

Changing Pattern of Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: An Administrative Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The pattern of women's empowerment has many features over the years in post-colonial periods and after the inception of Bangladesh's Independence in terms of administrative views. The study has been accomplished through qualitative methodology by analyzing reviewed journals (secondary sources). The study's objectives are to discover the changing pattern of women's empowerment through government initiatives in different periods in Bangladesh and to critically analyze the gaps in women's empowerment to articulate the current positions of women in Bangladesh. The study's findings have been organized by the government's initiatives over the periods and the fundamental challenges and solutions of women's empowerment in Bangladesh. The governments' initiatives have been classified into three periods. Each period was organized by the significant initiatives of the government and the conditions of women's empowerment at that time. Recognizing women's empowerment used two primary determinants: adult literacy rate and participation in the making process of women, respectively. The study suggests that the concerned authority needs to update its administrative approaches to Change the Pattern of Women Empowerment in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Changing Pattern, Women Empowerment, Bangladesh, Administrative Perspective

INTRODUCTION

The government has already taken different initiatives to address women's problems and gender discrimination in order to empowerment. It is a good sign for women as they can participate in the public and private sectors by utilizing their opportunities nowadays (ADB, 2022). For Example, many women have participated in Bangladesh politics compared to other South Asian nations. However, there are unique features of women leaders and politicians who participated in politics; most ancestors were politicians or lawmakers. On the other hand, women have little access to direct parliamentary and other elections as in patriarchal societies and mental issues of male partners (Moghadam, V. M, 2002). Moreover, the government has enacted many policies and acts to empower women, focusing mainly on this sector (Khan, 2019; Shetu & Ferdous, 2017; Halder, 2004). Though there is a myth in analyzing the realities, pro-women policies and acts must be appropriately implemented.

The general objective of the study is to discover the changing pattern of women empowerment in Bangladesh, and the specific objectives of women are to identify the administration of women empowerment in different periods in Bangladesh and to critically analyze the gaps of women empowerment in different periods in Bangladesh.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Much literature exists on women's empowerment in several contexts, globally and nationally. Khan (2019) focused on Pakistani civil society organizations' role in enhancing gender equality and women's empowerment in her study. She conducted qualitative research with the help of some relevant interviews. She explored that it is only possible to ensure women's empowerment and development with the concern of all sectors of the country. That means civil society organizations could not reach the required goals individually; there must be support from all other sectors. Shetu and Ferdous (2017) conducted a work titled "Glass Ceiling for Professional Women: A Study on Bangladesh. The objective of the study is to find out the actual barriers of profession of women which bound them in the restricted areas as they couldn't reach the actual positions in their workplace. They found various circumstances: professional jealousy, social negligence and underestimate, unavailable daycare center, inefficient family support etc. Raynor et al (2006) led a study by FGD (focus group discussion) to find out the effects of the girl's stipend program in Bangladesh. They argued that there is very scarce information about its actual effects. The study suggested that there is needed quality education to enhance girl's education. Kamal and Sabrina (2014) conducted a study on the heading of "Gender Gap and Present State of Working Women in Corporate Arena: An Overview of Bangladesh Perspective. They revealed the actual position of women in the world in the secondary workforce, where they contribute greatly. They also found in their study that gender balance is a myth without ensuring a women-friendly environment in the workplace in Bangladesh. The study suggested that women's participation in the corporate sector is very near to mitigating the circumstances properly. Roy (2013) argued in her study that gender equality in Bangladesh mostly depends on rural women's empowerment. She researched "Pragmatic Approaches to Sustainable Development through Rural Women Empowerment in Bangladesh" to identify the actual conditions of rural women empowerment. The study found that some factors might facilitate the empowerment of rural women more: microfinance, information communication technology, agriculture and others.

Pandey (2008) argues in his study that women's participation in Bangladesh's decision-making process is still neglected. However, the quota system enhances the number of women in the political arena, which could be better. In his study, he explored how donors, women's organizations, and NGOs influenced the government to introduce the quota system to promote women's political participation. However, more was needed to reach the actual goals. Women are facing several social, cultural and religious limitations even when they are assaulted and harassed by male competitors. Papanek (1971) studied Purdah in Pakistan: seclusion and modern occupations for women. He argued in his work that medicine and academia are the most popular and acceptable occupations for educated women because of the particular requirement of female competitors in a sex-segregated system.

