



Can the Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP) attract brilliant students to join the Bangladesh Civil Service?

MA Research Report

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MA RESEARCH REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Meritocracy in the civil service is as old as the Imperial bureaucracy in China. The public administration theorists and practitioners discussed its diverse effects in service delivery. Merit based bureaucracy is no longer a debatable issues in the new civil service. But the problem is how to address the ‘war for talent’ in the civil service. There are numerous attractions to joining the private sector with high salaries and challenges for boosting both quality and standard. Job security, prestigious service comprises with low salaried personnel desires ‘brainpower’ in civil service to combat the challenges of 21st century.

Faulty recruitment procedure of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) and ‘politicization’ is an epidemic problem in hunting for talent in the civil service. In the case of Bangladesh, due to few options in job selection and a long time spent in the selection procedure of BPSC, prospective candidates engage in private jobs with high salaries and set a ‘propensity to consume’ lifestyle.. Moreover there are some demotivating factors which may be focused on due to the mass media. It is widely expressed that there are very few success stories in the civil service. In media coverage is only of corruption, red tapism and the slow implementation of government interventions etc.

Considering the gender perspective, female students and rural dwellers prefer the civil service and ‘risk lovers’ and those who like challenges prefer public service or business. Usually public university students prefer the civil service and they may be ‘risk averters’ or like job security.

In general, prospective candidates are not well aware about the civil service, hierarchy of service, salary structure; prospects etc. and they have asymmetry of information regarding the civil service. Introducing the Civil service Internship Program (CSIP) will inform them about the civil service and its future.

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

In order to meet the challenges of a frequently changing society and an increasing diversity of public service users, the Civil Service has to ensure a talented workforce. Over the decades the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) has failed to attract talented students into the civil service. Poor salary and asymmetry of information regarding the civil service may put off that student from joining the civil service. Introducing a civil service internship program (CSIP) can pay attention to these students. The aim of this program is to encourage high caliber individuals to apply for the BCS.

Merit based civil service is not a new phenomenon in the world. It has a long history in China. During the Qin Dynasty (221–207 BC) the civil service based on meritocracy is the Imperial bureaucracy of China. In the period of the Han Dynasty (202 BC–220 AD) the *xiaolian* system of recommendation by superiors for appointments to office was established. In the areas of administration, appointments would be based on merit. In the case of the military, merit was the sole criteria for appointment in China.

After the fall of the Han Dynasty, the Chinese bureaucracy would regress into a semi-merit system known as the *Nine –rank system*, yet in this system noble birthright became the most significant prerequisite for one to gain access to more authoritative posts.

Like china the development of the civil service in Bangladesh went through various phases and historical perspectives. Under British rule, there was an organized system of non-political bureaucracy led by the Indian Civil Service (ICS) through competitive examination. Accordingly, very brilliant graduates of both Indian and British origin would join the ICS.

In August 1947, Pakistan was born and the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) was established out of the ICS. The standard of recruitment process, professional training, discipline, service structure and promotions etc also remained the same as those in the ICS.

After the independence of Bangladesh, different cadres emerged and positions were filled by existing CSPs, EPCSs and some other personnel through lateral entry. In many cases the intellectual ability varied from CSP / EPCSs and other cadre officials. To create and maintain an effective standard in the civil service officer group, the government introduced a recruitment process by competition through the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC).

The Commission is charged with maintaining the purposes of civil service systems, merit selection, tenure and an independent civil service commission. An independent civil service commission is the protection against political interference in the recruitment process.

Although it has gone through various amendments since 1981 including eliminating political patronage, encouraging efficiency and introducing staff training, the Bangladesh

Civil Service Recruitment Rules, 1981, laid down the procedure for recruitment to various services of the Republic to bring success in the public sector programs. The requirement to consult the Public Service Commission is a constitutional one as envisaged in Clause (2) of Article 140 of the Constitution.

1.1 Rationale of this study

The Public Service Division (PSD), Singapore runs the CSIP in order to get a clear image of the career opportunities in the civil service. The CSIP aims to provide interns with a better understanding of a career with the civil service. The 6–8 weeks internship program has modules to visit selected public sector agencies during their internship. In 1993, the PSD initiated the Student Internship Program, now renamed the civil service internship program (CSIP) for experience sharing and disseminating related issues by senior civil officers.

Bright and energetic human resources constitute the most important component of bureaucracy. The achievement of the government's vision and missions depends on a capable person in the right place. As a matter of fact, a sound and effective human resource management is seen as the most significant variable that determines the performance of government. Thus public administration theorists and practitioners similarly attach a significant importance on the need for ensuring a competent and efficient use of human talents (Siddique N.A., 2003).

It is widely believed that the Bangladesh civil service (BCS) attracts the country's brilliant student. But in reality the BCS fails to attract bright students who will give better service to people. The basic issue of research under the present study is: Whether poor salaries, less prestige and power are the main issues discouraging brilliant students from join the civil service? Are they knowledgeable about the civil service and its future? Can the CSIP attract the brilliant into the civil service?

The study will have academic and policy implications. From this consideration, some of the possible policy implications are as follows:

- From this study, we can explore the cause of reluctance to join the civil service;
- By the study we can estimate the expectations of the prospective civil servant;
- To identify the knowledge gap of the new generation about the civil service.

1.2 Objectives of proposed study

The study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

- To assess the necessity to introduce a civil service internship program (CSIP) at university level;
- To observe the view of brilliant students about the civil service;
- To trace the causes of preference for the civil service or other jobs;

1.3 Methodology and procedure

As stated earlier, the study has been designed to analyze the causes of less preference civil service posts. So, it is a descriptive, qualitative study. The study is based on both secondary and primary data. Data are largely obtained from various sources of published statistics, journals and publications.

1.4 Research instruments/methods of conducting the study

A self administered questionnaire is adopted for data collection. The report will be presented in a descriptive pattern with some statistical analysis such as frequency distribution, mean. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be analyzed by using suitable tools and techniques. The methods used for this study are content analysis and data analysis with a small sample size.

