

## 5

## RECRUITMENT

### 5.1 Introduction

The quality of governance is critically dependent on the quality of its public servants. A major determinant of the quality of government servants is the rigour and integrity of the recruitment process. Therefore the recruitment process, apart from being transparent, objective, fair and equitable should also ensure that the right type of persons join the civil services. Government being the largest employer in India recruits candidates for a wide variety of positions through various institutional mechanisms. The Union Public Service Commission – a Constitutional authority – has the mandate to recruit senior public servants for the Union Government. A similar role is played by the State Public Service Commissions for State Governments. The Staff Selection Commission recruits personnel for other positions in the Union Government. Government Departments are also authorised to recruit certain categories of personnel. The system of recruitment to the civil services in India has evolved over the years. Several changes have been made in the recruitment process, especially after Independence, to reflect the needs of the administration from time to time. In this Chapter the Commission has examined the recruitment process for senior positions in Government through the Civil Services Examination.

### 5.2 Brief History of Recruitment to Civil Services in India

5.2.1 In its long evolution, the civil services in India have progressed from what essentially was an elitist service to a service that is now representative of Indian society. This is a very positive development. In its representative character, the civil services now have a good number of people from rural areas and disadvantaged backgrounds. The experience has been that students from these backgrounds have a critical comprehension of the issues, constraints and problems faced by people in rural areas and disadvantaged sectors. For the civil service to be an agent of change and social transformation, this advantage of a representative civil service needs to be further strengthened.

5.2.2 Before 1922, the Indian Civil Service Examination was held in England by the British Civil Service Commission. It was only from 1922 that the examination also began to be held in India. Subsequently, a Public Service Commission (India) was constituted

to conduct the Indian Civil Service (ICS) Examination in India from 1926 on behalf of the British Civil Service Commission. Under the Government of India Act, 1935, the Public Service Commission (India) was replaced by the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) which from 1937 began to conduct the ICS Examination in India independent of the British Commission. Before Independence, a combined examination was held in India for the Indian Audit and Accounts Service, Imperial Customs Service, Indian Railways and Accounts Service, Military Accounts Department, Postal Superintendents (Class II), Service and Transportation (Traffic) and Commercial Departments of the Superior Revenue Establishment of State Railways. A separate examination was held for the Indian Police. However, after 1943, recruitment to these services, including the ICS, was suspended.<sup>39</sup>

5.2.3 After Independence, new services called the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Foreign Service (IFS) were established. Between 1947 and 1950, an annual combined competitive examination was held for recruitment to these services as well as to the non-technical Central Services. In 1950, on coming into force of the Constitution, the FPSC was redesignated as the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). The examination required the candidates to take three compulsory subjects and three optional subjects (for the IPS, only two optional subjects were required to be taken). A separate viva voce was also conducted. From 1951 onwards, the eligibility age was fixed at 21 to 24 years (20 to 24 years for the IPS) and the candidates were permitted to take three chances at the examination. One of the recommendations of the Public Services (Qualification for Recruitment) Committee, appointed in 1955 was limiting the number of attempts to two by reducing the eligibility age range to 21-23 years. Government, while leaving the eligibility age unaltered, decided to reduce the number of attempts to two which were to be counted separately for (a) Category I Services (IAS and IFS), (b) Category II Services (IPS and Police Service Class II of the Union Territories), and (c) Category III Services (Central Services Class I and II). In effect, this amounted to one examination becoming three examinations from 1961 onwards. On the recommendation of the First Administrative Reforms Commission, the upper age limit was increased to 26 years in 1972 and from 1973, candidates were permitted to make three attempts for each of the three categories of services.<sup>40</sup>

5.2.4 The Committee on Recruitment Policy and Selection Methods (hereafter, called the Kothari Committee) which gave its Report in 1976, recommended a new scheme of the Civil Services Examination for recruitment to the All India and Central Services. This consisted of three sequential stages: (i) Preliminary Examination (Objective Type) for selecting the candidates for the Main Examination, (ii) Main Examination (Written examination followed by an interview) for selecting candidates for entry into the civil

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<sup>39</sup>Source: Chapter 2; Report of the Kothari Committee

<sup>40</sup>Source: *ibid*

services and (iii) Post Training Test at the end of the Foundation Course at the Academy, including an interview by a Board constituted by the UPSC. It was proposed that the result of the stage three test, combined with the result of the stage two examination would determine the ranking and therefore, allocation of services. Government did not accept the recommendation regarding allocation of services after the Foundation Course. The new scheme, consisting of the first two stages was introduced in 1979. This scheme was revisited by the Committee to Review the Scheme of the Civil Services Examination (the Satish Chandra Committee), which in its Report in 1989 recommended the continuance of this structure while introducing a compulsory Essay paper in the Main Examination. The present structure of the CSE is given in Table 5.1.

<b>Component of Examination</b>	<b>Number of Papers and Marks</b>		
Preliminary Examination (Objective Type)	General Studies	1	150
	Optional Subject	1	300
Main Examination (Conventional)	English (Qualifying nature and Matric Standard)	1	300
	Indian Language (Qualifying nature and Matric Standard)	1	300
	General Studies	2	600
	Esaaay	1	200
	1st Optional Subject	2	600
	2nd Optional Subject	2	600
	The General Studies papers, the Essay paper and the Optional papers could be answered either in English or one of Schedule VIII languages while the Question papers are set bilingually.		
Interview			300
Total			2300
Age	21-30 years (relaxation of three years for OBC candidates and five years for SC/ST candidates)		
No. of Chances	4 for General, 7 for OBC and no restriction for SC/ST candidates		
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Graduate degree		

*Source: Report of the Alagh Committee/UPSC website*

5.2.5 The number of applicants and candidates appearing in the CSE has increased enormously over the years, as indicated in Table 5.2. The Services, for which the recruitment is done, are indicated in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.2: Number of Applicants and Candidates Appearing in CSE**

Year of Examination	No. of applicants	No. of candidates appearing in Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination
2003-04	3,16,496	1,60,784
2004-05	3,49,020	1,74,475
2005-06	3,45,106	1,75,202
2006-07	3,83,983	1,95,803

Source: Tables 1 and 2; Annual Report 2006-07 and Tables 3A and 3B; Annual Report 2005-06, Union Public Service Commission

**Table 5.3: The Services for which the Recruitment is Made through the CSE****Civil Services (Main) Examination – 2006****All India Services**

i) Indian Administrative Service

ii) Indian Police Service

**Central Services Group 'A' Services / Posts**

iii) Indian Foreign Service

iv) Indian P &amp; T Accounts &amp; Finance Service

v) Indian Audit and Accounts Service

vi) Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise)

vii) Indian Defence Accounts Service

viii) Indian Revenue Service (I.T.)

ix) Indian Ordnance Factories Service (Assistant Works Manager, Non-Technical)

x) Indian Postal Service

xi) Indian Civil Accounts Service

xii) Indian Railway Traffic Service

xiii) Indian Railway Accounts Service

xiv) Indian Railway Personnel Service

xv) Post of Assistant Security Officer in Railway Protection Force

xvi) Indian Defence Estates Service

xvii) Indian Information Service (Junior Grade)

xviii) Indian Trade Service (Grade-III)