Halder (2004) argues in her study that Bangladeshi women's interest in politics gradually increases despite several visible and invisible obstacles in society and family. She also found that the political elite is the primary opponent to increasing women's participation in the decision-making process in Bangladesh. It is not only against a single woman's nomination in the party, but they also de-motivated the women's representation in politics in the country. Rahman et al. (2010) studied "historical development of secondary education in Bangladesh: Colonial Period to 21st Century". They explored that to enhance secondary education and formed several commissions and committees. Besides that, various NGOs play a vital role in promoting women's secondary education. There have been Changes in The secondary education system from the colonial period to the present age that is still under public scrutiny. Andaleeb and Wolford (2004) determined that women's participation in decision-making could be better in developing countries. They found the main reason the male-dominating society was that women could not represent there. They explored that their organization runs efficiently, where communication needs to be gender-friendly. The main barrier for women in the workplace is the male counterpart's hostile competition, which makes them

feel de-motivation to participate in politics and other sectors.

Zafarullah (2000) conducted a study on “Through the Brick Wall, and the Glass Ceiling: Women in the Civil Service in Bangladesh. He aimed to find out the actual positions of women in administration. He argues the study that the male-dominated culture hinders women’s participation in the public sphere. Therefore, the personnel development policies are influenced by male biases. Even though recruitment, promotion, and wages are bound by discrimination against women in administration. However, it is very clear from the above literature that women empowerment in Bangladesh is in changing scenarios. However, there has yet to be a significant study on the overall development tenure in Bangladesh has been explored. Therefore, this study seeks to play a vital role in that research gap by focusing on the women empowerment scenarios over the decades in Bangladesh.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Changing Pattern

Generally, changing patterns indicate resilience capacity for extreme and standard levels; however, these systems can add, stir, and erase through this process. This system can evaluate the whole process (Reichert et al., P, 2009). The changing pattern indicates the overall situation of women’s empowerment from an administrative perspective. The study especially tries to articulate a scenario for the current position of women’s empowerment, which has been developing its conditions over the years.

Women Empowerment

The concept of women’s empowerment varies across the globe. Women empowerment facilitates the good things for women so they can prepare themselves to alter their positions for the better, followed by social and exercise their freedom in personal and relevant sectors (Worldvision, 2021). Some times, power imbalance disrupts women’s well-being and dreams in their daily lives and creates many barriers for them. The improvement of women includes many characteristics to upgrade their position up to the mark. The relevant stakeholders need to intake different policies and guidelines to upgrade women’s status in safe livelihoods, financial resources, public and private affairs, education and other sectors. Therefore, women can utilize their capacity and strength in different sectors, followed by decision-making, conjugal life, and reproductive health. Hence, the population programme and other sectors will benefit from the abovementioned issues. The enhancement of women is very interrelated with the overall development and population programme (UNFPA, 1994). This study has focused on women’s administrative empowerment over several regimes.

Administrative perspectives

The government operates its activities and functions through administration, which executes the authority’s decisions. The administration has different features and characteristics (Wilson, W, 2003). Women’s empowerment in Bangladesh existed for several periods, which will be articulated in this study from the initiatives initiated by the administration.

METHODOLOGY

This study has been completed based on reviewed articles from secondary sources. It has analyzed the documents and contents regarding the changing pattern of women empowerment in Bangladesh from an administrative perspective. The researchers reviewed relevant books, reports, journals, news reports, statistical yearbooks, government publications, ordinances, acts, rules, and official documents to attain

