

SEMINAR PAPER ON

ANALYZING THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT OF GOVERNMENT FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN BANGLADESH: A CASE STUDY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS DIVISION

Submitted to

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Summary focused on women government officials within the cadre services and particular emphasis was on the Administrative, Health, Education and Police Cadres because of the centrality of the first, the numbers of women in the second and third and the innovations happening in the fourth. Relevant legislation, policies and projects were reviewed and interviews and focus group discussions were carried out to seek the views of the policy makers, senior government officials, project advisors and women in government service. There were attempts to use existing data and research, where available. Bangladesh is a particularly interesting case study because of the sheer size of the public sector, the early introduction of some government measures to promote gender equity and the experience of concerted efforts in a number of key sectors by the government and development partners to undertake reform, develop these to better address the needs of the citizens and address gender equality in the programmes and the institutions. These sectors have included health and education and, more recently, police reform. There are also a number of internationally supported initiatives to support the government's public administration reform agenda. At present, the Bangladesh civil service has more than one million civil servants in 37 ministries, 11 divisions, 254 departments and 173 statutory bodies. Appointment to a service is on the basis of merit and quota reservations for districts, freedom fighters, women and ethnic minorities. 10% of posts are reserved for women. There is steady progress in the numbers of women in service at middle and senior levels from 8.5% in 1999 to 15% in 2006 and 21% in 2011. These are also echoed in some sectorial policies such as the health and education policies, both of which were recently formulated and approved. These have not, however, been reflected in the provisions of the draft Civil Service Act or the existing civil service regulations, which are gender-neutral and therefore have important omissions. In public sector employment, men and women enjoy the same benefits and amenities in all respects, including in pay, allowances, pensions and other financial benefits. However, as various reviews on administrative reform have found, massive improvements in working conditions are needed to attract more women to the civil service. Constraints and priorities identified for the lesser participation of women in the public service and especially at decision-making levels include lower recruitment of women; fewer promotions of women, especially at senior levels; field postings and transfers; lack of gender sensitivity and discriminatory attitudes among management and colleagues and lack of family support. Various institutional weaknesses and constraints in overall public

administration make human resource development, planning and use difficult. The lack of a centralized human resource management function and the lack of adequate sex-disaggregated data for human resource management and planning are some of the major constraints. In 2008, Bangladesh ranked 116th in the Gender Development Index (GDI) of the UNDP's Human Development Index, below Pakistan but above India. However, the pace of change merits attention, as gains for Bangladeshi women were made from a lower starting point than in other countries. One interesting recent development has been the sharp increase in women's formal labour force participation. There has also been significant recent growth in new areas such as public sector employment, as teachers or health workers, and in self-employment and household enterprises.

**ANALYSING THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT OF GOVERNMENT
FEMALE EMPLOYEES; A CASE STUDY OF ROADS
TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS DIVISION**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background. Female employment has repeatedly been considering as the vital precondition to achieve economic emancipation in the construction of a sustainable society by the stakeholders. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has taken many measures in action to make our women sect educated, trained, and employed in different level. The governmental initiatives reinforce the women in our country to take advantages and participate themselves in substantial professional activities. The increasing employments of the women in different sectors of Bangladesh for the last two decades is playing significant role in the journey of our economic growth toward an economically developed nation. However, the employed women in our country are facing critical challenges inside and outside their professional areas continuously. On the one hand, our traditional patriarchal discourses turn down women from professional practices, and on the other hand, the professional organizations in our country do not assure promising atmosphere for them completely. Besides, the employed female sect in our country is subjected to be ill-treated with different forms of sexual bullying. Therefore, a practical observation and analysis becomes inevitable to identify the challenges of the employed female sect immediately. Unless, it will be a mere dream to achieve an economically healthy Bangladesh without ensuring congenial working environment of our female employees.

1.2 Statement of the Problem. After about a long five consecutive decades of struggle toward having economical emancipation in national life, Bangladesh could manage to have the status of middle income country which reflects the increasing participation of the female sect in education and employment. Awareness through education and employment of the women in governmental and non-governmental organizations in our country truly satiates their smooth livelihood. Furthermore, their contributions through services facilitate the development of our national economy effectively. However, the working environments of the female employees in our country do not seem to offer smooth and promising atmosphere to enhance themselves and the development process. They are being obstructed by the social, physical, and professional beliefs and practices inside and the outside of their working areas. This is undoubtedly a crucial challenge for them as well as for the country in broad scale. Practically, the women are the halves of contributors in the building process our national economy. Therefore, an actual and practical measurement is necessary to evaluate and initiate the working environments of the female employees in our country.

1.3 Objectives. The current study attempts to investigate into the present working environment of female employees in Bangladesh in light with three major areas: the physical environment, the social environment, and the professional environment. To get an exact scenario of working environment of the female employees in our country, the paper tries to find out the answer of the following questions:

- How far the physical environment in the working area i.e. settings, working equipment's, transportation, safety issues etc. supports the female employees in the workplaces?
- To what extent our masculine eyes restrain the female employees with the practice of traditional patriarchal discourses in our country?
- How much supportive the professional environment in Bangladeshi organizations in terms of organizational laws and policies, salary structure, working hour, administrative behaviour, inter employee relationship and so on for the female employees?

1.4 Justification. Women are the half of the total population of our country. Without creating a congenial working environment for the female employees in organizations, an inclusive development remains untouched for any socio-economic context. Since, the issue of working environment of the female employees in our country has repeatedly been accused as uncongenial; the study bears a lot of significances. The objective of the current study is to find out possible incongruity in the female working areas in Bangladesh. Therefore, the study will highlight some essential way out to make the female working environment more effective and easy going for them. Additionally, the result of the study will open new avenues to take into consideration for the researchers and the stakeholders related with this field. Thus, the study is time-friendly and valuable in terms of the significances and scopes.