**Group 'B' Services / Posts**

xix) Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Service (Section Officers' Grade)

xx) Delhi, Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman &amp; Diu and Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli Civil Service

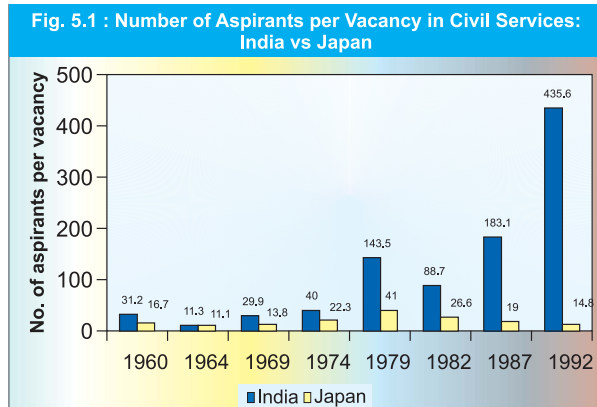
xxi) Delhi, Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman &amp; Diu and Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli Police Service

xxii) Pondicherry Civil Service

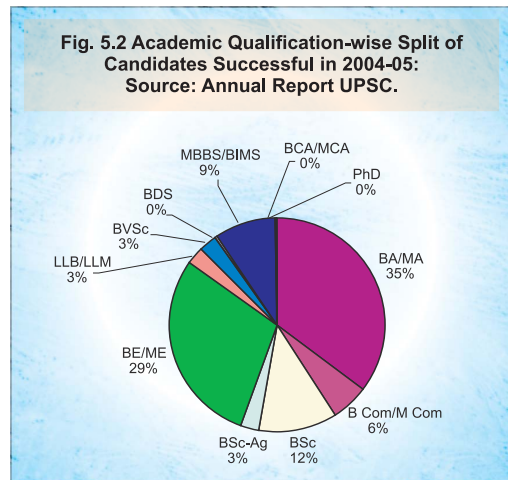
xxiii) Pondicherry Police Service

Source: 56th Annual Report, 2006-07; UPSC

5.2.6 The adequacy of numbers in the talent pool from which the existing system recruits its civil servants has never been an issue. For example, the number of applicants competing for 457 civil service jobs in 2005 has been of the order of 3.45 lakh (based on the Annual Report of UPSC 2006-07). This ratio has been increasing over the years. A comparison with Japan which is often cited as an example of merit-based recruitment to the civil service confirms that recruitment to the civil services in India is far more competitive than Japan. Figure 5.1 illustrates this.<sup>41</sup>



5.2.7 In addition to the Civil Services Examination, the UPSC conducts competitive examinations for other 'specialised Services' such as the Indian Forest Service, Indian Economic Service/ Indian Statistical Service, and Indian Engineering Services. Only those candidates who have the prescribed graduate (or post graduate) qualifications are eligible to appear in these examinations. The Commission is prima facie of the opinion that some of the Services, currently covered by the CSE (especially the Accounts Services) should be included in the category of 'specialised Services' and recruitment should be done through a separate examination. The Government may take a view on this issue in consultation with the UPSC. The Commission has deliberated on various issues involving recruitment into the civil services through the Civil Services Examination (CSE). The concluding deliberations have centred around the following issues:



- i. Stage of entry into the civil services
- ii. Age of entry and number of attempts

<sup>41</sup>Das SK, 1998; Civil Service Reform & Structural Adjustment.

- iii. Structure of the civil services examination
- iv. Other modes of induction into the civil services

### 5.3 Stage of Entry into the Civil Services

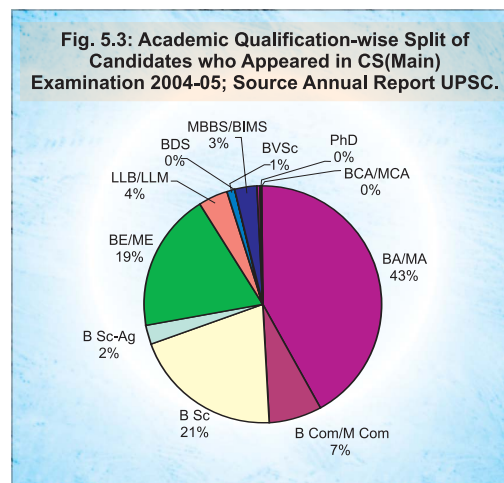
The stage of entry into the Services through the Civil Services Examination conducted by the UPSC, is after graduation (a Bachelor's or equivalent degree). The source is the pool of graduates (in all subjects) in the eligible age-bands. Persons who are selected and allotted to different services are given a common as well as service-specific training for a total period of two years. The Committees which have reviewed the recruitment and training practices have found several deficiencies in them and have suggested – as dealt with elsewhere in the Report – changes in the existing systems. This Commission has also made suggestions for improvement, that can be implemented immediately, both as regards the examination system and training. It has been urged by a number of perceptive observers that the system needs to be changed radically, if the objective is to recruit persons with the talent, skills, attitudes and motivation essential in a civil service career. One of the main elements of the change proposed is that grooming for a future civil service career should start at a young age when the mind is open and receptive to values of public service whereas entrants into civil service at a late age bring with them a 'baggage' of entrenched mindsets. Based on these considerations, two proposals have been made, namely:

1. Post-School recruitment system and
2. post-School grooming for public services.

While the objective of both is the same, the second one seeks to avoid the weaknesses of the first one. Both the proposed systems are examined below:

#### 5.3.1 The Post-school Recruitment System:

5.3.1.1 This proposal envisages recruitment to the civil services through an All India Entrance Examination for students who have completed school (class XII). Those who qualify would be called for interview which would also include psychological tests, group discussions, medical tests, etc. The final selection would take into account existing reservation quotas. The selected candidates would join an Institute for



3-year course. This 3-year course would be carefully tailored to meet the essential requirements of a modern and responsive civil service. Assessment tests will be held every year during the course period. All candidates who pass the final test would be awarded a graduation degree that is nationally recognized. A merit list will be drawn up thereafter, on the basis of the exams/tests conducted by the institute. Those who do not wish to pursue a career in the civil services will be permitted to exit and pursue their interests elsewhere. Realistic fees would need to be charged for the full course with provision for scholarships for meritorious/poor students.

5.3.1.2 Those candidates desirous of pursuing a career in the civil services would, on completion of the course, be given their service allotments on the basis of merit and their choice. Candidates who have been given their service allotments will undergo a 2-year service-specific course in designated national academies/institutes - for example SVPNPA for IPS, NADT for IRS etc. These 2-year courses would be designed specifically for the requirements of the concerned service. There would also be further annual examinations/tests during these 2 years. Again, a final merit list for each service will be drawn up at the end of 2 years on the basis of the exams/tests carried out by the designated academies/institutes. Candidates in the All-India Services would be given their cadre allotment at this stage on the basis of merit and preference.

5.3.1.3 The proposed system would require the establishment of a National Civil Service College to conduct the 3-year graduation course. The UPSC would conduct an examination to select candidates for this College and the eligibility would be a CBSE (Class XII) or an equivalent educational qualification. The existing age criteria would need to be correspondingly lowered.

