

# **Professional Hazards of Female Members in Bangladesh Civil Service: Dimensions and Remedies**

**Department of Public Administration**

**University of Dhaka**

**Professional Hazards of Female Members in Bangladesh Civil Service:  
Dimensions and Remedies**

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### **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is an original work of research which I conducted in pursuit of my PhD degree at the University of Dhaka. I am the sole author of this thesis and it does not conflict with anyone's copyright. I have not submitted this for any other degree under any other institution before. Being aware and accepting the research ethics guidelines of the university, I have carefully performed every work of this research within the boundary of that guidelines. To abide by the ethics guidelines, I have obtained prior approval where applicable and kept the relevant subjects well informed about their rights and my responsibilities.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Declaration by Supervisor**

The thesis titled “Professional Hazards of Female Members in Bangladesh Civil Service: Dimensions and Remedies” is the work of research candidate herself. Research candidate Professor Firdous Zareen, worked under our supervision for the required period suggested under the rules for the award of Ph.D Degree of the University of Dhaka. She has given a new dimension to professional hazards of female officers in Bangladesh Civil Service. She has proved herself to be an uncompromising researcher, based on her personal and practical experience under her area she has arrived at the conclusions. In our opinion, the thesis fulfils the requirements laid down by the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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**List of Acronyms**

AC	: Assistant Commissioner
ACAD	: Advanced Course on Administration and Development
ACR	: Annual Confidential Report
BANSDOC	: Bangladesh National Scientific and Technical Documentation Centre
BBS	: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BCS	: Bangladesh Civil Service
BIAM	: Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management
BPFA	: Beijing Platform For Action
BPATC	: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
BPSC	: Bangladesh Public Service Commission
CEDAW	: Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	: Civil Service Official
DC	: District Commissioner
DCC	: Daycare Centre
FGD	: Focus Group Discussion
FTC	: Foundation Training Course
KII	: Key Informant Interview
MOPA	: Ministry of Public Administration
MP	: Member of Parliament
MoWCA	: Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NAEM	: National Academy for Education Management
NGO	: Non-governmental Organization
SPSS	: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSB	: Superior Selection Board
SSC	: Senior Staff Course
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNO	: Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UN Women	: The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

**Abstract**

This study aims to identify the prevailing nature of professional hazards of female cadre civil servants, to explore the factors causing those professional hazards, and to suggest remedial measures to prevent those. Using a mixed-method approach, Kanter's 'Theory of Structural Empowerment' was used to identify the prevailing nature of professional hazards whereas Hofstede's 'Cultural Dimensions Theory' was used to analyze the causal factors of such professional hazards. Findings of the study revealed that different forms of professional hazards are currently affecting the life of female members of the cadre officials in civil service. These hazards include recruitment, promotion, transfer, higher education and training related issues. Beyond these there are other multi-dimensional hazards which has negative impact in the professional life of female cadre civil servants. Binding professional women with both professional and household responsibilities, the prevailing culture of Bangladesh makes it extremely difficult for female cadre civil servants to accomplish their career achievements as per their potential. Moreover, prevailing stereotyped perception about women like their inefficiency, inability to attend large and critical tasks causes additional barriers for the career progression. This research has also found the components of 'Cultural Dimensions Theory' contributing to inflict the professional hazards upon female members of the cadre officials of civil service. Hierarchic system of civil service, embodied in the rigid aspect of respect and fear towards superiors and intolerance of the institution to new ideas and changes, creates an environment that marginalizes female officials. Moreover, the bureaucratic system appreciates the masculine traits of officials, demanding female officials to adapt to this reality and judging them as a weaker part of the organization for the femininity they possess. Showing minimal respect for the double burden of female officials caused by their higher engagement with family responsibilities, the organization sometimes demands an unconditional priority of work to family and personal relations. The bureaucracy also often shows the characteristic of preferring collectivism to individualism, short term plan to long term plan, and hierarchic decision making to pluralist decision making. All these features are causally related to the professional hazards experienced by the female cadre officials in bureaucracy. These factors significantly affect their work performance. Several alternate measures applicable for civil service of Bangladesh and the government of Bangladesh was delineated broadly targeting to improve the working conditions of female cadre civil servants along with changing the mindsets as well as the culture of male civil servants of BCS. Understanding the current scenario that has been prevailing since the beginning, changes can neither be made nor be expected within a blink of time. Considering the current scenario of Bangladesh, perceiving the

state being on a highway of development, efficient incremental progression should be visible stage by stage. This study, therefore, can be a valuable instrument to guide future adjustments in civil service related to the stakes of its female cadre officials.



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## Chapter I - Introduction

### Background

Women of Bangladesh have long been bearing the patriarchic confinement of the private sphere, mostly accepting and often glorifying their role in a domestic setting (Arntsen, 2016; Sultana, 2010; Kotikula et al., 2019). The institutions of this society have internalized restrictive norms (Kabeer, 1988), which limit women's opportunity to transcend their border of domesticity. Such restrictive practices isolate women of all ages from the opportunity of education and access to economic apparatus. They grow up with limited access to the realm of education, mostly because the traditionalist elders do not consider education as necessary for their daughters as sons (Sultana, 2010; Haque and Druce, 2019). Moreover, women rarely have the access to economic resources since the gendered ideologies hold men with the responsibility of performing breadwinning activities (García-Moreno et al., 2005; Huda, 2006; Schuler et al., 2008; Karim et al., 2018; Karim and Law, 2013).

Followed by a limited opportunity in education and economic engagement, women have marginal representation in politics and higher decision-making level of the government (Khan, 2000). Considering women to be unfit to serve in the public service, especially in the position of policymaking, the patriarchic values of society have always discouraged their participation in politics and decision-making sphere (Jahan, 2007; Zafarullah, 2000; Ferdous, 2014; Kashem et al., 2001). Even today, statistics show a little progress in women's share of decision-making positions in civil service (UNDP, 2014)<sup>1</sup>. Their participation in mainstream politics is even by far inferior to male politicians (Bangladesh Parliament, 2019; Foyez, 2019). Their share in leadership of political parties (except women wings), their ratio of positions as people's representatives (except reserved seats) and their participation in the cabinet are insignificant to

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<sup>1</sup>According to a report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report of 2014, only 18% women in Bangladesh were in decision making positions at the public sector. The ratio of the female members in the civil service was even lower (9.6%, 11.6% and 14.2% respectively during the years 2005, 2007 and 2009) (UNDP, 2014).

claim progress of gender equality or women empowerment in politics (Panday, 2008; Foyez, 2019)<sup>2</sup>.

Recruitment in BCS is systematically equal but social structure induced barriers of women make them unequal competitors of their male counterparts. The following Table 1 shows that the female candidates are remarkably less than the male candidates applying for BCS examination.

Table 1: Male and female applicants in BCS

<b>BCS Exam ( Batch )</b>	<b>33<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>34<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>35<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>36<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>37<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Female Candidates (%)</b>	32.29	32.36	33.35	33.14	34.83

*Source: Ministry of Public Administration, 2018*

Data of five consecutive BCS examinations in the recent past shows a large gap as the male-female ratio is 2:1. This is far from equality across gender. Moreover, the degree of change in this ratio is very subtle over the years. On the basis of 37<sup>th</sup> BCS Examination 983 (75.27%) male and 323 (24.73%) female successful candidates were recommended by the BPSC (BPSC Report 2018). This fact of inequality raises a question worth inquiring why the women are not there to compete for employment where they have equal right with men. Following discussion explains how social structure bars in Bangladesh the empowerment of women in this society. It also argues that withdrawing quota reservation is likely to be counterproductive regarding the empowerment of women in this country.

One of the key barriers induced by social structure is the oppositions of education, particularly higher education for girls. The table below (Table 2) shows that the number of female students enrolled at the tertiary level is much lower than that of male students.

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<sup>2</sup> Thirty-eight (38) out of forty (40) registered political parties secured less than 20 percent women representation in their committees. Meanwhile, Awami League (AL) had already achieved 18% women representation in the central executive committee, BNP achieved 15% women representation (Foyez, 2019). Women in Bangladesh had no representation in 1973 National Parliament after emergence of Bangladesh as an Independent state. Moreover, they had already secured respectively 0.6% in 1979, 0.9% in 1986, 1.3% in 1988, 1.5% in 1991, 0.9% in 1996, 2.4% in 1996, 2.0% in 2001, 6.0% in 2008 and 5.4% in 2014 through First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) election system in national parliament election directly (IFES, 2011).



Table 2: Male and Female Students enrolment in University education

Year	2005	2007	2009	2011	2014	2017
<b>Female: Male</b>	0.52: 1	0.55: 1	0.59: 1	0.69: 1	0.73: 1	0.7: 1

*Source: World Bank, February 2020; Trading Economics, 2020*

Data presented in table 2 reveals that the unequal presence of female candidates in BCS examination is partly because of their absence in higher education. However, the comparison of table 1 and 2 shows that the gender gap increases from tertiary education to the candidacy of BCS examination. It means that most of the female students do not pursue civil service job after completing their degrees.

Gender inequality in higher education does not resemble their total absence from educational facilities, rather the girls drop out when passing secondary and higher secondary level<sup>3</sup>. The society has made this drop out obvious by holding a much-preferred alternative priority for the girls; marriage. According to the report of UNICEF, 2019. Bangladesh is still suffering from a higher prevalence of child marriage which is causing greater high school dropout (UNICEF, 2019). Sexual harassment is another significant reason behind girls' discontinuity of education. About 90 per cent of girls between the ages of 10 and 18 are sexually harassed (Tower et al., n.d.).<sup>4</sup> Guardians often solve this problem by ceasing the study of their daughters (Ahmed et al., 2014; BD, 2019). This is how the experiences of sexual harassment also hasten girls' early marriage.

<sup>3</sup> According to the latest report of the BANBEIS, about 51 percent of the female students are studying in the country initially. At this level the male student is 2 percent less than female. The percentage of female students in secondary level is 53 percent, 46 percent of the female students in college education. However, the female students are higher in madrassas (54 percent). Besides, 39 per cent in professional education, 34 per cent in tertiary education, 24 per cent in technical education are women (BANBEIS, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> These girls have been harassed through hitting comments, obscene comments, whistling and obscene or ugly gestures. The cases of harassment usually occur at roads, schools and colleges as well as online platforms (Nahar et al., 2013).

The traditionalist mindset of the society is not yet ready to accept women in an empowered position. The narration of women's glory in domesticity is still popular in our society. People popularly believe that the primary task of women is to look after the family, to serve their husband and in-laws (BANBEIS, 2014). This viewpoint discourages guardians about girls' education and drive the girls to marry as early as they consider appropriate (Nahar et al., 2013). Thus, the hindrance to education reduces the opportunity of female in Bangladesh to become equal competitors for securing position and developing their career in public service.

Professional skill is another weak point of Bangladeshi women regarding their preparedness for a career. Women are less prioritized than men in skill development programmes in Bangladesh (ADB, 2018). Due to the moderately masculine nature of our society, girls find it difficult to access either government or private opportunities for skill development. They are challenged by both guardians' unwillingness to invest in such uncertainty and concerns over their security (Ahmed et al., 2014; Huda, 2003). The residential confinement and restrictions over mobility also take the last opportunity of self-skill development away from them (Rahman and Islam, 2013).

The traditionalist viewpoint also discourages women members of the society about professional advancement because they are not yet accepted fully as breadwinners. It is social norms and structure which create women's image as non-breadwinner which, afterwards, defines her unfit to the masculine jobs. This patriarchal mindset makes the men solely responsible for the supplies a family requires (Cooke, 2018). This is how women are pushed inside the domestic life with the responsibility of homemaking, which is again not economically valued. The result of this structure is a power discrepancy between men and women in the family (Chowdhury, 2010). It keeps women subordinate to men and teaches the generations of women to accept their destiny as such (Chowdhury, 2009).

The current cadre recruitment and selection of 40<sup>th</sup> BCS batch is freed from quota applicability<sup>5</sup> to make the competition fair by freeing it from any positive discrimination (Faruk, 2018). Despite its literal implication of ensuring the fairness of recruitment opportunity for all, the

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<sup>5</sup>According to the gadget no. 05.00.0000.170.11.07.18.276 of the government of Bangladesh 10% quota reservation for the female candidate has permanently been abolished (See Appendix: IV).

current social structure of Bangladesh creates barrier before women's journey towards professional success. Therefore, the withdrawal of women quota reservation is likely to affect the development of the country by pushing its women further backward through intrinsically unfair competition. Neither the current status of women's recruitment in civil service is up to the mark, nor is the current trend of society showing much hope for change in its gender structure soon.

Historically, the movements to empower women of this country have been mostly led by the people from elite background and found moderate success keeping a status quo with the existing patriarchic system (Ahmed, 2016). The level of success is moderate in the sense that these movements could not bring change in a larger scale over the society because of masculine oriented political and institutional settings. Begum Rokeya, a pioneer of women's movement in the country, made the clarion call for educating women saying, "you just educate your daughters and let them make their livelihood" (MoWCA, 2011). Begum Sufia Kamal also raised the issues of women's rights in her works (Zaman, 2016; Chowdhury, 2019). On the other hand, Neelima Ibrahim's *Aami Birangana Balchi*<sup>6</sup> covered the stories of women who endured the unspeakable torture by the brutal occupying military force of Pakistan. With its unique style of storytelling, Neelima Ibrahim's book shed light on the history from a feminist perspective (Biswas and Tripathi, 2019). These legendary figures in the history of feminist movements in Bangladesh are mostly from privileged elites. They invested their intellect and influence for making the change in women's lives in Bangladesh, but they could hardly meaningfully reach the women in the masses (Vishwakarma, 2015).

However, globalization of information, the wider institutional coverage of the education system and the increasing labour value of women in an industrialized economic system have started empowering women from all sections of the society, yet again, keeping a status quo with the patriarchic values. Traditionalist leaders, especially religious clerics accepted and, in some cases, encouraged primary education of girls with the logic of making wives more potent in supporting their husband and family (Field and Ambrus, 2008). However, it is no denying fact that more and more women are getting primary and secondary level education before being pulled to their

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<sup>6</sup>This book was published in 1994 and later translated into English by Fayeza Hasanat in 2017. The translated copy was titled *A War Heroine, I Speak* (Ibrahim, 2016; Murthy, 2017; Biswas and Tripathi, 2019).

socially constructed destiny of domesticity. A recent spike of female participation in the job market is a result of their increasing enrolment in education (Ovi, 2018). More progressive issue of Bangladesh in recent past includes the reduction of gender-based wage gap along with increased female employment<sup>7</sup>(World Bank, 2019).

Despite the lacking in meaningful participation of women in politics, some significant achievements in this aspect deserve to be acknowledged. The country has witnessed women serving alternatively as prime minister and opposition leader for the last three decades. There are more women in the leadership position of mainstream political parties and elected representatives in parliament as well as in local government<sup>8</sup>. Nowadays, the women candidates fight election not only in reserved seats but also in general ones (Kalimullah et al., 2019; Halder, 2004; Bangladesh Parliament, 2019). Although the majority of women politicians are from politically eminent families, some women made their fate in this sector<sup>9</sup>. Several female politicians have also held some key positions in the cabinet and parliament including the minister<sup>10</sup>, state minister<sup>11</sup>, speaker<sup>12</sup> and deputy leader of the parliament<sup>13</sup>(Mohajan, 2012).

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<sup>7</sup> Female participation in labor force of the country was 26 percent in 2003 but turned to be 36 percent in 2016 (World Bank, 2019).

<sup>8</sup> In the country's parliamentary election of 2008, the total female candidates contesting for general (not reserved) seats were 155 and the number of elected ones was 19 (Kalimullah et al., 2019; Halder, 2004; Bangladesh Parliament, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> The most prominent female politicians in this country are Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia; both owe some credit to their families for the political career they have (Heitzman and Worden, 1989). Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman came to power as the successor of her father, while Khaleda Zia emerged as the leader of BNP after her husband's death.

<sup>10</sup> Dipu Moni is a Bangladeshi politician who is serving in the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) as the Minister of Education since January 2019. She also served the country as the Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2009 to 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Selima Rahman is a Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) politician. She served as a State Minister at the Ministry of Cultural Affairs GoB from 2001 to 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury is the current and the first female Speaker of the National Parliament of Bangladesh since April 2013 till date.

<sup>13</sup> Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury is currently working as a deputy leader of the Parliament since 2019.

Slowly but gradually female members increased their participation in government offices<sup>14</sup> including the civil administration<sup>15</sup>. Official data of the Ministry of Public Administration shows that the participation of women at the grassroots level is increasing day by day. Moreover, female officials have been discharging their duties at the district and Upazila levels<sup>16</sup>, breaking the traditional norm of keeping them posted mostly in Dhaka. In some of the districts, the majority of Upazilas had female UNOs<sup>17</sup> (Ahmed, 2017). Additionally, the number of female officials serving at the higher ranks of civil service has also increased steadily<sup>18</sup> (Sultan and Jahan, 2016).

Reproductive role and other socio-economic constraints made the road harder for the women to step beyond the wall of domesticity (Raihan and Bidisha, 2018). Both religion and patriarchal values challenged any reform in the traditional role of women in this society. Religious norms have been very influential in determining the relations between men and women in Bangladesh<sup>19</sup>. Patriarchal society in Bangladesh misinterpreted Islam and used those interpretations against women's participation in coeducation (Chowdhury, 2009).

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<sup>14</sup> There were some 274,114 women in the government service in 2009 and the number increased to 378,354 in 2015 (Ahmed, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> A total of 106 female Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) had been working in the field administration across the country. Besides, 10 female secretaries, 6 female deputy commissioners and 16 female additional deputy commissioners were working in the administration in 2015. The 1,100 of 5,759 officials in the administration cadre of the civil service were women that time (Ahmed, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> The number of upazilas was 491. There were full time UNOs in 428 upazilas. Of them, 106 were women UNOs (Ahmed, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Eight upazilas out of 13 in Kishoreganj had women UNOs and there were eight women UNOs out of 12 in Tangail (Ahmed, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> 21 percent women joined civil service in 2011. This figure was only 8.5 percent in 1999 (Sultan and Jahan, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> Islam provides one of the most influential sets of norms in Bangladesh since the followers of this religion constitute more than 85% of the country's population (Chowdhury, 2009).

In this backdrop, this study discusses the professional hazards of women in civil service and explores the factors driving those hazards. The main objective of the study is to identify the prevailing nature and factors of professional hazards of the female cadre officials in Bangladesh Civil Service. It follows Kanter's theory on 'Structural Empowerment' to identify the existing professional hazards and Hofstede's 'Cultural Dimensions Theory' to find the factors causing and catalyzing such hazards.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Patriarchic social structure has always pushed back the women who have been seeking a place in the public sphere in Bangladesh. This structure restricts female members from participating in the labour market by intercepting their mobility in public sphere out of social norms (Raihan and Bidisha, 2018; Banks, 2013). Public patriarchy excludes them from the positions of power; both economic and political (Chowdhury, 2009). Not only public life but also the private life of the women are subject to patriarchy. Women take the full responsibility of making home but do not receive any recognition even partly because of their necessary subordination sermoned by some twisted explanation of religion.

Workplaces, including the government offices, are not conducive to the women. Several sources have already asserted different challenges and limitations encountered by the female officials of civil service. These limitations are structural, organizational and operational and the list includes male superiority complex, non-cooperative attitude from male colleagues, lack of privacy at the workplace, absence of gender-sensitive code of conduct, transfer of women without considering their family responsibilities, and lack of some infrastructural facilities such as daycare centre and separate toilet facilities (Karim, 2008; Sultana and Ferdous, 2017; UNDP, 2014). It also consists of the issues of gender stereotypes which regards men as more efficient than women in work (Zafarullah, 2000; Sultan and Jahan, 2016; Ferdous, 2014; UNDP, 2014). Another opinion adds that the career development path in civil service is discriminatory towards women due to certain reasons as low participation of women in the top bureaucratic positions, mainstream ministries and selection board for promotion (Zafarullah, 2014; Bilkis, n.d.).

Challenges in the professional life of female officials in civil service not only reduce their performance and productivity but also undermine women's empowerment, though this is a prerequisite for the women to claim their rights, have control over their own lives and play some

role to make changes in the quality of their living (Paul et al., 2016). A professional career is a fundamental way to engage in economic activity for women. Therefore, the uncongenial professional lives of women affect their economic participation and undermine their economic empowerment.

The government, as well as other stakeholders, need to take measures to address the professional challenges, operationalized in this research as professional hazards, of female civil service officials (CSOs). Proper understanding of the nature and causes of hazards are essential prerequisites for planning and executing effective remedial measures in this regard. Moreover, the segregation of data is necessary for ensuring proper monitoring of the crucial issue. This research has shed light on the forms of professional hazards female civil service officials (CSOs) experience and the factors causing these hazards.

### **Rationale of the Study**

Equal participation of women in the professional arena is essential both from the point of justice and ethical dimension of democracy. It is a constitutional promise for the country's women to get equal treatment along with men in employment<sup>20</sup>. It shows the commitment of Bangladesh as a state to ensure gender equality, which requires ensuring a participatory workplace. To sustain women as significant workforce, their existing hazards and hurdles toward advancement need to be properly detected and remedial measures should be undertaken. Equal participation of women in different professions will enhance their status and empower them socially and economically (Ferdous, 2014).

A balanced male-female participation ratio in economic activities will also represent Bangladesh in a prestigious way to the rest of the world. Bangladesh has already made its commitment towards gender equality and women empowerment by signing CEDAW and BPFA. To fulfil its commitments, the Government of Bangladesh has been working to formulate policies to

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<sup>20</sup>According to article 29 of the Bangladesh Constitution, "There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic". Also, it has been stated that "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" (Constitution of Bangladesh 1979, article 133-136; Ahmed, 1986: 177-178).

empower the country's women in compliance with the goals set in global instruments. Bangladesh's success in empowering women has already earned eminent recognition by international organizations (Brahmaputra, 2018). *“The CEDAW Committee in its Concluding Comments on the Fifth Periodic Report of Bangladesh congratulated the Government for achieving gender parity and the dramatic increase in the enrolment of girls in primary and lower secondary level in schools”* (MoWCA, 2009). Such appreciations are the assets for a country like Bangladesh to hold its position as a valuable partner of the international community.

This research will be a valuable source for the policymakers, researchers and all other stakeholders working for the betterment of female members as well as for the institutional improvement of the civil service. Researchers will find new insights to interrogate novel questions for their research and for improving their understanding of more specialized points of view. Moreover, there are issues of stereotypes and awareness that different social groups can pinpoint to spread better understanding regarding the idea and role of gender. Most importantly, this research will provide policymakers with the empirically tested interrelation of factors that they can use for making policies to address the professional hazards of female officers.

### **Research Question**

On the basis of the above discussion certain questions arise for the study. The research questions are:

- What are the professional hazards that female cadre officers of civil service in Bangladesh are facing?
- Which factors are responsible for causing the professional hazards of female cadre officers in civil service?
- Which remedial measures can be undertaken to eliminate the gender-based professional hazards of female cadre officers in the civil service of Bangladesh?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to explore the facts and dynamics of professional hazards faced by female members of cadre officials in the civil service of Bangladesh. The specific objectives are:



- To identify the prevailing nature of professional hazards experienced by female cadre officers in the civil service of Bangladesh.
- To analyze the factors causing the professional hazards of female bureaucrats in Bangladesh.
- To suggest remedial measures to overcome the identified hazards of female cadre civil servants in Bangladesh.

## **Operational Definition**

### ***Professional Hazard***

Scholars mainly use the term professional hazards to denote the health hazards faced by people from across professions (Dittmar and Howard, 2004; Knibbs, 2014; Watkins, 1983). Some scholars often broaden the term ‘hazards’ to include risk and challenges (Donoghue, 2001; Lott and Manning, 2000; Pandis et al., 2007), and similar definitional position is seen in cases of defining risk and challenges (Bird, 2009; Loughlin et al., 2015; Lujala et al., 2015; Resnic and Welt, 2009). While the two concepts are closely linked, this wider definition is challenged by some scholars who differentiate between risk and hazards. They consider risk as outcomes or consequences whereas hazard as a source of risk (Kasperson et al., 1988; Slovic, 1987). This definitional approach consider hazard for having a long latency period or arising from complexity (Dekker, 2012; Ringleb and Wiggins, 1990).