1.5 Limitation. As an economically emerging country in the world, the working environment of the female employees in Bangladesh have taken into consideration by researchers and the stakeholders for last two decades very seriously. The female employment for a country like Bangladesh as economically emergent is considered as one of the key components in social and economic development. Unfortunately, the working environment of the female employees in Bangladesh is shown as uncongenial from different angles by the eyes of the observatory entities. Most of the previous studies regarding this issue focus inequity and inadequacy in the working environments for the female employees. So to say, their prescriptions and guidelines to restructure the attitude and environment postulate a huge scantiness in physical, social, and professional attire and attitude of the existing system. Therefore, a comprehensive study is necessary to rationalize the inappropriateness of the system and to enhance the supportive working environment for the female employees in the journey of our nation building.

2.0 Methodology

2.1. To assess the overall picture of the working environment of the female employees in Bangladesh, the researcher divides the working environment into three sub parts: physical environment, social environment, and professional environment. To get authentic data about the mentioned areas for the female employees, the researcher develops a survey questionnaire of about ten relevant questions. Three levels of performances: poor, good, and excellent are set against each question to respond by the participants. This questionnaire survey was conducted among sixty female employees from governmental services. After analysing and evaluating the responses, the researcher went through different mathematical equations and calculation to offer the percentages of available performances.

2.2 Study Area. The study utilized both primary and secondary data. The methodology was referred as a set of methods and principles used to perform a particular activity. The study followed personal interviews, telephonic interviews and key informants interview. Beforehand a semi structured questionnaire was prepared. Simple statistical analysis was done.

2.3 Primary Sources of Data Collection Primary data was collected from Road Transport and Highways Division which was gathered from the questionnaire exclusively prepared by the researcher.

2.4 Secondary Sources of Data Collection. Relevant quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from the secondary sources by reviewing available wave sites, journals, Magazines and newspapers.

2.4.1. Preservation of Research Information. For preserving question and answer the researcher used:

- a. Question form.
- b. Personal Computer.
- c. Notebook.

2.4.2. Data Gathering. Data gathering took place after preparing the questionnaire. Then according to the sampling plan interviews has been conducted for selected respondents.

2.4.3 Data Processing. After conducting the research and survey all data were encoded to the computer and have been analysed.

to the poor. Reports from international NGOs, such as Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), suggest that corruption in Bangladesh is especially endemic in social sectors such as education and health. Absenteeism of service providers is a serious problem in rural Bangladesh.

4.2 As described in the last national five-year plan part of the reason for weak administrative capacity is the weakness of the civil service system, but another reason is the heavily centralized service delivery mechanism. Local governments have little authority and at both central and local levels, day-to-day general administration is carried out by civil servants. Currently, the civil service is facing serious challenges including low quality of staff, poor remuneration, weak accountability and corruption. Several areas of intervention have been initiated to bring efficiency, transparency and accountability to public service management. The seventh Five-Year Plan's strategy for capacity development consists of four pillars:

- a. Strengthening the civil service
- b. Promoting devolution to local governments
- c. Building partnerships with the private sector and NGOs
- d. Improving the planning and budgeting process.

4.3 Government employees in Bangladesh belong to four categories: Class I Officers, Class II Officers, Class III Employees and Class IV Employees. Officers are also classified as 'gazetted' officers or 'non-gazetted' officers. Officers whose appointment, posting, transfer and promotion are notified in the government gazette are known as 'gazetted officers'. All Class I officers and some Class II officers are treated as gazetted officers. Of the Class I officers, some belong to the cadre services. 'Cadre service' means the organization of civil servants in well-defined groups, services or cadres. Cadre services generally exist in countries with a British colonial heritage and have specific regulations governing the number of positions, structure and recruitment/promotion. A cadre system entails organization of civil servants into semi-functional occupational groups or cadres. The cadre service in Bangladesh was first officially recognized in 1981, when the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) Recruitment Rules of that year were introduced. In comparison, non-cadre services generally do not have any definite structure of mobility either horizontally or vertically.

4.4. Some cadres are general, such as BCS (Administration), BCS (Foreign Affairs), BCS (Police), BCS (Food), BCS (Customs & Accounts), BCS (Information). Others are professional/technical, such as BCS (Health), BCS (General Education), BCS (Technical Education), BCS (Economics) and BCS (Fisheries). Originally there were 30 cadres in the BCS. In 1990, BCS (Secretariat) was merged with BCS (Administration). In November 2007, the lower

judiciary in Bangladesh was separated from the executive. As a result, BCS (Judiciary) has become a separate service known as Judicial Service and it is no longer a cadre of BCS.

5.0 GENDER EQUALITY CONTEXT

5.1. In 2008, Bangladesh ranked 116th in the Gender Development Index (GDI) of the UNDP's Human Development Index – below Pakistan, but above India. However, the pace of change merits attention, as gains for Bangladeshi women were made from a lower starting point than in other countries. Bangladesh has been catching up surprisingly quickly, given the modest pace of poverty reduction overall. The rapid achievement of lower fertility rates in Bangladesh is due to a combination of access to and latent demand for fertility control. With respect to maternal mortality, deaths per 100,000 live births more than halved in the 15-year period up to 2001, although they remain high (Nazneen et al., 2010).

5.2 A World Bank report credits government action in expanding service delivery with these rapid gains, noting that the proportion of women vaccinated against tetanus increased from around two thirds in the early 1990s to 85% a decade on, while ante-natal care access also increased. However, in general, skilled maternity and emergency care remains extremely limited. Further striking changes have been seen with respect to girls' education. Bangladesh had closed the gender gap in enrolment at the primary level by the end of the 1990s, ahead of the MDG targets and many comparator countries (Chowdhury et al., 2002). More girls than boys now enrol in secondary school, presumably largely because of the cash stipends given to all unmarried girls who meet minimum standards (Al-Samarrai, 2009).

