ABSTRACT

Introduction

In most countries of the third world, the disparity between male and female representation in civil service is wide. “Women have little or unequal access to public employment” (Zafarullah, 2000: 197). “Fewer women are employed by governments in the civil service and they figure prominently in jobs set aside for them, while executive positions are generally occupied by men. A very insignificant number of women occupy key decision making positions in the public service” (United Nations, 1989: 13; UNDP, 1995: 40). In the past the members of bureaucracy were selected on the basis of merit. “But the merit principle was rather narrowly interpreted to favor a small group of people who had the opportunity, with the backing of prevailing social values, to gain entry to institutions of higher learning to develop their competence for governmental jobs” (Zafarullah, 2000: 197). “High entry standards and certain other prohibitions deprived a large segment of the population, especially women, from serving society” (Zafarullah, 2000: 197).

While discussing on ‘representative bureaucracy’ Kingsley mentions that “In a democracy competence alone is not enough. The public service also has to be representative if the state is to liberate rather than enslave” (Kingsley, 1944: 185; cited in Zafarullah, 2000: 198). Scholars have been vigorously arguing for gender equality in public administration. A similar theme is advanced by developmentalists also. They contend that development, apart from economic growth, connotes “equity, social justice, and the effective exercise of basic human rights” (Lateef, 1992: 295; cited in Zafarullah, 2000: 198). Thus if equitable development is a key concern of Third World especially in South Asian governments, it is crucial that the structures of authority, decision making and implementation be modified to provide access and equity to all segments of society, especially women. The International Labour Organization (ILO) clarifies that by emphasizing “the promotion of women’s participation in economic
activity, including the management and decision making levels, is not simply a question of equity, but also one of necessity for viable and sustainable national development” (United Nations, 1989: 242).

**Basis for Research Problem**

The proposed study will probe women’s participation in South Asia’s (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) civil services. Roots of public administration in this region can be traced to the past. Past developments during pre-British and pre-Mughal rule are important, yet “modern” public administration in this region has been significantly molded by almost two centuries of British colonial domination of the Indian-subcontinent. Almost all aspects of Indian society were influenced and old governing institutions were shaped in the British model. Public administration was the central pivot that cut through institutions like the executive, the legislature and the judiciary (Khan, 2000: 64). Bangladesh, like India and Pakistan, basically adhere to the same ideology and structure of bureaucracy as embodied in the ethos of Indian Civil Service (ICS).

**The Civil Service of India and Women’s Position in it**

The Civil Service in India is composed of the central and the provincial civil services. The central government has constituted the three All- India services [Indian Administrative Service-(IAS), the Indian Forest Service (IFC), and the Indian Police Service (IPS)] and several other Class I central services categorized as Group A, B, C, and D services. Each provincial government has 10-20 services, depending on its historical background and size. There is no special reservation for women in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). Their entry is on merit alone. According to the Indian Constitution, there is no bar of persons belonging to different regions, castes, and creed to join the civil services. There is no gender discrimination. There is no bias for people with a particular educational background, which could facilitate their entry to the civil services. In the case of ‘SC and ST’ the reservation is about 22 percent in
the AIS (All India Services –IAS, IPS and IFS). This is not helpful to women unless and until women fall under that category only then can she utilize the benefit. In the case of the various states (provinces) of the Indian union, this reservation (in state administration) is between 50 percent to 69 percent (Mishra, 2001: 131). In the case of Group A, B, C and D services, their entire management rests in the hands of the central management and the provinces have no say in the matter.

The entry of women into the IAS is a post- independence phenomenon. The service, around which all other services revolved, i.e. the Indian Civil Service (ICS), was manned exclusively by men before 1947. Since Independence in 1947, the Constitution has permitted Indian women to enter the administrative services, especially in the public sector. During British rule, women were disqualified for higher administrative posts. Immediately after Independence, women were allowed to take the competitive examination for the administrative service. However, rule 5 (3) of the Indian Administrative Services’ Rules of 1954 empowered the government to demand the resignation of a female officer after marriage on ground of efficiency (Swarup and Sinha, 1991: 16). After women parliamentarians and women leaders raised a hue and cry against this provision, the All India Services separated it from their recruitment rules in 1972. Nevertheless, the percentage of women IAS remains very low—not more than 11 percent of the total. Presently the percentage of women working in the Central Government is 7.56 percent, of which 24 percent are in All India Civil Services (http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/March 8th 2009).

