

Trend of Women Representation in Civil Service Bureaucracy in Nepal

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Abstract

Representative bureaucracy is a sign of inclusive and democratic governance. In this article, women's participation in Nepali bureaucracy is examined both qualitatively and quantitatively in light of the adoption of the reservation policy in 2007. This study aims to determine the extent to which Nepal's bureaucracy has evolved to reflect the demographics of the nation and whether it has improved in terms of citizen responsiveness after the establishment of a reservation policy. Gender-friendly practices are being implemented as the nation moves toward modernity. PSC and CBS secondary data are employed with descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (t-test and one-way ANOVA). Women's representation has increased through participation in the civil service, but they still mostly hold junior or non-gazetted posts. Citizens' evaluations regarding responsiveness and processes of service provision are also mixed.

Keywords: Gender, Bureaucracy, Civil Service, Reservation

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1. Introduction

In order to address gender issues, the government of Nepal has undertaken numerous initiatives. These include the introduction of the National Gender Equality Act in 2006, the National Gender Equality Policy in 2007 and the National Gender Equality Program in 2008. The government has also taken measures to make education more accessible to girls, increase the representation of women in government, and introduce laws and policies that promote gender equality. Additionally, the government has also implemented programs to improve access to healthcare, improve nutrition, reduce gender-based violence, and empower women (MLJPA, 2015). In conclusion, gender issues in Nepal are multi-faceted and complex. The government has taken a number of initiatives to reduce gender inequality, but there is still a long way to go. In order to ensure that the benefits of development are shared equally, Nepal needs to continue to focus on creating an enabling environment for inclusive economic growth and development.

According to government policy, civil servants in Nepal are recruited by the Public Service Commission (PSC), often known as the public service. Women are becoming more prevalent in government positions. In 2012, there were 7% and 10%, respectively, of females at the officer and non-officer levels. Nonetheless, only 2.4% of all civil servants participate in policy and decision-making, making their presence there still quite limited.

Although there is still blatant evidence of gender discrimination, the percentage of women in the Nepalese civil service has increased from 8% a decade ago to 23% last year, according to recent statistics. In 2008-9, just 32,457 women applied for civil service jobs through the national examination system, but in 2017-18 that figure reached 296,704, according to the annual report of the Public Service Commission (PSC). Currently, 20,334 of the 87,753 workforce are women.

Table 1: Regional Data

Indicators	Afghanistan	Bhutan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Nepal	India	Maldives	Sri Lanka
Population	35.53	0.81	164.67	197.02	28.21	1339.18	0.44	21.44
GDP	586	3110	1517	1548	835	1940	10536	4065
WLF (%)	19	58	33	25	83	27	43	35
WTSE (%)	3.6	8.9	14	9	12.2	27	20.5	22.9
GII	153	117	134	133	118	127	76	80
HDI	168	134	136	150	149	130	101	76

Source: World Bank Databank, UNDP, Population: Millions, GII: Gender Inequality Index UNDP (out of 189 countries), WLF: Women's labor Force, WTSE (Women Tertiary School Enrollment)

2. Research Questions

This study raises the following research questions:

- To what extent Civil Service has become inclusive?
- What is the perception level of Civil Servants towards inclusiveness and its impact on their attitudes or behavioral changes?

2. Objective of the Study

This study is founded on actual observations and experiences of women in the workplace, as opposed to theoretical methods, as well as on a critical examination of the situation of working women in Nepal. The goal of this study is to determine if the reservation policy implemented by the government of Nepal has effectively addressed the issues of exclusion in Nepal's civil service.

- What are the policy responses in solving problems of exclusion?
- Descriptive analysis of inclusiveness in civil service.
- Comparative analysis among reservations seats.

4. Literature Review

The literature shows that social exclusion has become a hindrance to the democratization process and removing such interruption reservation could be a rectification tool that helps to make the state inclusive. In the public administration literature, the debate concerning the representation of women and minorities in the public bureaucracy continues to attract significant attention.