6.0 INCREASED EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

6.1. One interesting recent development has been the sharp increase in women's formal labour force participation. Analysis of the 2005 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), the main source of nationally representative poverty data, concluded that, while the labour force as a whole had grown modestly and gradually at the start of the 2000s, women's wage employment increased considerably over the five-year period, growing at 4.3% each year between 2000 and 2005 (World Bank, 2008).

6.2. Some 60% of the increase in women's paid work during the 2000s was concentrated in urban areas and half in manufacturing sectors (Sultan, 2010). Over two million women are estimated to be employed in the garment industry, which dominates the Bangladesh manufacturing export sector. Given that garment factory careers may be short, many more than the current two million women documented are likely to have experienced this employment. There has also been

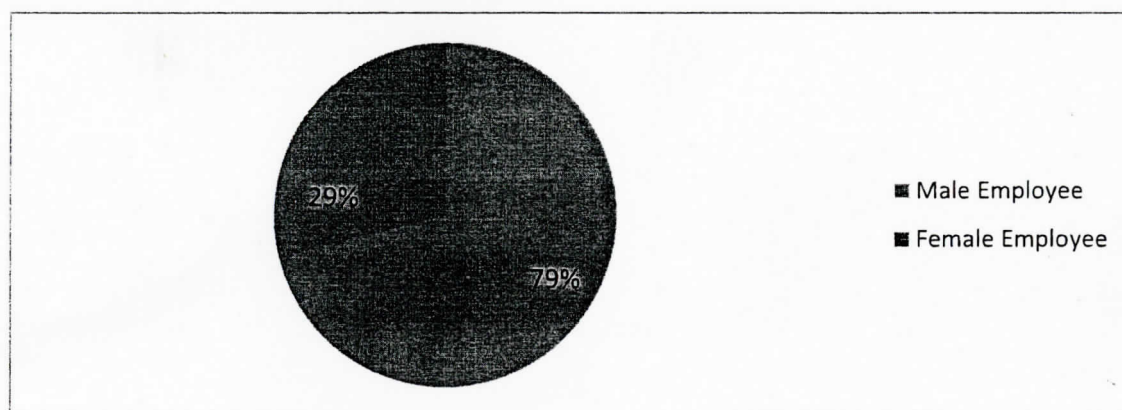
significant recent growth in new areas such as public sector employment, as teachers or health workers, and in self-employment and household enterprises (Sultan, 2010).

6.3. It is not only where and how many women are in paid work that matters: declining reliance on agricultural self-employment means women have been shifting into higher-productivity activities with longer working hours. Consequently, women's wages have increased much faster than men's since 2000 and the gender gap in income and wages has narrowed considerably (Nazneen et al., 2010).

7.0 WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

7.1 This section starts with an overview of the current gender balance and trends, followed by an analysis of constraints and internationally supported interventions addressing the Roads Transport and Highways Division as a whole. These sections are based primarily on available statistics, focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews with women civil servants as well as a desk review. The gender balance and key issues in the health, education and police sectors are reviewed in detail in the related annexes. In Roads and Highways Division participations of men and women are shown below:

Chart-1: Men and women participations In Roads Transport and Highways Division.



8.0 GENDER BALANCE BY SECTOR

8.1 In 2010, the CEDAW shadow report prepared by the Citizens' Forum on CEDAW found that the highest percentage of women (62%) was in MOWCA, followed by 22% in the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs and 14% in Education – in other words, the sectors traditionally highly feminized in many countries. Interestingly, the report also found that recent recruitment drives in the police have raised the number of women to around 2,000 in law Enforcement agencies. In terms of recruitment, more widely, more women are entering the BCS, as can be seen from the following table. In Roads and Highways Division participations women were also strongly agreed with gender balance.

8.2 Women Participation in the Civil Service

Table 8.2: Employees of Different Ministries, Directorates and Corporations by sex, 2014, 2015 and 2017

Ministry/ Department	2014			2015			2017		
	Women	Men	W/M*100	Women	Men	W/M*100	Women	Men	W/M*100
Ministries/Divisions	1795	8937	20.1	1864	8916	20.9	2123	9532	22.3
Department/Directorates	340738	718915	47.4	345164	727280	47.5	333726	729900	45.7
Divisional and Deputy Commissioners' Offices	3302	31384	10.5	3185	28603	11.1	3258	26446	12.3
Autonomous bodies/Corporations	24747	245620	10.1	28139	239242	11.8	29712	227601	13.1
Total	370582	1004856	36.9	378352	1004041	37.7	368819	993479	37.1

Source: Statistics of Civil Officers and Staff 2014, 2015 and 2017, MoPA

The participation of women employees in government service (government & autonomous) is presented in Table 10.03.1. It is observed from the table that in the year 2014, sex ratio of women to men was 36.9%. Such proportion was 37.7% in 2015 and 37.1% in 2017. It is notable that women ratio was the highest in departments/directorates (47.4%) and lowest in autonomous bodies/corporation (10.1%) in 2014. In 2015 and 2017, ratio of women to men was the highest in departments/directorates and the lowest in divisional and deputy commissioners' offices.

