

An Analytical Study of Policy, Politics and Bureaucracy Regarding Meritocracy in the Selection of Head for the Federal Government Institutions

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate meritocracy in the selection of top positions in the federal government offices from the context of politics, bureaucracy, and selection policies. This research uses the five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to disagree. The data was collected from the officers working regularly in the different ministries of the federal government through a personally administered survey questionnaire with a 78% response rate. An assortment of key findings was noted among which the most prominent one is the issue of meritocracy which affects the right selection of public servants in the government institutions. Secondly, it was also noted that the recruitment and selection policies are also affecting the effectiveness of right selection. Thirdly, one of the important findings of this study was the political impact on equality of gender-based selection. It has been concluded in this study as highlighted in earlier studies that relevant authorities have to pay attention to balancing gender equality by avoiding political influence. Furthermore, this research suggests conducting further research to analyze other aspects of underlying factors causing gender inequality in the selection of bureau heads.

Keywords: Bureaucracy, Gender Selection, Meritocracy, Politics in Selection, Recruitment Policies

Introduction

Recruitment and selection are the gateway of the people to become employees of an organization, thus has higher significance among all other functions of the organization. Recruitment and selection is a managerial activity that has a wider impact beyond the organizational settings, especially on the social justice which connotes with the adherence of maintaining equal opportunities to all the individuals in a society and active labor force (Taylor, 2006; Jewson & Mason, 1968). It becomes more significant to see social justice from the perspective of treating the gender on an equal basis in the government controlled institutional heads' selection. The reason for this social justice is that government institutions run the basic structure of governance of the socio-economic development of any country. Earlier studies have always tried to find out the issues related to the merit-based selection and have identified dozens of issues related to the meritocracy. Meritocracy is an essential aspect of social justice that guarantees equal employment opportunities. This in turn ensures workforce diversity that is considered vital for effective decision making in achieving organizational objectives effectively (Weidekamm & Willer, 2012).

In practice, there are two recruitment and selection systems in civil services, one that promotes meritocracy that follows a prescribed selection mechanism and the other at the mercy of political actors of the government (Webber's and Wilson's 1978). Adherence to merit almost resolves the issue of workforce diversity and social justice in an organization (Taylor, 2006). Meritocracy is the only solution to safeguard the institutions because people avoid going for litigation due to KASO (Knowledge, Abilities, Skills and other Characteristics) based selection (Hing et al., 2002). Multiple perspectives have been found linked with the discrimination among which the most cited one is the interpretation, influence of transparency, and ambiguity in the selection criteria for making a selection (Lupton, 2000; Collinson, 1987). Ambiguities in the standardized procedures of selection procedures

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pave the way to influence by those in power (Dory, 2010). Studies on recruitment and selection are not having clarity about how the meritocracy is being influenced by politics, bureaucracy, and selection policies. These are the factors that have a direct connection with the adherence of the meritocracy in the organizational selection system. The main focus in most of the earlier studies remained on analyzing direct associations or relationships that may be beneficial from the economic benefits point of view. This is one of the main reasons that researchers should focus on the political and ethical aspects of the recruitment and selection (Taylor, 2006). Therefore, the main emphasis of this paper was to conduct a thoughtful and analytical based study on analyzing the phenomena under study in two ways. The first one was to analyze the relationships between selection policies, political & bureaucratic influence with meritocracy. The second aspect was to analyze this relationship keeping in view its impact on gender equality which is an important factor for gaining social diversity through meritocracy.

Related Literature Review

Meritocracy in Civil Services

Civil services have to perform its dual task on compliance in achieving the goals of the ruling party of the country and secondly imparting them proper guidance that helps them to make an effective policy and its implementation (Bekke & Meet, 2000). Generally, there are two known civil service systems: one is a merit-based civil service system that focuses on professionalism and the other is a spoil system that empowers directly the politicians to control the civil services of the country which affects negatively (Webber's & Wilson's 1978). The proponents of the new public management argued that merit-based civil service is too rigid that is causing lower efficiency due to the strict rules and regulations. According to them, they did not consider the impact caused by overlooking the merit-based civil service system (Peter & Pierre, 2001).