Social inclusion is about participation, especially of the most disadvantaged people who are left out of the mainstream of development and in the governance process (Jackson, 1999). Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society. It is also a process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people, disadvantaged based on their identity, to take part in society (World Bank, 2013). Kingsley (1944) was attributed to contributing originally to the theory of representative bureaucracy, who observed if a workforce reflects the social composition. According to Roch and Pitts (2011), the concept of inclusion is used to "consider whether a public organization employs a bureaucracy that matches the general population. Social inclusion is about participation, especially of the most disadvantaged people who are left out of the mainstream of development and in the governance process (Jackson, 1999). Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society. It is also a process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people, disadvantaged based on their identity, to take part in society (World Bank, 2013).

According to Frazee (2003), people need both opportunities and assurances of welcome to make people socially active. She also argues that inclusion and equality are two distinct and complementary principles where equality stands for rights and inclusion for relationships. Freiler (2003) argues that social inclusion is the capacity and willingness of a society to keep all groups within the reach of what is expected from society.

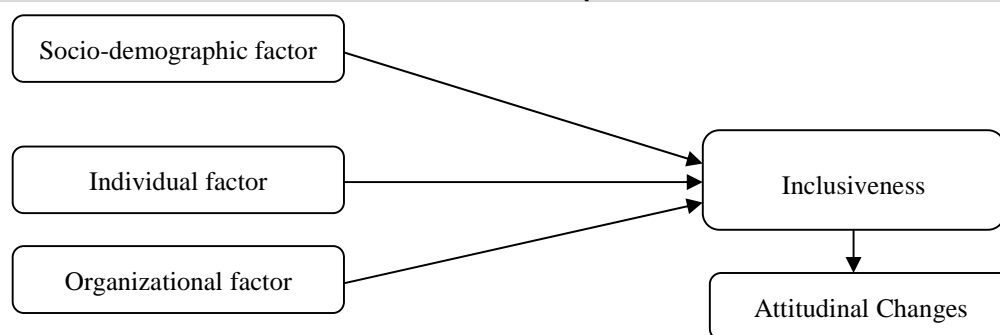


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Dependent variable

Inclusiveness is the equal participation and representation of women, marginalized, ethnic, and other caste groups in civil service and by increasing their access to social and economic spheres by creating opportunities with proportional representation in decision-making processes and guaranteeing recognition, identity, and social justice for them.

Independent Variable

- **Socio-demographic factors:** Gender, age, educational qualification, entry level position.
- **Individual factors:** Self-confidence, educational achievement, family support, skills and potentialities, and the motivational level of the respondents.
- **Organizational factors:** Challenges, performance, and level of satisfaction, and these indicators are measured based on the perception of the respondents towards the given factor.

Current Policy and Legal Provisions for Inclusive Civil Service

Reservation is a type of affirmative action used in Nepal to increase the participation of underrepresented groups that are generally determined by caste, handicap, and backwardness. There are both constitutional and statutory restrictions on discrimination based on gender, caste, backwardness, and disability. Nepal is a patriarchal society where women's roles are typically constrained to caring for the home and farming. Women have traditionally been assigned conventional responsibilities like cooking, cleaning the house, fetching water, and providing fodder while being cast in the shadow of their male counterparts. With the acceptance of numerous national laws and international conventions, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1991, Nepal has made commitments to abolish gender discrimination. Nepal pledged to work towards gender equality and the empowerment of women at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and committed to the Beijing Platform for Action.

Table 2: Total seat and Number of Civil Servants Nepal

S. N.	Service Type	Total Seat	Total Number of Working Civil Servants		
			Total	Female	Male
1	Economic Planning/ stat.	474	406	12.81	87.19
2	Engineering	12051	8496	13.56	90.64
3	Agriculture	5741	4785	13.56	86.44
4	Judiciary	4256	3515	14.85	85.15
5	Foreign Affairs	297	271	19.93	80.07
6	Administration	56510	33398	12.23	87.77
7	Auditing	378	349	12.32	87.68
8	Forest	7038	5870	9.93	90.07
9	Education	1834	1632	17.77	82.23
10	Health	32986	26785	46.94	53.06
11	Parliament	433	250	16.80	83.20
12	Miscellaneous	5493	3282	43.78	56.22
Total		127491	89039	23.72	76.28

Source: PSC (2018)

Gender and Human Development

A composite score, the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GLI) measures the discrimination that many women experience in the areas of reproductive health, secondary education, political representation, and the labor market.