This study will satisfy the objectives and indicate some policy instruments as well as lead to further researches. It is expected that this study will help to formulate the policy of the government to encourage the brilliant student into the civil service by introducing a Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP).

1.5 Sampling

In order to obtain a statistically significant result the standard sample size should be followed. But due to time and resource constraint we could only select 25 samples (20 students from 1 public and private university) and 5 BCS officer from the MAGD program. The sample was selected through purposive manner.

1.6 Operational Definition

a) Civil Service:

A 'civil service' is a service provided by a group of civilians working as core government officials. This group of service providers are selected by the Public Service Commission (PSC), a quasi judicial body of the government through a competitive examination. The term excludes the armed forces and only the BCS are within the civil service. In Bangladesh, there are 29 cadres officials who have different responsibilities to work for the citizens.

b) The Civil Service Internship Programme (CSIP):

The Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP) is an apprenticeship which provides opportunities for university students to gain experience in the civil service and its process starting from recruitment to retirement. During the internship period, the student is supposed to gain knowledge of some theoretical and empirical issues and put them into practice. This way the student receives information about the civil service.

1.7 Limitations of the study

1. This study reflects the causes of less preference for the civil service rather than other jobs and the effects of introducing the CSIP in Bangladesh. The study sample is too small and therefore the findings of this study are limited and do not hold good for generalization.
2. Due to course load, we selected a sample in a purposive manner and sample units were not randomized.
3. Considering the shortage of resources and the time constraint the variables have been limited to identifying views about introducing the Civil service internship program (CSIP) among limited respondents.

SECTION II: LITARATURE REVIEW

A review of related literature on different aspects of the research would provide further justification of the study. Low caliber students in the civil service or failure to attract brilliant students into the civil service have drawn the attention of many researchers who have studied this issue from different angles and dimensions. Some of the results / findings of the literature review are stated below.

The term brilliant is synonymous with talent, caliber and meritorious students who studied in many leading public and private universities in Bangladesh. According to the office of merit protection commission of Australia, 'merit' means that employment decisions should be based on assessment of a person's ability to do the job, must be objective and fair, avoiding patronage and favouritism and unjustified discrimination. This definition is based on the outcome of meritorious students in the civil service.

Jahan Fedous (2006) carried out a study on 'Public Administration in Bangladesh' which showed the civil service is now behind in its appeal as the best career alternative due to defective recruitment and politicization. The 'corrupt' recruitment practices, lengthiness of the entire exam. systems, the leakage of question patterns, an unaccountable viva board are the cause of a civil service which is unattractive to students. Politicization is also another main cause of avoiding to sitting for the BCS. According to this study, the majority of respondents have no idea about salary benefits and the composition of the civil service. According to this study three quarters of respondents are not aware about the salary and composition of the civil service. There is a geographical difference between rural and urban based student. Rural based students, rather than their urban counterparts, prefer the civil service.

Dworkis M.B., Thomas S.F., Weintraub R. (1962) in 'Establishing an Administrative Internship Program' showed that public service is not obtaining a adequate share of talent. The Federal College Internship Program was introduced in Colleges in New York and New Jersey under a project. The presumption was that if the trial was successful the federal government would establish a permanent program of this nature. The anticipation of that program was an attractive experience leading to the undergraduate keenly considering a career in the federal service. Through advertisement (poster, leaflets etc.) the Board of Directors, United States Civil service Commission selected interneers and a six weeks program covered by scholarship. The Internship program covered individual assignments, conferences, seminars and visits. To present the relationship between different organs of government (example: judiciary and legislative relationship), the program organizer arranged lectures, demonstrations and tours given by a representative of Congress; the white House; the Supreme Court; the Pentagon; the department of Health, Education and welfare; the Civil service Commission and other establishment headquarters . In the program evaluation stage a structured questionnaire was introduced to know about the intern's broad interests, background, outlook, attitudes and awareness about public and private careers. It has become ... internship itself is of tremendous significance and that the orientation, exposure, and work responsibilities given to the

intern may likely be conclusive as to whether he or she will select the federal service as a career.”

Davy J. Thomas (1959) in a national conference of the American Society for Public Administration in Washington D.C., April 3,1959 ‘Competing for Administrative Brainpower’ stated that the process of attracting and preserving more of the talented students for administrative career in the civil service. This study indicates that more information about the civil services needs to be given to prospective students and others. The reasons for ‘most unattractive to outstanding college student’ who were in the internship were (i) political and other pressures delaying achievement, (ii) public unresponsiveness and criticism, (iii) Inadequate pay and fringe benefits, (iv) narrow specialization, rigid procedures, strict personnel rules.

In a study named ‘Who wants to work for the government?’ Lewis B. Gregory & Frank A. Sue (2002) explore the causes behind choosing to work for the government instead of wanting to be a ‘millionaire’. This study was an empirical test of the ‘sectoral choice model (Kilpatrick, Cummings, and Jennings (1964). There are correlations with job selection and the rate of financial rewards; job security; worthwhile, useful, interesting, and challenging work; opportunities for improvement; and good working condition. Job selection depends on personal values, education, race, sex, veteran status, personal contacts and birth cohort. The segment of people placing great value on job security prefer a government job and those who place higher priority on pay select a private job. Young people are less likely to hold federal jobs.

Transparency International Bangladesh (2007) presented a report on the ‘Bangladesh Public Service Commission: A Diagnostic Study’. In this report the TIB showed the dishonest recruitment process and impact of such irregularities. The impacts of irregularities are (i) politicization of public service; (ii) talent is no longer the basis of selection; (iii) perception about corruption exists in newly recruited civil servants; (iv) decline in the standard and quality of human resources in the civil service.