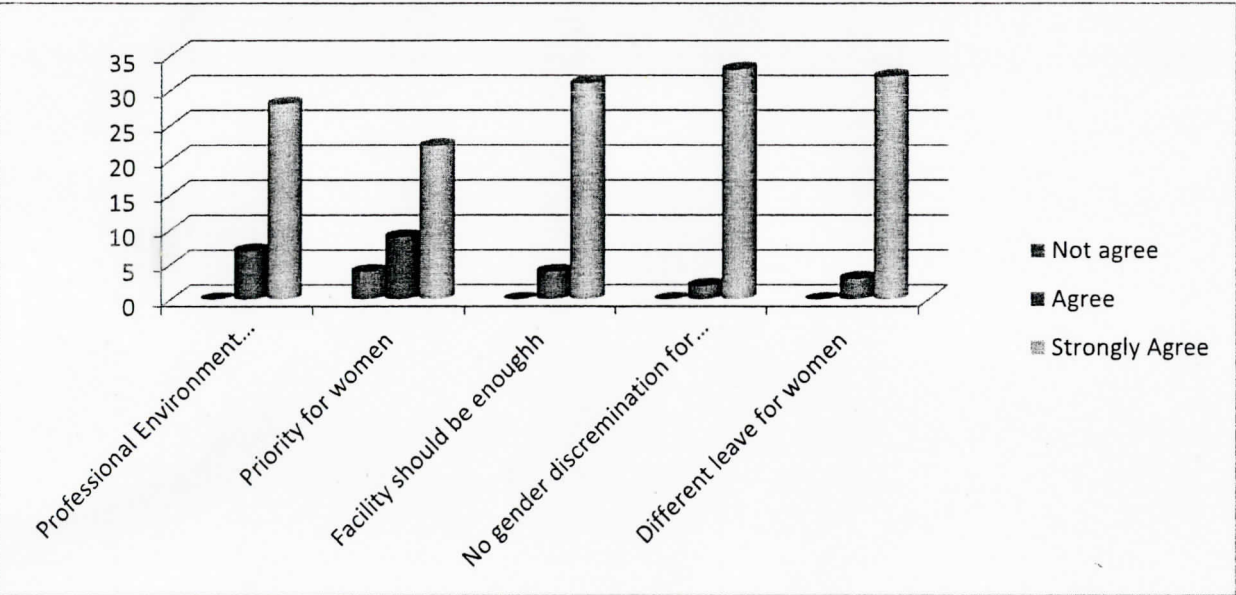
Table 8.3: Number of Women and Men Civil Officers and Staff in the Ministries, Directorates, Autonomous Bodies and Corporations, 2014, 2015 and 2017

officers and staff	Women	Men	Total	Women % of total	Women	Men	Total	Women % of total	Women	Men	Total	Women % of total	
2014					2015					2017			
Ministries/Divisions													
Class-1	610	2523	3133	19.5	619	2435	3054	20.3	710	2693	3403	20.9	
Class-2	370	1771	2141	17.3	401	1906	2307	17.4	430	1984	2414	17.8	
Class-3	415	2322	2737	15.2	424	2271	2695	15.7	516	2482	2998	17.2	
Class-4	400	2321	2721	14.7	420	2304	2724	15.4	467	2373	2840	16.4	
Total	1795	8937	10732	16.7	1864	8916	10780	17.3	2123	9532	11655	18.2	
Department/Directorates													
Class-1	13962	56502	70464	19.8	14654	58437	73091	20.0	17717	61584	79301	22.3	
Class-2	48146	42301	90447	53.2	52086	43662	95748	54.4	34770	45421	80191	43.4	
Class-3	237710	495613	733323	32.4	235293	503511	738804	31.8	238584	500899	739483	32.3	
Class-4	40920	124499	165419	24.7	43131	121670	164801	26.2	42655	121996	164651	25.9	
Total	340738	718915	1059653	32.2	345164	727280	1072444	32.2	333726	729900	1063626	31.4	
Divisional and Deputy Commissioners' Offices													
Class-1	383	1371	1754	21.8	462	1537	1999	23.1	536	1450	1986	27.0	
Class-2	2	357	359	0.6	1	272	273	0.4	2	228	230	0.9	
Class-3	1300	13679	14979	8.7	1247	12806	14053	8.9	1304	11495	12799	10.2	
Class-4	1617	15977	17594	9.2	1475	13988	15463	9.5	1416	13273	14689	9.6	
Total	3302	31384	34686	9.5	3185	28603	31788	10.0	3258	26446	29704	11.0	
Autonomous bodies/Corporations													
Class-1	8682	55784	64466	13.5	10259	60416	70675	14.5	11079	58912	69991	15.8	
Class-2	4522	45294	49816	9.1	4888	33549	38437	12.7	5361	29682	35043	15.3	
Class-3	7389	80564	87953	8.4	8418	76267	84685	9.9	8376	70251	78627	10.7	
Class-4	4154	63978	68132	6.1	4574	69010	73584	6.2	4896	68756	73652	6.6	
Total	24747	245620	270367	9.2	28139	239242	267381	10.5	29712	227601	257313	11.5	

9.0 SUPPORT POLICES AND SERVICES FOR AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

9.1 In the public sector employment, men and women enjoy the same benefits and amenities in all respects, including in pay, allowances, pensions and other financial benefits. However, as the PARC report (2000) reiterated the findings of previous reports (specifically the Public Administration Study Report of 1993 and Government that Works, 1996), massive improvements in working conditions are needed to attract women to the civil service. It suggested that an enabling environment should be created in jobs outside the capital by providing the following: Appropriate and secure accommodation and transport for field visits, Day-care centres, and health and education facilities for children and Allocation of separate toilets for women employees, security arrangements, etc. In Roads and Highways Division maximum female employees were asked regarding these issue and they responded strongly. A statistic is shown below:

Chart-2: professional Environment of Female Employees in Roads and Highways Division