The Civil Service of Pakistan and Women’s Position in it

After its creation in 1947, Pakistan had kept intact the civil service system developed by the British. Although the 1956 and 1962 constitutions of Pakistan ensured equality of opportunity for all citizens with regard to public employment, in reality the situation was quite different. The structuring of Pakistan Civil Service, however, underwent some changes according to the need of time and in the changed circumstances, for example regarding appointment of women in different cadres. It
was clearly mentioned in the recruitment rules of the civil services that women will be considered only for (a) audit and accounts service, (b) railway accounts service, (c) military accounts service, (d) income tax and postal services. However, they were not eligible to enter the All-Pakistan Services, i.e. the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) and the Police Service of Pakistan (PSP) (Mahtab, 1995: 90). Nevertheless, women were increasingly appointed to those professional services such as education and health both at the central and provincial levels as well as to the subordinate services.

In addition, they will receive appointment to those services in which they are fit after selection, only when they voluntarily declare that they would resign from their service after marriage or remarriage. The then Pakistan Government was of the opinion that once women enter into matrimony, their skill diminish (Choudhury, 1969: 105).

After 1973, the scenario has changed theoretically as the Constitution of Pakistan, and Article 27 pointed out clearly the equal opportunities of women to enter into the civil service. In this regard, the government can take any affirmative action (positive discrimination) to increase women’s participation in the civil service (Article 34). After 33 years, in 2006, the Government of Pakistan adopted a policy of reserving 10 percent quota for women in central superior services (CSS) and another milestone was achieved when 10 percent reservation of senior management jobs were for women. But there are only 5.4 percent women in government jobs (all scales -BPS 1-22) (UNDP report, 2008). However, this speaks of great disparity between men and women in government service. The Basic Pay Scale (BPS) 16-22 is considered to be the officer class. In this level women constitute only 11.9 percent (from BPS-17 to BPS-22).

The Civil Service of Bangladesh and Women’s Position in it

Bangladesh inherited the administrative structure and civil service system developed in Pakistan, which was a continuation of the system of the British period. It was known as the most distinguished civil service in the world. The service of this heaven born service was the product of the old order (Morshed, 1997: 76).
The government of Bangladesh has a two-tier administrative system. The upper tier is the central secretariat at the national level consisting of the ministries and divisions to provide policies and to perform clearing house functions. The other tier consists of ‘line’ departments/directorates attached to the ministries and divisions that are mainly responsible for general administration, service delivery to citizens and implementation of various government development programs at the sub-national level (Ahmed, 2002: 327). The civil service has been classified vertically into four categories, namely class-I, class-II, class-III, and class-IV, based on such variables as levels of responsibility, educational qualification and pay range (Ahmed and Khan, 1990: 29). The category class-I is the highest category of civil servants.

After independence in 1971, the Bangladesh government took certain steps to increase women’s participation in the realm of administration and policy making. The constitution of Bangladesh gives equal right to women to enter any employment or office in the civil service. The constitution not only ensures equality of sexes but also acknowledges the necessity of remedying the existing unequal representation by reserving certain percentage of civil service posts for the women. In spite of constitutional provisions for guaranteeing equal representation of women in all sectors and continuous support and cooperation from local and international agencies in advocating women rights, the situation of women employment in administration has remained marginal. At present (in 2007), out of total public sector employment of 10, 03,021, only 1, 88,848 are women (Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh, 2008). About 18.83 percent are women and among them over 90% were class III and class IV employees i.e. the vast majority of women in the civil service are low-paid clerical staff. But women’s position at the top administrative and managerial classes carrying higher prestige and pay scale is extremely meager [(9.77 percent) for Class-1]. This is despite the reservation of quotas, 10% of class I and class II posts and 15% for class III and class IV posts (Banglapedia, 2004: 12).

In the central decision making arena, the number of women employees is very insignificant. In fact, this Secretariat is considered the nerve center of the government.
In the various Ministries and Divisions, only 14.34 percent are women till June 2007 (O & M Wing, Ministry of Establishment, 2007).

Having recognized the above concerns, the overall question of this research is:

**Why women’s participation in the civil services (especially in the decision making level) in South-Asia (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) is low?**

To answer the question above we need to ask other related questions:

a) What are the policies of successive governments pertaining to women participation in the public administration?

b) To what extent are the macro and micro social, political and cultural contexts of Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan influence the business of women as a civil servant?

c) What are the formal institutional arrangements in respect of structure, functions, procedures and power of concerned authorities (recruiting agencies and promotional boards) in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan?

d) What are the key factors that affect the women participation in the civil service?