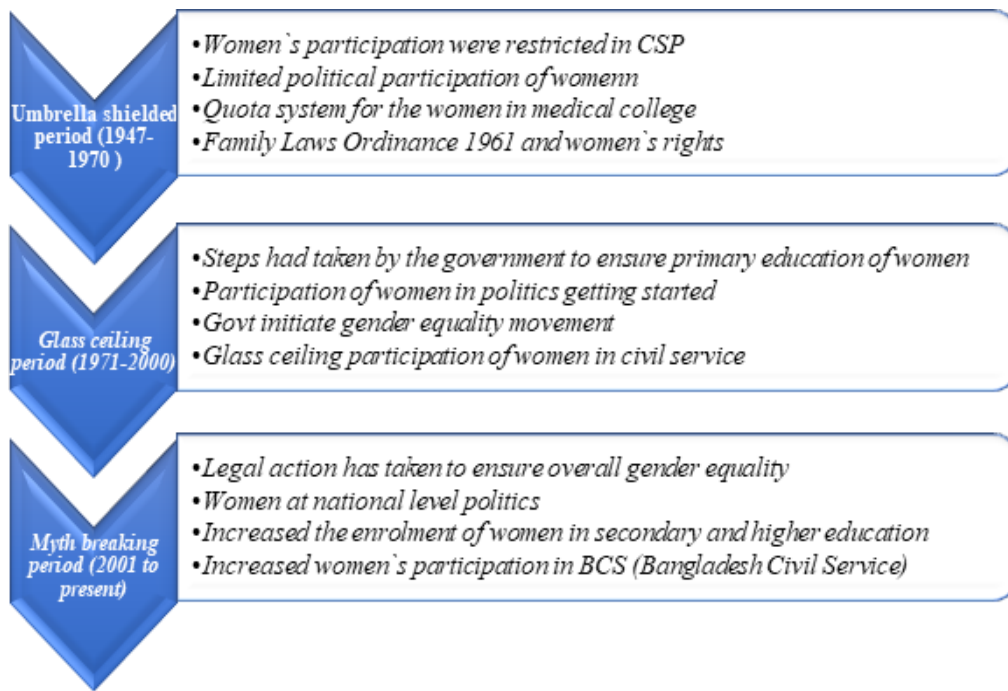
secondary data. To collect the wide range of these secondary materials, the researchers have browsed a wide range of libraries, including the Library of the National Academy for Planning and Development, the Library of the Secretariat, a library of the British Council, a library of BPATC, and the library of BCS Administration Academy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Changing Pattern of Women’s Empowerment in Bangladesh

FINDINGS

The participation of women in the job sector has ensured a new dimension in administration and women empowerment. Bangladesh has been struggling with several challenges since its Independence. At present, the scenario of Bangladesh undoubtedly is going forward. However, women empowerment could not get the required results, although every administration tried their best. Most of the time, we blame the government because of improper information in some cases. This study benefits the government and relevant stakeholders to develop new decisions to address women’s problems by policymakers, feminists, gender experts, donor agencies, and researchers.