Jamil Ishtiaq (2002) in the study entitled ‘Administrative Culture in Bangladesh: Tensions between Tradition and Modernity’ noted that the civil service reform measures have reduce the attraction of the Bangladesh Civil Service compared to ICS and CSP. The effect of open or comparatively effortless access to the civil service compared with the British colonial and Pakistan periods. Most new recruits, since liberation, have been from the lower middle class, inadequately trained, and the products of a worsening educational system (Kochanek, 1993, p. 236).

Khan R. M. and Ara Ferdous (2005) in their study ‘Direct Recruitment in the Cadre Services in Bangladesh: An Overview’ identified that many bright candidates are deprived from entering the civil service due to the recruitment process, system of examination, lengthy procedure, disproportional subject choice and not testing on the same syllabus and questions. In the recruitment process, merit and quota are used for the selection of civil service but adopting a quota system contradicts the implementation of selection on merit.

SECTION III: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK / ANALYTICAL MODEL

Considering all the issues related to the civil service and prospective civil officers mentioned above and at the same time providing information about the civil service will give a scenario of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS). The information considered in this study includes identification information, job choices, reasons behind this selection and moreover knowledge regarding the civil service. Keeping the study objectives in mind, the variables used in this study are as follows:

- a. Sex (S)
- b. Prestigious job (P_J)
- c. Job Security (J_S)
- d. Serving the nation (S_N)
- e. Higher study (H_S)
- f. Opportunity to work / visit abroad (F_T)
- g. Pension (P)
- h. Family desire (F_D)
- i. High salary (S_H)
- j. Challenging Job (C_J)
- k. Performance based promotion (P_P)
- l. Non transferable job (NT_J)
- m. Fair recruitment (F_R)
- n. Living place (L_P)

To determine the socioeconomic cause of selecting civil service and on the other hand the causes of selecting other than civil service, we can show the functional relationship with civil service / other than civil service and the important explanatory variables, which is relevant for the same.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Civil service (CS)} &= f(P_J, J_S, S_N, H_S, F_T, P) \\ &\quad \& \\ \text{Other than civil service (PS)} &= f(S_H, C_J, F_R) \end{aligned}$$

The expected signs of the partial derivatives of CS with respect to explanatory variables are:

$$\delta CS / \delta P_J > 0; \delta CS / \delta J_S > 0; \delta CS / \delta H_S > 0; \delta CS / \delta F_T > 0; \delta CS / \delta P > 0;$$

There are some other variables which are not proportionally related to the civil service, such that sex, serving the nation, family desire. Those who are female may have a high propensity to select the civil service rather than other jobs or business. Serving the nations and the desire of family members are other issues to select the civil service which are not proportionally related with dependent variables.

The expected signs of the partial derivatives of PS with respect to explanatory variables are:

$$\delta PS / \delta S_H > 0; \delta PS / \delta C_J > 0; \delta PS / \delta F_R > 0;$$

Under this study there are some variables which are not proportionally related to dependent variables (Other than civil service), such as performance based promotion and non transferable jobs. Those who are born and brought up in an urban area and used to urban facilities are reluctant to select the civil service. Moreover performance based promotion strategy leads them to choose other than civil service.

By considering the above variables and our research questions we can construct a conceptual framework, which expresses the determinants/cause of choosing and not choosing the civil service.

➤ **Framework of the determination/cause of different categories of job selection:**

Variable		Result of variables
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male 	▶ In general, female students prefer civil service comparing to other jobs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prestigious job ➤ Job Security ➤ Serving the nation ➤ Higher study ➤ Opportunity to work / visit abroad ➤ Pension ➤ Family desire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <input type="checkbox"/> More prestigious job <input type="checkbox"/> More job security <input type="checkbox"/> Options to serve the nations <input type="checkbox"/> More opportunity to work / visit abroad <input type="checkbox"/> Pension facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Attend family desire 	▶ Preferred civil service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High salary ➤ Challenging Job ➤ Performance based promotion ➤ Non transferable job ➤ Fair recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <input type="checkbox"/> High salary package <input type="checkbox"/> More challenging job <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure performance based promotion <input type="checkbox"/> Make certain duty place <input type="checkbox"/> Corruption free recruitment process 	▶ Encourage other than civil service
Living place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural 	▶ Rural dwellers prefer civil service

➤ **Relation between variables and sources of information:**

In our study several types of variables are used. But some of the variables may lead to an ambiguous and misleading idea about the importance and existence of this study. To maintain standards, in terms of operational definition and coverage of variables, we can develop a table.

Variable	Indication / Proxy	Reference /Coverage of Variable	Sources of Information	Instruments for Data Collection
Sex	Gender	Prospective job seeker	Interview	Questionnaire
Prestigious job	Better or not	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Job security	More or less	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Serving the nation	Possible or not	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Higher study	Earning more degrees	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Opportunity to work / visit abroad	Possible or not	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Pension	Provision or not	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Family desire	Agree or not	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
High salary	More than civil service	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Challenging job	More or less challenging	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Non transferable job	Frequency of movement	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Fair recruitment	Corrupted or not	Prospective job seeker	Interview / Published documents	Questionnaire/ Content analysis
Living place	Area of living	Prospective job seeker	Published documents	Content analysis

SECTION IV: RESULTS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

The different variables obtained in this study are analyzed and summarized in tables and graphs. From this we get some personal information of respondents and reasons for selecting or avoiding the civil service as well as causes of not selecting the civil service

The distribution of the sample by age, gender and educational level is shown in Table – I. The sample includes a total of 20 students (10 from public university and 10 from Private University) and 05 civil officers (BCS) from different cadres. Some 65% (13/20) of the respondents among students in the sample are male with a mean age 24.5 years old. The majority (65%, 13/20) students are studying in masters' level and all respondents in civil officer category have a masters' degree.

