cannot be easily detected. Objective and unbiased human resource policies and practices are vital in attracting, developing and retaining women civil servants. Quotas meant for women are often erratically administered by a hierarchical structure dominated by men whose perceptions and attitudes influence the development of personnel policies with a clear male bias (Zafarullah, 2010:100).

All of these variables contribute to create a lack of interest among women to choose civil service as a career and women's marginalized position in BCS could be seen as stemming from a complex interplay of factors-----historical, personal and attitudinal, socio-cultural, organizational, administrative and political (Jahan,2007:57).

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>57</sup> The brick wall consists of an obstruction or immovable block that prevents women from entering a career.

<sup>58</sup> The glass ceiling consists more or less of artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational biases that prevent qualified women's movement upward (Burton, 1997: 34).

While identifying the obstacles of women's entry into the BCS it was found that there are numerous constraints and limitations which have impeded the proper and effective implementation of women quota and establishment of a gender representative bureaucracy. Only one factor is not responsible for creating the 'implementation gap' between government policy and practices rather a number of variables collectively affect the implementation process which create the 'gap.' Some of the factors are not unique to Bangladesh but may have acquired specific attributes within the context of Bangladesh. These factors interact and reinforce each other at various levels as they work against women's entry and advancement in BCS. (Kabir and Jahan,2007:10).

## **Chapter Nine**

### **General Observations and Conclusion**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the main findings of the study corresponding to the research questions and attempts to answer the objectives of the research. The study was basically conducted to examine two major issues, first to assess the implementation status of quota (women) policy for achieving gender equality in BCS and second, to analyze the problems behind underutilization of quota set aside for women. This chapter also links the findings with the hypothesis and highlights some of the recommendations made by the respondents to increase women intake in the civil service of Bangladesh and finally makes the concluding remarks.

#### **Observations in the Light of Empirical Findings**

Keeping in view the study issues, the analysis and discussion of primary and secondary data led to the following conclusions in response to the research questions and objectives.

Since independence, emphasis has been given on ensuring gender equality and mainstreaming gender issues through various policies and strategies to ensure employment of women in various professions in Bangladesh. It was found that although the constitution declares equal opportunity for men and women in every sphere and there are reserved positions for women in the civil service, representation of women in the service has not reached the expected level. Women representation in BCS is in increasing trend in recent years but it is not increasing in proportion to women's ratio in the population make-up and in proportion to women's overall numbers in education and work. Women's representation in the higher level positions is far low and discouraging. Women are not only less in number but also are less empowered as a result of being absent from positions of authority and power. The study noted that in the 1970s there were no female applicants for many cadres and the number of women who qualified in BCS was less than the quota entitlement. It was also observed that, over the years government could not fill the posts which were reserved for women except a few BCS examinations and there were significant variations in the percentage of quota filled from one year to another. The utilization of women quota in general cadres in recent times have been good and is now being met. But there are lesser utilization of quota in the professional and technical cadres. Lack of qualified women caused the underutilization of women quota in these cadres. On the other hand, the drop-out rate of female candidates at preliminary and written tests of BCS examination is higher than that of male which adversely affected utilization of women quota in general. Another problem for women quota utilization is that, ten percent women quota within district quota framework is ineffectual unless vacancies are unusually large. All qualified women in the same district could not avail the quota opportunity if the number of vacant posts are found to be less than the number of qualified women. The impact of quota is, however, negligible as very few new posts are available. Furthermore, the performance of women in the competitive

examination has improved significantly and a disproportionately low quota of ten percent for 50 percent of women is now considered as a hindrance to the entry of qualified women in the civil service. The complex distribution system of quota matters for increasing women representation. Thus women have gained little through the quota policy.

Women quota is socially desirable and constitutionally justified but it could not play a useful role because it is wrongly designed and improperly implemented. The study got a mixed impact and perception regarding quota for women. Majority of the participants supported women quota, and 15 percent women (survey respondents) affirmed that the quota policy has contributed to their career choice. However, surprisingly a significant percentage of the participants including women were not found to support it. They strongly rejected women quota as a policy measure to make the civil service gender representative on the grounds that quota compromises the principle of merit and undermines the ability of women. Majority of the women civil servants believe that the quota policy has never been followed appropriately as per rules in the selection of women candidates.