Nepal ranked 115th out of 157 nations and territories in the 2015 UNDP Human Development Report (with the highest number indicating the worst degree of inequality). The Nepalese government has been enforcing policies that promote social inclusion and gender equality since 2010.

Acts, Regulation and Legal Provision

According to the reservation policy put in place after the Interim Constitution of Nepal was promulgated in 2007 (MLJ, 2007) clusters that qualify for reservation are given 45% of the civil service positions. Reservations are available for women, Dalits, members of marginalized groups, handicapped individuals, Madhesi, and people of indigenous descent. One of the key components of the wider system of government is the bureaucracy, which is a permanent institution in every country. This policy is regarded as a turning point in the effort to diversify the civil service.

The national policy on WID/tenth GAD's plan follows the strategy of mainstreaming gender, reducing gender inequality, empowering women, and acknowledging gender equality as a critical indicator of poverty analysis. We are unable to see the program's effectiveness, though. ADB Only 17% of civil service jobs are held by women, and this number is substantially lower in positions of significant decision-making. Men make up 48.56 percent of the population of the country, compared to women who make up 51.44%. The participation of men and women in public and political life is drastically different. Despite the introduction of reservations in the civil service (33 percent out of 45 percent), no particular procedures have been implemented at the senior level.

Table 3: Reservation in Civil Service, Nepal

S. No	Category	Percent (%)
1	Women	33
2	Adibasi/Janjati	27
3	Madhesi	22
4	Dalit	9
5	Disabled(differently able)	5
6	Backward Area	4

a. Allocation of 33% reserved seats out of a total of 45% reserved seats (when taken as 100%)

b. Five years relaxation on age bar for entrance i.e. 40 years for women candidates as against 35 years for men

Women's role in decision making

In Nepal, women's participation in decision-making is very limited. Although there is still blatant evidence of gender discrimination, the percentage of women in the Nepalese civil service has increased from 8% a decade ago to 23% last year, according to recent statistics. Just 32,457 women applied for civil service jobs through the national examination system in 2008–09, but 296,704 women did so in 2017–18. Currently, 20,334 of the 87,753 workforce members are women.

Table: 4 Gender-wise Trends of Applicants for Civil Service in the Last 12 Years

Fiscal Year	Total	Female		Male	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2007/8	175122	67435	38.50	107677	61.5
2008/9	86168	32457	37.67	53711	62.33
2009/10	300463	139963	46.58	160500	53.42
2010/11	251651	110307	43.83	141344	56.17
2011/12	271577	113785	41.90	157792	58.10
2012/13	368805	173418	47.02	195387	52.98
2013/14	560915	255234	45.50	305681	54.50
2014/15	599668	360506	60.12	239162	39.88
2015/16	595031	318503	53.53	275877	46.36
2016/17	844297	382485	45.30	461812	54.70
2017/18	567853	296704	52.25	271149	47.75
2018/19	143840	70578	49.1	73175	50.9

Source: Public Service Commission, 2018

That is a remarkably beneficial change in Nepal's public service. The proportion of female candidates is rising as a result of female candidates' growing interest in and confidence in taking Public Service Commission exams (PSC). Although the number of female applicants has increased, there is still insufficient justification for satisfaction because the majority of candidates clearing the PSC tests are still male. The main cause of it can be the systemic discrimination that women have faced in our culture. The following section goes into additional detail about it.

Thirty-six percent of the total medical doctors in the country are females. The number of female doctors is 8, 626 across the country. Out of 7,718 applicants recommended, 2,465 were women. The Nepalese civil service has seen its proportion of women rises from 8 percent a decade ago to 23% last year, new figures reveal though clear evidence of gender discrimination remains. In 2008/9, just 32,457 women applied for civil service jobs through the national examination system, but in 2017/18 that figure reached 2,96,704 (PSC 2018). Women now comprise 20,334 of the 87,753-strong workforce.

