Good Governance Crisis in Bangladesh Civil Service: Ways for Improvement

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Abstract

Intentions Good Governance is to get complete progress of a state. Numerous limitations stay as blockades for instituting good governance. Good governance is not only a standard goal for civil service, but also a degree of brilliance for the government on the whole. Therefore, civil service would be questioned to sustain professional brilliance with more impartially and transparently in all of their dealings and react with honesty to the needs and demands of the people. Thus, attaining comprehensive objective of public interest becomes extremely vital. This has need of a people oriented and value considerate approach. For many years the traditional public administration has been in dominating position. There needs advanced views, thoughtful work, commitment, and effectiveness. This paper attempts to find out the loopholes of civil service against the standard of good governance and suggest some possible solution.

Key Words: Good Governance, Civil Service, Bangladesh

Introduction

The civil service presents a grim scenario. The civil administration has become an ineffective instrument of governance where politicization has destroyed the expected level of efficiency, faulty recruitment procedure marred the expected level of competence and the apparent rulebound framework followed by the civil service does not allow the practitioners to exercise the little creativity left within them. The result is a decline in the „thinking capacity“ of the government (Jahan & Shahan, 2008). Bangladesh needs a civil service of high quality and integrity also for mobilizing and utilizing its domestic resources. This requires innovative ideas, serious effort, dedication, and efficiency. Urgent reforms are therefore necessary so that these qualities can be restored and fostered (Kim & Monem, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the Bangladesh civil service for further development.

The paper presets good governance as a framework to overcome the ills that afflict the civil service and contains some prescriptions in the area of good governance. It is believed that the civil service will become efficient and effective if these prescriptions are adhered to.

Good Governance

Generally Governance denotes ‘how people are ruled, how the affairs of the state are administered and regulated as well as a nation’s system of politics and how these...
function in relation to public administration and law’ (Mills and Serageldin, 1991).

According to Webster’s dictionary ‘governance’ means ‘the act of process of governing specifically authoritative direction and control’. Governance is a comprehensive concept that government, state, and regime, and is the interaction between the organizations and individuals in civil society. Another definition puts it as, ‘a process whereby elements in society wield power, authority and influence and enact policies and decisions concerning public life and social uplift’ (Rahman, 2006).

Governance is regarded as the workout of monetary, administrative and political specialist to accomplish a state’s activities at very levels. Governance can be defined through two aspects, one focuses on positive aspects and another focuses on negative aspects. Such as: (1) Good governance and (2) Poor governance. Good governance tells us about an ideal governing arrangement that is expected for political, economic, social and cultural expansion of a country. It is the ideal direction of government that works best to attain self-sufficiency, sustainable development and social justice (Ferdous, 2013).

A World Bank booklet cogently summarized the major symptoms of poor governance. These are:
1. Disappointment to create a clear parting between the public and the private therefore a propensity for private gain from public resources;
2. Unable to institute an expectable structure of rule and administrative behavior conducive to development or uncertainty in the presentation of rules and laws;
3. Implementation of rules, systems, authorizing requirements and consequently onwards, which obstruct, working of markets and inspires rent seeking behavior;
4. Importance, uneven, with the development, causing in a misdistribution of properties;
5. Disproportionately narrow grounded or lack of transparency in decision making.

The other symptoms of poor governance are “excessive costs, poor service to the public and failure to achieve the aims of policy” (Islam, 2013).

Good governance, in contrast to poor governance, focuses on creating and sustaining conditions that are conducive to good living. The vital features of good governance are: (a) promotion of open and pluralistic societies; (b) strengthening of transparent, accountable, efficient and effective national government; (c) reinforcement of the rule of law, including fair and accessible legal and judicial system; (d) promotion of an independent media and dissemination of information; (e) anticorruption initiatives; and (f) efforts to reduce excessive military expenditure (OECD, 1992).

Existing Condition of Bangladesh Civil Service
Applying good governance concept as a framework to improve civil service in Bangladesh would require creation of a
congenial environment. Broadly, this means that democratization of the polity, improvement in the human rights situation, progress in the participatory process and competence of the government are required. But, the discussion below shows that congenial environment for good governance does not exist in Bangladesh (Khan, 2007). The civil service remains totally inadequate, ineffective, corrupt and out-of-tune with the present reality. Successive major administrative reform measures have been resisted and consequently not been implemented (Khan, 1998a). Bureaucratic culture demonstrates both systemic rigidities and behavioral dysfunctions of bureaucrats. These are: excessive reliance on hierarchy, elaborate formal rules and regulations, excessive control, lack of trust in subordinates, diffusion of accountability through overlapping checks and balances, and a loss of accountability and control. Other dysfunctional aspects of bureaucratic behavior include: centralization of authority, multiple layers of decision making, a regulatory modus operandi, and systemic lack of trust, lack of adequate public accountability, lack of commitment and lack of an incentive structure (Khan, 2002). Another issue is that it is a highly centralized decision-making system and focused mostly on, performing regulatory functions. Given the elite status of public administrators, many dysfunctions have also crept into the public administration system like alienation from people, lack of service orientation, perpetuation of corruption, resistance towards change and indifference to performance measurement. These are all reinforced by the lack of political commitment to bring substantial changes and persistent resistance of major reforms by civil servants to maintain the status quo. In an environment where the pressure is more on maintaining the status quo instead of focusing on developmental priorities, the process of improving the governance becomes long and frustrating. Corruption has become a part and parcel of the daily lives of citizens and seems like there is no escape from this menace. A recent survey on corruption in South Asian Countries found that Bangladesh is one of the most corruption-prone country (Khan & Naziz, 2013). A general impression conveyed by the politicians and civil servants is that corruption is viewed quite clearly as ‘a way of life’. According to them, some common types of corruption in Bangladesh are: Ghoosh or Bribe, Tadbir or Pursuing Bakshish etc. Gift-giving another form of corruption is part of negotiation and relationship building. The other forms are contract steering kickback, misuse of public asset abuse of travel expenses and abuse of portable assets etc. (Rahman, 2014).