**The Study Proposition**

Based on the above discussion I put forward the following proposition:

“Women administrators are encountering larger permeable glass ceiling in civil services resulting in a lower proportion of women in higher (decision making) positions in the civil services of this region”.

The ‘glass ceiling’ metaphor refers to barriers or impediments that prevent women and minorities from advancing to senior level positions in their organizations. Here the term glass ceiling will be used to describe all the problems of working women at the government level who can see where they want to get to but who find themselves
blocked by an invisible barrier. The attitude of the society generally, group or individual prejudice, restrictive male biased working practices, lack of the support available to men through their old-boy network- these are many more factors that conspire to build and strengthen the barriers around women (Flanders, 1994; cited in Mavin, 2000: 17).

A cultural approach has been adopted in this study as an analytical lens to explain the issue. Culture is the learned and shared ways of thinking and acting among a group of people or a society. Hofstede refers to the concept of culture as the software of the mind, a sort of mental programming (Hofstede, 1984: 11 &1991: 4). In the views of Wildavsky, Thompson and Ellis, the myriad of definitions of culture can be reduced to two groups. One views culture “as composed of values, beliefs, norms, rationalization, symbols, ideologies, i.e. mental products”. The other sees culture “as referring to the total way of life of people, their interpersonal relations, as well as their attitudes” (Jamil, 1994: 276). Culture influences our daily lives in the way we eat, dress, greet and treat one another, teach our children, manage organizations and solve problems. Human are not born with a culture but rather born into a society that teaches us the collective ways of life we call culture (Robertson, 1981: 59-60). Most anthropologists and sociologists tend to agree that culture cannot be genetically transferred. Culture is learned behavior. It is shared ways of doing things. It helps human beings adapt to their ever-changing environment.

G. Hofstede1 (1991, 2001) is known as a legendary cross-cultural researcher and one who, by far, has been the most influential scholar in the development of a theory of national culture (Gatley, Lessem and Altman, 1996: 98). His work considered as one of the most recent studies which address the question of influence of culture on organizational structure/performance. In his investigations into the work related attitudes and values of managers working in IBM in more than fifty countries and three

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1 Geert Hofstede, a Dutch engineer for ten years, returned to school to earn a PhD in social psychology. IBM hired Hofstede upon completion of his doctoral program as a management trainer in the European executive development department. Later he started the personnel research department at IBM. In this role he collected the 116,000 survey responses that laid the groundwork for his popular book Culture’s Consequences. Upon leaving IBM in pursuit of academia, it took Hofstede six years to complete the work.
regions, Hofstede was able to put together an impressive analysis of the cultural variations between nationalities (Tayeb, 1988: 38-39; Handy, 1993). Since the respondents were doing similar work in the same company, many intervening variables could be controlled. The only significant difference was their nationality. Therefore the study could claim the differences in attitudes and values were due to cultural differences (Gray and Mallory, 1998: 49-50). Hofstede’s work has been widely used and criticized by researchers. Here it is being employed as a framework for organizing information and data. The four dimensions of national culture or value categories provide a convenient typology to describe the government administrative culture of these three countries (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh). These three countries were included in the original survey.

The Data

The methodology of the study involved identifying and interviewing women administrators using an appropriately modified version of the interview schedule and questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher with the guidance of her supervisor. In India samples included only the IAS women officers. In Pakistan only the DMG women officers were being targeted, however, since the researcher couldn’t go there personally, information was obtained through email and phone calls. In the case of Bangladesh, the samples include only the women officers who are in Administrative cadre. The duration of data collection were ten month (January-2008 to October -2008).

In each country, questionnaires were distributed to all women administrators in the designated top ranks. Of the approximately 60 persons (20 persons from each country) 36 responded; 15 from India (Delhi, Mumbai and Pune), 5 from Pakistan (Islamabad) and 16 from Bangladesh (all from Dhaka). The questionnaires, which were usually completed by the respondents in their homes or offices, were followed with in-depth interviews which occurred in the respondents’ offices. Each respondent was visited two to three times by the researcher to obtain the responses (tape recorders were not
used). Regarding the respondents from Pakistan, the in-depth interview were mostly conducted through phone calls. The expected number of respondents from academic and research background was 30 (10 from each country). From India 10 responded, from Pakistan 2 and from Bangladesh 10 responded. In other words, 22 responded out of 30. Therefore, comparison will be made mainly between India and Bangladesh. The researcher will try to bridge the data gap through limited primary and secondary data to make a comparison with Pakistan too.