Though most scholars stress on physical health aspects in defining professional hazards, some scholars include psychological problems and thus accommodate issues like stress, violence and other workplace stressors (Johnstone et al., 2011; Kinman and Court, 2010; Rasmussen et al., 2011). In the case of bureaucracy, some scholars used the term ‘professional hazard’ to refer to the professional challenges including both the ethical and functioning challenges (Caron and Giauque, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2009). In case of women in bureaucracy, some scholars even refer to the issue of unequal representation and cultural barriers in promotion, work distribution and work environment as part of professional hazards (Smith and Monaghan, 2013; Marshall and Mitchell, 1989; Oakley, 2000; O’Connor, 1996; Ramsay and Parker, 1991). In the current study, the professional hazard refers to all the challenges and risks arising from the professional

environment and affecting the professional performance and accomplishment as well as personal well-being of female members of cadre officials in the civil service.

## **Field of Study**

The field of the current research work is the Secretariat of the Government of Bangladesh. The researcher interviewed female members of the cadre civil servants of all ranks currently working in different offices of the Secretariat. It is not only a convenient field of work but also a place where female officers are available with diverse professional experience of working in different environments around the country. Bangladesh Secretariat is the nerve Centre of administration of the country. Secretariat has been the epicentre of public administration since the colonial period (The Daily Observer, 26 July 2017; Cabinet, 11 December 2019; Obaidullah, 2012). The Secretariat epitomizes a centralized bureaucratic jurisdiction with its conglomerate of all Ministries/Divisions concentrating as decision-making authority. It was designed by colonial rulers as “a formal network of authority relationships, control, command and communication” among separate self-contained hierarchical units (Zafarullah, 2014). A ministry or division within Secretariat performs specific functions. Currently, there are 40 ministries, 27 divisions and 178 departments in the Bangladesh administrative set-up (Cabinet, 11 December 2019). Some divisions are directly under the jurisdiction of ministries. Ministers, the political heads of ministries work as the bridge between the political and bureaucratic administrations (Zafarullah, 2014).

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Approach***

This study uses a mixed-method approach consisting of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Conceiving the sensitivity and delicacy of the topic, the researcher considered the application of both the methods since any approach for this research might not be effective to explore the real situation with in-depth data. Another purpose of using mixed method is to overcome the limitations of segregate analysis through qualitative or quantitative research. In this case, the researcher especially emphasized on qualitative approach in exploring the prevailing dimensions of professional hazard to extract the reality from beneath the formal responses. On the other hand, more emphasis was given to the quantitative approach in identifying the causal factors of professional hazards since the related variables from Hofstede’s

theory were better suited to this approach. Making a synergy of results from both quantitative and qualitative data has served this research to be logically stronger.

### *Sampling Methods*

To conduct the survey in this research, firstly the researcher identified the up to date number of female cadre officers in civil services which was 1258 (23.40%) (MoPA, 12 February 2018). This figure (1258) constituted the Population Size of the research (See Appendix-I). The sample size had been derived by using an online-based sample size calculator available in Qualtrics. Keeping a 90% confidence level and 6% margin of error, the ideal sample size turned out to be 164 as representative to the population<sup>21</sup>.

The target respondents of this research were from the female officers working at the Secretariat together constituting six hierarchic stratas, from Assistant Secretary to Secretary. The respondents were from twenty-two ministries and the researcher sampled them using the technique of convenience, keeping representation from all the six stratas. Depending upon acquaintance and availability, the researcher distributed questionnaires and collected quantitative data from 164 female members of the cadre officials (13% of the total population).

Subsequently, the researcher conducted 17 KIIs and four FGDs for collecting qualitative data to have an in-depth insight into the subject matter<sup>22</sup>. The following table presents the distribution of samples across different data collection methods as well as the representation from different stratas.

Table 3: Sample Distribution: Survey, KIIs and FGDs

Sl.	Rank	Survey(n)	KIIs(n)	FGDs(n)
1	Secretary	5	-	-
2	Additional Secretary	13	3	-
3	Joint Secretary	14	3	1
4	Deputy Secretary	30	3	1
5	Senior Assistant Secretary	50	3	1
6	Assistant Secretary	52	3	1
7	Expert		3	
<b>Total</b>		<b>164</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>

<sup>21</sup>The calculation is provided as Appendix II

<sup>22</sup> The list of FGDs is provided as Appendix VIII

Diversification of ministries has also been ensured as twenty-two ministries have been covered under this study, amongst the then forty-five ministries and divisions (See Appendix-III).

### *Data Collection*

#### *Survey*

A survey was conducted over 164 female respondents to collect the quantitative data based on the variables and indicators identified from the theoretical framework. The researcher has used a structured questionnaire with a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions.

#### *KIIs*

17 key informant interviews (KIIs) have been conducted to collect qualitative data for this study. The researcher interviewed three Additional Secretaries and three from the ranks of joint secretary, deputy secretary, senior assistant secretary, and assistant secretary, and two expert opinions as the key informants. Based on a non-structured questionnaire, the researcher asked 12-15 questions to the key informants regarding professional hazard. The duration of each KII interview was around 60 to 120 minutes. The techniques of KII included face to face interviews, telephonic interviews and written responses.

#### *FGDs*

On the other hand, focus group discussions were held to know the opinion of the female members of the cadre officials from four consecutive stratas except for the top two ranks. There were 6-8 respondents in each of the FGDs and the duration of each FGDs was 60 to 90 minutes.

#### *Desk Review*

For attaining secondary data, the researcher reviewed relevant books, reports, journals, news reports, statistical yearbooks, government publications, ordinances, acts, rules and official documents. To collect the wide ranges of these secondary materials, the researcher has browsed a wide range of libraries including Library of National Academy for Planning & Development, Central Library of the University of Dhaka, Begum Sufia Kamal National Public Library at Shahbag, the library of Secretariat, the library of British Council, the library of BPATC, and the library of BCS Administration Academy.

### ***Challenges of Data Collection***

Taking advantage of the term ‘confidential’, the bureaucrats, administrators, managers tend to conceal more and reveal less. This happened when certain critical issues were inquired. This silence had been one of the greatest obstacles throughout the data collection process. In the case of respondents from senior officials, getting precise response required multiple attempts. Finally, being a civil servant, the respondents did not have the freedom to respond to any question critical of the state. The researcher had been aware of these challenges from the beginning and she utilized her communication skill to overcome these intangible barriers and extracted the facts beneath the concealment of diplomatic replies, tricky bypassing and polite denials.

### ***Data Analysis***

Quantitative data were analyzed by using statistical software ‘SPSS’ (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), version 23.0 and *MS Excel* that adjust for clustering. To make the data set suitable for the analysis, the data was thoroughly checked, edited and tabulated. Descriptive statistics such as simple percentages and cross tables were used to describe the prevailing status of the study population.

On the other hand, KII and FGD data were intuitively analyzed with the perceptions of the respondents. These data have been summarized and cross-matched with the quantitative results. Finally, these outputs have been logically organized to figure out the findings of this study. Thus, the amalgamation of literature review, qualitative data and quantitative data portray the total outcome of the research under the convergent type of mixed method.

### ***Ethical Consideration***

Respondents’ informed consent was taken before every interview. The female respondents explicitly agreed to respond to the questions after being informed in ways that they could understand each of the following:

- The purpose and expected benefits or outcomes of the study
- The time, commitment and other expectations from participants
- The right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the activity at any time
- The methods or ways in which the data is being collected
- The topics of information that are being collected and discussed
- The intended use of the information, and if any information is held in confidentiality

## **Overview of Chapters**

This thesis is a structured outcome of extensive research work for academic purpose. Chapter I has set the foundation of the thesis by introducing the topic and research problem, articulating the rationale of the study, and clearly stating the research questions and objectives. This chapter also set the methodology of conducting research addressing the specific issues of sample selection, data collection sources and techniques, and the process of data analysis. Chapter II contains a review of the literature. In reviewing the literature, this chapter followed the three objectives of the study and reviewed the works of literature covering areas related to these objectives. After reviewing major observations and findings of these works, the researcher has identified certain limitations from a critical perspective.

Chapter III contains the theories and theoretical framework derived from Kanter's Theory of Structural Empowerment and Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. These theories provided a very systematic framework to find both the nature and causes of professional hazards from the perspective of women employees working as the cadre officers in Bangladesh Civil Service. Chapter IV shed light on the evolution of civil service administration in Bangladesh. It explores the historical perspective from the Mughal period to Bangladesh period covering British Indian period and Pakistan period.

Chapter V deals with the most crucial part of the research work, which contains the prevailing status of professional hazards of the female cadre civil servants in Bangladesh. It explores the nature of professional hazards of the female members based on the components of Kanter's Structural Empowerment Theory. It explores the nature of professional hazards experienced by the female cadre civil service officers in terms of access to opportunity, access to the resource, access to information and access to support. Chapter VI identifies the factors which are responsible for the professional hazards of female cadre civil servants in Bangladesh. The discussion in this chapter is based on the six components of Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory which portray power distance, uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, loyalty and group belongingness, masculinity-femininity, and short-term orientation. And the Chapter VII details with possible remedies to such professional hazards. The final section entails the concluding remarks of the entire research.

## Chapter II - Literature Review

### Introduction

This chapter reviewed existing works of scholarly literature addressing the issues related to the objectives of this research. Global scholars (Zarra-Nezhad, 2010; Fitzpatrick and Richards, 2019; Zafarullah, 2000; Jahan, 2010; Khair et al., 2017), as well as institutions (PWHC, 2017; EILO, 2019) from their end, have conducted many types of research on the nature of professional hazards, factors contributing to the professional hazards and put forward some practical remedies to overcome such professional hazards. Many studies on women's professional hazards have been conducted in the context of Bangladesh as well and some of those studies investigated the working conditions and hazards faced by female members in public administration. After reviewing major observations and findings of these works, the researcher has identified certain limitations, which the current research has attempted to overcome with the use of two prominent theories: Structural Empowerment Theory of Kanter and Cultural Dimensions Theory of Hofstede. These theories provided a very systematic framework to find both the nature and causes of professional hazards from the perspective of female employees working as the cadre officers in Bangladesh Civil Service.

### *Prevailing nature of professional hazards*

Many scholars worked on the professional hazard faced by female officials in different parts of the world and all of which agree on the prevalence of such hazards from women's perspective. Different researches sketch the image of different nations some of which included variant nations. The multi-dimensional image created by these studies portrayed vast challenges and obstacles women face in their profession for the very reason of being women. Some of these hazards are common across borders whereas some have more localized features, but all these are obstacles in the way of women's comfort and opportunities of development in their profession.

Fitzpatrick and Richards (2019) assessed women's representation in British civil service under the British Coalition Government (2010-2015). Using the mixed-method approach, the study identified that the majority of women working in Whitehall belonged to the lower grades leaving a gender imbalance at the higher grades. The author found not only an absence of women in

higher grades but also a lack of fair competition in the recruitment procedure therefore narrowing down women's opportunity to be selected. EILO (2019) also worked on the representation of women in the UK's civil service at Whitehall and concluded with almost similar findings. It found that women, working in various wings of civil service, were under-represented. Alike the work of Fitzpatrick and Richards, this report also found a gap of women's representation at different grades; the higher the grade, the lower the representation of women. More importantly, most of the departments were found to follow the same pattern. Besides the UK, PWHC (2017) researched on the employers from 18 countries of both developed and developing world and found women's experience of gender discrimination in person during the time of application or attending an interview. More than one-fifth of the respondents reported such experience.

Bell et al. (2002) categorized professional hazards faced by women at the workplace into three types; discrimination, sexual harassment and glass ceiling. Firstly, discrimination refers to the gender-based discrimination in recruiting, promoting and terminating employees. Secondly, the persistence of sexual harassment at the workplace proves not only the prevalence of sexual crime but also employment-related humiliation or aggressive pressure as well as gender-based discrimination in workplace. Lastly, the glass ceiling includes all the invisible barriers that keep women from being lifted in their career through the vertical line of progress.

Several studies, especially in the last two decades, investigated the concerns of female members in the civil service of Bangladesh. The questions of these works mainly refer to the opportunities of Bangladeshi women to be recruited in civil service, to perform there as per their potential and to advance their career along with the hierarchic graph of the bureaucratic system. Interestingly the focuses of these researches evolved and changed over time. Earlier researchers were more concerned with the issue of quantitative representation, whereas the recent works investigated the concerns related to the qualitative participation of female officials in civil service.

Some scholars mainly focused on the representation of women in civil service and the issues regarding their recruitment, which is crucial to increase their representation. Zafarullah (2000) looked into the representation across gender in the civil service of Bangladesh and found disparity. He found that only 5.1% of all administrative and managerial appointments were held by women. Kashem et al. (2001) reviewed the utility of quota system in recruitment and found a plethora of social barriers that had been obstructing women from joining civil service.



Interviewing 190 respondents from both cadre and non-cadre female employees, the author found their constraints regarding staying away from family. This research argues that the quota system alone cannot enhance women's representation as long as this crisis of separation from family exists which discourages other women to join civil service.

The researches, then, gradually changed the question from assessing the quantitative increase of representation to the qualitative participation of women in civil service. Jahan (2007) investigated the situation of gender mainstreaming through interviewing 22 female officers of civil service in Bangladesh. The author acknowledged lower level of female members' participation in civil service and discussed the reasons behind this problem, but she gave more emphasis on the fact that women's quality of performance in civil service was below the expected standard. She also revealed that the professional environment of civil service required to be improved in the sense that it would support a woman to perform as per her potential. Jahan (2010) carried the investigation ahead and examined the problems faced by women civil servants working at the field level. A combination of content analysis, survey and case study method was used in this study. 64 respondents were picked randomly across seven cadres from 48 Upazilas of 28 districts for the survey. An issue like initiating new ideas were identified as a problem whereas the reason behind that was identified as the power difference between male and female officers.

The studies of the current decade have turned to be more reluctant regarding the affirmative action of quota system, but more focused on the institutional as well as social barriers that hinder women's performance as the officers in civil service. Zaman (2015) is categorically critical about the quota system on the ground of encouraging merit-based recruitment. The author opposed any potential increase of quota and suggested its reduction for future recruitment (Zaman 2015). He presumes that a low calibre candidate can outrace a more meritorious candidate in reaching the policy-making positions where the later one can serve better. Some other scholars changed their focus from quantitative representation because of the increase of women's number in civil service compared to the earlier decades. Still, some researchers addressed the issue of quantitative representation along with qualitative concerns. Sultan and Jahan (2016) focused on institutional barriers and found a gap between female members' representation in a lower grade

and higher grade of Bangladesh's civil service. They argued that the bureaucracy had certain barriers that keep the female officials from advancing in their career across the ladder ranks.

Some other scholars explored, in further detail, the challenges of female officials in civil service. Khair et al. (2017) examined the discriminatory practices against women in the Civil Service of Bangladesh through a survey of 276 respondents. The study finds the limit of opportunities for women in work environment of civil service. It explains those limitations and the other gender-based discriminatory practices in bureaucracy.

The reviews of the literature show that both global and national scholarship critically evaluated women's participation in civil service. Their focus evolved from the mere participation of women in number to the quality of participation. Recent studies are more significant for their focus on the work environment of women, but the findings are mostly narrowed to gender-based discrimination. A concentration in gender-based discrimination misses all other dimensions of professional opportunities and supports a woman who can be deprived of in her quest of getting jobs done. This is the gap of existing literature that the current study has addressed by utilizing the Structural Empowerment Theory introduced by Rosabeth Moss Kanter. An investigation into women's situation involving all four components of Kanter's theory has made this research comprehensive in exploring the prevalence of professional hazards.

### ***Factors of professional hazards***

The scholars all over the world sought to find the causes of professional hazards experienced by working women. Their works found a range of factors from the attitudinal aspects of people, especially men, to the barriers institutionalized in social structure and organizational practices. The key barrier appeared in the social structure is the attribution of household works to women, no matter what choice they make for their career. The most important factors identified by different works may be the dominance of men in the power structure of organizations both in the public and private sectors.

Fabian (1972) found the stereotype of men regarding their female colleagues as the key factor of causing all the professional hazards women face. The author illuminates that a professional woman ends up being a projective device for every man's stereotype of her independent behaviour. A man's fears and fantasies get intermingled and distort his perceptions of women.

Consequently, male co-workers grow all-around negativity regarding their female colleagues, whether a boss, colleague of the same level or a subordinate. The stereotyping tendency of men, which they get accustomed by the prevailing culture creates immense stress in terms of mental unrest, trauma and threatens of harm in every possible way. Finally, the author concluded by stating that masculinity and femininity need not be mutually exclusive, and if society is to progress, then both professional women and their male counterparts must recognize this. Price Water House Coopers (2017) also found stereotyped gender-based assumptions as a factor corrupting this system along with an economic issue; the cost generated due to maternity leave of female employees.

Ellemers (2014) identified both social barriers and paradox of equality as the factors restraining women's fulfilment of instinct capability in their professions. Social structure, attributing household and relational responsibilities exclusively upon women, prevents women from developing a similar level of capacity and desire as their male counterparts. Therefore, women are reduced to less prepared persons than men. Consequently, the devotions to equal opportunity in competition turn to be an unfair race where men and women do not have a level playing field because of their unequal preparations. This is how equal treatment of men and women creates a paradox. By paradox of equality, the author means bias to merit, which is considered as the basis of equality. Therefore, the author suggests that gender bias can be positive sometimes as it gives special attention to women if the business works in favour of them.

Shiva (2013) identified the burden of 'work-life balance' as the factor hindering working women in their career development. The phrase "work-life balance" describes activities to balance the demands of the family and work life of the employees. Using a quantitative method, the author interviewed a sample of 200 women from private and public sectors including schools, hospitals, colleges and other companies. Respondents from all these backgrounds lack organizational satisfaction; showing specifically more dissatisfaction amongst the working women of the private sector compared to the ones of the public sector. They could hardly make their family members happy with the fact that they have official responsibilities, which can affect their responsibilities in the family. Only 17% of the respondents were identified as being satisfied as they could make their spouses or parents accept their job demand.

Zarra-Nezhad (2010) found a correlation between family difficulties and occupational hazards faced by professional women. The author defined family difficulties as psychological and emotional problems generated through less interaction with family members and occupational hazards as work and workplace-related disorders. Working on the data of 250 married women, mother of two or more children and aged mostly between 23 and 49 years, the author found significant positive correlation between family difficulties and occupational hazards faced by professional women. Additionally, the study found working women being in quite a troubled condition despite their remarkable progression in representation at several different professional careers. These women were found craving for changes in occupational stress, family issues and economic status.

Gregory (2003) also accuses male-dominated power structure to be responsible for the gender-based professional hazards indicating that the upper positions are mostly held by men. A man in the position of command takes the leverage to cause gender-based discriminations in the form of unequal payment as well as sexual harassment. The author identified that the adverse impact of such practice gets multiplied in case of vulnerable women such as elderly and pregnant women. More importantly, the author expanded the scope of such hazards across sex, colour and race both in blue-collar and white-collar jobs.

Many scholars have also worked on the causes of professional hazards in the life experience of female civil service officers in Bangladesh. They identified a very wide range of factors, causing these hazards, stemming from the minds of people to the formal and informal values of the society and the institutional values, practices and facilities.

Karim (2008) worked out “*the structural, institutional and operational factors responsible for underrepresentation of women in civil service*” (p. 1). The author acknowledged the increased participation of women in BCS over the years; 10.67% in 5<sup>th</sup> BCS examination to 32.95% in 26<sup>th</sup> BCS examination. Still, women in this sector face structural, institutional, social and cultural challenges. Breaking down these categories, the author identified some specific factors causing problems in the work-life of female officers. These factors include women’s lack of equality and equity in the society and inappropriate working conditions (i.e., inadequate day-care centre, lack of reproduction health and childcare facilities). The author also mentioned the prevalence of gender-biases in recruitment, transfer and promotion system.

Some other works found stereotype as a crucial factor behind the lower representation of women in Bangladesh's civil service. Khair et al. (2017) mentioned the "negative perceptions and stereotypes about women's professional capabilities and commitments" as a factor constituting barriers to women's advancement. Zafarullah (2000) also acknowledged the low representation of female members in civil service and mentioned the following factors referring to UNDP.

(a) negative attitudes towards women by male colleagues; (b) doubts of superior officers about the capabilities (for work) of women officers; (c) superiority complexes of male colleagues; (d) tendency of men to treat women in a gender-biased fashion; (e) comments that men were more efficient than women; and (f) non-cooperation of male colleagues (Zafarullah, 2000).

On the other hand, Sultan and Jahan (2016) argued that the causes of lower recruitment of women include the lack of gender sensitivity among management as well as the lack of family support towards women regarding the realization of their professional visions.

Sultana and Ferdous (2017) identified women's inferior position in the higher strata of civil service in Bangladesh and found a large range of factors causing this underrepresentation. The authors showed that although the number of women in the civil service had increased in the last three decades, their position in terms of power and influence on decision making had not yet improved much. After analysing the documents from different government websites in 2016, they found that there were only 5 female Secretaries out of 75 positions, no female Divisional Commissioner and 5 female Deputy Commissioners out of 64. The factors behind such underrepresentation, as identified by this study, include the lack of appropriate policies and procedures; superiority complex of men, negative attitudes and non-cooperation of male colleagues; lack of protection and security; unfavourable work environment; absence of gender-sensitive code of conduct; different political issues; male-dominated social structure; and family responsibilities.

Zafarullah (2013) identified some aspects of "bureaucratic culture in Bangladesh from historical, social and political standpoints" (p. 932). These cultural aspects of bureaucracy are likely to contribute to the causation of women's professional hazards. Bangladesh's peculiar characteristics reflect a close link with the political process, a propensity towards personal survival, the male dominance over policy structures and a tendency to maintain social

clientelism. The study concluded that restructuring of the system or imposition of legislation cannot alter the prevailing culture, which represents the perceptions and orientations of the representatives of the bureaucracy.

The literary works of scholars reviewed in this section seem to cover a wider range of factors both in international and Bangladeshi perspective. However, most of the factors identified in the context of Bangladesh are identifiable operational aspects of bureaucracy. The deep structural issues that lie in the norms of bureaucracy in this country remained mostly unrevealed. Therefore, this research has come up with the Cultural Dimensions theory of Geert Hofstede. This theory has provided with a well-designed framework, which can measure the factors of professional hazards lying in the normative as well as functional characteristics of bureaucracy in Bangladesh.

#### ***Suggestions to address professional hazards***

Many studies provided with specific suggestions to address the professional hazards of women. Both in global and Bangladesh perspective, these studies suggested the interventions not only to eradicate the societal barriers but also to uplift the women with the required support for personal development, removing systemic obstacles before their entrance into the bureaucratic system, and improving the work environment in a manner that fits with the specific needs of female employees and free them from all the burdens of stereotypes.

PWHC (2018) summarized feedback obtained from professional women around the world, acknowledged a lack of trust between women and their employers, and made specific suggestions to address the issues of mistrust. The survey was conducted among 3,627 professional working women, aged 28 to 40, from more than 60 countries. People in Western Europe, North America, Asia, and Australasia account for 84% of responses. The study findings clearly showed that women around the world do not trust what their employers are telling them about promotions and salaries. The report identified transparency as a way of doing business in which employers offer a clear understanding of the requirements on both sides of the employment equation to their employees. Secondly, women need supportive networks of leaders and colleagues who create, encourage and support them in the workplace and at home. Thirdly, women need employers to rethink their approach to work, parenting, parenthood and family care and thereby provide workable organizational solutions.

