

# **Career Planning in Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Cadre: A Critical Assessment**

**Dissertation prepared for a partial fulfillment of  
Master of Arts in Governance and Development (MAGD) degree**

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### **Disclaimer**

I declare that no part of this study has been published elsewhere. The whole dissertation is prepared for academic pursuit and solely aimed for the partial fulfillment of MAGD degree. The document is submitted to the IGS authority with due acknowledgement of the cited text and norms of standard research works.

*Debabrata Chakraborty*

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## Preface

Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) of BRAC University offers the course Master of Arts in Governance and Development (MAGD) for the career civil servants of Bangladesh. Submitting a dissertation is a requirement for attaining the final degree. From this point of view the present study is completely an academic effort.

This study *Career Planning in Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Cadre: A Critical Assessment* mainly depends on the response survey and opinions from the BCS Admin cadre officers of different ranks and field offices. I received heartfelt support from my colleagues in different ministries, training organizations and upazila and district offices. Some senior colleagues also inspired me to re-think some practical issues of field management and the process through which the administration in Bangladesh functions. Just thinking of the career planning for the Admin cadre officers may perceived myopic; however I consider that if a proper career path for the BCS Admin cadre officers can be planned properly, the service delivery quality will be improved. To put the idea into purpose, I have framed a schema for career planning and the whole study is centered to that idea. The findings will validate the necessity of career components in the administrative service which are evidently and essentially targeted for the state catalysts.

During the study some of my colleagues tried to understand what do I mean by the phrase 'career planning for the public service'. They also did not hesitate to tell me that they were confused on the issue often asked me whether it was at all possible to frame a career planning strategy for the government officials. Their confusion and uncertainty seemed like a challenge for the study in the beginning. Though it had been widely accepted and taken for granted that without career goal, proper service delivery would be impossible for any sector: private or public.

The study reveals that without public service career plan, the state cannot actualise the policy it takes to ensure social justice for the citizens. The BCS Admin cadre officers play crucial roles right from formulating the policy at the centre to implementing the same at the periphery. It is not claimed that this study is the only guideline to career planning, however it depicts that absence of a career planning strategy has weakened the public service management and at the end of the day public dissatisfaction proves the inefficiency of the government.

There are scopes for further study in this area and more studies must be conducted with intensive efforts. I expect that future researchers will come forward to explore some other aspects of the civil service management to help the policy planners at the top echelon to creating congenial environment for our civil servant and enable them to serve best. I believe that when the civil servants are efficient and empathetic, the government can function most effectively. A sound career planning for Bangladesh Civil Service Administration can be a good start at this moment.

Devabrata Chakraborty

Dhaka,  
30 July 2008

## **Executive Summary**

Career planning is the process of making and implementing career decisions through designed and functional strategy to promote sound career decisions throughout the life. Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) is the core public service and civil affairs management body of the Republic and BCS (Administration) cadre officers play important roles among all 27 cadres. The jobs of BCS (Admin) officers are multidimensional and the success or failure of the government, especially at the local level, largely depends on this core generalist-cadre.

This study has mainly two objectives: (i) To critically assess the BCS career planning system and (ii) to suggest some policy guidelines to develop an operational career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. The study is based on response survey of 50 BCS (Admin) officers serving from 5 years to 25 years in the cadre and expert opinions from 5 academicians and 3 ex-bureaucrats. Three methods are used here: Content analysis, Interviews and Case-study. This study specifically targets the BCS (Admin) officers from an academic pursuit.

A career planning strategy must be viewed through a systematic analytical framework to testify its validity in context of Bangladesh and it would be suggestive to review and recreate such a framework. Career planning in the private sector today is much more focused to market needs. On the other hand, career planning in the public sector is a policy for better services with better staff. This study examines that career planning as a concerted concept is absent or dysfunctional, if not unknown, in BCS (Admin) Cadre. However there are numerous efforts of reforms and several reports are published by the Government and various International Organisations that mainly intend to show the level of inefficiency in bureaucracy.

This study observes that BCS (Admin) officers, selected by the Public Service Commission (PSC), some times are recruited in a bulk through irregular intervals. There was no impact assessment for the future of the irregular and huge recruitment of the BCS officers. There are resentments on the clumsy quota counting system, examination system, irregular interval, and 'recruitment politics'. There is no impact assessment of the provided training and practical implication in the service arena. Apart from the institutional training, on the job training is also invalid, since there is tenure guarantee. Foreign training has become the opportunist's property. Large perception holds that *tadbir* is the only tool that determines the promotion and placement and sometimes the tenure of posting which are also perceived as 'good' or 'dumped'. For promotion to the ranks of the DS and above, there is no competitive assessment system and many consider 'political blessings' as the ultimate solutions. There are indiscriminate practices of making OSDs. Performance evaluation through ACR has become 'an annual ritual of no practical significance'. The condition of pay is also poor, in comparison to the inflation rate and market price. There is no reward and Punishment system and innovation is not applauded. The study finds that career planning is dysfunctional in BCS (Admin) cadre that lacks leadership quality, vision and mission. It also notices that recently some creative efforts (e.g. PBES, Trainers' Pool, and e-filling system) have been initiated at MOE; however a proper career policy is a need of the time to make such efforts feasible.

It is expected that government will ensure need based recruitments through a regular calendar and carry out proper research on training, job assignments, competitive promotion policy, good incentive packages, and career ladders for all walks of staffs in the service. This study suggests a four level career plan framework for the BCS (Admin) officers. This will help creating an enabling atmosphere for efficient service delivery. If the proposed career planning system is politically agreed, BCS (Admin) officers will be able to function as citizen-oriented and valued catalysts of the republic.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Assistant Commissioner
ACAD	Advance Course on Administration and Development
ACR	Annual Confidential Report
AD	Assistant Director
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADP	Annual Development Programme
APD	Appointment, Posting and Deputation
AS	Assistant Secretary
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BCS	Bangladesh Civil Service
BCSAA	Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSR	Bangladesh Service Rules
CARC	Civil Administration Restoration Committee
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPT	Career Planning & Training
CR	Confidential Record
CSP	Civil Service of Pakistan
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DD	Deputy Director
DG	Director General
DM	District Magistrate
DS	Deputy Secretary

EPCS	East Pakistan Civil Service
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GOY	Government of Yukon (Local Government in Canada)
GSCR	Government Servant (Conduct) Rules
GSD&AR	Government Servant (Discipline & Appeal) Rules
HRM	Human Resource Management
HQs	Head Quarters
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
ICS	Indian Civil Service
IGS	Institute of Governance Studies
IMS	Industrial Management Service
JDS	Japanese Development Strategy
JS	Joint Secretary
LATC	Land Administration Training centre
LPR	Leave Preparatory to Retirement
MAT	Management at Top
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MLO	Martial Law Order
MLR	Martial Law Regulation
MOE	Ministry of Establishment
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MP	Member of Parliament
NDC	National Defense Course
NGO	Non Government Organization

NPC	National Pay Commission
OSD	Officer on Special Duty
OC	Officer in Charge (of a Police Station)
PACC	Public Administration Computer Centre
PAES	Public Administration Efficiency Study
PAO	Principal Accounting Officer
PARC	Public Administration Reform Commission
PASS	Public Administration Sector Study
PATC	Public Administration Training Centre
PATP	Public Administration Training Policy
PLR	Prescribe Leave Rules
PO	Presidential Order
PS	Private Secretary
PSC	Public Service Commission
PTE	Post Training Evaluation
RAB	Rapid Action Battalion
RDA	Rural Development Academy
RPP	Resource Persons Pool
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SAS	Senior Assistant Secretary
SDO	Sub Divisional Officer
SMP	Senior Management Pool
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
SP	Superintendent of Police
SRO	Statutory Regulatory Order
SSB	Superior Selection Board
SSC	Senior Staff Course
SSP	Senior Service Pool
UK	United Kingdom

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer (Sub District Executive Officer)
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

# CHAPTER 1

## SETTING THE BACKGROUND

*To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe.*

*- Anatole France (1844 – 1924), French Writer*

### 1.1 Introduction

Career planning is central to Human Resource Management (HRM) all over the world. Without a plan no goal is achieved and this is why persons in the public service need proper career design and management mechanisms to attain quality services for public satisfaction. Career planning is the process of making and implementing career decisions. When we say a career planning strategy for the civil service, we point out to a designed functional strategy to promote sound career decisions throughout the life of a career civil servant as required in a rapidly changing world. Bangladesh cannot be a solitary island in this respect. Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) is the core public service and civil affairs management body of the Republic. Particularly the BCS (Administration) cadre officers [hence forth BCS (Admin)] are vital among all 27 existing and functioning cadres. There is hardly any particular career planning strategy for the officers of this cadre. There are post-entry training systems and provisions of on the job training particularly at the junior level, but there is no policy specified for posting and placement reflecting the academic and training background of the officer. The job of BCS (Admin) officers are multidimensional irrespective of their posting place in the central administration, the local administration or posting on deputation in various capacities in public sector offices at home or abroad. Mainly discharging the function of coordinators, arguably, in most cases the success or failure of the government, especially at the local level, depends on this core generalist-cadre. When the government fails in any issue, people

blame that Civil Bureaucracy is inefficient. BCS (Admin) officers as a group face the music for the whole as if they are the only agent of bureaucracy, though there are other cadre and non cadre officers. There is another frequent allegation that BCS (Admin) officers lack professionalism and hence provide poor service delivery. On the other hand, there is a great deal of dissatisfaction among the civil servants regarding the poor pay structure and uncertain career path. Both aspects, of ultimate burden sharing and large dissatisfaction, make the situation difficult to attain citizens' services by the servants of the Republic. This study thus aims to examine the related existing rules and practices of civil service personnel management and tries to find out to what extent those practices support a suggestive career planning dynamics for the BCS (Admin) officers.

## **1.2 Background of the Problem Area**

Though career planning for the civil service management is vital, except in a few donor-driven reform-proposals, this essential aspect has not been given due importance for the civil service. Particularly for the BCS (Admin) officers, there has been no specific policy to deal with the matter. Other than some specific field offices, there are no precise criteria or focused policies for posting in central secretariat or departmental head offices or their subordinate offices: when and how a BCS (Admin) officer to be posted. For some training institutes, there are a few vague and arbitrary provisions - changing from time to time – that are ineffective in ensuring the posting of appropriate persons. In reality, there is no specific apex department for BCS (Admin) cadre officers. They can be posted to any where in the Class-1 general administration posts according to the salary-scale grades! But each post has its own characteristics and demands suggestive feedback from its stakeholders. During the time of posting, the educational and training background of the officer is hardly taken into consideration. Moreover the tenure is not strategy

bound. Sometimes officers are selected for the government sponsored scholarship programmes, for higher education abroad, mostly on discretionary basis. This creates dissatisfaction and unhealthy competition of *tadbir*<sup>1</sup> culture among the officers. Absence of career planning thus becomes a key hindrance from recruitment to promotion and posting prospects. The ultimate result is large-scale frustration, dissatisfaction and indifference among the officers, which affects the quality of their service.

### **1.3 Objectives and Research Questions**

This study has mainly two objectives: (i) To critically assess the career planning system of the BCS (Admin) cadre officers and (ii) To suggest some policy guidelines to develop an operational career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. To achieve the objectives, this study attempts to look into the following questions and tries to address them accordingly.

- a) What are the salient features of the present career planning of the BCS (Admin) Officers?
- b) What are the impediments to providing a career planning strategy and its impact on job satisfaction and service delivery?
- c) What are the issues to be emphasised in the career planning strategy?

### **1.4 Justification of the study**

This study will look into the functional characteristics of BCS (Admin) officers and impediments to providing specific career development strategy. An organized and need based career planning strategy helps the civil servants' capacity development in the service: entry, training, job specifications, posting and promotion prospects and none the less the post retirement benefit.

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadbir* literally means to pursue; but in the Public Service it connotes to pursuing for self-interest through political, financial or power-lobby influence to get a work done by the persons exercising public authority mostly violating the expected parity logic.

The body of civil servants as a whole is large, so are their functions. Because of time constraint and necessary limitations, the focus is made only on the BCS (Admin) officers since they play a pivotal role both in policy framing and implementation stages. From this study it is expected that some policy suggestions can be put forward which help in formulating a functional career planning system for the BCS (Admin) officers.

### **1.5 Methodology**

This study aims at exploring the practical situation of HRM aspect of career planning in the field level Administration and the central offices. For the purpose of the study no single methodology can be suggested. It will mainly base on response survey of the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. Accordingly the following three methods will be used here.

- a) Content analysis
- b) Interviews
- c) Case-study

The methodology largely used in this study is based on secondary data through content analysis of previous reform proposal reports, review of academic books and journals, and existing official rules and regulations related to BCS (Admin) officers. These are the major sources of secondary data.

The primary data are mainly relied on the interviews with 50 BCS (Admin) officers serving from 5 years to 25 years in the cadre, and expert opinions from 5 academicians and 3 ex-bureaucrats. These responses will be the main source of primary findings. There is also some real life experience learnt during the survey in the forms of cases to validate the study by exposing the ground reality.

## **1.6 Limitations**

The area of Civil Service Personnel management is vast and there are other cadres of the BCS and they have different aspects of career planning issues. But this study is limited to the career planning strategy of the BCS (Admin) officers. To complete an MA programme within a limited time frame, the study is aimed from a specific academic pursuit. Collected primary data are also limited and secondary sources are used frequently. In terms of secondary data scarcity of extensive academic materials and meager government documentation on the topic were drawbacks. Even in case of primary data, potential persons were not always ready to talk in view of the 'veil of secrecy' which pervades official activities in Bangladesh. Therefore, the study is qualitative in nature and it hardly utilises quantitative data.

## **1.7 Plan of Study and Structure**

After this introductory chapter which contains the background of the study, the second Chapter discusses the conceptual issues of career planning from both the public and private sector management giving a special emphasis on the functional aspect of the BCS (Admin); wherein a literature review reveals the concerned guidelines and existing efforts on career planning strategy for the said cadre officers. In the third Chapter, findings and case studies are incorporated while Chapter four analyses the data. Finally in Chapter five, conclusion is drawn followed by some recommendations posturing to a career development strategy for the BCS (Admin) officers.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONCEPTS AND ISSUES

*If you are planning for one year grow rice, if you are planning for twenty years grow trees, if you are planning for centuries grow human resources.* - Chinese Proverb

#### 2.1 Introduction

A career is the series of related jobs that a person does to sustain his or her life physically and psychologically (Clawson 1985: 165). Career planning is closely related to training and deployment policy and its management. This is also related to performance evaluation and future strategy for any HRM policy goal. In this case, we can make a clear distinction that application of HRM is sharply different in public sector from that of the private sector. This is evidently clear that the BCS officers are the public sector managers and some of the fashions and practices are similarly applicable for both the private and public sector managers. At the same time there are dissimilarities too. Before we go into that distinction, we may consider some of the concepts which relates to the idea of career planning in general.

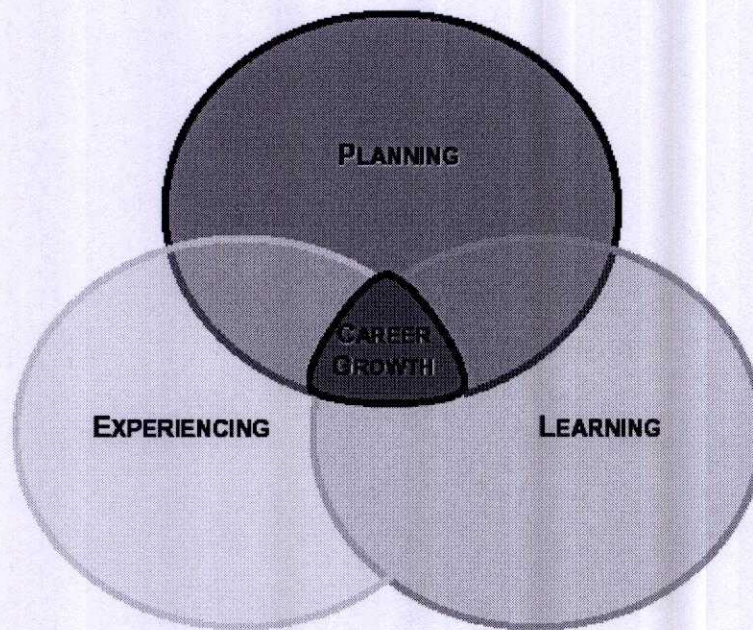
#### 2.2 Career Planning

The idea of the career planning is not new. If we go through the old books on monarchs and management of the states, we see lots of sermons and citations observed by the rulers. The ancient masters assumed that a king or governor must follow certain practices to become an ideal ruler. The word ideal has scopes of different interpretations: a war hero of a nation can hardly be

an ideal philanthropic to the defeated nation. Gradually the system of governing a state has changed and the market, more specifically the open and competitive market, has emerged as an influential element in the process of state actions. Today the state and the private sector are competitors and complementary to each other; and the government as the executive and functional agent of the state have to take the ultimate decision. The public sector managers, the Civil Servants, are the mandated catalysts who work for the State. From this perspective we need to assess the necessity of an organized and balanced personnel management system for the public servants.

