

## TOP MANAGERS IN SECRETARIET AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION-AN ANALYSIS OF TRENDS.

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“Administrative capacity” rightly observed the World Bank Development Report 1987 “is limited in every country; in some developing countries; it is the scarcest resource of all”. One of the important ways to enhance administrative capacity is to ensure an adequate flow of efficient administrators at the top. Top managers are important not only because they have a hand in day-to-day functioning of the machinery but also because they shape the machinery itself. In developing countries like Bangladesh top managers must act as the driving force of change. An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of top managers is essential for our understanding of administration in Bangladesh.

There are four types of top managers in Bangladesh. First, the secretaries who are the head of the Ministries in Bangladesh. Secondly, the heads of statutory public authorities who run state-owned enterprises. Thirdly, top managers of directorates or attached departments, which execute regulatory and development functions on behalf of the government. Finally, the Deputy Commissioners who act as the head of law and order, revenue and development administration at sub-national level. This paper focuses only on the top managers at secretariat and district level. The main reason for concentrating on these two groups is that the members of administrative cadre man these posts of what is sometimes called “amateur generalists”. Much of top managers in two other areas are specialists who follow different rules of recruitment, training and promotion. The old elitist cadres built on fast track promotions in Pakistan days have virtually disappeared. There are speculations about the suitability and effectiveness of new top managers at district and secretariat level. These changes at top level managers may be best understood in terms of an analysis of trends in academic background, training and the tenure of these officers.

The main purpose of this study is to highlight the changes that have taken place in the top management in secretariat and district administration since the birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Prior to the emergence of Bangladesh, top management of the secretariat and district level, was the exclusive preserve of amateur-generalists who were very often described as the steel-frame of the administration. In recent years old-elitist cadres based on fast track promotions have virtually disappeared. Generalist administrators who were recruited after the birth of Bangladesh now provide the new leadership. These administrators differ from their previous counterparts in respect of recruitment, training and the tenure.

This paper seeks to analyze the changes in top management of Bangladesh Civil service. The analysis is done for the period 1972 to 2006. It is based on the PDS (Personal Data Sheet) of the officers maintained in the Ministry of Establishment. From the available data, three characteristics of top managers are analyzed. First, the personal characteristic of officers including their home district and educational background is examined. Secondly, their training and experience in feeder posts is examined. Finally their average tenure in the posts is analyzed.

This study is divided into six sections. The introductory chapter provides an outline of the study. The second chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section summarizes the findings of the existing literature on the top management in district and field administration in Bangladesh. The second section identifies the key issues for further study. While the final section describes the methodology of the study. The third chapter describes the duties of the Deputy Commissioners and examines the data on trends in their educational qualification, training and experience in feeder posts of Deputy Commissioners. The fourth chapter analyses the role of the Secretaries of the Ministries in administration and summarizes the trends of their personal characteristics and training for their job. The fifth chapter analyses the trends in the tenure of top managers in the district and in the secretariat in Bangladesh. This provides useful insight into the continuity of leadership in administration. The sixth chapter summarizes the main findings and recommendations of the study and also identifies the areas for further research.