Niroo (2018) pointed out Afghan women's being deprived of proper education and denied equal opportunity in the public sector. The author made several suggestions for women in pre-recruitment, during the recruitment and post-recruitment stages. For the pre-recruitment process, it suggested education, dissemination of recruitment related information, and setting up of a career development centre for women. The recruitment stage requires a supportive gender-sensitive atmosphere. After the recruitment, the author suggested considering women's health, physical and social protection at work with utmost sincerity. Overall, the author depicted the challenge of social resistance against such policy so that the policymakers can deal with that.

WWICS (2014) acknowledged the policies and initiatives that had already been undertaken by the government of Bangladesh to ensure women's placement in different professions and towards achieving gender equality as well as gender mainstreaming in all the sectors. The government is a major employer in Bangladesh, so the recruitment of women in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) is very critical and requires special consideration from different perspectives. The study suggested appointing more female members at different cadres of Bangladesh civil service. It assumed that increased representation of women in the organizations would create an opportunity to free the women from the shackles that remain unseen to the men.

Ferdous (2014) revealed the restraints of women in society and suggested specific measures to encourage women's participation in civil service by addressing those stumbling blocks. The stumbling blocks are lack of appropriate policies, negative attitudes of male colleagues, family responsibilities, lack of adequate facilities and services, security problem, lack of women's participation in policymaking, non-cooperation of family, lack of awareness building, and social backwardness. Finally, the author recommended some ways out including proper policy formulation, convenient working atmosphere, an increase of quota reservation for women, and change of the mind-set of family members as well as the men in general.

Khan (2016) recommended making existing cadres of civil service function-based; enhancing present roles of specialists and including them in policymaking level; keeping one civil servant in one post for no less than three years; determining transfer decision of a civil servant following his/ her aptitude, expertise and training; generating comprehensive promotion policy keeping merit at its fundamental base, introducing two-tier recruitment system and allowing experts to enter civil service at mid/ senior level directly.

The works of literature reviewed here are rich with recommendations considering the vast areas from socio-cultural issues to institutional structures. However, the current study has specific

quests to understand how to deal with and modify the institutional characteristics, especially the ones suggested by Hofstede's theory of Cultural Dimensions. Reviewed works of literature do not fully answer to such quests.



## Chapter III - Theoretical Framework

### Introduction

This chapter discusses the theory of Structural Empowerment introduced by <sup>23</sup>Rosabeth Moss Kanter and the Cultural Dimensions Theory introduced by Geert Hofstede. The following discussion elaborates the concepts of these theories and shows their relevance to this study. The independent variables have been derived from both the theories to be considered for the research. A theoretical framework has also been derived from the aforementioned theories for the current study.

### Theory of Structural Empowerment

In her theory of ‘Structural Empowerment’ promulgated in 1977, Kanter stated that the features of an environment would restrict or facilitate the quality of job performance, irrespective of an employee’s practical manner or inclination (Kanter,1993). Power can be defined as the “*ability to mobilize resources to get things done*” (Kanter 1993:210). Employees possess power when they have access to information, support, resources, and opportunities to gain knowledge and develop their careers. When these sources are inaccessible due to hindrances or hazards, there is an omission of power. Accessibility of such sources in an organization paves the way to ‘Structural Empowerment’ (Greco et al. 2006; Ramos and Ales, 2014).

Kanter disseminated formal and informal systematic sources of power that prevails in an organization (Wagner et al., 2010). Positions at the upper level of the hierarchy are more involved with organizational goals and contain ample formal power. When a congenial relationship exists amongst peers, subordinates and seniors, informal power becomes active. It opens the channel of opportunities and power, which encourages employees to work efficiently with enthusiasm. When employees can work freely with changing mode of operation, apply ingenuity, accommodate as per situation, undertake crucial decisions, get involved directly with organizational goals, then they can achieve formal power. Informal power can be attained

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<sup>23</sup> Rosabeth Moss Kanter, an American Professor at Harvard Business School, co-founded the Harvard University-wide Advanced Leadership Initiative. She worked as founding chair and director from 2008-2018 as it became an international model for higher education and for training eminent leaders to utilize their proficiency to confront national and international challenges (Kanter 2019).

through social connections and the activation of information and communication channels (Kanter, 1993). Informal power is also derived through forming alliances with other employees and establishing a relationship with all at the workplace (Wang, 2015).

Kanter proclaims through Structural Empowerment Theory that the achievement of formal and informal power facilitates access to structures of organization and subsequently empower employees. Access to all organizational structures would provide a high level of structural empowerment (Kanter, 1993 cited in Laschinger et. al. 2001, 2004). Kanter suggests that the vital conditions of organizational structures, necessary for empowering and motivating the employees, are access to opportunity, resources, information and support. She considers these systemic determinants to be likely to clarify the individual responses of employees to the organization (Wang, 2015). Each dimension of Kanter's Structural Empowerment Theory is explained below.

#### ***Access to Opportunity***

‘Access to Opportunity’ covers prospects perceived by an employee for progression of career. It refers to employees’ expectations and capacity for development that enables autonomy and professional development within and beyond the jurisdictions of their employers (Kanter, 1977; Kanter, 1993). The expectation of an individual includes access to new scopes and an increase in the knowledge and skills they need for professional development. An individual’s access to opportunity can foster her ambition, job satisfaction, a sense of work, and dedication. Workers with poor career incentives tend to perform adversely in the workplace (Wang, 2015). This research has used two indicators to assess the female officials’ access to opportunity in bureaucracy; possibility for career development and opportunity to increase knowledge and skills.

#### ***Access to Resource***

Resources are the means to get a job done. This is true regardless of the differences in terms of organization or industry types. Access to resources refers to individuals' access to *‘the financial means materials, time supplies and equipment’* required to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to them (Kanter, 1977: 56). Therefore, access to such resources means automatically enhancement of motivation as well as empowerment of the employees. This research has used three indicators to evaluate the female officials’ access to resources in bureaucracy; allocation of financial resources, time allocation, and allocation of materials and supplies.

### ***Access to Information***

In any organization, information is one of the keys to success. The availability of the right information at the right time and place makes differences in accomplishment. Here, access to information refers to the kind of information, which are related to the decisions concerned that organization makes, issues it, prioritizes and the values it upholds. Such information includes data, technical and organizational knowledge, skills that the employees require to perform the responsibilities entrusted to them. This access can enable the employees develop a better understanding of organization's priorities so that their contribution in decision making and execution aligns with the wider objectives of the concerned organization (Kanter, 1977).

### ***Access to Support***

Here, support refers to the guidance from all the colleagues ranging from subordinate to superiors. An employee, especially one who is newly posted to a position, is in need of colleague's feedback to accomplish his/her tasks effectively. Such an effective support system helps better team building and the development of concerned institution (Kanter, 1977). The colleagues can support one another by consoling in a critical situation, sharing an evaluative opinion regarding other's performance, suggesting better alternatives and providing required knowledge (Brown and Kanter, 1982).

### **Cultural Dimensions Theory**

'Cultural Dimensions Theory' of Geert Hofstede<sup>24</sup> explores the influence of the culture of a community in shaping the values of its members, and how those values contribute to behaviour. Geert Hofstede promulgated Cultural Dimensions Theory in 1970. Later on, it was modified several times and finally, in 2010, he added the sixth dimension (Hofstede, n.d.). Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory delineates the impacts of societal culture on the values of its people and explains how these values affect the behavioural patterns of the people. "*Culture consists of*

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<sup>24</sup> Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist and an anthropologist from the Netherlands, and Professor Emeritus at Maastricht University, The Netherlands. He is well known for his groundbreaking work into and coordination of cross-cultural groups and organization. Hofstede's remarkable work is recalled as he promulgated 'Cultural Dimensions Theory'. Geert Hofstede's work unravels that national and regional cultural groups influence the behavior of societies and organizations ( <http://geerthofstede.com> ).

*traditions, symbols, patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, patterns of values, ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and practices, which act as factors in the shaping of human behaviour”* (Hofstede 2016; Kluchohn 1951:86; Kroeber and Parsons 1958:583 cited in Hofstede 2018). The understanding of culture is very significant for understanding the behavioural pattern of male and female, as well as their behaviour at the workplace. The six dimensions of this theory which analyse cultural values are: ‘large vs. small power distance’, ‘individualism-collectivism’, ‘masculinity vs. femininity’, ‘avoidance of uncertainty’, ‘long/short term orientation’, and ‘indulgence vs. restraint’. Hofstede’s six components of ‘Cultural Dimensions Theory’ have been discussed in the following section.

### ***Power Distance***

Power distance implies a difference in power, which originates in different ways like hierarchic organizational structures or over imposed respect and fear among employees of different grades or layers. The definition of ‘power distance’, according to the theory, is a situation where “*power is distributed unequally*” (Hofstede, 2010: 60-61). In some countries, employees are seen as being very afraid and superiors are often autocratic in decision-making. Normally, they do not communicate with their subordinates until they reach a decision. There are, however, variations between the small power distance (SPD) and large power distance (LPD) at workplaces. In the large-power-distance, there is a hierarchical system where superiors and subordinates regard each other as existentially unequal. Salary systems exhibit large gaps in the organization between the top and bottom. Relationships between subordinates and superiors are often loaded with emotions in a large-power distance organization (Hofstede, 2010: 73). Some cultures appreciate the norms of inequality and hierarchical system in community life. In Bangladesh, people are accustomed to such inequality.

### ***Individualism-Collectivism***

In an individualistic culture, it is accepted that the employees would prioritize their self interests. In such culture, interests of the employer is aligned with that of the employees. Thus the conflict is minimized between the goals of employer and employees. People and all forms of their personal needs are considered with high regard in an individualistic culture. Within individualistic cultures, the expectation is that everyone *should be treated equally*. “*This is known as universalism within sociological Jargon*” (Hofstede, 2010;122-123). On the other

hand, employers in a collectivist culture dissolve the identities of individual employees into that of the groups they belong to. An employee learns that his/her personal interest has no value in contrast with the interests of concerned group. This expectation is institutionalized and the opposite is strongly discouraged in a society (Hofstede, 2010). In a collectivist culture, individual's endeavour to serve self-interest is likely to cause conflict head-on with the flagbearers of group interest and the standards they set. Such communities share feedback more indirectly and subtly like removing usual favour or making indirect conversations (Hofstede, 2010: 122). In collectivist cultures, 'we' is stronger than 'I' as the concepts, not mere words. Living and working collectively is the inherent norm of the culture in Bangladesh too.

***Masculinity-Femininity***

*“A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life”* (Hofstede, 2010:139).

The basic features of masculine and feminine as delineated by Hofstede may be understood by the following poles –

Table 4: Masculine Pole and Feminine Pole

<b>Masculine Pole</b>	<b>Feminine Pole</b>
○ High earning opportunity	○ Sound operational attachment with superior
○ Acknowledgement of a good job	○ Cooperation at the workplace
○ The opportunity of higher-level promotion	○ Living in a desirable area
○ To do challenging work	○ Employment security
○ The personal sense of accomplishment	○ Preference for a less risky job

Source: Hofstede, 2010:139

The level of masculinity in Bangladeshi society is moderately high (Dutta and Islam, 2016). According to the masculinity index, Bangladesh holds the rank 30 and the score is 55 when the highest score is 110 for Slovakia and the lowest score is 5 for Sweden (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). According to Masculinity Index (MAS) values presented in Table 5.1, the most feminine-scoring countries (ranks 76-72) were Sweden, Norway, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Denmark (Hofstede

et al., 2010). This dimension of Hofstede's theory works on a culture's preference between masculine and feminine characteristics; former refers to competitiveness and later refers to cooperation, coordination and modesty.

### ***Uncertainty Avoidance***

People in a culture of higher 'Uncertainty Avoidance' prefer the organizations to be guided by strict rules. Strict rules keep the actions predetermined and results predictable. It does not tolerate the anxiety and ambiguity induced by some unconventional action which can yield unknown result. An organization with higher extent of 'uncertainty avoidance' keeps its employees in routine and set their works guided by some boundary. It tends not to trust any suggestion which was not experienced before because of the fear of any undesired outcome. Changes are hardly welcomed in the countries that highly value their traditions and rituals (Fiese, 2006). In Bangladesh intolerance to changes can be correlated to its traditionalist and ritualistic values. Here, uncertainty avoidance prevails and predetermined behaviours are predominant in all spheres.

### ***Long-Term Orientation-Short-Term Orientation***

*“Long-term orientation stands for the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards in particular, like perseverance and thrift. Its opposite pole, short-term orientation, stands for the fostering of virtues related to the past and present, e.g. respect for tradition, and fulfilling social obligations”* (Hofstede, 2010:239).

The societies with long-term oriented culture plan for the future, whereas the ones with short-term oriented culture plan for immediate result. Short-term oriented cultures may stay keen to see results in quarter of a year but long-term culture stay focused on decades ahead. When short-term gains contradicts long-term gains, long-term oriented culture leaves the immediate success for its more sustainable counterpart.

### ***Indulgence-Restraints***

*“Indulgence stands for a tendency to allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. Its opposite pole, restraint, reflects a conviction that such gratification needs to be curbed and regulated by strict social norms”* (Hofstede, 2010: 281).

Each culture will gratify desires by either letting those impulses rule the day or controlling them. Countries where indulgence rules include United States, France, European countries, Switzerland, Taiwan, Singapore, and the Netherlands. These countries are known for their liberal democratic political structure. On the other hand, restrained societies have a limited scope of the freedom of expression for citizens, e.g. Russia and Pakistan. Across twenty-six European countries, freedom of speech and democracy is strongly correlated with indulgence. More restrained societies are more strict about their application of law and order. Developed societies of contemporary world base their economies on service sector and they prefer a more indulgent culture (Hofstede, 2010). Bangladesh endures low-indulgent culture as it scored only 20 (Uddin, 2018). Such a score puts Bangladesh into the list of countries with restrained culture. Being a restrained one, people of this country are guided by societal, religious and cultural norms.

### **Justification of Kanter and Hofstede's Theories**

In this subsection, the logic behind incorporating these theories in the study is made clear. This applicability of the theories in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) would justify the reason behind undertaking both the theories for conducting the research. To understand why the researcher has chosen these theories, it is important to remember how this research defines professional hazard. It considers all the challenges and risks arising from the professional environment and affecting the professional performance and accomplishment as well as the personal well-being of female cadre officials in the civil service. Therefore, this research had to find the facts of female cadre officials' professional life, which affect their performance as well as personal well-being. Kanter's theory has come up as an excellent tool to answer this question since this theory organized the aspects that suppress or encourage the performance of employees. On the other hand, since this research wanted to explore the factors that cause the prevailing hazards, it had to investigate through the cultural aspects of the bureaucratic organization to develop a deep insight into what shape the behaviour of the people working here. Hofstede's 'Cultural Dimensions Theory', as explained in the previous section, is a great theoretical instrument to analyse an organization's cultural phenomena residing in its structure and shaping its behaviour.

In the Structural Empowerment Theory of Kanter, access to opportunity means the possibility for growth and movement within the organization as well as gaining an opportunity to increase knowledge and skills. If there is any malpractice concerned with gender regarding the decisions

of promotion, transfer or selection for foreign training and higher degree, it may affect the performance of concerned female cadre officials. Performance can also be affected by any gender-based disparity in access to resources required for accomplishing professional responsibilities. The same outcome can be caused by any hindrance in terms of female cadre officials in having access to information and support as well. Under access to information, there is the attainment of formal knowledge that is necessary to be effective in the workplace according to Kanter. Access to support means receiving feedback and guidance from subordinates, peers and superiors as mentioned by Kanter. Behaviour like non-cooperation and negative attitude of colleagues may appear as professional hazards for female members of cadre officials.

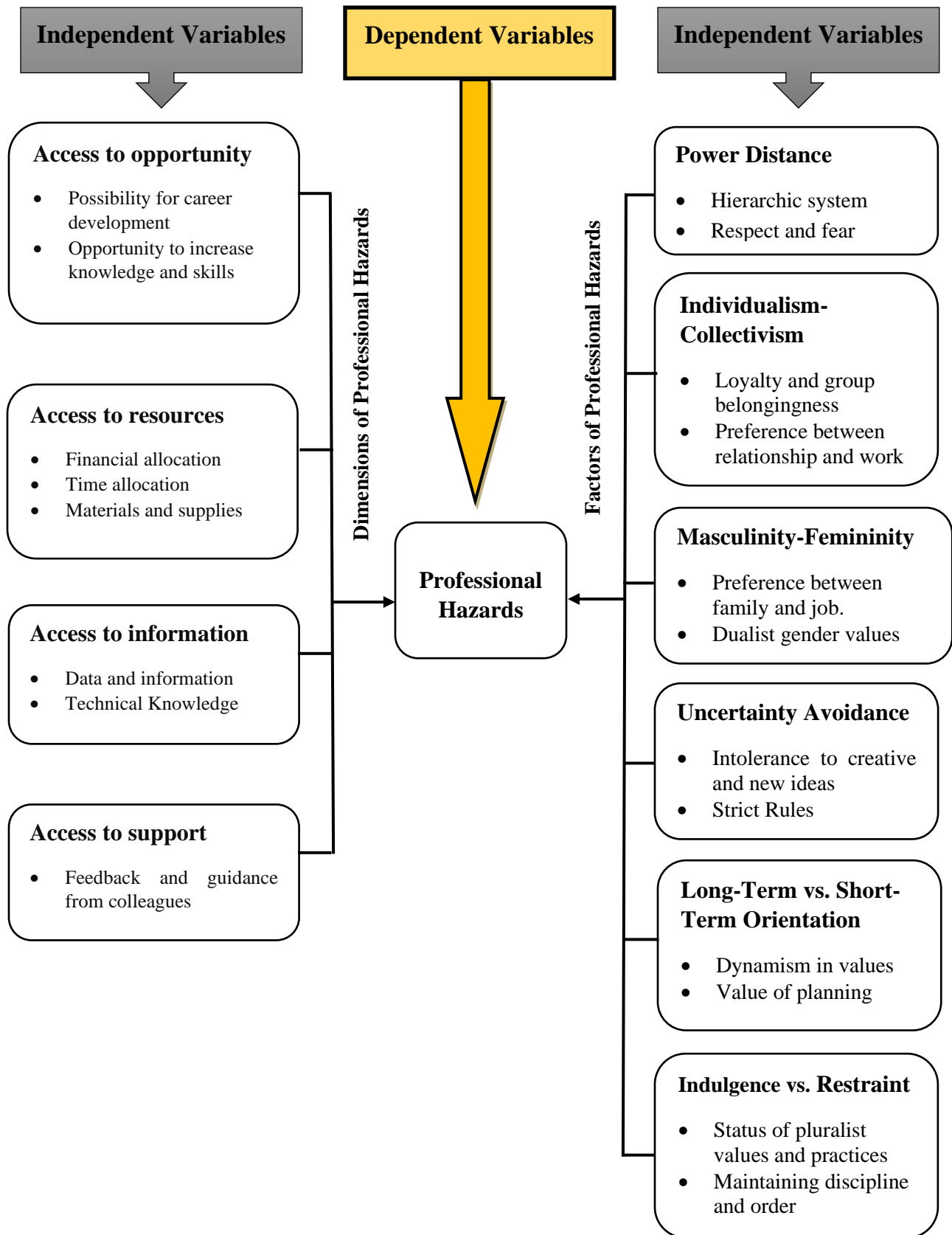
The Cultural Dimensions Theory, as explained in the previous section, shows how some cultural aspects shape the behaviour of the people belonging to that culture. This theory, since its introduction, has been frequently used to assess the cultural dimensions of different organizations ranging from school governance body to national bureaucracy to multinational corporations (Fowler, 1999; Kumar, 2007). All six dimensions introduced by Geert Hofstede can reveal, power distance across gender as well as the hierarchy, level of collectivism that omits individual aspirations of female officials, dominance of masculinity as in attitudes, principles and practices within the organization, level of intolerance to uncertainty, general orientation towards short-term plan, and preference of restraint to indulgence. Finding these features in the culture of an organization illuminates the reasons why the female cadre officials of that organization face hindrances in having access to opportunity, resources, information and support. Understanding this connection, the researcher bridged the theories of Kanter and Hofstede to investigate the questions of this research.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this research has been prepared by amalgamating Kanter's Structural Empowerment Theory and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. Kanter's theory attempts to explain the dimensions of current professional hazards faced by female cadre officials in the civil service of Bangladesh and Hofstede's theory helps to understand why and how these hazards originate in the organization.



Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Research



As depicted in Figure 1, the independent variables have been considered for detecting prevailing professional hazards of female cadre civil servants and the causes behind those hazards. Along with presenting the variables taken from two theories explained above, the figure delineates specific indicators to measure those variables. Since independent variables are of two types, dimensions of professional hazards and causes of professional hazards, those are placed in two sides in the figure. The left column presents the four dimensions of professional hazards derived from Kanter's theory. Firstly, the access to opportunity includes achieving the chances of training, promotion for career development, remaining free from nepotism, transfer in a preferred station, being motivated and remaining satisfied with job. Secondly, access to resources refers to financial and material resources, supply of which may have connections with administrative and bureaucratic culture. Thirdly, access to information includes proper recruitment and departmental information dissemination process as well as availability of technical knowledge. Lastly, access to support means all sorts of guidance and support from colleagues, especially male colleagues. Analyzing all these variables, this research has explored what sort of professional hazards female cadre civil servants confront while working in civil service.

The right column presents Hofstede's six cultural dimensions as six independent variables along with specific indicators. These variables are to be tested as the factors of professional hazards faced by the female members of the cadre civil service officials in Bangladesh. Indicators of power distance include hierarchy of the system and prevalence of respect and fear across that hierarchy. Then the extent of collectivism is set to be measured by two indicators; loyalty and group belongingness, and preference between relationship and work. To assess the third variable in this column, this research has measured what the organization prefers between family and job, and to what extent the dualist gender values prevail in the norms and practices within Bangladesh's bureaucracy. Then the organization's tolerance level to uncertainty is set to be measured by its tolerance to creative ideas and dependence on strict rule-based operations. The fifth variable related to the organization's orientation to planning also has two indicators; dynamism in values and the value of planning. Finally, the research sets to measure the organization's inclination to indulgence or restraint by the practice of pluralist values and its insistence on discipline and order.

## **Chapter IV - Evolution of Bangladesh Civil Service and The Status of Women: Historical Perspective**

### **Introduction**

To comprehend the present civil service in Bangladesh, it is necessary to attain its profile from historical point of view. This chapter entails the structure and organization of civil service in four different periods; Mughal, British-Indian, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Mughal rule laid the foundation of civil service in Indian sub-continent based on the then experiences from other empires like Persia and Middle Asia. The British invasion replaced the whole system with the one they already developed in the British Isles. The historical transition overturned the total system but changed later on with the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947 and the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, which made changes retaining the foundation of British system mostly intact. The current system of civil service in Bangladesh can be better explained as a domesticated British system where men took the place of colonial recruits, but women remained struggling to cross the barriers.

### **Civil Service Administration during the Mughal Era**

The Mughal Emperors<sup>25</sup> amalgamated the north and south parts of India under their rule and established a thriving civil service administration for a certain period (Metcalf and Metcalf, 2006). Mughal Empire developed its government system by combining Perso-Arabic and Indian components (Sarkar, 2013). The basic duty of civil service administration was to ensure law and order and accumulate taxes. To carry on this massive monarchic duty over a vast region, Mughal's administration<sup>26</sup> was divided into three main parts; the military, judiciary and revenue sector (Blake, 1979). The revenue administration was run by the District Collectors or Deputy

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<sup>25</sup> Emperor Babar established Mughal regime in Asia in 1526. He defeated Ibrahim Lodi in the first battle of Panipat and succeeded his regime. His brilliant successors namely Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb governed the region for many years (India today, May 6, 2016; Huque, 1996; Zafarullah and Huque, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> The administration was called "Subas" which was further subdivided into "Sarkar", "Pargana", and "Gram" (Blake, 1979).