It has been argued that the merit-based civil service system was considered purely to prevent the politicization of the civil services (Bossaert & Demke, 2003). This connotes the development of a system that is based on legal regulations and laws to promote meritocracy (Verheijen, 1999). Gajduschek (2007) has explained the main features of a merit-based system in which he found that the merit system hinders the unfair political influence and it fosters the significance of the regulations. Moreover, he further identified that there is a significant consensus among various researchers that the recruitment and selection must be according to the merit. Bossaert and Demke (2003) have elaborated that the countries that were previously under communism have developed and implemented the merit-based system which is according to the legal regulations that are contrary to the communist era of personnel policy. Gajduschek (2007) has referred to a unanimous stand of the earlier researchers on political control over the various personnel activities related to managers recruitment and selection, promotion, and removals from designated positions. They take the advantage of the loopholes in the law by keeping a strict political control by making political selections on different top positions of the government ministries. Ferris et al., (1989); Vigoda-gadot (2003) have mentioned that politics in the organization has been generally referred to by the researchers as organizational politics. This can be measured by the responses of the employees in an organization about the presence of politics in the workplace which is considered unfair.

According to the "simplistic model of merit system effects," the basic factor of the professionalization is the merit system that is based on law and total depoliticization i.e. no political involvement in the organizational personnel affairs at all (Gajdusek, (2007). In the presence of organizational politics, there is always the possibility of injustice and the issue of equitable resource distribution (Thompson & Ingrahm 1996). This causes the issue of lower value of justice, equity & fairness in the organizations (Ferris & Kacmar 1992). In a study based on public and private sector employees, the public sector organizations are more politically involved as compared to the private sector organizations (Vigoda-gadot & Kapaun, 2005). There is the possibility of perceiving the organizational politics in a different way than the respondents of his current study. Care needs to be taken in analyzing the situation in the light of existing findings to address the issue of generalization (Vigoda, 2001). In past communism, the communist system stood unreliable and the new cabinets changed the top-level positions with their loyal ones. This remained a problem as the new cabinet replaced them with their politically loyal ones, which continued after the government changed (Vigoda-gadot, 2007).

Meritocracy in Female Selection

The merit for women has become a challenge. Due to the promotion of social capital which is considered as a political behavior over human capital that focuses on the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other experiences (Sealy, 2010). The prevalence of the merit-based career progression for women has become complicated due to the lack of women members in the top executive positions in the organizational leadership. Meanwhile, women that are being selected through a quota system in public organizations raise the question of meritocracy (Sealy, 2010). People who have been selected on merit claim that they know the merit which becomes a major hurdle when they, in a group, decide about the merit (McNamee and Miller, 2004).

Very few women executives were found in the top executive positions of the corporations (Sealy et al., 2009). It has been identified in research, that females in the federal cabinets for the governments were found very negligible (Nabi et al., 2014). Merit is considered a principle in which only those people are rewarded who deserve it, which is unbiased (Son Hing et al., 2002). There may be various issues in assessing the merit in test evaluations and analyzing the comparative performance that may favor the white males (Hing et al., 2002). The violation of the meritocracy can also cause discrimination but at the same time, women are believed in making choices to maintain work life balanced instead of the struggle to reach the top (Sealy, 2010). People believe in meritocracy and they abstain from raising their objections when they see that the discrimination at the workplace is associated with the adherence of the merit (Hing et al., 2002). Women have to manage time for their domestic and work-life that causes the major challenge for them to shape their broader life (Robeyns, 2003). Females have expressed displeasure on their promotion for the higher posts based on sex, which they regarded as a clear violation of meritocracy and an insult to their abilities (Son Hing et al., 2003). In a study conducted in the Russian context, a huge discrimination based on employment, transfer, and career development with females was seen (Krnitcyna & Menshikora, 2015).

Civil Services rules have become one of the major hurdles in recruitment, training, and retaining potential managers that causes poor and unattractive image for the public sector (Bilmes & Neal, 2003). According to the dual elite model, the more a position is political by nature, the less are the chances that such position will be occupied by the educated graduate (Zang, 2001). To be selected for a professorship in the academic sphere, social capital is one of the factors other than talent and merit that also influences the decision for selection (Brink et al., 2006). Various networks that are dominated by the male networks favor men more as compared to the females, which causes difficulty for females (Bagilhole & Goode, 2001). In the United States, states, where top executives were selected through politically appointed agencies and their subordinates, were selected through a merit-based selection system showed better performance as compared to those states where non-merit based selection mechanism were used (Krause et al., 2006). The personnel selection system is not always politicized, however some personnel selection agencies do act of the hiring and firing according to the will of the political actors which he referred "at-will" system of hiring and firing of employees (Sunder & Weingart, 2000). To improve the competence of the federal bureaucratic personnel, it is necessary to maintain the balance between independent autonomous personnel and an "at-will" selection system (Krause et al., 2006).