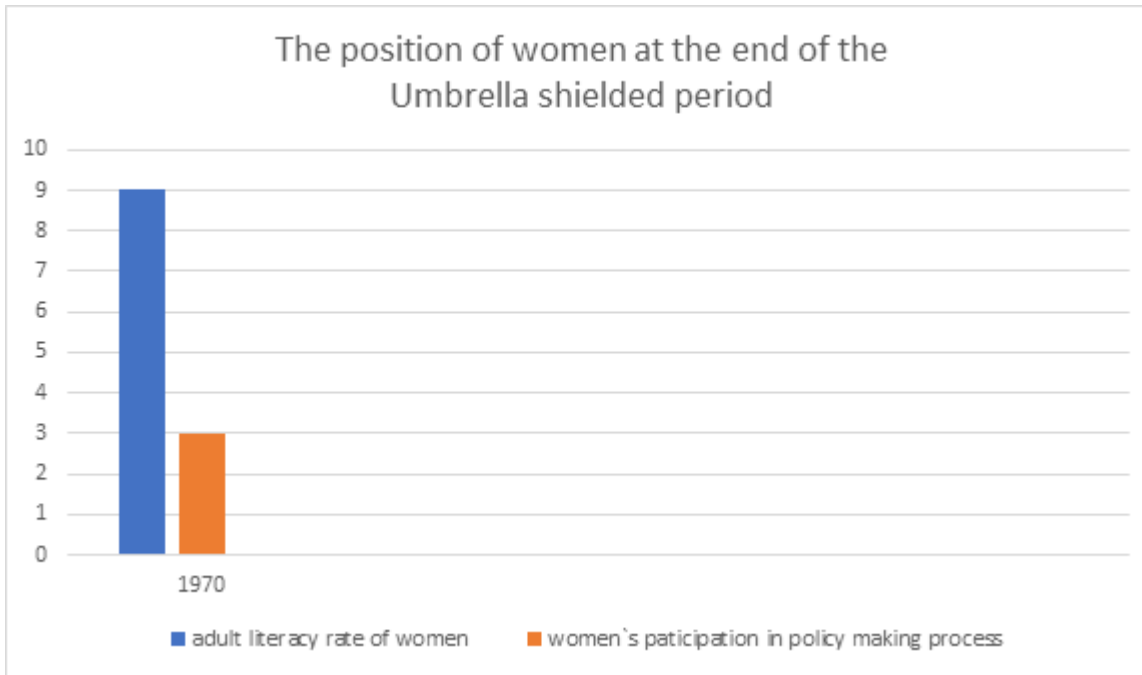


(Source: Jahan,1973; Naz et al., 2011; Halder, 2004; Feldman, 1983;Halder, 2005; Zafarullah, 2000; Feldman, 1998; Roy, 2013; Nazneen et al., 2011).

The name of the periods has been proposed by the conditions of the women’s performance regarding empowerment, which is determined by two primary areas of empowerment: the adult literacy rate of women and Women’s participation in the policy-making process.

Umbrella shielded period (1947-1970)

Women had limited options and choices from 1947 to 1971, when they were bound to obey the authority’s decisions.



Source: (Pio and Syed, 2013; Huq, 2016)

The figure mentioned above showed some characteristics of women's empowerment where they had little opportunity to attain their rights and dignity. The people of the sub-continent faced many challenges after the partition in 1947. On the other hand, Bangladesh has tried to initiate different tools to update its position as a post-colonial state in different sectors. After obtaining Independence from British Rule, the Pakistan government introduced some policies and guidelines for the nation as an Islamic Country. Therefore, East Pakistan had to adopt Islamic philosophies and guidelines to lead their daily lives, cultures, and administrative systems. In that case, the women were being shielded by Islamic rules and regulations (Azim, 2011). Because of religious morality, the government did not take such considerable initiatives to develop women's empowerment. Although some opportunities were available, most levels were restricted to women's participation. Women were indeed markers of national identity, but the symbolic appropriation of women by the state led to or was accompanied by the erosion of their political rights (khan, 2013).

Women's participation was restricted at top levels in CSP.

Women's participation was confined to different obstacles in Pakistan's civil service. Male ex-CSP (Civil Service Pakistan) members occupied the top administrative posts, and women's participation was restricted (Jahan, 1973). In the case of government service, candidates are selected on merit through a system of competitive examinations on the British model and then assigned to different "Services" based on their scores. These "Services" differ substantially in power and prestige, the highest being CSP and the Foreign Service. Women are automatically barred from these two Services and are assigned to lower-ranking units along with men whose scores are less than their own. Promotions from one Service to another are not possible. By contrast, the Indian Administrative Service, corresponding to the CSP in Pakistan and based on the same British model, has admitted women to its ranks since shortly after Independence. Therefore, women had limited access to the government's decision-making body in Pakistan (Papanek, 1971).

Limited political participation of women

Women had limited access to policy-making processes where. They were bound to obey the rules and regulations in their daily lives. They had limited access to the political system in Pakistan period. The

participation of women in the political system was limited and poor in East Pakistan (Kan and Sana, 2013; Jahan, 1973). Ulama, Islamic Scholars played an advisory role in the legislative branch per the 1956 Constitutions of Pakistan. Voting rights were given to both male and female voters, whereas women voters were discouraged, according to Islamic male scholars. There were some excellent indicators of women politicians who participated in Pakistan politics. For Example, Shaista Ikramullah and Jahanara Shah Nawaz were two assembly members in Pakistan's political history. The Constitution of Pakistan had made a provision for women to participate in indirect elections under the leadership of General Ayub Khan. Therefore, a low percentage of women (6) were getting the opportunities to participate in the assemblies. That was remarkable for female politicians like Miss Fatima Jinnah in the history of Pakistan politics. On the other hand, women started to participate in the 1970 election and raise their voices against injustice. General Ayub Khan worked for the Pakistan People's Party and Awami League of East Pakistan.

The participation of women in education and politics was low, whereas men were in leading positions in the categories mentioned above. Women were lagging in terms of voting behaviour. Women had little access to voting registration and voting casting (Qayyum, S. H et al.2013). The authority of Pakistan allotted ten seats for women for at least ten years as per article 44(2) (1) of the 1956 constitution for East and West Pakistan (Qureshi, A., & Ahmad, S.2022, September).