5.3.1.4 A similar system of post-school recruitment exists in the Armed Forces where students after passing the 12th class are eligible to join the National Defence Academy after qualifying in the competitive exam conducted by the UPSC. The Railways also recruit some of its mechanical engineers through a post-school entrance examination. They are further given professional training at the Indian Railways Institute of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering (IRIMEE), where the candidates undergo a four-year rigorous training programme in Mechanical Engineering, for which the Institute has a Memorandum of Understanding with Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi. The Armed Forces Medical College, Pune recruits candidates on the basis of a competitive examination which is post-school. Selected candidates are formally inducted into the Armed Forces Medical Services after successfully passing the final MBBS examination.

### 5.3.2 Arguments For

5.3.2.1 It has been urged that a post-school recruitment system, as briefly described above, has several advantages. It would be possible to “catch” potential civil servants at a young age and ground them in the ethos of public service at a time when they are still in their formative years. The educational/training programme could be so designed as to integrate the general knowledge and skills required for the civil services over a 3-year programme. It would also be possible to select the right candidates for various civil services based on a closer observation of their performance and aptitude. Another advantage would be that as the number of streams of education at the school level is limited as compared to the number of streams at the college level, this will make for ease of comparability and would reduce the clutter of students who are engaged in the study of other academic disciplines in most university courses but are actually preparing for the civil services examination.

5.3.2.2 The post-school recruitment makes it possible for the system to tap into a much bigger resource pool of talent than the present system of recruitment. Traditionally the best and brightest students in the country opt for a professional education after school, and tend to go to the IITs, Medical schools, National Law Schools etc. That being the case, a post-school entry system into the civil services has the potential of attracting the best and brightest talent of the country.

5.3.2.3 A post-school system would also end the present undesirable system of coaching institutes which have mushroomed all over the country to prepare candidates for the civil service examination. These coaching institutes tend to create stereotypes which ultimately thwart intelligence and analytical abilities which are essential civil service attributes. The present recruitment system unfortunately, tacitly encourages these thriving coaching centres which tend to trivialize education and merely train candidates to beat the examination system and thereby achieve success. As a substantial number of candidates who go through these coaching classes ultimately succeed in getting selected, the Services get burdened with ‘unsuitable candidates’ who become a lifetime liability.

5.3.2.4 Some eminent educationists have argued that the conventional principle of a Degree as the basic qualification to determine eligibility was evolved at a time when standards of school education were not as high as they are now. Furthermore, it was felt that students lacked the maturity at that young age to absorb professional skills and analytical abilities which are required to pursue professions requiring resolution of complex issues and national concerns. The myth that students will be mature enough to absorb professional skills and undertake professional responsibilities only after he/she attains the age of 25 has now been exploded with most professions (engineering, medicine etc) selecting students for entry

immediately after they pass their 12th standard. Thus, there are, for example, cases of students qualifying as lawyers at the young age of 21-22, being selected as judicial officers and sitting in judgement as early as at 23-24 years of age. Similar examples are available from other professions as well.

5.3.2.5 It has also been argued by the proponents of the post-school system of recruitment that the change will enable a larger number of candidates particularly from weaker sections to avail themselves of the opportunity to compete for the civil services as, according to them, university education in this country is the privilege of less than 15% of the eligible age groups. It therefore tends to deny equal opportunity to a vast section of citizens particularly those in rural areas to appear for the civil service examination.

### 5.3.3 Arguments Against

5.3.3.1 On the other hand, several arguments have been advanced against post-school recruitment. These can be summarized as follows:

5.3.3.2 It is well known that students studying in schools in rural areas particularly government schools, do not receive the same quality of education that is delivered in urban areas especially in the public schools. This can lead to an undesirable bias in recruitment. Such an urban bias is already apparent in the highly competitive examinations for admission to the IITs, National Law Schools, the premier medical schools and the centres of excellence in higher education established in various fields across the country. Furthermore, it is generally the affluent and the elite who, by virtue of their resources, have access to better educational institutions and better coaching and preparation for the competitive examinations such as the ones described above.

5.3.3.3 University education is the key to the development of a well balanced personality in as much as it promotes better understanding, insights into socio-economic problems and appreciation of real life situations through inter-action with peer groups. It is only after graduate studies that rural students can compete on the same footing with urban students for the civil services examination. In that sense, the university system in India is a great leveler.

5.3.3.4 Diversity and flexibility in education have been found to produce far more innovative entrepreneurial and courageous administrators and managers. Those who pursued a highly inflexible and standardized education tend to be routine in their approaches to problem-definition and problem-solution. It would take years of training and experience to overcome such a handicap. To nurture and encourage leadership thought as well as out of

the box approaches to solve difficult problems, it would be desirable to increase educational diversity through varied academic backgrounds in the Services.

5.3.3.5 It is argued that the system would provide flexibility to train young minds in public service values. While it is true that it would be possible to inculcate public service ethos in young minds, one has to recognize that most entrants to the civil service are drawn to it by the opportunities a civil service career offers for public service and that being the case, a certain aptitude for public service is inherent in the decision to join the civil services. Public service ethos is an outcome of a process of socialization that all individuals go through. The four main influences in this context are the family, culture, school and the State. While a career-oriented course has a value, the values of a public servant are shaped by external factors and societal influence. Significant orientation, in fact, occurs in the formative years of a child's development. Training is essentially to impart skills. Education on the other hand, is to develop the faculties of an individual and imbibe values.

**Box 5.1: Views of Various Committees on the Stage of Entry**

**The Public Services (Qualifications for Recruitment), Committee, 1955:** "Finally, for the top-most grades we are definitely of the opinion that entry into these services should be restricted to graduates. This view is based on our opinion that for the highest Executive and Administrative services a maturity of outlook and cultural standard is required which, by and large, can naturally be expected of graduates. For these services, therefore, we recommend the age level of 21 to 23."

**Committee on Recruitment Policy and Selection Methods (1976; Kothari Committee):** This Committee suggested the continuance of the existing minimum educational qualification as a university degree. It also examined the age limit for eligibility.

**Committee to Review the Scheme of the Civil Services Examination (1989, Satish Chandra Committee):** This Committee favoured the existing requirement of graduation as a qualification for taking the Civil Services Exam. It also examined the issue of age limit.

**The Civil Services Examination Review Committee (2001; Yoginder Alagh Committee):** This Committee touched upon the issue of qualification required and the age limit for the civil services examination. It had the following to say:

*"It is shown by research that there is a positive correlation between a higher level of education and performance in the Examination. Besides, considering the magnitude and importance of this examination, the graduate requirement seems to discourage the non-serious candidates who may apply in large number without any serious preparation and understanding for purpose of trial and may ultimately clog the system. In view of this, it is essential to prescribe graduation as the minimum educational qualification as the candidates are expected to reach a certain level of maturity by that time. In this way, it will work as a filter. However, the Committee recommends that the candidates may continue to be permitted to take the Preliminary Examination while studying for their degree, as at present".*

5.3.3.6 It may be recognized that for the Armed Forces, it makes sense to catch the potential recruits young and put them through a rigorous training and educational programme designed to uniquely serve the needs of the armed forces. This may not be ideal for the civil services which have a somewhat a different nature of duties and responsibilities. Several years of training and comradeship in a training institution for the officer corps in the defence

forces helps knitting them into a cohesive team with strong bonds and a common purpose. This has obvious advantages in uniformed, hierarchical armed forces. Civil services have to deal with all segments of society, and have to respond to the urges of citizens. Civilian public servants have to function in a democratic milieu and are accountable to elected political executive on a day-to day basis.