Women quota appeared controversial but no doubt it is bearing some fruits as a strategy to ensure women's representation and the statistics given in the study claimed that more women are now getting into the civil service. However, it cannot be attributed solely to the quota as women are also doing well in the BCS examinations and enhancing their share through merit.

In Bangladesh, two main recruiting agencies of the civil servants are MOPA and PSC. The MOPA is responsible for personnel policies of the government. Rules, regulations and instructions concerning recruitment emanate from the MOPA. All the appointments to class I posts are made on the recommendations of the PSC. It is solely responsible for conducting open

competitive examination for the selection of the candidates for the cadre services and the enforcement of different types of quotas.

A variety of factors interact in the process of quota policy implementation. Personal, attitudinal, socio cultural, political, structural, organizational and administrative variables contribute altogether for the slow progress of women representation and underutilization of women quota in the civil service. Equal employment opportunity is very much part of a larger political, economic and social framework. The cultural norms regarding the role of women have such a strong hold on people's attitude towards women that the government's initiative to promote gender equity have a limited effect. The country's socio-cultural, economic and political conditions have a significant influence on policy implementation over which the policy makers or the policy implementers have very little or no control. These contextual variables have a profound effect on the performance of the implementing agencies and women quota in increasing the number of women in the civil service can only be effective if they are assessed in context.

In Bangladesh the life of women is dominated by a patriarchal social system which upholds a rigid division of labor that controls women's mobility, roles and responsibility. Women lag behind men on all the indicators of gender development (education, health and nutrition, employment and political power). The constitutional and legal mechanisms have been ineffectual in providing social justice to women. The majority of women are socially oppressed and have a lower status as compared to men in the patriarchal social structure which have resulted in discrimination in education and employment.

Women's access to employment is considerably affected by gender and cultural stereotypes that exist in the society. A variety of personal factors like marriage, family support, children, education, and perceived conflict between

home and work seriously affect women's career choice. Women's career is generally considered as secondary to their family role. Such norms operate as both a restriction on a woman's mobility and an impediment to her participation in the public sphere. If women bear greater familial and childcare responsibility, whether by choice or necessity, then, this definitely will act as barrier in entering and continuing in the civil service.

The study found that women who have entered into the civil service have joined the service by dint of their personal efforts and through support and guidance of their family members despite all the social and cultural restrictions. Most of those women had an urban upbringing and acquired better education. Those women also supersede their male counterparts in terms of their parents' education and spouses' career. Thus women who belonged to the elite family and whose parents or husbands were already in civil service were able to be selected in the BCS. Therefore, it can be said that women quota is being enjoyed by the socio economically privileged class of women and people of poorer background irrespective of their gender are deprived. Morally it is wrong to give preference to the 'creamy layer'<sup>59</sup> of the backward classes.

In accordance with the respondents perception there have been a number of factors that have either supported or obstructed the paths of women to take up the civil service career. The respondents perceived educational attainment, right attitude, self- confidence, motivation, family influence and position, socio-economic background, luck and to some extent quota policy of the government as facilitators to bring women to the civil service. On the other hand, complex operation and inadequate monitoring of the quota policy, partisan character of PSC, politicization of bureaucracy, patriarchal nature of

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<sup>59</sup>A person may belong to a socially backward section but financially he/she may be more affluent than those who are not backward. In India this is known as the 'creamy layer' issue and the Indian Supreme Court held that 'creamy layer' of backward classes are not eligible for benefits of reservation denying the claims of a poor person from a non-backward section of citizens (Khan and Ahmad,2007:13).

the social system, educational imbalances, familial and social restrictions, stresses of work family conflict, characteristics of civil service job, gender unfriendly work environment, institutional bias against women and discriminatory organizational practices have been identified as barriers to their career in the civil service. However, field posting and transfer system of the civil service job received the highest response as a barrier for women to join the service, from both male and female participants.

The analysis and discussion of the findings in response to the research questions have led the study towards its basic objectives which was to assess women quota utilization and analyze the causes of the underutilization of such quotas.

According to the hypothesis assumed in this study, due to ineffective policy implementation government has not been able to make full utilization of women quota and address the problem of low participation of women in the civil service. The dependent variables of this study are underutilization of women quota and low representation of women in BCS which is believed to be created by ineffective policy implementation (intervening variable) which in turn is believed to be dependent upon certain factors such as policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, and political and social configuration of a society.