On the other hand career growth is the result of on going planning, learning, and experiences that contribute to advancing individual and organizational goals. For career growth to fully occur, organizationally there are several conditions for success. Public Services Commissioner's Conference in 2006 of Yukon Local Government in Canada views the career growth through the following points (GOY: 2006).

- Individual Accountability
- Senior Leadership Support
- Ensuring Opportunities are Available and Known
- Alignment of Organizational Values
- Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities
- Systems are in place such as Performance Management and Learning and Development



**Figure-1: Career Growth within the Organization<sup>2</sup>**

Our issue is career planning, which needs the primary importance. If an organization fails to plan properly for HRM, it suffers severely. A glimpse on the perspectives of career planning in general will further restate the issue.

Clawson *et al* (1985) analyse career planning from sociological and psychological approaches. The occupational level achieved in career development is seen as the result of a social process. They have also viewed careers as movement from one occupational level to another within a structure stratified by status and by the occupational role expectations of a person in a given status. On the other hand, psychological perspective is seen through intrapsychic approach or seeing unconscious forces as influencing conscious decision making, where "... individuals are seen as testing themselves through interaction with their environment, weighing the factors and alternatives, then making conscious career choices" because a career

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Government of Yukon, Canada. 2006. *Public Service Commissioner's Report*

“consists of more than a job: it is a series of jobs that are related in some way” (Clawson et al 1985: 163-164). They also continue that there are also individual, organizational and occupational scopes to analyse career planning. The individual career is the most comprehensive term that we normally view regarding career prospect of a person’s choice or social state. But, the jobs one has in an organizational career vary in terms of their content rather than their affiliation. Occupational careers are career courses defined by a particular set of related tasks for which one is compensated. There are other two perspectives also: external and internal. Externals are observable characteristics of a person’s career – the salary, the title, the tasks assigned, the power wielded, the speed of promotion, and such elements. The internal perspective refers to a person’s subjective experiencing of a traversing of the career course and this internal view is distinct from and not necessarily parallel to the external view. This is why career development consists of gradual disclosure of the activities that internally and externally sustain an individual through life and naturally time is the central idea of career development and career shapes, the other dimensions are status, income and learning.

### **2.3 Career Planning in Public and Private Sectors**

Career planning is much more frequent and reviewed in the private sector than the public sector. In the public sector it is more rule bound and process oriented. In most cases, a number of private organizations formulate new career planning strategy to cope with the changing world and time. Being much more flexible to procedures and rules, the private sectors, reflecting learning organizations, constantly design and redesign their policy for customer satisfaction. They can regenerate better human capital for further advancement. The public sector on the other hand, is mostly process oriented and not a learning organization. When stands for competition, whatever products or services, the public sector mostly lags behind in quality and commitment. There are

debates regarding the extent of power that government should exercise or not, but regarding the necessity of the public sector managers' skill development for expected service delivery, there is no doubt. The question of comparison and competency comes forward when we talk about the HRM process. What or where is the difference?

Career planning in the private sector today is much more focused on the market orientation. From the very beginning, right from the need assessed recruitment through training, setting target, flexibility of functions and evaluation process managers in the private sectors develop their career in the organizations. There is also a culture of learning and unlearning and organizational values guide, shape and reshape the personnel geography there. The incentive package is competitive and the elevation layers are normally defined, so that the career journey is bench-marked. This readiness to go aspect is a major force in private sector HRM as a whole.

On the other hand, career planning in the public sector is a policy for better services with better staff. But in most cases, the government employees work by rotation and when their educational background, academic excellence or professional expertise does not receive due importance for deployment, both the service provider and the service recipients suffer for poor service qualities.

#### **2.4 Functional Aspect of BCS (Administration) Cadre Management**

BCS (Administration) cadre officers are one of the central 'elite' civil services responsible for both the central policy making process and field level implementation. They work both in the Central Secretariat and Head Quarters and at the Field Administration, complying with both the policy formulation and implementation process. They are generalist officials specialized in all overall management of the government machinery. From the point of view of a theoretician, a

generalist may be defined as a public servant who does not have a specialized background and is easily transferable to any department or branch of the government. A generalist has also been defined as a civil servant, who belongs to a managerial class and who is well versed in rules, regulations and procedures of administration and who generally performs POSDCORB (Planning, Organizing, Supervising, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting) functions (Arora 2006: 52). In the process, a management work itself becomes a specialization and a traditional generalist becomes a specialist. The BCS (Admin) officers are important because they play the pivotal role of field administration management through executive magistracy, land management and general coordination among all the functional agencies of the government. At the same time, officers of this cadre are working in the central Head Quarters or Secretariat as policy technicians and designers. They also work as managers, planners, trainers and facilitators in different capacities on deputation postings. The acronym POSDCORB perfectly fits for such group of civil servants. The tradition and core functions of this service and internal chemistry of its working canvases may be reviewed very briefly for addressing the core issues.

#### **2.4.1 Brief Background of the BCS and BCS (Admin) Service**

The BCS (Administration) cadre officers are successors of the 'elite' British colonial Indian Civil Service (ICS) [at present Indian Administrative Service (IAS)] and Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) [at present abolished and transformed as District Management Group (DMG)]. After independence of Bangladesh in 1971, civil service underwent some changes from 1972 through reorganization of the Civil Services and by amalgamation of the East Pakistan Civil Service (EPCS) and CSP, the new Civil Service came into being. This later on emerged as Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) and Administration cadre has become one of the 31 (at present

27) cadres after a 1978 reform initiative to equalize the civil services of the Republic. Particularly after 1982, after the *Upazila*<sup>3</sup> system was introduced, in addition to a large number of recruitment in BCS (Admin) starting posts, persons working in Class II posts in revenue department were absorbed unscreened into those *Upazila* posts by elevating them to Class I Admin cadre posts along with persons from the other non-cadre subordinate departments like Election Office and COSCOR. Later on the Industrial Management Service (IMS) of 1973 and Military Land and Cantonment Service officers with time seniority were also absorbed in the Admin Service and the BCS (Secretariat) cadre was merged with BCS (Admin) in 1992. Previously the ICS or the CSP officers were a small elite group, recruited on top merit basis, played the role of the supervising executives with total control over the field administration and acted as the ultimate policy counseling and preparing group for the political executives at the centre. Being a mixture of many breeds, The BCS (Admin) has lost that authoritative controlling power over all other cadres' functions and now the Admin officers have to negotiate and match up with the other departments, yet the burden of works and responsibilities particularly at the field level still fall on the Admin cadre officers. Some of the core functions of the present day may be examined now for understanding the importance of the officers of this cadre running the general administration in Bangladesh.

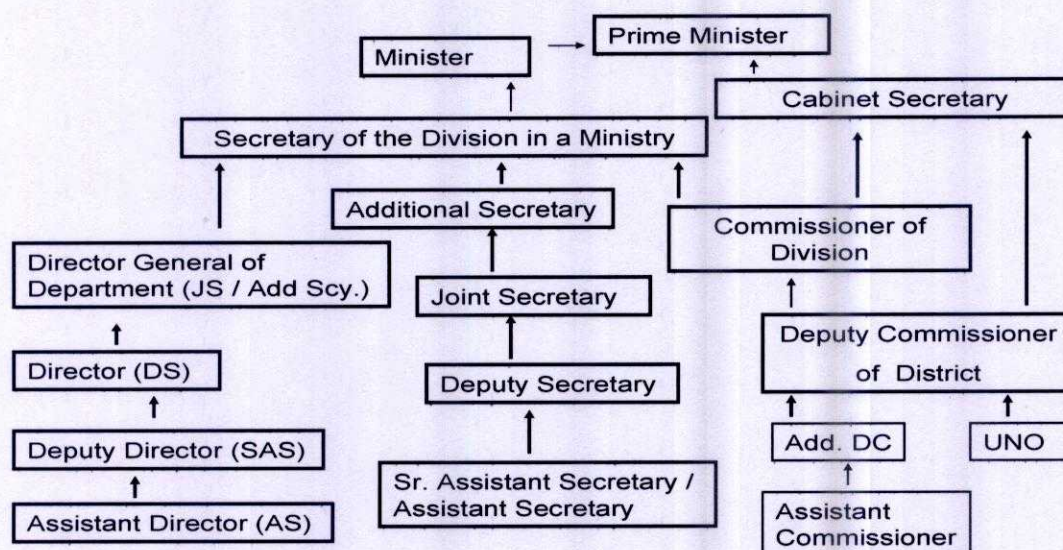
#### **2.4.2 Core Functions: Central and Field Administration**

The functions the BCS (Admin) are multi-faceted and sometimes complex. The officers of this cadre work in the field administration and at the central Secretariat and Head Quarters of different departments. Until recent times, the core functions of the BCS (Admin) cadre officers

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<sup>3</sup> Administrative sub-district

have rotated through the Magistracy, Revenue and Land management and to a greater scale a General Coordinating role among various agencies of the government in the field level.



**Figure-2: Interrelations in Ranks of Departments, Secretariat and Field Administration**

In Bangladesh practically District is the centre of all development activities. However, the *Upazila* system was created to decentralise public service, and the Government offices at the Divisions play mostly ‘ornamental supervisory’ roles. Among the BCS (Admin) Cadre officers in the field administration, Commissioner of a Division is the highest ranking officer.<sup>4</sup> This office mainly acts the chief authority of revenue administration in the Division and supervises the coordinating functions of the District Administration. There are number of officers starting from the rank of Assistant Commissioner (AC), Senior Assistant Commissioner (SAC), Director of Local Government (DS) and Additional Commissioner (a senior Deputy Secretary)<sup>5</sup> to assist

<sup>4</sup> Mostly with the rank of Joint Secretary to the government

<sup>5</sup> In Bangladesh, the highest rank in civil service is Secretary, and below that is Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Senior Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary. In BCS (Admin) an officer joins as Assistant Commissioner at the field level, but is known as Assistant Secretary when s/he works at the Secretariat.

the Commissioner in various functions. The schema below explains the positions and structure in BCS (Admin) cadre:

The District Administration is headed by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) who is also the Collector and the District Magistrate (DM) and a Deputy Secretary to the Government who represents the national government and acts a party in all suits and cases on behalf of the state. The DC as the DM is responsible to supervise and coordinate the law and order situation of the district, and as Collector, the chief revenue and land management authority in the district. Apart from these two greater parts, DC is also responsible for all sorts of coordination and monitoring regarding state security, civil defense, public safety, education, public examinations, disaster, relief and rehabilitation, food management, election, land acquisition, licenses, press and publication, transport and traffic, jail management, protocol, local government, social welfare and numerous similar functions in the field administration. For every function the DC, as the head of the Civil Administration, sends regular reports to the Cabinet Division and different Ministries and Head Quarters; on the other hand the central Ministries and all other departments also inform the DC about the government plans and actions set for the public purpose. In true sense DC is the chief manager of the district. For all these core functions there are different sections in the DC office and the DC is assisted by number of officers like Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADC), Senior Assistant Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and other clerical staffs. Newly recruited BCS (Admin) cadre officers, as probationer ACs, are placed under the supervision of a DC for their on-the-job training and initial grooming up for understanding 'something of everything' about the general administrative machinery of the government functions.

The *Upazila* Administration is supposed to be coordinated by an elected *Upazila* chairman, but as this local government institution is 'practically defunct' after 1991, the *Upazila Nirbahi* Officer (UNO) is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in function. He/ She also coordinates the 'similar functions like the DC in a smaller jurisdiction' in the *Upazila* and the UNO is assisted by various officers of different government agencies, where the AC Land belongs to the BCS (Admin) cadre. The UNO reports to the DC for various functions.

The BCS (Admin) officers are also posted in the field under other capacities too, which include Executive Officer and Estate Officer in the cantonment, CEOs in different Municipal councils and *Zila Parishads* (District Councils) and different posts in City Corporations and Settlement Departments. The Government may also send any Admin cadre officer on deputation to any of the government agencies in the field. Though the main function of the Admin officers is coordination which needs ample authority, for 'reducing the degree of authority to a larger extent from the Admin officers, presently the field administration suffers from coordination crisis. After November 1, 2007, separation of Judicial Magistracy from the executive, the role of field level BCS (Admin) officers must be redefined. Previously the importance of Magistracy was a binding force and impetus of coordination for more than a century.

Central Administration is mainly divided into two parts: Central Secretariat and Central Directorate of various departments or agencies which have their regional and link offices in the field level. In the Secretariat the ranks' hierarchy is: Assistant Secretary (AS) or Senior Assistant Secretary (SAS), Deputy Secretary (DS), Joint Secretary (JS) Additional Secretary and Secretary of the Ministry or a particular division of the Ministry. In the same way generally the hierarchy in the directorate or a training centre is: Assistant Director (AD = AS), Deputy Director (DD =

SAS), Director (=DS), Director General (DG = JS / Secretary). The head of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre is the Rector who is a secretary. All these posts are open for the Admin cadre officers as well as officers from other cadres, but usually officers from BCS (Admin) occupy those positions.

#### **2.4.3 Recruitments, Grooming and Existence**

BCS (Admin) officers are recruited by the government selected by Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC or PSC) through open examinations. Eligible graduates may apply for various Cadre Service posts of BCS 27 cadres. BCS (Admin) cadre officers serve both in the field and Secretariat administration. The first posting in this cadre is Assistant Commissioner (AC) in the DC office in District. The rank of AC is equivalent to that of the Assistant Secretary (AS) in the secretariat.

Training is essential to transform the individual into a creative agent. However public sector training is stated to be in a state of disequilibrium (Rashid 2008: 156). Bangladesh Public Service Training Centre (BPATC) is the apex training institution in Bangladesh. After completion of Foundation Training from BPATC and various on the job training like Treasury Training in DC office and Case Annotation in Judge's and Magistrate's Courts, passing PSC's departmental examinations with two years of satisfactory service, a probationer is confirmed in the service. Moreover there are other core trainings for the BCS (Admin) officers like Law and Administration from BCS (Admin) Academy (BCSAA), Land Management Course from Land Administration Training centre (LATC), Survey and Settlement Training by Directorate of Land Records, Military Orientation Course from the Army Training Directorate and Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA) and some other professional training like Financial Management, Personnel Management, ICT and Communicative English Language, Procurement and Planning,

and so on. Some of the trainings are designed for the mid level and senior level officers too; for instance Advance Course for Administration and Development (ACAD), Senior Staff Course (SSC), Managing at Top (MATT), National Defense Course (NDC) are designed for those senior officers in service.

Normally, after being confirmed in the service after two years the BCS (Admin) officers are posted as AC Land in an *Upazila*. After getting the senior scale, an AC is elevated as SAC or SAS. Then such officer can be posted as SAS or DD to the Secretariat or a central office or may be posted in the field administration as SAC or UNO or ADC depending on the seniority respectively. Senior posts higher than this stage, in the secretariat or departments, demand a rank of Deputy Secretary through promotion. For promotion to the ranks of the DS and above, there is no competitive assessment system and many consider 'political blessings' as the ultimate solutions for most cases. Same is the situation regarding posting and placement. Large perception holds that *tadbir* is the only tool that determines the placement and sometimes the tenure of posting which are also perceived as 'good' or 'dumped'. Many BCS (Admin) officers consider their placement in the training institutes as dumped posting (Rashid 2008: 155). On the other hand, for many tactful officers, 'good posting' means placement to those ministries or departments located in Dhaka that have scopes for independent transport facilities, huge procurement scopes for development projects or frequent foreign tours. For most cases capacity to perform with necessary physical or intellectual aptitude hardly matters.