Quota system for women in medical college

The government of Pakistan introduced a quota system for admission to medical colleges to promote women's participation in the medical profession (Papanek, 1971). The outstanding, high-prestige jobs for educated women in Pakistan were medicine and teaching regarding Shariyah norms. Working women faced many problems implementing their jobs and responsibilities for administrative and political challenges (Jahan, 1975). In that sense, most of the women were not allowed to get treatment from male doctors. The medical profession has come to be defined as having substantial women's sections. "lady doctor" is a well-known urban phenomenon. This quota system was reflected in the final degree; 12.5 per cent of all degrees and diplomas in medicine were obtained by women in Pakistan, according to the 1961 Census. However, not all women with medical degrees practice as doctors later on, the proportion of female doctors in Pakistan is probably higher than that in the United States (about 6 percent). Women obtained somewhat smaller proportions of degrees in other fields in the decade covered by the 1961 Census: 10 percent of diplomas and degrees in education, three per cent in engineering and one percent in law. While there is no question of the high prestige of "lady doctors," another medical profession, nursing has run into severe problems in Pakistan. Although it has come to be defined as "women's work" in most Western societies and also fits the Pakistani concept of nurturing women, the values of the purdah system have made nursing a low-prestige profession in Pakistan.

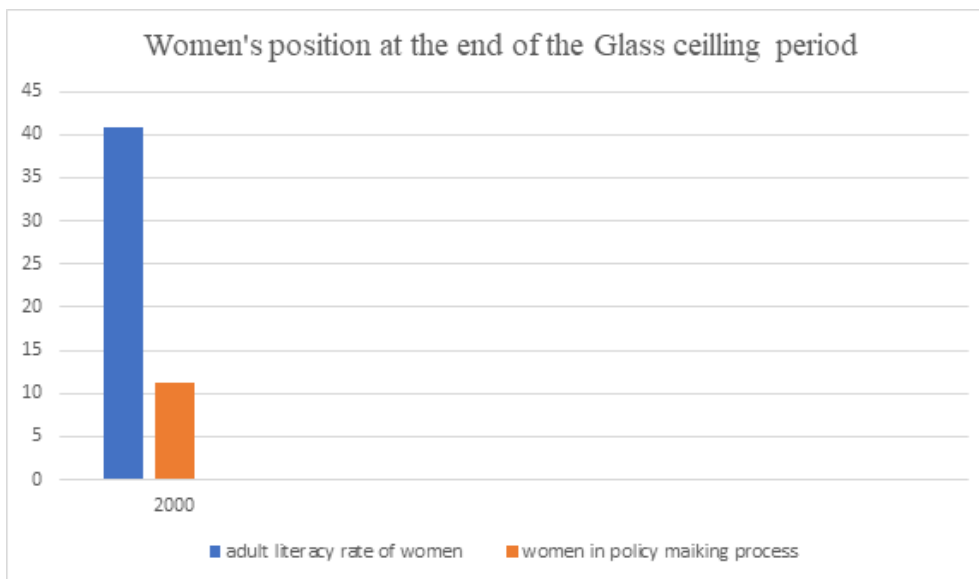
Family Laws Ordinance 1961 and women's rights

Most women in Pakistan needed to be more conscious about the rights, privileges and entitlements provided to them under the Family Laws Ordinance 1961 (Khan and Sana, 2013; Khan, 2019). The Government of Pakistan initiated the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs and Social Welfare to enhance women's mobility (Feldman, 2003). Women's organizations strongly started to battle for their rights from the second marriage in 1955, which brought to prominence the issue of polygamy. The government had to appoint a commission under the supervision of the then Supreme Court Chief Justice Rashid to evaluate the relevant policies and laws regarding polygamy and devise laws of marriage, family take cares and divorces due to women's collective movement. The Commission submitted its report in 1956, but it was shelved under pressure from the orthodox clergy. Finally, the committee recommendations were implemented by President Ayub Khan's military regime and came to be called the 'Family Laws Ordinance 1961'. Ayub Khan made certain amendments to improve the position of women. Under his strict and despotic Rule, efforts were made to promote women's education and their representation in government jobs and employment. Ayub

Khan’s Family Ordinance marked a vital attempt to reform family laws in Pakistan. Even so, the ordinance of 1961 did mark a big step forward in Pakistan’s struggle for women’s rights. The women’s movement in Pakistan was instrumental in transforming the ordinance into law and educating women about their rights under the law (Khan and Sana, 2013).