## **Quota Utilization and Independent Variables of this Study**

### **Policy Characteristics affecting Women Quota Implementation**

Effective implementation of a policy depends on clear-cut directions of policy objectives. The findings of the study reveals that there are no ambiguities in government policies relating to increase women representation in the civil service and all the policy decisions of the GOB support the quota policy in clear terms to ensure equitable female participation. Article 28 and 29 of the constitution also justified the quota for women.

Again, the study finds that the objectives of the policy also are in line with the social status of women in Bangladesh and a glaring discrimination against women is evident in all the indicators of gender development as reported in chapter five. Factors like education, training, motivation, self-confidence, supportive family, right socio-economic background etc. influence the recruitment process. Some cultural or gender/personal barriers prevent women from utilizing the existing facilities. However, as equal treatment for men and women is absent in the society, and the societal roles are different for these two groups of people women quota has a moral, logical and practical basis to prepare a level field for women. Therefore, it can be said that the policy objective of women quota is clear, well defined and socially desirable. But the complicated distribution method of quota within district quota framework often works against women's interest which has been discussed in the previous chapter.

On the other hand the study suggests that the implementation of quota is fairly lax. Such flexibility creates scope for manipulation. There is no specific agency with sufficient authority to oversee the enforcement of quota. Complex operation, poor monitoring and evaluation of the quota system further opens up the process of political maneuverings with which women cannot cope. It creates distrust in women's minds that they are being deprived of their right share.

### **Implementing Agency's Characteristics and Women Quota Implementation**

The institutional context in which a policy is operated is a major determinant of its success. Institutional features of the implementing agency facilitate or hamper smooth implementation. The institutional arrangements for implementing the quota policy seriously suffers from the partisan character of the implementing agency.



According to the findings of the study, the political appointments of the PSC chair and members allow the ruling political party to take control over the recruitment procedure and to enable its preferred supporters and activists to enter the civil service. Due to political bias some are advantaged and some are disadvantaged and obviously women are the most disadvantaged group in this respect as they are less integrated within powerful political networks. The evidence provided by the research shows that as an implementing agency, over the years PSC has been unable to be objective in discharging its duties and responsibilities. As an autonomous body, PSC has a weak institutional character because of unconditional loyalty to its political masters. As a result it cannot take firm decisions properly going against the political masters which ultimately influence the entry of women in the civil service indirectly.

Although the main responsibility to carry out the quota enforcement lies with the PSC, for successful implementation it needs inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination which is grossly absent. There is a communication gap between PSC and the ministries and departments in respect to framing rules for recruitment and processing the vacancies of direct appointments. Each ministry seeks to enforce the distribution of quotas in its own convenient way which has implications for the proper implementation of quotas.

### **Political Conditions Affecting Women Quota Implementation**

The political system of the country has a direct influence over the implementation of the quota policy. Majority of the respondents considered 'recruitment system is not fair because of political influence'. It is widely believed that politicization has gripped the civil service and the issue of representation in civil service has taken on an explicit political dimension. Candidates aligned to the ruling party get chances to enter the civil service to establish a partisan control over the service. As mentioned earlier overtly politicized PSC leadership resulted in political recruitment.

The study noted that perception of political influence turned out to be a major factor shaping the disapproving view of the civil service among the civil servants in general and women civil servants in particular. Women have less attraction towards the service primarily due to this factor. They opined that the bureaucracy is highly politicized and not only recruitment but promotion, transfer, deputation, posting etc. also are managed by political connections or lobbying. Naturally women tend to keep themselves away from bureaucratic politics. Politicization creates negative impression among the women about the civil service as they think that they will not be able to cope with this situation on an equal footing with men and thus they become reluctant to choose the civil service as a career.

### **Social Conditions Affecting Women Quota Implementation**

Socio-cultural factors is one of the key determinants of successful policy implementation. Social configuration of a society, its culture, tradition, level of education influence the policy process. The study suggests that women's social status and their culturally prescribed roles significantly influence women quota implementation.