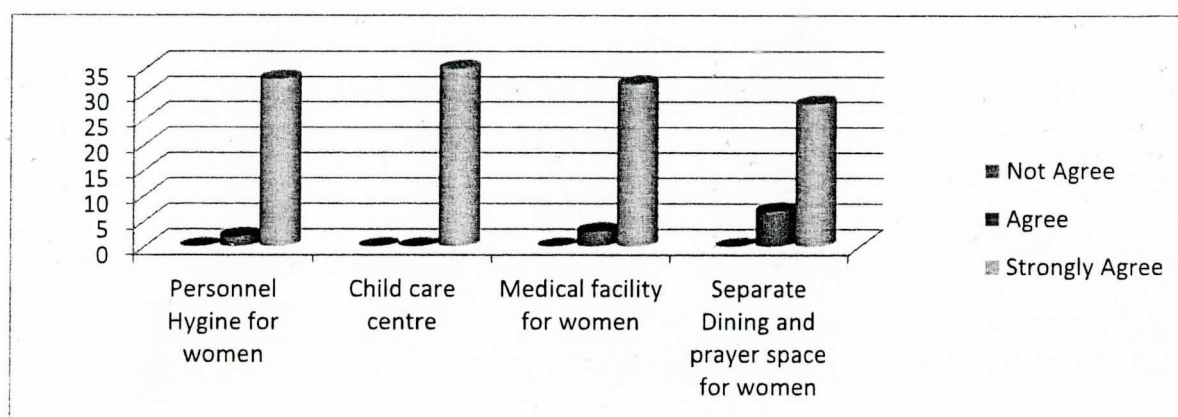


9.2 **Maternity and paternity leave.** The right to maternity leave has been assured by government and, indeed, was increased from four months to six months in 2011. This was in response to a proposal by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. There is also a circular providing 15 days of paternity leave for men. The responsiveness of government and recognition of men’s right to assume joint responsibility with women for their families are important. Women in the FGD discussions welcomed the recent increase and stressed the need for paternity leave so that men can help take care of new-borns and start to challenge gender stereotypes in the home. In Roads and Highways Division participations women were also strongly agreed with maternity and other leaves.

9.3 Childcare. Most government offices and facilities do not have childcare arrangements, although this is provided for in the Labour Act. Section 94 of the Bangladesh Labour Act (2006) stipulates that workplaces with more than 40 women should provide for separate childcare facilities for children up to six years of age, near the work- place with adequate light, space and fresh air. It also says that older children should be provided with a safe space to play outdoors. Because most public administration bodies have over 40 women, they should in principle have these facilities, but, as mentioned above, they do not (Sultan, 2010). Private day-care providers are very limited and there are only token government run day-care centres run by the Department of Women's Affairs in a few cities. It is important to understand why the employers and state are not able to provide the required childcare facilities and then to propose measure to address this basic requirement. In Roads and Highways Division participations women were also strongly agreed with separate childcare facilities for children up to six years of age, near the work- place with adequate light, space and fresh air.

9.4 Accommodation and Physical facilities. The Bangladesh Labour Act (2006) specifies that a separate washroom is required when there are 40 women employees or employers need to ensure adequate privacy and hygiene for women to use common toilets. This condition is not met in many workplaces, even in the Central Secretariat building. There is a need for a mechanism to embed this into any standard infrastructure plans and their official approval. The Labour Act also stipulates that a separate rest/sick/prayer room should be provided if there are over 25 employees (clause 93), but this too is generally absent. To respond to women's housing needs, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) has implemented projects to construct hostels for women in urban centres. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), the largest employer of women, also has a programme to improve working conditions of women, including accommodation. Police reform initiatives have similarly identified a need to improve the physical facilities of police stations to meet the needs of women clients (including prisoners) as well as of police officers. The model police stations have been designed to take into consideration the seating, accommodation and toilet facility needs of women constables and sub-inspectors. They include accommodation for three to five women. This has led to the drafting of guidelines for gender- sensitive police stations. In Roads and Highways Division participations women were also strongly agreed to have accommodation and toilet facility needs of women. Special medical facilities, child care centre, separate prayer room and dining are very much required for female employees in the office. In Roads and Highways Division all female employees are agree with the physical environment facilities. A graphical representation is shown below:

Chart-3: *physical environment facilities of female employees in Roads and Highways Division*



9.5 There has been a massive investment in health infrastructure with health centres and hospitals being upgraded to meet increased demand. However, equipment, accommodation and rooms for doctors have not been provided in a commensurate manner. Women in the FGDs and interviews with the Education and Health Cadres mentioned how important it is to have safe accommodation when they are posted away from their homes. The BCS General Education Association has taken up the issue so that college buildings must incorporate residential facilities for women.

10.0 Sexual harassment – Violence in the workplace

10.1 The Government Servants (Conduct Rules), 1979, Section 27 on the conduct or behaviour towards female colleagues states that 'no government servant shall use any language or behave with his female colleagues in any manner which is improper and goes against the official decorum and dignity of female colleagues.' (GOB, 1979, Rule 27a). The later High Court rulings around sexual harassment (discussed more fully below) specified that they should be read in conjunction with the Government Servants (Conduct) Rules. However, there is no way to know whether this provision is being used. Although there is now a discussion about the need for a Code of Conduct for civil servants, this is not mentioned in the Government Servants (Conduct) Rules, 1979, which are currently in force. The ILO is responsible for working with employers in the private and public sectors to address violence against women in the workplace under the joint UN programme on VAW. This project is addressing issues of violence; including sexual harassment in the workplace. Women civil servants at a workshop arranged by CSCMP in June 2010 felt that there is a need for wider dissemination of the provisions against sexual harassment and stronger enforcement of the provisions. The issue of sexual harassment especially in educational institutions and in the workplace has received increasing media coverage and reports of the suicide of young girls due to the humiliation endured. The sexual harassment of women in workplaces has not had the same kind of media coverage or public sympathy, although some research has been done on this

in the garment factory setting. In Roads and Highways Division participations women were also strongly agreed against sexual harassment and stronger enforcement of the provisions of law.

10.2 The Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) filed a writ petition in 2010 under Article 102 of the Constitution to formulate policies to protect women from sexual harassment in work-places/educational institutions and other public places and to take immediate steps to enact legislation to address sexual harassment. In response to this, the High Court ruled in May 2010 that any kind of physical, mental or sexual harassment of women, girls and children at their workplaces, educational institutions and at other public places, including roads, was a criminal offence, punishable by fines and/ or imprisonment.