Commissioners<sup>27</sup>, who collected the revenues from its citizens. They were governed based on centralized sovereignty. Every member of the bureaucratic system was supposed to abide by the law and be loyal to the empire. Besides, the judiciary<sup>28</sup> of the Mughal emperors, except Akbar<sup>29</sup>, was based on Islamic laws (Masud, 2019). People in the key positions of governance and commanding positions of military were known as Mansabdars (Blake, 1979). However, this revenue, judiciary and military administrative function were run across the provinces, districts, sub-districts based on their respective code of conducts (Blake, 1979; Srivastava, 2009).

Women of Mughal emperors were deeply involved in governing Harem<sup>30</sup> and court politics of the Kingdom. For instance, Daulat Begum<sup>31</sup> taught Babur about warfare and diplomatic matters. Maham Anaga<sup>32</sup> assisted Akbar to take critical decisions and implement policies of the Mughal court. Mah Chuchank Begum, the stepmother of Akbar, ruled and administered Kabul. She defeated Munim's powerful armed forces at Jalalabad and confronted Akbar utilizing her diplomatic and personal endeavours. Emperor Jahangir also had the practice of having consent from Nur Jahan before implementing any decision (Sundus, 2018; Travers, 2007).

### **Civil Service Administration during the British Indian Era**

The policy of the East India Company was the basis for the British civil service (Stening, 1994). In India, the word 'civil service' is said to have originated during the days of the government of the East India Company sometime between 1600 and 1858 (Gonsalves, 2019; Hutchins, 2015).

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<sup>27</sup> DC was known as Faujdar, who was assisted by Amil who collected revenue, Amin who inspected revenue, Patadar who took care of treasury, Qanungo who kept the records of land and Bitikchis equivalent to modern day clerks (Alavi, 1975).

<sup>28</sup> Those who run the Mughal Judiciary were known as Qazi, in the Ain-i-Akbari (Constitution of Akbar) the chief justice was called "the Qazi of the Imperial Camp" (Seth 1983).

<sup>29</sup> He introduced an inter-faith cultural and religious system by combining Islam and Hinduism known as Din-i-Ilahi (Khan, 1997; Masud, 2019).

<sup>30</sup> *Harem* denotes concealed venue for women and visit of men were limited (Lal 2005). The political powers of Mughal Empire sometimes were preceded by the oppressive in some cases as well as ladder based system in the Harem (Ghosh, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> Grandmother of Babur

<sup>32</sup> A chief nurse of Akbar

Civil servants during that time were obliged to perform a wide range of tasks; mainly legal, financial, and administrative ones along with tax and revenue collection (Hardiman, 1976). In addition to their regular duties of book-keeping, accounting, warehouse management, bursary, the charge of proceedings and correspondence ; keeping the record of stores, imports and exports, the civil servants had to travel with trade missions to the courts of princes and governors with requests and petitions. They sometimes did a little soldiering as well and received military commissions (Gonsalves, 2019).

The Civil Services in British India used to appoint two kinds of officers; covenanted and uncovenanted. Each 'Covenanted Servant' had to enter into a covenant with the company, signing a long-printed indenture drawn up in a form approved by the company's legal advisers. Recruitment of all the covenanted officers was conducted in London at that time. However, with the expansion of the company's activities, covenanted servants alone were not sufficient for performing all administrative responsibilities. The company, therefore, employed men outside the covenanted service for less important positions known as 'Uncovenanted Servants' (Arora and Goyal, 2013).

Indians were mainly employed in the non-covenanted Service (Birch, 2013). This service was not organized at all. It was a body of numerous employees who would carry out all the details of civil administration. There was no uniformity in the mode of recruitment or qualification for appointment to the non-covenanted Service, no fixed scales of pay and no security of tenure (Birch, 2013). When compared to the members of the covenanted civil services, the members of the non-covenanted services not only suffered from gross inequality in terms of status and salary but also found their career prospects blocked by rigid service systems (Gonsalves, 2019). Later, these non-covenant groups of officers were only called civil servants (Ghosal, 1944).

Though the British Government had the power to make all kinds of decisions, including civil-service appointments and pay determination (Dewey, 1973), the opinions of higher officials were also considered in some cases of recruitment (Moore, 1964). The government relaxed its grip on recruitment over time and the provincial authorities lately could control recruitment of civil servants for their administrations. However, their salaries and other benefits were determined by British government (Hardiman, 1976). As the the East India Company transferred the power to

the Crown in 1858, the civil servants appointed by them consolidated their hold over the entire administration of British India (Compton, 1968).

Under British rule, civil servants had a code of conduct (Birch, 2013). The India Act of 1784 introduced rules of conduct prohibiting corruptions of any kind (Haque and Haque, 2018). The Regulation Act of 1773 contains prohibition of accepting gifts, donations rewards by the officials. If found guilty of doing so, they would be legally convicted by the Supreme Court or the court of the mayor (Gonsalves, 2019). That time, negligence in duties, incapacity, corruption and other misconduct were considered as the prime reason for dismissal from the service.

During that period, high-level recruitment was usually made from England and low level from the local administration. Under the Company, the civil servants used to be posted in India after training them at Haileybury College in London (Moore, 1964). They were recruited by the Civil Service Commission based in London (Dewey, 1973). After the formation of the Commission in 1854, the competitive examinations were held in London. The candidates were examined by a syllabus overwhelmed by European context and standard (Misra, 1959). However, both the Court of Directors and the Board of Control were abolished later by the Government of India Act of 1858. Recruitment to the Indian Civil Service became centralized in the office of the Secretary of State for India in Council (Sharma, 2001). In the 1920s, the candidates could appear the examination both in London and India. Half of the recruits were to be from British nationals and the other half were from Indians (Gupta, 2019). Still, the local people were not getting enough opportunity to be selected as civil servants because of the discrimination over race, caste and ethnicity.

Gradually, the civil servants entered the government service entirely from earlier private activities. Over time, it has become the supreme body of policy and decision-making as well as power practice.

### **Civil Service Administration of Pakistan Period**

The Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) was developed from the Indian Civil Service and Covenant Civil Service of British-India (Hakim, 1992). There were two forms of Pakistan Civil Services; Central and Provincial (Talukder, 2018). The CSP officials were considered as generalist-administrators because they used to serve different departments ranging from land revenue to

law and order, and the administration of industrial, economic and commercial activities of the state (Ahmed, 1986).

The civil bureaucracy was often monitored and influenced by the military bureaucracy (Ziring and LaPorte, 1974) and there was a confronting relation between these two groups (Wilder, 2009). The civilian bureaucrats of Pakistan played vibrant role in policy and decision making. The politicians were not able to influence the civil servants by their prerogative powers. They had freedom in their selection, training, and transfer to irregular and inconvenient departments. The devaluation of ranks and forceful retirement from the civil services were strictly prohibited (Wilder, 2009).

Responding to the demand of the concerned society to restructure the civil service of Pakistan, the government of Pakistan formed an administrative committee to modify the structure, procedures and relevant aspects of the civil service in the year of 1958 (Imtiaz, 2013). The reform committee tried to modify the Civil Administration of Pakistan but failed. There were no major changes and modification in Pakistan Civil Services for the negligence of the recommendations made by the committees (Farazmand, 2002).

There was a system of vigorous training for the civil service officers in Pakistan. The Administrative Training Council was established in February 1960. The training session was designed categorically for commissioners, joint secretaries, and senior government officers at the administrative staff college, Lahore. The mid-level personnel of central government and provincial governments, independent agencies, and private firms were trained about management and development at the National Institute of Public Administration at Lahore and Dhaka (then spelt as Dacca). The administrative supervisory officers (village aid department), nation-building departments, CSP and provincial civil service officers were instructed at the Academies for Rural Development at Peshawar and Comilla. On the other hand, the ministerial personnel and lately inducted section officers were tutored at the Secretariat Training Institute (Gorvine, 1965). Women's recruitment in the civil service of Pakistan was very much improbable though they were part of all the social groups sourcing these officials; middle class<sup>33</sup>,

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<sup>33</sup> There were about 70% from middle class, 25% from upper class and 5% from lower middle class recruited in civil service of Pakistan

young<sup>34</sup> and fresh graduates<sup>35</sup> (Shafqat, 1999). Then women's entry was restricted to only in four services which the society considered suited for feminine characteristics due to their indoor and paper based responsibilities<sup>36</sup>. Women were considered not capable of accomplishing jobs that required outdoor movement and hard approaches like maintaining law and order. The worst aspect of restriction was the disapproval of married women as candidates of civil service entry examination. They not only considered married women primarily responsible for home making but also regarded them unfit for keeping up with professional standard of personal skill(Mahtab, 1995).

### **Civil Service Administration of Bangladesh Era**

The independence of Bangladesh was the result of a great vision to end all types of discriminations inflicted by the Pakistani rulers. After being independent, Bangladesh got an opportunity to replace the lately twisted administration with an upgraded bureaucracy characterized by good governance. The former CSP officers, after the independence, were appointed to the relevant department and ministries. The public administration of Bangladesh was influenced by the heritage of Pakistan for a certain period. However, the system improved over time. Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) carried out a procedure of abolishing structural and functional administrative disorder in public administration by its system of 28 cadres (Zafarullah and Huque, 2001). According to the BCS (Age, Eligibility and Direct Recruitment Examination) Rules-2014 currently Bangladesh Civil Service, the Public Service Commission conducts a three-tier examination for the recruitment of suitable candidates in the 27 cadres of the BCS. As per published in Bangladesh Gazette on 13 November 2018 SRONo. 335-Act/2018, Bangladesh Civil Service (Economic) cadre has been integrated with the Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) cadre (BPSC, 2019).

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<sup>34</sup> The age parameters of the candidates were within 22 to 23 years.

<sup>35</sup> The educational qualifications of the candidates were 60% to 65%, holding M.A./M. Sc. background and 40% to 45% were from B.A./B.Sc background.

<sup>36</sup>The Recruitment Rules of the Civil Services approved women's application in four services; 1) Audit and Accounts Service, 2) Railway Accounts Service, 3) Military Accounts Service, 4) Income Tax and Postal Services.



The Bangladesh civil service administration has been developed based on some policies and laws. Firstly, the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh established the Public Service Commission (PSC), and set its process<sup>37</sup>, recruitments<sup>38</sup>, terms of office<sup>39</sup>, and functions<sup>40</sup> (The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, 2019).

Table 5: Rules and regulations in the evolution of the Bangladesh Civil Service

<b>SL.</b>	<b>Name of Laws/Policies</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Issue/Fact</b>
1	Government Servants (Conduct) Rule	1979	Conduct
2	Public Servants (Special Provisions) Ordinance	1979	Special Provisions
3	Public Servants (Retirement) Act	1974	Retirement
4	Bangladesh Public Service Commission Ordinance and Amendments	1977	Ordinance with amendments
5	Bangladesh Civil Services (Reformation) Order	1980	Reformation with amendment
6	Bangladesh Civil Service (Recruitment) Rules	1981	Recruitment
7	Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) rule	1985	Discipline and Appeal

Source: MoPA, 2009

The above Table 5 entails different ordinances and laws that were enacted to further the institutional development of the Civil Services Administration in Bangladesh. The supervision, control and management of the civil servants were done and still conducted by two major constitutional bodies; the Ministry of Public Administration (MoPA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC). Additionally, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Ministry of Law (MoL) assists the government when required in dealing with the personnel administrative activities (BPSC, 2019).

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<sup>37</sup> In article 137

<sup>38</sup> In article 138

<sup>39</sup> In article 139

<sup>40</sup> In article 140 and 141

### ***Recruitment policy***

In Bangladesh Civil Service, 70% of Class I officers were recruited under 29 cadres (Kalimullah et. al, 2014). The recruitment policy was based on the admixture of merit and equity principles (Ahmed, 2014). Recruitment to the civil service is regulated by the Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment Rules 1981 and the Bangladesh Civil Service (Age, Qualification and Examination for Direct Recruitment) Rules 2014 (BPSC, 2019). PSC conducts an open competitive examination that includes preliminary test, written exam and viva voce (Jahan and Monem 2014). The candidates who qualify the BCS examination are identified as cadre officers (Zaman, 2015). Cadre is a discrete functional subsection in the administrative structure of the bureaucracy (Jahan 2012 cited in Zaman 2015). The government services which are legally controlled and directed by recruitment and promotion rules, such positions in bureaucracy are known as cadre services (Morshed 1997 cited in Jahan 2007). Bangladesh follows a ‘closed entry’ system which closes the recruitment at the entry level of cadre officers (Appendix-V & IX) the upper level positions are filled by promoting the recruited officers. Only exception to this closed entry system in this country is the provision of 10% appointments at mid and upper levels on contractual basis or on deputation (Kalimullah et al, 2014).

The entry level requirement of BCS is a four years honours degree from any recognized university and the age in the range between 21 and 30 years<sup>41</sup>. Bangladeshi citizenship is also a mandatory requirement and one’s citizenship will not be eligible if that person is married to a foreign citizen. A candidate must specify his/her choice of cadre preference in the application beforehand (BPSC, 2019). Since the 1990s, the BPSC requests the MoPA to send cadre wise vacancy list. MoPA collects the number of vacancies from respective ministries and agencies and transmits the vacancy list to BPSC. After receiving the requisition from MoPA, the BPSC advertises calling for applications from the eligible citizens against the number of vacant posts (BPSC, 2019).

All the eligible candidates have to appear at a Preliminary Test comprising of 200 marks. Pass marks is decided by BPSC after every examination and it varies from one examination to another. BPSC decides that based on the approximate number of candidates they require for the

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<sup>41</sup> The age limit was extended by two years for freedom fighters and their sons or daughters, disable candidates and BCS (Health) cadre candidates

next level which is the written examination. Only the qualified candidates in the Preliminary Test are eligible to appear in the written examination of 900 marks. The condition to qualify for the viva voce is to secure 50% marks in the written examination. Qualified candidates have to appear before the viva boards constituted of experts by the BPSC. Viva board tests the aptitude and other personality traits that are crucial for the professional performance of a civil service officer. The board considers a candidate's accomplishments of both curricular and extracurricular nature. If any candidate cannot secure 50% of total 200 marks in viva voce, he/she is not considered for the final selection (Kalimullah et al, 2014 and BPSC, 2019).

BPSC publishes a merit list based on the aggregate marks of written examination and viva-voce. Selected candidates go through a medical examination to ensure medical fitness and police verification to rule out criminal record before being posted as an officer of civil service. BPSC finalizes a list of recommended candidates enclosing the names of those in the merit list who cleared both medical examinations and police verifications. This list is shared with the Ministry of Public Administration and the ministry forwards this to the office of the Honorable President. Approval from the Honorable President make the candidates eligible to be posted and the Ministry of Public Administration issues the appointment letter for those who made it up to the list approved by the Honorable President (BPSC, 2019). The successfully passed cadre officials are posted in various ministries and departments and later rotated as required. The candidates who pass both written and viva but cannot secure place in cadre service due to limited vacancy are recommended for recruitment in the non-cadre posts following the requisition of the ministries (Kalimullah et. al, 2014; BPSC, 2019).

### ***Training Policy and Institutions***

Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) has been playing a tremendous role as the apex training institute in preparing the civil service officials with adequate knowledge and skill to serve the country as per the job requirements. Since its emergence in 1984, BPATC is responsible for imparting Foundation Training Course (FTC) to the officials of all cadres. It also holds some advance courses and short courses for the officials of all levels to serve their intellectual needs regarding the policies and priorities of the government and the contemporary trends and practices of public administration. Courses offered to the senior officials include the Advanced Course on Administration and Development (ACAD) and Senior Staff Course (SSC);

former for deputy secretaries and the later for the Joint Secretaries. Moreover, there are four categories of foreign training such as study tour, orientation courses and seminars, short-term courses, medium-term courses and higher studies leading to Masters and Ph.D degrees (Jahan and Monem, 2014).

To reduce the backlog, BPATC has delegated FTC to different training institutions like BCS (Administration) Academy, National Academy for Planning and Development, Rural Development Academy (Bogra), Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (Cumilla). After the FTC, the civil servants report to their parent ministry and after a certain period, the officers join training institutions meant for imparting departmental training to different cadres. There are various training institutions belonging to different ministries, divisions and public statutory bodies. Some of the major training institutions are BCS (Administration) Training Academy, National Academy for Education and Management (NAEM), Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) (Kalimullah et al., 2014).

### ***Transfer and Disciplinary Measures***

MoPA and concerned ministries are responsible for transfer and posting of civil servants. The only criterion that makes a civil servant objectively eligible for transfer is his/her tenure of service in the current post. The ministry must ensure that the transfer does not reduce the amount of pay an official receives in current post (Siddique 2003 cited in Kalimullah et al., 2014). Disciplinary measures suggested by existing rules and regulations<sup>42</sup> include dismissal, suspension, downgrading and reduction in pay. A transfer may cause some troubles of different kinds but not any of what are suggested as disciplinary action. Still, the government sometimes undertake transfer order in a manner when it seems to be a disciplinary action against a civil servant accused of some misconduct. However, punitive measures can be taken against the issues like insubordination, misconduct and corruption, but the accused civil servant has the right to complain against the government in the administrative tribunals. (Zafarullah, 2000, Ali 2010 cited in Kalimullah et al., 2014).

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<sup>42</sup> Government Servant (Conduct) Rules and Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules

### *Status of women*

Bangladesh government incorporated the principle of 'Equal Employment Opportunity' in the Constitution of Bangladesh to regulate the recruitment and selection process in BCS (Zafarullah and Khan 1989 cited in Khan, 2016). Application of this principle led to the emergence of quota (reservation of posts) system in 1972 (Khan, 2016). The quota system was implemented through an interim recruitment policy to increase the number of women in the civil service. Still, their representation remain at a minimal ratio compared to their male counterparts. Data reveal the slow rate of increasing women's participation in civil service; 7 per cent before 1976, 8 percent in 1985, 9 per cent in 1994 and 10 per cent in 2002 (Khan, 1988 cited in Jahan, 2007; BBS, 1996; Kashem, 2002). Lower participation of women is revealed across all the ranks and tiers of civil service (Kashem, 2002).

However, there have been some positive changes in women's participation in different cadre services in the last few decades. Women have been joining police since the 18<sup>th</sup> BCS after the government withdrew the gender-based restriction of recruitment in this cadre (Kashem, 2002). Still, the distribution of women across different cadres reveal their higher representation in the sectors that are traditionally considered feminine, i.e. education, health and social service, and lower representation in the stereotypically masculine cadres, i.e. administration and police. Another discrepancy of female representation, mentioned at the beginning of this research, is between lower and higher ranks of administration. A newly recruited official almost take two decades to be placed in higher decision making post (Jahan, 2007).

# **Chapter V - Prevailing Nature of Professional Hazards affecting Female Cadre Civil Servants in Bangladesh**

## **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the nature of professional hazards experienced by the female cadre civil servants in Bangladesh on the basis of Kanter's Structural Empowerment Theory. The research enquired into female officials' access to opportunity, resources, information and support considering the limitations and challenges in such access as professional hazards affect the professional performance as well as personal well-being of female officials. Analyzing the primary and secondary data from secondary documents, in-depth interviews and some survey questions, this research has found crucial shortcomings and challenges female cadre officials experience in gaining all four forms of accesses mentioned above (See Appendix-VI and Appendix-VIII). Though the cadre officers of Bangladesh civil service are entrusted with power and privilege to execute government decisions, the level of empowerment varies across gender. The female members of the BCS officials are found struggling more than their male counterparts in making their way up the ladder of rank. Moreover, they find it difficult to mobilize staffs, resources and information to accomplish their tasks. The organization is found with a tendency to entrust female officials with fewer resources and comparatively smaller and less critical projects. They are not provided with the information and support they need from their work environment. Female officials consider themselves having less effective control over their environment due to some forms of non-cooperation that is exclusively confronted by female officials in most of the instances.

## **Access to opportunity**

This section identified the professional hazards which are hurdle towards career development and such professional hazards that restricts the opportunity to increase knowledge and skills. In both of these cases, some elements of social structure, as well as institutional structure of bureaucracy, create barriers to shrink the opportunity of women for progress in their career. Growth of an employee within an organization is ensured through professional development as well as improvement of position, expertise, skills and others (Weng et al., 2010). For the women

of Bangladesh, career development in civil service encounter barriers in every stage. The social structure of Bangladesh, in many ways restrict the women from being prepared to have an entrance in civil service. *“The bright female candidates even sometimes do not perform well in the BCS viva exam as our socio-cultural environment do not permit our daughters to move freely and they lack enough outer exposure, consequently they lack broader outlook and general knowledge”*(Expert I, 2017). Further structural barriers include some traditional attitudes stemming from the dualistic gender perception, which considers man as the breadwinner and woman as a homemaker. This binary attribution discourages girls’ education or vocational training, women’s engagement in mainstream professions and encourages early marriage of girls as well as their domesticity. Interestingly, when a woman overcomes all such hurdles with privilege or hard work or a combination of both, they find themselves in a new level of hazardous situation. Reaching to a position of power does not necessarily free a woman from her gender-based disparity. She has yet to break the invisible barriers to get promoted in the line of hierarchy.

#### ***Opportunity of hierarchic growth of career***

Once a girl gets privilege to compete in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination and succeeds to secure a place in civil service indicates that she just passed one stage of struggle to face newer challenges at a new level being a woman. Most importantly, she has to encounter most of these challenges just because of being a woman, unlike what her male colleagues go through. The barriers of promotion, revealed by this study, include male-dominated promotion committee, female officials’ lacking in communication skills and the problem of beauty myth in the organization. Beyond the organizational boundary, family responsibilities often obstruct women’s career.

#### ***Promotion***

The promotion process is systematically fair but female civil service officers (CSOs) are less likely to get promoted compared to their male colleagues (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Despite having a specific set of criteria for promotion, the ratio of promotion of female CSOs is less than that of male CSOs (N. Sania 2019, personal communication, November 20). The ratio of women in different tiers of administration reveals less presentation of female CSOs in higher ranks (MoPA, 2018; Jahan, 2006; FR Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 06 and

FGD-3, November 06, 2019). The ratio of female officials gradually decreases from junior to senior ranks. In BCS, female officials occupied 33.75% of the Assistant Secretaries, but only 13.33% of the Secretaries. These figures support the claim that female officials are somehow kept contained from the hierarchic growth in their career.