Glass ceiling period (1971-2000)

After gaining Independence from Pakistan, Bangladesh was trying to restructure its nation. Bangladeshi citizens are trying to shape their own cultures where Pakistan’s traditional styles and norms have been reduced for the betterment of their interests (Azim, 2011). As a result, the government started to develop a multi-sector where women were a glass-ceiling part. Although the government had taken several initiatives to empower women, various invisible barriers existed. Through which women see elite positions but cannot reach them (Shetu & Ferdous, 2017). Some government initiatives try to show there.



Source: (World Bank, 2019; Kabir, 2014)

The government has taken steps to ensure women’s primary education.

The government of Bangladesh started to take several steps to ensure girls’ primary education in late 1981(Raynor, 2005; UNTERHALTER et al., 2003). Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission Report (1974) proposed some policies and guidelines to improve women’s condition in child care, food and nutrition, preservation of health and nursing of the sick sector. This Commission also emphasizes vocational and non-vocational training and education for women (Chowdhury et al, 2020). An old Bengali saying observes: ‘caring for a daughter is like watering a neighbor’s tree’. It reflects the view that investing in a daughter who will be lost to another family through marriage is a waste of resources. However, the government included a secondary stipend programme, which started on a small scale in 1982 and became a nationwide programme in 1994 (Raynor, 2005). The Female Stipend Program (FSP) was created in 1982 in Bangladesh to help increase the enrolment and retention of girls in secondary schools. It was implemented initially in six areas only; the program was so successful that it was extended in 1994.

Participation of women in politics getting started

Women’s public status in Bangladesh improved after gaining Independence (Rahman, 2000: 391). To accelerate women’s participation in Bangladesh’s national politics, the government has introduced reserved seats for women in Parliament to play their role in politics. The Bangladesh government has reserved fifteen

seats for women in the Constitution (4.8% of the total seats) regarding political women empowerment. Later, the percentage of reserved seats accelerated to 9.7% of the total seats (30 seats) in 1979. The electoral reserved seats needed to be included for the three consecutive years for administrative and government decisions. Later, the crisis was resolved by reinserting the reserved seats for women in 1990 with a constitutional amendment. The Union Parishad Ordinance was promulgated in 1976, reserving two seats for women in each union parishad. Later, an amendment in 1983 increased the quota of seats for women to three. After 1983, women's participation in local government institutions increased sharply. In 1995, the Bangladeshi government initiated the Local Government Second Amendment Act, which set a milestone towards equal participation of women in the political power structures. This amendment conditioned the distribution of seats to women in local-level elections.

To enhance women's equal access and political participation in politics, the Local Government (Union Parishad) and the 2nd Amendment Act 1997 played a role. Women got the opportunity to participate in the open election with male partners at the local level election for this amendment. Therefore, women got the opportunity to contribute to political decision-making, local development, leadership skills, and others (Khan & Ara, 2006).

The government initiated the gender equality movement.

The official code of rights and general policy for women in Bangladesh was formulated in 1997 to guarantee women equal rights (Huq, 2016). Three broad strategies to achieve gender equality encompassing legal and institutional reforms, political participation and access to and control over productive resources have been formulated after Independence. Measures to ensure equal employment opportunities and outlaw discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, and gender were enshrined in the Constitution as early as 1972. It also empowered the government to adopt special provisions in favour of backward sections, including women, to secure their adequate representation in the civil service. At that time, they also opened the way for introducing a quota system in public employment. Initially, 10% of entry-level positions were reserved for women; this was later increased to 15% (Zafarullah, 2000). Though Bangladesh has ensured some achievements in gender parity in education sectors, it has weaknesses in teaching and working with professional women (Raynor et al, 2006).

