Recruitment of Administrative Elite in Japan and Bangladesh: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract: A sound system of recruitment is considered as the cornerstone of any public personnel administration. Both Japan and Bangladesh have independent and autonomous central recruiting agencies - the National Personnel Authority (NPA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) respectively - to administer recruitment of their civil servants. The paper attempts to conduct a comparative analysis of the two systems to identify similarities and dissimilarities between them and their context. Recruitment of civil servants is taken as the case and the recruitment process is evaluated in detail. Relative merit of eligible candidates is the basis of selection in both systems though criteria differs. For instance, in Japan NPA maintains a pool of qualified candidates for recommendation to the hiring ministry and agency whereas in Bangladesh PSC recruits candidates of requisite qualification but based on set merit-cum-quota system. Likewise, the Japanese process is faster and need based. On the contrary, in Bangladesh, the process of recruitment is time consuming and without any long-term planning. It is concluded in this paper that the Japanese system is challenging and has integrity besides being more transparent as well as accountable in terms of processing and finalizing the recruitment system.

Introduction

The efficiency and effectiveness of organizations, both public and private, largely depend on the quality and commitment of its personnel. All other relevant variables including 'placement', 'promotion' and 'training' as well as internal operational mechanism of the organization are severely curtailed unless personnel are recruited through effective recruitment process. To establish an effective recruitment system based on 'merit' through a competitive examination process, the neutrality and autonomy of 'central personnel authority' as well as the constitution of the recruiting agency should be fair and neutral. Both Japan and Bangladesh have

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independent and autonomous central recruiting agencies to administer recruitment operations, but noticeable differences take place in the nature of recruitment operations. Therefore, this paper discusses the fundamental traits of recruitment process of these two countries about how the central organs of both Japan and Bangladesh operate in terms of recruitment process and what are the similarities and asymmetries that exist in these two systems.

Both the bureaucracies of Japan and Bangladesh have their own traditions. In the context of Japan, merit based selection process evolved through constraints during different periods. During the period of Tokugawa, civil servants were recruited without evaluation and examination while the Meiji period established for the first time a merit oriented recruitment system where the notion of achievement prevailed over the principle of ascription.

A civil service career in Japan has long been considered extremely prestigious. The Imperial University of Tokyo has traditionally established an unparalleled image of the largest provider of administrative elite as well as a training center of government officials. Some even suggest that, "Only the best and brightest, often top graduates of the Law Faculty of the University of Tokyo, would become elite-track state officials,"(Suleiman, 2003; 195). The Meiji government (1868-1912) established for the first time an absolutely merit oriented bureaucracy based on the Weberian model. Even after the Second World War, the allied forces did not bring about much change in government bureaucracy.

**Rationale of Comparison**

Theoretically both countries approximate the Weberian Model of bureaucracy. The domination of administrative elite or the generalist cadre is being exercised in both Japan and Bangladesh. Both countries historically looked upon elite bureaucrats with special reverence. A common characteristic of Japan and Bangladesh is a homogeneous culture free from the domination of certain ethnic groups. A marked feature signifying the characteristic of both countries has been domination by graduates from top-ranking universities. For instance, the majority of the successful candidates in the senior - level entrance
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examination come from the University of Tokyo in Japan and from the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh. The generalist tradition and the slow pace of promotion in both countries mean that "public servants are often rotated to other positions from time to time and there is strong competition for good positions" (Kim, 2002; 389). Both are democratic countries with a parliamentary system of government and the overwhelming majority of their population are traditionally freedom loving as well as docile and amiable.

**Conceptualizing Merit and Equity**

The traditional concept of merit has been extensively rethought in order to enhance its inclusiveness to facilitate adequate representation of different societal groups in the public affairs including government bureaucracy. Mere merit as an ideal is discriminatory in nature for the ensuring a sound and effective recruitment and selection system in public employment. There are scholars who suggest that "Any definition of merit as is the case with all selection procedures, is simply discriminatory; it is the set criteria to make the determination and the values that one wishes to maximize that are important" (Tummala, 1989; 5). Consequently, almost all countries have enacted policies in their personnel systems to enhance adequate representation and to remedy past discrimination through equity. Therefore, the concept 'merit' has been enhanced to include 'equity'- relaxation in competitive excellence. Different countries have perceived 'merit' from different perspectives. For example, in the USA it is called "affirmative action"; in England, it is "positive action," in India it is "reservations" and in Bangladesh it is called 'Quota' (Tummala, 1989; Zafarullah, 1992; 2000). Accordingly, the logical ground of equity are premised on considerations such as:

**Contemporary Justice:** Historically, some sections of the community... have been systematically deprived of their opportunities; so it is time that they are compensated now.