5. Research Methodology and Data

The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2002a; 2002b; 2004) and the Public Commission Service (PCS), which offered secondary data, served as the study's main data sources. A thorough assessment of the literature on gender-related issues in various industries was taken into account. Secondary data at the national level was gathered from evaluations, reports, and websites of pertinent ministries. SPSS version 20 and R-programming are used to apply and analyze both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The numbers of civil service employees are 16,939 are recommended from inclusive advertisement but in the same period, 24,129 employees are from open competition as under table.

Table 5: Woman Applicants in Civil Service by Class and Level of Last 3 Years

Level	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	Women %	Women %	Women %
First Class (Gazetted)	12.7	15.8	29.8
Second Class (Gazetted)	22.4	21.4	30.8
Third Class (Gazetted)	37.8	41	42.3
First Class Non-Gazetted	43.8	47.2	49.8
Second Class Non-Gazetted	51.2	50	50

Source: Annual Reports of Public Service Commission, 2018/19

6. Results and Findings

Fiscal year 2067/68 to 2074/75, from inclusive civil service employees 16939 and from open competition 24129.

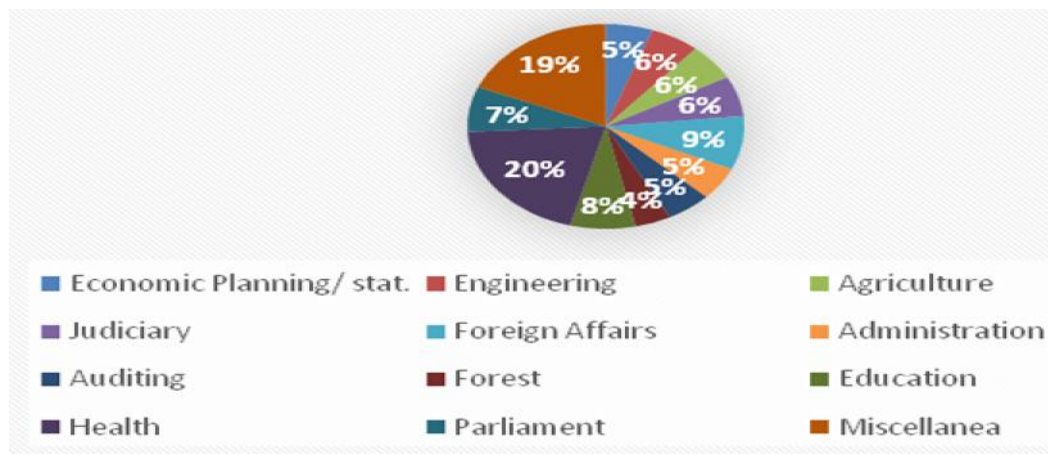


Figure 2: Women representation in civil service

Table 6: Gender Gap Index

Country	Global Gender Gap Index		Economic participation & opportunity	Labour Force participation	Wage equality for similar work	Estimated income (USD, PPP)	Professional & technical workers
	Rank	Score	f/m ratio	f/m ratio	f/m ratio	f/m ratio	f/m ratio
Bangladesh	47	0.719	0.465	0.54	0.57	0.50	0.41
Bhutan	124	0.638	0.622	0.80	0.79	0.57	0.49
India	108	0.669	0.376	0.35	0.62	0.23	0.34
Nepal	111	0.664	0.599	0.94	0.58	0.58	0.42
Maldives	106	0.669	0.641	0.73		0.69	1.09
Pakistan	143	0.546	0.309	0.30	0.55	0.19	0.28
Sri Lanka	109	0.669	0.521	0.42	0.63	0.35	0.97

Source: The Global Gap report, 2016, World Economic Forum

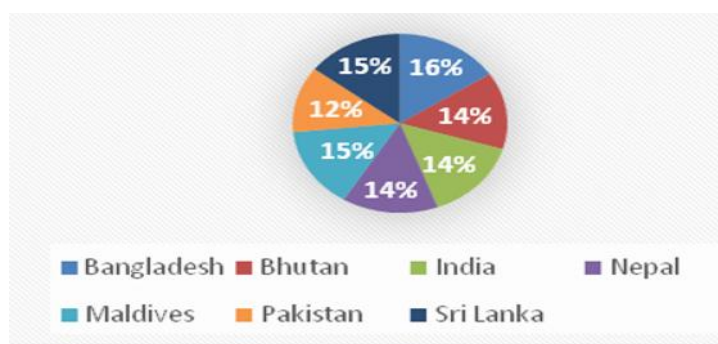


Figure 3: Global gender gap score

Table 7: Number of Candidates Recommended as Per Free-Competition and Reservation Policy