The questionnaire of this research is divided broadly into two parts based on its subject matter. First part is based on the socio-economic and educational background of women administrators while second part concentrate more on their perceptions and attitudes to their career and task environment. As mentioned earlier, that the respondents have been divided into two broad categories, namely, administrators in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and experts / researchers on WID (Women in Development) issues. The discussion with the experts was more informal in nature; where they tried to analyze why women’s participation was so low in this region; what were factors affected their task environment and how far they were able to manage those issues? As a result, the researcher didn’t follow any structured questionnaire in this case rather she followed a very simple unstructured questionnaire and the discussion was going on the way the experts wanted it to. They were then free to express their opinion and pointed out very useful suggestions for the researcher. The administrators identified some factors which affect their participation are mentioned below:

Factors Affecting Participation: from the Perspectives of Administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mentioned by the women administrators (out of 15 from India and out of 16 from Bangladesh)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>India (10), Pakistan (5) and Bangladesh (16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political influence</td>
<td>India (13), Pakistan (4) and Bangladesh (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Commitment (Domestic, childcare and other domestic responsibilities)</td>
<td>India (11), Pakistan (4) and Bangladesh (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational policies</td>
<td>India (8), Pakistan (2) and Bangladesh (11)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
and procedures (problems of promotion, transfer, deputation, training and recruitment etc)

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<tr>
<th>Requirement to work in different locations (field work unsuitable as lack of facilities in the field offices)</th>
<th>India (7), Pakistan (5) and Bangladesh (9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullying, harassment and discrimination at the work place</td>
<td>India (7), Pakistan (5) and Bangladesh (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of friendly and congenial working environment (negative/traditional outlook of male colleagues, superiors and subordinates)</td>
<td>India (4), Pakistan (2) and Bangladesh (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadre (Insider/outsider)</td>
<td>India (3), Bangladesh (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of skill and ability to take a decision individually</td>
<td>India (2), Pakistan (2) and Bangladesh (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>India (though they didn’t face but majority said caste discrimination is there in the civil service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine cultural pattern (Man is tough and women are soft and because of this ‘feminine’ in nature she is only suitable for desk oriented jobs)</td>
<td>India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (Majority respondents mentioned this cultural traits as one of the main cause for low participation of women in the civil service)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The academicians also mentioned some factors which are pointed out below:

1. Ideological Factors (Patriarchy)
2. Socio-Cultural Factors (Masculine cultural pattern)
3. Quotas (gender quota should be linked with social and economic redistributive justice in the society)

They also mentioned some barriers which are broadly divided under two:

1. Personal Barriers (Dual responsibilities, transferable nature of job etc.)
2. Organizational Barriers (Lack of supportive work environment in the work place, superiority complex of the male colleagues, Societal backwardness etc.)

**Major Findings of the Research**

It is clear from the above discussion that women’s active participation in the civil service is hampered because of the issues raised above by the women administrators, academicians and researchers of WID issues. These issues can be described as follows:

**Figure 1: Key Factors Affecting Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Problems of organizational policies and procedures (i.e. recruitment, training, deputation, transfer etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of skills and ability to make a decision</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Superiority complex and negative attitudes of male colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of friendly/congenial working environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of security (protecting abuse and harassment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Absence of appropriate and supportive environment in the workplace (Inadequate transport facilities, inadequate residential accommodation, lack of career women’s hostel facilities.)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cultural factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Masculinity cultural pattern (Patriarchy etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gender, Caste problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Requirement to work in different locations (field work unsuitable for women)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Family Commitment (Domestic, Childcare and other domestic responsibilities)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Absence of a day care centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Non-cooperation of husband and family members</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Societal backwardness</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political factors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Politicized bureaucracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Inconsistent and ambiguous policies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Factors relating to Public Service Commission and Promotional Boards

- Weak Characteristics of PSC and different promotional boards (i.e. Superior Selection Board in Bangladesh and Central Civil Service Board in India)