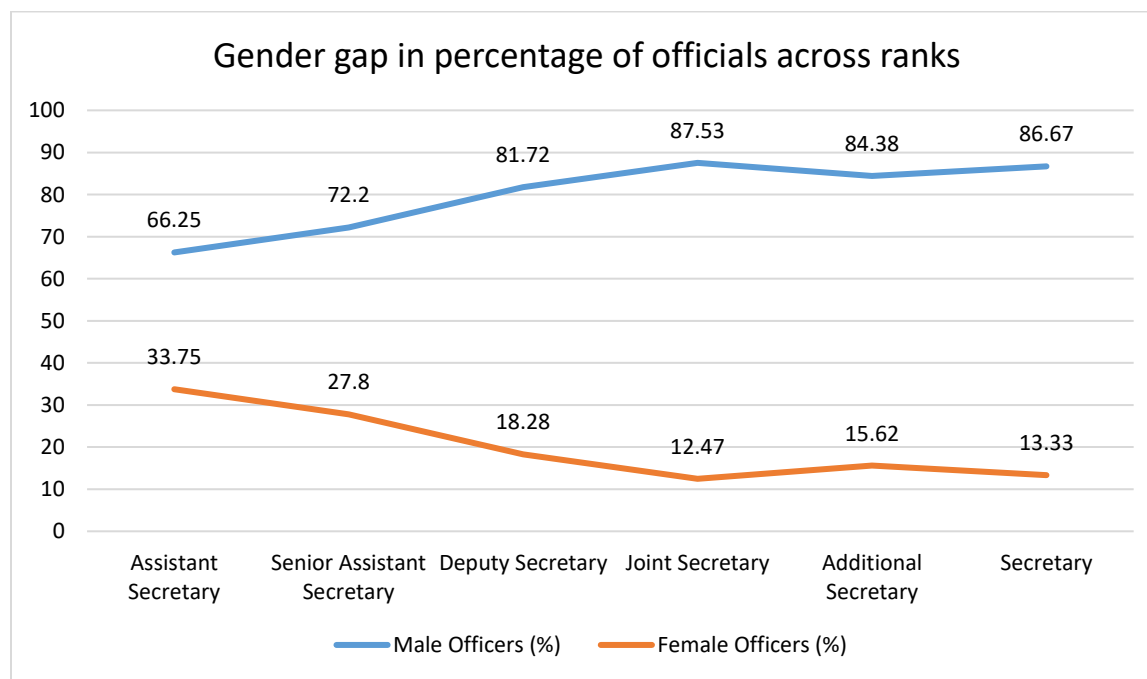
Table 6: Gender-based distribution of civil servants in different ranks, 2018

Sl	Designation	Male (N)	Female (N)	Total	Male %	Female %	Total
1	Secretary	65	10	75	86.67	13.33	100%
2	Additional Secretary	416	77	493	84.38	15.62	100%
3	Joint Secretary	674	96	770	87.53	12.47	100%
4	Deputy Secretary	1055	236	1291	81.72	18.28	100%
5	Senior Assistant Secretary	1065	410	1475	72.20	27.80	100%
6	Assistant Secretary	842	429	1271	66.25	33.75	100%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4117</b>	<b>1258</b>	<b>5375</b>	<b>76.60</b>	<b>23.40</b>	

Source: MoPA, 2018

The percentage of female officials as mentioned above in different ranks in BCS have been depicted through a graph which also demonstrates the status of female officials in the policy making level.

Figure 2: Gender gap in percentage of officials across ranks





The figure (Figure 2) presents a sloping representation of female civil servants in BCS. From the Assistant Secretary level (33.75%) towards a higher level of Joint Secretary (12.47%), the percentage of women officials diminish gradually. There is a minor increase in terms of percentage at the Additional Secretary (15.62%) level. Then again in the Secretary level (13.33%), the percentage decreases as there were only ten (10) female Secretaries altogether in BCS in 2018. Showing the percentage of male officers along, the figure shows a constantly increasing gender gap as the curves move from junior to senior ranks.

Male-dominated system of promotion is one of the responses to women's less opportunity to get promoted. Absence or limited presence of female members in Superior Selection Board (SSB)<sup>43</sup> increases the chance of bias towards male candidates and reduces female officials' opportunity of being understood beyond the typical criteria of promotion. Presently, the SSB consists of Cabinet Secretary as Chairman and Secretary of MoPA, Secretary of Finance, Secretary to the Prime Minister's Office, and Secretary of Home Affairs as members (FGD-2, January 21, 2020; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). During the period of data collection of this study, there was no female member in this panel. Since this board is responsible for selecting officials who would be promoted, the members of this board have to thoroughly conceptualize the officials having potential capability and candidacy for promotion. Having some female members in the SSB would help to broaden the board's understanding by adding some outlook from a gender perspective (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Male selectors are more likely to understand the quantitative achievement of male candidates and less likely to understand the qualitative value of female candidates or consider their typical challenges (FGD-2, January 21, 2020). Therefore, the lack of gender diversity in the selection board deserves taking some blame for creating a cycle of women's stagnation in case of career progression.

Another challenge women face is their limited opportunity to communicate their performance and accomplishments to the higher officials as well as the wider sphere of the organization. Such communication helps create a positive image of an officer, which helps their career progress. Because, technically speaking, promotion of the officials depend on what the selectors know about their performance. In current practice, official documents and formal interactions are not

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<sup>43</sup>The decision of promotion for the cadre civil servants is made by Superior Selection Board (SSB)

enough for an officer to make the higher authority informed about his/her capability. Therefore, the officials create alternative paths to reach the higher authority and convince them about his/her ability to contribute with higher capacity (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; FGD-1, January 21, 2020). Female members of BCS officials acknowledge lagging in this aspect. They can hardly extend office stay and make time for informal gatherings mainly due to their family responsibilities, security as well as taboos (FGD-3, November 6, 2019). Such constraints disconnect them from informal opportunities of the aforementioned communications and networking. Moreover, the social structure of Bangladesh, being moderately masculine, generally equips women with less communication skill. Such deficiency is carried by most women including the civil servants (FGD-1, January 21, 2020; N Shabnum, 2019, personal communication, December 10). Another challenge in this regard is the honey trapping myths<sup>44</sup> related to female officials who have wider communications (M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Therefore, male officials can use their leverage of additional communication opportunities to outrace their female counterparts in the competition of promotion.

The honey trapping myths or beauty myths not only restrict women's communications but also harm their carrier progress in many other ways. Some of the male colleagues have the tendency not to credit a female officer's managerial or leadership capacity for any achievement but her secret act of seducing people (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14). Promotion of female officers also creates a wave of untrue stories with sexual elements. In these stories, beauty and sexuality become the key qualities of the female officers. Dirty gossip<sup>45</sup> and rumours are spread pointing at their

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<sup>44</sup> It's a common fear in the female officials who have the potential of being promoted. Their communications with higher officials are, sometimes, misunderstood by others as a seductive measure to ease their way up the rank. To maintain a clean image, female officials often tend to turn extra introvert and curb their communications (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14; FGD-1, January 21, 2020).

<sup>45</sup> Compared to men, when a woman's financial ability, educational ability, professional quality and success, family and social acceptance improves remarkably, then in many cases men suffer from insecurity (real jealousy) and inferiority and due to these reasons such treatment (dirty gossip) comes against women. In a male-dominated institute, men are powerful, women have accepted that they cannot always challenge men in this regard. In such case, women lose power and become tolerant. It is easier for men to cross over any punishment despite devaluing the women officials.

beauty and sexuality as the causes for their promotion. (M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Though these rumours engage female and male officers, female officers are particularly at higher risk of having negative marks in performance appraisal. The respondents shared that rumour has a minimal effect over a male officer's career but, even a trivial rumour is taken as a significant issue and enough of a reason to consider a female officer ineligible to get promoted. (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6). Most regrettably, the gossipers include not only male but also female colleagues<sup>46</sup> (N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26). Such practices affect female officials' enthusiasm to attempt for promotion (Schwantes, 2019).

### *Transfer*

Transferred posting is an inevitable part of the growth in an officer's career, but it is a paradox for a female members in civil service. A female officer's crisis is highly associated with the transfer because although it creates an opportunity of career progression, it also creates a challenge of distancing from family. Family responsibility is the foremost barrier for a female officer to accept a transfer to a distant station. (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 06; FGD-3, November 06, 2019). A full-time job does not excuse most of the female officers from domestic responsibilities<sup>47</sup>. Being in the middle of dual expectations from office and family, it becomes difficult for them to adjust if they are transferred suddenly. This crisis takes a toll of female officials' progress in career (Jahan, 2007). Because isolation from family often leads to issues of contention (S Prity, 2020, personal communication, January 14). However, respondents mostly agreed that women rarely get the privilege to find a posting of

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<sup>46</sup>Unable to express one's own inability, failure, deception, and deprivation, at one stage evokes anger, hatred and jealousy in women's mind and it is divulged to other women. If the morality of a deprived woman is strong, then, she would not blame other women for her failure instead be tolerant and generous towards other women. If her/his moral ideas are not strong enough and affect one's thinking collectively, then 'Empathy' will never work for others; on the contrary, 'Antipathy' behavior will be exposed.

<sup>47</sup> According to a study of the Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a woman in a family works on average of 12.1 SNAs (System of National Accounts) per day. In contrast, a male member of the family works only 2.7. SNAs.

their choice compatible with their family (N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; and S Farzeen, 2019, personal communication, November 28).

Female officers prefer to be transferred to some station either near home or in such a place where the husband is stationed (See Appendix-XI). However, they often get transferred to neither of these sorts.

Table 7: Negative impact of transfer of female cadre civil servants

Designation	Yes		No		N/A		No Response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secretary	2	40.00	0	0.00	1	20.00	2	40.00	5	100
Additional Secretary	7	50.00	5	41.67	1	8.33	0	0.00	13	100
Joint Secretary	8	57.14	5	35.71	1	7.14	0	0.00	14	100
Deputy Secretary	18	60.00	10	33.33	1	3.33	1	3.33	30	100
Senior Asst. Secretary	30	60.00	9	18.00	9	18.00	2	4.00	50	100
Assistant Secretary	25	45.28	21	39.62	4	7.55	2	3.77	52	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>54.88</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>30.49</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10.37</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>164</b>	

54.88% (90) of the respondents shared that they had to bear various professional challenges when they were transferred to a new district and had to leave their children and other family members for joining the new station. Such a crisis creates tremendous psychological pressure and also leaves an adverse socio-cultural impact as the family is splitted. It can also affect the quality of public service since the officer cannot keep herself psychologically stable enough. On the contrary, 30.49% (50) responded that they did not face such professional hazards. Those who responded as such mentioned about a senior member of the family who took care of home affairs and some of those officials had grown-up siblings who helped themselves as well. In this survey, 4.29% (7) remained silent and 10.37% (17) marked not applicable in their case.

***Opportunity to increase knowledge and skills***

This study ruminates the opportunity of higher education and training as the opportunity to increase knowledge and skills for the female civil service officers. It has found that the existing

policy over higher education is systematically fair for both male and female officers but social structure such as family responsibility causes barriers for the female officers to avail the higher education in time. Family responsibilities are also the key barriers for availing residential training.

### ***Higher Education***

Officers of civil service in Bangladesh usually pursue higher education<sup>48</sup> after joining the service. Female members of BCS officers can apply and achieve scholarship along with their male colleagues without facing any gender-based discrimination (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26). The government of Bangladesh contacts the universities abroad and makes an official arrangement to provide the officials special opportunity to avail the scopes of higher studies and enhance their knowledge. For instance, under the Human Resource Development Scholarship Scheme (JDC) of the Government of Japan, BCS cadre officers get the opportunity to study for a two-year master's course at various Japanese universities. Under the project, JICA contributes 100 per cent of the scholarships to those officials who attain the opportunity to study. Along with the Master's programme, the officers can also enrol for a PhD programme with the funding support of such scholarships. They can study public administration, economics, law, city planning and government financing and investment policies (JDS - Bangladesh, 2020). Besides, the government of Bangladesh in the year of 2015 made policy for its Employees to allow achieving higher education within the country (See Appendix- X).

The fair system of enrolment in higher education is not exempted from the barriers caused by the family responsibilities of female officers (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Most of the female cadre officials cannot avail their opportunity of higher education just because of their inability to avoid family responsibilities for a certain period (N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; S Farzeen, 2019, personal communication, November 28). When it comes to an issue of

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<sup>48</sup> During the financial years of 2009 to 2018, 720 BCS officials had obtained Master's Degree, 260 BCS officials obtained PhD Degree, 157 BCS officials had taken Diploma Degree and 1717 BCS officials had undertaken short courses from abroad. Joint secretaries, additional secretaries and secretaries had been trained in short courses. Most of these courses and degrees were attained from the universities of United Kingdom, and many other universities in the United States, Italy, and Australia.

choice between opposing interests of the family and higher education, many women prioritize family, unlike the male officers who can easily decide to leave home for higher education abroad. Consequently, many female officers could not attain their higher degree in time and their career progression had become difficult in comparison to their male colleagues who completed masters or PhD from reputed institutions abroad (S Rahemeen, 2019, personal communication, December 22; FGD-2, January 21, 2020; FGD-3, November 06, 2019; FGD-4, November 24, 2019).

### ***Training***

In BPATC different training courses are imparted to the BCS cadre officials. Mainly, '*Foundation Training Course*' for the Assistant Secretary level, '*Advanced Course on Administration and Development*' for Deputy Secretary level and '*Senior Staff Course*' for Joint Secretary level officials (MoPA Annual Report 2017-2018:45).

The scope and interest of foreign training have increased in the recent past. According to the MoPA, about 7663 officers had been trained abroad from 2009 to 2018 (MoPA January 2019). According to seniority for 21 days foreign training 100 deputy secretaries are sent to Australia, 100 joint secretary level and 50 additional secretary level officials are sent to U.S.A. For short course (12 days) training, junior officials are sent to China, Hong Kong, Korea, Vietnam and other countries. Officials are also trained abroad through projects under various ministries funded by different donor agencies including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNDP (FGD-4, November 24, 2019, Additional Secretary MoPA).

While female officers struggle to manage their family, male officers often use their social as well as communicational leverage to get access to professionally significant trainings; both domestic and foreign. Like higher education, family responsibilities are the vital barrier for the female officers regarding both foreign training and domestic residential training (FGD-2, January 21, 2020; FGD-3, November 06, 2019; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). The lack of family support such as proactive assurance and responsibility sharing by other family members, lack of support in child-rearing and caring are the key challenges that the female civil servants in Bangladesh face (M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14; N Shabnum, 2019, personal communication, November 3; S Rahemeen, 2019, personal communication, December 22; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). They compromise their opportunity to get trained and develop

professional excellence to support their career progress. Moreover, officers of civil service consider international training as an opportunity and they compete to secure place as trainees. Proper communication of an officer with authority sometimes helps to secure a place in such training. Absence of proper lobby (happens mostly in case of female officials) creates hurdle and sometimes causes even non-selection for participation.

All the cadre officials of certain level irrespective of gender can openly apply for participating in foreign training programme<sup>49</sup>. Due to the challenges mentioned above and criterion set by the MoPA, it finds a very insignificant number of female cadre members interested and eligible for foreign training<sup>50</sup>.

### **Access to resources**

This section examines the professional hazards of the female officers of civil service in terms of access to resources. Taking into consideration the idea of Kanter (1977), the discussion of this section identified their professional hazards measured by their access to required finance, materials, supplies and time.

#### ***Financial and material resources***

It is difficult for female officials to secure the allotment of adequate financial and material supplies for their task. Though both the male and female officials encounter this challenge, women have some additional difficulties compared to the male colleagues in this regard. The main difficulty is the mind-set that female members of BCS are not capable of managing an enormous budget and the higher magnitude of tasks in terms of handling larger amount of materials and supplies (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; N Sania, 2019, personal communication,

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<sup>49</sup> There is a foreign training manual in MoPA where certain criteria are set for the selection of trainee. Firstly, officials must apply. Secondly, the officials must not have already attended the same training. Thirdly, the candidate must not have less than three years to be in service before retirement which is 59 years of age (telephonic interview with senior officials MoPA).

<sup>50</sup> Foreign Training Manual, MoPA, telephonic interview with senior officials MoPA.

November 26). The obvious consequence is, firstly, the appointment of female officers to less critical positions and entrusting them with a lesser magnitude of tasks and secondly being extra concerned and conservative in allotting larger amount of budget or supplies (S Rahemeen, 2019, personal communication, December 22; S Y Suraiya, 2020, personal communication January 21).

Patriarchal values are so strong in the country’s culture that the employers often agree with mass people on women’s inability to serve as administrators and to accomplish the tasks generally considered as challenging. Therefore, people hardly accept women serving as ‘magistrate’ or ‘police officer’. Social prejudices created by “*traditional norms, values and the socialization process*” have developed this parochial mindset in both men and women (Kashem et al., 2002: 94). Even after decades in the bureaucratic circle, male officials hold this parochial idea and let this prejudice influence their decisions in service. This mind-set affects the readiness of authority to appoint female officers to critical posts and to allot more resources under the management of a female officer.

Table 8: Male peer confidence in the competence of female officials

Designation	Yes		Sometimes		No		No Response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secretary	2	40.00	1	20.00	0	0.00	2	40.00	5	100
Additional Secretary	5	41.67	8	58.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	13	100
Joint Secretary	4	28.57	10	71.43	0	0.00	0	0.00	14	100
Deputy Secretary	14	50.00	13	43.33	2	6.67	1	3.33	30	100
Senior Asst. Secretary	25	50.00	23	46.00	0	0.00	2	4.00	50	100
Assistant Secretary	32	58.49	17	32.08	2	3.77	1	1.89	52	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>43.90</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2.44</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>164</b>	

The main constraint of the allotment of resources is the lack of confidence of authority on the capacity of female officers. This study has investigated whether the female members of cadre officers are valued as competent enough to take decisions and face challenges in critical conditions. 50% (82) of the respondents answered positively that male superiors and peers show due respect and consider them to be competent in their work. On the contrary, 46.34% (72+4) of the respondents shared their experience of usually not receiving due respect and confidence.



Only 3.66% (6) abstained from answering this question. When female members of civil servants do not get the opportunity to participate in the major decision-making process or important information is not circulated to them, they would not be able to prove their expertise in their work. Confronting such adverse attitude and behaviour female officials are often demoralized and demotivated which leads to professional hazards and eventually the female officials quality of performance is also affected.

### ***Time allocation***

Though there is no formal or informal discrepancy between male and female members of cadre officers in having required time to get their job done, there exist some critical issues that shrinks the time allotted to the female officers compared to the male officers. Female officers cannot extend their daily allotted time for official tasks. Moreover, some female officers face troubles getting enough support from the staffs to efficiently utilize their time. One key distinction between male and female officers is that the male officers can dedicate time at the office and beyond regular office hours also but the female officers cannot do the same because of their family engagement as well as restrictions in late hour office engagement (S Y Suraiya, 2020, personal communication, January 21). Therefore, even with the same deadline, female officers often get less quality time than male officers.

It was reported by some of the respondents that when junior female officials cannot accomplish assigned work in time, then they are rebuked by senior officials. Though this is common for the officers of both the genders, female officials think their case is harsher than the male officials. They are subject to derogative remarks. Sometimes, they are said that their incompetence is inevitable because incompetent is what women are. They are even said they would be better off as the homemakers or they would fit better in the kitchen. Besides, usually, the female officials are unable to explain the causes of delay or incapacity, hence cannot defend themselves.

Moreover, female members of cadre officers often find it difficult to efficiently use their time because of lacking a well responsive support system. This study finds that in most of the cases the supporting staffs of the female officials are not quite obedient to their orders. The staffs often do not take the work seriously if it is assigned by a female officer. The female officers have such experience that the staffs pass time gossiping and using a smartphone when they are asked for an important task. Even if the officer strictly instructs them, they often move in a very callous and

slow manner. They not only dislike taking orders from women but also consider female officials as less powerful than the male officials in punishing the subordinates. The female officers are concerned that if the staffs are seriously taken to task, these subordinate staffs become united and spread rumours in their group against their superior female officers. They also become more non-cooperative than before, after being rebuked (K Brishty, 2020, personal communication, January 21; FGD-3, November 6, 2019).

It's conclusive to say that female officials lack time to accomplish their task both in quantity and quality compared to their male counterparts. Therefore, senior officials hold a presumption that female officers cannot complete their tasks in time (FGD-2, January 21, 2020; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26). This predisposition regarding female officers is responsible for other problems like restrictive allotment of budget and other resources to female officers. Even, this is the reason behind women not being posted with responsibilities of critical nature or higher magnitude.

### **Access to Information**

Being inspired by the indication of Kanter (1977), this study has recognized the professional hazards or constraints of female cadre officers in obtaining data or information and getting required technical knowledge.

#### ***Access to Data***

Female officials are less likely than male officials to get adequate data related to their work and duties (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Despite being in similar rank and even in the same project, female officials lag this access. Male officers not only get more information but also get it quickly. It is easier for the male officials because they exercise more mobility than their female counterpart. Their effective and rich network within the organization help them getting access to different crucial contact points in different tiers of bureaucracy including the policymaking level. They can contact with their access points even beyond the office simply by visiting the officers' club (FGD-3, November 6, 2019). Through these contact points, male officials often promptly receive information. On the other hand, the female officials do not have enough time to spare beyond the office hours since they have to be engaged in divergent family affairs. The social structure also does not permit them to meet male officers and build rapport with the higher officials in informal manners. A female officer spending much time at the officers' club is also

susceptible to unwanted rumours (T S Neela, 2020, personal communication, January 21; FGD-2, January 21, 2020). Therefore, female members of cadre officers are constrained from having wider networks. Consequently, they are often deprived of receiving correct information promptly.

Since the whole society is male-dominated, sources of relevant information are mostly within the male circle. Therefore, male officials can easily build rapport with the key stakeholders outside the organization. In most of the cases, the male officers visit various remote places where women do not have the opportunity to reach and a male official usually meets more people than a female official does. Therefore, the male officers can gather all sorts of information from all sorts of sources, which are necessary to make an effective decision (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; FGD-2, January 21, 2020). Eventually, female officials turn out to be less informed decision-makers compared to the male officials in the civil service.

#### ***Access to Technical Knowledge***

Female members of BCS have less access to the technical knowledge required to carry out their assignments. They are, sometimes, posted to newer departments where technical knowledge is vital. Such knowledge can be attained by formal orientation as well as training but the most effective form is to understand the technical know-hows practically from the people already accustomed to that system. In such cases, female officials have experience of serious non-cooperation from colleagues (N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Moreover, when their immobility in technical knowledge is reflected in their job, the senior officials rebuke them and sometimes blame their womanhood as the reason for their ignorance. They even have to listen to the harsh judgments such as “women lack intelligence and wisdom” (FGD-1, January 21, 2020) or “women are more suited to homemaking than to work at the administrative office” (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Such derogative comments affect their psyche, personality and enthusiasm. Such behaviour demises their curiosity and the interest in learning technical works and the challenges of officers seem to be evident as greater challenges in case of female officers. (FGD-3, November 06, 2019; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; S Rahemeen, 2019, personal communication, December 22).

## Access to support

The colleagues are less likely to support female officers than male officers. The female members of cadre officers often face difficulty in getting help and support from their male colleagues (FGD-3, November 06, 2019; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; S Y Suraiya, 2020, personal communication, January 21; T S Noushaba, 2020, personal communication, January 21). Being raised in a patriarchal society, female officers cannot easily reach their male colleagues for guidance<sup>51</sup> (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6; N Tabussum, 2019, personal communication, November 27). Such an environment of non-cooperation frustrates the female officers so much that one of the respondents stated, “Sometimes it seems that it would be better to be a wife of a magistrate rather than being a magistrate myself” (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6).

Table 9: Traditional attitude of the male at workplace (Does the male possess traditional attitude at workplace?)

Designation	Yes		No		Sometimes		N/A		No Response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secretary	0	0.00	3	60.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	40.00	5	100
Additional Secretary	3	25.00	7	50.00	2	16.67	1	8.33	0	0.00	13	100
Joint Secretary	1	7.14	10	71.43	0	0.00	3	21.43	0	0.00	14	100
Deputy Secretary	9	30.00	13	43.33	1	3.33	6	20.00	1	3.33	30	100
Senior Asst. Secretary	22	42.00	21	42.00	0	0.00	7	14.00	0	0.00	50	100
Assistant Secretary	14	26.42	22	39.62	1	1.89	12	22.64	3	5.66	52	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29.88</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>46.34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2.44</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17.68</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>164</b>	

Paternalistic and hegemonic features of Bangladeshi society are reflected in the administrative system. In the table (Table 9) 29.88% (49) of the respondents reported that the male members of

<sup>51</sup> This practice has started from the family and the society at large. For instance, when girls argue, it is said that girls should not argue much. But when the boys argue, he is taken judiciously.

bureaucracy hold traditional values and subsequently such attitudes, norms and beliefs are transmitted to our bureaucratic culture too. These respondents might have experienced being subject to 'demand of subjugation' and commanding attitude of, the senior officials. When 49 out of 164 female officials of civil service speak out about the traditionalist mind-set of male colleagues regarding gender, it's understandable why the female members get less support from their colleagues.