**Distributive Justice:** As social goods are there for the benefit of all, efforts ought to be made to ensure that each gets a fair share.
Social Utility: Each and everyone has something unique to give, and that all segments ought to have an opportunity to participate and contribute for the betterment of the society.

Responsiveness: Minorities will get a fair hearing, and justice probably will be done, if they represent their case to their likes as it facilitates communication (Tummala, 1989: 6).

Equity does not connote employment of non qualified candidates; rather it means, as stated earlier some form of relaxation in the competitive excellence. On the other hand, merit ensures the employment of the best suitable candidates. In order to select suitable candidates for public service positions, there must be an independent statutory organ free from political interference. This independent organ is generally called the 'Central Recruiting Agency'. In Bangladesh, it is called the PSC and in Japan it is the NPA. In the merit system, there are some prerequisites to establish merit in the selection process so that competent candidates can compete according to the rules designed for the recruitment system. Hence, in a merit system the role of the central personnel agency is of great importance.

Evolution of Career Bureaucracy in Japan and Bangladesh

Japan
An ideal type of bureaucratic organization is managed by a group of personnel who are recruited on the basis of 'technical qualifications' and tested by a competitive examination, salaried by fixed remuneration in money. The salary scale is evaluated mainly in accordance with the rank of bureaucratic hierarchy. There is a process of 'promotion' on the basis of seniority or of achievement, or both according to the judgment of relevant authority constituted for the purpose. The officials usually enjoy the right of job security, promotion, pensions, and the freedom of resignation and voluntary retirement (Weber, 1947).

In line with the aforementioned pattern of organization, bureaucracy in the real sense did not emerge in the period of Tokugawa (1603-1868), where "structural arrangements for administration that existed
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both in the central government and in the fiefs were patrimonial rather than bureaucratic. The criterion of recruitment to key officials was primarily ascriptive, such as membership in the shogun's immediate vassalage in Edo and the possession of a specified feudal family rank in the fiefs" (Koh, 1989; 11). Throughout this period, recruitment method and promotion criterion were not based on merit and education rather on vassalage and birth. Ascription prevailed in lieu of achievement in matters relating to the recruitment system. Consequently, at the waning period of Tokugawa, since the Samurai class started acquiring elitist education, bureaucracy began to evolve in the modern sense resulting decisively from the Commodore Perry's gunboat diplomacy in 1954, where reasonable changes in government bureaucracy were brought.

On the other hand, the Meiji government (1868-1912) reshuffled the previous bureaucratic structure and founded both modern education as well as a bureaucracy based on elitist nature (Hossain, 1991; 29). The initial stage of Meiji era especially the first two decades of Meiji restoration did not witness performance oriented personnel administration rather there was the enforcement of a 'spoils' system when the top ranking governmental officials were staffed from those who played the leading role in the Restoration. With the emergence of democratic governance, the demand of establishing a parliament, a cabinet, and a merit bureaucracy stressed "the need to cope with opposition politicians and to guard against the possibility of the abuse of 'free appointment' privileges by party politicians upon winning power provided the oligarchs with a strong incentive to institutionalize the merit principle in the recruitment of officials" (Hossain, 1991; 29). As a result, "in July 1887, the first general-examination ordinance was promulgated, extending examinations from the judiciary to all parts of the government. The new system set up two levels of civil-service examinations: higher examinations for sonin officials and lower ones for hanin officials" (Hossain, 1991; 29). The structures and principles of bureaucracy that Japan finally adopted were premised on the German model.

**Bangladesh**
The origin of public administration in Indian sub-continent dates back
to the Mauryan period (1313, BC), where loyalty as well as sincerity was treated as cardinal features for recruiting public servants. During the Mughal period, organizational structure approximated the traits of modern bureaucracy where performance oriented selection process was given emphasis while patronage of rulers for the appointment of officials was declining except the recruitment of some top ranking officials. But with the advent of the British East India Company, organizational structure became the foundation of the civil service in British India. In this period, recruitment rules were set, a fixed remuneration system was established, promotion principle developed and the training system was designed. But by the period of British's departure in 1947, India established one of the most developed civil service systems in the world, which eventually had an impact on the administrative apparatus of Bangladesh.