Bangladesh is a developing country with predominant rural settings. Identically it is a country along with colonial and traditional heritage. Traditional norms and values predominantly govern its overall social and cultural life. Patriarchal nature of the social system and traditional culture of Bangladesh ascribe an inferior position to women in comparison to men in the society. Traditional socio-cultural practices circumscribe women's opportunities in education, skill development, employment, and participation in the overall development process. Illiterate as well as ignorant guardians in the rural areas are not willing to send their girl child to educational institutions. Some guardians consider that girls do not need higher education. Women become victims of social and religious legislation, family restriction,

early marriage and their higher study have been stopped in many cases in rural Bangladesh. Cultural barriers restrict women to work or interact with outside agencies which makes their knowledge confined and they lag behind as competent candidate. As a result whatever little representation women have in BCS or higher education come from the urban areas despite the fact that urban population is less than rural population.

The reason behind the low level of selection of women in the BCS examination is that in spite of being meritorious they could not perform well in the competitive examination due to familial responsibilities and social limitations. The outstanding result of women in Secondary and Higher Secondary School Certificate Examinations might be due to the reasons that they do not get married or involved in other familial responsibilities seriously at that time. But after that most of the women get married and discontinue their higher studies and consequently they do not get the chance to appear in the BCS examination. Those who complete their higher studies are expected to pass through the stage of childbearing and caring of younger children where domestic responsibilities are more than before or after. They do not get enough time to prepare for the examination and mentally become less confident and consequently they do not sit for the examination or cannot come out successful. Whatever the reason, it adversely affects the utilization of women quota. Another finding of the study is that lack of qualified women caused the underutilization of women's quota especially in the technical cadres which indicates that women are not interested in science and technical education and do not opt for these services.

### **Other Factors Affecting Women Quota Implementation**

The findings of the study specifies that there are other factors which have significant effect on women quota implementation. According to the findings, in the pursuit of their career in the civil service, women have not

compromised their traditional roles of wife and mother, rather they are equally committed to both career and family. Therefore, one of the most important problem preventing females from entering and continuing jobs in the civil service is separation from family due to the very nature of civil service jobs like field posting and frequent transfer. Many eligible women are not interested to join in BCS as field level posting is not attractive to them. This indicates that women's interpersonal relationship with children, husband and family influence their career choice which affect women quota utilization. Besides, work family conflict, gender unfriendly work environment, organizational barriers (institutional bias against women, and discriminatory organizational practices) and attitudinal problems of the women civil servants themselves and their male colleagues and bosses act as barriers to women's entry into the civil service. Women face an additional barrier to entry from the lack of enough female role models in the top level of the civil service hierarchy demonstrating that it is a place where women can be successful.

The foregoing analysis and discussion indicate that all of the proposed independent variables were important for effective policy implementation. The objective of quota policy was clear and relevant but it was wrongly designed which negatively affected implementation performance. Out of the selected four independent variables two (implementing agency's characteristics and social condition) had direct impact on quota policy implementation. The other independent variable namely, political condition did not have direct impact on women quota utilization but instead had indirect influential effects on implementation. The findings also indicate that women quota implementation does not depend only on these four independent variables. Many variables influence the nature and extent of women quota utilization. There are some other factors/ variables for example, the nature of civil service job, women unfriendly work environment, attitudinal, organizational and procedural constraints which hinder full

utilization of women quota and prohibit women to enter in a civil service job. These factors were not included in the analytical framework of this study.

## **Conclusion**

The study draws four broad conclusions.

First, the quota policy introduced to increase the presence of women in BCS has achieved some success as there has been a persistent growth of women representation in the civil service at the entry level. However, this increase cannot be attributed solely to the quota as women are enhancing their share through merit. Women quota has not been proved the most successful in guaranteeing an increase in female representation to a particular target level.

Second, the prevailing quota system is very complex and hard to understand and even difficult to implement for PSC. Quota implementation process is ineffective because of the existence of certain problems in the process of implementation which creates the implementation gap between policy and practice. For this the government could not fully utilize the quota for women which might cause low representation of women in the civil service. It is clear that better implementation of quota is still needed.

Third, political and socio-cultural challenges continue to be barriers in the further progress of gender streaming in BCS. Low gender development and masculine culture affect both the supply and demand side of women employment. Women's token presence makes it difficult to create a women friendly culture in the civil service which has negative repercussions for women's employment on the demand side. Again, women's limited access to higher education, training, and employment opportunities adversely affect the supply side. While all women's career opportunities are constrained by social

conditioning, women do not by any means constitute an undifferentiated social category. In a highly stratified society like Bangladesh the intersection of gender relations with those of class means that the range of possibilities available to women varies considerably across the social order. Women quota had very little effect in redistributing jobs to backward women from the more privileged.

