

# THE NEED FOR CAREER PLANNING IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

*Golam Mostakim\**

## Introduction

Most of the human beings in the society have to do some job to earn their living. They depend on different organizations for the purpose. Sometimes, the organization is the state itself. Sometimes, organizations in the private sectors also offer a livelihood. But there is difference between a private sector organization and a public sector organization. The tendency prevailing in the society is especially in the developing countries that people are more interested to associate themselves with the public sector organizations for different reasons. This is so because people think that they have a better career prospect in public sector organizations. This way, a great pressure is continuously being created on the public sector organizations.

In this essay an attempt will be made to show that people opt for public sector organizations because they think that public sector organizations can offer them a guaranteed career in their working life and this creates pressure on it. By career we understand how a

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\* Deputy Secretary, Government of Bangladesh.

person will move upward in his service life, what arrangements are made by the organization that he is serving. What promotion the man will get at what interval of time is also considered. For a long time career planning has been used as a managerial tool for achieving the basic organizational goals of economy and efficiency. It has been seen that it is easier to achieve the organizational success if the most qualified people are identified for the purpose.

It has been recently found out that man looks for the satisfaction of his creative drive and for self-respect and efficiency. Career planning tries to ensure that the talents of individuals are utilized and both the individuals and the organizations are made complementary to one another. Where this is done, both the organizations and the individuals can hopefully look after their respective interests. To put the perspective succinctly, "Individual Career Planning is a process of clarifying personal goals, values, needs, work styles, preferences and ability. Organization career management is a system of supportive activities and processes for matching these individual considerations with future organizational needs and opportunities." (Brace & Smith, 1982 : 465)

### **Pressures on Public Sector Organizations**

Public service especially in the developing countries is still the most choiceable career for the young graduates. Because in this area, job security, career prospect, social prestige and a brotherhood among the colleagues are available. In Bangladesh, Public Service Commission recruits the personnel for public service through nationwide competitive examination. This remains an avenue of service where new entrants can expect a good service career. Once a young graduate enters into the machinery of cadre service, he can hope to climb up the career ladder smoothly if nothing unusual happens to him. On the other hand, career prospects are still not so bright in the private sector as it has very limited area of operation in developing countries.

In public service, duties are service oriented. So the performance cannot always be quantified. On the other hand, private sector enterprises are production oriented. So the performance of an employee can be quantified and he may be held responsible for his individual performance. But in the public service, job is normally a collective responsibility and it is a machinery that one tries to protect its interests at all costs.

There is a limited number of posts in the public service and the recruitment procedure takes more than a year as the competitive examinations are not held regularly. In Bangladesh, the officers were not recruited regularly as a result of which there were anomalies in the services and officers could not be promoted because their number was higher than the available number of posts in the higher grades. This puts pressures on the government.

In public service, posts at the top are also few. Up to the mid level, the employees can normally come up after a respected period of service. But the top positions in public service is always under pressure. This creates frustration and inefficiency in the public service. But since there is security of the job, employees in the government service continue to do their job in spite of frustration along with many other difficulties.

## **Causes of Pressures on Public Sector Organizations**

### **Privatization**

Public sector corporations in many developing countries attract the young men and women for jobs. In many Third World Countries the expatriates during colonization controlled the trade and foreigners owned commerce and the industrial enterprises. But after the independence, in or around fifties many developing countries especially in Africa and Asia nationalized these industries and local people took charge of these industrial enterprises.

Inexperienced and undereducated persons got the managerial positions in industrial enterprises in their countries resulting in bad management and lower production. But these managers could not be replaced as there were no proper substitutes for them. Along with improper management, there was also rampant corruption at all levels. These brought heavy losses to these nationalized industries and had adverse effects on the national economy. These ailing industries then had to be subsidized from the fragile government funds. In Bangladesh after independence in 1971 almost all the jute mills, textile mills and other industrial enterprises were nationalized and a special service namely Industrial Management Service was introduced to run these nationalized industries. But like many other developing countries, the service personnel could not run these industries properly due to and proper training. As a result these industries start being denationalized from the early 80s and Industrial Management Service was abolished in 1982 and these officers were inducted in the regular government cadre service.

The capacity to absorb persons into the nationalized industries went out of the hands of the government. The same thing happened to the nationalized banks and insurance companies. These financial institutions were also privatized due to structural adjustment programme further limiting the scope of employment in the public sector. This has created pressure on the remaining public sector corporations. Though these organizations were semi-government they still could absorb some of the aspiring graduates for employment.

Before privatization these organizations had actually more personnel than really required due to various reasons, political reason being the most obvious. Though, that was bad for the performance of these enterprises, it had a positive effect on the society with regard to employment. In many developing countries,

the people believe and expect that government will ensure their employment. After finishing their education they simply wait to get a job in the public service. They normally do not try to start a petty business as the credit facilities are not encouraging. Moreover, they show little eagerness to join the private sector organizations. This is possible because other earning members of the family give the unemployed younger members a chance to try for a public service job. But in development countries the situation is quite reverse. It is the personal responsibility of an individual to find out employment for him all. That is why activities in this regard are taken over by the other agencies than the state. In comparison with the public sector, private sector offers better wages and fringe benefits. But the pension and retirement benefits in public sector are far better than those of the private sector. This also inspires many persons to go for jobs in the public sector organizations.