The performance evaluation system is one way Annual Confidential Report (ACR), where the supervising officer evaluates the junior officer's general administrative and individual management capacity. The performance evaluation has become 'an annual ritual of no practical

significance' (Siddiqui 2003: 50) other than the promotion time, which is also an irregular process because of bulk number of junior posts to accommodate in the senior posts like DS and above rank. Moreover, as there is no 'parent department' for further promotion and Secretarial posts like DS, JS and above ranks are the 'natural line postings' for the BCS (Admin) officers. In contrary to this, the other cadre officers demand equal right to DS and above ranks in addition to their parent department posts. This has provoked a messy condition of cadre conflicts in Civil Administration. The present system of DS and above promotion is based on quota system for the Admin officers and officers from other cadres who may be placed as DS or JS by a complex calculation. Performance is not the basis of promotion in BCS (Admin) Cadre, only time length, seniority and previous ACRs without any adverse comments and with a particular grade is the precondition of promotion. However, in most cases political influence or the higher court's order are the two major reasons in senior level promotions with a few exceptions by administrative decisions. The condition of pay is also poor, in comparison to the inflation rate and market price. Siddiqui (2003: 49) also depicts that in 1996 top managers in the private sector got as much as six times of pay differentials compared to their Civil Service counterparts. On the other hand, the World Bank (1996) has reasonably stated that in Bangladesh the compensation system is characterised by 'equal pay for unequal tasks'.

#### **2.4.4 Where is a Career Planning Strategy?**

Career planning as a concerted concept is more or less absent or dysfunctional, if not unknown in BCS (Admin) Cadre. Though there are numerous efforts of reforms and numbers of reports by the Government it self and International Organisations like World Bank (WB), (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Department For International Development (DFID), the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and

many other national and international think tanks. The major features in all these reports are rotated through non political characteristics, clustering the ministries and some financial and administrative reorganization and decentralisation to various degrees. The major initiatives are listed in the following tables.

**Table-1: Commission and Committees formed by the Government of Bangladesh**

	<b>Name of commissions and Committees</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Main focus</b>
1	Administrative Reorganization Committee	1971	Organizational setup for the government after emergence of Bangladesh.
2	Administrative and Services Structure Reorganization Committee	1972	Service Structure
3	National Pay Commission	1972	Pay issues
4	Pay and Services Commissions	1977	Services Structures and Pay issues
5	Martial Law Committee for Examining organizational setup of Ministries / Divisions / Directorates and other organizations	1982	Organization and rationalization of manpower in the public sector organizations
6	Committee for administrative reform and reorganization	1982	Reorganization of District , Upazila and Field Level Administration
7	National pay commission	1984	Pay issues
8	Secretaries committees on administrative development	1985	Promotion Aspects
9	Special committee to review the Structure of Senior Service Pool	1985	Structure of Senior Service Pool (SSP)
10	Cabinet sub-committee	1987	Review of SSP and promotion aspects
11	Committee to Reexamine the necessity of keeping certain government offices in the light of changed circumstances	1989	Necessity assessment of some government departments and offices
12	National Pay Commission	1989	Pay issues
13	Commission for review of the structure of Local Government	1991	Structure of Local Government
14	National Pay Commission	1996	Pay issues
15	Administrative Reorganization Committee	1996	Structure and reorganization of manpower across Ministries / Departments / Directorates
16	Local Government Commission	1997	Strengthening of Local Government Institutions (LGIs)
17	Public Administration Reform Commission	2000	Improving transparency, efficiency, accountability, effectiveness of public administration and bringing institutional and procedural changes and service delivery to ensure Value for Money at all levels of administration in the light of NPM.
18	National Pay Commission	2004	Pay Issues
19	Local Government Commission	2007	Strengthening the LGIs

Source: Ali (2007) and CPT Wing of MOE

**Table-2: Reports prepared with the Assistance of Development Partners**

	<b>Name of the Report</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Agency Involved</b>	<b>Main Focus</b>
1	Public Administration Efficiency Studies	1989	USAID	Secretariat system , relationship between ministries , departments and corporations
2	Reports from Public Administration Sectors Study in Bangladesh	1993	UNDP	Public administration reform in the government with emphasis on certain specific areas
3	Towards better government in Bangladesh (four secretaries report)	1993	DFID	Administrative
4	Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector	1996	World Bank	Comprehensive , administrative reform, privatization, reduced levels of government
5	Local Government in Bangladesh: An agenda for governance	1996	UNDP	Local government issues
6	Taming the Leviathan: Reforming the Governance in Bangladesh	2002	World Bank	Size of public sector and loopholes
7	Public Administration Reform in Bangladesh	2004	UNDP	Civil service reform issues
8	Proposed Programme Loan and Technical Assistance Grant for the People's Republic of Bangladesh: Good Governance Programme	2007	ADB	Good Governance and Foreign Assistance

Source: Ali (2007) and CPT Wing of MOE

It is evident from these two tables that reform initiatives are multifaceted. Still the Civil Administration in Bangladesh is 'feeble, weak and anti people'. Ministry of Establishment (MOE) is responsible for personnel policy within the BCS and also has direct responsibility for a number of key HR and organisational management functions, particularly in relation to officers of BCS (Admin) cadre. Career Planning and Training (CPT) wing of MOE has been framed to look into the career matters of the BCS officers in general and the HRD related affairs of the BCS (Admin) officers in particular. Other than some paper works, the functions of CPT is yet to

be fully functionalised and the efforts of the CPT must be evaluated which can be another area of a wider research. Since the officers of BCS (Admin) occupy the largest portion in policy level and functional field administration, without a meaningful career planning it is impossible to improve the public sector service as a whole. On the other hand, a career planning strategy must be viewed through a systematic analytical framework to testify its validity in context of Bangladesh and it would be suggestive to review and relocate such a framework through existing literature.

## **2.5 Literature Review**

There are basically three types of literature available on Public Administration and HRM in the public sector of Bangladesh: historical perspective focuses evolution and development, restating the prescriptions by the internationally influential policy guides and official reports on Public Sector Reforms during various regimes. Honestly speaking, no comprehensive effort has been taken on career planning strategies for the public sector officials. There are some discrete initiatives on training issues, the impact is very little. The intellectual exercise on career planning for the BCS (Admin) has been a less focused arena for some unknown reasons.

Ali (2004) narrates the historical and political perspective of the Civil Service in Bangladesh. Rashid (2008) provides a good amount of information regarding the background of Civil Service in general and recruitment, training and performance assessment system of BCS (Admin) Cadre officers in particular. Ali (2007) has discussed mainly the management perspective of Civil Service in Bangladesh. He points out some policy reform agenda like recruitment, pay, deployment policy, career planning, training, disciplinary control, promotion and disposal of duties. The discussions are focused from the earlier reform efforts initiated by

previous commissions and committees. In the career planning part he emphasises on the clustering of ministries and deployment of officers accordingly. Yet the problem regarding the BCS (Administration) is not specially highlighted. In spite of the fact, this is the first book at least to sense the career planning part as a holistic approach for the BCS officers. Zafarullah and Khan (2005) view the civil service reform issue from academic point, where bureaucratic mind set is held responsible for a stereotyped administrative system in Bangladesh. There is hardly any policy suggestion practically viable for a concerted public sector career development strategy. Istiaq (2007) and Rahman (2006) have also discussed the necessity of reforms to bring in suggestive changes for good public services, yet they do not suggest any career planning in the BCS. Jahan (2006) and Siddiqui (2003) meticulously focus on the current state of the Civil Service efficiency levels in Bangladesh. Schiavo-Campo and Sundaram (2000) have elaborately discussed the public services issue in Asian Countries with ample examples from both developing and developed countries around the globe. To them government personnel management consists of four fundamental functions: planning, acquisition, development and sanction. Planning refers to the definition of personnel recruitments, jobs, and pay and benefits. Though they have mentioned that personnel management varies greatly because of government nature, still the notion they mention for planning is narrow: particularly the development functions have been kept separately out of planning functions. In a seminal essay Maor (1999) has discussed the paradox of public administrators' problems to counter political influence to secure the tenure. Following the World Bank (1996) Report, the Public Administration Reforms Commission (PARC) (2000) has suggested cluster system for smooth functioning of general administration in Bangladesh. Bakshi (2000) has focused on the political unwillingness and bureaucratic hindrance to the reform process of BCS and in this way lack of effective effort for any specific career path determination has never come to practice. Lack of a suggestive political

will is also discussed by Khan (2007) where he points out the bureaucratic mindset and immature political ideology to sense the effective use of a capable bureaucracy for efficient service delivery. In any case, none of the above works have dealt with career planning in detail, and in case of BCS (Admin) cadre no mentionable research and documentation have been carried out so far. In this respect, this study is going to break into new grounds.

## **2.6 Analytical Framework**

The existing literature only focuses on training and promotion prospects and mostly they have taken the generalist views for the BCS. No study has been initiated so far for a career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin.) cadre officers. Though the recruitment, promotion, placement and the hierarchy are there in BCS (Admin) cadre, the issue of career planning is unfocused for some of the aspects. This study aims at searching the other aspects of career planning which are presently absent in personnel management in BCS (Admin.) service and which affects the service delivery state largely.

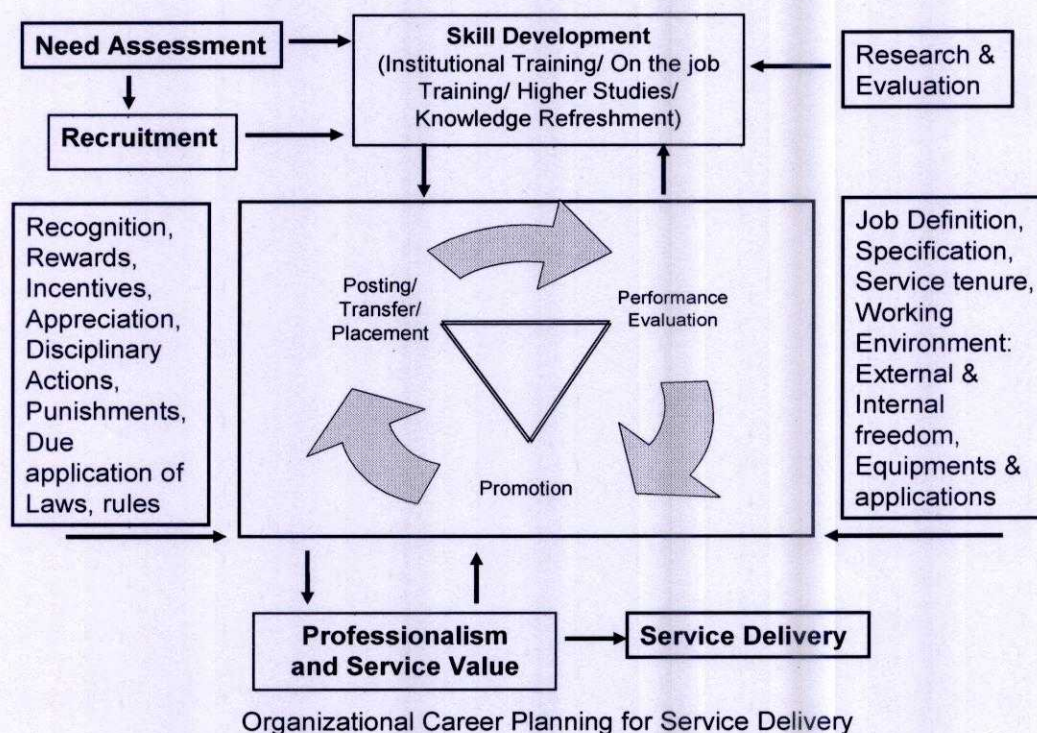
A sound career planning strategy has both short term and long term effect. Schein (1978: 200 – 202) argues that career planning must relate to certain kinds of matching activities which take into account the needs of the individual and as well as the organization. He points out four planning activities i.e. Planning for staffing, Planning for growth and development, Planning for leveling off and disengagement and Planning for replacement. Each of these planning activities generates a number of organisational processes which become the vehicles by which the organisational and individual needs are matched. Public Sector is a vast area, and as a generalist but a ‘specialist managerial’ cadre BCS (Admin) needs to analyse first the necessity of its service. Without such need assessment, any aimless recruitment process will add no value but

create definite problems in career mobility like postings, placement or promotion and ultimately hamper professional value to service delivery.

In this connection, need assessment is the first criteria to be recognised first for Career Planning Strategy. Following the need assessment of number and quality of new recruitment, the entrance examination would be determined. The next stage of skill development includes both 'on the job' and 'out of job' or institutional training at various levels in the service. Assessing the nature and managerial capacity stage of the job for the BCS (Admin) officers, higher studies and knowledge refreshment are necessary in career planning. Regular research and evaluation is the precondition of such initial step of a career planning for the BCS (Admin) officers. The next step is the service stage which includes posting or placement of the officer with specific assignment to be followed by performance evaluation, which will once again be the basis of promotion or higher responsibility with better incentives and compensation package and thus the circle continues.

This service step must be properly blanketed by two organisational and functional assurances in two broad categories. On the one side, there are recognitions, rewards, incentives, appreciation, disciplinary actions, punishments, and due application of rules and laws where a breach of such law can easily be challenged. On the other hand, the functional part consists of job definition and specification at every stage of progress, service tenure, working environment with external and external freedom and equipments and application assurance. Follow up of all these elements and with this framework promote a professional value which ultimately reflects in the service delivery stage. In this way both the organisational and individual engagement can help us understanding the career path for the BCS (Admin) officers. The schema below captures

the scope of this framework, which will be utilised to examine the existing scenario of career planning of BCS (Admin) cadre in this study:



**Figure-3: Analytical Framework of Career Planning**

## 2.7 Chapter Summary

The concepts and issues regarding career planning of BCS (Admin) officers are vital and indispensable. Though a defined career path and its functioning in personnel management are important, it has never been practiced through a concerted strategy. As a prime agent of the government BCS (Admin) must experience such a goal setting policy. Previously the reform efforts did search for the solution to make the civil service functional as a whole; still it has been 'the same lame duck'. The issues and concepts are reviewed in this study to critically assess whether they may focus to the analytical framework by blending the practical reality of

Bangladesh Administrative scenario. The responses and findings have been revealed through the responses and facts unfolded gradually by the next chapters.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESPONSES FROM THE SERVICE

*The difference between a job and a career is the difference between forty and sixty hours a week.*

- Robert Frost (1874 – 1963), American Poet

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Public servants must be aware of a career planning path focused neatly throughout the service motion. It has already been pointed out in the previous chapter that as a ‘specialist’ managerial cadre, BCS (Admin) officers should follow a cutting-edge personnel management system with tailor-made Acts and Rules. Responses from the survey depict a different picture uncomfortable to meet any ideal theory or practice. There are always gaps between existing rules and ground reality regarding personnel management. In this chapter the findings of the study show the poor personnel management condition and the case studies that follow also refrain the same tone. Unfocused and disconcerted personnel management makes the BCS (Admin) officers’ service path mostly uncertain.

#### **3.2 Findings**

From the interviews and personal contacts of both the serving and retired BCS (Admin) Officers and Some experts in this field it has been clear that there is no focused career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin) officers. Personnel management needs multi-level attentions to ensure a functional career planning strategy. So the necessity and importance of diverse issues have been

identified and emphasised differently by the respondents with some issues and problems very common from their experience. The findings are discussed by those identified aspects relating to career planning.

### **3.2.1 Provisions set in Rules and beyond**

BCS cadre officers are selected by the Public Service Commission (PSC) and appointed by the President of the Republic. This is the constitutional prerogative of the President that he will appoint and control the services of the Republic by laws promulgated in the parliament and until such laws are enacted the President, by issuing necessary rules and circulars, will continue the same. Unfortunately such a constitutional obligation of formulating and promulgating any act in the Parliament has not yet been observed. The top executives of the governments have issued the rules, indiscriminately and abruptly, time to time and 'governed' the Civil Officers. Aspects of some of these rules and orders may be reviewed very briefly to understand the practice and application of such instructions in practice for BCS (Admin) personnel management.