This chapter has depicted different kinds of challenges female members of cadre officials experience in having access to opportunity, resource, information and support, which are crucial for their professional performance. The challenges derived from the responses of interviewees are exclusively from the experience of female officials. There are many other challenges and limitations besides these that the civil service officials encounter but this research has filtered the ones that female cadre officials experience just for being women. They confront more challenges than the male officers in getting promoted, pursuing higher education and training, securing financial allotment and material supplies, accessing required data, and finding other supports from the work environment. In all these cases, they are less valued for competence and intelligence, more misunderstood, and often marginalized as they are in the wider aspect of society. The challenges they face stem from not only their work environment but also from their family and society. Their double burden of family and office, social expectations of a modest and docile exposure often take the toll of their disrupted performance and mental strain. This is how all the aforementioned challenges and troubles turn out to be what this research defines as professional hazards. Kanter's Structural Empowerment theory has contributed immensely as a theoretical instrument to reveal these professional hazards.

Despite the above mentioned professional hazards and newly generated other hazards, female members of civil servants still continue working and struggle to put their utmost effort for maintaining an equilibrium between professional and family affairs.

## **Chapter VI - Factors Causing Professional Hazards of the Female Cadre Officials in Civil Service**

### **Introduction**

This chapter explores the factors causing the professional hazards of female cadre civil servants in Bangladesh. Finding the causes of a phenomenon requires an investigation with the question 'why'. It is possible to answer the 'why' of various questions from cultural perspective by applying Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions theory. Therefore, this research has used the six components of Hofstede's theory in analyzing the data to find the factors causing professional hazards of female members of cadre officials of civil service (See Appendix-VII). Discussion in this chapter contains the findings of this analysis. It shows the prevalence of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, masculinity, short-term orientation, and restraint in the civil service. All these features of civil service are particularly responsible for creating challenges before female cadre officials and affecting their professional performances as well as achievements. 'Large Power Distance' prevails in the civil service as differential hierarchical privileges, status symbols and other power-related advantages associated with the specific level. It also demands individual's commitment towards collectivity to overrule personal priorities, officials of both genders to fit in the organization's masculine expectations, and to work in conformity with a hierarchic decision-making system, short term planning priorities and an overwhelming need for order. Female officials find it difficult to fit in such a system. They have specific gender needs, which often are overlooked by a male-dominated and hierarchic decision-making system. Their pattern of action, however promising to get things done, are discouraged by an organization fearful to uncertainty. Thus, all these cultural notions of bureaucracy in Bangladesh take toll of women's professional successes by posing unnecessary challenges in their tracks.

### **Power distance**

This study reveals that a relatively larger power distance prevails in the hierarchy of Bangladesh's civil service which is vital in generating professional hazards of the female officers. The centralized hierarchic system of decision making and the practice of respect and fear proves the prevailing power distance across the ranks.

### *Hierarchic system*

Bureaucracy is widely regarded as a hierarchic system in today's world (Diefenbach and Todnem By, 2012). Such a system can cause hazards when it strictly maintains a top-down approach to decision making. In such a top-down system, employees staying at the bottom or the margin of the structure can hardly make their concerns heard or understood by the top officials. The bureaucracy of Bangladesh, being based on a strict hierarchic system, mostly follows the top-down approach of decision making. Table 10 depicts that higher officials often make executive decisions without going through proper consultation with field-level officials.

Table 10: Higher officials make decisions without consulting field-level staffs

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	0.0%	0.0%	30.8%	69.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	0.0%	28.6%	21.4%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	3.3%	33.3%	30.0%	30.0%	3.3%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	6.0%	44.0%	32.0%	12.0%	6.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	15.4%	76.9%	3.8%	3.8%	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>30.5%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>34.2%</b>	<b>1.55%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The table depicts rank-wise responses of female cadre civil service officials regarding the argument that the higher officials make decisions without consulting field-level staffs and demand execution. The majority of the respondents from the top three ranks either remained neutral or disagreed with this statement whereas respondents from the lower three ranks rather agreed mostly with it. The rank-wise positivity of responses increased gradually downwards. Such deviation of responses indicate the existence of power distance for which, as per the lower-ranked officers commented, 'Higher officials make decisions without consulting field-level staffs and demand execution'. Secretary ranked respondents remained mostly neutral (60%). However, it is to be noted that extreme responses consisting of strongly agree or strongly disagree have come from very few respondents. Especially none of the respondents from the top three ranks has given any extreme responses.

Table 11: Limited authority and opportunity of junior officials in decision-making

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	7.7%	69.2%	23.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	7.1%	42.9%	28.6%	21.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	13.3%	53.3%	26.7%	6.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	20.0%	50.0%	18.0%	8.0%	4.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	32.7%	57.7%	5.8%	3.8%	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	13.5%	52.2%	23.7%	9.9%	0.7%	100.0%

Across all the ranks, most of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, ‘there is a lack of sufficient authority, opportunity and support from senior officials required to take more decisions by the junior officials. A large portion (40%) of the secretaries remained neutral just like the previous responses. Most of the officers from the three comparatively junior ranks shared responses affirmatively to this statement. Percentage of disagreeing respondents is lower and only 4 per cent of senior assistant secretaries strongly disagreed with this statement. Interestingly ‘neutral’ responses reduced from higher ranks to lower ranks whereas affirmative responses increased. Therefore, the bulk of ‘neutral’ responses from higher ranks show a sign of discomfort when they encountered this issue.

### ***Respect and Fear***

The bureaucratic system in Bangladesh is running on the premises of respect and fear (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, 06 November; T S Naushaba, 2020, personal communication, 21 January). Feedback from FGDs revealed that senior officials in civil service are respected by junior officials in such a manner that shrinks the scope of disagreement (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). The comparatively junior officers not only consider respect as a strict protocol towards their seniors but also are driven by fear regarding the acceptance and execution of the orders they receive (M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, 14 November; FGD-3, November 6, 2019). Greater fear comes from the risk of unwanted transfer and the fear of having a negative score or comment in the ACR (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; T S Naushaba, 2020, personal communication, 21 January). Higher officials’ opportunity to reflect personal dislikes in the ACR against junior officials and undertaking transfer orders as punitive actions create



enormous power distance. The practice of respect and fear beyond the limit is the obvious syndrome of this large power distance.

### **Power Distance and the Professional Hazard of Female Officials**

Though the hierarchic power distance is understandable to cause problems for the junior ranked officials, women among them are more vulnerable. Female officials of junior ranks face a double distance when their authority is male, firstly caused by rank and secondly caused by gender. These female officials have additional difficulties compared to male officials due to their constraints in mobility and restricted communication in Bangladesh's social context. Therefore, a decision made by higher authority for field-level execution, sometimes, have features that make it challenging to be implemented. Field-level implementation is particularly critical for female officials since they cannot deal with the stakeholders as easily as the male officials. Female officials have restrictions in socially accepted level and forms of mobility and communications (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Therefore, a decision, which is challenging for field-level officials are, sometimes, more challenging when the official is a woman. Moreover, large power distance marginalizes the female officials from appealing for revision of any decision even when they have a direct stake, such as sudden transfer order to distant stations (FGD-3, November 6, 2019). Such an inability or incapacity to tilt the decision in their favour makes them suffer from serious professional challenges and psychological stress (FGD-4, November 24, 2019).

### **Uncertainty Avoidance**

The civil service of Bangladesh has a strong tendency to keep itself in a safer avenue of action. It guides the officials in a manner that no one's action can lead to uncertainty of the result. The bureaucracy is not ready to take responsibility for any unwanted consequences resulted from an officer's unconventional action, even if it is taken with a good intention. The organization, as a whole, fears the uncertainty of any nature.

#### ***Avoidance of risk and challenges***

To avoid uncertainty, the bureaucratic system in Bangladesh is most likely to skip risk and challenges (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6; M Nahar 2019, personal communication, November 3). In the field level, officers are supposed to serve the people with a plethora of complicated services even taking risks. For

instance, a sudden market visit without notice can help the officers to find out whether any law is breached or consumers are being deprived of their basic rights. Such actions are part of their administrative responsibilities but involve risks of confronting locally influential people. Bureaucracy has a traditional intent to avoid this kind of clashes (N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26; N Tabussum, 2019, personal communication, November 26). Such avoidance of risks and challenges result into diminishing risk and challenge management skills of officials (S Rahemeen, 2019, personal communication, December 22; F Ayesha, 2020, personal communication, January 12; S Priti, 2020, personal communication, January 14).

### *Intolerance to creative and new ideas*

BCS as a traditional system is intolerant to creative and new ideas to accomplish its tasks. In most of the cases, the higher authority is less likely to accept an emphasis on unconventional work rather than their routine work and sometimes junior officers are discouraged by seniors in this regard (S Farzeen, 2019, personal communication, November 28; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Though a new trend has emerged following Vision 2021 to innovate new ways of providing public service, in reality, creative ideas are mostly discouraged by the immediate authority (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). The following table depicts this reality.

Table 12: Higher officials discourage creative and new ideas

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	0.0%	46.2%	15.4%	30.8%	7.7%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	0.0%	35.7%	14.3%	42.9%	7.1%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	10.0%	20.0%	40.0%	30.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	18.0%	38.0%	22.0%	10.0%	12.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	7.7%	57.7%	21.2%	11.5%	1.9%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>32.9%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>27.5%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

No respondent from the highest rank (secretary) agreed to the statement that ‘The higher officials discourage creative and new ideas’. Interestingly, except for the secretaries, respondents from all the rest of the ranks acknowledged it to some extent. Junior ranked officials supported this statement more than the senior ranked officials. Some of them disagreed and most of them

agreed while few of them remained neutral. Middle and higher ranked female members of cadre officials, except secretaries, have a balanced distribution in response. Such a pattern of response indicates an overall agreement in most of the respondents that new and innovative ideas are not welcomed by the higher officials. The senior officials discourage creativity fearing the uncertainty of the outcome.

Recently, junior ranked officials find some supportive responses from their senior officers regarding innovative ideas. This is mostly driven by the recent priority of the prime minister's office, not by the general bureaucratic practice of tolerance. In some cases, new ideas get mere appreciation from the immediate boss because of the rigorous campaign government already made in recent past to realize the vision of Digital Bangladesh (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; S Y Suraiya, 2020, personal communication, January 21; K Brishty 2020, personal communication, January 21). Some officers, at least verbally, appreciate the culture of innovation being driven by the initiatives of the prime minister's office to enhance public service quality through innovation (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Still, it depends on the openness of the mindset of the concerned official to what extent these new ideas would be finally considered while undertaking major decisions (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26).

### ***Strict Rules***

Rules are necessary but being too strict with the rules, sometimes, reveal an organization's intent to protect itself from any form of uncertainty. Civil service of Bangladesh shows a higher level of rigidity regarding rules and regulations, which indicates the organization's unwillingness to face uncertainty (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; M Haseen, 2019, personal communication, November 13; K Brishty 2020, personal communication, January 21). BCS as an institutional system follows strict rules and regulations to avoid uncertainty (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Strict rules and regulations, sometimes, become hindrances on the way of creativity and prompt action. The following table (Table 13) depicts this reality.

Table 13: Bangladesh Civil Service follows strict rules

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	23.1%	69.2%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	10.0%	56.7%	13.3%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	36.0%	38.0%	16.0%	8.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	19.2%	69.2%	7.7%	3.8%	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	29.5%	50.3%	12.2%	7.7%	0.3%	100.0%

Most of the respondents agreed to the statement that ‘The organizations apply strict rules over its officials’. Some of them stayed neutral and few of them disagreed. It shows that strict rules are a well-understood feature of civil service. No respondent from the top two ranks (secretary and additional secretary) disagreed with the statement. Interestingly, all of the secretaries responded positively (consisting of ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’) and none of them remained neutral. Overall 80% of the respondents agreed on the practice of strict rules and the agreement varied little across ranks. The organization might take the strict rules for granted but we cannot deny the possibility of discouraging innovation by a strict rule centric environment. In qualitative interviews, respondents opined that strict rules often works as a hurdle and becomes catalytic to discourage newer and innovative ideas (K Brishty, 2020, personal communication, January 21; M Haseen, 2019, personal communication, November 13).

### **Uncertainty Avoidance and the Professional Hazard of Female Officials**

Female officials experience some distinct troubles due to the culture of uncertainty avoidance in civil service. Since the bureaucracy is traditionally designed as a male-dominated patriarchic organization, making a gender-friendly environment for the female officials, sometimes, require changing their traditional shackle of office procedure (FGD-2, January 21, 2020; N Sania, 2019, personal communication, November 26). Moreover, the presence of women in civil service itself is, sometimes, considered as an unconventional fact involving uncertainty. Some officials cannot just depend on female officials to get the result. The findings of the study reveal that the bureaucracy still considers large and complicated responsibilities to be at risk in the hands of female officials (K. Brishty, 2020, personal communication, January 21; FGD-3, November 6,

2019). This is an acute evidence of how uncertainty avoidance is worsened by its traditional gender-biased mindset.

### **Individualism-collectivism**

The civil service in Bangladesh still prefers collectivist values to individualistic values. It expects its officers to sacrifice their personal preferences for the collective interest of the organization. Most importantly, the organization does not endeavour to align these two interests, rather define and signifies the organization's interests irrespective of considering that of individuals. Whenever two interests contradict, it judges its officers based on the level of sacrifice they make for collectives and the degree of loyalty they show.

#### ***Loyalty and group belongingness***

Superior authority in this system demands absolute loyalty (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14). In many cases, loyalty is considered as one of the qualities of cadre officers (N Subaita, 2019, personal communication, December 14). Lack in group belongingness is considered as disloyalty and the person identified or accused of such usually gets rebuked and non-cooperated by other colleagues. Sometimes, they even get avoided (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6). Considering collectivism as the better way to serve the organization's purpose, it rips off the benefits of individualism from the system (N Tabassum, 2019, personal communication, November 26; FGD-2, January 21, 2020). Individualism ensures personal rights and keeps the space for outstanding individual recognition. Civil service, being a collectivist organization, ignores all such individual factors by practising collectivism. Senior officials always use some phrases such as 'we are one body', 'we are a family' to inculcate collectivist values in the officials and motivate them to disregard their desires for the sake of organization's goals (M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14; FGD-3, November 6, 2019)

#### ***Preference between relationship and work***

In most of the cases, the organization emphasizes on work more than personal relationships (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). The following table (Table 14) clearly shows that the organization demands the officers to prioritize their work to their relationships.

Table 14: Bureaucratic Organizations Prioritizing work to Relationship

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	30.8%	69.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	21.4%	42.9%	14.3%	21.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	40.0%	36.0%	18.0%	4.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	34.6%	57.7%	5.8%	1.9%	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>53.2%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The table (Table 14) depicts overwhelming positive responses towards the organization's priority of work across all ranks of respondents. Only 7.6% (7.3% + 0.3%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the organizations demand the officers to prioritize their work to their relationship. On the other hand, more than 80% (27.3% + 53.2%) agreed to the statement whereas approximately 12% remained neutral. The secretaries and joint secretaries did not even remain neutral. Such unconditional positivity of rank-wise responses represents respondents agreeing with the inquired statement. Therefore, the civil service of Bangladesh can be defined as a collectivist institution with minimal respect for the values of individualism.

### **Collectivism and the Professional Hazard of Female Officials**

The more collectivist an organization is, the more challenging the profession is for its female employees. The findings of this study, as delineated in chapter V, has shown women's double burden of being responsible for homemaking along with official responsibilities. Therefore, female members of cadre officials often cannot fulfil the loyalty demand of higher officials. They can hardly make time beyond office hours to dedicate extra effort for office assignments, communicate stakeholders, and meet colleagues in informal gatherings (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; FGD-4, November 24, 2019; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14). These shortcomings of female officials are often judged as either inability or lack of commitment and loyalty to the organization or collective interests. Such limitations affect the female officials' promotion, and evaluation in ACR (M Haseen, 2019, personal communication, November 13; FGD-3, November 6, 2019).

## Masculinity-Femininity

The bureaucracy of Bangladesh is a masculine organization within a moderately masculine society<sup>52</sup>. The masculine values and perceptions shape the personality and behavioural pattern of male and female members of the society which is directly reflected in the administrative sphere and has become an intricate feature of the administrative culture of Bangladesh. The bureaucratic system of Bangladesh is characterized as an organization that appreciates rigidity, assertiveness, and centralization of power; all masculine aspects from the dualist gender perception. Such a structure challenges the professional well-being of female officials by shrinking the scope of feminine characters in the organization.

### *Preference between family and job*

When there is a contradiction between family and job, the job is mostly preferred in civil service. This system considers a civil service officer (CSO) as worthy of appreciation if he/she prefers job to family (N Tabussum, 2019, personal communication, November 26; N Shabnum 2019, personal communication, December 10). The following table illustrates this view.

*Table 15: Bureaucratic organization's preference for job to family issues*

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	38.5%	53.8%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	21.4%	42.9%	21.4%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	20.0%	56.7%	10.0%	13.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	42.0%	40.0%	10.0%	6.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	48.1%	50.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>28.3%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

It is visible that across all the ranks, highest responses came agreeing with the given statement that 'The organizations do not or minimally care about the family issues of officials compared to

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<sup>52</sup> In the Masculine Index of Hofstede, Bangladesh has been ranked moderately high in masculinity (Haque and Mohammad 2013 cited in Dutta and Islam, 2016) The country stands somewhere at the middle of the rank with a moderate score (55). Therefore it can be deduced that the country bears a moderately masculine society (Hofsted, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010: 141-143).

their jobs’. Positive responses as in a combination of responses ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ came to be significantly higher than the negative responses as in a combination of responses ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’. Moreover, only 2%, that is only one of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Therefore, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents across all the ranks acknowledged the minimal priority of family issues at the office. Such an environment puts the female officers at strain since most of them carry the double burden of family and office.

### *Dualist gender value*

Masculine attitudes are preferred in the bureaucratic system (S Y Suraiya, 2020, personal communication, January 21; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). The respondents argued that in BCS, masculine oriented behaviours are preferred and feminine way of thinking is considered a weakness for the organization (M Sharmin, 2019, personal communication, March 3; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14). The following table (Table 16) echoes this finding.

Table 16 : Bureaucratic Organizations encourage strong and assertive notions and discourage modesty and caring notions

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	23.1%	61.5%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	28.6%	21.4%	7.1%	42.9%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	26.7%	40.0%	13.3%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	46.0%	36.0%	10.0%	8.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	28.8%	61.5%	7.7%	1.9%	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>32.1%</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The highest number of respondents from secretaries (40%), joint secretaries (28.6%) and senior assistant secretaries (46%) strongly agreed on the statement that the organizations encourage strong and assertive notions and discourage modesty and caring notions. It is to be noted that not even one respondent strongly disagreed with the statement. Only the joint secretaries shared a handful of responses (42.9%) against the statement. The officials are well aware that their organization values masculine characters and expects them to reflect those in their operations.



## **Masculinity and the Professional Hazard of Female Cadre Officials**

The female cadre civil servants in Bangladesh struggle to adjust family issues and they usually do not inform their seniors regarding family issues unless it is that important (FGD-4, November 24, 2019; N Shabnum, 2019, personal communication, December 10; M Sharmin, 2019, personal communication, November 3). They have to often encounter dialectic situations between family and office interests. Sometimes they compromise family well-being when preferring office obligations; sometimes they compromise career opportunities when they prefer family interests. It is psychologically and professionally hazardous for them in both the ways. If they choose to compromise their family concerns, it often takes the toll of their psychological health, which indirectly can affect their professional life as well (N Tabassum, 2019, personal communication, November 26; K Brishty, 2020, personal communication, January 21; FGD-3, November 6, 2019).

The predominance of dualist gender values is another strong barrier in women's professional path. In the traditionalist society of Bangladesh, women grow up being socialized with feminine attitudes and men grow up to be masculine. When the organization choose man's way, which in this case is masculinity, female officials find themselves in need of learning masculine traits. It compromises their performance, undermines their capability and disappoints them as a professional. As we discussed in the previous chapter, some men are too egoistic to accept women as bosses and colleagues. Even some male subordinates feel humiliated to work under a female officer. Men think women are not competent enough to be in a commanding position and to take challenges. Male officials want to see female officials as obedient, submissive and ready to accept control or instruction. Most of the male seniors bear traditional and typical masculine mindset and thereby advice the responsible authority not to appoint female officials in any post which involve critical work and high financial value.

## **Long Term vs. Short Term orientation**

The programs and projects of civil service are significantly driven by short term objectives. This is widely understood from service perspectives since bureaucracy often takes reactive instead of proactive measures to deal with public service-related issues. Long term planning might help to address the issues of work environment within the organization as well as adjustment of

organizational values to the changing value of time. However, the current practice of civil service is different, if not opposite, where short term gains are comparatively more focused.

### *Dynamism in values*

The bureaucratic institution is less likely to adopt dynamism in values. It clings to traditional values, for instance respect, responsibility and mostly ignores new values i.e. human rights, individualism (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 06; K Brishty, 2020, personal communication, January 21; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14). High officials are less likely to address the changing values (N Tabassum, 2019, personal communication, November 26). After being trained and becoming a part of BCS professionals, the officials are less adaptive to changes (S Y Suraiya, 2020, personal communication, January 21). The Foundation Training introduces the young officials to the rigid set of code of conducts and prepares them to be non-responsive to organizational culture and environment (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). On the contrary, many of the young officials are more or less adaptive to changing values. Some of them practice dynamic values in their personal lives but they maintain compliance with organizational values in the professional field (FGD-3, November 6, 2019). The following data shows how civil service holds traditional values without adapting to contemporary demand and context.

Table 17: Civil service holds traditional values without adjusting to current demand and context

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	7.7%	69.2%	7.7%	15.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	21.4%	42.9%	0.0%	35.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	16.7%	50.0%	20.0%	13.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	38.0%	28.0%	14.0%	14.0%	6.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	23.1%	53.8%	17.3%	3.8%	1.9%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	21.2%	53.9%	9.8%	13.7%	1.3%	100.0%

Most of the respondents from all the ranks agreed that the organization holds traditional values without adjusting to time and context. The respondents who disagreed to the statement are very few and strongly disagreeing ones are minimal in number; 1.3% of all the respondents. The secretaries who are the highest-ranked respondents did not provide any negative response and

did not even remain neutral. Thus, a large number of officials acknowledged that a lack of dynamism prevails within the traditional values of bureaucracy. Such overt acknowledgement regarding the rigidity of rules and inclination to traditional values might be facilitated by the organization’s pride in these characteristics (T S Neela, 2020, personal communication, January 21; FGD-2, January 21, 2020).

### *Value of planning*

The bureaucratic institutes are less likely to emphasize long term planning. In the bureaucracy, short term planning is done to address the demands of a situation<sup>53</sup> (FGD-3, November 6, 2019). In other cases, i.e. allocating budget based on the face value, not considering the actual needs of that department, is also a vivid example of not having a long-term plan of this institute (N Subaita, 2019, personal communication, December 14; FGD-2, January 21, 2020). The following table establishes that BCS, in most of the cases, plans for short term to resolve the matter of immediate concern.

Table 18: BCS organization mostly plans for short term to resolve urgent matters

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	0.0%	30.8%	53.8%	15.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	0.0%	42.9%	21.4%	28.6%	7.1%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	3.3%	43.3%	20.0%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	16.0%	28.0%	28.0%	16.0%	12.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	19.2%	46.2%	13.5%	17.3%	3.8%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>6.43%</b>	<b>38.54%</b>	<b>32.78%</b>	<b>18.43%</b>	<b>3.82%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 18 shows that none of the respondents from the secretary, additional secretary and deputy secretary level strongly disagreed to the statement, ‘The organizations mostly plan for short

<sup>53</sup> Recent decision of quota abolishment in the recruitment of the government employee is an example of reactive decision making. Government had long been having expert suggestions for quota reform, but the decision was made only after a hard strike conducted by the students of different universities (Haque and Haque, 2018). The decision was made instantaneously without much of long term analysis and research to address its immediate and long term impact (See Appendix-IV).

term'. However, 3.82% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Other than additional secretaries, the majority of the respondents from all the rest of the ranks agreed. It is to be noted that none of the three higher ranked officials strongly agreed with the given statement. However, from the overall observation, affirmative response consisting of 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' occupied more responses than the negative responses consisting of 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree'. Additionally the high percentage in neutrality might be the diplomatic answers from the respondents. Therefore, it can be summarized that the civil service in Bangladesh is mostly driven by the short-term plan instead of long-term. It also reveals that the organization does not sufficiently value the necessity of long-term planning.