Table I: Distribution of respondents by their age, gender and educational level

Identification Information	Respondents	Age			Sex		Educational Qualification		
		20-25	25-30	30+	Male	Female	Bachelor Level Student	Masters Level Student	Masters Degree Holder
	University of Dhaka	5	5	0	6	4	4	6	0
	North South University	4	6	0	7	3	3	7	0
	Civil Service (BCS)	0	1	4	4	1	0	0	5
	Total	9	12	4	17	8	7	13	5

Table II demonstrates that majority of the respondents prefer the civil service rather than other service. Among the respondents nobody prefers public service other than the BCS. This means that, the attraction of public service other than the BCS is very limited and less preferred than any service. Most of the public university students and half of private university students prefer the civil service.

Table II: Job preference among students

Name of University	Civil Service	Public Service (other than BCS)	Private service			Business
			Multinational Company	Bank	NGO	
University of Dhaka	8	0	1	1	0	0
North South University	5	0	2	1	0	2
Total	13	0	3	2	0	2

Open ended multiple response questions were asked about choosing the civil service as a career. The causes of selecting the civil service are as follows:

In all categories of students, no respondents reported the opportunity to work abroad, as the reason for selecting the civil service. Most of the reported job security (92%) as the reason for selecting the civil service, pension after retirement (92%) and all the respondents supported the power of the civil service and its prestige (100%). There is a lack of knowledge about scope for higher study and opportunity to visit many countries in the civil service. Both variables showed no strong correlation with the civil service (Table III).

Table III: Reasons for selecting the civil service as a career

Issues	No. (%) of Respondents
Prestigious / power of the Civil Service	13 (100%)
Job security in the civil service	12 (92%)
Serving the nation	3 (23%)
Scope for higher study	1 (8%)
Visit many countries	1 (8%)
Opportunity to work abroad	0 (0%)
Pension after retirement or old age	12 (92%)
Desire / suggestion of family members	5 (38%)

Respondents were asked about reasons for selecting other than civil service. This was an open ended question, and up to five answers were recorded per respondent. The new generation is more concerned about risk. So among the respondents, of those who preferred private service (not business) most wanted to work in a challenging situation (92%) and to maintain the smart standard of living. They were interested in earning a high salary (71%). Merit and performance based promotion, a fair recruitment process and non transferable jobs were considered by the respondents in table IV.

Table IV: Reasons for selecting other than civil service as a career

Issues	No. (%) of Respondents
High salary	5 (71%)
Challenging job	12 (92%)
Merit / performance based promotion	3 (23%)
Non transferable job	1 (8%)
Fair recruitment process	5 (71%)

The major concern of the current study is to estimate the potentials of introducing a Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP). Among the students, those who are interested in joining the civil service and all respondents under the service holder category mentioned the necessity of training for clear vision of the civil service. In order to obtain information on duration and types of training / internship program, respondents asked 'close ended questions'. In table V, all civil officers (5/5) identified that the CSIP should be a separate program and the duration should be one month.

Table V: Duration and types of training /internship program

Respondents	Types of Training			Types of Internship (CSIP)		Stage of introducing CSIP		Duration of internship (Month)		
	Class room based	Internship program	Seminar / workshop	Course within degree syllabus	Separate program	Bachelor level	Postgraduate level	One	Two	Three
University of Dhaka	1	7	0	0	6	6	0	5	0	1
North South University	1	4	0	1	3	3	1	3	1	0
Civil Officer (BCS)	0	5	0	0	5	3	2	5	0	0
Total	2	16	0	1	14	12	3	13	1	1

All the respondents were asked about their knowledge of the recruitment process. They were also asked to give their opinion whether the current selection process is perfect for recruiting quality students into the civil service. Among respondents more than half of them did not know much about the recruitment process of the BCS. And 25% students partly know the process. The knowledge gap between public and private university was remarkable (Table VI).

Table VI: Knowledge of recruitment process

Respondents	Do you know the recruitment process of BCS?			Total
	Know	Don't know	Partly know	
University of Dhaka	3	4	3	10
North South University	1	7	2	10
Total	4	11	5	20

More than 90% of respondents who reported that they know (including partly know) the recruitment process were asked very specifically regarding the current selection process. All respondents (9/9) expressed their views concerning the faulty process of searching for quality student to join the civil service (Table VII).

Table VII: Perception about selection process

Respondents	Do you think the current selection process is perfect for searching for top quality students to Join the civil service?		Total
	Yes	No	
University of Dhaka	0	6	6
North South University	0	3	3
Total	0	9	9

SECTION VI: DISCUSSION

In this section we can analyze the cause and consequences of less attraction to the civil service by the prospective candidates with some related factors. Some relevant questions will be emerging to identify hidden reasons for more attraction to careers other than the civil service. Through the answers to the following questions we can ensure the importance of our study and the outcome can be found from those by comparing our study findings.

- Who wants to work in the civil service?
- Why do we have a merit based selection?
- How can the civil service better compete for talent?
- What qualities should a person applying for the civil service possess?
- Do low salaries discourage talent from entering the civil service?
- How the government can reduce de-motivating factors against the civil service?

5.1 Work in the Civil service

If prospective job seekers have options to choose a job in Bangladesh, somebody who wants to be a millionaire selects business, somebody is interested in joining the private service (including multinational company, bank and other private organizations etc.) and another segment of people are interested in joining the civil service. In the challenging situation of the 21st century, it is very difficult to attract and retain highly qualified employees in the civil service. Only a prestigious and power oriented civil service with job security and pension facilities may attract the portion of talented students, those who are ‘risk averter’. But now the meritorious new generation is very aware about economic solvency and delighted to be selecting a challenging job, to be a ‘risk lover’.

In the USA, there is a crisis of quality, morale, and effectiveness of the federal civil service and it has been steadily deteriorating over the past two decades (Levine 1986, 200). In the case of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), there is a ‘ crisis’ of talent over time. The nation’s prime and most stable employer, the Government of Bangladesh is the lead organizational responsibility to provide service through ‘good governance’. The civil service is at the heart of most economic systems. It either determines or controls the means to policymaking, legislation and rules in society. If this machine is not well oiled and kept in permanent good order, the economy, even society fails.