#### **3.2.1.1 Recruitment**

Recruitments to entry level Cadre posts are guided by the 'Civil Service Recruitments Rules, 1981'<sup>6</sup>. There is no definition of a 'cadre service' or a 'civil service' in this rule. The PSC selects the candidates through Advertisement and open examinations. From time to time, the entry examinations have under gone various forms and shapes regarding the quality and content of the process for the Cadre officers. Sometimes only *viva voce*, sometimes objective tests and *viva voce*, sometimes objective preliminary tests followed by written and psychological tests and *viva voce* were the basis of selection. The total marks for these tests and qualifying minimum marks

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<sup>6</sup> MOE, SRO NO. 1-1/81/ED (R II) R-70/80 dated January 1, 1981

also largely vary from time to time. In selecting the candidates, in addition to merit criteria, there are quota systems for each cadre that also follow a confusing and clumsy process to determine district, female, tribal and Freedom fighters (now their wards) quotas. The merit quota is 45 percent, while the rest 55 percent is filled by the candidates through quotas (10+10+5+30 = 55).

Moreover the BCS examinations, as it has seen from the previous years, are not held regularly. As a result, after long intervals the government appoints a bulk of officers in the same batch, which again create the career problem of the officers in future. There must a defined size of posts against which the new officers will be recruited so that they may assess a career goal to reach to a certain level of hierarch and that is also defined. Need assessed and planned recruitment is the precondition of a career design for the personnel management. The previous records show that there was no impact assessment for the future of the irregular and bulk recruitment of the BCS officers. The clumsy quota counting system, examination system, irregular interval, and 'recruitment politics' demands special attention for research.

Similar to other cadre officers, BCS (Admin) cadre officers are selected by the PSC and appointed by the President. Recruitment in the BCS (Admin) Cadre is largely a closed entry model. Though there is scope for other cadres to come into the Secretariat Positions for Administrative functions at the DS and JS level as lateral entry. In the open advertisement for combined BCS examination, there is no specific duty details for the BCS (Admin) officers. Neither is there any career path indication: where the person will go if complied with the necessary norms and conditions of the service. The advertisement informs only the name of the initial post 'Assistant Commissioner' and the number of posts to be recruited for that year/ batch. However the government has the final authority to decrease or increase the number of the post.

**Table-3: Number of BCS (Admin) and Secretariat Cadre (later merged into Admin)  
Appointed by batch and year**

Batch and Year of Examination	Joining Year	Officers Joined in Admin Cadre	Officers Joined in Secretariat Cadre
Freedom Fighter (Special) 1972	1973	403	58
Batch of 1971	1974	65	45
Non Freedom Fighter (Special) 1973	1977	44	21
Superior Service 1976 (exam held 1977)	1979	23	44
Superior Service 1979	1981	65	24
1st BCS 1982	1983	97	160
2 <sup>nd</sup> BCS (Upazila Magistrate) Special 1982	1983	597	-
5 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1984	1986	450	45
7 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1985	1988	546	45
8 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1986	1989	216	33
9 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1988-89	1991	50	71
10 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1989-90	1991	142	32
11 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1990-91	1993	219	-
13 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1991-92	1994	229	-
15 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1993	1995	125	-
17 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1995-96	1998	68	-
18 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1999-97	1999	96	-
20 <sup>th</sup> BCS 1998	2001	297	-
21 <sup>st</sup> BCS 1999	2003	194	-
22 <sup>nd</sup> BCS 2000	2003	289	-
24 <sup>th</sup> BCS 2003	2004	342	-
25 <sup>th</sup> BCS 2004	2006	199	-

**Note:** Only the relevant BCS (Admin) batches are included (excluding the rest special batches for other cadres) in the list<sup>7</sup>.

From this table it is evident that the difference in number per batch is beyond any planning for the officers' career path. It has been seen through the historical evolution of the Administrative cadre system (through ICS and CSP) that specific number of highly qualified persons were recruited through heavily competitive examinations system as generalist managers who would perform later executive functions like Magistracy, Land Management and general coordination

<sup>7</sup> Compiled from the data collected from New Appointment Section of MOE and PSC

among all the functional agencies of the government in the field administration and later in the Secretariat or central Directorate as policy mechanics to the political executives mandated by people to run the government. Their defined career path and promotion prospects led a considerable number of them to the highest post in the hierarchy i.e. Secretary. On the other hand, there were other non cadre and Class II officers at the *Thana*<sup>8</sup> level in subordinate administrative and revenue posts and also the EPCS Grade I officers. Each of the posts had different career paths to reach to a number of limited ranks in the Administrative hierarchy. This balance was rationally maintained throughout the service system during the Pakistan period. After the liberation of Bangladesh, the elite characteristics of 'a quality few' with well designed career path have been demolished by whole scale amalgamation of different stages of posts and a large number of latter recruitments without thinking the future promotion and deployment prospect of the 'bulk of officers' for whom quality examination and quality selection could not be ensured either.

We have seen in Chapter Two, that particularly after 1982, the introduction of *Upazila* (sub district) system created so many posts in the *Upazila* and made provision for four posts i.e. AC Finance, *Upazila* Magistrate, AC Land and UNO to be absorbed in and from the Admin Cadre. There was no career vision when such non-cadre or Class II *Thana* level subordinate posts were elevated to the cadre posts, hence lowering down the dignity of cadre posts, and the Cadre officers from BCS (Admin) were posted to those posts and their number increased more than the career capacity in the hierarchy. In this way the appointed four batches, i.e. 1982 (Special, joined in 1983), 1984 (joined in 1986), 1985 (joined in 1988), and 1986 (joined in 1989), accrued to 1809 persons in the rank of AS without thinking about the future career path of

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<sup>8</sup> Literally a Police Station, but a traditional administrative unit subordinate to a Sub Division, now upgraded as Upazilala.

these cadre officers. To add to the burden, persons working in Class II posts in revenue department were absorbed unscreened into those *Upazila* posts by elevating to Class I Administrative cadre posts along with persons from the other non cadre subordinate departments like election office and COSCOR and later the Industrial Management Service (IMS) of 1973 and Military Land and Cantonment Service officers with time seniority in the Admin Service.

Another important point is the educational and age background of the officers. Previously a first graduation was the minimum qualification for the CSP, both Class I and II of EPCS, or any cadre, non cadre Class I or II. But they differed in merit, examination systems, examination results, postings and subsequent grooming processes which helped and guided them to adopt into the organizational culture of each of the services. During the indiscriminate merger of different services from different levels and quality, the educational qualifications, training background, individual service capacity and age of officers created a peculiar dis-equilibrium in the Administrative Service environment of Bangladesh.

When the *Upazila* system was made nonfunctional after 1991, the posts of AC Finance and Upazila Magistrate became redundant. The officers of those posts were posted to the DC office as ACs thus miserably failing to set any career goal and service mission for the nation. Moreover, BCS (Secretariat) cadre was merged with BCS (Admin) in 1992, and officers of that cadre were posted to Field Administration. The whole personnel system of Administration Cadre, as a confusing panorama, has fallen into quagmire creating a national problem of 'career congestion' for those persons who, in reality, are the pivotal machinery of everyday functioning of the governance system. The subsequent batches after the 'elephant four' have been suffering in the same way regarding the future career paths. Unfortunately this crisis, often misperceived

as the cadre concern of only the BCS (Admin) officers, is yet to be sensed by the national policy masters and the civil society organisations who only advocate the Administrative Reforms following the models of other countries but not assessing the necessity of defining the vacancy posts and recruitment paradox existing within Civil Service of the country.

The wide variorum of numbers of recruiting the BCS (Admin) officers make the primary block in training design for the new entrants in the service. Most of the officers cannot be accommodated in the same batch of training, some of the officers first join the service without any training and after serving even for 3 to 4 years join the Foundation Training! The same thing happens with the other core trainings, which can be clarified through the training scenario.

### 3.2.1.2 Institutional Training

Institutional trainings provide the new entrants the basic ideas and norms of the service. Among the basic institutional trainings, there are at least four institutions imparting the courses for the BCS (Admin) cadre officer.

**Table-4: Common Institutional Training Courses for the New BCS (Admin) Officers**

Name of the Training	Institutes	Capacity per batch (Aprox)	Duration
Foundation (FTC) Including other cadres	BPATC	250	4 months
Law and Administration	BCSAA	50	5 months
Survey and Settlement	Dir. LR & Survey	50	8 weeks
Military Orientation (for the male officers)	BMA	99	6 weeks

Land Management	LATC	30	3 weeks
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Source: Ministry of Establishment 2008 *Biennial Report (2006-2007)*

The list is not comprehensive and there are other trainings aim to increase ‘professional skills’ that occasionally include BCS (Admin) officers in different categories without any concerted rule or principle, except in some cases which indicate 40 years as age bar. Such trainings include Personnel Management, Financial Management, ICT and Communicative English Language, Procurement and Planning, and so on. Some of the trainings are designed for the mid level and senior level too; for instance Advance Course for Administration and Development (ACAD), Senior Staff Course (SSC), Managing at the Top (MATT), National Defense Course (NDC) are designed for those senior officers in service. Question raised at this point is whether all the trainings are need-based and complied with the assessment of the present day. Do the officers know when they can join a designed training fixed for them? The fact reveals that there is lack of coordination among the training institutes, for this reason sometimes overlaps are common, sometimes old content and methodologies are not changed due to traditional attitudes of the ‘authority’.

In the prime training institutes for the BCS (Admin) Officers, for example the BPATC, BCSSA and LATC the criteria of the trainers are not fixed. BPATC has both the permanent staff-trainers and trainer-officers on deputation from BCS (Admin) Cadre; while both BCSSA and LATC mainly rely on deputed BCS (Admin) officers and guest speakers. What are the special criteria for the BCS (Admin) officers being deputed to these training institutes is not clearly explained anywhere. Whether the officer has the educational background in Agricultural Science, Electrical Engineering, English, Management, Public Administration or any other subject, there is hardly any difference. The variance is also evident in the length and experience

in the service. Though the CPT wing of MOE has taken initiative to create a Training Pool<sup>9</sup> comprised of officers having special skills in different fields eligible for posting in a training institute, it is yet to be finalised to put the effort into function. At the same time, the review process and need assessment of the course content of the training are stagnant and the training methodology or the contents are hardly subject to any change. For example the training course for the officers to be posted as UNOs may be conducted by the BPATC or the BCSAA. However in the course content, for example, ICT practice in the United States or WTO provisions for Flower Export have hardly any relevance to the practical situation in the *Upazilas* of Bangladesh. Moreover, such a training course must reflect the practical aspects, while there is no guarantee that those practical 'management techniques' will be taught by some body serving in the field administration.

On the other hand, in the course contents of such prime training institutes there is rarely any component that promotes the behaviour, attitude and humane aspects of the officers and the government agencies as a learning organization. The feedback system is also traditional: there is no impact assessment and correlation between the provided training and practical implication in the service arena. Moreover, there is no effort of the training courses conducted by the 'apex' training centre to guide how professional values, creativity, innovation, and leadership can help the BCS (Admin) Officers as generalist managers. These gap-areas in the training process have hardly been assessed or addressed which demand special investigation, research and supervision.

In most cases, training programmes designed for the BCS (Admin) officers are 'approved' by the MOE, which has no 'expert evaluation process' to assess those training

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<sup>9</sup> CPT Wing and its Career Planning section of MOE has been working on this since 2003.

contents and methods. Though there is a Public Administration Training Policy (PATP) formulated in 2003, and there is a wing in the ministry as Career Planning and Training (CPT), it can hardly work consistently simply because of the officers like SAS, DS, or JS of this wing do not enjoy the tenure guarantee by themselves.<sup>10</sup> Neither do they have any special criteria or qualifications fixed, to be posted in that wing. How can they make career planning for others when they do not have their own career planning? CPT wing is mainly responsible for training management of the BCS (Admin) officers. It is quite interesting that they do not possess an easily accessible data-base of the training records of the officers. Though there is a Public Administration Computer Centre (PACC) under the same wing of MOE, the officers of the training section of CPT hardly take the pain to check the PACC records. In most cases the records are not updated either. The simple thing they do is to ask the DCs or other controlling officers in the field administration whether there is any officer still left out of a particular training and such queries are frequent, even repeated, for the same training. Sometimes this creates loopholes for some field officers 'not willing at that moment' to go for a training. Sometimes DCs do not release the junior officers due to less number of officers in the field administration.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes officers themselves pursue to go for training when they are sick of the continuous and clumsy field work for long or when they feel that there is 'handsome training allowance' for a particular training. In this way, for most of the cases, the centralized selection system and irregular data usage generate irregularities in training.

### **3.2.1.3 On –the-Job Training**

On the job training is common for the probationer officers in hardly BCS (Admin) Cadre. Commonly at the DC office, where a new officer is posted as Assistant Commissioner (AC), he/

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<sup>10</sup> Feedback received from the CPT Wing of MOE

<sup>11</sup> Feedback received from the field during the study and personal experience.

she learns the office procedures, the works of different functional and executive departments in the district including the basic knowledge of magisterial and judicial activities from the senior officers working there. The learning is supposed to be practical and the Cabinet Division has clear directive for a two years' designed programme for the purpose.<sup>12</sup> But the reality reports a different picture. Since the appointment in BCS is not regular, so there is scarcity of officers for different sections of the DC office. After a long interval, when the new ACs join the DC office, naturally they are given charge of different sections vacant for long days. The matters vary from DC to DC; some take one week, some one month or some six months at best. With a few exceptions, this is the common picture for all 64 districts in Bangladesh.<sup>13</sup> Still every DC office reports to the Cabinet Division regularly about the officers' on the job training is 'properly provided' by the section officers. And it has been pointed out previously that there is no tenure guarantee that the officer will not be transferred before the designed two years' time.

Apart from this initial training for the probationer officers, the picture of on the job training in the other offices where a BCS (Admin) officer is deputed anew is worse. Those trainings are initiated mainly for the skills-development of the new appointee, but for the lack of tenure certainty, and for the mismatch of his/ her academic and previous training background with the new posting, the officer does not find interest in those short training in the department. However if any such offer comes for a foreign training, for a short course or for a degree or a diploma, most officers with some exceptions take that as an opportunity for earning money and pleasure trip to a foreign country.

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<sup>12</sup> Cabinet Division Memo No FASCT/ Seminar/ Training- 62 dated June 28, 2003

<sup>13</sup> Feedback received from the Field Administration.

### **3.2.1.4 Higher Studies and Foreign Training**

Some of the training courses are offered or conducted by some foreign training institutes. Sometimes the Government nominates or sponsors officers for a Higher Degree in a foreign Institute. The response received from the study is that in most cases officers posted in or near to Dhaka get privilege. The announcement for such courses are 'plotted and preplanned' and revealed through the web-page or sent to the DCs at the last moment, when it is almost impossible from the field to prepare all the necessary papers to apply within the deadline. Even if the application reaches the Ministry, following all the procedure 'through proper channel' most of the selection procedures are discretionary, depending on the officer's personal relation and influence over the nominating authority. There is no provision or set rule<sup>14</sup> to be followed strictly in practice considering the incumbent's educational qualification and need assessment of the job nature reflected and exposed through the place and nature of work the officer is assigned to perform. There are evidences that some 'privileged persons' frequently go abroad on different occasions, and the selecting authority do not find any other alternative other than those 'few competent officers' and most BCS (Admin) officers working in the field level largely feel that this attitude of the MOE does not add any value to the career development strategy of the Admin officers.

### **3.2.1.5 Promotion**

Ideally in the Civil Service system seniority, merit and adherence to rules of conduct or good conduct are the three basic elements. In the BCS (Admin) cadre seniority is a general principle to be followed largely. At the same time records of satisfactory service is reflective through Annual

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<sup>14</sup> Though there is a Circular of MOE NO. FT-80/ 92 dated August 29, 1992 which provides the Committee on foreign scholarships the selection procedures. But if the information reaches to the field officers so late, how can they apply? This circular does not say any thing on the announcement procedure of such information; hence it has been a centralised system.