### Organizational Factors

The majority of respondents from all the three countries mentioned that initially they didn’t face any problems regarding promotion and other policies offered by the organization as it is mainly based on an organizational time frame. Later on in the senior level women faced discrimination and in the big cities women face more problems compared to small cities. Promotion, transfer, deputation, placement everywhere women faced discrimination. They complained that they are always in number ‘2’ in their respective departments. They mentioned that a women’s work is assessed not necessarily by neutral objective criteria. The gender angle somehow creeps in, directly or indirectly. Thus, women who speak up are “aggressive” while their male counterparts are “dynamic”. Women who show sympathy or are caring are considered “weak” or “emotional” while men are considered the “new-age males”. Women who put the job first, even before family, and gets things done are considered “hard” while a man would be considered “efficient”. Along with others they mentioned superiority complex and negative attitudes from their male superior/colleagues, lack of supportive work environment, etc. Socially people still consider a men’s work much more important than a women’s work. As a result, work space; work patterns are completely male oriented in these countries. Furthermore, special arrangements for women officers are absent in our office environment. This is also related to the lack of security of those who are posted in the remote areas.
Cultural Factors

According to G. Hofstede’s cultural dimension it was assumed that India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are a Masculine society. Masculinity pertains to societies in which social gender roles are clearly distinct. The pre dominant pattern is for men to be more assertive and for women to be more nurturing. These masculinity cultural patterns of these countries assign specific sex roles in the society which give women an extremely limited scope for employment opportunity.

Cultural norms continue to inhibit women’s access to education, in general, and higher education, in particular. Gender differentiation of roles assigns women to the domestic sphere, i.e. to early marriage, taking care of children and domestic work. In almost all masculine societies, the most clearly defined role for women has been that of mother and wife. Motherhood as distinct from fatherhood has traditionally been viewed as a full time job. Even when employed outside of the home, women tend to remain responsible for the mothering and general housekeeping functions (Davidson, Sirburg and Hill, 1974: 185-188; cited in Bayes, 1991: 28). The wife-mother syndrome pervades the behavior and role performance of all women in this Indian subcontinent to some extent and socializes all women to avoid success, to be unambitious and to be passive even if they have gained admittance in to the administrative service cadre (Lynn and Vaden, 1978: 209; cited in Bayes, 1991: 29). This might be the reason for low presence and low participation of women in the civil service.

Lastly, they have agreed upon the following aspects of general perception of the society regarding the role of women in public services which need to be addressed to make an enabling environment for the advancement of women in the civil services in these countries.
a) Women do service for earnings but not as a career in public service. Society, too, accepts women as earners but not as policy makers/executives.

b) Reservations in the minds of male staff to work under Women Heads.

c) Tendency to have ‘presence’ of women but not sharing power with them.

d) Typically women give education, culture, child welfare, women welfare and much other ‘feminine’ subject to handle.

These stereotypes result in differing attitudes in both genders regarding women’s participation in public administration or for that matter in any other sectors of the economy. Lastly, it can be said that the common policy on women development in these three countries are ‘aims to establish parity between men and women in all spheres of national life’, but such an altruistic purpose will only provide positive outcomes if strong political commitment is patent and is backed by an unconstrained bureaucratic apparatus free from male prejudices.

**Political Factors**

The majority of respondents said that a relationship with a politician is one of the vital factors that can influence the career development of the administrators. They mentioned in the case of promotion, transfer, placement, deputation, foreign training, everything depends mostly on the relationship with the politicians. The majority said, this is more so in recent years, where the party politicization of bureaucrats has reached to such an extent that the so called “disloyal” bureaucrats are discriminated and placed at unimportant positions or are made OSDs (Officers on Special Duty or without a portfolio). The administrators think that though it is not directly related to gender, it is the nature of political connection that matters. Ministers either on selection committees or having direct or indirect influence on such committees can manipulate the process to favor their preferred candidates, whether men or women. But it would negatively affect their participation they mentioned.
In G. Hofstede’s study Pakistan and Bangladesh societies are more collectivist than India (though they all belong to the collectivist scale). The most significant manifestation of collectivism in these regions is the key role played by family and kinship structures. Family and kinship based social structures have given rise to the culture of ‘lobbying’ in these countries. It is believed that in bureaucratic decision making in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the intrusion of caste, communal and familial considerations are considered as fundamental factor. An experienced Pakistani diplomat, who serves as Foreign Secretary and, more recently, as a foreign Minister summed up the application of rules in Pakistan as follows, (cited in Islam, 2004: 322)

“For friends everything, for enemies nothing and for the rest strict application of rules”.