**Classification of Public Service Positions**

**Japan**
There are two broad divisions of national public employees: the special service (tokubetsu shoku) and the general service (Ippan Shoku). The former, includes such different positions as the Commissioners of the NPA, Prime Minister, Ministers of state, Parliamentary Vice-Ministers, Deputy Director Generals of the Cabinet Secretariat, Director General of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau, Judges and other employees of the courts, members of the Diet and their Secretaries, and employees of the Defense Agency. The ippan shoku public employees are categorized into three divisions (1) those governed by the regular compensation law (Kyuyo shokuin), (2) those governed by the special compensation law, (Tokubetsu shoku) and (3) public prosecutors. Finally, the ippan shoku public employees who are subject to the regular compensation law are subdivided into seventeen categories, each of which carries its own salary schedule. They are (1) the Administrative Service I, (2) the Administrative Service II, (3) the Specialized Administrative Service (4) the Taxation Service (5) the Public Security Service I, (6) the Public Security Service II, (7) the Marine Service I, (8) the Marine Service II, (9) the Medical Service I, (10) the Medical Service II, (11) the Medical Service III, (12) the Designated Service. (13) The Educational
Service I (14) The Educational Service II, (15) the Educational Service III (16) the Educational Service IV, and (17) the Research Service (Chowdhury, 1999; 18). Consequently, the Administrative Service - I has been selected as the single most important of all the categories in accordance with both size and significance, and has specific relevance to this study.

The following diagram has been designed to clarify the aforementioned categorization of public service.

**Diagram of the types of public employees**

**Bangladesh**

Public service in the context of Bangladesh can primarily be classified into Gazetted and Non-Gazetted posts. The Gazetted posts are generally divided between Class I post and Class II post, while the overwhelming majority of non-Gazetted posts are divided into Class III posts and Class IV posts. On the other hand, posts are also categorized into technical and non-technical positions. Technical post is the one which includes technical nature of work i.e. Agriculture, Medical and Engineering, etc while the non technical posts involve the posts which are organized and evolved on the basis of age-old generalist tradition (Chowdhury, 1999; 20). This practice dates back to the colonial past. If we look at the Indian civil service it will be clear that the same practice is exercised in the context of India. As observed by Maheshwari; "The holders of the higher services are
gazetted officers, while low-ranking personnel are the non-gazetted officials. The higher post holders are called gazetted because their appointment, transfer, promotion, retirement, etc. are announced in the official gazette in a notification issued by the government" (2005;50). He further observes that since the year 1773, this practice started "when the government of Fort William in Bengal brought out its official gazette. The government of India published its own gazette from January 1864. Another way of classifying the civil service into four classes- class I, class II, class III and class IV, now changed to group I, group II, group III and group IV" (Maheshwari, 2005; 50).

On the other hand, public service can be classified into cadre service and non-cadre service. In the context of Bangladesh, all cadre officers are regarded as class I officers while all Class I officials are not necessarily included in cadres. Non-cadre civil servants do not enjoy the same opportunities as their cadre counterparts do. For instance, non-cadre civil servants lag behind in promotion prospects with respect to their cadre colleagues who also belong to class I officers. On the other hand, in line with the classification scheme of late Professor Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury and others in the context of erstwhile Pakistan civil service classification, Bangladesh civil service cadres are broadly classified into three groups such as 'generalist' 'specialist' and 'technical'. (a) Generalist-administrative services belong to the first category including such cadres as BCS (Administration) and BCS (Secretariat); (b) functional services include such cadres as BCS (Audit and Accounts), and BCS (Taxation), BCS (Customs and Excise) and (c) specialist or technocrat services includes BCS (Fisheries), BCS (Technical Education) and BCS (Public Works) etc. At present there are 29 cadres in Bangladesh civil service. The functions and operations of each cadre have been clearly delineated and there has been little, if any, mobility or exchange of membership among these cadres. In each of the cadre system, "every post is borne clearly against one or another cadre and no member of a particular cadre is expected to be posted in the post borne against another cadre. This implies that a civil servant, who becomes a member of particular cadre, is clearly aware about his own lines and prospect for promotion"(Khan, 1988; 49-50).
The Role of Central Recruiting Agency for Recruitment Operations