Glass ceiling participation of women in civil service

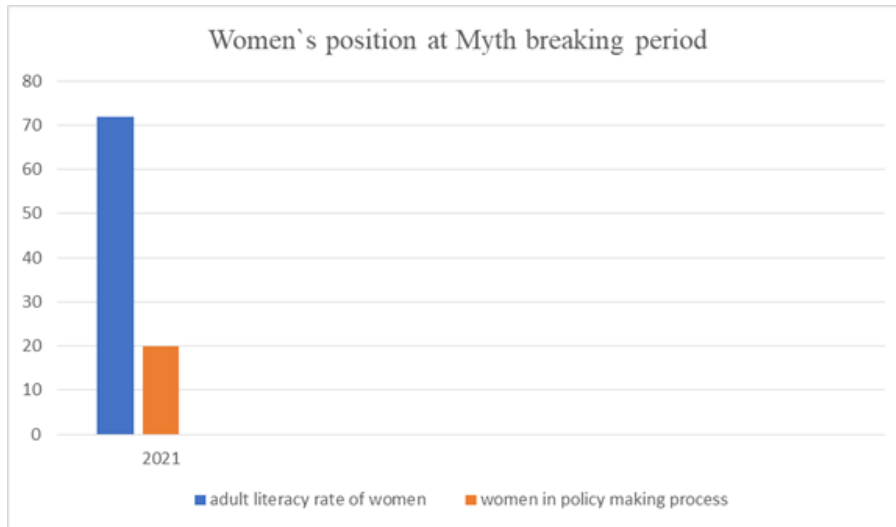
The inequality between male and female partners is widespread in Bangladesh (Zafarullah, 2000). It is a common scenario that an institute's executive position is held by men, where women are recruited in subordinate positions and other less powerful positions in Bangladesh. The scenarios mentioned above have been changed day by day. On the other hand, women face some administrative and subjective policies to hold a high position in an institute where they have equal strength and capacity in some cases.

After liberation in 1971, the Bangladesh Civil Service was born. Under the 1980 reforms, there were 14 cadres and 22 sub-cadres. 1987, it became 30 cadres, but the BCS currently has 29 cadres. Since 1972, women have been eligible for appointment to the BCS but have yet to be represented across all service areas. Until 1980, there were no women in the administrative, judicial, postal and communication cadre; only one woman was in the revenue department of the finance division; four women were in the Foreign Service; and six women represented the information department. Prior to 1982, there were very few women in the civil service. Since then, an increasing number of women have attempted the civil service examination, and women are being recruited to various cadre services at an increased rate. By 1986, the number of women in BCS reached 1,417 (Mahtab.N, 2014).

Although PSC (Public Service Commission) has started a quota system in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), it has been unable to improve the actual working of the quota system and the way it is perceived as being

abused by both administrators and astute applicants for civil service positions (Zafarullah, 2000).

Myth-breaking period (2001 to present)



Source: (Kabir, 2014).

Traditionally, the roles of women in Bangladesh are primarily domestic. However, the evidence of recent increasing female participation in several sectors shows that at least some Women are breaking away from their traditional roles to that of a worker outside the home (Chaudhury, 1977). In a patriarchal society, the fanatics' clever appeal seems to attract people when they advocate not dragging a mother and sister out of a home but instead employing unemployed fathers and husbands. In the primary stage of the 19th Century, while a vast number of women engaged in NGOs (non-government organizations), they were attacked by Ulemas and Maulanas called "fallen women". Today, that myth has changed due to the government's various initiatives (Halder, 2004). Some of those initiatives try to focus there.

Legal action has been taken to ensure overall gender equality.

Bangladesh Government has passed the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act of 2010 for the protection of women and children from family violence and discrimination (Kamal, 2014). According to the Constitution of Bangladesh, "all citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law (Article 27 of the Constitution); the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (Article 28(1), Women have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and public life (Article 28(2). A robust patriarchal culture not only gives the sole authority over women to men, but the sole authority over children as well. Mothers had no legal standing as a guardian. However, the government took a radical step in 2000 by changing this. Putting the mother's and father's names on the birth registration and children's school certificates is now mandatory. Several other documents, like voter identification and passports, must now also carry the mother's name. Conservative Islamic groups were infuriated by these changes and claimed that this would bring social disorder by undermining the institution of marriage. They argued that this provision would encourage young people to live together without getting married. The 1951 Citizenship Act restricted Bangladeshi women from extending their nationality to foreign husbands. However, the same law did not apply to men; that has been changed by articles of the Bangladesh Constitution (Alim, 2012).