Personnel who are being selected without involvement of the political appointment process are more expert in policymaking with superior experiences, specialized skills in public management, good relationship with the main stakeholders and other institutional actors (Hecl 1975). The politicized selection system has greater turnover as compared to the merit-based selection system (Ban & Ingraham, 1990). Due to the political appointments instead of the career-based civil servants, multiple issues have affected the performance, which creates hurdles for making an effective selection for the government (Suleiman 2003). The politically appointed have better performance than those who have been appointed among the careerist due to higher education and more experience (Donahue, 2003). Krause et al., (2006) have identified that besides many factors that influence the bureaucratic performance in the government, the personnel selection system is the prime factor that influences the bureaucratic performance. This is more significant from the policy-making point of view as the bureaucracy must work between the political and public pressure across the top to bottom decision making authority. Horn (1995) has proposed in his study that although the cost of using a blend of politicized and autonomous personnel selection system remains higher, this can be offset by gaining the best talent and skills that boost the performance. Bureaucracy competence increases if the agency

executives are being selected through such a selection mechanism that is different from politically motivated appointments (Krause et al., 2006).

Political appointments in an organization can bring more new knowledge, experiences, and ideas that become supportive for the governments to deal with various groups and other people with whom they have to deal with in making policies and their implementation (Boke, 2003). In socialist economy loyalty to a political party and education are important for making the recruitment and selection at senior level positions (Zang, 2001). Deng Xiaoping and his government officials wished to have different cadres in the leadership who may be selected based on technically sound capability and political reliability (Lee, 1991). CCP in china has developed a hierarchy to run the administrative affairs of the government and maintain social order for which various criteria of selection has been set and usually the selection for CCP top positions are being made based on political loyalty, while as for the government positions a strict criteria, based on university education are being followed (Zang, 2001). Regarding personnel administration, most of the studies have been carried out in the English speaking countries, which raise the various cross-cultural related concerns due to its narrowness of perspective (Tucker & pounder, 2010). Well developed and planned recruitment strategy and a diverse pool of applicants can enhance the possibility of finding a well-suited employee for the organizations keeping in view the personnel & professional qualities (Tucker & pounder 2010). Walker and Dimmock (2002) have noted in their study that in china the personnel administration selecting an employee mainly focuses on a collectivist approach, while as in the western and European countries this focus is based on the individual capabilities. Personnel administration policies, practices, and processes are being promoted that reflects a complex bureaucratic mechanism spectrum (Tucker & Ponder (2010).

Public service motivation and policy-making dimension are the key factors for making an effective recruitment and selection for public sector organizations (Vandenabele, 2001). This further influences the government to make selection for public officials (Lew's & Frank, 2002). Although vast research has been done in the recruitment and selection but their major focus has remained on the methods and realistic job preview (Breugh, 20008 Saks, 2005). Researchers have concluded that larger organizations get more applicants and have more dedicated HR staff (Chaprian et al., 2005). Studies are needed to have focused more on the organizational characteristics, which are important from the recruitment context of the applicant's attractions (Rynes & cable 2003). Moreover, this can be influenced by policy, politicians, and bureaucratic factors especially in fostering merit. Recruitment methods, realistic job preview, and recruiter behavior had remained the main area of research in the recruitment field (Saks, 2005). The recruiter effect has attracted much of the researchers' attention, but it has been noted that minimum importance was given to those other factors, that may have indirect interaction with the effective recruitment strategies (Breugh et al., 2008). To make an effective recruitment and selection policy the concerned authorities of the recruitment and selection have to consider all the aspects to have positive implications on the managerial practices and help to make legislation that is relevant and can also be implemented practically (Taylor, 2006).

Research Methodology

Participants

The focus of this study is to analyze how meritocracy is being affected by various independent variables highlighted in figure 1. The data for the study was collected by using a random sampling technique from the employees of the officer cadre of civil services of a federal government in India and Pakistan. These were the regular employees serving for the federal government under the various capacities.

Materials

The data were collected during July and August 2014 through a survey research questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strong agree to Strongly disagree" focusing on various aspects of each variable of this study highlighted in Figure 1 i.e., Recruitment and selection policies, Political and Bureaucracy involvement in Meritocracy from the context of general and gender perspective.