Fourth, quota implementation does not depend only on policy characteristics, implementing agency's characteristics, political and social condition of a society. There are some other variables which have significant relationship with quota utilization and those variables have not addressed in this study.

Thus it can be concluded that the hypothesis of this research has been proved correct depending on the variables chosen for the study. The findings fit with the analytical framework of the study which suggests the acceptance of the hypothesis. However, there are some other variables which were not taken into consideration for this study. While taken into consideration these variables would have had a different outcome.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the empirical findings the study put forward the following recommendations.

The quota system in Bangladesh is supply driven not demand driven. Instead of giving women adequate power and authority, only focusing on the supply side of women in the name of their representation will not help in the long run. The purpose of quotas should be 'authoritative representation' rather than 'token representation'. A policy shift towards increasing the proportion of women in civil service by quota reservation may not be effective if implemented in a male dominated culture. Several respondents suggested that enforcement of women quota at the lateral entry level through

promotion or recruitment of competent and qualified women into the top levels of the administrative hierarchy might improve the situation. Efforts should be made to ensure representation of women in all levels of civil service according to their ratio in population make-up. The ratio of women's presence at all levels of administration in all ministries should be set to a minimum.

To get the full benefit of the quota system the procedure of distribution of jobs and selection of candidates should be entirely reformulated. All quotas except district quotas should be filled on national basis and quota within quota should be abolished. Group specific quota must be distributed nationally allowing a fair competition within the group. Eventually, it will help to fill up the women quota. In its Annual Report for 2015, the PSC suggested that no post will remain vacant under the quota system, if candidates of the preferred groups who enjoy reservations are selected from the very beginning of the examination process.

The socially and economically marginalized women could not be selected from BCS examination instead in their names the elite group of women got the opportunity of joining in the civil service of Bangladesh through the quota system. Unless a significant breakthrough can be made in the areas of higher education of females no effort to increase the representation of women in the civil service will succeed.

Government should establish more educational institutions for higher studies of the female students in the rural areas and arrange special coaching and training with a view to ensure their future employment. Women have to be groomed up from the very beginning. Capacity development programs are needed to increase their competitiveness for civil service jobs. A study should be undertaken in line with the persistent problem to identify the reasons about the small percentage of females enrolling in technical and science education.

Successive government have failed to follow any uniform rules in appointing the members and chair of PSC. Due to the absence of prescribed qualification and mode of selection of its members and chair, PSC sometimes loses its impartiality and independence. The PSC can work independently if it desires and for this the members and chair of the commission must be persons of high integrity, strong moral courage, personality and commitment. If PSC is not vulnerable to political pressure then it can discharge its duties impartially and effectively.

Attention should be given to the gender balance of recruitment panels. At least one third members of PSC should be appointed from competent and qualified women. The PSC chair and members who are especially responsible for the proper implementation of the policy need to be positive in their attitude to women. The nomination of women members to BCS viva boards should be increased.

Institutional support to improve gender balance should focus on the areas of improving availability and quality of sex -disaggregated data to enable the tracking of gender balance at various levels and cadres of the civil service. The PSC and the MOPA do not mention in their merit lists and gazette notifications how many candidates are selected under the quota. Non publication of data on the specific quota of the recommended cadres makes the process of quota implementation non-transparent and create opportunities for irregularities. To determine the impact of quota on female employment the most important fact one needs to know is the ratio of female candidates employed on merit and quota. This breakup is not available from the ministries. The MOPA and MOWCA should take initiative in this regard and prepare a sex-disaggregated database to enable the tracking of gender balance at various levels and work streams in BCS.



The research section of PSC has not yet conducted any research on the trend of therepresentation of the population in terms of religion, ethnicity and sex of the recommended BCS posts. A full-fledged chapter should be incorporated on the utilization of women's quota in the annual reports of PSC.

Women will always face patriarchal obstacles as the tradition of patriarchal society runs deep in Bangladesh. Women themselves should try to overcome these obstacles and they need to change their stereotypical thinking that women's career is secondary to their family role. In this regard the existing mindset of the people needs to be changed. It is essential that the family, society and government should accept and support both professional and familial roles of women and extend their cooperation. Attitude of women pertaining to family life also needs to be changed.