Factors Relating to Public Service Commission and Promotional Boards

There is an argument that the chairman and members of Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) act politically as they are recruited on the basis of political affiliation of the present government. In most cases when a government changed, the chairman and members of BPSC are also reshuffled. This may change or alter BPSC’s objectives as an independent implementing authority. The ‘Quota’ in Bangladesh was fully operationalized in the 1980s. As with all quota systems there have been administrative problems relating to equitable treatment and creaming. Many positions reserved for women remain unfilled because of procedural faults. This is why the respondents mentioned that ‘quotas’ actually have limited the opportunities for women to enter the civil service and have failed to eliminate not only discrimination against women, in general, but also discrimination between different categories of women - the advantaged urban and disadvantaged rural/semi-urban women. The BPSC knows the loopholes of the ‘quota’ system. However, they pointed out that taking advantage of the loopholes in the system is not unique to Bangladesh; it is also not uncommon in
other countries. They said because of BPSC as a weak institution (politically backed) they cannot make decisions properly. BPSC’s weak institutional character indirectly influences the participation of women in the government service.

In the thesis in political factors we have also noticed that different promotional committees are ineffective in Bangladesh and India because of political influence. They only perform the routine work, have to follow the political decisions and implement those decisions only. They cannot perform their duty independently which makes the administration very weak. This has a negative influence to the overall organizational policies and procedures which might de-motivate women to participate in the civil service.

All these factors are collectively responsible for the low participation of women in the civil service.

**Conclusion**

The above discussion gives us a broad understanding regarding women’s participation in the civil service in these three countries. Despite the efforts government has taken to stimulate the entrance and upward mobility of its women administrators, the overall figures are not impressive; women administrators, especially in the higher echelons, are still very few in number. Those who started in junior positions experience many barriers to career advancement. One of the more general problems is the existing pattern of gender roles; majority of women civil servants think that they faced discrimination because of that. They think the women who pursue a career in public administration; the choice continues to be between career and children. A lack of office and other facilities as well as the negative attitude of personnel officers who are afraid of deviant cases, are both strong barriers in the process of participating in the decision making sector for women. As long as governments are unwilling to accommodate the needs of women for more flexible hours and for child care the
position of women will not improve, in spite of general political climate that supports the hiring of more women.

They mentioned two strategies for change which will help to achieve more women in the public sector. Firstly, to achieve greater female participation in civil service, profound changes must occur in the society as well as in the government bureaucracies. Perhaps the most important and difficult of these is changing the sex specific division of labor which women identify as the main source of discrimination against women in employment. The public service gears recruitment and promotion to the model of the male employee who is often free from family tasks (mostly because of an unemployed wife). Not only must the distribution of family roles be changed, but the social consciousness of the fundamental importance of family duties, especially child raising work, must be fostered and incorporated into the recruitment rules of the civil service.

Secondly, as short term strategies, greater female participation in decision making positions in civil service could be obtained through: (1) giving preference to female applicants in jobs where women have been underrepresented; (2) altering career ladder requirements that discriminate against women; (3) motivating women to obtain training in typical female areas; (4) using affirmative action plans to advance women into key positions; and (5) passing an anti-discrimination act that punishes violations with effective sanctions. They mentioned these are but a sample of some of the strategies that deserve attention.

Once women obtain a critical mass of at least 25 percent of top administrative jobs and are not required to behave like tokens, the overall mix of administrative style will change and recruitment and promotion of women become easier. In this way women’s participation can increase in the civil service and later on which in turn will play effective role in forming gender balanced employment policy of the government to attract more women to be employed in the civil service.
Since women’s representation at the policy making level is low, incorporating of women’s critical issues of the development plans could not be ensured. As women are rarely found in the project implementation bodies, the programs undertaken for women development are not successfully implemented in most cases. It is, therefore, not surprising that the declared national objective of these three countries “to bring women into the mainstream of national development” has remained unfulfilled. It is, therefore, necessary that women are adequately represented in the policy making (Parliament) and policy implementing (Bureaucracy) levels, so that incorporation of women’s critical and strategic needs in the development plan is ensured and women’s interest in various sectors are taken care of.

(Signature of the Guide)                                                (Signature of the Researcher)
Dr. Suhas Palshikar                                                            Syeda Lasna Kabir
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