

LEX SCRIPTA MAGAZINE OF LAW AND POLICY, VOL-1, ISSUE-4
ISSN-2583-8725

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ISSN- 2583-8725

VOLUME-1 ISSUE-4
YEAR: 2023

EDITED BY:
LEX SCRIPTA MAGAZINE OF LAW AND
POLICY

LEX SCRIPTA MAGAZINE OF LAW AND POLICY, VOLUME-1: ISSUE-4

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SERVICES COMMISSION IN INDIA AND BANGLADESH

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Abstract

The civil services commissions of Bangladesh and India, two South Asian nations with different administrative systems, are thoroughly compared in this article. Civil services commissioners are essential to the upkeep of good governance because they choose and manage the civil service workers who are essential to the functioning of a nation. This study aims to shed light on the similarities and differences between the civil services commissions in India and Bangladesh, with particular attention to their historical development, organizational structures, recruitment and selection procedures, training and development initiatives, performance evaluation and accountability mechanisms, as well as the challenges and reforms they face. In Bangladesh's and India's recruiting and selecting procedures, a great deal of attention is paid to examination systems, eligibility standards, and training programs. An analysis of these procedures provides insight on the efficiency and diversity of employment policies in the two countries. The article also looks at initiatives related to training and development, including curriculum, skill development plans, and training facilities, all of which are crucial for equipping public servants with the knowledge and skills needed for their positions.

Keywords: *Civil Services Commissions, India, Bangladesh, Recruitment, Training, Accountability, Reforms*

Introduction

Both Bangladesh and India's civil services commissions have a complex and colourful history that is firmly entrenched in their colonial pasts. In Bangladesh's example, the idea of civil services commissions was formed after the nation's arduous 1971 separation from Pakistan. At this critical juncture, the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) was established. This organization was painstakingly created to guarantee equitable, transparent, and merit-based hiring and recruiting procedures for government officials in the just established country.¹

¹ Habib Zafarullah, Mohammad Habibur Rahman, Mohammad Mohabbat Khan, *The Civil Service System of Bangladesh*, Civil Service Systems in Asia (pp.24-78.), Edward Elgar (June 2001), <http://dx.doi.org/10.4337/9781035304486.00010>.

An important turning point that signalled the beginning of an age of administrative stability and expansion in Bangladesh was the establishment of the BPS. Following independence, the country had to confront the difficult challenge of developing a competent and committed labour force to handle its growing administrative needs. The BPS has become the champion of meritocracy because to its stringent screening procedures and careful selection standards. It was essential in forming the nation's administrative structure, carefully selecting capable people for important posts in the government. The BPS has actively supported the development of talented public servants throughout the years, producing a generation of leaders who have been crucial to the nation's progress in addition to upholding the values of justice and equality.

In India, the complex history of British colonialism is where civil services commissions first appeared. The Indian Civil Service (ICS) evolved from the Imperial Civil Service, which was established in the middle of the 1800s. The ICS had a significant impact on the current structure of the nation's civil services when it was modified and reorganized after India attained independence.

In India, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is proof of this historical inheritance. The UPSC is in charge of hiring people for a variety of central government positions and serves as the backbone of India's administrative system. Its function goes much beyond recruiting; it carefully plans and administers tests that act as a first step for prospective civil officials, assessing not just their knowledge but also their critical thinking, ethical judgment, and decision-making capabilities.

The UPSC makes sure that the administrative machinery runs as effectively and efficiently as possible. With a battery of tests and interviews, the UPSC's stringent selection procedures help it find people with extraordinary potential and develop them into tomorrow's leaders. These leaders, who are carefully selected on the basis of competence and merit, are essential to the creation of India's policies, the execution of development projects, and the promotion of a culture of good governance.²

Any country's administrative machinery runs on the foundation of civil services commissions, which are the cornerstone of efficient governance. These commissions, which carefully choose and appoint people to important government posts, have a significant impact on the calibre and effectiveness of public administration. Several factors can be used to emphasize their significance, which are following

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- Upholding the ideals of impartiality and justice in the hiring process is made possible in large part by civil services commissions. These commissions make sure that the worthiest individuals hold positions of responsibility by assessing candidates according to their merit, credentials, and abilities. This strategy reduces favouritism and nepotism and creates an atmosphere where skill takes precedence over relationships.

² Tom Ratemo Jr., *The Public Service Commission of Kenya vis-a-vis the Union Public Service Commission: A Critique*, 3, GNLU Journal of Law Development & Politics, 123 (2013).