Japan

The NPA, the central recruiting agency of Japan - was established in 1948 in compliance with National Public Service Law (NPSL). The rationale behind the establishment of the NPA is to ensure the efficient functioning of government administration signifying the consequence of democratic principles of 'recruiting right men in the right positions'. The NPA enjoys full autonomy which remains neutral even though it is subject to the jurisdiction of the Cabinet. "The National Public Service Law spells out its basic standards, principles, and procedures. The law sets up the National Personnel Authority as one of the two 'central personnel administrative organs"(Koh, 1989; 68). This organ, along with the Personnel Bureau of the Management and Coordination Agency (MCA) is required to act independently and impartially without fear or favour. NPA discharges its functions "as an independent regulatory commission, under the jurisdiction of the Cabinet. It has functioned to secure rational and scientific management of personnel administration problems while acting impartially in the national interest. Thus, the NPA is one of the most important agencies concerned with controlling and coordinating public personnel policy"(Kim, 1988;33). The authority concerned in the NPA consists of three commissioners appointed by the cabinet in accordance with to the approval of Diet for a four years term of office. In order to maintain neutrality, neither two commissioners from the same political party nor two people graduating from a same faculty of a same University would be appointed. "They may be reappointed but their maximum term is twelve years. One of the commissioners is designated by the cabinet as president of the authority. The commissioners may not be removed from office except through impeachment" (Koh, 1989; 64).

The National Personnel Authority is highly independent organ and plays a vital role to implement efficient and impartial administrative management. To perform its duties, the NPA is vested with the mandate of different fields of personnel management including entrance examinations, standards of appointment and dismissal, promotion, training, remuneration, welfare and other working
conditions, grievance resolution procedures, etc. On the other hand, the Personnel Bureau of the MCA is responsible for promoting and ensuring efficiency, economy and effectiveness in personnel affairs which are developed and enforced by operating ministries and agencies. However, it is needless to say that the individual ministries and agencies have adequate power and authority over actual personnel management on a day-to-day basis.

**Bangladesh**

Like all other former British colonies who have established their 'central recruiting agencies' as independent statutory bodies, the PSC in Bangladesh discharges functions as a defender of merit to recruit deserving candidates for civil service positions. Generally, the PSC is an independent statutory body outside executive interference and thus required to discharge functions neutrally while selecting candidates; but in real practice, its integrity depends on such aspects as the appointment of the PSC members, their educational and professional backgrounds as well as political affiliation. A member with political affiliation is less likely to maintain neutrality in the selection process than a non-political one. Therefore, the appointment to the PSC membership should be neutral and free from political biases. Though the President is vested with the authority of appointing candidates for PSC membership, yet the appointment should be judicious. As observed by a former bureaucrat, "under the existing constitutional mandate, the appointment of Chairman and members are made by the President but on the advice of the Prime minister. This provides a scope for a political bias in selection" (Ali, 2002; 267).

**The Process of Recruitment**

**Mode of Recruitment**

In accordance with the official guidelines, entrance examinations are designed to evaluate the ability of candidates effectively to secure the employment of deserving candidates for suitable jobs. "To this end, government officials construct each examination by first specifying the knowledge, skills, and traits required for a particular position, and then devising an appropriate combination of a general test, a specialized knowledge test, and a personality test"(Kim, 1988; 34). It
is noteworthy to mention that administrative elite in the Japanese society have long been characterized by elevated status as well as extraordinary social prestige. Japanese bureaucrats have traditionally been regarded as corrupt free and the genuine guardian of society due to their caliber, abilities and knowledge which is well proved through a rigorous entrance examination process designed specifically for the higher civil service. This tough examination eventually assumed to be a milestone for anyone's life cycle who dreams to be regarded as a member of top ranking civil servant, and have a desire to advance career up to the position of an Administrative Vice Minister-equivalent to the Permanent Secretary in the U.K. or the Secretary in Bangladesh.