#### 5.3.4 Systems in Other Countries

5.3.4.1 In this regard, a study of the recruitment systems to the higher civil services in various countries yields useful insights. The Commission has looked into the French recruitment system to the civil services and held discussions with the French Authorities. France has an elaborate network of civil service schools which are higher education institutions separate from public universities. Each of them is run under the supervision of the concerned Minister. The premier school, the ENA ('Ecole Nationale d' Administration' or 'National School of Administration') is supervised by the Prime Minister but managed by the Ministry of Civil Service. Entry to these schools is through competitive examinations, open to candidates fulfilling objective criteria such as age and level of education i.e. a graduate degree. The ENA is an administrative establishment of the government which trains top-level civil servants. The ENA was created for two purposes:

- to standardize the recruitment of civil servants meant for a wide variety of careers, and
- to ensure professional training of the highest quality for those civil servants who are expected to rise to the highest levels of public service.

5.3.4.2 Recruitment of the students to the ENA is made through three streams:

- 'external' competition, open to students under 28 years of age who already hold a degree equivalent to a licence; this competitive examination is open to members of the European community.
- 'internal' competition, open to civil servants or public sector employees with a minimum of four years service, and under 35 years of age on January 1st of the year they sit for the competitive examination.
- a competition, open to persons under 40 years of age with at least 8 years of professional experience in any sector other than public administration, or who have held office for at least 8 years as a member of an elected regional body.

5.3.4.3 ENA students complete a one-year professional internship followed by 15 months of course work. At the end of their studies, students are ranked according to their academic merit and, in the order of decreasing merit, asked to choose the service they wish to join, the best ranked graduate having the widest choice, the last one having none.

5.3.4.4 Thus, the French system is not a post-school recruitment system, though it has several special features of its own.

5.3.4.5 The vast majority of countries do not follow a post-school recruitment system for the civil services. Several countries, including those that have undertaken civil service reforms such as USA, UK, Australia, Singapore have not adopted the post-school system of recruitment to the civil services.

5.3.4.6 The Commission has carefully examined the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system as well as post-school recruitment system. After careful consideration it is of the view that in order to combine the advantages of the post-school system with the existing system, a new system (post-school grooming) should be developed over the next few years so that it becomes the main source of recruitment for the civil services in the future. This system is described in the following paragraphs.

### 5.3.5 Post-School Grooming for a Public Services Career

5.3.5.1 Modern administration involves facing complex challenges in critical sectors like public policy, policing, urban and rural development, delivery of justice, health care, education, land management, infrastructure, to name a few. These are intricate and often inter-related issues which require a set of knowledge and skills and an understanding that conventional university courses do not adequately provide because unlike other specialized courses, public administration as a subject has still not evolved into a full-fledged graduate course in our universities. As a result, students who appear for the Civil Services Examination may have outstanding academic records in other professional courses but often lack the desired level of knowledge in areas pertaining to their future career in the Civil Services. This underscores the need to introduce in our higher education curriculum, a formal degree course in public policy and management which is necessary and would be of immense value for a person seeking a career in the Civil Services. The syllabi in public policy and management must include an understanding and insight of our Constitution and laws, the political system, social and economic concerns, public services, human resource management and core principles of good governance. This envisages introduction of specially designed new courses which will include the above subjects in a single graduate degree which will become a part of the university curriculum.

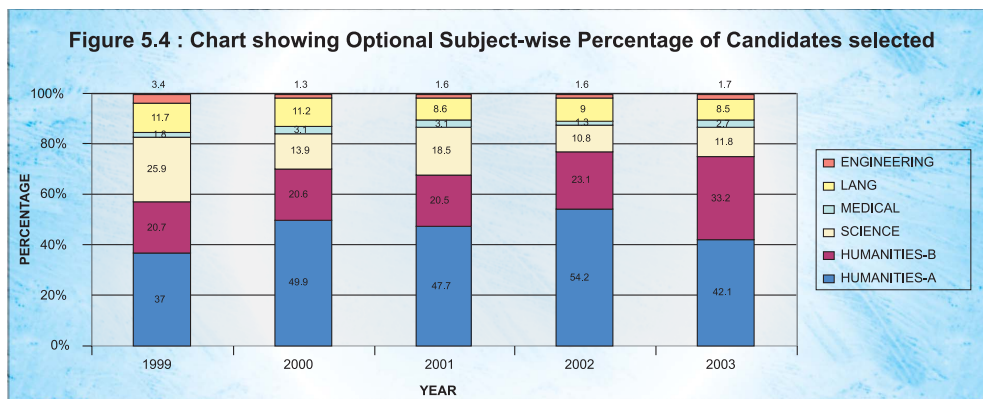
5.3.5.2 Such graduate level courses can be introduced either by setting up exclusive institutions for this purpose or by making the courses available through selected existing universities and institutions both at the national and State levels. The French ENA is an example of the former, whereas institutions such as the Kennedy School of Governance and the Maxwell Centre for Public Policy in the USA are examples of the latter. Given the rapid expansion of the University system in India, the Commission is of the view that both approaches are relevant for the country. Government of India should not only establish a few National Institutes of Public Administration (of the standard of IITs and IIMs) but some reputed universities and institutions should be assisted in introducing these specialized courses in public administration and related subjects. By focusing on the quality of students admitted to these institutions, the faculty, the course content, the educational processes, evaluation systems, learning resources and the governance of these institutions, it should be possible to create a pool of well qualified and informed applicants for the civil services.

5.3.5.3 While it is expected that in due course, applicants who have undergone the above-mentioned course will have a comparative advantage in the Civil Services Examination, it will also not be desirable to totally block the chances of other students who wish to appear for the Civil Services Examination. Arguably, the entry of graduates from other disciplines like engineering, science and medicine and the liberal arts etc. has enriched the repertoire of the civil service; they have brought into the services a significant degree of sophistication in terms of clarity of thinking, diversity of view-points, analytical ability, human relationship and implementation skills. However, in order to equip graduates from other disciplines for a career in the civil services it would be necessary to educate them in the core subjects mentioned earlier. Therefore, the Commission is of the view that graduates from other disciplines may be permitted to compete for the civil services examination but only after they have successfully completed a “bridge” course in public administration. These bridge courses could be offered by the selected institutes/universities in such a manner that aspiring candidates can pursue these along with their regular courses of studies. Such courses should also be offered through modern e-learning platforms to extend the reach of the bridge courses.

5.3.5.4 These two streams of students will constitute the pool of applicants for the Civil Services Examination. This would ensure that all applicants will have the pre-requisite knowledge, understanding and sensitivity which a civil servant should possess. Candidates from these two streams, on completion of their courses, will be required to appear for the Civil Services Examination to be conducted annually by the UPSC. The Commission has examined in detail the structure and content of this examination and made recommendations in paragraph 5.5. In the long run, it is expected that the specialized centres of excellence

(National Institutes of Public Administration) would evolve as the major source of recruitment to the civil services. The National Institutes of Public Administration will not only increase competition for selection in the public services by the education they provide to candidates, but will also facilitate admission to the disadvantaged and weaker sections of society by providing need-based scholarships to meritorious students. The Commission is of the view that this policy will serve the twin objectives of nurturing excellence and promoting inclusion.