What kinds of people take a civil service job? The prestige of the civil service is not as high as it should be. When we think of the civil service, many of us still have in mind the inefficient, slow moving and corrupted person as service provider. Moreover the recruitment system is also degraded and politicized. The defective recruitment practice and the politicization of the civil service are the main problems of attracting and retaining talent in the Bangladesh civil service (Jahan Ferdous, 2006: 2).

In fact, civil servants are a good cross section of the society from which they come. They seem to be a better-quality group if they get their jobs on the basis of competitive examinations with other citizens. So, in a country like Bangladesh, selection for the civil service may have top priority for prospective candidates. But in our study 35 percent of prospective candidates did not select the civil service as their career choice. Low salary package, absence of merit / performance based recruitment and promotion; less challenging jobs are the main causes of avoiding the civil service. There is a number of civil servants to whom the security of the service, opportunity to do work / study abroad, serving the nation or desire of family members is the prime consideration / appeal.

5.2 Merit based selection in the civil service

The civil service in Bangladesh is characterized by ladder, specialization, rules, impersonality etc. In the new era, administrative problems become more complicated and diverse; the concept of merit has gradually crept into the composition of the civil service. ‘With reference to higher civil servants, the merit should mean knowledge of the art and science of public administration’. Higher civil servants are not merely executives; they are also planners, thinkers, innovators and organizers (Alam Shamsul AZM, 1997:41-45).

At present, the Bangladesh civil service has more than one million civil servants in 37 ministries, 11 divisions, 254 departments and 173 statutory bodies (ADB, 2005). Serving the public in the 21st century requires people who have different skills and special kinds of training. An intelligent, creative, strategic-thinking, adventurous individual who can bring their academic knowledge, professional and personal experiences, cultural awareness and appreciation, and dedication to improving the world should be recruited to serve the people.

Recruitment follows the Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment Rules of 1981. The Public Service Commission is required to reserve selection of Class I posts according to the following quotas:

30% reserved for freedom fighters or the children of freedom fighters

10% reserved for women

5% reserved for tribal groups

10% reserved for different districts (based on district population density)

The remaining 45% of the posts for recruitment to be filled following a merit-based open competitive system. The Public Administration Reform Commission (2000) also proposed slow but sure abolition of this system, and to make sure of merit based selection and promotion. Later the government decided that in case of 30-percent reservation for the children of freedom fighters, if suitable candidates are not found, the posts could be filled through merit (PARC, 2004:13-14).

Over the years, the civil service has become greatly politicized rather than using merit based selection and promotion. Consecutive governments have attracted the civil servant through a system of 'carrots and sticks'. Carrots include lucrative posting, allowing corruption and preference positions, while the sticks are based on unjustified speedy promotions. Politicization may cause a turn down in the self-esteem of the civil servants and reduce their competence and efficiency. 'Faulty recruitment and politicization may create a vicious cycle: because of politicization fewer interested, meritorious candidates enter the civil service; with fewer meritorious new entrants, the scope for politicization increases; and this further deters the most able candidates from entering the civil service (Jahan Ferdous, 2006: 2)'. In the end this process could damage the complete administration.

5.3 Struggle for talent in the Civil Service

How can the government improve its efforts to attract bright prospective candidates and its struggle for talent in the civil service? One approach to this question is to discuss challenges and strategies of attracting and retaining the best officers in the civil service.

Under rapidly changing circumstances around the world with increasing pressure on performance and innovation in government, old fashioned personnel management must be significantly transformed, in order to attract and retain the besting government as well as to win the war for talent (Kim Suk Pan, 2008).

The Civil Service needs to be representative of all the talents if it's to be the best that it can be. The Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) faces severe recruitment challenges due to a long procedure of selection (Appendix-A). Recent graduates always try for a private job with a high salary and many of them are reluctant to sit for the BCS examination. The BPSC is often blamed for taking too much time from advertisement to final selection. Appendix-B shows the recruitment time taken in different Civil Service examinations after independence.

There are two problems in the recruitment process in the Bangladesh Civil Service. The first is the lengthy procedure and the inadequate salary structure. The second is politicization and corruption which leads to faulty selection and low quality civil

servants. Although people “show less respect to the civil servants” and civil servants are not the most powerful group in the society (Jahan Ferdous, 2006: 15-17)

The brain drain is another issue. Can the government keep the talented civil servant in service? When the civil service is criticized by civil society, media and other agents of society, prospective candidates turn away from the public sector to the private sector. Lack of financial incentives, confidence and trust in the system must be addressed to attract and retain the best. (Kim Suk Pan, 2008: 638).

5.4 Qualities of a civil servant

What kind of people are we looking for as a civil servant? Are academically competent people all that are really needed for merit based selection in the civil service? The answers to these questions are not so simple.

Both public and private services have done same but the comparison depends on the motivation of that person. The doctor in a government hospital does much the same work as the doctor in a private one. The difference lies largely in the way he is paid—which leads them how motivated both of them by their salary package.

In the case of Bangladesh, the basic issues of merit among the civil servants are¹:

- a) the knowledge of relevant laws, policies, rules;
- b) knowledge about the values and morals of the people;
- c) knowledge about the needs, demand, condition of the society and goals of the government;
- d) knowledge of objectives of the organizations;
- e) knowledge of specialties and technicalities;
- f) ability to put questions to specialists to provoke innovations;
- g) knowledge about comparative efficacy of alternative techniques of influence;
- h) knowledge of environmental conditions in order to be able to adopt the technology;
- i) knowledge of personnel administration;
- j) knowledge of relevant tools and materials;
- k) knowledge of budgeting, accounting and auditing;
- l) Knowledge of human psychology, group dynamics etc.

The concept of qualities of a civil servant is in fact related to the issues of direction - capability- results and centered with integrity rather than academic competency. It is obvious that academic aptitude is one of the parameters to acquire merit based selection.