Confidential Report (ACR) from the supervising officers. But how far the major aspect of merit and creative performance can be judged through the ACR system which is a one way, one person and one annual event? This issue will be discussed a little later. Now the types and prospects of promotion in practice may be looked into. For the BCS officers Ali (2007: 159) describes that there are three ways of promotion:

- Promotion to Senior positions within the cadre;
- Promotion to various Secretariat positions from the level of Deputy Secretary and above;  
and
- Promotion to the Senior Scale Cadre Officer.

Promotion to Senior Scale is the first stage for the BCS (Admin) Officers in the rank of Assistant Secretary (AS) who serve as junior scale cadre officers. After successful completion of five years with service confirmation and passed the senior scale examination<sup>15</sup> conducted by BPSC, an AC/ AS is eligible to be promoted to the senior scale. In reality MOE takes more than Five years for such promotion even if an officer has completed all the criteria in time and there are evidence that such an initial promotion takes 9 years after all the precondition was completed by the officers.<sup>16</sup> In most cases the Confidential Records (CR) section does not prepare the readiness list in time, and when the MOE decision comes for this promotion the CR section asks the junior officers that why there ACRs for the previous years have not been reached to the CR section in time! In this way the first promotion process creates a pessimistic idea about the uncertain future career path among the junior officers.

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<sup>15</sup> Legal framework for the examination is guided by BCS (Examination for Promotion) Rules, 1986

<sup>16</sup> This study finds evidence that 100 officers of the 13<sup>th</sup> batch of BCS (Admin) got their first promotion to Senior Scale after 9 years of service as AS/ AC (1994 – 2003).

Though the initial promotion of the BCS (Admin) officers needs a written examination, there is no provision of any written examination for promotion to the post of DS and gradually JS, Additional Secretary and Secretary. Only there is a Superior Selection Board (SSB) headed by the Cabinet Secretary and the only criterion is the previous records of ACR and the *viva* with the committee. Recent provision shows that there is a 100 marks scheme<sup>17</sup> where 25 for educational qualification, 30 for average of last five years ACR, 25 for average of entire career ACR except last five years, 10 for without any negative remark and 10 for no punishment in the entire career. But *viva* is a great factor here, and previously there were so many secret rules and provisions that changed frequently every regime to promote some ‘politically favoured and loyal’ officers. And there are instances that number of writ petitions filed in the High Court for judicial relief from such ‘step-mother like attitudes’ by the Government to some ‘unfortunate officers deprived of justice’. Sometimes promotions to DS and JS are sanctioned on political grounds more than the number of existing higher posts. In such situations some officers are made OSDs for long or ‘set *in situ*’ in the previous post where the service is embarrassing for the newly promoted officers for two main reasons: such OSDs are officers without portfolio and the *in situ* officers are blocking the post of juniors and there is ‘promotion jam’ throughout the Admin Service for the effect.

**Table-5: Batch wise First promotion to Senior Scale and Time Gap**

Batch	Joining Year	Promotion Year	Expected time	Time Spent	Remarks
10th	1991	1999 - 2001	5 years	8 years	3 intervals
11th	1993	2001	5 years	8 years	
13th	1994	2001 - 2003	5 years	7 – 9 years	3 intervals
15th	1995	2003	5 years	8 years	
17th	1998	2003	5 years	5 years	
18th	1999	2004	5 years	5 years	
20th	2001	2006	5 years	5 years	

Source: APD Wing of MOE

<sup>17</sup> MOE’s notification on June 11, 2002

For the BCS (Admin) officers until recent times, there has been 75 percent quota for DS, and 70 percent for both JS and Additional Secretary posts through promotion, and the rest others are filled by other cadres<sup>18</sup>. But a recent judgement by the High Court observed that such 'discrimination among all other BCS cadres' is unlawful since the quota system fails to maintain equality principle. So BCS (Admin) officers are still uncertain about the number of future promotion for them because there is no parent department for them like rest other cadres where they have a sharp hierarchy for promotion within the own department. Following the 'equality principle' and violating the 'equity principle' if the posts for the DS are opened for all cadres and under that system the BCS (Admin) officers can only be promoted up to the Senior Assistant Secretary (SAS) in the departmental hierarchy. After that to be promoted as DS they will have to compete for an imbalanced but common examination with all other cadre officers, when the other officers will have alternative promotion prospects within their own departments. Another reference may be relevant here to restate the promotion prospect of the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. In December 1985, the government constituted a committee led by the then Navy Chief Rear Admiral Sultan Ahmed. The committee worked out the promotion prospect of various cadres in the policy desired Senior Service Pool (SSP) and this committee in its report in 1986 shows that among the existing the then 27 cadres the promotion prospect of Foreign Service is the highest (52%) where the same for the Administration Cadre is the lowest (0.9%)<sup>19</sup>. How far the situation has improved to day is another interesting and important area of research. But in reality the matter is yet to be decided and within this uncertain service canvas how can the BCS (Admin) officers plan their career for future to create professional value?

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<sup>18</sup> MOE, Notification NO. EM/SA-4/ 2-1/ 94 )Part2)/ 29 dated February 10, 1998

<sup>19</sup> Admiral Sultan Committee Report, 1986, p. 21 , cited in Ali(2007: 171)

**Table-6: Batch wise Promotion to DS and Time Gap**

Batch	Joining Year	Expected Time	Promotion Year	Time Spent	Remarks
1st BCS (1982)	1983	10 years	2000	17 years	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Special BCS (1982)	1983	10 years	2000 & 2001	17 years	
5 <sup>th</sup> BCS (1984)	1986	10 years	2003 & 2005	17 years	
7 <sup>th</sup> BCS (1985)	1988	10 years	2006 & 2007	18 years	
8 <sup>th</sup> BCS (1989)	1989	10 years	2007	18 years	
9 <sup>th</sup> BCS (1989)	1991	10 years	2007	16 years	
10 <sup>th</sup> BCS (1989-90)	1991	10 years			Yet to be promoted

*Note:* There are 4 more batches (namely 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>) of BCS (Admin) Officers who are already waiting to be promoted as DS.

Source: APD Wing, of MOE.

### 3.2.1.6 Tenure and Transfer

BCS (Admin) officers do not enjoy a tenure guarantee though there is a general provision for a three years stay in a post. The provision of 3 years' tenure is a continuation of previous East Pakistan Government Circular in 1962<sup>20</sup> and this circular reads that the Class I officers shall be assigned for 3 years. But in practice such stipulated period has never been followed accordingly. By political or personal influence or by any form of *tadbir*, the tenure of BCS (Admin) officers is never fixed to achieve a target.

<sup>20</sup> Government of East Pakistan, Service and General Administration Department (S&GAD) Order No. IC-23/ 62, dated May 31, 1962

These officers are placed for a post by government orders. Other than the junior scale posts (AS/ AC) in the field administration, all other postings from the rank of SAS and above are 'administered' centrally by MOE. Though the vital field level posts like UNOs, DCs or Commissioners of Divisions should have 'an expected tenure' of two or three years, this study has observed a gross anomaly of such provision. Except a few examples, until the recent past (1991 – 2006) tenure of an UNO or a DC has largely depended on the political satisfaction of the MPs of the ruling party or the local chairpersons of the ruling party in that administrative jurisdiction. There is no legal protection of the tenure and the BCS (Admin) officers are vulnerable to force and sudden transferring at any time even by 24 hours notice. There are reports of indiscriminate mass transfer during the regime change of the government whether political or caretaker. Under these circumstances how far a target oriented or a particular programme can expect a viable result when the key officers of such projects do feel uncertain of their stay in the office?

The dilemma is even more severe for the junior officers like ACs in the DC office or in the *Upazila* Land Office. Initially after recruitment in the BCS (Admin) cadre, a new officer is posted to a Division which is not his/ her 'home Division'. It is expected that the new officer will attend all the institutional training courses from that office and also experience on the job trainings under the supervision of a DC and other senior officers in the District and gradually be confirmed in the service. The logic seems to be supportive for a career planning at the initial level of service. This study finds that by any way, even before two years, the 'probationer officers' are able to pursue and 'manage' transfer and postings else where out side the Division through an order from the MOE: because they are subject to dual control for transferring by the MOE and the Commissioner of the Division. Sometimes it has been observed that at a time an Assistant Commissioner has received two transfer orders, one from the MOE stating a transfer to

another Division, the other is from the Commissioner of the same Division under whose jurisdiction his present DC office is. Reports from the field show that there are many examples of such uncertain tenures.

The anomalies are evident in other places too. BCS (Admin) officers may be posted, directly or by deputation, to a Ministry in the central Secretariat, Directorate, Training Institutes or to any specialized agency like RAB or BDR under different capacities. Though in these postings the job specification is more specific than the field level posting, there is no certainty that the BCS (Admin) officers serving in the post will continue in the assigned post for a planned period whether on deputation or on regular duty. The posts of SAS or DS are always 'fragile' in the sense that they may be transferred from one ministry to another ministry or even if within the MOE, from one section to another section or branch irrespective their work experience, professional efficiency or educational background.

The inconsistent transfer policy and practice is evident in each sphere of the Administrative hierarchy: for the Secretary, Commissioner, DC, ADC, UNO, AC (Land) or any BCS (Admin) officer in the service. More over, for the 'imperfect and unconvincing' practice of transfer, most of the Admin officers, particularly from the DS and rank below, are prone to *tadbir* culture to avoid the hazard of postings far away from Dhaka for familial and personal reasons like education of children, work of spouse, support of better Medicare and other centralized urban facilities. This 'pursuing tension' creates unhealthy competition among them sometimes for an over stay in a particular post or to transfer to a place 'of comparative advantage', or for withdrawal from a field post or an uncomfortable 'dumping ground' like a training institute, and so on. Under such uncertainty and 'first come first served' manipulating

situation, BCS (Admin) officers cannot set any career goal neatly supporting the duties and responsibilities assigned to them.

### **3.2.1 Placement and Assignments**

The assigned duties and responsibilities of the BCS (Admin) officers vary depending largely on their posting and placement. In very limited places they have reflection of their academic background and trainings for the assigned jobs and duties. The BCS (Admin) officers are posted to field administration, central secretariat, or else where in any department or special agency or a training institute by direct posting or by deputation order or even placed to a Foreign Embassy for certain duty posts. Each post has its own characteristics and therefore attracts special skills and knowledge, and after a targeted period the posted officer earns a kind of expertise and experience which should guide his/ her future career path. This principle can be seen through the deployment scene in practice.

The issue of deployment, policies and management and how they work in practice, has not found much attention from researchers. Ali (2007: 79) has pointed out three reasons in this regard. The deployment of civil servants is normally viewed as a routine activity of government. Next, access to information is difficult and finally when the information is available it is difficult to find out the right document out of numerous government circulars and memoranda issued from time to time, mostly uncoordinated to each other. What is the principle behind such placement? The Answer to this question is difficult to simplify, and this study finds that hardly the academic background or training background of the officer has taken into consideration while placing an officer to a special section or department. So it is very common that an officer with post-graduation in Bio-Science may be placed in the Religious Affairs ministry, on the

In the Field Administration the situation is special in the sense that the field officers are generalist-coordinators and discharge executive functions for the Republic. But in the training centres and elsewhere in the deputation postings, which require special skills and experience, mostly the norm is violated because of indistinct rules and ill practice of *tadbir* and nepotism or manipulation. After posting, sometimes the BCS officers are oriented with the 'on the job training' and some of them can adopt the essence of the department or the training centres after a certain period. There is no guarantee that by the time the officer attained certain skills, will not be transferred immediately to another department or office which needs a completely different types of knowledge or skill! In this way a BCS (Admin) officer having academic background in Islamic History currently posted in BPATC as a Deputy Director (DD) teaching Public Sector Budget Planning, which is a technical skill he may have attained by two years through on the job or by a foreign training, may have been transferred to the Narcotics Department as a DD to supervise the Chemical Intoxication of Alcoholic drinks! No wonder, after five months he may be posted as the labour officer to a Bangladesh foreign mission abroad!<sup>21</sup> In this way from the very beginning, and gradually by steps, it has become almost impossible for an officer in BCS (Admin) Cadre to plan a service career for the future by avoiding the 'blind flow of humdrum tradition' of the present day.

### 3.2.3 Special Duty

As a generalist cadre the BCS (Admin) officers are always ready to follow the government orders on special duty. But special duties in Bangladesh vary largely, sometimes the intension of

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<sup>21</sup> Possibility assessed by real experiences of the BCS (Admin) officers learnt during the study; only the posting places and the posts are changed to hide the identity of the officers.

### 3.2.3.1 OSD on Purpose

Sometimes officers are sent for scholarship schemes for higher studies for a degree or diploma. Such a study scheme may be a programme by local university or a foreign university or institute. According to a circular of MOE, officers under such programmes will be OSDs during the study period, if the study period is longer than three months<sup>22</sup>. Other than this provision, officers are also made OSDs immediately after a promotion to higher post or returning from deputation to a regular duty post for the next posting. This purposeful system sharply contrasts with the bad practice having mal-intention to humiliate or harass an officer 'not in the good book of the authority' for various reasons.

### 3.2.3.2 OSD as Inactive Service

Posting an officer an OSD is an administrative decision but during the recent past, making OSDs due to political consideration has been a much talked issue not only in the Administrative arena but also in the news media. When an officer does not comply with the wish of the 'authority' he/she is made an OSD and attached to the MOE without any portfolio. A little portion of such inactive postings are made when there is an allegation of an 'offence' having scope to be defined through the rules of conduct<sup>23</sup>, such officer may be made an OSD. In doing so the 'satisfaction and decision' of the 'authority' is final even if any formal charge is yet to be instituted. At this point the officer has no scope to set any appeal against the decision other than personal persuasion or *tadbir* by a lobby; and a large number of officers normally follow this common

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<sup>22</sup> MOE Memo NO. FT- 12/ 90-382 dated May 05, 1994

<sup>23</sup> The Government Servants (Conduct) Rules, 1979

‘power house within the government’ or its local agents. Being posted as an OSD for an uncertain long period seems to be living a socially humiliating life to an officer and it creates credibility crisis which leads to decreasing the morale and confidence level of an officer’s professional value and performance of public service. Undoubtedly such instances make other officers, peers or other colleagues in the service, cautious against any service norm. Under such a situation ‘desired political neutrality’ is impossible and career planning is far fetched idea.

### **3.2.4 Performance Evaluation**

Performance evaluation in BCS (Admin) is similar to the other government agencies, one way evaluation by the supervising officer hardly reflecting any achievement of the ‘assigned targets’, but of personal relations. The evaluation processes are exposed into two ways here, through an Annual Confidential Report (ACR) and job rotation within the office or branch.

#### **3.2.4.1 ACR**

Performance evaluation has direct link with career growth and ideally evaluation system is the mirror of shortcomings or achievement of a person’s set target. In the present evaluation system for the BCS (Admin) officers, like all other Cadre Officers, nothing such is reflected. The classification of rating in ACR is shown in the following table:

**Table-7: Classification of Rating the ACR**

<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
95 – 100	85 – 94	61 – 84	41 – 60	40 and below

Source: Prescribed ACR Form for Class I Gazetted officers

the basis of general nature of work and competence of the officer in terms of disposal of business. Personality of the officer is assessed in the fifth while part six relates to recommendations and brief remarks that include need for further training, reputation, honesty and special qualification of the officer if any. Part seven relates to comments and counter signing by the head of the department or the official head of the ministry and the last part (i.e. eighth) is for the official use of the CR section of the MOE which is the ultimate destination of the ACR by February each year.

Unfortunately in very few cases the bad performances are honestly evaluated, and in most cases ACR rating scores depend on the personal relation of the officer with the supervising officers. 'Good ACR' is the precondition, though not a guarantee, for promotion and the officers try to 'satisfy the senior officer' who has this tantalising tool within the grip to command the officer that leads in most of the cases some unfair deals<sup>24</sup>. There are reports from the field that at the end of a year the best time to submit the ACR is when the supervising officer is in 'good mood', otherwise it is better to wait for the 'congenial moment'. The supervising officers also hardly bother about the deadline of submitting the ACR of the juniors to the next higher authority.