5.3.5.5 In this context, the proposed graduate level courses in public administration could be structured in the following manner. The initial duration of these courses would be three years. The courses should have core subjects as well as certain optional subjects. The



core subjects could include Constitution of India, Indian legal system, administrative law, Indian economy, Indian polity, Indian history and culture etc. The design of the curricula for the public administration courses to be offered by the selected universities as well as the 'Bridge Course' and the admission criteria should be developed by an Expert Committee to be appointed immediately by the Government in consultation with the UPSC. This Committee should inter alia have the following terms of reference:

- a. Laying down norms for identification of universities and institutes where the said courses would be conducted.
- b. Design and content of the curricula for the said courses in public administration.
- c. Prescribing the modalities of admission for these courses.
- d. Prescribing the modalities and design of the bridge courses.

The Commission strongly recommends that the Expert Committee be appointed straightway so that the new courses could be started in at least some institutions/universities from the coming academic year. The Commission also feels that the bridge courses and their effectiveness should be reviewed based on the experience of five years.

5.3.5.6 After successful completion of the three-year programme in the selected universities, candidates will be given a Bachelor's degree in public administration/public policy/public management. These graduates will have the freedom to either appear in the civil services examination or pursue higher studies or any other career of their choice.

5.3.5.7 An added advantage of this system would be that a large pool of professionally educated administrators would be created which could also be tapped by the State and Local Governments and other public and private organizations. This is of particular relevance in the context of the expanding functions of the local governments after the passing of the Seventy Third and Seventy Fourth Constitutional Amendments, the need to strengthen State administrations and the increasing role of voluntary organizations and public-private partnership.

5.3.5.8 Alongwith the setting up of insitutes of public administration and identification of universities for running courses on Public Administration, the entrance examination system for the civil services would also require corresponding reforms. The Commission has studied the content of the papers prescribed under the present scheme of the Civil Services Examination in Paragraphs 5.5.3 and 5.5.5. At present, there is a very large number of optional subjects some of which have almost no nexus with the issues or problems that a civil servant may need to address. In this context, the Alagh Committee had recommended that:

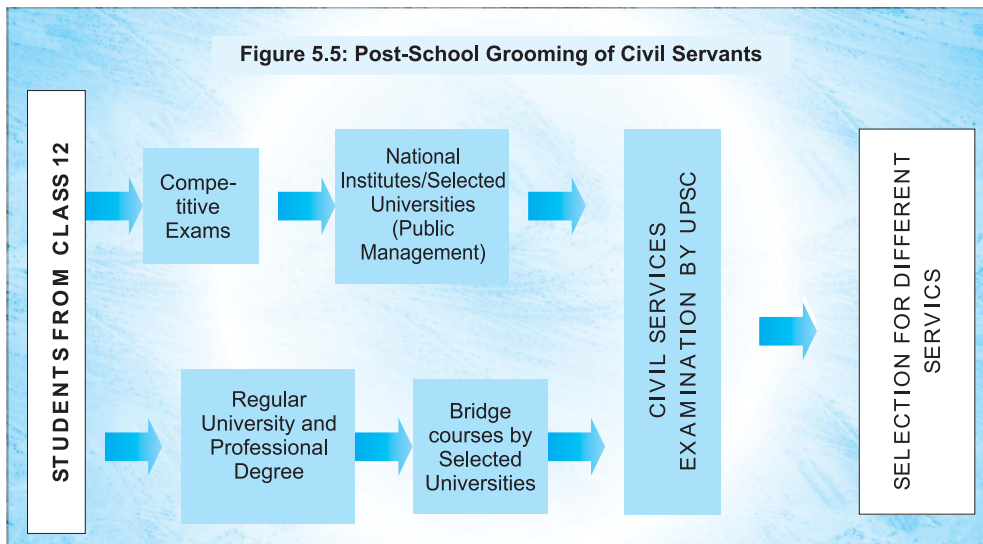
*“The present testing of optional subjects is based on college/university curriculum. Re-examining the candidates in their own subjects appears to be of doubtful utility. The universities have already done the work and retesting, possibly even at a lower level that what candidates have completed earlier, appears to be unnecessary., What is important is the relevance of a subject to the job requirements of a civil servant, especially in the changing scenario.”*

5.3.5.9 The Commission agrees with the views of the Alagh Committee (the Civil Services Examination Review Committee) that what is important is the relevance of these subjects to the job requirements of a civil servant. The Commission has therefore recommended in para 5.5.6 that the preliminary and main exams should comprise compulsory subjects

such as Constitution of India, Indian legal system, administrative law, Indian economy, Indian polity, Indian history and culture. These changes in the examination system are in synchronization with the recommendations of the Commission on the post-school channelisation of students for a career in the civil services.

5.3.5.10 The Commission recognizes that the system proposed - post-school grooming- especially the setting up institutes of public administration as well as identification of the universities for conducting public management/public administration courses constitutes a major reform relating to an important area of governance. It will need coordinated guidance, especially in the initial years. In view of its importance, the Commission would recommend the constitution of a high-level oversight/coordination committee with the Prime Minister as Chairman, to meet once in three months and give guidance to the implementing agencies and concerned institutions.

5.3.5.11 The Commission recognizes that the proposed reforms will require a lead time of some years. Meanwhile, the Commission has examined other aspects of the Civil Services Examination and recommended lowering the upper age limit, reducing the number of attempts and a revised structure of the Civil Services Examination. These recommendations can be implemented straightaway. These examination reforms would pave the way for a seamless transition to the system of recruitment focusing on acquisition of post-school professional qualifications by aspiring civil servants.



### 5.3.6 Recommendations

- a. **Government of India should establish National Institutes of Public Administration to run Bachelor's Degree courses in public administration/governance/management. In the long run it is expected that these specialized centres of excellence (National Institutes of Public Administration) would evolve as major sources of civil services aspirants.**
- b. **Selected Central and other Universities should also be assisted to offer such graduate level programmes in public administration/governance/public management which will produce graduates to further expand the pool of eligible applicants to the civil services.**
- c. **The courses offered in these universities should include core subjects such as the Constitution of India, Indian legal system, administrative law, Indian economy, Indian polity, Indian history and culture apart from optional subjects.**
- d. **Graduates of the above mentioned special courses from the National Institutes of Public Administration and selected universities would be eligible for appearing in the Civil Services Examinations. Further, graduates in other disciplines would also be eligible to appear in the Civil Services Examination provided they complete a 'Bridge Course' in the core subjects mentioned above. The Bridge course should be run by the same selected national institutes/universities, which conduct the graduate level courses stated in (c) above.**
- e. **Liberal need-based scholarships should be provided to students admitted to the Institutes/Universities.**
- f. **An 'Expert Committee' should be appointed immediately by the Government in consultation with UPSC to develop the curricula and determine the admission policy to these selected institutes/universities. This Committee should inter alia have the following terms of reference:**
  - i. **Lay down norms for identification universities and institutes where the said courses would be conducted.**
  - ii. **Design the content of the curricula for the said courses in public administration.**

- iii. **Prescribe the modalities for admission to these courses.**
- iv. **Prescribe the modalities and design of the bridge courses.**