### **Short term planning and the professional hazard of female officials**

Female professionals find higher regard in newer values such as gender equality and women's rights, whereas the traditional values often marginalize them by promoting parochial gender-stereotypes. This is how bureaucracy's inclination to the traditional values and lack of adaptability to the newer values make it less supportive for its female employees. Because traditional values overlook the true potential of the female officials as well as the gender-based discriminations and challenges they encounter. The previous chapter has already discussed this sort of professional hazards encountered by female members of cadre officials. Addressing this problem requires long term and proactive planning and intervention. Unfortunately, long term and proactive planning is, to some extent, unlike how civil service of Bangladesh function. Short term and reactive decision making cannot solve gender-related problems that are deep-rooted in the organization's culture.

### **Indulgence vs. Restraint**

This study reveals that the civil service of Bangladesh lacks pluralist values, which has earlier been reflected in its top-down approach of decision making. Moreover, it values restraints because of its higher priority of maintaining law and order. Here, individual freedom is easily compromised and sometimes turns to be an unimaginable issue because of bureaucracy's conservative attitude and the practice of restraints.

### *Status of pluralist values*

Bureaucracy in Bangladesh follows a rigidly hierarchic system and it is less likely to indulge pluralist opinion. Here, decision making is highly dependent on the motive of the superior. Subordinates rarely find it easy to express their opinions, even if they have any. It is not that subordinates' opinions are the exact opposite to their superiors (FGD-4, November 24, 2019). Regardless of the quality of their opinions, whether those were logical or complementary to that of their superiors, subordinates could hardly make an opportunity to express them due to intolerance of pluralist value (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; FGD-4, November 24, 2019). The following table shows that the senior management discourages diversity of opinion.

Table 19: Senior management discourages diversity of opinion

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100%
Additional Secretary	0.0%	0.0%	84.7%	15.4%	0.0%	100%
Joint Secretary	0.0%	0.0%	64.3%	28.6%	7.1%	100%
Deputy Secretary	6.7%	30.0%	26.7%	33.3%	3.3%	100%
Senior Assistant Secretary	22.0%	28.0%	22.0%	10.0%	18.0%	100%
Assistant Secretary	34.6%	50.0%	5.8%	7.7%	1.9%	100%
<b>Average</b>	<b>10.55%</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>40.58%</b>	<b>25.83%</b>	<b>5.05%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Responses regarding the senior management's acceptance of diversity of opinion are mixed across the ranks. Respondents from the top three ranks either disagreed or stayed neutral in this question. The majority (60%) of the secretaries and some of the additional secretaries (15.4%) disagreed to the statement. On the contrary, a greater portion of the lower ranked respondents agreed about the senior management's discouraging attitudes towards diverse opinion. Therefore, the culture of Bangladesh's civil service can be understood as being centralized and that it is an organization which lacks, at least to a significant extent, pluralist values in decision making.

### *Priority on maintaining law and order*

In the Bureaucratic system of Bangladesh, maintaining law and order is often given the highest priority (F R Yasmin, 2019, personal communication, November 6; M Haseen, 2019, personal communication, November 13). This is closely related to its characteristic of avoiding uncertainty. While overemphasizing law and order, sometimes it compromises service of the people (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; FGD-4, November 24, 2019; M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14).

Table 20: Bureaucratic organizations take strong measures to maintain discipline and order at work place

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Secretary	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Additional Secretary	38.5%	61.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Joint Secretary	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Deputy Secretary	26.7%	43.3%	20.0%	10.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Senior Assistant Secretary	66.0%	22.0%	8.0%	4.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Assistant Secretary	65.4%	28.8%	3.8%	0.0%	1.9%	100.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>58.6%</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

All of the secretaries and most of the respondents from the other ranks agreed that the bureaucracy highly prioritizes the application of law and order. Very few of them either stayed neutral or disagreed to this statement. It reveals that bureaucracy's priority to law and order is a well-known and well-accepted fact within the organization. Breaching order and discipline may invite disciplinary action towards the concerned official.

### **Restraint and the professional hazard of female officials**

Bureaucracy's priority of order and stability is applied not only outside the organization but also within it. Female members of BCS officials are at risk of victimization by such priority. It can conceal an issue of sexual harassment or violence for the sake of maintaining order and stability in the organization. In case of any complaint from a female official concerning violence against women (VAW), the situation is often dealt confidentially (FGD-3, November 6, 2019; FGD-4, November 24, 2019; S Prity, 2020, personal communication, January 14). This trend of brushing things under the carpet often compromises justice by taking different departmental actions, i.e.

transferring the perpetrator, even in cruel cases transferring the victim (M Nahar, 2019, personal communication, November 14; T S Neela, 2020, personal communication, January 14; FGD-2, January 21, 2020). This kind of actions are justified for the sake of maintaining order and stability as well as upholding the image of bureaucracy.

The factors revealed in this chapter are deeply rooted in the organizational culture of bureaucracy. These factors shape the civil service in a manner that encourage prejudices and promotes systems that cause the professional hazards of the female officials. Moreover, these factors act as hindrances towards any rationale action to address these hazards. Until and unless the civil service gets rid of these factors, a congenial gender-friendly environment would not develop at work place.

## **Chapter VII - Remedies for Eliminating Professional Hazards of Female Cadre Civil Servants in Bangladesh**

### **Introduction**

This chapter delineates Remedies for Eliminating Professional Hazards of Female Cadre Civil Servants in Bangladesh. Remedies suggested in this chapter are divided into three categories; measures to promote gender equality in society, develop women-friendly as well as a gender-sensitive mindset in the bureaucracy, and ensure the structural improvement of bureaucracy to make it gender-sensitive. Based on the findings depicted in chapter V and VI, the remedies have been constructed to reduce the professional hazards of female cadre officials by addressing causal factors.

### **Measures to promote equality in society**

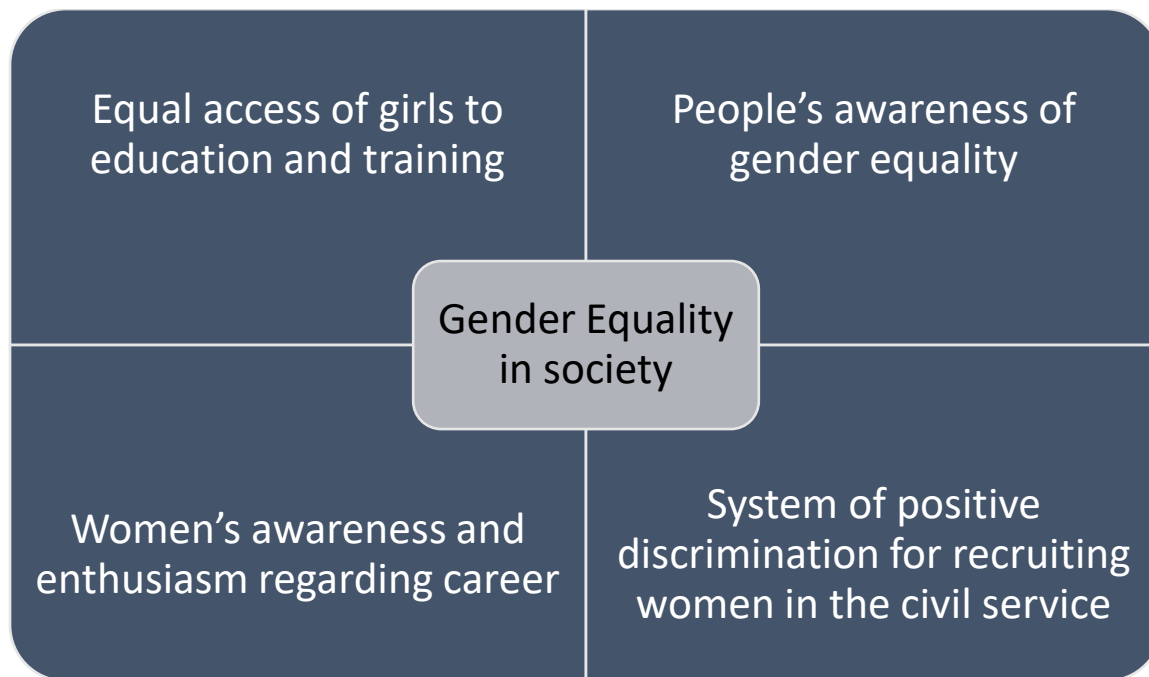
Until and unless men and women are not considered equal in society, no positive change can be made in the bureaucratic arena concerning the professional hazards of female officials. Feminists and human rights activists have long been advocating to promote equality across gender in society. This research has found that the discrimination we see in the civil service reflects the gender-inequality deeply rooted in the culture of this society. Therefore, change in the civil service cannot be attained if it is considered isolated from society. Initiatives of changes must address society-wide context of gender-inequality.

### ***Expected changes***

The current status of gender equality is not in an ideal state. Having gender equality in society means having it in all the sectors and aspects of society. This is a multifaceted idea. The following figure shows what it means to have gender equality in society of Bangladesh considering its utility to promote gender sensitivity in the civil service.



Figure 3: Expected changes regarding gender equality in society

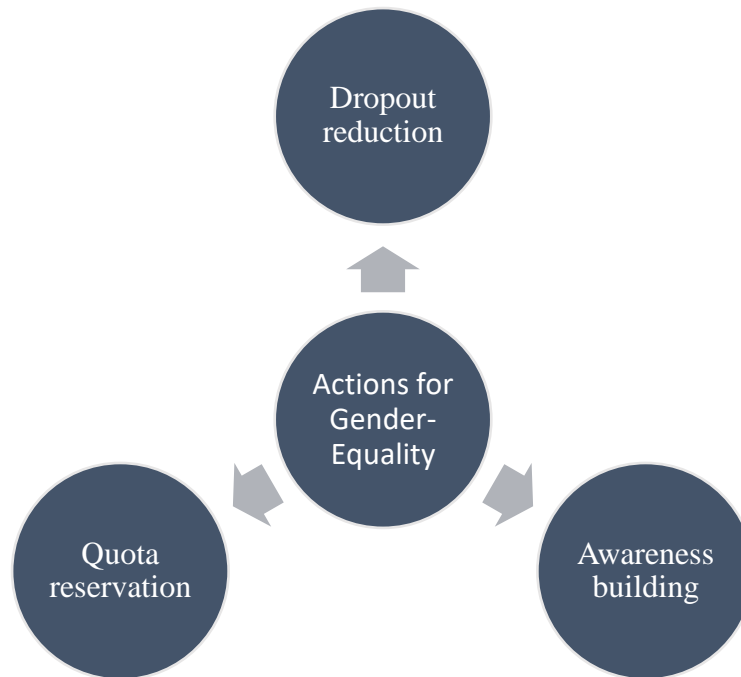


The above figure is itself self-explanatory. Expected changes include the kind of society where both boys and girls will have equal access to all the opportunities for education and training. Gender equality is a systemic feature of any society, but its meaningful application requires awareness and sensibility in the minds of people living in society. The people include the women themselves who must learn to exercise their liberty in building their career of own choice, e.g. as a bureaucrat. All these characteristics may support women's progress in professional life, but it takes time in a society like Bangladesh where women have been undermined to the subject of men through a long practice of inequality and subjugation. In the meantime, the system of positive discrimination comes to be crucial through incorporating more eligible women in civil service and subsequently ensuring their career progress.

#### ***Required Intervention***

Certain constant and long-term measures are required for improving the situation to promote equality in society.

Figure 4: Required intervention to promote gender equality in society



#### *Reduction of the dropout rate*

This research has found dropout as a common phenomenon which reduces girls' participation in upper grades and higher studies. Girls' dropout is the result of multifaceted factors; therefore, it requires multifaceted measures. The following measures are crucial to address these factors and reduce the dropout rate of girls.

- Stop child marriage
- Stop sexual harassment
- Enhance family support for the higher education of women. It requires assuring parents and other guardians regarding their girls' security and brighter career.
- Increase awareness of school and college girls regarding higher education and career.

Government of Bangladesh as well as non-government organizations already have several programs regarding the measures suggested above. Still, they remained relevant and important since gender-inequality prevails to a significant extent.

### **Awareness building program**

Since society is attitudinally conservative regarding the modern value of gender-equality, some measures are required to make people aware of women's worth as equal to men in society. Such measures may work as the starting point of most of the challenges this study has found in the context of society as well as bureaucracy. It can make the parents and guardians think of their girls' future with due importance along with their boys. Besides educating people on the norms of gender equality, the government needs to make the girls aspire for pursuing a career in civil service. Awareness campaign may build a supportive attitude in the minds of most of the guardians on facilitating and encouraging the female students to take part in the BCS examination. In this regard an expert commented, "*we must encourage to upgrade the quality of female education for getting bright and brilliant female officers*" (Expert opinion-I, 2017).

### ***Quota reservation for the female candidate***

A society of discrimination and inequality cannot be changed overnight; it takes time. In the meantime, discriminated people require some additional support to be lifted in life. Women of this country require this kind of support as long as they do not have the equal opportunity like men. "*In comparatively less advanced region of the country special measure may be undertaken for inclusion of female members in BCS for a certain period of time*" (Expert-III, 2018-2020). The government may take the following measures for ensuring appropriate quota reservation for recruiting women in civil service.

- Carry out research by a separate commission and identify the requirement of quota reservation and restore the system as per the research.
- Establish a government body to monitor the application and effectiveness of quota system and make adjustment overtime.
- If restoration of quota is not possible at all, the authority must take any other alternative immediately to enhance female participation in the public service sector.

### **Develop women-friendly as well as a gender-sensitive mindset in bureaucracy**

This study has traced many challenges of female officials back to the inherited traditionalist and conservative mindset of people within the bureaucracy which is still expressed in a different modality. If bureaucratic culture is not changed and positive attitudinal change is not ensured

then bureaucracy would never be gender sensitive. The growing gender-sensitive mindset has no other alternative for women-friendly progress of the institution. This study has specific remedies which are indispensable for establishing a women-friendly working environment in the bureaucratic organization.

**Expected changes**

A gendered mindset is exposed in different forms in different contexts. The following figure shows what a gender-sensitive mindset means in bureaucracy.

Figure 5: Expected changes to develop a gender-sensitive mindset in bureaucracy

Gender-Sensitive Mindset				
Understanding sexual harassment as an act of disgrace and a punishable crime.	No expectation of sexual privilege in the minds of male colleagues	No stereotypical division of masculine and feminine jobs	No stereotypes as women’s natural lack of capacity and manipulation by beauty	Equal treatment of feminine and the masculine traits to be considered as situationally appropriate

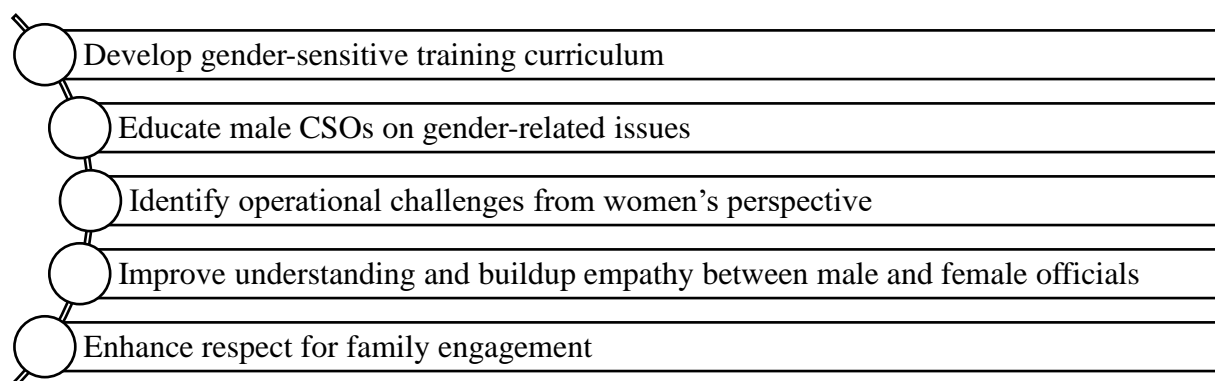
The changes expected here include changed understanding and expectation regarding gender-related issues concerned with civil service. The bureaucratic officials need to understand the worth and rights of female officials and prepare their minds to develop expectations and judgements beyond stereotypical thoughts. From social context what is actually meant by sexual harassment it has to be conceptualized by both masculine and feminine officials in BCS, and modify behavioural pattern accordingly. Gender based favouritism has to be avoided for maintaining impartiality. Division of job responsibility amongst officials should not be segregated based on male and female differentiation. The irrevocable attitude that women lacks capability to handle larger projects should be obsoleted. Prohibition of exaggerated comments or

gossip on gender issues should be strictly followed by all officials. Feminine qualities must not be underestimated because depending upon situational demand modesty and compromise also might be the suitable way of tackling situation when assertiveness might deteriorate the chaotic situation. *“The process of changing mindset of the officials has started but this positive change will take time to institutionalize it in near future”* (Expert-II, 2017).

### ***Required Intervention***

To change mindset is neither easy nor a simple initiative. Even the best interventions may take generations to replace traditional mindset with newer and more rational norms and values. Gender-equality is such a new norm which is highly incompatible with patriarchal thoughts developed over millennia. The following figure shows key interventional remedies to induce some changes towards a gender-sensitive mindset in civil service.

Figure 6: Required intervention to develop a gender-sensitive mindset in bureaucracy



### ***Gender-sensitive training curriculum***

The training authorities of civil administration need to be vigilant regarding the effectiveness of their gender-related contents and modules. They need to innovate the ways to develop gender-related modules in a manner that can appeal to the conscience of trainees. Human rights-related courses should be covered with the utmost priority of outcome-oriented learning experience. The male need to understand that women’s rights (e.g., the right to have maternity leave with pay) are human rights, not negligible privileges. This curricular incorporation of gender component is required in regular departmental training programs as well as the specified training programs dedicated to gender issues.

### ***Educating male CSOs on gender-related issues***

- Ensure the effective participation of male officials in gender-related training programs.
- Make the participants consider these programs as serious events and be sincere about adopting the learnings.
- The male officials should be trained in a way that they would equally respect and follow the instruction and observations of their superiors, whether male or female.

### ***Identifying problems from gender perspective***

The authority should keep the scope open for female officials to share their experiences, which will help the organization understand the problems lying in the mindset of its officers and staffs. Learning the experience of female officials, the authority would be able to take measures to change the gendered attitude and perceptions of the officials.

### ***Improve understanding and buildup empathy between male and female officials***

A gap of understanding creates the space for stereotypes and misogyny to thrive in the mindset of male officials. More mutual understanding can lead to empathy and support. The organization may create opportunities for male and female officials to share the stories and experiences from their end on gender-related issues. Expressing one's story of suffering and feelings of pain might be received in other mind in a non-judgmental environment and may reach the hearts of those who would not have cared earlier.

### ***Enhance respect for family engagement***

The problem in the mindset is not only the conservative attitude towards female officials but also the restrictive attitude towards family responsibilities. To have an easier professional life, female officials require colleagues who appreciate their family engagement; not make them feel guilty of having it. Therefore, such a work environment is required which would appreciate the family engagement of any official, whether male or female. It should not be considered as a point of weakness of a female official.

### **Structural improvement of bureaucracy to make it gender-sensitive**

Structural renovation is necessary to make the bureaucracy gender-sensitive. Such renovation will require changes in rules, infrastructures, practices and overall work environment. The bureaucracy requires to develop such a working environment that will not provoke gendered challenges before its female officials.

#### *Expected changes*

Considering the needs and aspirations of female officials, the structural improvement must be designed to modify the bureaucratic set-up for mitigating the professional hazards of female civil servants. The following figure depicts the expectations of female cadre officials in the structure and environment of bureaucracy.

Figure 7: Expected changes to build a gender-sensitive structure in bureaucracy

<b>Gender sensitive structure</b>	Women-friendly system of promotion
	Women's access to self-development
	Equal access to organizational resources
	Equal access to information
	No gender stereotype in performance evaluation
	Family priority in posting and transfer
	Infrastructural support for privacy and hygiene
	Sexual harassment free work environment
	Participation in decision-making

### ***Required Interventions***

Various long-term measures may be undertaken to reform bureaucracy to make it women-friendly. Here is a list of required interventions.

- Consider gendered challenges of female cadre officials in performance appraisal
- Consider gender-specific concerns in promotion, transfer and posting
- Consider gender-related concerns in distribution of responsibilities and resources
- Discourage and prevent misinformation
- Adopt pluralist and long-term approach to decision making
- Consider female officials for higher education and training with special support
- Arrange office set-up in a gender-sensitive manner
- Create a gender-sensitive work environment
- Collaborate with interest groups of professional women
- Run effective grievance management system where female officials have safe access
- Ensure justice against harassment

### ***Gender consideration in performance appraisal***

- *“The process of measuring performance, moving towards result orientation, quantifiable and verifiable performance has started, but it will take time to get the good result”* (Expert-II, 2017).
- The authority needs to review the current system of ACR to ensure its impartiality regarding gender. If any issue in ACR can be identified as susceptible to gender biases, it needs to be modified.
- Consider the exemption of female members of BCS officials from the penalty in case of their limitations in success that are caused by some hurdles due to gendered excessive responsibilities such as the double burden of work and family.

### ***Consideration of female officials in promotion, transfer and posting***

An expert opinion that *“seniority should not be only considered rather the marks granted for promotion examination should be increased”* (Expert Opinion I, 2017).



- Relax the requirements in promoting capable women to the upper positions in civil service keeping the following concerns in considerations.
  - More representation of women in higher ranks
  - More women in higher authority to help the organization become more gender-sensitive
- Consider the personal priorities of female officials in case of transfer and posting since their presence is often essential for their families. Posting spouses to the same station or closer stations is a great support for the concerned officials (See Appendix-XI).

***Gender-sensitive distribution of responsibilities and resources***

- In general, the distribution of responsibilities will follow the principle of gender equality.
- The budgetary allocation of resources should be comprehensively monitored to avoid gender based stereotypes of risk perception that underestimates the female officials regarding their capability.
- Distribute responsibilities in a manner that female officials can maintain their work-life balance. For instance, female officers working at the field level often have official duties in public holidays, which can be alternatively distributed to different officers instead of keeping everyone engaged in each holiday.
- The concerned authority can build rapport with the family members of female officials to build up confidence of family in the office environment by assuring them about safety and professional requirements of training, visits etc.

***Discouraging and preventing misinformation***

- Higher officials need to restrain themselves from judging any subordinate female official based on rumour. They need to ensure and establish a culture that no fake story can affect professional decisions regarding a female official.

### ***Pluralist and Long-Term Approach to Decision making***

- Engage civil servants of both genders and all levels who have some stake in pre-discussion consultations. The junior officials should be able to express their thoughts in this setting and engage actively in decision-making.
- Appreciate diversity of opinion irrespective of the speaker's rank or gender. Encourage every effort of sharing opinion irrespective of its naivety or brilliancy.
- To develop a practice of long-term planning in bureaucracy so that the crucial issues along with gender issue get proper attention in the organization.

### ***Higher education and training for the female officials***

- Encourage female members of cadre officials to pursue higher education from internationally reputed universities to enhance their expertise and professional excellence.
- The authority may try to identify the challenges of female officials in pursuing higher education and take measures to ease them. Official provision must be made to give special points and value to the PhD holders while promotion to encourage more female officials to attain higher education.
- For monitoring female CSOs to apply for foreign training the authority may undertake provisions to provide added value (numbers) on accomplishment of such trainings which would be considered while promotion.
- To ensure by all concerns that 10% quota of female cadre CSOs against foreign trainees are fulfilled.
- MoPA has to explore new sponsors, countries and divergent training programmes to match the demand of different cadre services and to give more opportunity to female officials for developing their potentiality.
- Consider some female officials' need to attend domestic training from their residence based on the necessity of her circumstance. Family responsibilities, cultural

conservativeness, and childcare issues can make the female officials prefer non-residential mode of training.