¹ Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective – A Z M Shamsul Alam, Bangladesh Cooperative Book Society Ltd., 1997



Source: website (as image separately)

Nearly all jobs in public service involve teamwork. A civil servant almost never works without the help of others. So if some are the 'lone-wolf type' who does best when working alone rather than with others, better to select some kind of private job where he/she can work individually.

5.5 Salary in the civil service

'The [Singapore] government believed that an efficient bureaucratic system is one in which the officers are well-paid so the temptation to resort to bribes would be reduced (Rahman, A. T. Rafique, 1986: 151)'

Pay is the key factors of workers' job choice (Lewis G.B. & Frank S. A., 2002:396). Salary is intended as an incentive, indicating an individual's value to the organization and sustainable contribution as a service holder. It should represent the size and challenge of the job; professional and leadership capability, an individual's market value that gives assurance of future sustainable performance.

But there is another point of view against the monetary views. Monetary reward, of course, is not the only attraction to a profession, and Christopher Hood has himself listed a considerable number of other inducements to public service, including job security, pension, honours, social status, regularity of reward, psychological satisfaction and participation in important decisions (Hood and Lodge 2006).

Table VIII: Change in the real value of Permanent Secretary (PS), UK salary 1914-2000

(1): Year	(2): Ps Salary	(3): Tax payable on (2)	(4): Actual pay	(5): CPI (1914=100)	(6): Real salary, price adjusted	(7): (4) as % of (6)
1914	£2,000	£100	£1,900	1.0	£1,900	100
1930	£3,000	£615	£2,400	1.7	£3,230	78
1955	£4,500	£2,015	£2,500	4.5	£8,550	29
1960	£7,000	£3,100	£3,900	5.0	£9,000	43
1970	£14,000	£7,185	£6,800	7.0	£13,300	51
1980	£31,000	£11,250	£20,000	26.0	£49,400	41
1985	£45,500	£17,900	£27,500	37.0	£71,300	36
1990	£76,320	£25,370	£51,000	50.0	£95,000	56
2000	£130,000	£45,120	£85,000	67.0	£127,000	66

Source: Rimington, John D., The Value of the Remuneration of High Civil Servants in Britain in the 20th Century and its Implications, Public Administration, Vol. 86, No. 4, (p 1113)

Table IX: Nominal and real salaries* for Top secretariat officials in Bangladesh 1962-1994 (Taka/Month)

Year	CPI 1969/70=100	Secretary		Joint Secretary		Deputy Secretary	
		Nominal	Real	Nominal	Real	Nominal	real
1962	71	3000	3000	2,300	2300	1525	1525
1977	441	3000	483	2350	378	1850	298
1985	1,014	6000	420	4750	333	3700	259
1991	1,671	10000	425	7800	331	6300	268
1994	1,853	10000	383	7800	299	6300	241

* Basic salary

Source: Bangladesh Public service A political-Administrative Perspective, A.M.M. Shawkat Ali, 2004 (P 149)

In Bangladesh, civil servants are paid much higher than their their private sector equivalents (World Bank, 1996). Under the National pay commission (NPC) usually after five years, pay rates improve even though the rate of increase must be lower than the private sector. The civil service offers a ‘final salary’ pension scheme. House rent allowance, medical allowance etc.

Comparing Table –VIII and Table – IX, IN the UK, the Permanent Secretary’s nominal and real salary increased over the period 1914-2000. But in the case of Bangladesh, the Secretary’s’ nominal salary increased from taka 3000 to taka 10,000 and real wages decreased by 13% over the period 1962-1994 and the amount of real salary was taka 383 only.

‘In 1969, one day’s salary of a secretary was equivalent to 100 kgs of rice, 25 kgs of beef and 40 kgs of fish. Today (1994) one days’ salary is equivalent to 15 kgs of rice, 6 kgs of beef and 4 kgs of fish’

Until the mid-sixties, an entry level civil servant could buy a small car with six months' salary; now it would take 40 months to buy the same car.

About 50 years back, a judge's monthly salary was equivalent to 100 tolas of gold; now it only buys two tolas (World Bank, 1996)'.

In 1994, public sector salaries (as % of private sector salaries) are: 110% (Singapore), 70% (Korea), 47% (Thailand), 40% (Malaysia). There is a little evidence to compare the public and private salary in Bangladesh. To compare salaries between two sets of people who have the same kinds of responsibility, we can consider lecturers from public and private universities. It is apparent that the private university lecturer gets a much (more than 5times) higher salary than his public counterpart. In the case of the civil service, the salary is too low and it is difficult to survive with a minimum living standard. and the service fails to attract talent.

5.6 Factors affecting differentiated career choice

Bangladesh is a highly populated country with a limited source of employment capacity. Even though there is a 'war for talent' to recruit and retain better human resources for the public sector, there are many important factors playing a role for career choice: increasing mobility, emergent attractiveness of big firms, growing temptation of business options in the market, lifestyle choice, family and spouse decisions, and declining public confidence in government, limited career development opportunities in government. All are the factors influencing the differentiated job search (Kim Pan Suk, 2008:639).

The de-motivating factors for selecting the civil service as a career are inadequate salary, faulty examination procedure and the job environment. The public university student considers this job as extraordinary and attractive. Students from private universities are not at all interested in joining the civil service. Seventy percent of respondents have no idea about the composition and responsibility of civil service (Jahan Ferdous, 2006:21). There is an information gap regarding the civil service and also due to more transmission of adverse news of civil service by the media, many prospective candidates are not well aware or have misleading ideas about the civil service and its composition and future.

'One size does not fit all' should be noticed for neutralizing de-motivating factors in civil service. The Government has to ensure a support program to create public value, public awareness and the strength of civil service and trust to people ((Kim Pan Suk, 2008:649). To improve the image of the civil service, the media may focus on the successful history of public works and a case study of honest and sincere civil servants instead of on the slow implementation of the government program, red tape etc.