In the context of Bangladesh, the recruitment of Class I and Class II officers are primarily administered by the PSC since it has constitutionally been authorized with executive power to supervise recruitment process of personnel administration. These two classes of recruits are, as stated earlier, called the gazetted officers of the state since the confirmation of recruitment is made through gazette notification. The Bangladesh Civil Service consists of 29 cadres and the officials of these cadres belong to the gazetted posts. Therefore, in addition to the recruitment of these officers, the PSC has to recruit Class I and Class II officers of different departments, ministries and directorates. In the recruitment system of Bangladesh Civil Service, the Ministry of Establishment is informed of the vacant posts by respective ministry and thus forwarded to the PSC for administering the recruitment operations. Therefore, the PSC advertises the number of vacant posts through the national newspapers inviting eligible candidates to apply against the available posts (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, MWCA, GOB, 2005). Therefore, the eligible candidates have to appear at a preliminary test. Only the qualified candidates in the preliminary test are invited to appear in the written test. "The candidates, who are able to obtain 45 percent in the written test, are qualified for the viva-voce and psychological test. If any candidate is not able to pass they will not be considered for final selection. A merit list is prepared after adding the marks of the written test and viva. The candidates are then selected according to the government rules by calculating the different numbers of
quota" (MWCA, GOB, 2005). The PSC also makes special arrangements for huge number of vacant posts of any single cadre on an emergency basis, which is called special BCS. Its selection procedure is also different from the normal BCS. Generally some portion of academic attainment (result) is considered with a preliminary test and viva at the time of final selection. The recruitment system other than cadre services done by the PSC also varies from one to another. Some recruitment is made through viva and some are on the basis of written test and viva." (MWCA, GOB, 2005).

Position Advertisement and Preliminary Test

Both in Bangladesh and Japan, position advertisement is the prerequisite of higher civil service entrance examination in order to attract promising candidates to the government bureaucracy. In the case of Japan, the NPA is engaged in different position advertisement functions. The cardinal methods of recruitment advertisement are: "(1) announcement of positions via the public press, television, and other mass media; (2) posting of announcement bulletins in government recruiting materials, including position advertisement, to colleges, which may be expected to be in touch with suitable applicants" (Kim, 1988; 22).

Both the Japanese and Bangladesh central recruiting agencies conduct preliminary interview/examination to select a sizeable number of competent persons in order to conduct a written test. But the purpose for this preliminary test is somewhat different. In the case of Japan, the main purpose of the employers is to evaluate the personality of candidates. Having assessed the personality of candidates, academic records are usually examined by the ministry officials and forwarded for civil service entrance examination. "This process is called a 'blind assessment' because the officials conduct interviews without seeing the candidates' academic records. If the candidates do not pass the personality assessment, they will be rejected even if they have excellent academic records. On the other hand, even if their academic records are undistinguished, they will be accepted if they appear to be men of vitality and strong character" (Kim, 1988). On the other hand, in Bangladesh, the PSC advertises the vacant posts in leading dailies for the services of the 'Republic to attract the competent candidates to
the government job. Preliminary selection system based on I.Q. Test, comprising General Knowledge, International Affairs as well as Bangladesh Affairs has been introduced to alleviate the pressure of a huge number of applications received and dispatched. "To deal with the question of unusually large number of candidates applying for posts through competitive examinations, the Commission introduced in 1989, a system of screening through what it called preliminary test"(MWCA, 2005).

**Written and Viva voce Test**

B.C Koh (1989) identifies some fundamental features which indicate the distinctiveness of the Japanese civil service recruitment process. These are;

First, there are three different levels generally found in the recruitment process of Japan's civil service. The highest level (jokyu) is designed for four-year college graduates while the intermediate level (chukyu) for graduates of junior colleges and the lowest (shokyu) for high-school graduates. Again, the highest level i.e., the Jokyu examination was categorized into two: the type A and the type B. "Of the four levels, the type-A higher examination was equivalent to the prewar higher civil service examination, and the lower examination approximated the ordinary civil service examination. The remaining two-the type-B higher examination and the intermediate examinations-must be viewed as postwar innovations"(Koh, 1989). It is mentionable that none of these examinations demands a specific educational requirement. For instance, the type-A higher civil service examination, is open to all candidates between the ages of twenty one and thirty three irrespective of any particular educational achievement. But in the actual sense, the educational standard of candidates appearing for the higher civil service examinations has been quite high..

A second marked feature of entrance examination was the selection of a special field designed for all candidates for higher civil service pertaining to specialization. In the higher (type -1) examination, candidates must choose one of the following twenty-eight fields: law, public administration, psychology, mathematics, economics,
education, sociology, physics, geology, information engineering, electrical engineering, electronics and communications, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, architecture, metallurgy, chemistry, energy engineering, erosion control, pharmacy, forestry, agriculture, agricultural economics, agricultural chemistry, agricultural engineering, animal husbandry, fishery science, and landscape design (Koh, 1989).