11.0 Gender blindness and discriminatory attitudes

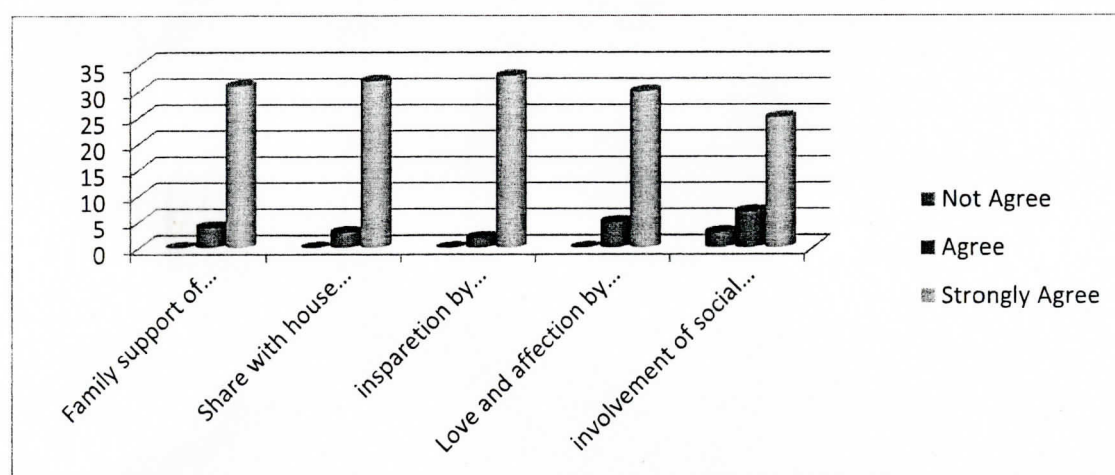
11.1 A senior official in the Department for Higher and Secondary Education said that they felt that an education cadre officer was first and foremost an education cadre official and that his or her sex was immaterial. Whilst this displays a certain neutrality and emphasis on merit, which are both positive, it also indicates 'gender blindness' in that the specific needs and contributions of women and men risk being overlooked. If not addressed, and given the underlying socio-economic bias in favour of men, there is a risk of gender-neutral policies inadvertently impacting negatively on women. In Roads and Highways Division participations women were also strongly agreed that gender blindness and discriminatory attitudes in the society should be abolished.

11.2 The interviews highlighted that women sometimes faced discriminatory attitudes, remarks and behaviour from male colleagues, and that traditional stereotypes resulted in their having to work harder than men to prove themselves. They mentioned remarks and jokes about their leaving early and watching the clock. The culture of long hours and staying after office hours is seen as positive, which disadvantages women with domestic duties. Taking maternity leave is seen as a privilege rather than an entitlement and women felt that they are seen as women first and officers second. This statement is not incompatible with the previous discussion in which women were considered officials first, with their sex immaterial; the issue is that equality does not mean sameness, so differences need to be understood and addressed. Other examples of discrimination include being overlooked for training due to supervisors assuming that they will not be able to go. Despite all this, however, one positive outcome of the interviews was that some respondents felt that the attitudes of senior men towards women in the civil service were gradually changing. This was partly as they, too, had wives and daughters engaged in professional work. One implication of this is that increasing numbers of women – especially in middle and senior positions of the BCS – could further generate momentum by engaging the support of their husbands and fathers.

12.0 Family support

12.1 The value given by families to women's work was seen as determining to a certain extent how well they can perform. Families' willingness to be mobile is one example, and sharing responsibility for rearing children is another. Recognition that the rest of the family and society (in the form of day-care and quality schooling) has a shared responsibility in this regard was felt to be important, as was It was emphasized by a number of the women in the FGDs that families must feel that the responsibility for children and the household is joint and can and should be shared. Along with the importance of moth- echoed, "Fatherhood" should be valued and stressed (FGD with women in Foundation Course BPATC). In Roads and Highways Division a survey was done to see the effect of family and society to female employees. All are positive regarding the common issue of women privileges. The effect of family and society in different women privileges of Roads and Highways Division are shown in the chart:

Chart-4: The effect of family and society in different women privileges of Roads and Highways Division



13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 The recommendations below are aimed at strengthening the public administration and the gender policy framework, building on progress to date. However, there is a window of opportunity at the policy level as well as in terms of programming. International technical and financial support remains important, as Bangladesh, despite having made great progress, is an LDC, and interventions should also begin to explore ways of tackling entrenched gender roles in both women and men.

Recommendation 1: Legislative and policy reform related to public administration.

13.2 A number of policies and acts need to be brought updated and made consistent with the national women's policy and national development plans. The draft Civil Service Act, currently

being finalized, and its bylaws, are a key piece of legislation and a priority, but the Police Act also needs updating. As well as explicitly including non-discrimination and gender equality principles, they should also include elements described below.

Recommendation 3: Institutional support to improve gender balance should focus on:

13.3 Improving availability and quality of sex-disaggregated data to enable the tracking of gender balance at various levels and work streams, as well as connected factors, such as training and dropout rates; this should all be publicly available to facilitate support from civil society and the international community. MOPA would have a key role to play in this regard. MOWCA would have a facilitating and follow-up role. The various line ministries would have to fully commit to collecting and using such data. Supporting senior management to demand, analyse and act on this information to achieve gender quotas and improve the gender balance, as well as with compulsory gender-sensitization training, based on a participatory needs assessment including men. Special measures should be taken to increase the number and quality of day-care facilities. These mechanisms could target those ministries and departments, with a greater interest in or immediate potential to move forward with this agenda, and the political support of top management should also be a criterion. Initiatives should be given weight and public support, as well as funding, by the prime minister and the international community.

