RECRUITMENT

The Iranian Personnel system is based on the principles of competence and merit, which were adopted by accepting the unified Civil Service Code on 22nd June, 1966. It has now been agreed that the efficiency of an administration depends mostly upon the method of recruitment. A public servant entrusted with a particular task, must have the capacity to understand the problems involved therein, and to deal with them in a competent manner. The capacity of a servant is determined by his merit decided by his education, intelligence, character and physical fitness at the time of recruitment. In this Chapter Iran's system of recruitment has been discussed.

The employment programme for public services in Iran primarily aims to recruit the most suitable and efficient candidates into the services. This job has been entrusted to the State Organisation for Administration and Employment Affair (SOAE) which acts as the recruiting Agency in Iran.
In developing countries the problem of recruitment is altogether different than that in the developed countries -

"Since it is difficult to get persons, and more so in the underdeveloped or developing countries, who have the qualifications and experience to perform all the complex and especially highly skilled and managerial jobs in administration, business or industry, selection is made of young recruits who have potentialities for development and who, with training and experience, can be developed for doing the highly skilled and managerial jobs."²

Under such circumstances when qualified and suitable candidates are not available in sufficient number, the recruiting agency has to make serious efforts in selection of the candidates.

Iran's Civil Service Code of 1966 includes the following definitions:

(1) **Employment by the Government** consist of accepting a person into Government
service in one of the Ministries or Government Agencies.

(2) Government Service consists of engagement in a task which an employee must perform in pursuit of an official policy or action.

(3) A Ministry is a specific organisational unit which is recognized by this designation by-law.

(4) A Government Agency is an organisation which is created and administered according to law by the Government.³

It has also been a objective incorporated in the Constitution of Iran. It says, "Creation of a correct Administrative System and elimination of unnecessary organisations is an important function of the Government."⁴

In Iran's administration, it is recognised that the main aim is to engage the most efficient employees into the service of Government. Although, the administrative system has basically remained
almost unchanged, even after the 1979 revolution, many new organisations have been created. But the essential problems of administration remains as to how the young employees recruited for Government services should be placed in the system in the early stage of recruitment. In order to avoid political and other kinds of interference in the recruitment system and to put an end to the earlier practices, the Central Personnel Agency (SCAE) has been entrusted with the responsibility of recruitment of the Government Servants on behalf of the Government.\textsuperscript{5}

Technically speaking recruitment and selection of employees is the function of the Government. But since it is based on merit system that takes place through examinations and competitions to attract right type of persons for employment in the Government services, the process of recruitment is under direct supervision and control of 'SCAE'.\textsuperscript{6} It performs its functions in accordance with the Unified Civil Service Code, which provides the necessary laws and guidelines for recruitment in the public services.\textsuperscript{7}
Method of Recruitment:

Attracting right type of persons for recruitment in the Government Services is the primary stage of the employment programme. Amount of difficulty at this stage depends upon both quantity and quality of work-force needed in the Government Services. Some of the main reasons which make the new recruitment necessary are: discharge, disabilities, promotions, Retirement, transfers etc.\(^8\)

Recruitment to the public services in Iran is done by two methods:

(I) Internal Recruitment:

Recruitment from within is an important method of recruitment, which uses available personnel of an organisation. This type of recruitment takes place to encourage the employees already in the service and to indicate their worthiness for higher position.\(^9\)

This process is made possible through promotion; training and transfer policies. By this method, recruitment to the higher posts is made only from
within the services, either, through promotions or through prescribed examination for the job in the new group.\footnote{10}

(II) **External or Direct Recruitment:**

Another method of recruitment to public services, is filling up the positions from the several other sources available out-side the services. In Iran for direct recruitment a system of competitive examination is followed.\footnote{11}

In actual practice a combination of both the methods that is to say internal recruitment for higher positions and direct recruitment in the lower services or groups is followed in Iran.\footnote{12}