- The government machinery is stable because of the civil workers hired by these commissions. These experts continue to work regardless of political changes, guaranteeing the efficient execution of plans and initiatives. The nation's ability to continue progressing depends on this continuity since it lessens the potential disruptions caused by changes in political leadership.
- The task of choosing people with a variety of specializations falls to civil services commissions. The government's decision-making process benefits from this variety. Experts in fields ranging from finance and law to engineering and administration provide a multitude of knowledge and expertise that facilitates thorough problem-solving and well-informed decision-making.
- Government accountability and openness are promoted by the open hiring procedures set up and managed by civil services commissions. Public employees are more likely to take responsibility for their decisions and acts as they are aware that their appointments are made on the basis of merit. The increased openness in governance that results from this accountability raises public trust in the system's integrity.
- A well-trained and impartial civil service, selected via open processes, greatly increases citizen confidence in the government. People are more inclined to believe that the government can meet their wants and problems when they believe that public servants are selected on the basis of merit. A solid citizen-state relationship is built on trust, which promotes collaboration and advancement for everybody.

Historical Development

Evolution of Civil Services Commissions in Bangladesh³

Pre-Independence Era - Bangladesh was an essential component of British India during the pre-independence era, which lasted for several centuries. Under colonial administration, Bangladesh saw significant changes to its administrative system. The introduction of a centralized administrative structure by the British colonial rulers had a long-lasting effect on regional government. Traditionally, the Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination was the main means of hiring civil officials. It was a demanding test that evaluated candidates on both their administrative and intellectual prowess. Professionals and elites from Bengal played crucial positions in the colonial government. Their engagement in civil services demonstrated their commitment to community duty as well as their academic abilities. They had important roles in a number of administrative domains, greatly influencing the government of the area. Bangladesh's administrative environment was further shaped by the centralized administration model and the presence of British administrators, which permanently altered the country's history and governance systems.

³ S. Askvik, The Significance of Institutional Trust for Governance in Bangladesh, in I. Jamil, S. Askvik, & T. N. Dhakal (Eds.), In Search of Better Governance in South Asia and Beyond (pp. 91–108), New York and London: Springer (2011).

Post-Independence Developments - Bangladesh set out to reconstruct and reorganize its political and administrative structures after gaining its hard-won independence from Pakistan in 1971. In order to create a stable and effective state, significant reforms in governance were required following the liberation struggle. The establishment of the Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) cadre was one of the major changes that occurred during this time. This cadre was put in place to oversee the civil services in the recently constituted country and guarantee effective governance and administration. The Public Service Commission's formation was a crucial turning point in Bangladesh's post-independence history (PSC). This organization was entrusted with administering tests and managing the hiring procedure for public personnel. The PSC was essential in upholding meritocracy and openness in the hiring process and making sure that the best candidates were chosen to serve the country. The goal of this program was to develop a committed and competent civil service that could handle the various issues the nation faced. Furthermore, there were coordinated attempts in the post-independence era to localize the administration and encourage the participation of the Bengali-speaking community in the civil services. In order to adequately represent the varied demographics of the country and guarantee that the civil service accurately represented the goals and ideals of the populace, inclusion was essential. Bangladesh attempted to create a public service that was not only productive and efficient but also reflective of its rich cultural and linguistic diversity through a variety of reforms and policies.⁴

Evolution of Civil Services Commissions in India

Colonial Legacy - The structure and professionalism of India's public services are largely due to the lasting impact of British colonialism. A well-planned public administration structure was built during British control. The ICS, which during the colonial era represented the pinnacle of administrative excellence, was at the centre of this system. The majority of ICS officials were hired from Britain, and they brought a wealth of administrative experience and knowledge with them. British India's administrative activities were mostly managed by the ICS. Its officials were in charge of overseeing the efficient operation of several administrative divisions, managing resources, and putting policies into practice. This elite group of civil workers had a long-lasting influence on the government of the country by shaping the basic basis of India's administrative system. Beyond the ICS, the British left behind competitive exams that became the foundation of India's civil services. It was made sure that only the most competent and qualified people could join the bureaucracy by this stringent examination method. The colonial government also developed a hierarchical bureaucracy that prioritized specialization and distinct lines of command. As a result, the IAS and other specialized services were established, each with specific functions and duties inside the administrative structure.

⁴ *Supra* note 1.