On the other hand, there is hardly any example that the CR section MOE has regularly provided necessary reminders to the controlling officers if the ACRs are not submitted to MOE in time. Moreover if there is a good comment or any recommendation of an officer's capability

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<sup>24</sup> Based on the responses from the field and personal experience

incomplete item is identified, mostly after a long period or by chance or by an intentional report from any corner, the CR section generally calls the evaluated officer for explanation. How far the responsibilities of the evaluating officer of a confidential report are shifted to the evaluated officer is a question of logic. When such an explanation letter reaches to the evaluated officer, for example after 3 years, it is a far cry and hazard for him or her to reach to the ex-supervising officer, may be in retirement or in a foreign country then, and get the old ACR 'signed, corrected or amended as necessary'. A confidential evaluation system that does not ensure any direct impact to improve the quality of performance can hardly meet the career development strategy of BCS (Admin) officers.

#### **3.2.4.2 Job Rotation**

The newly appointed officer in BCS (Admin) Cadre first joins at the DC office where he or she is supposed to learn the Field Administration as a probationer AC. While in the DC office, the ACs work for different sections through the delegated authority of the DC on Magisterial, Executive or Revenue matters; DC himself is the chief manager. Their works rotates through the district administration. On the other hand when they are posted as SAS or DS in the ministry they have stipulated tasks of the desk basically transmitting the policy decision or sometimes sanctioning of government's decisions and such works vary depending on the task of the ministry. The important point is to note here is that both in the field administration, in divisional Commissioner's office or at the DC or the UNO office the BCS (Admin) officers are dependent on the class III staffs or clerks believed to the 'living memory'. The rotation system of the class III staffs is very uncommon in the Secretariat. On the other hand, at the DC or UNO office staffs

poor. Since officers are frequently transferred from one office to another, and to distant location and mode of work, sometimes of higher rank, they cannot remember every project taken by that particular section or job specific branch. Naturally the 'permanent' class III staffs are the sole reliance, whether you like or not. Moreover they have strong unions, closely related to political alliance, and so they act as pressure groups on the ruling party as a whole. The BCS officer, posted there with responsibility, virtually cannot control or command the office. In this way job rotation cannot find expected results in public service delivery, other than adding a kind of 'stale and passive experience' for the officer. The same thing happens in the directorates and other local government institutions where the officer can go through a deputation posting.

#### **3.2.4.3 Rewards and Punishments**

Rewards for good performance and punishment for bad performance is a general principle. Such principles should be clearly written and any violation or breach may be placed before a justice system. In the existing service system there is no such direct reward system rather it is reminded every now and then the officer is a 'servant for 24 hours'. Even the heads of the offices hardly bother to issue a letter of appreciation to encourage a young officer for better performance in future. Like wise bad performances are hardly scoured, and even if through the long and time consuming process of departmental proceeding a punishment is awarded, for the procedural mistakes and loopholes of legal process the convict becomes free by the appellate authority.

some of the BCS (Admin) officers enjoy peons and other staffs as personal assistants and a vehicle while assume an independent office like the UNO or the DC. But in most of the cases they have to manage their own arrangement and transport for everyday living. The pay increases through promotion or time scale, but such a progress is very slow, slower than the speedy race of the market.

Though the BCS officers are cadre officers, there is no difference of the pay scale with other non cadre Class I officers of the government. Moreover, there is no salary system on the basis of Consumer Price Index (CPI). Sometimes the government set Pay Commissions in irregular intervals and doing research after six months or so when they submit the report, the government hardly pays attention to the inflation rate or to the market. Instead it only allows a kind of unrealistic pay scale of 22 grades starting lowest at Tk. 2400/- to the highest at Tk. 23000/- (fixed) which is the current rate from July 1, 2005. This almost ten times salary difference is unrealistic. The BCS (Admin) officers start the salary at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Tk. 6800/- and gradually reaches by four years to Tk. 9000/- per month as the selection grade officer. SAS level starts at Tk. 11000/- where as the DS and JS starting scales are Tk. 13750/- and Tk. 16800/- respectively. Pointing to the unrealistic and impossible pay structure Ali (2007:72-75) has cited from WB (1996) and calculated that comparing the salary of 1962 the pay of a Joint Secretary would be Tk 1,99,300/- in 1996 if maintained by the increasing salary based on CPI.

The post retirement benefit is the monthly pension and gratuity for the total service life. The rate is also very poor, 80 percent of the last (at the time of retirement) basic salary at best.

situations, the officers search in for the alternatives. Some adopt unfair means; some seek alternative jobs in private sectors or international organizations for better salary keeping lien from the service for a fixed period. Sometimes BCS (Admin) officers go for private tuitions or coaching in English, Mathematics or other science subjects at their homes.

Sometimes attending seminars or trainings abroad earn good money. Postings to a training centre also attract some, for having opportunities as a guest lecturer in a nearby training centre during 'off sessions'. Sometimes officers do engage in share market business mostly in different identity, because the rules of conduct for the officers do not permit such alternative income.

### **3.2.6 Guarding the Administrative Service**

Legal framework for the BCS (Admin) is the constitution that says that the Parliament shall enact a law to regulate the services of the Republic. Nothing such happened, and the President, by the advice of the government, issues circulars and rules, either to reorganise, some say to 'disorganise' the civil service, sometimes to increase pay and a little financial benefits. The most interesting thing is all the disciplinary rules or ordinances were promulgated by the military or non representative governments. No government has taken initiative to plan a suggestive Civil Service Act or Rules framed there under. This has provided scopes of anomaly, scopes of the court's intervention to the binding service decisions on the government and making the service structure a mess. A list of legal papers relating to the BCS (Admin) is given at the appendix.

People join the civil service, in spite of all the constraints of financial and infrastructural poverty. For the BCS (Admin) Cadre, leadership is the ultimate flow, just after the political leaders. This allurements for leadership in the development process of the country is identified as the major impetus behind joining the Admin service for most of the officers, this study has investigated. This leadership is the precondition of professionalism. In true sense the political leaders represent the people and the Admin officers are their aid in policy implementation following the set rule reflecting neutrality. The BCS officers are supposed to be brought up as generalist specialist through working in the field administration. Moreover the exercise of magistracy could provide them the expected insight that they may apply in future while drafting or thinking of a policy for people. In this connection the seniors are the natural mentors. Though the immediate seniors should nurture the service value and love for the people and service, the roles of the Heads of the field offices, Heads of Directorates, the Establishment Secretary and above all the Cabinet Secretary are important in this respect.

In most cases, as this study has found, the field officers like the DC and the Commissioner of the Division have scopes to guide the juniors in service values and ethics no less important in the career planning process. However the moral boost up is not more than 50% according to the feedback received from the field. The ADCs cannot boost up the juniors, because at the very beginning of the service and long before the probation period is ended, the ACs become very busy with individual section. The Heads of the Departments, on the other hand, are very busy with the assigned works. Juniors, with rare exceptions, have very little scopes to learn directly from the senior most 'boss' of the office. Instead the juniors learn by

Other than the organizational capacity, knowledge management should be the motivating force, particularly for the current flow intellectual and technical knowledge. Having sound knowledge on concepts of modern governance system, socio-economic conditions of the country and the region, the global geo-political and environmental situation and thoughts of development and analysis of multicultural relations are needs of the day. The majority responses from the field level show that a little amount of the field officers have such knowledge capacity. In most of the institutional training, ICT is very common. But there is little scope for application in the field administration, only for some offices computers act as an alternative to typewriters that the office staffs use. In this way the management of information is still paper based, which most of the time gets lost and people become prey of those 'scheme oriented staffs', leaving the responsibility on the BCS (Admin) officers. On the other hand, when most officers serve in the 'anti knowledge' field administration, a considerable number of them create vacuum in exploring academic learning. When they face any fairly English spoken person or pronouncing Bengali by themselves, it is a shaky condition. They thus lack confidence which again go against a thoughtful career goal for future service.

The roles of the Establishment secretary and the Cabinet Secretary must be reviewed and there are larger scopes for greater research. Since the Cabinet secretary is the 'secretary of secretaries' and virtually the guardian of all the Civil Servants of the Republic and a replicable character as an Administrative Leader. In recent times, we do not find any pivotal role of the cabinet secretary in Civil Service Management other than presiding over some formal meetings.

and the HR manager of the BCS (Admin) officers. Without his or her visionary leadership and strong commitment Civil Administration can never be a committed agency for the people. The personality, appearance, leadership and quality of command of the Establishment Secretary transmit throughout the Administrative service.

### **3.2.8 Association of the Administrative Service**

The collective bargaining is very poor in BCS (Admin) service. Though there is an Association called Bangladesh Administrative Association (BSA), there is rarely any evidence that this organization follows or practices any democracy while selecting the representatives. The feedback received from the field is mostly negative about the central organization of the BCS (Admin) officers. Though in the Career Planning Process, bargaining agency or professional association is not directly relevant, but as result of professional dynamics such organization would emerge naturally. In case of the UK or other Civil services, such organizations promote the interests of the professionals and upheld the interest of people. In the case of the BSA, it has not reached to the expected level of trust of the stakeholders staying inside or out side. This aspect also keeps scopes for wide research in future.

### **3.3 Case Studies**

The findings can show that the BCS (Admin) officers do suffer for uncertain career goals. The following case studies reflect the same tales. For reasonable grounds the names and posting places and the postings are changed in the following cases. These stories tell the reality of

**Case One**

Mr. Rahman (not the real name) served in the BCS (Admin) for 26 years. He joined the service in 1973 and posted at different positions throughout the country. He retired as JS, though he could not assume an office, just a week before his forced retirement in the decade of nineties, he was 'promoted ornamentally'. When he entered the service it was a war ravaged country. With a patriotic feeling and a new zeal, he entered the service. There is no single spot in his service life, and his academic background in Economics was very sound. He could speak and write well, and had his chance to become a Secretary. Mr. Rahman did not know the cause of his forced retirement, but anticipated some of his strong stands against political ill motive of one of his junior colleagues.

**Case Two**

Mr. Zakir (not the real name) is new officer in BCS (Admin). He is an UNO posted to a southern district. During his 14 years of service, he was never posted to his home division in Rajshahi. During the last 10 years, he served in the costal *Upazilas* first as AC Land and next as UNO. As a student of English from Dhaka University, he once wished to be a trainer at BPATC, but never got a chance for a posting near to Dhaka. Now he has no vision for the service. He stays alone in the UNO's Quarter. His wife and only son occasionally come to visit him, as he has little chance to visit them. His wife is a Government primary school teacher, and she too stays with Zakir's parents. He considers him as a bad husband and a poor father.

joined the service. She is very new, just serving as an AC Land in a remote *Upazila* in Northern Bangladesh. She is willing to go abroad for a higher study on scholarship, but as there is no internet facility, she cannot apply for any. All the scholarship notices reach there late or at the last moments when sending application before the deadline is next to impossible. On the other hand, her little kid can rarely find any source of merrymaking there. Her husband, an officer in a private company in Rajshahi, visits her at the week end. At present she is anxious about her kid's unusual but irregular fever, she does not have any medical specialist there. Moreover, she is currently in charge of the UNO who is in a short training in Dhaka for two months. She plans to take a leave, but cannot get permission until the UNO comes back. Where do you want to see yourself in the service after 10 years? She answers with an utter ignorance, that she is not even sure of the future of the Administrative service in Bangladesh.

#### **Case Four**

Ms. Kusum (not the real name) has been in the BCS (Admin) Service for the last 10 years. She was never posted outside Dhaka city except the initial one year to a nearby district. Since long she is serving in the secretariat and in different offices on deputation. She tries to attend almost all the foreign trainings and trips she can avail for her. She maintains good relations with influential persons, administrative or political. She narrates that since there is no clear cut policy for such short training, it's better to convince the concerned persons to take such 'opportunities'. For short courses there is no academic pressure, on the other hand, foreign trips earn good money. She loves to be in Dhaka by any means. "What do you do, if the government orders you for a transfer posting outside Dhaka?" "It's simple, I'll convince the appropriate authority that I am fit for the Dhaka offices only; even if I am posted to a remote or a nearby *Upazila*, I'll be

more than seven or eight months, I'll be able to come back to Dhaka from the Field Postings. In Admin Cadre you need to be *tactful*" she adds.

#### **Case Five**

Mr. Tinku (not the real name) is a DS at present. He has his educational background in a Biological Science subject from Dhaka University. He was never placed in a post that may be related to his specialization. For his long service life of almost 20 years, he has occupied 15 posts in the field administration and central secretariat and on deputation at the local government institutions, autonomous bodies and training centres. 'I was never given a chance to develop any expertise in any of a particular field. Sometimes I thought to leave the job, while I was made an OSD for more than five months without knowing the reasons. While serving as a law-bound senior Magistrate, one of my decisions went against a ruling political leader. He complained against me for favouring the other political parties. The MOE did not bother to probe into the matter since the allegation came from a powerful corner. I was asked to join the MOE as an OSD. After five months when one of my friends, who is a businessman in Chittagong, heard my story and made arrangement of my posting to a Local Government body. Though this *Upazila* level posting was a bit of humiliating for me, I accepted that to get rid off the OSD curse. There is no career planning policy in BCS (Admin) and the MOE has no vision as a learning organization.' he adds.

#### **Case Six**

Mr Robin (not the real name) has served as an UNO in a North-Eastern *Upazila*. While narrating his experience as an AC probationer in a Northern District, he says the story of the DC supposed

*Upazila*. While traveling with him I came to know that he was going to buy a cow that the UNO of that *Upazila* has already made an arrangement. We reached to that market, and the DC saw the cow, a healthy domestic cattle. However the price was quite higher than the estimate. He did not buy that animal; instead we went to the UNO's residence to have our lunch. While coming back after the meal suddenly the DC saw a cow standing in the UNO's backyard. The DC asked the UNO about its owner and the subordinate officer answered that the cow belonged to his wife. The DC immediately asked the UNO to send the cow to his official bungalow at the District head quarters and suggested the UNO to buy another cow for his wife. As a subordinate officer, the UNO was obliged to send the animal free of cost to his boss.' Mr. Robin also narrates that this was the kind of mentor he got as a probationer officer. He also narrates the DC was also known for his notoriety as a money monger and bribe-taker. He did not hesitate to snatch money forcefully from the applicant willing to get a license for a cinema hall or a jeweler's shop or any such permit. Hardly had he cared for any shyness in front of the junior officers or other colleagues.

### **3.4 Chapter Summary**

How then is the career planning managed in the BCS (Admin) cadre? There is no conscious attempt at career planning and management and the career planning is pre-determined by the career pyramid of the cadre up to a certain level. For the BCS (Admin) there is a set career path consisting of various posts that are organized both vertically and horizontally in the field and head quarters offices. The vertical mobility is caused by promotion and the horizontal mobility is by deployment in equivalent positions in the headquarters or to another field office. From the

nation. Almost all the components of career dynamics are not focused in the BCS (Admin) career path and the field responses consider the career journey of this cadre is uncertain. Such uncertain agency can never provide quality service for the people. The next chapter will reveal the institutional efforts and analyses the data to validate whether the facts relate to fiction of career planning programme by the Government.

*There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and of comfortable inactions. All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talents.*

- John F. Kennedy (1917 -1963), the US President

### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapters reflect the background and the issues of career planning prospects in BCS (Admin) cadre. It has been evident that the Cadre suffers seriously from a concerted career strategy from an organisational point of view, as seen in this study from the feed back from the service and the cadre officers in the field and central administration. On the other hand, the response from the offices and records are no far different from the reactions, most importantly the rules do not find ways for parity applications. In this chapter the functions and feedback from the CPT wing, and particularly of the career planning section, will be initially discussed. The remaining part of the chapter will analyse the survey results in the light of the findings.

### **4.2 Reviewing the CPT Wing of MOE**

A new wing- Career Planning and Training (CPT) was formed in the Ministry of Establishment in 2003. CPT is one of the six Wings in the MOE and a JS supervises its functions and programmes. The Wing comprises of broadly 2 branches (Career Planning and Training) and 6 functioning sections and one Public Administration Computer Centre (PACC). The core function of this Wing is HR planning for all BCS officers in general and for the BCS Admin officers in

DS, the study got the following feedback regarding the major functions of the Career Planning Branch.