**The Commission strongly recommends that the Expert Committee be appointed straightway so that the new courses could be started in some of these institutions/universities from the coming academic year. The Commission also feels that the bridge courses and their effectiveness should be reviewed based on the experience of five years.**

- g. **Since this is a major reform relating to an important area of governance and will need coordinated guidance, especially in the initial years, a high-level oversight/coordination committee with the Prime Minister as Chairman may be constituted to meet once in three months and give guidance to the implementing agencies and concerned institutions.**
- h. **The reforms to the scheme of the examination system as recommended in paragraph 5.5 may be taken up immediately. Examination and Recruitment reforms following the introduction of public administration/governance management as a full-fledged degree course in National Institutes of Public Administration and selected universities would take some time to be operationalised. Till then, the existing system, where students from all disciplines can appear for the competitive examinations, may continue.**
- i. **Students who have acquired a graduation degree in the above-mentioned course would have option to join any other career of their choice either in the public or private sector.**

#### **5.4 Age of Entry and Number of Attempts**

5.4.1 As mentioned above, the age limit for writing the civil services examination in the 1960s and the early 1970s was 24 years for the general category candidates with a relaxation of 5 years for candidates belonging to the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. During the last three decades, there has been a progressive increase in the age limit. Presently, candidates from the general category are permitted to write the civil services examination until the age of 30 years with relaxations of 3 and 5 years respectively for candidates belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and SC/ST. As a result of this increase in the age limit, there has been a discernible change in the age profile of the fresh entrants as Table 5.3 shows. In fact, while the average age of a fresh entrant was about 24 years in the 1960s and

early 1970s, it is now about 27 years. In the case of the IAS, the figures for average age of entry are presented in Table 5.4.

Batch	Eligible max. age for General	No. of Officers					Average Age of Entry into IAS				
		Total	Gen	SC	ST	OBC	Overall	Gen	SC	ST	OBC
1960	24	49	43	1	5	0	24.2	23.6	29.0	28.5	NA
1961	24	60	50	7	3	0	24.2	23.7	27.7	24.3	NA
1962	24	83	62	17	4	0	24.6	23.9	26.5	28.3	NA
1963	24	69	58	8	3	0	24.4	24.0	26.4	26.6	NA
1964	24	84	70	11	3	0	24.4	23.8	27.8	26.0	NA
1965	24	105	87	14	4	0	24.4	23.8	27.4	25.8	NA
1966	24	108	90	12	6	0	23.9	23.6	25.7	25.9	NA
1967	24	122	101	16	5	0	24.2	23.7	27.3	25.7	NA
1968	24	80	63	14	3	0	24.3	23.5	27.4	27.5	NA
1969	24	69	54	13	2	0	24.2	23.5	27.3	23.8	NA
1970	24	81	65	11	5	0	24.2	23.7	26.7	25.6	NA
1971	24	81	67	12	2	0	24.1	23.5	27.6	24.8	NA
1972	24	135	104	22	9	0	24.4	23.6	27.2	25.8	NA
<b>Group Average</b>		<b>1126</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>26.2</b>	
1973	26	116	84	23	9	0	25.2	24.1	28.1	27.8	NA
1974	26	140	110	20	10	0	24.9	24.4	27.3	25.1	NA
1975	26	127	97	18	12	0	24.9	24.1	27.4	27.3	NA
1976	26	137	112	19	6	0	25.2	24.5	28.8	26.4	NA
1977	26	152	113	23	16	0	25.1	24.5	27.9	25.8	NA
1978	26	130	100	21	9	0	24.8	24.2	26.8	25.8	NA
1979	26	119	95	17	7	0	24.9	24.4	27.1	25.3	NA
<b>Group Average</b>		<b>921</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>26.2</b>	
1980	28	123	94	19	10	0	25.6	25.1	27.6	26.8	NA
1981	28	128	101	18	9	0	25.9	25.3	28.0	27.4	NA
1982	28	144	113	21	10	0	26.1	25.6	28.1	28.4	NA

Recruitment

**Table 5.4 : IAS 1960-2004: Average Age at Entry (Contd.)**

Batch	Eligible max. age for General	No. of Officers					Average Age of Entry into IAS				
		Total	Gen	SC	ST	OBC	Overall	Gen	SC	ST	OBC
1983	28	157	122	25	10	0	25.8	25.1	29.1	26.6	NA
1984	28	142	109	21	12	0	26.1	25.3	28.7	28.6	NA
1985	28	159	123	23	13	0	25.6	25.0	27.6	27.7	NA
1986	28	135	106	19	10	0	26.4	25.8	29.5	27.4	NA
1987	28	125	97	20	8	0	25.4	25.0	27.4	26.2	
<b>Group Average</b>		<b>1113</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>27.4</b>	
1988	26	114	89	17	8	0	25.4	24.8	27.5	26.5	NA
1989	26	109	83	16	10	0	25.1	24.6	27.0	26.5	NA
1990	26	106	82	16	8	0	25.3	25.0	25.8	26.8	NA
Group Average		329	254	49	26	0	25.2	24.8	26.8	26.6	
1991	31	106	84	14	8	0	25.7	25.3	27.6	26.4	NA
1992	28	81	62	12	7	0	25.4	24.7	28.0	26.8	NA
1993	33	80	60	14	6	0	25.6	25.2	26.6	27.2	NA
<b>Group Average</b>		<b>267</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>26.7</b>	
1994	28	80	62	12	6	0	25.8	25.1	28.3	28.7	NA
1995	28	79	35	12	6	26	26.1	25.3	28.1	27.6	25.9
1996	28	80	37	12	6	25	25.7	24.9	27.0	25.8	26.2
1997	28	76	35	13	6	22	26.6	26.0	27.0	27.2	27.2
1998	28	55	25	8	5	17	26.1	24.8	28.4	27.3	26.5
1999	28	54	27	7	3	17	26.3	25.3	28.6	26.6	26.9
<b>Group Average</b>		<b>424</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>26.5</b>
2000	30	56	23	8	4	21	26.0	25.9	26.3	25.8	25.9
2001	30	57	28	9	4	16	27.2	26.6	27.2	26.5	28.6
2002	30	59	23	10	6	20	27.0	26.0	28.4	26.0	27.9
2003	30	71	32	12	7	20	27.3	26.7	27.9	29.0	27.3
2004	30	89	40	15	5	29	27.4	26.9	26.8	29.2	28.1
2005	30	91	39	12	6	34	27.5	27.1	28.5	30.2	27.3

Table 5.4 : IAS 1960-2004: Average Age at Entry (Contd.)

Batch	Eligible max. age for General	No. of Officers					Average Age of Entry into IAS				
		Total	Gen	SC	ST	OBC	Overall	Gen	SC	ST	OBC
<b>Group Average</b>		423	185	66	32	140	27.2	26.6	27.5	28.0	27.5
<b>Grand Total</b>		4603	3356	684	316	247	25.4	24.7	27.6	26.9	27.1

*Source: Cabinet Secretariat*

5.4.2 In terms of numbers, the difference in the average age at entry is only 3 years. But its impact on the system of values and beliefs that a civil servant will bring into the service is undeniably significant. This needs to be viewed in the context that it is around the age of 23-24 years that an individual makes the transition from an open and receptive phase in life to a phase where he/she starts getting 'set' in his/her views. This makes it difficult for a civil servant entering at a later age to adapt to and internalize the core and intrinsic values demanded of a civil service.