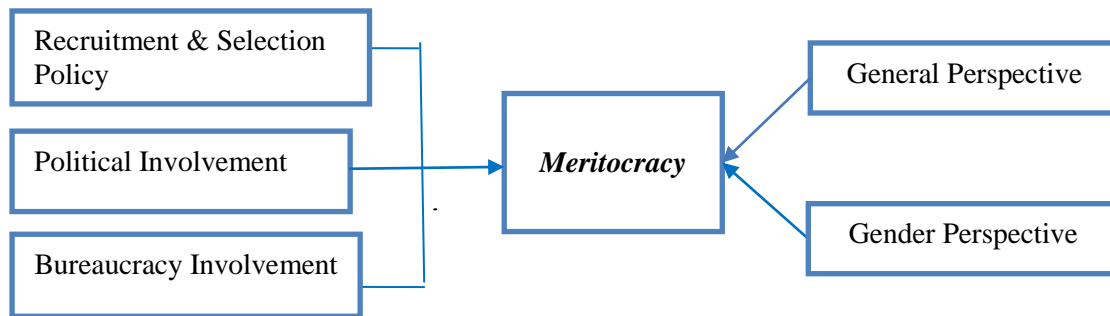


Figure 1: Theoretical Model

Procedures

Overall 150 survey questionnaires were distributed among the officers of the civil/federal employees in each country. A total of 115 survey questionnaire were properly filled that shows a 78 percent response rate. The officers who filled the questionnaire were assured anonymity which encouraged them to remain fair in their responses. The sample was carefully selected to have relevant observation about the heads selection in the federal/civil governments. Regression and correlation analysis was run with the help of SPSS research software to derive valid results for the analysis. These results were subsequently properly discussed along with a suitable conclusion.

Results

The procedure of this section focuses on describing the results based on the statistical significance level of the variables under study. Tables 1a, 2a, and 3a mention descriptive results and correlations of the Geographical and General Meritocracy, Recruitment and Selection policies, Political and bureaucratic factors regarding the recruitment and selection of heads in the public sector institutions. The results in table 1a present weak but positive correlations that show the association which has not exceeded the .61 in all factors. However, recruitment and selection policies show relatively strong and positive correlation with geographical meritocracy at $r=.61, p<.001$ and political factor at $r=.52, p<.001$ level, while as the correlation between geographical meritocracy with political & bureaucracy factor are indicating positive correlation but a little moderate at $r=.38, p<.001$ and $r=.22, p<.001$ respectively. According to the table 2a, the correlations between gender meritocracy based on human capital with recruitment and selection policies at the level of $r=.58, p<.001$ as compared to the political and bureaucratic factor that showed $r=.35, p<.001$ and $r=.18, p<.001$ respectively. However the recruitment and selection policies relationship with the political factor seems better at $r=.52, p<.001$ as compare to the bureaucracy factor that stood a bit weaker but positive at $r=.29, p<.001$.

Table 3a, which presents the results regarding the meritocracy from the gender perspective, this zero-order correlation about the gender meritocracy with the recruitment and selection policy shows a weak but positive relationship at $r=.10, p<.001$ while its relationship with political and bureaucracy factor is negative and very moderate correlation at and $r=-.06, p<.001$ respectively. $r=-.21, p<.001$ However, the relationship or association between the recruitment and selection policy with the political factor records positive and bit strong relationship or association at $r=.52, p<.001$ but weak with the bureaucratic factor at the level of $r=.27, p<.001$.

Table 1a

Correlation Analysis of Geographical Meritocracy

Variables	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4
Geographical Meritocracy (GMR)	3.3696	1.20665	-	.611**	.385**	.221**
Recruitment and Selection Policy (RSP)	2.9104	.81975			.523**	.286**
Political Influence (PI)	2.6783	1.11251				.146*
Bureaucratic Influence (BI)	2.5913	1.18392				-

** Significant at .05 level

Table 1b

Regression Analysis for Geographical Meritocracy

Variables	B	t	P
Geographical Meritocracy (GMR)	-	1.747	.083

Recruitment and Selection Policy (RSP)	.549	6.071	.000
Political Influence (PI)	.090	1.028	.306
Bureaucratic Influence (BI)	.052	.663	.509

Dependent Variable: Geographical Meritocracy (GMR)
R2 = .381, Adjusted R2= .365, F Value = 22.811. Sig =.05

Table: 2a

Correlation Analysis of General Meritocracy

Variables	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4
General Meritocracy (GM)	3.1739	1.37178	-	.577**	.347**	.179*
Recruitment and Selection Policy (RSP)	2.9104	.81975			.523**	.286**
Political Influence (PI)	2.6783	1.11251				.146*
Bureaucratic Influence (BI)	2.5913	1.18392				-