The third cardinal feature of the examination system is that all examinations have multiple stages. The first stage of higher examination is composed of two sets of multiple-choice tests. "The first set, known as Kyoyo shaken (general-culture test), is designed to test general knowledge, aptitude, and intelligence. The second set, called senmon shaken (specialized test), is designed to measure the level of expertise in the candidate's chosen field of specialization and lasts three and half hours" (Koh, 1989). More than 90% candidates are eliminated in this process. The second stage of higher civil service examination also consists of two types of tests: specialized and general. But examinations of this second stage are comparatively easier than the previous one consisting of problem solving questions. Those opting for the field of public administration, for example, must choose three subjects out of five (constitutional law, political science, social policy, public administration, and principles of economics) and answer one essay-type question in each subject (Koh, 1989). In the general test (Sogo shaken), the candidate's thinking and analytical ability as well as the ability to synthesize ideas and value judgments are assessed. To this end, a frequently used device is to present long excerpts from an article, often in English, and then ask the candidate to summarize and evaluate the main arguments. There is then a brief oral examination (Jinbutsu shaken) during which the candidates are questioned about his motives for choosing government service, his interests and hobbies, and other matters related to the abilities and potentialities of the candidate (Koh, 1989). This brief oral examination is followed by a marathon group discussion of the competitors through which the sincerity, seriousness and submissiveness of the candidate would be originally proved. In this process of such a rigorous contest, half of the candidates surviving in the first round are eliminated in the second round contest.
The fourth feature of the entrance examination system is the adoption of a decentralization policy in the process of recruiting administrative elite in Japan. "The National Personnel Authority compiles rosters of successful candidates (saiyo kohosha meibo) for each field of specialization; names are listed in the order of scores earned. Upon receipt of request from the ministries and agencies, the authority forwards lists of eligible candidates whose numbers typically exceed the number of vacancies by a ratio of five to one" (Koh, 1989). The process of hiring commences in early August of each year by the ministries of agencies after the completion of the second stage of higher examination. Officially, however, recruitment activities should not commence until early October after the final results of the higher examination have been announced"(Koh, 1989). It, therefore, seems clear that the central recruiting agency in Japan is not the final authority of recruitment. Like many of its counterparts in both developed and developing countries including that of Bangladesh, the respective ministry or agency has been vested with the final say to select a candidate for a civil service position.

On the other hand in Bangladesh, the PSC has the sole authority to finalize the list of candidates to be appointed through the entrance examination process. It also follows the preliminary test, written test and viva voce test but none of the tests are as rigorous or vigorous as that of Japan. After the scrutiny of applications, a preliminary selection test is conducted to ascertain applicants aptitude in order to undertake the main written examination comprising five compulsory and three elective subjects, and then the psychological test and the oral examination. Theoretically, the entire recruitment and selection process is impartially conducted by the PSC without the intervention of any governmental agency. However, in the recent past, allegations of encroachment in the process and undue influence to manipulate examination results have been made, although not always buttressed by concrete facts and premises. Moreover, the principle of merit has been tremendously modified ,in the name of achieving "a more equitable representation of the people of all districts of Bangladesh in various services and posts under the government" (A& SRC, 1973: 50). This has been followed by a further policy pronouncement of reservation of posts for women, freedom fighters and tribal population. The reservation of posts on the basis of quota system was
introduced in order to reduce the disparity that took place in the pre-independence period because of the emphasis placed on merit in the recruitment policies of successive governments in the then Pakistan (Khan and Zafarullah, 2001; Zafarullah, Khan and Rahman, 2001).

**Representativeness**

*Japan*

The Constitution of Japan provides equal treatment to all citizens. It calls for equality of treatment by enumerating that 'all people are equal under law'. This enumeration corresponds to article 27 which provides 'no discrimination to all nationals by reason of race, sex, religious faith, family origin, social status, and political opinion or affiliation' (Koh, 1989). In the selection process, open competition is the cardinal aspect of recruitment. In order to guarantee equal opportunity for all applicants to the civil service, merit principle is faithfully followed. Regarding appointment procedure, causes of disqualification are specified by Article 38 of NPSL, and there is no provision of post reservations for any specific section of society including that of female population whose representation is not adequate in the higher civil service of Japan compared to their male counterparts (Koh, 1989).

Male domination had long been embedded in the Japanese society especially in matters relating to the election in public offices on the basis of popular franchise as well as employment to government administration. Naturally in the larger society, the government bureaucracy mirrors the inferiority of women. "Legally, however, women were placed on an equal footing with men in the competition for civil service appointments as early as 1909, when they became eligible for the higher civil service examination. However, this did not actually end male monopoly until 1928, when women passed the judicial section of the higher civil service examination" (Tashiro, 2001; 164). Consequently, male dominated administrative milieu had no longer been dignified by proportional representation principle reflecting adequate female representation in the higher civil service before the Second World War.
The situation of female representation in the higher civil service after the Second World War is quite different. Figure 1 highlights the increasing trend of female representation in different years from 1978 to 1999. The lowest position of female recruitment stands below five percent in the years from 1978 to 1984. But the position increased from 1985 to 1995 and it was slightly reduced in 1994. Again, it gradually reduced from 1997 to 1999. However, the overall position of female involvement is not yet satisfactory.
Bangladesh
In the context of Bangladesh female representation is not enough in the higher civil service especially in the administrative cadre where 10 percent females are serving even after the introduction of the Quota system. But this rate is increasing gradually due to the gradual progress in the literacy rate of the female population.

Table 1 below clearly mentions an increasing trend of female representation in the BCS administration cadre from 1993 to 2000. This increase took place due to the application of female quotas in the government employment. The increasing trend of involvement continued from the 15th BCS up to the 22nd BCS examinations. The average rate of percentage stands at 21.29 in the periods from 1992 to 2000 which is ten percent higher than that stood at 12.66 in the years from 1982 to 1992.

Table-1: Gender wise and year wise distribution of Women in the BCS Administration Cadre (1992-2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Exam</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993/94 15th BCS</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23(19.49)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/96 17th BCS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3(75.00)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/97 18th BCS</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>20(19.2)</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/99 20th BCS</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>59(20.8)</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 21st BCS</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>44(23.03)</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 22nd BCS</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>60(21.05)</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>209(21.29)</td>
<td>977</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Table has been designed from the information calculating the name of recruits collected from Bangladesh Gazettes published in different years from 1992 to 2000.

Note: Special BCS in different periods (out of admin cadre) have not been mentioned in this table.

Comparison and Evaluation
The preceding discussion suggests that Japan has established an effective recruitment system providing the autonomy of its central recruiting agency. The central recruiting agency or the NPA plays a vital role to select suitable candidates. But the NPA is not the final
authority in matters of selection process. Respective ministries recruit candidates after rigorous evaluation. In addition to examination, evaluation plays an important role for final recruitment. Merit principle is strictly observed. In that sense, the recruitment of higher civil service in Bangladesh can not be called absolutely merit oriented. Because, the appointment of recruiting authority is based on political influence which can hardly guarantee merit oriented recruitment process. Justify in the validity of this assertion, Ali (2002) insisted that "Under the existing constitutional mandate, the appointment of Chairmen and members (of the BPSC) are made by the President but on the advice of Prime Minister. This provides a scope for a political bias in selection" (p-267). Thus, if there is politicisation or political bias, as has been argued by Ali and many other academicians as well as the media, this seriously impacts on public confidence in the BPSC and also on the quality of recruitment and selection in the civil service of Bangladesh. On the other hand, Japanese recruitment is premised on the principle of decentralization process. Both NPA and respective ministries play their due role in discharging the recruitment operations. Therefore, examination and evaluation are both important. Only the most suitable and potential candidates are selected in this rigorous examination process. The fundamental features of Japanese recruitment system can be summarized as follows:

In case of the Japanese-government bureaucracy, however, a number of factors magnify further the importance of recruitment. First, the custom of lifetime employment underscores the imperative necessity of selecting the right persons initially. Second, the persistence of decentralized recruitment despite the creation of a central personnel agency, coupled with an extremely low degree of lateral mobility—that is, interagency transfers—helps to foster both competition and caution in the recruitment process. Third, the multiple-track system of recruitment, under which the future leaders of government ministries and agencies
must be identified and selected at the outset, raises the stakes of initial recruitment. Moreover, the virtual absence of probationary appointment further enhances the importance of selectivity in recruitment (Koh, 1989; 67).

Another remarkable difference in these two systems is the principle of equity. Merit has been more inclusive in the context of Bangladesh. Therefore posts have been reserved for the backward sections of society. Female representation is still insignificant in the civil services both in Bangladesh and Japan. However through the quota system 10% of the total number of posts have been reserved for female candidates in Bangladesh.

The Japanese recruitment process appears to be more effective because "there has always been a huge pool of well qualified candidates available for recruitment. Only about 5 percent of the candidates for the Principal Senior A-Class Entrance Examination have been successful. The problem of the Japanese government has been not how to attract enough candidates, but how to pick the best among so many well-qualified candidates." (Kim, 1988; 33). On the other hand in Bangladesh, due to the widespread unemployment problem and availability of limited private organizations providing suitable remuneration, government job is the final dream of the majority youth. Consequently, a huge pool of candidates is available for recruitment with a low qualification.

The Japanese recruitment system is designed to meet not only the short term personnel needs of each ministry but also the long-range personnel plan of the government. The NPA generally includes more candidates in its pool than the needs of each ministry. Consequently each ministry can recruit personnel according to their specific requirements. Fairness, justice and honesty as well as integrity of the system resulted in the effectiveness of recruitment system. It is comparatively corruption free. Many able candidates apply for the higher civil service or the administrative elite because it is prestigious as well as dignified. "The Japanese recruitment system is effective because the NPA uses modern examination methods. The NPA constantly analyzes and checks the content of examinations to make them valid, objective, and consistent, so as to effectively measure the qualities of each candidate" (Kim, 1988; 31). But in Bangladesh,
greater reliance has persistently been placed on general testing rather than relying on the concept of specific -job-relatedness in educational background as well as pragmatic insight and intelligence of the candidates. Consequently, the undue emphasis on general academic qualification for the position under competition has made it quite difficult for the recruiting agency for making selection for long term needs, such as the appointment of a personnel with less immediate ability but with greater potential and innovativeness.

The Japanese public recruitment system is particularly important because it challenges the Western system, especially that of the United States, in one key aspect, i.e; the fundamental attitude toward public recruitment. Most Japanese government leaders hold the opinion that a ministry, like a family, depends on an established structure, and that appointing a new public employee is like accepting a new family member. The important point here is that human relationship within the government organization or household group are considered to have priority over all other human relationships. Consequently, the Japanese public recruitment system aims at finding the person who will maintain harmonious relation with others, and who will be able to work as a member of the team by effectively demonstrating the three Ss-Sincerity, Seriousness and Submissiveness. But in Bangladesh no serious attempt has ever been made to dismantle the uninterrupted continuance of the literary generalist tradition in recruitment operations. As a consequence, the civil service is still stratified into a highly differentiated class which in turn reflects the basic inequities of the social structure prevalent in the country (Ahmed, 1980; Khan and Zafarullah, 1980; Khan and Zafarullah, 2001; Zafarullah, Khan and Rahnman, 2001).

**Conclusion**

From the preceding discussion, it seems clear that the Japanese recruitment system is much more effective for many reasons compared to Bangladesh. A lot of qualified candidates are available for recruitment in Japan every year. Again, "It is effective because the system meets not only the immediate personnel needs of each ministry each year, but also the long-range manpower plan of the national government" (Kim, 1988; 33). The NPA always uses latest techniques
for the recruitment operations while Bangladesh is lagging far behind in this context. Moreover, as a result of the so called modified merit - cum-quota system the principle of merit in the recruitment process in Bangladesh can be conceived in more or less passive or negative terms in that. Its primary emphasis is to eliminate wide-spread favoritism, nepotism and malpractice rather than to evolve bold imaginative ways of attracting and retaining meritorious personnel in the civil service. Like the NPA in Japan, the PSC in Bangladesh must continuously review the tasks it is called upon to discharge, and the possible ways it might perform them better. It should think out with boldness and imagination what new skills and techniques can be adopted for selecting appropriate men and women who can be effectively deployed, developed and retained. We recognize that the adoption of modem recruitment, selection and assessment practices can not take place overnight but strongly believe that a long term strategy needs to be put in place to move the BPSC from its prevailing situation to one where it has developed the requisite commitment and capability to operate such practices. Like the NPA in Japan, the BPSC should undertake research into the graduate job market in order to fully comprehend who applies to the BCS, who does not, when, and why, and all the reasons behind their decisions. The fundamental aim of this research should be to understand the market so that relevant recruitment and selection practices can be developed to attract the best quality candidates who are most likely to make outstanding civil servants and to discourage, or preclude, those who are unlikely to make outstanding civil servants - all this, while at the same time ensuring equality of opportunity and justice.
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