Gender sensitive career management programs throughout the service should be maintained. Effective measures should be taken to ensure sensible posting and transfer of female civil servants considering their familial responsibilities. At the entry level the maximum age for women could be increased from 30 to 32 to take into account women's family and childbearing responsibilities. The existing women quota policy should be continued for next ten years and after that it should be gradually abolished.

Reforming the workplace culture is equally important and certainly no less urgent. Ensuring gender supportive workplace should get priority to increase women intake in BCS. If women's particular needs such as day care centers, transport, separate restroom facilities, flexible hours and accommodation in the field are not addressed by the government the problem of gender inequality would continue to exist in spite of the policy of hiring more women. Necessary initiatives for creating a congenial work environment for women, will in fact lead to improve women's representation in BCS and greater utilization of women quota.

The issue of politicization of the civil service should have to be addressed as women are lagging behind and unable to compete in the politicized bureaucracy.

Successful cases of women professionals and role models should be highlighted to encourage more women to join the civil service. The visibility of women in top policy level posts would encourage women to continue with their education and to consider BCS as future career option.

For an even gender development in the entire country in general and in the civil service in particular, government has to make a concerted effort to widen human development and economic opportunities in order to reach women in all areas and regions. For that to be happen, basic changes need to be ushered in many areas including education, training, mindset of the society, organizational culture in BCS and weak policy oversight.

## **Implication for Further Research**

This study yields a broad based analysis of women quota utilization in BCS which may be used as a take off point for more focused, comparative and longitudinal studies as there has been very limited research on this subject. The study only focused on women quota in the context of Bangladesh and did not compare it with other countries which also have gender quotas. Thus future researchers can concentrate to a comparative study on this issue. Especially they can focus on a comparative analysis on the impact of women quota in civil services among different South Asian countries. By identifying the factors that affect women quota implementation in other countries and comparing those to the factors found in this study an additional insight can be drawn as to why women have a lower representation in the civil service in this region. Thus this study leaves scope and prospect for future researchers to conduct further study in this relatively unraveled parlance of research.

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## **Appendix**

### **Survey Questionnaire**

#### **Gender Streaming in Bangladesh Civil Service: A Critical Study of Women Quota Utilization**

This survey is part of a research study which attempts to examine the factors influencing the implementation status of government policies to ensure women's participation and gender equality in the civil service of Bangladesh.

You are one of a sample civil servants being requested to participate in this survey. It is assured that all information obtained through this survey will be kept strictly confidential. No information about your individual response will be reported anywhere. All data will be reported in a summary form and be used for this particular study only. Your response is critical to the success of this effort.

**Please read the following instructions before you begin.**

- To ensure confidentiality, please do not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire.
- Answer each question and complete the questionnaire by not later than November 15, 2015.
- If you have question, please contact at; Tel 01727288334, email: [jahanmomtaz@gmail.com](mailto:jahanmomtaz@gmail.com)

## Personal Data

The following questions relate to your background. Please tick box or write the most appropriate response.

1. Sex:

a) Male

b) Female

2. Age (Years):

3. Marital Status

a) Married

b) Unmarried

c) Others

4. Educational Qualifications:

Degree	Name of Institute	Location of Institute		Year
		Urban	Rural	
SSC				
HSC				
Graduate/Graduate (Hons)				
Masters				
M. Phil				
PhD				

5. Information about the Respondent's Family

Name of the Family Members	Highest level of Formal education	Major occupation	Name of Organization (if service holder)
Father			
Mother			
Spouse			
Children			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

## 6. Living Situation:

- a) Living alone
- b) Living with spouse and children
- c) Sole adult with dependent(s)
- d) Living with other adult dependent (s)
- e) Other

## 7. Place of residence in life's first 20 years

- a) Village
- b) Upazila
- c) District Town
- d) Metropolitan City
- e) Capital City

## 8. How do you describe the social class of your family?

- a) Upper
- b) Upper – Middle
- c) Middle
- d) Lower – Middle
- e) Lower

**Current Civil Service Status**

## 9. Present Post

- a) Title \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Salary Grade \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Number of Year in this position \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Name of Cadre \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Nature of Appointment to the present Post:

Direct recruitment Promotion

Other: (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. First appointment in the civil service

a) Title \_\_\_\_\_

b) Salary Grade \_\_\_\_\_

c) Year of Joining \_\_\_\_\_

d) Nature of Appointment \_\_\_\_\_

11. Motivation in joining the civil Service (Using the scale below, tick the number which indicates the extent of your motivation to choose civil service as a career).