** Significant at .001 level

Table: 2b

Regression Analysis of General Meritocracy

Variables	B	T	P
General Meritocracy (GM)	-	.694	.489
Recruitment and Selection Policy (RSP)	.540	5.764	.000
Political Influence (PI)	.063	.690	.491
Bureaucratic Influence (BI)	.016	.197	.844

Dependent Variable: General Meritocracy
R2 = .336, Adjusted R2= .318, F Value = 18.740, Sig =.000

Table: 3a

Correlation of Gender Meritocracy

Variables	Mean	S.D	1	2	3
1. Gender Meritocracy (GdM)	2.5391	1.17941	-	.108*	-.214**
2. Recruitment and Selection Policy (RSP)	2.9104	.81975			.523**
3. Political Influence (PI)	2.6783	1.11251			.146*
4. Bureaucratic Influence (BI)	2.5913	1.18392			-

** Significant at .05 level

Table: 3b

Regression Analysis of Gender Meritocracy

Variables	B	t	P
1. General Meritocracy (GM)	-	6.005	.000
2. Recruitment and Selection Policy (RSP)	.333	3.097	.002
3. Political Influence (PI)	-.373	-3.576	.001
4. Bureaucratic Influence (BI)	-.108	-1.163	.247

Dependent Variable: Gender Meritocracy
R2 = .123, Adjusted R square= .099, F Value = 5.190, Sig =.002

Table 1b, 2,b and 3b consists results regarding the regression analysis about the understudy variables and according to the table 1a that represents the impact from the geographical meritocracy perspective, where the recruitment and selection policies have relatively stronger impact on the dependent variable GMR at (B=.55, p<.001). However, the table 2b consists of results regarding the general meritocracy from the human capital reference which shows that the recruitment and selection policies have a relatively stronger impact on the general meritocracy GMR at the level of (B=. 54, p<.001) while as the rest are presenting insignificant results due to higher P-value above .05. The table 3b deals with the meritocracy from the gender perspective where the predictor recruitment and selection policies prove moderately lower but positive impact on gender meritocracy at (B=.33, p<.002) while as on the other hand the political factor presents a different picture that portrays a negative effect on gender-based meritocracy at (B=-.37, p<.001), However, bureaucracy is showing insignificant impact on the gender-based meritocracy.

Discussion

The definition of meritocracy explains that it is based on the factors of the human capital, and to achieve our objectives, this research has focused on meritocracy from three dimensions to understand this phenomenon in the heads selection for the public sector institutions of a federal government. The

first perspective of analysis was to see the meritocracy from the influence of geographical affiliation of a candidate to see whether this may have been influencing the meritocracy in the heads selection as like the social capital justification for merit. In the second case, the research focused on looking at the meritocracy mentioned at the beginning of this section that is based on human capital. The third perspective of this research was to enable the respondents to comparison of the general meritocracy and meritocracy from the gender perspective. Keeping in view the close factors that are directly involved in shaping and de-shaping the meritocracy in the public sector organizations working in the government control, we have identified three such factors to make an effective analysis mentioned in figure 1 in the methodology section.

The first finding of this study is regarding the meritocracy based on geographical affiliation influenced by the selection policies, political and bureaucratic factors, where it has been noted that recruitment and selection policies greatly influence the heads selection for the public sector institutions. This may due to the selection of the employees at the initial stage through competitive examination for the direct officer cadre at BPS -17 (officer cadre), which is based on marks in entry test, academics, number of seats quota wise allocation for each province, and other categories. Based on the promotion system these officers once they reach some senior positions in the institutional hierarchy, these officers sometimes form a group that becomes a threat themselves for the establishment and promotion of merit. This is consistent with similar earlier findings (McNamee & Miller, 2004). These employees appointed through a comprehensive examination system are considered most powerful and authoritarian in the government services due to their strategic nature of the role that may become a hurdle in making and interpreting the merit the way they want. This sometimes can cause the issue of discrimination in making selection based on the quota-based and causes great damage to the overall meritocracy in the public sector institutions.

Public sector institutions may have other competent and well-talented people available that have the aptitude and capacity to serve the public interest better as compared to those selections that are being made based on the "spoil system" that is politicized. This also highlights, that sometimes it seems difficult for the government to make sure merit-based heads selection because of the pressure to have people on the top positions from all the provinces to avoid the notion of geographical discrimination. This is detrimental because earlier studies have shown that quota-based selection has showed negative performance (Gorecki & Kukoliwicz, 2014). Much is not different from the perspective of human capital justification according to which the recruitment and selection policies have been found one of the main issues in managing meritocracy. The most serious issue of the impact of recruitment and selection policies on meritocracy is the implementation side of the recruitment and selection policies. Both meritocracies from the geographical and human capital perspective have proved as one of the pivotal issues for overall public sector meritocracy. It is that the heads are not being selected according to merit and in general the major challenge for the meritocracy is the different quota systems that prevails based on the proportionate geographical representation from each province.