**HRM Committee:** This committee was formed in August, 2007 for some specific objectives in mind. The working group of this committee first met to formulate draft of some important draft documents essential for the civil service in Bangladesh. The agenda included particularly (i) Public Service Ordinance, (ii) Promotion Rules for the Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, and the Secretaries, (iii) Transfer, Posting and Placement Policy, (iv) Career planning, and (v) Reform in the Field Administration. The Additional Secretary would convene this committee. Other members are Joint Secretaries of Establishment Ministry (CPT, and APD), Cabinet Division and Land Ministry.

**Resource Persons Pool:** MOE has taken initiative to constitute a Resource Persons Pool (RPP) following paragraph 8.3 of the Public Administration Training Policy (PATP), 2003. Previously CPT wing had asked for applications from the interested persons willing to be included in the RPP. An evaluation board examined the performance of some promising officers through August 2008 and out of 75 candidates, 58 have been recommended by the evaluation board. In addition to that, 5 secretaries and 6 Additional Secretaries were also included in the pool as a special case. Moreover all the secretaries to the Government, ex officio, would be included into the RPP.

**Performance Based Evaluation System (PBES):** A pilot project has been taken at the CPT Wing of MOE and DC's Office, Narshingdi to introduce assignments and accomplishment

### **4.3 Analysis of the Responses and Findings**

Though the MOE looks institutionally sound in respect of its 'polished' policies, the responses from the clients - both the citizens and public servants - are quite different from the institutional expectations. In spite of all the programmed reports and written policies, practices in reality are almost near to the opposite. From direct interviews, structured questionnaires and case studies, the present study has received the responses from the officers keeping career planning at the centre point. The following analysis is the result of those views that begin with recruitment at first.

#### **4.3.1 Recruitment**

Among the respondents, 80 percent opined that the recruitment for the BCS does not comply with the need assessed recruitment policy. Particularly for the BCS (Admin), the number of recruitment is uncertain. What is the basis of determining the vacant posts is a big riddle. There are too many vacant posts in the field level and these posts should not exist for the cadre officials. An uncertain number of recruitment against some uncertain vacancies marks an uncertain journey into the career path from the very beginning. A cumbersome quota system has made the process more critical. Moreover, there is no specific career description written in the recruitment advertisement. The quality and method of recruitment examination is 'reproduction type' not the 'analytical type'. Moreover, no specific test is taken for the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. Since the PSC is asked 'to fill in the blanks' for a particular number of candidates, the policy of 'ability of the candidates' is compromised with the 'availability of candidates'. As a

service with undefined jobs and aims.

#### **4.3.2 Assignments and Placement**

Since there is no job description in the career path of the BCS (Admin) officers, from the very beginning the officers become 'dependent variables' from the very beginning. 'What the boss says or may say or expected to say' is the primary concern for many officers. Among the respondents, 70 percent think that under the present situation independent and creative thinking has less importance in the present state of the civil service. 75 percent of them think that political masters enjoy this kind of loyalty of 'boss-cheering' public servants. Among them 85 percent think that persuasion has become the only tool for a desired posting. This is why many public servants do not hesitate to approach political leaders, or politically influential leaders of various professional groups to get one desired placement or posting.

#### **4.3.3 Grooming in the Organizational Culture and Professional Values**

Among the respondents, 82 percent think that grooming in the BCS (Admin) cadre is defective. They consider that other than some theoretical knowledge, institutional and on-the-job training has less value if compared with the practical picture of 'managing the administration'. 65 percent of the respondents feel that absence of a focused job description and uncertain job specifications has created an atmosphere of aimless destination, as if echoing the statement of the rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland* - 'if you do not have the destination, the road will take you there'. Hence no professional value supports the officers. On the other hand, hardly any officer owns the organisation or the organisational command. In effect, day-by-day the persons in this service are

#### **4.3.4 Performance and Services to People**

In reality, there is no specific job for the BCS (Admin) cadre in general. Their assignments are counted against a post and on the gravity of the place of the post. This is why they are not credited for any specific service. 90 percent of the respondents think that performance measurement through the existing ACR system does not reflect anything but mostly the bossing and maintenance of personal good relations with the superior authority. Since there is no specific target, there is no competition for the excellence or improvement of quality services to the citizens. In this way 85 percent respondents think that Citizen Charters shown by various offices have become the paper products only, without any significant value to the public. As far as the MOE is concerned, 80 percent of the respondents consider Citizen Charter has no significance here. Most of the officers have to pay 'something extra' to the subordinate staffs of the sections to 'move the files' may be for example- rest and recreation leave or any study leave, a deputation or a lien order, an investigation or enquiry information or any such matter that can be translated as 'a service'. Responsibility has become a fussy question to everybody, at least when the question of shouldering comes ahead.

#### **4.3.5 Rewards and Punishments**

BCS (Admin) by default is a regulated service. There are strict rules to punish the Officers violating the codes of conduct. 78 percent of the respondents point out that only the punishment rules cannot ensure pro-active services. They support the idea of a comprehensive reward and punishment policy that will be followed without any discretion. 85 percent comment that in

2002 Promotion Policy for the DS and above is defective and weak, because of its frequently changing nature on educational and ACR scores. In absence of a Civil Service Law, the circulars have become the only source of regulating or deregulating the Civil Service. Under such unfocused job condition, a suggestive career planning is impossible; think 78 percent of the respondents.

#### **4.3.6 Meeting Point for the Horizontal and Vertical Mobility**

In Central Secretariat and Field Administration, the BCS (Admin) officers have to work with the Class II and Class III officials who have almost no mobility for transfer and very little scope for promotion to an immediate higher post. As far as the field administration is concerned, such Class III staffs are recruited only considering the quota system, and not considering the merit principle. 60 percent of the respondents think that under these circumstances, if these staffs are reluctant to help the Class I BCS (Admin) officers (that is the usual picture), in which case hardly any stern can be taken. But for all the immediate and accomplished services the BCS (Admin) officers are held usually responsible, but in reality who is practically a helpless person very much scared of ACR and future 'bad posting' or becoming OSD for an uncertain period. 70 percent of the respondents consider that these staffs do not feel happy being blocked in the same posts for decades and more. They point out that if a considerable number of them (by scrutinising their ability and performance through systematic rules) could be absorbed into the mainstream service regularly, they would feel encouraged to perform in a better way. Such system must be defined through rules and some initial Admin Cadre posts may be offered to among best of them.

As a regulated service, the BCS (Admin) officers cannot directly involve into politics. However they stay very close to the political masters as policy mechanics at the centre and executives to implement policies in the field. Risk of political vulnerability is higher for these officers. But the important aspect of professional neutrality is lost while in most cases the supervising political authority considers the officers as their personal staffs. On the other hand, such officers also get accustomed to be treated in the similar vein. 90 percent of the respondents think that this nexus is obvious for a representative democracy, but in context of Bangladesh this nexus has toxic effects in respect of distorting the professional values among the BCS (Admin) officers. In addition to that, for the lack of a clear chain of command, the class III and class IV employees act as independent entities by virtue of their strong links with political parties and Collective Bargaining Agent politics. In reality, two third of the administrative jobs are delivered to the end users by the class III employees who are in the block posts. One third (or less than that) of Class I BCS (Admin) officers can hardly bring any change unless the subordinate staffs cooperate with this corps. In this way an enabling capacity to 'manage' the subordinate staffs has become another headache for the cadre officers.

#### **4.3.7 Service Structure, Service Supports and Welfare Aspects**

Among the respondents, 80 percent think that the organisational structure of BCS (Admin) service is illogical, because it does not support a balanced ratio of the top posts and entry-level posts. In addition to that, in the field level the logistic support is insufficient, and there are indiscriminate budget cuts even for the necessary and most urgent heads. 70 percent respondents consider that the field officers are able to manage their offices locally as the buildings and office yards are mostly unplanned. 80 percent respondents say that the allocated rooms for the sections

headed by a Joint Secretary, it will be easier for the officers to quickly move files. On the other hand, allocation for the stationery is insufficient. For example, the quality of photocopy in the field offices and particularly at the MOE is mostly messy. Use of computer is limited to typewriting only. Though the CPT Wing of the Ministry is trying to introduce e-filing system with files tracking mechanism, it is still in the process of 'under consideration'<sup>25</sup>. For the absence of a practical and replicable data management and e-filing system the officers are dependent mostly on the Class II and Class III staffs who act as 'living memories' in the office. 78 percent respondents point out that in this way, the BCS (Admin) officers lack support from the organisational system, culture and technology; and in consequence appear as inefficient and ineffective to the general people.

Ideally just after the entry to the service, particularly at posting place, the officers must be provided at least with residential, medical, official movement and children's education facilities that can be considered as 'minimum' facilities for living a sane life. This may be considered as welfare aspect in the service. 75 percent of the respondents think that welfare has hardly any place for the BCS (Admin) officers. They consider that the little amount (for example, Tk 500/- for Class I officers) government provides as the Medical Allowance is funny and ridiculous comparing to the present market price. Moreover, they do not get any specialised medical support through government system for themselves and their family members. Any special treatment causes additional cost that is not reflected in the welfare aspect of these officers. Residential facility at the government quarters in Dhaka city depends on the influence and

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<sup>25</sup> Feedback received from the CPT Wing of the MOE during study.

creates discrimination among the colleagues. They also consider that under such situation, children's education, either in Dhaka or at the field posting, is 'no guarantee option' for the officers. When such minimum necessity is 'uncertain' during the career path, what better services can be expected from a Public Servant? Only personal commitment to serve the nation is a noble wish that does not always go with the reality of the existing standard of live they live in the society.

#### **4.3.8 Gaps in Theory and Practice**

There is good number of papers and documents in the MOE to establish some 'management excellence' mostly funded by projects from donors. In this context, 95 percent of the respondents say that such papers or policies are for the library and office records only, because the ultimate say in the MoE is the politics of the *master's words* not the policies. In this way, 92 percent of the respondents consider that career planning for the BCS (Admin) officers cannot be implemented unless those policies are results of political will and are put into legally binding documents. And for that a civil service law is a must. They consider that a defined Civil Service Act and Rules issued under such law can protect the Civil Service of the Republic and also can help maintaining a systematic and transparent Public Personnel Management for the whole nation.

#### **4.4 Chapter Summary**

The nature and practice of any Public Service always depend on the practical situation and political will of the nation. The theories of Public Administration and Public Personnel

Act. During this time since its independence in 1971, Bangladesh Civil Service is functioning mostly through circulars and rules. The MOE, which is officially responsible for the HRM policies and programmes, can hardly introduce any positive change that can qualify the service improvement status for the people. Rather the MOE and officers serving under it are more accustomed to discharging routine duties following the previous examples and citations. Though in recent times, some creative and new efforts have been initiated, for example at the CPT Wing for e-filling system, but change management takes a long time in this organisation. The District and *Upazila* offices, in the field administration, follow the traditional and anti change mentality of the centre. Since the nation lacks a focused Civil Service Law and up-to-date rules, the whole HRM system and programmes including the recruitment, assignments and placements, training, grooming in the organizational culture, their performance evaluation and appraisal, rewards and penalty, support services and political neutrality are defective and the respondents mostly consider that the present state of HRM situation for the BCS (Admin) is a problem by itself. The next chapter will conclude this study considering some issues as recommending factors and a new framework for a Public Sector Career Planning policy that can be considered while thinking a Career Planning Policy for the BCS (Admin) officers.

*You must be the Change you wish to see in the world.*

- M. K. Gandhi (1869 – 1948)

## **5.1 Introduction**

The study has explored the practical reality and service condition of the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. The feedback and facts revealed through the course of survey is not exciting to reflect a ray of hope for a positive public service situation in Bangladesh. The BCS (Admin) Cadre officers are facing lots of problems that include poor and unplanned recruitment and less motivational grooming, uncomfortable service environment, no harmonious service concord, traditional mind-set and most importantly lack of quality leadership to mentor and monitor the Administrative service. However it is essential for the nation to develop and stabilize a functional managerial generalist cadre that should prepare a true, people oriented and service bound managerial corps of the government. To become so, proper need assessment is necessary as to whether the state really needs a functional and an enable managerial Administrative Cadre with ample capacity and coordinating power. From this point of understanding the state needs to ensure an achievable career planning strategy that will focus the necessity and capacity building of the BCS (Admin) Cadre to be flourished and nourished in the pursuit of service goals of the officers- which would ultimately be translated into national goals through service to the people and preparation and implementation of pro-active national policies. This chapter aims to suggest

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The services provided by cadre officers are important for the nation. Since the BCS (Admin) cadre members gather experience through diversified assignments and responsibilities, they need proper planning both from the organizational as well as personal capacities. It is the ultimate responsibility of the state to create an enabling atmosphere where a new officer can visualise his/her career goal with personal development in learning and serving. They should know why do they exist in the service and what are their responsibilities to the nation. On the other hand, the nation must understand the necessity of such a managerial core group specialised and capable of discharging the public affairs and stay above all political debates and party interests. As far as career planning is concerned, the following points are placed for further consideration to make the services of BCS (Admin) Cadre officers a better reality.

### **5.2.1 Research and Need Assessment**

The recruitment process must be reviewed in the light of modern world. It must be assessed what the other countries are doing and what best practices are replicable for Bangladesh reality in this respect. PSC must be given with more autonomy for selecting the candidates in terms of merit judgement, and for all these functions there must be clear and focused rules so that everybody can have access and understanding of those rules. The advertisement for each post must be specific; at the same time, a general career path, future trainings, compulsions and responsibilities against the advertised post, pay and total welfare package must be described in that widely circulated public announcement. The candidate must have a choice to comply with

The time of selection process and recruitment tests must be designed through an annual calendar. At the same time, the number of officers to be recruited each year must be fixed (preferably NOT more than two digit numbers) and such limited numbers will help the HRM activities of MOE to initiate programmes accordingly on internal grooming, institutional and on the job trainings, placement, assigning responsibilities assessing their personal capacities, and elevating the professional values. This is why a continuous research on BCS (Admin) career paths and designing and reshaping the whole HRM process must be anchored by the MOE so that they may ask the PSC and the Training Institutes respectively to select and groom up the officers fit for the Civil Administration to a desired efficiency level.

### **5.2.2 Training and Grooming**

When the recruitment process is accomplished maintaining the personal goal and institutional design, the grooming and training of the officers become easier. As it has been observed in Chapter Two, in the manual photographic process the figures taken into snaps gradually become distinct on the art paper; so is the Career Development process. A designed recruitment and pre-planned grooming scheme (including professional, technological, philosophical and social knowledge) gradually converts a new entrant into a skilled manager. This is why the training branch of the MOE must ensure a time bound and job-oriented BCS (Admin) Service training policy. Such initiatives must also follow a regular training calendar, so that every officer in a group can be brought under a systematic scheme to attain expected professional goals. This branch should ensure also the Post Training Evaluation (PTE) and maintain proper database for

of trainee officers must be sent for attachment for a specific period to a foreign mission of Bangladesh and to an international/ multinational company for exposures in better negotiation skills, business orientation and innovative practices. This period must be included into their probation time and assessment and evaluation of such attachments would be reflected in the training results. Regular research and need assessment for the training and grooming aspects are also necessary for enhancing the HR quality in the Civil Service.

### **5.2.3 Defining Cadre and Departmental Posts for the BCS (Admin) Service**

BCS (Admin) cadre has no apex department and such cadre officers permeate throughout the Civil Administration of the State. They have their presence of various capacities by direct placement or by deputation in different Ministries, Directorates and Departments, Autonomous Bodies and Statutory Organisations where they perform administrative and policy functions according to the needs of the organisation or agency. If the career mobility can be ensured to a limited extent for the Class III and Class II staffs, it will be easier to maintain a balance between the top and the base of service pyramid. In this context, MOE may review the idea of introducing Junior Grade Administrative Service that will start from Class III status and gradually through promotion process, those staff will become Class II and Class I encadred officials (100% Class II and 50% of the Class I initial grade) and at the final stage of their service life they may at best fill the total 25 percent of vacant posts of selection grade and senior scale officers including the field postings like AC (Land) and UNO. The service life, for example of 30 years, of such staff thus may be planned and distributed accordingly for various grades with time benefits, seniority, promotions and postings. Their recruitment rules and process may be reviewed if thought from

posts and preferably PSC will conduct such recruitment tests. After each of such upgradations, MOE will have to ensure effective training for these persons. The desired service discipline and chain of command should also be ensured through this process. **Frankly speaking without ensuring a career planning for these 'street level bureaucrats' career programme designed only for the Cadre officers will not create a functional concord in the Administrative service in Bangladesh** and the existing scenario would most likely continue with similar dismal results.