- Reduce the training schedule to be aligned with office time (9 am to 5 pm) instead of currently practised (5 am to 9 pm) duration.

#### ***Gender-sensitive office arrangement***

- All the female members of BCS officials of civil service need to have a separate, clean, hygienic washroom for them at each floor of a building.
- As the women officials stay eight hours in their offices, measures may be taken to establish ‘Lady Officials’ Lounge’ with a cafeteria to have tea and lunch at a reasonable price. There may be a prayer corner in the Lounge.
- Established well-maintained and hygienic daycare centre (DCC) for the female CSOs who are compelled to bring their children during working hours.
- Establish an easily accessible breastfeeding corner for the infants inside DCC to preserve the privacy of women and ensure children’s right.
- Facilitate security in the lift to avoid harassment. The authority must work on making a system to allow the female officials to maintain their privacy in the lift.
  - The authority can dedicate separate lift for women, where plausible.
  - In case, an office cannot afford more than one lift, it can develop a policy to ensure protection of female officials. Such policy may suggest a separate queue (office resuming and leaving time), separate lifting, close circuit camera or any other measure that is considered appropriate by concerned female officials.

#### ***Gender-sensitive work environment***

- Create a gender-sensitive culture in the working environment of civil service.
- Any disrespect towards femininity of an official must be treated as a disciplinary offence.

### ***Collaborate with interest groups of professional women***

The government should patronize BCS women network association and empower them to work meaningfully to solve all sorts of problems encountered by BCS female officials to uphold their prestige and dignity.

### ***Grievance management***

Inform all the female members of civil servants about the grievance handling cell of concerned ministries. This cell must be equipped with enough resources and appropriate principles to function effectively and efficiently. This cell should be composed of female officers and headed by a female officer of the Joint Secretary level. The female officers with complaints must feel safer to ventilate their issues of professional harassment and express all sorts of grievances at the workplace. This cell must maintain confidentiality, protect the female officials from any kind of threat and extend support to the victims to find justice.

### ***Ensure justice for harassment***

The authority must take every case of harassment seriously, ensure justice, protect the professional right of the victim and develop a progressive working environment.

- Rebuking female officials blaming their femininity as the reason behind any mistake or deviation in performance should be considered as a punishable offence.
- Passing derogative words and remarking that ‘they should have been housewives instead’ should be considered as an act of harassment.

The remedies presented here are developed based on the opinions and insights gathered from the interviews with female cadre officials of civil service. These are neither ‘one-size-fits-all’ solutions nor the end of finding ways forward for women in civil service. The findings of this research will inspire more remedies from time to time if the discussion and debate continues.

## Conclusion

Civil service is a complex and massive organization, which works as one of the key engines running the state. For a developing nation like Bangladesh, the performance of civil service is pivotal. Professional hazards of civil servants, therefore, demand immediate attention to be addressed. Considering the underrepresentation of female officials working in BCS, this study identified the nature of professional hazards faced by female members of cadre civil servants in Bangladesh. It also explored the factors causing such hazards and attempted to provide some plausible remedies. Kanter's 'Theory of Structural Empowerment' has been applied to find the prevailing forms and dimensions of professional hazards and Hofstede's 'Cultural Dimensions Theory' has been utilized to explore the underlying factors of such professional hazards.

Reviewing the political history of the Indian subcontinent, this study traced the civil service back to the Mughal period. Civil service administration under Mughal emperors was responsible to collect revenue and ensure law and order. Later, the modern form of civil service was introduced in this part of the world by East India Trading Company. Two types of civil servants used to work at that time; the covenanted and the non-covenanted ones. Indians mostly entered the non-covenanted service at that time as the covenanted servants were recruited directly from England. The British government had the sole power and responsibility to employ the civil servants for the subcontinent and determined their pay scale. After 1947, the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) was built following the model of ICS and was divided into central and provincial wings. From the very beginning, CSP confronted with military bureaucracy and the demand for restructuring this institute did not work. Moreover, its recruitment was biased against the candidates from East Pakistan and exclusionary to the married women. The number of women attending CSP was therefore very insignificant in number.

After 1971, Bangladesh achieved its independence, but the civil administration was holding the legacy of Pakistan period. However, BCS continued to change over time by adopting new norms and developing new policies. Public Service Commission (PSC) recruited the entry-level officials through the three levels of tests; preliminary exam, written exam and viva voce. It used to maintain quota reservations for different groups of candidates, but it has been recently transformed into a complete merit-based system. The number of women applicants and recruits

have been increasing since the very first BCS recruitment. This is a progress from the gender perspective, but the progress is very slow.

Being restrained by domestic responsibilities, many women of Bangladesh under a patriarchal social structure can hardly occupy the opportunity to access educational privilege or engage in economic activities. Government as well as non-government actors took different initiatives from time to time to lift women of this nation from their disadvantaged position. Legends like Begum Rokeya, Sufia Kamal and many others are recalled for their works to break the chains of women and ensure their development, but there is still a long way to go. Women enrolment in education, particularly in the tertiary level, is quite low. Such poor representation is also found in most of the professions as well as in politics. Despite having female prime ministers for more than 25 years, the number of female MP is still quite insignificant. Patriarchal social structure is playing the pivotal role to push women back to the private sphere from public life. Patriarchal values and mindset discourage women from being professional at all. They are not only restrained from having a profession but also challenged in many ways once they enter a profession. Civil service of Bangladesh government shows similar phenomena as per the experience of its female cadre officials.

Limitations faced by female members of the officials in civil service are structural, organizational and operational. They include male superiority complex, non-cooperative attitude from male colleagues, lack of privacy at the workplace, absence of gender-sensitive code of conduct, transfer of women without considering their family responsibilities, and lack of some infrastructural facilities such as day-care centre and separate toilet facilities. All such challenges are creating professional hazards for women in the workplace. Such hazards affect female officials' productivity along with performance. They are also liable for undermining women's empowerment in the society.

This study has found women's limited access to opportunity in their professional progress. The patriarchal social structure discourages women to play the role of breadwinner. Such predefined gender role restricts women from joining BCS. Female officials also reported challenges in case of promotion. The present social structure creates sort of a glass ceiling impeding female officials to reach the upper tier, consequently keeps a lower representation of women in higher ranks. This research has found no female member in the superior selection board (SSB). Another

challenge is a family crisis when the female officials are transferred to distant stations, from where they cannot perform their dual responsibilities to both office and family. Such family responsibilities as imposed by current social structure also affect their scope of attending higher education. Despite having a great opportunity, female civil servants can seldom avail higher education abroad due to their household obligations. The same problem appears in case of residential training and foreign training.

Female officials have also reported some gendered practices in resource allocation. Based on the stereotypes, women are often not trusted to be capable of handling a big budget or large scale projects. Time works as a different kind of resource, which women cannot utilize as much as their male colleagues because their family takes some share. Therefore, they can manage lesser time for office than their male colleagues. Having less time and limited exposure in the office sphere also deprive them of an effective network, which affects them by limiting their access to official information. It was also observed that female officials happened to have less access to technical knowledge and skills than their male co-workers. In many cases, their access to technical know-how depends on the support from their male colleagues, which many female officials reported being difficult to achieve. Non-cooperation is not necessarily the only reason; the introvert personality of female officials and hesitation to reach out also prevent the female officials from moving forward.

This study also identified the factors of professional hazards as per the components of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. In terms of power distance, the hierarchic system of BCS causes different sorts of professional hazards towards female members of cadre officials. Senior officials of civil service often take decisions without consulting field level officials. Therefore, field-level officials encounter difficulties which could be avoided if their concerns were addressed. Such difficulties are to a greater extent for female officials than males. The bureaucratic culture expects the junior officials to respect the words of their seniors and fear for any form of disobedience. This culture creates a power gap, which causes many hurdles that female cadre officials could avoid otherwise.

The characteristics of uncertainty avoidance and collectivism work to imply a 'one-size-fits-all' approach in bureaucracy, but it cannot address the demands of diversity. Respondents affirmed bureaucracy's characteristic of uncertainty avoidance, interpreting its desperation to avert risks

and challenges. To avoid risks associated with the interventions, the organization grew intolerance towards creative and /or innovative ideas. It also maintains strict rules and negates any form of deviation to keep the whole apparatus in a comfort zone. Another related factor is the organization's devotion towards collectivism and discouragement towards individualism. It strongly appreciates group belongingness and loyalty. It also vehemently prefers work to individual's interests and priorities.

Female cadre officials are more marginalized by the masculine characteristics of civil service and short-term orientation makes it difficult for the organization to bring required change in this regard. Masculine traits and behaviours have long been considered as suitable personality types to be a bureaucrat. Such preference discourages feminine traits, consequently female officials. This is a deep-rooted problem, which requires a fundamental change in organizational culture. Such a change cannot be attained in a short period. Almost all the factors identified by this study require long-term intervention for the gender-sensitive progress of civil service. But in fact, the short-term orientation of bureaucracy has become the bottleneck, which restricts required investment and interventions envisioning an elevation of women's status.

Finally, this research came up with some remedies to address the professional hazards faced by female members of cadre civil servants of Bangladesh. Firstly, it advocated a society-wide approach to prepare the girls for pursuing a career in civil service and their guardians to render required support. Both the government and non-government actors are important to attain this purpose. It requires the reduction of girls' dropout from school and encouragement for aspiring a career instead of taking their domestic role for granted. Secondly, this research indicated attitudinal reformation and interventions to bring change in the traditionalist mindset of the people in civil service. It pointed remedies through different interventions to educate the male officials on gender issues and grow empathy in their minds towards the odds the female officials endure around them. Thirdly, it solicits a massive structural change of bureaucracy to make it gender-sensitive. These interventions are focused on having women-friendly rules and regulations, practices, infrastructure and work environment.

Echoing the findings of Zarra-Nezhad et al. (2010) and Ellemers (2014), this study finds a correlation between family difficulties and occupational hazards. The underrepresentation of women in higher ranks of civil service shows a commonality with other countries as shown by



Fitzpatric and Richards (2019) and Gregory (2003). Some factors of professional hazards depicted by this study such as prevailing culture and norms, stereotypes and negative mindsets of male co-workers echo the findings of Bell, McLaughlin and Sequeira (2002). However, the current study came up with more detailed findings beyond the relevant works of literature it reviewed; The theories of Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Geert Hofstede are indeed praiseworthy, as its attributive syndromes guided to conduct the entire research.

Abolishment of professional hazards faced by female cadre civil servants of Bangladesh will not only ensure their personal performance, but also contribute to country's progress from a holistic perspective. Besides sharing a disappointing scenario of female members of cadre officials, the current study offers some realistic suggestions to make desired changes. These changes will take time, perhaps more than a generation, and coordinated efforts of diverse actors. This study has drawn a massive picture in a small frame. Smaller parts of this picture require more in-depth investigation. More importantly, this research and the similar ones require a policy level response and continuous extensive discussion and debate.

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## Appendices

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### Appendix- I : Male and Female BCS Cadre Officers in 2018.

Table No: 1: Male and Female BCS Cadre Officer 2018

Designation	Male & Female	Female	Percentage of Female
Secretary	75	10	13.33%
Additional Secretary	493	77	15.61%
Joint Secretary	770	96	12.46%
Deputy Secretary	1291	236	18.28%
Senior Assistant Secretary	1475	410	27.79%
Assistant Secretary	1271	429	33.75%
Total	5375	1258	23.40%

Source: <http://www.mopa.gov.bd>, Ministry of Public Administration, 12 February, 2018

## Appendix-II : Sample Size Calculator

Qualtrics offers a sample size calculator online that can help you determine your ideal survey sample size in seconds. Just put in the confidence level, population size, margin of error, and the perfect sample size is calculated for you.

**Confidence Level:**

90% ▾

**Population Size:**

1258

**Margin of Error:**

6% ▾

**Ideal Sample Size:**

164

To learn more about the variables you can read this post on [how to find your sample size](#) or scroll down to learn more about confidence interval or level.

## Appendix-IV : Rules on Quota Abolishment

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়  
বিধি- ১ শাখা  
[www.mopa.gov.bd](http://www.mopa.gov.bd)

নং-০৫.০০.০০০০.১৭০.১১.০৭.১৮- ২৭৬

তারিখঃ ১১ আশ্বিন ১৪২৫  
০৪ অক্টোবর ২০১৮

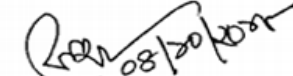
### পরিপত্র

**বিষয়ঃ** সরকারি দপ্তর, স্বায়ত্তশাসিত/আধা-স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠান এবং বিভিন্ন কর্পোরেশনের চাকুরিতে সরাসরি নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের বিদ্যমান কোটা পদ্ধতি সংশোধন।

সরকার সকল সরকারি দপ্তর, স্বায়ত্তশাসিত/আধা-স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠান এবং বিভিন্ন কর্পোরেশনের চাকুরিতে সরাসরি নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের ১৭/০৩/১৯৯৭ তারিখের সম(বিধি-১)এস-৮/৯৫(অংশ-২)-৫৬(৫০০) নং স্মারকে উল্লিখিত কোটা পদ্ধতি নিম্নরূপভাবে সংশোধন করিল:-

- (ক) ৯ম গ্রেড (পূর্বতন ১ম শ্রেণি) এবং ১০ম-১৩তম গ্রেডের (পূর্বতন ২য় শ্রেণি) পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে মেধার ভিত্তিতে নিয়োগ প্রদান করা হইবে; এবং
- (খ) ৯ম গ্রেড (পূর্বতন ১ম শ্রেণি) এবং ১০ম-১৩তম গ্রেডের (পূর্বতন ২য় শ্রেণি) পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে বিদ্যমান কোটা পদ্ধতি বাতিল করা হইল।

২। ইহা অবিলম্বে কার্যকর হইবে।

  
(ফেরোজ আহমদ)  
সচিব

**Appendix-VI : KII & FGDs Questionnaire****Professional Hazards of Female Officers in Bangladesh Civil Service: Dimensions & Remedies****Questionnaire****Demographic Data**

<b>Name</b>	:	
<b>Age/Date of Birth</b>	:	
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	:	
<b>Designation</b>	:	
<b>Name of Institution</b>	:	
<b>Length of Service</b>	:	

***Prevalence of hazards*****Opportunity**

1. Do you think that female civil service officers (CSOs) enjoy equal opportunity in promotion? If not, do they face some restraints in this regard for being women? If yes, what kinds of restraints do they encounter in general that hamper their promotion?
2. Do the female CSOs get equal opportunity of training and any other institutional arrangement for knowledge and skill development? If not, do they face some restraints in this regard for being women? If yes, what kind of restraints do they encounter in general that hamper their opportunity of knowledge and skill development?
3. Do the female CSOs get equal opportunity of higher education? If not, do they face some restraints in this regard for being women? If yes, what kind of restraints do they encounter in general that hamper their opportunity of knowledge and skill development?

**Power**

4. Do the female CSOs have enough time and resources (finance and supplies) to get their job done? Do they face disparities in this regard compared to their male counterparts? If yes, explain with example.

5. Do the female CSOs have access to information (data, technical knowledge and expertise) that are crucial for their works to be effective? Do the organization create any disparity between male and female CSOs in rendering access to information? Explain.
6. Do the colleagues of all levels support female members of cadre civil officials with proper guidance in workplace? Do the female CSOs experience exclusive forms of non-cooperation unlike their male counterparts? Explain.

### ***Factors of professional hazards***

#### *Power Distance*

7. Do the CSOs work in a hierarchic environment? Do the higher management take decision without consulting and valuing field level officials? Are the roles distributed based on the convenience of higher officials?
8. Do the CSOs feel the pressure of being respectful to and afraid of higher officials?

#### *Uncertainty Avoidance*

9. How do the higher officials respond to creative and new ideas? Do they accept easily or discourage?
10. Do the CSOs have to follow strict rules in their workplace? Are the organizations concerned about keeping all the officers in line?

#### *Individualism-Collectivism*

11. Do the organizations frequently demand loyalty and inculcate the idea of group belongingness?
12. Do the organizations demand the CSOs to prioritize their work to their relationship?

#### *Masculinity-Femininity*

13. Do the organizations do not or minimally care about the family issues of CSOs compared to their jobs?
14. Do the organization show masculine attitude by valuing strong and assertive notions and discouraging modest and caring notion as feminine?

#### *Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation*

15. Do the organization consider traditional values as static or adjustable over time and context?
16. Do the organizational culture value long-term planning or depend on short-term plans and fate?

*Indulgence vs. Restraint*

17. Do the organizations encourage diversity of opinion or discourage it?
18. Do the organizations take strong measures to maintain order in workplace?

***Recommendations***

19. Please suggest measures that can make the work environment better for female CSOs and reduce the existing professional hazards they encounter.

**Appendix-VII : Survey Questionnaire****Professional Hazards of Female Officers in Bangladesh Civil Service: Dimensions & Remedies****Questionnaire****Demographic Data**

<b>Name</b>	:	
<b>Age/Date of Birth</b>	:	
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	:	
<b>Designation</b>	:	
<b>Name of Institution</b>	:	
<b>Length of Service</b>	:	

**Factors of Professional Hazards****Power Distance**

- The higher officials make decisions without consulting field level staffs and demand execution.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
- Lack of sufficient authority, opportunity and support from senior officials required to take more decisions by the junior officials.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Uncertainty Avoidance**

- The higher officials discourage creative and new ideas.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
- The organizations apply strict rules over its officials.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Individualism vs. Collectivism**

5. The organizations demand the officers to prioritize their works to their relationships.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
6. The organizations do not or minimally care about the family issues of CSOs compared to their jobs.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Femininity vs. Masculinity**

7. The organizations encourage strong and assertive notions and discourage modesty and caring notions.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
8. The organizations hold traditional values without making adjustment to time and context.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation**

9. The organizations plan mostly for short term only.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
10. The senior officials blame fortune for the result.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Indulgence vs. Restraint**

11. The senior management discourage diversity of opinion.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
12. The organizations take strong measures to maintain discipline and order in workplace.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Access to opportunity**

13. Negative impact of the transfer of female civil servants  
 Yes    No    Neutral/ N/A    No Response

**Access to resources**

14. Male peer confidence in the competence of female officials  
 Yes    Sometimes    No    No Response

**Access to support**



**15.** Does the male possess traditional attitude at workplace?

- Yes**             **No**             **Sometimes**     **N/A**             **No Response**

**Recommendations**

16. Please suggest measures that can make the work environment better of female CSOs and increase their opportunity in the structure and access to power.

**Appendix-VIII : FGDs Table**

<b>FGD No.</b>	<b>FGD # 1</b>	<b>FGD # 2</b>	<b>FGD # 3</b>	<b>FGD # 3</b>
<b>Designation</b>	Assistant Secretary	Senior Assistant Secretary	Deputy Secretary	Joint Secretary
<b>No. of Participants</b>	8	6	5	6
<b>Avg. Age</b>	26-35	36-45	46-56	50-59
<b>Date</b>	21/01/2020	21/01/2020	06/11/2019	24/11/2019
<b>Time</b>	12:30 PM	04:00 PM	02:30 PM	12:30 PM
<b>Duration</b>	1 hour 45 min	2 hour	1 hour 45 min	1 hour 30 min
<b>Place</b>	Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy	Bangladesh Secretariat	Bangladesh Secretariat	Bangladesh Secretariat

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## Appendix-X : Policy on Higher Study

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়  
বিদেশ প্রশিক্ষণ গবেষণা ইউনিট  
[www.mopa.gov.bd](http://www.mopa.gov.bd)

স্মারক নম্বর- ০৫.০০.০০০০.২১১.২২.১০৬.২০০৮.৩৩৯

তারিখঃ ২২ অগ্রহায়ণ, ১৪২২ বঙ্গাব্দ  
০৬ ডিসেম্বর, ২০১৫ খ্রিষ্টাব্দপ্রজ্ঞাপন

সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/বিধিবদ্ধ/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত সংস্থার কর্মচারীদের জন্য দেশের অভ্যন্তরে  
উচ্চশিক্ষা বিষয়ক নীতিমালা

প্রজাতন্ত্রের কর্মে নিযুক্ত সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/বিধিবদ্ধ/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত সংস্থার কর্মচারীদের দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধিতে তাদের কর্মজীবন পরিকল্পনার (Career Planning) অংশ হিসেবে উচ্চশিক্ষাকে সরকার গুরুত্বের সাথে বিবেচনা করছে। উচ্চশিক্ষার অনুমোদন কার্যক্রমকে সহজীকরণের জন্য একটি সমন্বিত নীতিমালার প্রয়োজন রয়েছে। এ বিবেচনায় প্রজাতন্ত্রের কর্মে নিযুক্ত কর্মচারীদের দেশের অভ্যন্তরে উচ্চশিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত এ নীতিমালা জারি করা হলো।

০২। নীতিমালার উদ্দেশ্যঃ

- (ক) কর্মচারীদের জ্ঞান ও দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধি;  
(খ) কর্মচারীদের আবেদন বিবেচনার মাধ্যমে উচ্চশিক্ষাকে উৎসাহিতকরণ;  
(গ) জনবাহুবল নীতি প্রণয়ন ও বাস্তবায়নে পেশাদারি মনোভাবের বিকাশ সাধন।

০৩। নীতিমালার আওতাঃ

সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/বিধিবদ্ধ/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত সংস্থার কর্মচারীদের দেশের অভ্যন্তরে উচ্চশিক্ষা গ্রহণের অনুমতি প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রে এই নীতিমালা প্রযোজ্য হবে।

০৪। উচ্চশিক্ষাঃ

পেশাগত দক্ষতা অর্জনের জন্য কর্মচারীর Service path অথবা তার Academic Background সংশ্লিষ্ট শিক্ষা, পোস্ট গ্রাজুয়েট ডিপ্লোমা, মাস্টার্স/এম.এস./এম.ফিল., পিএইচ.ডি. এবং পোস্ট ডক্টরাল রিসার্চ উচ্চশিক্ষা হিসেবে গণ্য হবে।

০৫। প্রেষণঃ

- (ক) পূর্ণবৃত্তিতে সম্পাদনযোগ্য উচ্চশিক্ষা কোর্সের সম্পূর্ণ মেয়াদের জন্য কোন কর্মচারীকে স্বাভাবিক নিয়মে প্রেষণ মঞ্জুর করা যাবে। দেশে পাবলিক/প্রাইভেট বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে প্রাপ্ত ফেলোশিপকে পূর্ণবৃত্তি হিসেবে বিবেচনা করা হবে। বিদেশী অর্থায়নে পরিচালিত কোন প্রকল্প হতে অথবা উচ্চশিক্ষার জন্য দেশী/বিদেশী অর্থায়নে পরিচালিত দাতাসংস্থা/সরকার অনুমোদিত ফাউন্ডেশন হতে প্রাপ্ত বৃত্তিও পূর্ণবৃত্তি হিসেবে গণ্য হবে। তবে ব্যক্তি মালিকানাধীন কোন প্রতিষ্ঠান বা ব্যক্তির কাছ থেকে প্রাপ্ত অর্থ বৃত্তি হিসেবে বিবেচনা করা হবে না।



১/৬

## **Appendix-XII : Designation of Experts**

### **Expert I**

Member, Bangladesh Public Service Commission

Interview date : 19 July 2017.

### **Expert II**

Ex-Senior Secretary

Economic Relations Division

Ministry of Finance

Government of Bangladesh

Interview date: 27 July 2017

### **Expert III**

Additional Secretary

Bangladesh Public Service Commission Secretariat

(2018-2020)