Motivators	5	4	3	2	1
a) Salary					
b) Benefits					
c) Job Security					
d) Power/Influence					
e) Social status					
f) Public Service					
g) Other					

Note: 5 = Exceptionally High, 4 = Very High, 3 = High, 2 = Average, 1 = Not at all

12. Put a tick beside the factors you feel have contributed to your career choice.

a) Education

- b) Attitude, self-confidence, Motivation
- c) Family Influence/ position
- d) Family Support
- e) Political Connection
- f) Luck
- g) Governmental Policies (Quota)
- h) Other (Specify).

13. Were there any barriers you had to overcome at the time of joining in the civil service?

Yes  No

14. If 'Yes', please specify:

15. What kind of problems you have faced or are facing at work after joining the service?

16. Being a female how much comfortable you are with your job in comparison with your male colleague? (only for female respondents)

- A) Highly comfortable
- B) Moderately comfortable
- C) Less comfortable
- D) Not comfortable at all



17. Tick the problems that you are facing at home.

1. To bring up children.
2. Excessive pressure of household activities
3. Lack of cooperation from husband/wife.
4. Non-cooperative attitudes of other family members.
5. Different places of posting of working spouse.

18. Have you ever thought of quitting civil service? If 'Yes' please specify the reason.

19. What are the main causes of not fulfilling the women quota at various BCS examinations?

- a) Lack of suitable/qualified women candidates.
- b) Women are not motivated to pursue career in civil service.
- c) Quota is not distributed in a proper and transparent way.
- d) Others (Specify)

### **Perception about Women Quota Policy Implementation**

20. Using the scale below, circle/tick the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- |                      |          |          |       |                   |
|----------------------|----------|----------|-------|-------------------|
| 1                    | 2        | 3        | 4     | 5                 |
| Strongly<br>Disagree | Disagree | Not Sure | Agree | Strongly<br>Agree |

Statements	Scale				
a) In general reservation/quota policy (exclusively for women) in case of BCS recruitment is clear and relevant to social conditions and problems of women in Bangladesh.	1	2	3	4	5
b) PSC chairmen and members have full understanding of quota policy objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
c) Ministries/divisions/departments of Bangladesh Government have full understanding of quota policy objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
d) Quota practices are in line with the socially disadvantaged position of women in Bangladesh.	1	2	3	4	5
e) The chairmen and members of PSC are capable and willing to carry out the implementing activities.	1	2	3	4	5
f) They have a positive attitude towards women employment.	1	2	3	4	5
g) They are gender sensitive and do not discriminate women in the selection process because of their gender.	1	2	3	4	5
h) PSC can work as an independent implementing authority, free from all executive influence.	1	2	3	4	5
i) Governments do not pay due attention to the recommendations of PSC.	1	2	3	4	5
o) Political pressure obstructs the proper implementation of the quota policy.	1	2	3	4	5
j) PSC is a politically backed weak institution which cannot implement decisions properly.	1	2	3	4	5

k) Masculine culture affects women's career aspiration and career choice.	1	2	3	4	5
l) Social norms and values limit the scope for women to pursue civil service careers even after having obtained the necessary qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5
m) People prefer a male officer than a female officer.	1	2	3	4	5

### Opinion about Women Quota

Statements	Scale				
a) Employees in the BCS should reflect the gender make-up of the population	5	4	3	2	1
b) Affirmative action is necessary to facilitate women candidates in pursuing career in the civil service.	5	4	3	2	1
c) The percentage of women quota should be increased.	5	4	3	2	1
d) At present women quota is not needed because women are entering the civil service by merit	5	4	3	2	1
e) Females with equal abilities should get preference over male employees in the departments where they are underrepresented.	5	4	3	2	1
f) Existing quota system cannot empower actually the real backward women.	5	4	3	2	1
g) Both male and female are equally capable in contributing to civil service's overall goal.	5	4	3	2	1
h) Women are not ambitious enough	5	4	3	2	1

to their careers in civil service.

l) Female civil servants need to put extra efforts to perform better rather than her counterpart.

5      4      3      2      1

**Thanking you for taking time to complete the Questionnaire.**