To exercise the meritocracy in the letter and spirit, the recruitment and selection policies need to be formed and implemented based on the uniformity principle without any discrimination based on region, color, and other characteristics. This is very important. After all, researchers have identified that it is the meritocracy that is the only solution to safeguard the institutions from litigation because people believe in meritocracy (Hing et al., 2002). Governments can adopt a general curriculum at university level education system across the country with equitable resources and monitor its smooth functioning to help the free and true meritocracy on which no one has an objection. Otherwise, meritocracy will always be under severe threat based on reserve or quota-based selection system. Effective recruitment and selection system is the matter of survival and sometimes failure of an organization (Compton, 2009 & Canton, 2004). This happens because of adherence with meritocracy which always is under pressure by the political appointments on the top positions

Another focus of this study was the meritocracy from the gender perspective. This study shows that selection policies and political influence are the main factor that has an impact on gender equality. This is consistent with earlier findings where merit for women has become a challenging issue due to the promotion of social capital which is considered as a political behavior over human capital (Sealy, 2010). For a female to be head of any public institution in the male-dominated environment is almost impossible because of the number of factors among which the most notable is

the ambiguity, lack of transparency in selection methods, and female stereotypes of that masculine strength. The important finding of this study is that in the previous two situations, political appointments and bureaucratic influence was not found. But in this case, the gender-based meritocracy is being influenced by the politicians but not bureaucracy personnel, which needs much-needed attention. This may be that politicians who want to appoint their choice of heads are indirectly influencing the relevant heads of the department because they constitute or chair the selection panel or committee. Studies have found that females are given negligible representation in this selection panel which may cause lesser appointment of females on top. This is consistent with the earlier finding where females have more probability to be appointed if females are members of the selection committee (Salay, 2010; Brink et. al, 2006). Therefore, this study has supported the earlier findings about meritocracy that public sector organizations are more politically involved as compared to the private sector organizations (Vigoda-gadot & Kapaun. 2005). Political involvement is the major challenge for the gender-based meritocracy but policies are a hurdle for meritocracy from the implementation perspective more as compared to its formulation aspect. This empowers those who are in power to make their choice of decisions. Thus ambiguities and lack of clarity in standardized procedures enable those in power more effective in making involvement (Dory, 2010).

Conclusion

In the public sector institutions, meritocracy is a major challenge in making transparent merit-based selection on the top positions in government ministries. The major concerning issue for the general meritocracy is that the policies of recruitment and selection are the main hurdle from the implementation aspect of these policies to foster merit. It has been observed that the way "social capital" justification for the appointments is undermining the real meritocracy based on human capital justification. The geographical quotas are another factor that has mold the real essence of the meritocracy in these public sector government-controlled institutions. Thus, this has emerged another major concern for the implementation of the real meritocracy in the selection of heads, which according to the earlier researches and this study is the most needed impartial solution for talent grooming and institutional development.

The headhunting for these public sector institutions has been found politically influenced and recruitment and selection policies have been noted more in the female selection for the selection of heads. The less female representation in the selection committees or board has a negative influence on the female's selection for the top positions. This causes a major hurdle to bring gender equality on top which is the only component for social diversity. The female as a selection of the heads of these institutions needs attention because, in the name of meritocracy, gender inequality especially on the top remains in vulnerable situations. The concerned authorities in the government institution have to pay keen attention to the lobbies of "self-called influential pundits of meritocracy in different organizations". This research suggests that gender equality can be ensured by adding female members to the different selection boards and committees. Social diversity through gender equality is very important because female executives may have a different opinion on a particular issue to make an effective decision. The viable speedy solution of fostering and maintaining meritocracy in the civil service selection can be made through a constitutionally approved "Meritocracy Implementation Boards" at the federal and provincial level with full authority and powers. Finally, this study concludes that the main hurdle in the way of meritocracy is in the implementation of the recruitment and selection policies. This study suggests that meritocracy can be fostered more effectively by incorporating e-governance in making transparent selection. This research suggests conducting further research to analyze other aspects of underlying factors causing gender inequality in the selection of bureau heads.

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