Increased the enrolment of women in secondary and higher education

In secondary education, girls attended more than boys over the period; the average participation rate of girls

was slightly higher than boys between 2010 and 2015 (Sarkar et al, 2019). The net enrollment rate for boys and girls increased notably from 2010 to 2015. This measurement refers to the number of students enrolled in the official age – group expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group. In 2010, the net enrollment rate of girls and boys was 55.09 per cent and 44.45 per cent, and it went up to 71.85 percent and 62.61 percent, respectively, in 2015. The first Education Commission in Bangladesh appointed under Dr Quadrat-e-Khuda submitted the report in 1974. The report emphasized secular education at all levels, future work-relevant technical and vocational education, an improved assessment system, letter grading in the assessment of student performance in all stages of education and making primary education from grade 1 to 8 and secondary from grade 9 to 12 (Karmaker. R, 2022). The government formed a sixteen-member committee to update the National Education Policy 2000, headed by National Professor Kabir Chowdhury. The proposed new education policy was formulated in the light of the ‘Quadrat-e-Khuda Commission report of 1974 and the ‘Shamsul Huq Education Commission Report’ of 1997. The final draft of the National Education Policy 2009 was formally submitted to the Prime Minister on September 7, 2009. The salient features of the committee’s recommendations include revising the stages of undergraduate education from three to two, the mandatory inclusion of certain compulsory subjects under all streams of education, making education more need-based and forming a permanent education commission (Rahman et al, 2010).

Women at national level politics

The Government of Bangladesh has played a pivotal role in opening new avenues for women, enhancing their participation in national politics (Kumar and Feldman, 2015). In the 2001 elections, 48 women contested non-reserved seats in Parliament, and 13 were successful. Notably, two women. Among the 48 contested ten seats (both contested five seats each) were successful in nine of these 5. Sheikh Hasina failed in one of the five seats she contested. Besides these two women, only six were successful in elections for general seats. Only ten women managed to get more than 15 percent of the total vote cast among the rest of the candidates, while other candidates were negligible.

Quotas for women in Parliament have also experienced a remarkable journey in reaching their present level of 50 out of a total of 350 seats initiated by the 15th amendment of the Constitution passed in June 2011 (Kabir, 2014).

Increased women’s participation in BCS (Bangladesh Civil Service)

According to statistics from the Ministry of Public Administration, women’s participation in civil administration has increased a lot over the years (Prothom Alo English, 2017). Prior to 1982, there were very few women in the civil service. Since then, an increasing number of women have attempted the civil service examination, and women are being recruited to various cadre services at an increased rate. By 1986, the number of women in BCS reached 1,417 (Haque & Bala, 1988). Recognizing this problem, the Constitution of Bangladesh has made significant provisions to provide equal opportunity for males and females in every sphere of life. In addition, the government adopted quotas for women entering the civil service. It implemented many policies to increase women’s representation in the civil service and integrate women into mainstream development initiatives (Mahtab. N, 2014).

The gap between the initiatives and reality

A country’s contemporary development depends on human resource improvement, and women’s empowerment is a vital issue in this context. Bangladesh had achieved salient success by women’s leadership over the years, yet the women of this country could not enjoy complete freedom in their lives. The main reason for the patriarchal system exists in society (Rahman, 2020). Governments of all regimes perceived that the initiatives regarding the strategic interest of gender might be successful if the practical needs were perfectly met (Sultana, personal communication, 22/01/2021). The Shariah-based personal laws

bind most women from conservative Muslim families. Education is a mandatory platform to increase women's participation in policy-making (Kabir, 2014). Following these matters, these two indicators have been focused on in this study to determine the periods. It is clearly shown that the literacy rate is increasing, but political participation is rare. Women who are engaged in politics inherit this opportunity. On the other hand, most women never take any steps because of professional jealousy, bloody competition by male counterparts, reproductive duties and hate speech from male politicians (Shetu & Ferdous, 2017).

Limitations of the Study

The study has been completed within a limited time. On the other hand, it has limited documents about government initiatives in several regimes to analyze the data and information for this article.

CONCLUSION

It has been observed that Bangladesh has changed its development scenarios rapidly in all sectors, with women's empowerment increasing, as mentioned by several study respondents. Although most of the target population shared the same problems in the workplace, some mentioned more problems, such as scarce opportunities for higher study, a positive environment in society and others. They suggested that women's empowerment must change if we ensure strategic needs besides women's basic needs. Moreover, every organization should provide daycare centres to increase women's productivity, provide a flexible environment, and provide proper hearing from them. Every administration has taken several initiatives over the period, but we could not get the required result for the above mentioned reasons; if we measure it correctly, we must go ahead very soon.

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FOOTNOTE

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