#### **5.2.4 Assessment System: Target and Performance Appraisal**

Assignments for BCS (Admin) officers must be specific and target oriented and **to ensure that a minimum tenure guarantee for a specific posting is a must.** Such target may be fixed for policy formulation or policy execution or to some extent both. In the case of coordination matters, such officers must be given with ample coordinating and managerial skill, capacity and power to hold themselves and the cooperating agencies responsible and accountable to the people. In the case of next promotion and placement such target achievements will be counted. On the other hand, for any extra duty or creative task or risk management, the officers must be paid for; otherwise free service will not bring any motivation for the service. **As a projection phase for the next two years, MOE may introduce the Performance Based Evaluation System (PBES) in its daily works for all sections and branches and each month the Additional Secretary of the Ministry may evaluate such progress and report to the Secretary for further improvements.** Such system may be introduced and incorporated for the

### 5.2.5 Legal Sanctions

Though the Constitution of the country makes it definite that laws enacted by the Parliament must regulate the service of the Republic, such a law is yet to be introduced. There is no Civil Service Law and the Service is regulated by various rules and circulars issued from time to time by the government; and there are over laps and contrasts in these orders and circulars and such products are influenced by coterie as well political interests. Thus, a **Civil Service Law is an immediate and absolute necessity**, as it can end all ambiguities and limit scope of ill intention for vested interest groups. Under such a harmonious law, rules and orders must be simplified to define the terms and conditions of the services of the Republic. Such rules must also define and determine the scope and capacity, assignments, accountability, extent and limitations of a service.

Such a law should have ample scope to protect the employees from any injustice in respect of the Service, and at the same time such law should prevent the employees misusing and abusing the public authority and any negligence of people's needs. Rewards and punishments, discipline and chain of command, capacity and acceptance and finally the necessity of such service must be defined and protected by law.

systematic scrutiny. MOE must identify some best junior, middle level and senior officers who have contributed something creative and fundamental for the service of the nation and award them with national Civil Service medal and other honours. Such initiative will inspire the other officers for better services.

On the other hand, promotion to next higher posts must always be on the basis of performance, target achievements, core training designed for different ranks (SAS/ DS/JS), and a defined examination arranged by PSC and a Superior Selection Board. Officers must be given chance to work with their full satisfaction, and if anybody fails to attain a regular promotion for consecutive 3 times, such officer will have opportunity to leave the job with time benefits determined by focused rules. Rules must also be strict and prompt to punish a culprit through a lawful investigation method. The present Discipline and Appeal Rules need necessary amendments immediately. The Discipline and Law Wing of the MOE should handle the cases with judicious manner, so that no vested interested group can take any advantage either by lodging a false case against an officer or by giving him/her an unjust relief. For all such complaints, identification of the applicant or informer and proper primary investigation must be ensured before filing a formal charge. And for all cases, every step and information must be data based for further and quick reference and reproduction. Otherwise, the whole process will aim at harassing the officials and empowering the street level bureaucrats of the concerned sections.

must have access for everybody. Policies and strategies regarding recruitment, training, placement, posting, promotion, rewards, punishments, pay and welfare package must be well defined. Regular research is a must to review and readjust those policies. Participatory approach must be taken for formulating and designing such rules and policies regarding the BCS (Admin) officers. Political leaders, ex -bureaucrats, university professors, researchers, media personalities, members from various professional groups and from different strata of the civil society along with the functioning BCS (Admin) officers may be included in a group to suggest such policies.

### **5.2.8 Building Support from Within**

The functions of the BCS (Admin) officers are crucial for overall civilian management system in Bangladesh. No doubt that any planning relating to these group fully depends on the political will: whether we need a better Administrative Service for better public service or we allow this Service to remain incompetent, dysfunctional, incapable and destabilised. This understanding must be the initial agreement.

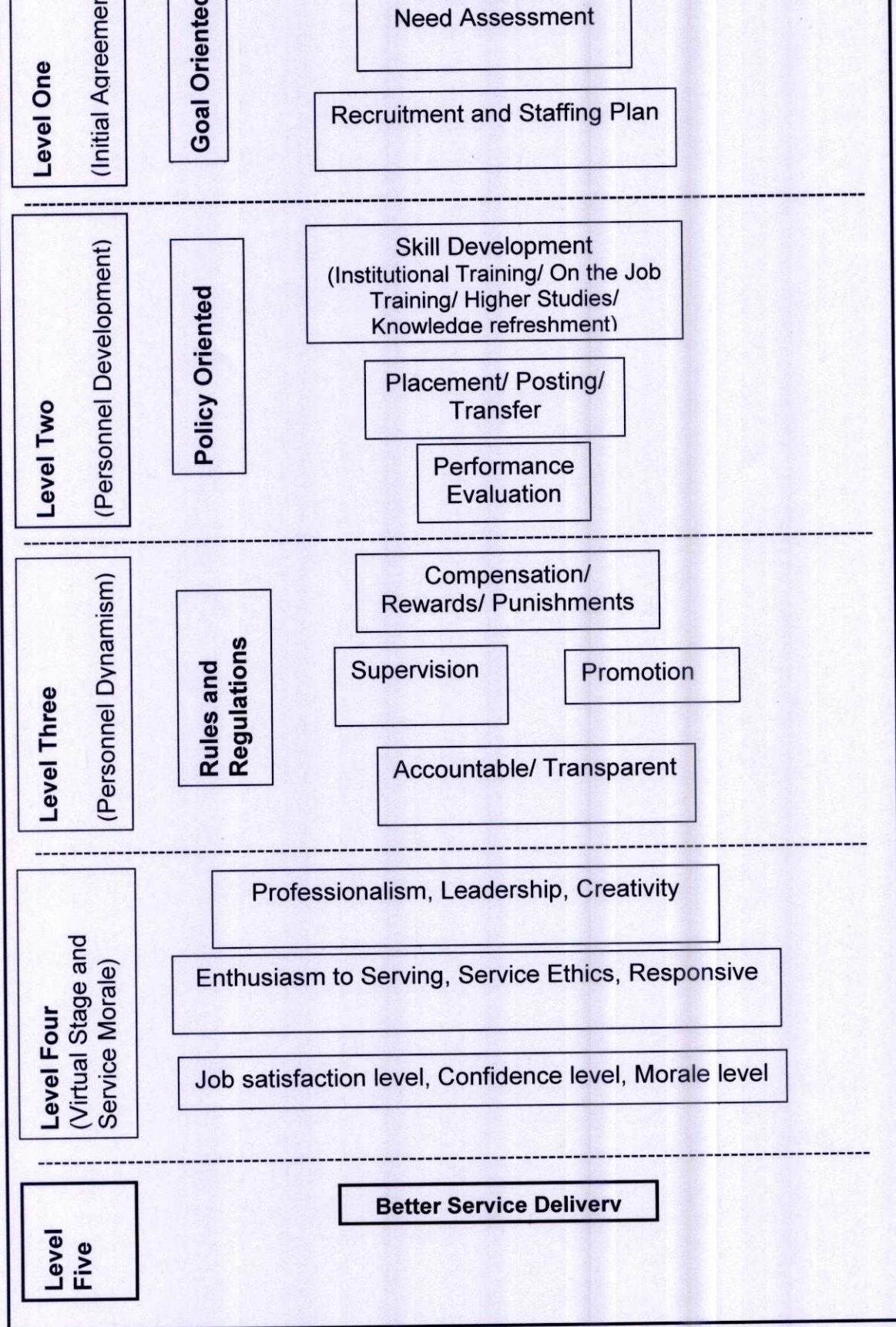
On the other hand, change of mentality of the officers is the primary concern for providing meaningful services to the nation. In spite of every institutional and programmed efforts by the government no positive change will happen unless the Civil Servants themselves are motivated for a better civil service movement. A well designed career planning for the BCS (Admin) Service can inspire a considerable number of new officers to mark the journey towards that desired path of change. The government may also support initiatives of continuous research

### 5.3 New Framework for Career Planning Strategy

Throughout the study, it has been explicit that career planning for an officer must meet his/ her personal career vision and the institutional design of nurturing such officers throughout the organizational culture. Open policies on the recruitment, training, placement, posting promotion, pay and welfare package and other capacities virtually reflect the career path in the organization. As far as the BCS (Admin) officers are concerned, such policies are unclear and incomplete. But Career Planning policies for the BCS (Admin) Officers should have certain visions to attain the final results that will ensure better services for the nation.

A sound career planning strategy has both short-term and long-term effect, and both aspects must be taken into consideration. For the BCS (Admin) officers in Bangladesh a career planning schema can be suggested keeping five levels into account. The **first level** is the initial agreement whether we need a functional Administrative service or not. If we need such a service, so we must approach to goal orientation. This level will ensure research and needs assessment for the vacancies, recruitment and staffing plan leading to initial deployment. The **next phase** or immediate result of a well-designed career planning strategy is focused through the personnel development stage that includes skills development (training, higher studies, knowledge refreshment etc), promotion, and posting/ transfer/ deputation/ placement and performance evaluation. Skills development and performance evaluation are closely linked and to some extent determining factors for rewards or punishment, which may be evident in promotion or posting/ transfer/ deputation etc. This also makes an officer accountable for both supervision and being

**Level three** reflects the Personnel dynamism stage. Focused and exercised through rules and regulations, this level includes compensation rewards, punishments, supervision and promotion in the service ladder. Supervision and rewards or penalty also ensures accountability and transparency in the Service. The previous stages have sequential and synergic effect on the **fourth level** or virtual stage. This level promotes service morale and basically this level is the resulting phase of the previous three levels. If the policies and programmes are designed and implemented following all issues and priorities, this resulting stage will reflect through professionalism, leadership and creativity among the officers. Such attributes will gradually provide enthusiasm to serving, service ethics and make them responsive to people's needs. Until this point when the job satisfaction, confidence and morale levels meet hand in hand and heart by heart, what results is nothing but better service delivery levels which is the ultimate aim for designing the Career Planning schema for the BCS (Admin) officers. An outline of such a Career Planning framework is shown in the following page.



BCS (Admin) officers may be identified as the central link to their job orientation and functional existence. In the case of Bangladesh, the previous reform initiatives were intellectual and smart enough but are staying almost as paper records in the archives. This study tries to explore the problems and prospects of personnel development process in the organisational structure of the BCS (Admin) cadre officers, since they discharge the major policy functions among all the BCS Cadre officers in Bangladesh. Responses and feed backs of this study reveal that the career planning process for the BCS (Admin) Cadre like most other cadre officers are defective and uncertain; and therefore an uncertain group of public sector managers cannot ensure any public policy properly, since the actors have no planning for their own career paths. This study also points out some recommendations that may be adopted by the MOE for setting some career goals and personnel development planning for the days ahead. Some relevant but less focused areas in this study, like the office design and venue planning for the public offices, Class II and Class III service characteristics and effects, grooming process, welfare package for the public servants, resource management through local capacities by the field officers, meaning and scope of 'tactful management' and so on may be researched with greater scope and details by the future researchers.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

A functional bureaucracy is one of the most fundamental pre conditions of a democratic nation. If the career planning strategy is not designed practically and properly, if it is not focused clearly, if there is no integrated act of the legislation for the legal protection of the Civil Service, political and unethical influence will loom over the public servants and they cannot prepare themselves

reality and global situation, it can be stated that overlooking the problems of the core professional groups of the Bangladesh Civil Service- the development process of the country would be messy and not certain to meet the desired goals. Thus, a comprehensive, well defined, goal oriented and nationally designed career planning policy for the Civil Officers can at least ensure the right track to democratic and economic progress of the nation.

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## A Critical Assessment

## Questionnaire 1

[Note: The present study is an attempt to conduct a research on the career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin) cadre officers. Collected data will be used for research purpose for a final dissertation of an MA Degree and personal identity of the respondents will never be disclosed. Please help the study by your practical experience. Please put tick mark or write where necessary. --Researcher.]

1. What is your rank? AS SAS DS JS Add Secretary Secretary

2. Where do you work now? Field level Dhaka based HQs

3. Length of your service BCS (Admin): ----- years

4. When did you get the first promotion? After ----- years of service.

5. Is the promotion process regular in BCS (Admin)? Yes No

6. Is there any policy for promotion? Yes No

7. During your service what were the posting places?

- a.) Upazila level ----- years
- b.) district level (excluding metropolitan) ----- years
- c.) Metropolitan city/ Divisional HQs ----- years
- d.) Secretariat/ directorate ----- years
- e.) Others (specify) ----- years

8. Nature of total postings?

- Direct ----- years
- Deputation ----- years
- OSD -----years

9. Tenure of a single posting?

- Minimum ----- years
- Maximum -----years

11. Do you think that the Ministry of Establishment (MOE) has a policy for posting the BCS (Admin) officers?

Yes      No      Not sure

12. Do you think that MOE has a policy of transfer?      Yes      No      Not Sure

13. Your educational attainment:      Bachelor      Masters      MPhil      PhD

14. Area of academic specialization: -----

15. How many postings were related to your educational specialization? -----

16. Please identify the relevance of your work with your academic background (scale starts from 0 = No, 1 = lowest to 5 = highest):

0      1      2      3      4      5

17. Did you complete all compulsory trainings in time?

In time      Late      Yet to finish

18. Are the trainings designed according to the need of your job?

All the trainings      No training

Some training (provide percentage) ----- %

19. Do you think that training results have any influence on posting or promotion?

Yes      No

20. Does your service have any skill development measure?

If yes, specify at least three: -----

If no, what should be the measures, at least three: -----

21. Do you have any job description for your work?

Yes, always

No where

0 1 2 3 4 5  
23. Is there any service goal set for the BCS (Admin)? Yes No Not sure

24. Are you satisfied with your job? (Provide percentage) ----- %

25. Can you provide service satisfactorily? (Provide percentage) ----- %

26. If you find any hindrance to proper service delivery, what are the reasons?

No hindrance

Political interference

Non cooperation from boss

Non cooperation from the juniors/ colleagues

Others (specify).....

27. Do you consider that your colleagues have a service moral? Low High Not sure

28. Do you consider that at present you have scope to serve professionally?

Yes No

If yes, what is the reason (identify 5 causes) -----

If no, what is the reason (identify 5 causes) -----

29. Do you have any scope for innovation in your service? Yes No

30. Do you consider that an officer should be given a specific period to attain some defined target?

Yes No

31. Do you think that the existing ACR system is enough for performance evaluation?

Yes No

If Yes, please identify 5 reasons -----

If No, please identify 5 reasons -----

32. Do you have any incentive for a good work in your service?

If yes, identify 5 priority factors: -----

If no, identify 5 priority factors: -----

33. Are you satisfied with your compensation package? Yes No Not sure

**Thank you for your kind response**

Your Current position: .....

Office: .....

Location: .....

Date: -----

## A Critical Assessment

### Questionnaire 2

#### Opinion Survey

[Note: The present study is an attempt to collect data in search of a focused career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin) officers. The opinions will be used for research purpose and personal identity of the respondents will never be disclosed. Please help the study by your practical experience.  
- Researcher.]

1. What is your area of specialization: .....

2. Your experience in this field: ..... years

3. Are you aware of any career planning strategy for BCS (Admin) officers?

Yes    No    Not sure

4. What are the most important issues for career planning strategy for the BCS (Admin) cadre?  
(please provide some points)

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....

5. Do you think that regarding recruitment, training, posting, promotion, incentives, and punishment of BCS (Admin) the existing rules are just right?

Yes    No

6. What are challenges do you think that the BCS (admin) cadre must adapt to become a world class public management system? (Please provide 5 priority points)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

7. What aspects in your view should cover the Career Development Planning for the BCS (Administration) officers?

**Thank you for your valuable comments**

Your present Position/ Profession: .....

Your Office/ Location: .....