**Sources of Direct Recruitment:**

In order to carry out the policy of direct recruitment multiple sources are essential. It is necessary to know and find out as to where the greatest suitable number of employees for recruitment are available. The following may be said to be some of the important sources of direct recruitment in Iran.
(1) Job seekers
(2) Public Employment Bureau
(3) Private Consultants
(4) Advertising in the 'situation wanted' columns in the press.
(5) Unions and Associations
(6) Universities and Colleges
(7) Recommendations from the existing staff.¹³

It is needless to mention here that each of these sources of candidates for recruitment to public services has its relative advantages and disadvantages, and in practice the Government may make use of some or all of these sources for attracting the needed persons into public services.

Qualification Required from Employment in Government Services:

While considering the problem of the qualification for public employment, the field of choice has been restricted in order to ensure that those who are recruited must possess those qualifications, which are believed to be essential for the diverse tasks for the administration in the country. The
Employment Law, therefore, lays stress that "Employment of persons for official services should take place through examination and competition, under the Central Personnel Agency's (SCAE) supervision and regulation." 14

**General Qualification:**

Applicants for Government employment should possess certain general qualifications which are as follows:

(1) **Age:**

Candidate's age is related to his educational qualifications. The emphasis is laid upon the recruitment of persons with the maximum physical stamina or ability. However, the age limit required for employment to public services is prescribed to be "Not less than 18 years of age and not more than 40 years of age." 15 It must be mentioned here that in case of re-admission to the Government employment the employees may be exempted from the maximum age limit. 16
(2) **Citizenship:**

Only the citizen of Iran can enter into any official recruitment. No distinction is made between citizenship by birth or acquired citizenship for employment in services. However, those who acquire Iranian citizenship, can never become a Minister or Deputy Minister or can never be recruited in the Foreign Ministry.\(^{17}\)

In case of the recruitment of foreign citizens Article 82 of the 1979 Constitution says, "the employment of foreign experts by the Government is forbidden, unless their services are highly essential. Their employment must be with the approval of the Majlis (Parliament)."\(^{18}\)

(3) **Military Services:**

The military service is compulsory for every male citizen of Iran. He has to undergo compulsory military training for at least two years.\(^{19}\) In cases of physical deficiencies, the citizens are exempted from the military service, including those who had been disabled during 1979 revolution.\(^{20}\)
(4) **Convictions:**

It is illegal to accept applications of those who have been "criminally convicted."²¹

(5) **Physical Condition:**

Most applicants are required to provide information about their physical conditions. Persons having immoral conduct or addiction to the use of narcotics or having contagious diseases are prohibited from joining the Government Services.²²

**Special Qualifications:**

In addition to the general qualifications mentioned above the candidates who desire to enter Government services are required to possess some special qualifications which are as follows:-

1) **Education:**

By and large, the Iranian system lays down definite educational standards for enterants to different employment groups. But in any case, a candidate wishing to enter the Civil Services should
possess a minimum certificate of six years of Elementary School. This is sufficient to enter into the group one and two, from educational point of view and to be qualified for Civil Service Examination for those groups.\(^23\)

The educational qualifications for entry into the seven temporary groups are as given below:

For entry in Group two, employee should possess either an elementary traditional education or a three years of Secondary School. Group three requires a three years of Secondary School plus a special training course which must have been completed. Entry to Group four requires the employees to possess a certificate for completion of Secondary School or certificates of technical and vocational schools which are equivalent to a regular Secondary School. For Group five, the applicants should have completed a specialized course in addition to the Secondary School Certificate. The employees, to enter into the Group six are required to have a Bachelor's Degree, and for Group seven they should possess either Master's or Doctorate Degree.\(^24\)
ii) **Experience**:

Experience and knowledge of work is an additional qualification laid down to be necessary for different employment groups. This is specially felt necessary in technical jobs in public administration.\(^{25}\) It is to be added here that the conditions for different jobs are on the basis of education and experience. These additional qualification have been set differently for different employment groups. For example, Group four requires eight years of experience. In Group five, six years of experience is necessary. Group eight, nine and ten requires "sufficient" experience, whereas Groups eleven and twelve require "sufficient technical and practical" experience in the field.\(^{26}\)