Post-Independence Reforms and Changes - After gaining independence from British rule in 1947, India undertook a revolutionary quest to reconfigure its administrative framework. To fit the requirements of the recently independent country, significant adjustments were implemented to the inherited administrative structure. As the nation's premier administrative service, the IAS took the lead in preserving the nation's governance roles. Other All India Services (AIS) were created in addition to the IAS, each with a unique focus on administration and specialized knowledge. This diversification made it possible to manage the many demands of the country with an all-encompassing strategy. In order to guarantee the hiring of the most skilled candidates, the UPSC was founded as the supreme authority in charge of holding competitive exams. Aspiring civil officials used these exams to gauge their knowledge, abilities, and suitability for public service. The UPSC was essential in preserving the high standards established by the colonial government and making sure that the civil service continued to draw people of extraordinary ability. In addition, there was a decentralization of the administrative system, which signified a paradigm shift in government. Public Service Commissioners at the state level were created to provide each state the authority to manage hiring and appointment practices inside its borders. In addition to encouraging local participation, this decentralization made it easier to modify administrative regulations to suit local needs. India's administrative structure has remained flexible over time, changing to meet the country's changing demands. The civil services have become more accountable, transparent, and efficient as a result of ongoing reforms. These modifications have strengthened the legacy left over from the British colonial era, forming an advanced and competent administrative framework that still propels India's growth.

Organizational Structures

Organizational Framework of Civil Services Commissions in Bangladesh

The Bangladesh public Services Commission (BPSC) is a fundamental entity that plays a pivotal role in the careful supervision and control of the hiring and administration of the country's public services. The organizational structure of the BPSC is a precisely calibrated machinery, made up of several intricately interconnected parts, that guarantees the effectiveness and honesty of the nation's civil service.⁵

- *Composition* - The BPSC is the highest authority in Bangladesh for hiring and overseeing public workers. It was founded as an autonomous, constitutional organization. The renowned members of the commission, including the chairman, are chosen by the president of Bangladesh, which defines the makeup of the group. The stringent selection procedure guarantees that the persons assigned to oversee the country's government officials has exceptional competence and expertise, cultivating a perception of dependability and confidence in the system.

⁵ *Supra* note 1.

- *Autonomy* - The BPSC is distinguished by its unmatched level of autonomy. Because of its independence, the commission is able to decide on important issues like hiring, promoting, and disciplining staff members without giving in to undue pressure or influence from outside sources. The independence bestowed upon BPSC functions as a buffer, maintaining the integrity of the civil service system and the meritocratic values that form its foundation.
- *Divisions and Departments* - A well-functioning system of departments and divisions within the BPSC, each with a focus on a distinct aspect of civil service administration, runs smoothly. These departments are painstakingly created to manage a variety of tasks, including administering stringent tests, supervising complex hiring procedures, and keeping copious personnel files. The establishment of specialized departments guarantees that all facets of civil service administration are executed with the highest level of accuracy and proficiency.
- *Regional Presence* - The BPSC has purposefully set up regional offices all throughout the nation. These regional offices function as essential centres and are essential in helping to streamline the hiring process locally. In order to provide equitable access to chances for prospective public officials from various areas, they administer exams, interviews, and other evaluations locally. The decentralized model improves accessibility and diversity, leading to a more transparent and equal civil service recruiting process.

Organizational Structure of Civil Services Commissions in India

India's federal system and cultural diversity are reflected in the intricate organizational structure of its civil services commissions. The system is painstakingly built to meet the administrative requirements at the federal and state levels.⁶

- *Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)* - As the highest authority at the federal level, the UPSC carefully conducts exams and supervises the hiring and administration of civil workers for esteemed positions like the IAS, IPS, and other all-India services. The UPSC was created in accordance with the Indian Constitution and functions as a separate body, guaranteeing an impartial, open, and merit-based selection process devoid of outside interference. It is crucial in forming the highest levels of the nation's bureaucracy.
- *State Public Service Commission (SPSC)* - Within the federal framework of India, the SPSC is unique to each state. These commissions are in charge of hiring civil servants for a range of state-level administrative positions and services. SPSCs follow the state and federal regulations that regulate their activities even if they operate autonomously. By establishing SPSCs, governments may customize their governing bodies to meet their specific requirements, resulting in a more effective and localized form of governance.

⁶ English original text of the Constitution of 1949. 144 (2011), Chapter I: Services.

- *Central Staffing Scheme* - The Central Staffing Scheme, a flexible mechanism that permits civil servants to be assigned to a wide range of central government roles, is another component of India's civil services structure. The aforementioned strategy fosters a collaborative and cooperative administrative environment by improving mobility and interchangeability among various government agencies and ministries. Through the Central Staffing Scheme, civil servants can hold important positions in a range of central government agencies. This gives them the chance to develop a variety of experiences and specialties, which will ultimately improve the administrative apparatus's overall effectiveness.
- *Specialized Services and Cadres* - In addition to the all-India services, India offers a wide range of specialized services and cadres that are tailored to certain industries and fields, including banking, engineering, medicine, and education. These specialist services guarantee that the precise and knowledgeable administrative demands of various sectors are satisfied. These cadres of civil officials receive specialized training and are endowed with domain-specific expertise, which allows them to efficiently handle the particular difficulties presented by their respective disciplines.
- *Training and Capacity Building* - Within the framework of public services, India gives training and capacity building a great deal of importance. Civil workers get extensive training from a variety of institutions, including the National Police Academy and the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), which equips them with the information, abilities, and moral foundation required for efficient government. By keeping civil servants up to date on the newest advancements, technology, and best practices, ongoing training and skill development programs enable them to confidently and competently take on today's issues.