Fiscal Year	Candidates from Inclusive						Total
	Women	AJ*	Madhesi	Dalit	Disabled	Backward Area	
2019/18	1088	858	711	292	163	132	3244
2018/17	1383	1026	901	385	189	142	4026
2017/16	797	629	503	213	101	95	2338
2016/15	639	547	454	168	95	76	1979
2015/14	626	509	384	173	91	71	1854
2014/13	372	318	254	106	51	35	1136
2013/12	352	280	212	99	40	30	1013
2012/11	471	371	300	105	59	43	1349
Total	5728	4538	3719	1541	789	624	16939

Source: PSC 59th report 2018, *AJ-Adibasi/janjati

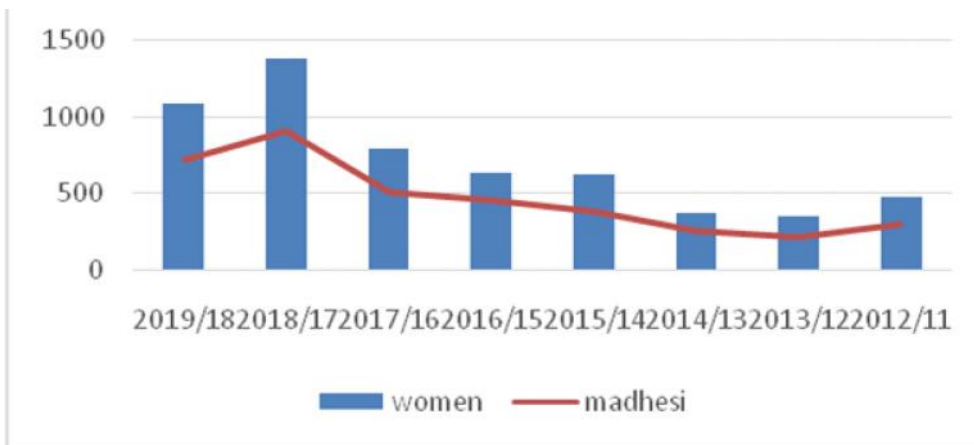


Figure 4: Trend analysis inclusiveness women vs madhesi in civil service

Table 8: ANOVA results (Candidates from Inclusive)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2962342.994	5	592468.599	22.992	.000
Within Groups	927678.625	36	25768.851		
Total	3890021.619	41			

Since the significant value is less than zero, so there is a significant difference between women and other service employees in civil service.

7. Conclusion

The epitome of gender justice is the representation of women in the civil service. At all levels of administration, there are now more women working in the civil service of Nepal than ever before. According to Nepal's reservation policy, women now make up 24 percent of the civil service, up from 8 percent between 2008 and 2018. Although more women are working in the civil service, their representation at the policy and decision-making levels is still quite low (5.10 percent in first class and none in special class).

At the level of II and III class officers, the ratio is approximately 4.88 and 9.80%, respectively. One method for increasing the involvement of underrepresented populations and groups in public services has been regarded as a reservation. Special laws and initiatives are desperately needed to ensure that women have equal access to opportunities and rights in governmental structures. Political parties play significant roles in government and policymaking. Thus, it is strategically important for women to be properly represented in political parties and important positions. According to this, education is essential for developing sufficient strategies for achieving equality in education and women's economic empowerment. It also serves as a preparation for political and social life. As media, communication, and technology have advanced, women have begun to engage in activities outside of the house.

Programs for capacity development are necessary to boost their competitiveness and empower women. To reduce discrimination, assure equality, and reform society, it is crucial to strengthen our legal system as well as our social and political structures. Since the number of female applicants appears to be rising, reservation rules have been successful in drawing them to the civil service.

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