The above mentioned general and special qualifications are necessary pre-conditions for eligibility to the public service examination. It is the obligation of the Central Personnel Agency to enforce these standards with the cooperation of recruiting agency. They may ask for higher standards or qualifications in order to limit the number of candidates. But in any condition, it can not reduce the minimum condition set out by the Civil Service
Code. Under the present system the recruiting Agency or Ministry has to confirm the minimum qualification of the eligibility of the applicants appearing for the entrance examination to be conducted by the Central Personnel Agency (SQAЕ).

In addition, the candidates have to fill up an application form provided to them by the SQAЕ. It is given on next pages.

The Examination:

In Iran recruitment to public services is made by means of competitive examinations. This system is defined as "the corner-stone of the public personnel system." The process of recruitment is closely related to the examination process. The examination process is administered and supervised by the Central Personnel Agency, (SQAЕ). The competitive examination system is administered meticulously by the SQAЕ "to select the best possible candidates for Government Employment." 

"Entrance competitive examination are held for official employment under the supervision of State Organisation for Administration and Employment
Surname: Name: Application No.

Identity Card No: Title of the Job:

Date:

Application form for Employment

1) Date of Birth:
2) Iranian Identity Card No:
3) Father's Name:
4) Place of Birth:
5) Unmarried:
6) Married:
7) Number of Children:
8) Military Status:
9) Educational Qualifications (Last Grades/Degree Completed):
10) Special Subject:
11) Any specialised Certificate:
12) Training/Apprenticeship Experience:
13) Job Experience:
14) Title of Previous job:
15) What type of job do you demand?
16) Are you a member of Syndicate?
17) Which area do you prefer to work?
18) Do you prefer to work at night shift? Yes No
19) Have you been sponsored? Yes No
20) What expected salary would you demand?

21) What facilities would you demand?

22) Present Address: Province: City: District:

23) Previous Address: Province: City: District:

24) Date of immigration:

25) Reasons for immigration:

26) Type of immigration: Permanent: Temporary:

27) Mother Tongue (Persian): Speak: Read: Write:

28) Foreign Language: Speak: Read: Write:

29) Height:

30) Weight:

31) Do you have any physical disability? Yes: No: If yes, state what type of disability? (List physical defects of disabilities)

32) Address for Correspondence: Telephone No.

Applicant's Signature:

Remark:

Name and Surname of Interviewer: Signature

***

Affair (SQAE), the SQAE may, where it is deemed appropriate, delegate the holding of entrance competitive examination to the employing agency. But it shall maintain the supervision right."\textsuperscript{30}

The examinations are conducted in the following manner:-

(1) Written Test

(2) Oral Test or Practical Test.\textsuperscript{31}

(1) \textbf{Written Test:}

Written Tests are most commonly used in Iran. They are composed of the short answer type examinations by which the aptitude and intelligence of the candidates are tested. The written test is also designed to test and assess candidates maturity of thinking, sense of responsibility and knowledge of the work/subject.\textsuperscript{32}

(2) \textbf{Oral and Practical Test:}

An oral test aims at assessing and measuring each candidate's personnel qualities, intelligence, knowledge or behaviour. The main idea behind it, is to get a look at the candidate and to detect his personality and general behaviour, which can not
be tested by a written examination. A candidate who secures the required percentage in the examination would be graded competitively and kept in the merit list for appointment.\textsuperscript{33}

Practical examination is related to the subject matter or the skill required to be necessary for the job. Oral tests are usually conducted in the form of Interview. If the required number of candidates are equal to the number of candidates appearing for oral test, then the interviews are considered to be less competitive.\textsuperscript{34}

As it has been pointed out earlier, that the process of recruitment is closely related to the examination process, which is usually administered by the Central Personnel Agency (SQAЕ), therefore, it is essential here to highlight and explain the entire process of examination, which will help us in understanding the various aspects of examination process in Iran.