SECTION VI: CONCLUSION

Different kinds of new ideas, best practice in other countries and benchmarking new thoughts can be disseminated through seminars, workshops, and conferences. But to attract a new generation into the civil service as prospective candidates, we need an intensive program. To neutralize and also internalize the de motivating factors against the civil service course based education with field attachment in public offices / ministries etc. is required.

It is true that ‘one size fits all’ or ‘best practice’ in one country may not be applicable for another country. But in reality there are many examples of applying one imported intervention or technology transfer which may give a good result to the recipient country. Now the Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP) is operating in Singapore, searching for talent for the civil service. In the USA, some political scientists express their belief that the lack of interest in public service among students stems from preconceptions based upon insufficient information about government employment (Davy Thomas J, 1959:232).

Poor documentation and lack of career counseling has a greater role in poor civil service recruitment. The fascinating nature of the work, the significance and relevance of the governmental program, career opportunities and moreover the satisfaction of doing something for people will increase the strength of prospective candidates to the civil service. Through introducing the Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP) in Bangladesh we can face the future ‘challenge for change’ and achieve our ‘Vision 2021’ in the civil service.

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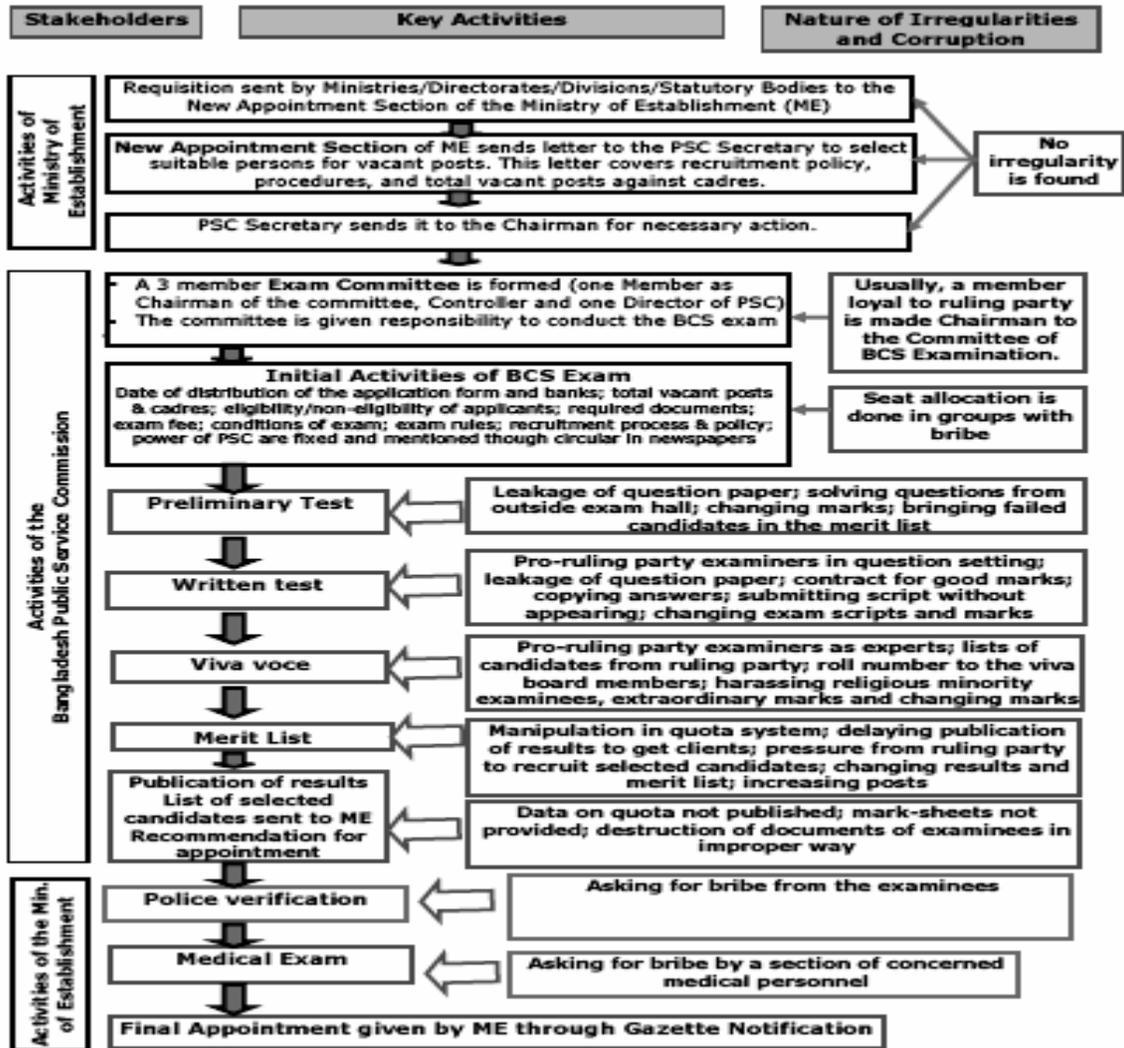
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Appendix –A: Stages of BCS Examination



Source (Copied from website): Transparency International Bangladesh, Bangladesh Public Service Commission: A diagnostic Study, March 2007 (Page 35)

Appendix-B: Time spent in BCS & Equivalent Examination (1972 – 2006)