### **Decentralization**

Decentralization of administration has been a very popular term in developing countries. In Bangladesh, decentralization of administration was initiated after 1982. The lowest unit of administrative structure was given a new impetus by creating a post of an elected representative to supervise and control the activities of officials of different departments at the local level. Many new departments were created to bring a change in the lives of the rural people and the people were to be associated with the development activities of the government. Participative management was given due consideration.

Due to creation of further posts, a pressure was created naturally on the government. A large number of officers were recruited within a very short time sacrificing quality. But due to decentralization, many mid-level offices were transferred from the capital city. As this mid-level offices with posts remain outside the

central secretariat, promotion prospects in these offices will be static causing an added pressure on the public service. As the lower level of officers working in the decentralized administrative offices will naturally find it difficult to get further promotion, this will create dissatisfaction among the public service and that jeopardizes the development activities initiated by the government.

As a large number of officers have been recruited within a very short time, career planning of these officers has proved to be very difficult task, because, the top positions in the public sector are always a very few. Thus when these officers gain age and experience for promotion serious dislocation in the career management occurs because many are eligible for promotion against a very few opportunities.

Though there is decentralization, the nature of work in the central secretariat and outside the secretariat is quite different. So when the personnel join the secretariat after serving in the rural areas, they find it difficult to adjust themselves with the new environment of working conditions. That too creates an adverse effect on the career of these officers.

Decentralization also takes away some posts from the centre of the government to its wider jurisdiction. So the centre of the government suffers from a shortage of officers and that creates a pressure on the government to perform its day to day affairs.

### **Career Planning in Public Sector Organization**

When the people join public sector organizations they think that organization will do everything for the smooth functioning of their working life and also for the development of their career. The organization also keeps provision for the career development and self-actualization of its employees. After recruiting the personnel for the public service, they are given foundation training

comprising the basic issues of public administration, development economics and governmental system in Bangladesh. Then they are given the professional training according to the departments they will be serving. Mid-level officers are also given training on the implementation techniques of the government policy and recommendations. Moreover, the top public service personnel are given training on the formulation of policy and its impact on the general mass and economy of the country.

As a large number of personnel working in the public sector organizations and lack of adequate training facilities, they normally do not get equal opportunities for training. Sometimes, some of the public sector employees are not released for training by their controlling officers because substitute are not placed for the persons leaving for training. This creates a dislocation in the training management for the employees. Sometimes, the employees who are well posted and think for genuine reasons that training will not bring any change in their service career they may not be interested for training. Due to lack of resources, internal and foreign training cannot be arranged for the employees who as a result do not get necessary skills and experience for their career development. When the questions come for promotion the employees cannot be promoted due to lack of skills. This creates a pressure on the public sector organizations.

### **Computerization**

Now a days computerization is being introduced in the public sector organizations. Technology offers many advantages. It makes persons more efficient in discharging their duties. But due to introduction of new technology mid-level employees tend to lose jobs in public sector organizations. The lower level employees are

unskilled and find it very difficult to go up as the mid-level due to few positions. Moreover, the mid-level personnel may also find it difficult to learn the new technological techniques and ultimately change their career causing a pressure on the public sector organizations.

Top management of the public sector organizations always looks after the interests of the higher-ranking employees working in the organizations. Though they can understand that introduction of new technology can cause redundancy still they have to do it.

Before the introduction of computer technology, data was collected in the traditional way by the interviewers and data collectors. Then another group of employees carried out collection. Different persons also did data processing and data analyses. When a top executive of an organization, would require data for specific purpose, he asked the immediate man working under him. The order would pass through the layers down to the data collector. But with introduction of computers a simple operator is sufficient to do all the tasks regarding data collection. And the top executives who know the use of computers can do the same by himself.

It is a fact that computers make some people redundant in the organizations, though there are many positive aspects of computers. Due to computerization, middle managers are losing job. In developing countries, there is a strong opinion against the introduction of computers especially in the public sector organizations. But due to international pressure and to cope up with modern technology computers are being introduced in the public sector organizations limiting the scope of employment there and it causes pressures on their organizations.

## **Conclusion**

It is true that people value career and when they join an organization, they expect a sound and progressive career there. To ensure career prospects in public sector organization, governments in developing countries and especially Bangladesh should change its training policies. The training programmes should be more pragmatic, practical and make the trainees achieve necessary skills to do the future activities in the organization. The employees should also be able to implement the new policies and execute the new programmes initiated by the government. And by changing the training policies and programmes public sector organizations can make its employees more capable of performing their duties with a view to going up the career ladder in the organizations.

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