The examinations for public services in Iran are conducted in the following stages:-
(1) The recruiting Ministry or Government Agency through its representative contracts the 'SOAE' for this purpose.

(2) The recruiting Agency, with the help of 'SOAE', makes advertisements of the vacant posts in the newspapers etc.

(3) Then the application of the qualified candidates are accepted after due scrutiny.

(4) The recruiting Agency sets the question papers for written examination in consultation with 'SOAE'.

(5) The examination dates are fixed and they are held on scheduled time.

(6) The results of those who have passed the written examination are declared.

(7) The candidates who get through in the written examination are required to appear for oral examination. Thereafter, the oral tests are held for them. Practical examination are also held at this stage, if necessary.
(8) Then 'SQAEE' announces the list of successful candidates. Either they have to undergo training courses or they are kept on probation for a specific period in different Ministries or Government Agencies.\textsuperscript{35} At the end of the probation period the candidates are posted permanently in the organisations for which they have applied.\textsuperscript{36}

Exemption or Prevention from Entrance Examinations:

In some cases, the candidates may be exempted or prevented from the entrance examination for public services, they are as follows:-

(1) If an employee has resigned from his earlier job and applied for a lower job, the employing Ministry or Agency may waive the Entrance examination and even the probationary period.

(2) If an employee applies for higher job he should necessarily pass the entrance examination but the employing Ministry or Agency may waive his probationary period.\textsuperscript{37}

(3) Those employees who are not yet confirmed
in the official employment, after the expiry of the probation period, are not eligible for one year, to appear for entrance examination for employment in the same job.\textsuperscript{38}

**Probationary Period:**

Probation system has been adopted in Iran to certify and test the employee's ability. A candidate for entering into the Government services, after having passed the entrance examination and before the appointment as an official employee should pass through a probationary period which may be between six months to two years.\textsuperscript{39}

Probation period is a decisive step which consists in matching what the new employee can do with what the job demands him to do. The final selection is, thus, based upon trial and satisfactory work of the employee. The probation period is, therefore, considered as a part of the recruitment process during which all the employees have to go through a trial of their capacity and ability to prove to be able to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of their future positions.
If the recruiting Agency does not confirm an employee for selection during or at the end of the probation period then, "the candidate shall have no right for one year, from the date of his dismissal to participate again in the entrance competition for official employment in the same job." 40

The position and privileges of the employees during the probationary period are as follows:

1. The temporary appointment of the employee on probation on the permanent organisational post is permissible.

2. The employee on probation is considered official employee during the probationary period, meaning that the salary and allowances of the employee on probation are determined and paid in accordance with the regulations governing the salary and allowances of permanent official employees.

3. The salary during the probationary period is equal to that of the first step of the relevant group. 41
And finally, when the employee is accepted, he is appointed into the official services and his period of probation is considered as a part of his service. 42

Under the present situation the probationary period in Iran has been misunderstood ill-advised as it looks only a part of service, whereas organisa-
nally the employees' skill and knowledge should be measured on the job or in the field. The present position does not leave much room for the employees to demonstrate and improve his individual ability.

Forms of Recruitment:

In Iranian Civil Service Law divides all Government recruits into two main types they are as follows:-

(1) The Official Employees:

An official employee is one who is employed in a Ministry or Government Agency and occupies one of the organizational posts within the employment groups. 43

Recruitment of the official employees is through competitive examination and merit system as described
above.

(2) The Contractual Employees:

The contractual or temporary employee is one who is described by law as, "One who is employed according to a contract for a temporary or definite period and for a specified work." They can be employed as permanent or official employees only if they qualify through the competitive examinations for that purpose.

In general all the recruitment affairs of all the Ministries and Government Agencies are supervised by 'SOAE' and are subject to the provision of the Civil Service Code. But there are some Ministries and Agencies which are not covered under the subjection of Civil Service Code. For instance the below mentioned Ministries and Agencies have been placed outside the supervision of the Civil Service Code.

(1) Those Government Agencies which, according to their status, are administered as Government companies under the Commercial Law. However, the employment regulations of companies also are prepared by the 'SOAE'.
(2) Municipalities and their agencies, Health Councils and organisations of a local nature which meet their expenditure from incomes that are derived from special sources.

(3) Positions like that of Judges and Professors etc.

(4) Employees subjected to the provision of the Employment Law of the Armed Forces.

(5) Employees of the Parliament.

(6) Employees of the Ministry of the Foreign Affair (it has got its own employment regulations.)

Besides these the following positions are not covered under the Civil Service Code, they are as follows:

(1) The Prime Minister,

(2) Cabinet Ministers,

(3) Deputy Prime Minister,

(4) Deputy Ministers,

(5) Ambassadors,

(6) Governor-Generals,
(7) The Managing Director of Plan Organisation,
(8) The Secretary-General of 'SOAE',
(9) The Bureau Chief of Prime Minister,
(10) The Bureau Chief of the Ministers. 46

Recruitment in India:

In every Government organisation a number of vacancies arise every year due to retirements, promotions, transfers, deaths etc. Besides this, newly created posts, need to be filled up through fresh recruitment.

The basic principle of recruitment has been provided by the Indian Constitution as it paved the way for "equality of opportunity for all citizen in matters relating to the employment or appointment at any office under the State." 47 And it says, "No citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them be ineligible for or discriminated against in respect of any employment or office under the State." 48

In India, the recruitment to all Government services takes place on the basis of merit system i.e., by open competitive examination. Although,
there is direct recruitment for all higher services but a certain proportion of post is reserved for being filled up by the promotion from below.49

The Union Public Service Commission conducts the competitive examination for All India Services like the Administrative, Police, Foreign Services and also for all Central services. The recruitment to All India and Central Services is based on the following tests:-

(1) A written test common to all candidates, meant to test the capacity for clear and logical thinking, memory, expression and general knowledge (compulsory papers).

(2) A test of intellectual ability and scholastic attainments through written examination in the subjects of the candidate's choice (optional papers).

(3) An interview to assess candidate's personal qualities.50

The required manpower is also recruited from within the services for Clerical, Supervisory and
even managerial ranks in many organisations. However, competitive examination may also be required as evidence of competence for promotion.\textsuperscript{51}

Reservations in Services:

The Constitution of India also provides for special provisions regarding the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in different services of both Centre and States, to safeguard the interest of lower sections of the society.\textsuperscript{52}

It is to be added here that there is no reservation system, as compared to India, in Iran. But there are certain privileges which Government has provided for those Government Servants who, during the War, have stayed and provided the essential services in the areas effected by the War or War-Zone Areas. Benefits are given also to those Government employees who join the war as volunteers or those employees who have been taken as Prisoner of War (POW). These privileges have been given either in the form of cash rewards or by giving additional step as promotion to the Government servants.\textsuperscript{53}
Recruitment in England:

The recruitment of Civil Servants in Britain before and during the IIInd World War was done according to Method-I. But after the recommendation of the Fulton Committee Report, the British Government abolished Method-I of recruitment and since, then for the entry into the Administrative Class Method-II has been adopted, which is open only to those possessing an Honour's Degree.54

Recruitment to the Civil Services is related to the academic qualification in Britain. Entry to the Civil Services is possible at the following three educational levels:

(1) Ordinary level General Certificate of Education for clerical posts.

(2) Advanced level General Certificate of Education - for executive posts.