Name of Examination and Year	Type of BCS	Date of Advertisement	Date of Recommendation by PSC	Time spent (month)
1972 Special examination	Special	n/a	n/a	12
1973 Special examination	Special	n/a	n/a	12
1977 Regular examination	General	n/a	n/a	36
1979 Regular examination	General	n/a	n/a	24
1 st BCS Examination, 1982	General	10.06.82	07.08.83	14
2 nd Special BCS (Recruitment of Magistrate) Examination 1983	Special	22.12.82	22.05.83	5
3 rd Special BCS (Health) Cadre Examination, 1983	Special	31.01.83	11.04.84	14.5
4 th Special BCS (Agri. & Railway Engr.) 1984	Special	10.11.83	09.06.84	7
5 th BCS Examination, 1984	General	26.01.84	13.07.85	17.5
6 th Special BCS Exam (cadre & Sub Cadre) 1985	Special	09.07.84	14.11.86	28
7 th BCS Examination, 1985 (Cadre & Sub Cadre)	Special	12.10.85	14.11.87	25
8 th BCS Examination, 1986	General	30.12.86	13.05.89	28
9 th BCS Examination, 1988-89	General	15.10.88	19.06.90	19
10 th BCS Examination, 1989-90	General	24.05.89	22.04.91	24
11 th BCS Examination, 1990-91	General	28.05.90	14.09.92	27.5
12 th Special BCS (Police) Examination, 1990	Special	13.09.90	15.12.90	3
13 th BCS Examination, 1991-92	General	15.06.91	31.10.93	28.5
14 th Special BCS (General Education) Examination, 1992	Special	04.06.92	07.07.93	13
15 th BCS Examination	General	27.05.93	01.07.95	25
16 th Special BCS (General Education) Examination, 1994	Special	27.04.94	06.11.95	18.5
17 th BCS Examination, 1995	General	30.03.95	30.05.95	27.5
18 th BCS Examination, 1997	General	n/a	n/a	n/a
19 th BCS Examination, 1998		18.05.98	11.05.99	10
20 th BCS Examination, 1998	General	25.05.98	07.12.00	29
21 st BCS Examination, 2001	General	15.07.99	30.11.02	40
22 nd BCS Examination, 2001	General	17.08.00	24.08.03	36
23 rd BCS Examination (freedom Fighters)	Special	n/a	n/a	n/a

24 th BCS Examination, 2002	General	12.09.02	24.02.05	34
25 th BCS Examination, 2004	General	28.02.04	13.04.06	17
26 th BCS (General Education) Examination, 2004	Special	29.08.04	02.08.05	12
27 th BCS Examination, 2005	General	26.06.05	21.01.07	19

Source: Ali (2002: 298-300), BPSC Annual Reports and TIB Field Survey

APPENDIX – C

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE STUDIES BRAC UNIVERSITY BANGLADESH

Title: Can Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP) attract brilliant students to join Bangladesh civil Service?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I am a student and researcher of MA in Governance and Development, Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University. I request you for helping me to collect some information. Your information will be used only for my academic / research purpose. All kinds of cooperation from you will be highly appreciated.

Date :

Time :

Identification No.

Personal Information

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Educational Qualification:

1. What kinds of job do you prefer? (multiple response)

- 1. Civil Service (BCS) (if this is the answer then skip Question # 4,5)
- 2. Public Service other than BCS (if this is the answer then skip Questionnaire)
- 3. Private (if this is the answer then skip Question # 3)
- 4. Business (if this is the answer then skip Questionnaire)
- 5. Others (Please specify)

2. Why do you prefer civil service? (Multiple response)

- 1. Prestigious / power;
- 2. Job Security
- 3. Serving the nation
- 4. Scope to higher study
- 5. Visit many countries
- 6. Opportunity to do work in abroad
- 7. Pension after retirement or old age
- 8. Desire / suggestion of family members
- 9. Others (Please specify).....

3. In private service which sector do you prefer?

- 1. Multi national Company
- 2. Bank
- 3. NGO
- 4. Others (Please specify)

4. Why do you prefer other than civil service? (multiple response)
- 1. High salary
 - 2. Challenging job
 - 3. Merit/ performance based promotion
 - 4. Non transferable job
 - 5. Fair recruitment process
 - 6. Others (Please specify).....
5. Do you know the recruitment process of Bangladesh Civil Service?
- 1. Know 2. Don't know 2. Partly know
6. Do you think current selection process is perfect for searching top quality student in civil service?
- 1. Yes 2. No
7. What types of training / program will help students to decide for civil service?
- 1. Class room based training
 - 2. Internship Program
(if this is the answer then go forward to other Questions)
 - 3. Seminar / workshop
8. What types of internship program do you suggest?
- Course include within degree syllabus in university level
 - Separate program (if this is the answer then skip Question # 9)
9. In which stage you suggest to introduce internship program?
- Bachelor level
 - Post graduate level
10. What is your suggestion about duration of internship?
- 01 (one) month
 - 02 (two) months
 - 03 (three) months

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX -D

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE STUDIES BRAC UNIVERSITY BANGLADESH

Title: Can Civil Service Internship Program (CSIP) attract brilliant students to join Bangladesh civil Service?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (for service holder only)

I am a student and researcher of MA in Governance and Development, Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University. I request you for helping me to collect some information. Your information will be used only for my academic / research purpose. All kinds of cooperation from you will be highly appreciated.

Date :

Time :

Identification No.

1. Personal Information

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Educational Qualification:

2. Why do you select civil service as career? (Multiple response)

- 1. Prestigious / power;
- 2. Job Security
- 3. Serving the nation
- 4. Scope to higher study
- 5. Visit many countries
- 6. Opportunity to do work in abroad
- 7. Pension after retirement or old age
- 8. Desire / suggestion of family members
- 9. Others (Please specify).....

3. Why people select other than civil service? (multiple response)

- 1. High salary
- 2. Challenging job
- 3. Merit/ performance based promotion
- 4. Non transferable job
- 5. Fair recruitment process
- 6. Others (Please specify).....

4. Do you think if university graduate (student or recently passed) have much knowledge about civil service; it will help them to decide their career?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

5. Do you think introducing internship program will help them to decide for civil service?
- 1. Yes (If yes please go for next question)
 - 2. No
6. What types of internship program do you suggest?
- Course include within degree syllabus in university level
 - Separate program
7. In which stage you suggest to introduce internship program?
- Bachelor level
 - Post graduate level
8. What is your suggestion about duration of internship?
- 01 (one) month
 - 02 (two) months
 - 03 (three) months

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION