

A Study on Employment of Women in the Government Sector of Bangladesh

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Abstract

The study is aimed to analyze male and female employment ratio in the government sector of Bangladesh focusing on female employment in particular and to also to study the growth trend thereof from 1987 to 2010. Female employment is one of the vital indicators of women empowerment and social development. In 2010 the civil employees of the government were 1078082. Historically the involvement of female persons in formal sector was not bright. Women were mainly engaged in informal sector and a large portion of their contribution is not monetized. The study revealed that female employment in the government sector was being increased gradually. Maximum growth was being occurred in 3rd and 4th class employee level. Ratio of male employee had diminishing trend from 1987 to 2006. Then there was an upward trend of male employees till 2010. At the same time female employees had a constant upward trend from 1987 to 1998. Since 1998 this trend increased fast. Ratio of female employment in government sector increased dramatically in recent years from 2006-2010. Maximum number of female employees were engaged in the health and the education sectors. Some posts in the class-iii are reserved for women. A large quantity of female employment was generated in class-iii level post due to some policy interventions by government. Female employees will nearly be equal to male employees within 20-25 years subject to the condition that other related factors such as socio-economic, political and cultural environment contribute positively or at least not hinder the growth.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Statement of the problem

Since independence the government of Bangladesh endeavored to improve the quality of life of women. In the article 29 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, the discrimination on employment in government sector on the basis of gender is strictly prohibited. The government of Bangladesh has ratified the 'Platform for Action Plan' taken in the fourth conference of women held in Beijing in 1995. Various documents of the government, considered as the philosophical instruments, have been approached women as a priority agenda. Lastly Government has formulated 'National Women Development Policy 2008'

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and Women Development Action Plan. The state has undertaken some packages of arrangements in favour of women development. It is to be noted that the employment of women in the government as well as private sector is not satisfactory despite all these favourable steps. According to 'Report on Monitoring of Employment Survey (MES) 2009' a labour force (above 15 years) 51 million (male 38.5 million and female 12.5 million) out of 53.7 million were engaged in different professions (Economic Review 2011, page 27). It is to be stated that Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2004-05 indicated that a labour force of 47.4 million (male 36.1 million and female 11.3 million) were engaged in a range of professions. In 2002 the civil employees of the government were 930026 (male 825268 and female 104761). In the year 2010 the civil employees of the government became 1078082 (male 850968 and female 227114). Growth rate of civil employee was 16% over the last 8 years. On the other hand the number of female employees has increased by 117% in the same duration. Employment in government sector is highly formal sector of employment for the labour force. The overall development of a country is not possible keeping women outside the mainstream. With this end in view, a numerous policies have been formulated by the Government. Employment is one of the vital opportunities to engage women in economic activities. It will ultimately lead to economic and social development of the country.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The size of the economy of Bangladesh is not big enough to employ the entire workforce. As a result a huge number of people remain unemployed outside the boundary of public and private employment capacity. Due to this drawback a sizeable number of Bangladeshi professionals, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour force is very much prone to seek expatriate employment. Historically the involvement of female in formal economic sector is not bright in Bangladesh. Female are mainly engaged in informal sector of economy and a large portion of their contribution remain unmonitized. Data show (Table:1) that more than 85% male labour force are employed. At the same time number of female employee is in upward trend but not up to the mark.

Table: 1 showing the position of woman in the workforce in Bangladesh

Duration	% of employed male	% of employed female
1995-96	87	15.8
1999-00	84	23.9
2002-03	87	26.1

Source: Labour Force Survey 1995-96, 1999-00, 2002-03.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The study has covered only civil employee in the government sector from 1987 to 2010. This sector has included all the Ministries, Divisions, Departments, Directorates, Subordinate Offices, Autonomous Bodies, Corporations, Constitutional Bodies, Offices of the Divisional Commissioners, Offices of the Deputy Commissioners, Field Offices of the various Ministries/Divisions at Divisional, Regional, District and Sub districts level as well as Foreign Missions & Embassies of Bangladesh. Educational institutions under Monthly Payment Order (MPO) are excluded here. Though they are getting greater portion of compensation and fringe benefit from government as like as civil employees but they are not considered as civil employee of Bangladesh. The data used here are secondary.

1.4 Objectives

Employment of female persons is one of the significant indicators of women empowerment and social development. Employment in the government sector is lucrative and suitable to the people of Bangladesh due to its stability and duration. Nature, types and volume of female employment in government sector have changed over time. This paper has made an attempt to attain some objectives. The purpose of this paper is to:

- i) analyze the status of male and female employees in the government sector with special focus on women.
- ii) analyze the growth trend of male and female employees in the government sector from 1987 to 2010.
- iii) recommend some policy interventions/guidelines for enhancement of female employment in the government sector.

2.0 Methodology

This study is mainly descriptive and analytical in nature. All the relevant data and information are collected from secondary sources. Most of them are taken from government publication such as Statistics of Civil Officers and Staff by Ministry of Public Administration; Economic Review by Finance Division; Various Census and Reports of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. Data have been selected and analyzed with 04 years interval. Some tables, graphs, diagrams are used for better analysis and representation of data. All the tables, graphs, diagrams are formulated and drawn by using data collected from available secondary sources. Government employees are divided into four classes and 20 grades of National Pay Scale. In this study data are analyzed based on gender, class, duration. All the data are categorized on the head of the four categories of offices- Ministries/Divisions, Departments / Directorates, Divisional / Deputy

Commissioner's Offices, Autonomous Bodies and Corporations based on the available sources of data.

3.0 Data analysis

3.1 Male and female ratio

In the year 1987 number of male and female employees were 1037335 and 52998 respectively (100 : 5.1). Class-wise ratio of male and female employees was in class-i 100 : 4.21, class-ii 100 : 3.83, class-iii 100 : 8.78 and class-iv 100 : 1.36. Number of male and female employee were 850968 and 227114 respectively in 2010 (100 : 26.68). The ratio of female employee has been increased by $(26.68 - 05) = 21.68\%$ during the last 23 years. Only in the last 8 years the ratio of female employee has been enhanced by $(26.68 - 12.69) = 13.98$. In the year 2010 the ratio between male and female employee was in class-i 100 : 17.61, class-ii 100 : 15.13, class-iii 100 : 30 and class-iv 100 : 24.57. From the data it is depicted that female employment in the government sector has increased as a whole to a great extent. Maximum growth has been occurred in 3rd and 4th class level. If this trend continues it will reach 50% within next 20 to 25 years.

Table: 2 showing Male and Female Civil Employees in Government Sector

Year	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1987	61481	2592	33914	1302	488859	42903	453078	6201	1037335	52998
1992	73619	5056	34362	2486	521782	58060	238939	12425	868712	78037
1994	77351	6312	34014	2984	527931	62990	218416	13368	857712	85654
1998	81379	7978	43589	3629	519623	75287	186781	13784	831372	100678
2002	82310	9108	46440	3953	511807	77307	184711	14393	825268	104761
2006	83328	10511	48857	4614	496189	114496	174963	17129	803337	146750
2010	88239	15539	46544	7044	526945	158017	189242	46514	850968	227114

Source: Statistics of Civil Officers and Staff, Ministry of Public Administration.

In the Ministries/Divisions 16% employees were female and 84% employees were male. One fourth employee was female in Departments/Directorates and their Subordinate Offices. But the scenario was opposite in Divisional/Deputy Commissioner's Office and Autonomous Bodies & Corporations having only 8% female employees.

Figure 1: Ratio of Male & Female in
the Ministries & Divisions

Figure 3: Ratio of Male & Female in
Divisional & Deputy Commissioner's
Offices

Growth rate of male and female empl

The number of female employees
by 328.58% within last 23 years. In the

female employees had increased from 146750 to 227114 (54.78%) (Table: 2). The number of male employees had diminishing trend from 1987 to 2006. There had been an upward trend in the number of male employees up to 2010 (Figure-5).

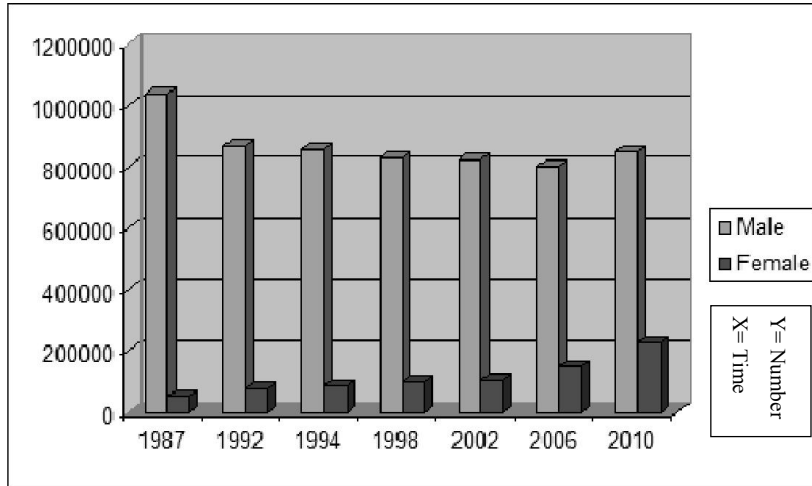


Figure 5: Growth rate of male and female employee from 1987 to 2010.

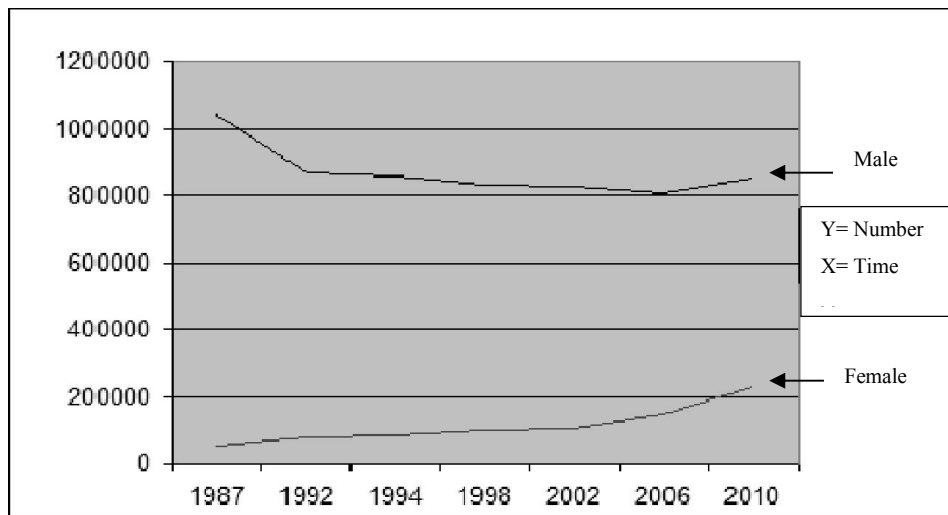


Figure: 6 Growth trend of male and female employee from 1987 to 2010.

At the same time the number of female employees had a constant upward trend from 1987 to 1998. From 1998 and onward this trend had increased fast (Figure: 6).

3.3 Class-wise female employees:

Maximum number of female employees were engaged in class-iii in the departments and directorates and their Subordinate Offices. The class-iii female employees were 149742 (65.93% of total) out of 227114 (Figure: 7, Table: 2.1). Most of them were employed in health and education sector under the directorate of health, directorate of family planning, directorate of primary education, directorate of secondary and higher education. Under the directorate of health 26516 employees (33% of total) were female out of 79800 employees, and there were 2413 employees in the class I post (21% of total) were female out of 11257 employees and in the class III post 18430 employees (38.53% of total) were female out of 47829 employees. In the directorate of secondary and higher education 6898 employees (28.64% of total) were female out of 24080 employees and in the class I post 3497 employees (27.71% of total) were female out of 12617 employees. Under the directorate of family planning 33981 employees (70% of total) were female out of 48553 employees, and in the class I post 317 employees (31.35% of total) were female out of 1011 employees and in the class IV post 27673 employees (87.47% of total) were female out of 31634 employees (Statistics of Civil Officers and Staff, 2010). Among the female employee in class-1 was 6.84%, class-ii was 3.1%, class-iii was 69.58% and class-iv was 20.48% in the government sector. It is clearly noted that highest number of female employees were engaged in the class-iii level as a whole. Rate of change during the last 23 years in the class-1 post was 499.53%, Class-ii post was 441%, Class-iii post was 268.31% and Class-iv post was 650%.

1995	49	-	49	1	244	3	652	7	1474	129	2379	237
1999	48	1	54	1	271	4	652	7	1856	193	1757	196
2001	49	1	58	-	257	5	697	25	1874	192	1881	256
2004	49	-	81	2	280	10	722	47	1692	238	1454	232
2008	59	1	75	1	358	26	1422	166	1284	211	1101	258

Source: Public administration computer centre, 15 September 2008.

These are government posts beyond the particular cadre post of Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS). The jobholders in these posts play crucial role in government decision making and policy formulation process. The data represent a positive trend of female involvement in this process of the government.

3.5. Female employment and quota system

As per government rules, 10% quota is reserved for female candidates in 1st class & 2nd class post and 15% quota is reserved for female candidates in 3rd class & 4th class post in government sector. But 60% quota is reserved for female candidate in the post of assistant teacher of government primary school and 30% quota for government secondary school. Some posts in the class-iii are very much specialized in nature for female such as Nurse, Family Welfare Visitor (FWV), Family Welfare Assistant (FWA), Aya etc. This reservation of quota and specialized nature of job has a great contribution to female employment in 3rd & 4th class post in the government sector.

4.0 Discussion

Some important points of findings are drawn from the analysis and review of the relevant data. These are as follows:

- i) Only 2% manpower is employed in the government sector out of the total employed labour force.
- ii) Number of female employees in government sector increased dramatically in recent years from 2006 to 2010 compared to previous two decades before that.
- iii) Maximum number of female employees was engaged in the 3rd class post (69.58%) and the health and education sector were highest in 2010. Second position was class-iv post (20.48%) then.
- iv) Some posts are specially filled by female personnel such as Nurse, Family Welfare Visitor (FWV), Family Welfare Assistant (FWA), Aya etc due to specialized nature of job suitable & fit for women.

v) In general 10% quota is reserved for female candidates in 1st class & 2nd class post and 15% quota is reserved for female candidates in 3rd class & 4th class post in government sector. In addition to that 60% quota is reserved for female candidates in the post of assistant teacher of government primary school and 30% quota for government secondary school. This quota system has a great contribution to the enhancement of female employment in government sector.

vi) Since there was no special quota reservation and no specialized nature of job suitable and fit only for women in class i & class ii post, female employment was not satisfactory here only having 6.86% and 3.1% respectively in this level. This rate was very much insignificant compared to 3rd class and 4th class post.

vii) Without quota reservation either general or special, female employment in government sector might be around 50% of the existing female employees in 2010.

viii) Female employees will nearly be equal to male employees within 20 to 25 years subject to the condition that other related factors such as socio-economic, political and cultural environment will contribute positively or at least will not hinder this growth.

ix) Sometime family and social reasons may hinder the female from formal employment. They cannot manage the dual role of a mother and wife or a jobholder. As a result, some women are not interested to get a job in government sector through competitive examination process or may quit the job due to family and other pressure. A case study is illustrated to realize the situation in the Annexure-A.

x) Above all, policy intervention by the government and some sorts of assistance to female in the form of social safety net like stipend to female students has a great contribution to enhancement of women employment in formal sector like government sector.

5.0 Recommendation and conclusion

Employment of female in government sector has increased gradually. This trend is very positive for women empowerment and women participation in government decision making process. But the ratio of female employment is not yet reasonable and satisfactory. From the analysis of data some policy interventions and guidelines are recommended for further action of the government. These are as follows:

i) The quota system has been adopted by government to make some positive discrimination for the enhancement of under privileged section like women

in the government employment. As a result, a significant contribution has been visualized in this area. So quota for female in the government employment may require to be continued up to next 20 years.

ii) Some hazards have been faced by female employees for their biological nature, family requirements and intensive care needed for their children. Most of the women feel very much discomfort in the working environment due to lack of sufficient health and sanitary arrangements. These issues should be addressed and institutional facility should be established and developed to overcome these problems for attracting more female employment in government sector.

iii) Education is the precondition to get employment in the government sector. Government has taken some initiatives to enroll more female students in education for balanced human development. It is to be noted that enrolment of girls in primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels outreached the boys. But dropout rate of girls is higher than that of the boys. So some special arrangements and initiatives in the form of social safety net should be continued and strengthened.

A female has to do job in the government sector along with a huge responsibility in her family and social life. Normally she is not in a position to avoid home making activities and entertainment of family guest. Actually she has to bear more responsibility in this area compared to her counterpart male employee. Trend of female involvement in the responsibility shouldering job in the government sector has brightened gradually. In the near future contribution of female in the government sector will be significant and fruitful. It will ensure actual economic and social development of the country.

Annexure-A

A case study

Mrs. Lyle Begum graduated and post graduated from the University of Dhaka. Before marriage she worked in a NGO. After getting married she tried to get a job in the government sector and took part in the various competitive examinations. Her husband also graduated and post graduated from the University of Dhaka. He was a banker and got handsome compensation packages from his job. A few years later she got a job in the government primary school as Headmistress in Munshigonj district. Her husband was posted to Narayangonj and resided in Jtrabari, Dhaka. She joined the job in Sreenagar, Munshigonj and became pregnant after one year of her job. A son was born. She joined the job again after completing her maternity leave. During office time her mother looked after her child. Her mother was busy with her family matters and did not pay due attention to her grandchild. The child was busy playing with toys instead of other children most of the time. At the age of two, Lyle Begum noticed that her son was not trying to utter a word that was usually done by other children of the same age. After few days she was feeling guilty for her child not growing well. She went to various prominent doctors to consult the issue about her child. The doctors advised her to spend more time with her child and to interact with him more and more verbally. After following this modality some improvement has been occurred. In consultation with family members she decided finally to leave the job for more physical and mental attachment with her child. That ultimately helped her reducing speech problem of her child. Here problem might not be correlated with the job of the mother rather there might have been other medical grounds. But the mother not the father had to leave the job.

Appendices

Table: 2.1. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (2010)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1726	435	1597	277	1939	313	1966	315	7228	1340
Departments/ Directorates	42048	9546	17255	3866	433183	149742	111338	42072	603824	205226
Divisional/Deputy Commissioner's Office	1358	248	88	0	11544	940	13348	1124	26336	2312

Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	43107	5310	27604	2901	80279	7022	62590	3003	213580	18236
Total	88239	15539	46544	7044	526945	158017	189242	46514	850968	227114

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff, 2010

Table: 2.2. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (2006)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1588	335	1606	245	1937	308	1896	288	7027	1176
Departments/ Directorates	36575	5695	18722	1716	390222	107337	87522	12589	533041	127337
Divisional/Deputy Commissioner's Office	1543	198	127	0	13006	869	14434	1004	29110	2071
Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	43622	4283	28402	2653	91024	5982	71111	3248	234159	16166
Total	83328	10511	48857	4614	496189	114496	174963	17129	803337	146750

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff, 2006

Table: 2.3. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (2002)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1761	285	1697	212	1930	290	1989	264	7377	1051
Departments/ Directorates	35305	5171	14837	1304	399428	69610	90679	9813	540249	85898
Divisional/Deputy Commissioner's	1534	140	124	0	13771	789	17213	963	32642	1892

Office										
Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	43710	3512	29782	2437	96678	6618	74830	3353	245000	15920
Total	82310	9108	46440	3953	511807	77307	184711	14393	825268	104761

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2002

Table: 2.4. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (1998)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1802	249	1663	152	1998	325	2118	246	7581	972
Departments/ Directorates	34791	4680	14043	1310	402219	68333	91106	9676	542159	83999
Divisional/ Deputy Commissioner's Office	1835	128	100	0	14347	643	17652	818	33934	1589
Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	42951	2921	27783	2167	101059	5986	75905	3044	247698	14118
Total	81379	7978	43589	3629	519623	75287	186781	13784	831372	100678

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1998

Table: 2.5. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (1994)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1754	209	53	13	3379	376	2275	225	7461	823
Departments/ Directorates	30965	3663	11475	1343	392160	56019	107572	9588	542172	70613
Divisional/ Deputy	1886	94	111	1	14849	513	17762	656	34608	1264

Commissioner's Office										
Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	42746	2346	22375	1627	117543	6082	90807	2899	273471	12954
Total	77351	6312	34014	2984	527931	62990	218416	13368	857712	85654

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1994

Table: 2.6. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (1992)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1711	154	45	6	3787	345	2144	199	7687	714
Departments/ Directorates	27954	2849	9486	1072	376580	50159	136446	8123	550476	62203
Divisional/ Deputy Commissioner's Office	2043	76	173	0	15674	446	17627	623	35517	1145
Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	41911	1977	24658	1408	125741	7110	82722	3480	275032	13975
Total	73619	5056	34362	2486	521782	58060	238939	12425	868712	78037

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1992

Table: 2.7. Showing the male and female civil employees in Government sector (1987)

Name of Office	Class-I		Class-II		Class-III		Class-IV		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministries/ Divisions	1521	110	26	03	3230	209	1859	133	6636	455
Departments/ Directorates	25106	1041	10083	324	384721	37099	282106	3977	608836	42441

Autonomous Bodies and Corporations	34854	1441	23805	975	100908	5595	262293	2091	421863	10102
Total	61481	2592	33914	1302	488859	42903	453078	6201	1037335	52998

Source: Statistics of civil officers and staff of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1987

Table: 4.1. Showing the distribution of quota in Government service.

No.	Various types of Quota	For 1st & 2nd class post (%)	For 3rd & 4th class post (%)
1.	Merit Quota	45	-
2.	Inhabitants of Orphanage and Physically disabled (Excluding District Quota)	-	10
3.	District Quota (As per the population of district)		
	a) Freedom Fighter Quota	30	30
	b) Female Quota	10	15
	c) Tribal Quota	5	5
	d) Member of Ansar and VDP	-	10
	e) Remaining (General candidate of district)	10	30
	Total	100%	100%

Source: O and M Manual 2009, page-311, Ministry of Public Administration

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