Recommendation 4: Advocacy

13.4 There is a widespread need to sensitize civil servants, including senior managers, policy makers and the public, on the positive contribution women can make in terms of quality of services and outreach, as well as to their rights to equal opportunities and equal outcomes in terms of gender balance. Associations such as the Women's Civil Service Network and the Policewomen's Network should play a key role through newsletters, conferences and similar initiatives, and indeed these association's advocacy capabilities should be strengthened. Successful cases of women professionals and role models should be highlighted to motivate women as well as men. Strategic media campaigns with key messages along these lines could put the issue of gender balance in the PA on the public agenda and encourage more women to join the civil service. They could also liaise with movements working on gender through other issues or in other contexts to contribute to advancing gender equality overall and to contribute to a broad strategic new vision of gender equal society. The Ministry of Information could play a key role in such campaigns. More widely, MPs and political parties in general, should also be sensitized to the importance of increasing the proportion of women in decision-making in the PA.

14.0 CONCLUSIONS

14.1 The issue of gender equality in the public administration, or civil service, and specifically that of the gender balance, is not a new one in Bangladesh. Despite early recognition of the importance through policy measures, such as quotas, numbers remain low at senior levels. Civil service reform, which could be a catalyst for improvements in gender equality, is itself proving to be a very long-term process. The generally conservative organizational culture in the BCS, weak policy oversight and still limited awareness of the whole issue by staff would appear to mitigate against gender equality initiatives. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the political will demonstrated by the prime minister and some other ministers has helped to encourage greater willingness on the part of men and women to accept women in the civil service on equal terms, despite real or perceived differences in their competence depending on whether they join through quotas 'or' on merit. Certainly, the FGDs brought out amongst male colleagues that it is 'not done' to be openly critical of women, and whilst this may simply make discriminatory attitudes less obvious (and harder to tackle), it is a step in the right direction.

14.2 There are also pockets of good practice and supportive legislation, although weak implementation and lack of institutionalization undermine any systematic improvement. Specifically, quotas, intended as a positive measure, almost seem to act as obstacles. This whole issue needs urgent review and updating in line with international standards and experiences. Many basic human resource good practices such as career planning and performance-based promotions would benefit women and men and any special measures would need to be carefully analysed and executed to avoid perceptions of less competent women than men entering through quotas and recruitment drives. The study has brought out the importance of role models, special incentives and political will to break gender stereotypes, expand the boundaries of what is possible and bring in women to senior levels.

BPATC, Savar, Dhaka-1343
December 2020


12.12.2020
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Deputy Security
Participant
130th ACAD, BPATC

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সম্মতিপত্র

“Analyzing the working environment of government female employees in Bangladesh: A case study of Road Transport and Highways Division” শীর্ষক গবেষণা পরিচালনা করার জন্য আমি মোঃ সামীমুজ্জামান তথ্য সংগ্রহ করছি। এই জরিপে সরকারি মহিলা চাকরীজীবীদের জন্য কাজের পরিবেশ বিশ্লেষণের লক্ষ্যে মহিলা চাকরীজীবীদের মতামত এবং যে সকল প্রতিবন্ধকতা রয়েছে সে সম্পর্কিত তথ্য সংগ্রহ করা হবে। উল্লেখ্য, আপনার দেয়া তথ্য শুধু গবেষণার কাজে ব্যবহৃত হবে। এই সাক্ষাৎকার আনুমানিক ১০-১৫ মিনিট এর মধ্যে শেষ হবে বলে আশা করছি। আমি এই তথ্য সংগ্রহে আপনার সহযোগিতা কামনা করছি।

ক্ষতিপূরণঃ এই গবেষণাকর্মে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনাকে সরাসরি কোন ক্ষতিপূরণ/লাভ/সুবিধা দেয়া হবে না।

গোপনীয়তাঃ আপনার দেয়া তথ্য যথাযথভাবে গোপনীয় থাকবে এবং শুধু গবেষণার কাজে ব্যবহার করা হবে।

সম্ভাব্য ঝুঁকি: আমাদের ধারণা অনুযায়ী এই জরিপে অন্তর্ভুক্ত কোন প্রশ্নের উত্তরে কোন ঝুঁকি নেই। তা সত্ত্বেও যে সকল প্রশ্নের উত্তর দেয়া আপনার কাছে ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ বা অস্বাভাবিক মনে হবে সে সকল প্রশ্নের উত্তর আপনি চাইলে না দিতে পারেন।

স্বেচ্ছায় অংশগ্রহণ প্রত্যাহারঃ এই গবেষণায় আপনার অংশগ্রহণ সম্পূর্ণ স্বেচ্ছামূলক এবং আপনি চাইলে যে কোন সময় উত্তর দেয়া বন্ধ করতে পারেন।

আপনি কি তথ্য দিয়ে আমাদের গবেষণার কাজে সহযোগিতা করতে ইচ্ছুক?

১। হ্যাঁ (হ্যাঁ হলে পরবর্তী প্রশ্নে যান)

২। না (না হলে প্রশ্ন করা বন্ধ করুন)

সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণকারীর নাম	তারিখ
মোঃ সামীমুজ্জামান	

সেকশন-১: তথ্য প্রদানকারীর ব্যক্তিগত তথ্য		
১০১	নাম (ঐচ্ছিক):	
১০২	পদবী ও কর্মস্থল:	
১০৩	বয়স:	
১০৪	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:	
১০৫	বৈবাহিক অবস্থা:	