(3) First degree level examination - for executive officer 'A' class.55

For entry to the services at each level, the educational qualification and age have been limited.
The Government of Britain after accepting the Fulton Committee recommendation has set up a "Civil Service Department", under the direct control of the Prime Minister. The function of this Department encompassed the work of the Treasury, Pay and Management group, as well as that of the Civil Service Commission. This Department is responsible for recruitment and policies for Civil Service pay and management and administrative functions of the Civil Service Commission.56

In France recruitment to all categories of Government Services is made by competitive examination conducted by the "Ecole Nationale-de-Administration.58 Examination consists of a written part and an oral examination. There the candidates are required to possess a minimum qualification of the primary or secondary school leaving certificate or a University Degree Depending on the class of the posts for which they apply. Beside this, Ecole Nationale-de-Administration also holds open examination which is only for Government employees who have five years of experience and are under thirty years of age.57
In Iran both direct and indirect methods of recruitment are used. Both these methods have been utilised depending upon the circumstances and requirements of the different types of jobs.

The recruitment methods of the public services play a significant role to fulfil the requirements of the Government, as it can bring more bright persons at middle and higher levels necessary for better and more efficient Civil Administration.

On the whole the problem arises only when recruitment to public services is practically used as an instrument to fill up the vacancies in Government without considering the requirement and needs of the Government. This has resulted in overlapping of different Administrative Departments. Some of the Government Agencies and Ministries are not yet covered by the unified Civil Service Code of 1966 and have their own personnel laws. This in turn creates and results in multiple character of Recruitment system in Iranian Personnel Administration.
The Civil Service Code also provides for temporary or contractual employment for a specified period. But it has been observed that in most cases the contractual employees after a few years of temporary service can acquire official status even without appearing for competitive examination. This is neglect of the employment law and is against the principle of merit system. It also has adverse effect on the morale of other employees.

The examination process, which is the most complex part of recruiting techniques, has been criticized as it is not up-to-date and mostly based on general knowledge, and is not related to the actual knowledge required for the job.

The Interview System also has been criticized as the time for interview is short. The candidate may not be able to express his experience and abilities in a short time. In some cases where the number of candidates are equal to the required number, the interview is merely held as an formal introduction.
There should be more contact and cooperation between the Central Personnel Agency 'SOAB', and the Universities and Research Institutes, which are working in this field to bring about new techniques to solve problems relating to the recruitment system in Iran.

***
REFERENCES:


7. Ibid., Based on Article, 28.


9. State Employment Law, op.cit., Article, 28

10. Ibid., Article, 36(c)


13. Ibid., pp.228-30.

15. Ibić., Article, 14(a)


17. Ibić., Article, 15.


19. Government of Iran: Compulsory Military Service Act, Approved on 21st October, 1984, Chapter 1, Article 4(a) (In Persian)


21. Statement Employment Law, op.cit., Article 14(D)

22. Ibić., Article, 14(G) and (E)

23. Ibić., Article, 14(F)

24. Ibić., Based on Note 2, of Article 137.


31. S.C.A.E.: Regulations for Competitive Examinations, op.cit., Chapter 1, Article 3
32. Ibid., Chapter-III, Articles 11-14.


34. S.C.A.E: Regulations for Competitive Examinations, op.cit., Chapter-1, Note of Article, 3

35. Ibid., Chapter-1, Article, 4.

36. State Employment Law, op.cit., Article, 19

37. Ibid., Articles 68.69.

38. Ibid., Article 21

39. Ibid., Article 22

40. Ibid., Article 21

41. Ibid., Article 17(1) and (18)(1)(2)

42. Ibid., Note-1, of Article 18.

43. Ibid., Article 5

44. Ibid., Article 5


46. Ibid., p.42.


48. Ibid., Article 16(2), p.53.


53. The Law regarding the Permission of payment of Salary and allowances to the Civil Servents who have been taken as P.O.Ws., During the War, or remained in War Zone Area, Approved on 25th October, 1981.

54. Maheshwari Shriram: The Civil Service in Great Britain, Naurang Rai, New Delhi, 1976, p.44.

55. Ibid., p.52.


58. Ibid., p.35.

59. State Employment Law, op.cit., Based on Note-26, Article-6.