5.4.3 In addition, these late entrants will have a shorter service span, which means that they may not have adequate opportunities to contribute to policy-making at higher levels. Table 5.4 presents a theoretical exercise to find out the percentage of civil servants eligible for consideration for empanelment at the level of a Secretary to Government of India as per the present norms of age. It can be seen that, while for 1961 to 1972 batches of the IAS, about 21% of the SC officers and 41% of the ST officers were eligible on these norms; in the last six years, these percentages have come down to 15% and 21% respectively. Admittedly, these percentages only indicate the eligibility of civil servants with regard to their age; it is quite likely that the results in the actual empanelment would be significantly lower. Reservation for the OBCs in the civil services started in the year 1995. As Table 5.4 shows, the average age of entry in their case is also on the rise. Clearly, there has been a retrogression in the age profile of officers belonging to these categories with very few of them being available for posts at the level of Secretary and still fewer finally making it to that level. This clearly militates against the interest of civil servants of categories who, because of their inadequate service span, miss out on appointments at apex levels.

Recruitment

Table 5.5: IAS – 1960-2004 : Percentage Eligible for Secretary										
Batch	Eligible max age for General	No. of Officers					% Eligible for Secretary as per present norms			
		Total	General	SC	ST	OBC	General	SC	ST	OBC
1960	24	49	43	1	5	0	33	0	0	NA
1961	24	60	50	7	3	0	44	14	67	NA
1962	24	83	62	17	4	0	73	18	0	NA
1963	24	69	58	8	3	0	93	38	0	NA
1964	24	84	70	11	3	0	93	9	33	NA
1965	24	105	87	14	4	0	100	14	50	NA
1966	24	108	90	12	6	0	99	50	50	NA
1967	24	122	101	16	5	0	100	25	60	NA
1968	24	80	63	14	3	0	100	14	33	NA
1969	24	69	54	13	2	0	100	31	100	NA
1970	24	81	65	11	5	0	98	27	40	NA
1971	24	81	67	12	2	0	100	17	50	NA
1972	24	135	104	22	9	0	99	18	44	NA
<b>Group %</b>		<b>1126</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>NA</b>
1973	26	116	84	23	9	0	86	13	0	NA
1974	26	140	110	20	10	0	75	30	50	NA
1975	26	127	97	18	12	0	77	11	17	NA
1976	26	137	112	19	6	0	63	5	17	NA
1977	26	152	113	23	16	0	64	30	56	NA
1978	26	130	100	21	9	0	66	33	56	NA
1979	26	119	95	17	7	0	66	18	71	NA
<b>Group %</b>		<b>921</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>NA</b>
1980	28	123	94	19	10	0	54	16	30	NA
1981	28	128	101	18	9	0	48	39	22	NA
1982	28	144	113	21	10	0	42	24	20	NA
1983	28	157	122	25	10	0	52	0	30	NA
1984	28	142	109	21	12	0	51	14	33	NA
1985	28	159	123	23	13	0	52	30	15	NA

Table 5.5: IAS – 1960-2004 : Percentage Eligible for Secretary (Contd.)

Batch	Eligible max age for General	No. of Officers					% Eligible for Secretary as per present norms			
		Total	General	SC	ST	OBC	General	SC	ST	OBC
1986	28	135	106	19	10	0	38	0	30	NA
1987	28	125	97	20	8	0	53	15	38	NA
<b>Group %</b>		<b>1113</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>NA</b>
1988	26	114	89	17	8	0	56	24	25	NA
1989	26	109	83	16	10	0	58	25	20	NA
1990	26	106	82	16	8	0	46	38	38	NA
Group %		329	254	49	26	0	53	29	28	NA
1991	31	106	84	14	8	0	48	29	50	NA
1992	28	81	62	12	7	0	63	17	29	NA
1993	33	80	60	14	6	0	53	29	17	NA
<b>Group %</b>		<b>267</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>NA</b>
1994	28	80	62	12	6	0	44	25	17	NA
1995	28	79	35	12	6	26	40	8	17	60
1996	28	80	37	12	6	25	62	33	17	48
1997	28	76	35	13	6	22	29	31	17	18
1998	28	55	25	8	5	17	60	13	40	13
1999	28	54	27	7	3	17	44	14	0	
<b>Group %</b>		<b>424</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>35</b>
2000	30	56	23	8	4	21	30	13	50	14
2001	30	57	28	9	4	16	18	22	25	8
2002	30	59	23	10	6	20	30	10	33	3
2003	30	71	32	12	7	20	16	8	0	
2004	30	89	40	15	5	29	15	27	20	0
2005	30	91	39	12	6	34	21	8	0	
<b>Group %</b>		<b>423</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Overall</b>		<b>4603</b>	<b>3356</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>

Source: Cabinet Secretariat (2007)

5.4.4 The existing system of higher age limit and larger number of permissible attempts means that a large number of candidates continue to appear repeatedly in the civil services examination over a long period. Apart from being a waste of vital human resources, this places an undesirable premium on cramming and memorization rather than on intelligence and analytical abilities. Another outcome of this has been the proliferation of coaching institutes to prepare candidates for the Civil Services Examination. These anomalies can be reduced by lowering the age limit and circumscribing the number of chances.

5.4.5 The supporters of the higher age limit generally argue that there is lack of educational facilities in rural and backward areas compared to large cities. Since there has been a discernible improvement in the spread of educational facilities during the last three decades, the perceived disadvantages accruing to candidates from rural and remote areas have been greatly reduced. This is evident from Table 5.5 which sets out the data gathered by the UPSC in respect of the Civil Services Examinations conducted by them. Obviously, the share of successful candidates from the rural areas will increase as the educational facilities spread further.

**Table 5.6 : Successful Candidates in Civil Service Examinations**

Year	% Rural	% Urban
2000	26	74
2001	29	71
2002	32	68
2003	32	68
2004	33	67
2005	33	67
<i>Source: UPSC</i>		

5.4.6 Under the circumstances, there is a strong case for reducing the upper age limit belonging to all categories appearing for the civil services examination. Lower age limits, in general, would help in reinvigorating the civil services by making it possible for civil servants to inculcate the required civil service values at a young age. In respect of candidates belonging to the OBC and the SC/ST categories, it would greatly help in enhancing their career progression and enable them to occupy apex positions in government. In turn, government would stand to gain in terms of greater availability of their services.