সেকশন-২: প্রশ্ন ও উত্তর					
পেশাগত পরিবেশ (Professional Environment)					
প্রশ্ন		আপনার মতামতের কলামে টিক চিহ্ন (✓) দিন			
		Disagree	Poorly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
১.	এটা প্রত্যাশিত যে, পেশাদার পরিবেশে (Professional Environment) কর্মচারীদের মেডিক্যাল সহায়তায় প্রয়োজনে দীর্ঘমেয়াদি স্বাস্থ্য বীমা সুযোগ সৃষ্টি করে।				
২.	অর্থনৈতিকভাবে সমৃদ্ধ প্রত্যাশী রাষ্ট্র হিসেবে বাংলাদেশে চাকুরীর ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা বিবেচনায় মেয়েদেরকে অগ্রাধিকার (Flexibility) দেয়া উচিত।				
৩.	একটি সংগঠনের নীতি এমন হওয়া উচিত যেখানে মেয়েদের চাকুরীর ক্ষেত্রে আদর্শ বেতন, নিয়মিত পদোন্নতি, উৎসব ভাতা অন্যান্য আনুসংগিক ভাতার নিশ্চয়তা থাকবে।				
৪.	সাংগঠনিক নীতি লিঙ্গ বৈষম্য দূরীকরণ, পদোন্নতির ক্ষেত্রে নিরপেক্ষ হবে।				
৫.	সাংগঠনিক নীতিতে নারী কর্মী/কর্মচারীদের জন্য অনুপস্থিতজনিত ছুটি, নৈমিত্তিক ছুটি ও মাতৃত্বকালীন ছুটি অন্তর্ভুক্ত থাকবে।				
অবকাঠামোগত পরিবেশ (Physical Environment)					
৬.	এটা প্রত্যাশিত যে, নারীর বাস্তব কর্ম পরিবেশ সৃষ্টির জন্য একটা সংগঠন যথাযথ ও নিরাপদ স্বাস্থ্যকর নেপকিন, জীবানুমুক্ত সামগ্রীর সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করবে।				
৭.	মহিলা সহকর্মীদের জন্য উত্তম কর্ম পরিবেশ নিশ্চিত করতে একটি সংগঠনে শিশু পরিচর্যা কেন্দ্র,শিশুদের জন্য খাবার কক্ষের ব্যবস্থা থাকবে।				
৮.	মহিলাকর্মীদের নিরাপদ কর্মস্থল নিশ্চিত করার অংশ হিসেবে একটি সংগঠন/সংস্থা প্রয়োজনীয় মাস্ক, নিরাপদ গ্লাস, হেলমেট, প্রয়োজনীয় চিকিৎসা সামগ্রীর প্রাপ্যতা নিশ্চিত করবে।				
৯.	গুণগত কর্মপরিবেশ নিশ্চিত করার অংশ হিসেবে একটি সংস্থা তার কর্মচারীদের জন্য খাবার স্থান (Dining Place) এবং প্রার্থনার স্থান নির্ধারণ করে দেয়া প্রয়োজন।				

প্রশ্ন	আপনার মতামতের কলামে টিক চিহ্ন (✓) দিন			
	Disagree	Poorly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
১০. অফিসে যাতায়াতের কার্যকর ব্যবস্থার অংশ হিসেবে একটি সংস্থা মহিলা কর্মীদের জন্য সর্বোচ্চ পরিবহন সুবিধা নিশ্চিত করবে।				
১১. নিরাপদ ও স্বাস্থ্যসম্মত শৌচাগার সুবিধা নিশ্চিত করবে।				
১২. উত্তম কর্ম পরিবেশ নিশ্চিত করার লক্ষ্যে অফিস কক্ষের প্রয়োজনীয়তা নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।				
পারিবারিক ও সামাজিক পরিবেশ (Familial and Social Environment)				
১৩. শারীরিক ও মানসিক মনোবল বৃদ্ধির অংশ হিসেবে একজন নারী কর্মচারীকে তার পরিবার সর্বদা, সহায়তা, সহানুভূতিশীল দৃষ্টিতে দেখবে।				
১৪. একজন নারী কর্মীর পরিবারের অন্যান্য সদস্যরা তাকে গৃহকার্যে সাহায্যকরবে যাতে তার দাপ্তরিক কাজের বাইরে কাজের চাপ হ্রাস পায়।				
১৫. মহিলা কর্মীদের মানসিক মনোবল চাঙ্গা রাখার বিষয়ে তাদের স্বামী/পরিবারের অন্যান্য সদস্যগণ সর্বদা তাদেরকে উৎসাহ প্রদান করবে।				
১৬. নারী কর্মীরা তাদের পরিবারের নিকট হতে যথাযথ সম্মান, স্বীকৃতি এবং ভালবাসার দাবিদার।				
১৭. চাকুরিতে নারীদের অংশগ্রহণ ত্বরান্বিতকরণ এবং নারীদের অংশগ্রহণমূলক সামাজিক উন্নয়ন বৃদ্ধির বিষয়ে সামাজিক সংগঠন/প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলোর আওতায় বিভিন্ন সেমিনার, সিম্পোজিয়াম, সামাজিক মিলন মেলার আয়োজন করা প্রয়োজন।				

প্রিয় অংশগ্রহণকারী/সুধী,

শুভেচ্ছা নিন। বাংলাদেশে নারীদের কর্মপরিবেশ যথাযথ কিনা তা মূল্যায়নের জন্য “Analyzing the working environment of government female employees in Bangladesh: A case study of Road Transport and Highways Division” শীর্ষক একটি গবেষণা কর্ম গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে। ১৩০তম উচ্চতর প্রশাসন ও উন্নয়ন কোর্সের (ACAD) অংশ হিসেবে উক্ত গবেষণা কর্মটি গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে। গবেষণা কর্ম সুষ্ঠুভাবে সম্পাদনের জন্য একটি প্রশ্নোত্তরিকা (Question & Answer) প্রণয়ন করা হয়েছে।

প্রত্যাশা করা যাচ্ছে যে, অংশগ্রহণকারীবৃন্দ পরবর্তি পাতায় সংযুক্ত প্রশ্নোত্তরিক পড়ে বাস্তব ও নিরপেক্ষ মতামত প্রদান করবেন। যা একটি কার্যকর গবেষণা কর্ম সম্পাদনে সহায়ক হবে।

বিনীত

(মোঃ সামীমুজ্জামান)