Recruitment and Selection Processes

Examination Systems in Bangladesh

The Preliminary Examination, Written Examination, and Viva Voce (Interview) procedure are the three phases of Bangladesh's civil services examination system. Multiple-choice questions spanning a range of areas make up the Preliminary Examination, which assesses applicants' aptitude and general knowledge. After passing the preliminary exam, candidates move on to the written exam, which uses essay-style questions covering a range of subjects to evaluate their analytical and critical thinking abilities. The Viva Voce, the last phase, assesses a candidate's personality, communication abilities, and fitness for the civil services. Exam results are assessed by looking at a candidate's correctness, breadth of knowledge, written coherence, and Viva Voce articulation. The goal of the examination procedure is to find people who have a solid academic background, analytical abilities, and excellent communication skills.

Examination Systems in India

The UPSC is responsible for conducting the civil services test in India. The Civil Services Preliminary Examination, the Civil Services Main Examination, and the Personality Test (Interview) are the three exams in the examination process. The two objective exams that make up the preliminary examination are the General Studies and Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT), which assesses applicants' general knowledge, understanding, and analytical skills. The Main Examination, which consists of nine examinations comprising essay writing, general studies, and optional courses, is taken by candidates who pass the preliminary exam. A team of specialists' interviews candidates to determine their fitness for the civil services at the final round, known as the Personality Test.⁷

Reforms and Innovations

Reforms Undertaken by Civil Services Commissions in Bangladesh

The Bangladeshi civil services commission has implemented a number of innovations and changes throughout the years to improve the efficacy and efficiency of its operations. The system's faults and problems are what these changes seek to solve. A few significant reforms are –

- The BPSC's hiring and selection procedure is becoming more computerized. To expedite the application process and lessen administrative responsibilities, computer-based exams, online application systems, and e-recruitment portals have been established.
- There has been an attempt to make the hiring process more equitable and transparent. In order to reduce nepotism and favouritism and guarantee that appointments are made on the basis of competence and merit rather than political influence, the BPSC has implemented steps.
- In addition, the BPSC has endeavoured to enhance diversity within the civil service. Underrepresented groups, such as women and minorities, are allotted special quotas in order to foster equality and diversity in representation.
- To provide government personnel with the knowledge and abilities required for their positions, reforms in training and skill development have been implemented. The creation of contemporary training facilities and changes to curricula have been crucial in this respect.

Reforms Undertaken by Civil Services Commissions in India

Significant modifications have been made to India's civil services commissions in order to solve long-standing problems and adjust to changing demands. Several notable changes have been adopted by the UPSC and different state public service commissions. These include:

- The Civil Services Examination (CSE) pattern has been updated by the UPSC on a regular basis to improve its comprehensiveness and relevance. Modifications like the addition of an independent

⁷ Shivam Kaushik & Anushri Singh, *All India Judicial Services: Problems and Prospects*, 11, NUJS Law Review, 519 (2018).

ethics paper and optional topic selections are meant to evaluate a broader spectrum of abilities and expertise.

- The selection process has been streamlined, paperwork has decreased, and the possibility of mistakes and malpractices has been reduced with the use of online application procedures and computer-based exams.
- The importance of performance-based evaluations for federal personnel has increased. Officers' performance and responsibility are being evaluated through 360-degree assessments and regular feedback systems.
- There has been an attempt to inculcate in public personnel a strong sense of ethics and honesty. To encourage openness and moral behaviour, training courses and moral standards have been implemented.

Conclusion

There are several important ramifications for comparing the civil services commissions in Bangladesh and India. First of all, it emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend the procedural, organizational, and historical features of civil services commissions across national boundaries. Policymakers and scholars may make well-informed judgments by comparing the systems in Bangladesh and India, which provides them with important insights into what functions well and what doesn't. Furthermore, the research illuminates the difficulties encountered by both countries, promoting international education and cooperation.

Furthermore, the ramifications encompass the wider framework of public administration and governance throughout South Asia. By identifying best practices, the comparative study enables other nations in the area to gain insight from Bangladesh's and India's achievements and shortcomings. Through information sharing, South Asian countries' civil services commissions may be improved overall, creating more efficient and responsible public administration systems.