Ways of Achieving Good Governance in Bangladesh Civil Service

This segment covers patterns of reforms that may bring proper administrative system and also falls in the framework of good governance concept.

A Clear Mission for the Civil Service

In the civil service arena, a mission statement aid, to launch a strong way of
intelligence and promise for civil servants employed in diverse parts within an organization. There are numerous benefits of devising a clear mission statement for the civil service. These: (a) inaugurate a joint vision for public administration arena; (b) support government servants to make clear in their personal attentions what the task of the organization is; (c) deliver emphasis for public servants in attaining organizational objectives; (d) inspire amongst the civil servants a sense of belonging to the institute; (e) offer an agenda with which to govern objectives and more specific intentions; and (f) offer a perfect speech for the common people of the organization's motives for presence (Khan, 2009). Familiarizing the mission statement of the civil service to present requirements and confirming that its central values and principles encounter the shifting of public expectations is acute for guaranteeing good governance.

**A work-oriented culture**

In Bangladesh a work-oriented culture needs to be nurtured that encourages, supports and respects reform. Vision for the future is very important here. There is a crying need to look at the civil service from the perspective of the nation’s progress and development. Partisan attitude and placating sectarian interest will not help. There must be a clear and unambiguous commitment of the political leadership to uphold the merit principle in all aspects of the civil service.

**Dominance of Merit**

Merit principle should be used as the sole criterion on which all decisions pertaining to the civil service needs to be taken. Meritorious civil servants must be encouraged by giving them accelerated promotion, appropriate training, higher emoluments and choice postings.

**Reform activity on regular basis**

Reform exercise should be a regular activity. These exercises need to be directed by extraordinarily talented civil servants with ideas and ability and who are not afraid to argue and push for their cause in the face of difficulty and opposition.

**Abolishing Corruption**

Abolition of corruption must be the state’s number-one concern taking into consideration the always-growing prospect of political and organizational corruption and diverse effects on the people at-large. It essentials to be anticipated by all that abolition of corruption is merely imaginable if solid political assurance be present. Lack of solid political assurance, administrative replacement, a lively and an operative civil society, checking corruption is a very hard-nearly unmanageable job (Khan, 2003).

**Citizen-Oriented Services**

The assessment of citizen-oriented services be influenced by together on the role and presentation of the service suppliers such as The public servants and as well on the fulfillment of service receivers—the citizens. Grounded in the value of customer or consumer rights, the citizens are now thought to be treated as clients. The administration had better, in place of playing an interventionist role in various sectors, is advised to redefine its role.
Representation of Women
In Bangladesh, women constitute more or less half of the whole population and signify nearly half of its potential. Consequently, socioeconomic progress cannot be rightly attained without the women’s dynamic participation and fair representation at every level in society. Women are in behind position financially, socially and traditionally in the custom bound Bangladeshi social order. The executive ranked positions are usually employed by men. The program for gender parity must be evident demarcated and an inclusive policy on women, containing the ideologies of admittance and parity in public sector employment and career development essentials to be formulated and executed in discussion with the stakeholders (Jehan, 2011).

Quality Service Delivery
It is a horrible need of the current time and will remain to occupy a crucial place in any upcoming reform program in contemporary years. Growing importance given to these terms is the effect of modification in the mentality of clients of public service. Service quality findings are determined by such issues as consistency, sensitivity, capability, right of entry, consideration, communication, trustworthiness, safety, understanding the consumer and presentation. Thus, all these matters need to keep in consideration.

Partnership with Private Sector
The public administration of Bangladesh has up to now managed soundly fine with the appearance of substitute service delivery, providing organizations, for example Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Voluntary Organizations (CVOs). Public administration functioning within the outline of the governance has effectively worked together with these organizations. Public service delivery at local level by mutually civil servants and representatives of local government has enhanced through the participation of various third sector organizations. It is needed to give more concern to this collaborative effort.

Conclusion
Good governance outline is an emergent precedence for the international community. It can be measured more practical for fulfill the public needs, endorsing effectiveness and progress of a state. It is a multidimensional thought with broader implications for the civil service all over the world and including our state “Bangladesh”. Good governance is at the present perceived of by theoreticians and specialists in addition by residents as a dependable outline to observe measure and assess the presentation of civil servants. The Good Governance agenda can be used to create civil servants accountable and transparent also. The recommendations delivered above essential to be given thoughtful consideration by policy creators and policy developers in Bangladesh. By doing thus, in Bangladesh- the civil service can be
restructured in such a method to facilitate it to good work for the common people.

References