5.4.7 The question of the age limit for the civil services has been the subject of deliberation of several committees. Some of these are:

- The Public Services (Qualifications for Recruitment) Committee, 1955
- The Committee on Recruitment Policy and Selection Methods (1976, Kothari Committee)
- The Committee to Review the Scheme of the Civil Services Examination (1989, Satish Chandra Committee)
- The Review Committee on Civil Services Examination (2001, Yoginder Alagh Committee)
- The Committee on Civil Service Reforms (2004, Hota Committee)

5.4.7.1 *The Public Services (Qualifications for Recruitment) Committee, 1955*: This Committee was appointed in 1955 to “consider the proposal that a University degree need not be insisted upon as condition for employment to Public Services”. This Committee was headed by Dr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar. As regards the Higher Civil Services, the Committee recommended that:

*“Finally, for the top-most grades we are definitely of the opinion that entry into these services should be restricted to graduates. This view is based on our opinion that for the highest Executive and Administrative services a maturity of outlook and cultural standard is required which by and large, can naturally be expected of graduates. For these services, therefore, we recommend the age level of 21 to 23.”*

5.4.7.2 *The Committee on Recruitment Policy and Selection Methods (1976, Kothari Committee)*: This Committee suggested the continuance of the existing minimum educational qualification as a university degree. It also examined the age limit for eligibility and recommended as follows:<sup>42</sup>

*“In consideration of the fact that a serious student, planning to enter the All India Services, should be adequately equipped to appear in the Civil Services Examination, we recommend that the minimum age for the Preliminary and the Main Examinations may be fixed at 21 years. We do not recommend the lower minimum age of 20 years for the Indian Police Service as is permitted at present.*

*We have given considerable thought to the upper age limit for the Civil Services Examination. Whereas it is necessary that the entire process of the examination should ensure identification of the really capable among the competing candidates, we feel that adequate opportunity should be provided to the late blossomers and to those others who wish to pursue higher academic studies or obtain specialisation in*

*subject of their choice, before entering service careers. We feel that the interest of these candidates would be adequately protected by retaining the upper age limit of 26 years, with the usual relaxation for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates and other categories as may be notified by the Government from time to time.”*

5.4.7.3 *The Committee to Review the Scheme of the Civil Services Examination (1989, Satish Chandra Committee):* This Committee examined the issue of age limit and recommended as follows:<sup>43</sup>

*“Age limit for the Civil Services Examination (where a Bachelor’s degree of an Indian University is the minimum qualification) has to take into account the average age of students acquiring the Bachelor’s degree. In India, an average student passes the Senior Secondary Examination (10+2) at the age of 18. Thereafter, he has to spend three years in a College/University to get a degree in humanities, commerce or science. Thus by the time he becomes a graduate, he is about 21 years of age. A professional such as a doctor or an engineer has to take a longer period of four to five years after the Senior Secondary level. Thus when he complete the Bachelor’s degree, he is 22-23 years of age. Taking into account the age profile of our graduates, in our view, the lower age limit has been rightly fixed at 21 years. We recommend no change in the existing age limit of 21-26 years for the general candidates. There would be the usual relaxation of 5 years of age for members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.”*

5.4.7.4 *The Review Committee on the Civil Services Examination (2001, Yoginder Alagh Committee):* This Committee also looked at the age limit for the civil services examination and recommended:<sup>44</sup>

*“In view of the foregoing discussion and analysis, the Committee strongly recommends a reduction in the present maximum age. The Kothari Committee had also recommended the age limit of 21-26 years to provide opportunities for candidates who blossom late and who wish to obtain either specialization in a subject or pursue higher academic studies. The present Committee fully agrees with this view and recommends an upper age limit of 26 years for general category with usual relaxation for the candidates from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and the Physically Handicapped, i.e., three years for Other Backward Classes and five years for candidates from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and ten years for the Physically Handicapped. This would meet the requirements of social equity also, as the Committee has amply demonstrated.”*

5.4.7.5 *The Committee on Civil Service Reforms (2004, Hota Committee):* This Committee did not go into the issue of qualifications required for eligibility for entering the civil services but recommended the following about the age of entry:<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Paragraph 5.0902 and 5.0908; Report of the Satish Chandra Committee

<sup>44</sup>Paragraph 7.9; Report of the Alagh Committee

<sup>45</sup>Page 94, Report of the Hota Committee

*“To mould young entrants for the higher civil service through training, government may go back to the period from 1948 till 1971 when the age of eligibility was 21-24 years for general candidates (as against 21-30 years for general candidates at present) with five years age concession for members of the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. Age concession for candidates of the Other Backward Classes may be three years as at present.”*

5.4.8 It can be seen from the above that all the Committees have been in favour of an age limit of either 21-26 years or 21-24 years for general candidates with age concession for candidates from OBC and SC/ST categories. As observed in the foregoing paragraphs, late entry into the civil services has three undesirable outcomes – it works against the interests of the weaker sections in the long run, does not enable recruitment of best candidates at a malleable age and puts a premium on rote learning and coaching institutes. In the circumstances, the Commission is of the view that the permissible age for appearing in the Civil Services Examination should be 21 to 25 years for the general candidates, 21 to 28 years for candidates from the OBC, and 21 to 29 years for candidates from SC/ST as also for those who are physically challenged.

5.4.9 Lowering the age limit would also require reducing the number of permissible chances available to different categories of candidates. Presently, the number of permissible attempts is 4 for general candidates, 7 for candidates from OBC and unlimited for SC/ST candidates (subject to an age limit). This issue has also been considered by various Committees in the past. The Kothari Committee had favoured only two attempts, not only for the general candidates but also for SC/ST candidates. It felt that as the number of vacancies in a given year is a fixed number and an increase in the number of attempts works to the advantage of the less deserving candidates. However, to remove difficulties which may arise out of lack of familiarity with such examinations, it chose to recommend two attempts. In doing so, it concurred with the view of the Public Services (Qualifications for Recruitment) Committee of 1955. It also made a passing reference to the situation in the UK where candidates were allowed only one attempt in a similar examination.<sup>46</sup>

5.4.10 Government did not accept the recommendations of the Kothari Committee on this issue. The Satish Chandra Committee analysed the percentage of general candidates who were placed in the first two hundred ranks in the merit list during 1984-87 and observed that the success ratio in the first attempt was low compared to that in the second and third attempts. Further, the success ratio in the second attempt was only marginally higher than the third attempt. Observing that the rules permit only one further attempt in case a candidate is allocated a Group ‘A’ Service other than the IAS and IFS, it declined

to interfere with the scheme of allowing three attempts to general candidates as it stood at that time.

5.4.11 The Alagh Committee had made an analysis of successful candidates in the 1995 to 1999 examinations and found that in the general category, less than 20% were successful in their first attempt, and approximately the same percentage of candidates were successful in their second and third attempts (above 30% in each case) and about 80% of the candidates were successful by their third attempt.<sup>47</sup> In case of successful candidates belonging to the OBC category, more than 80% were able to get selected by their fifth attempt and in case of SC/ST candidates, around 85% to 90% got selected in their sixth attempt.<sup>48</sup> As the Committee had recommended the age limits of 26, 29 and 31 years for General, OBC and SC/ST candidates respectively, it recommended 3, 5 and 6 attempts for these candidates in that order.

5.4.12 The Commission has deliberated on this issue. It is of the view that once the scheme of testing only in compulsory subjects in place of optional subjects is accepted (as is being recommended in a subsequent paragraph in this Report) the argument furnished by the Kothari Committee regarding large number of attempts leading to selection of less deserving candidates is certainly valid. Higher number of attempts also lead to loss of productive years as also the self confidence of those aspirants who keep making repeated attempts to pass the examinations. Keeping this in view the permissible age band and the number of attempts recommended by the Commission are given in Table 5.7. The Commission also feels that this may be reviewed after five years.

**Table 5.7: Permissible Age for Appearing in the CSE and Number of Attempts to be Allowed**

Category	Permissible age (years)	No. of attempts
General	21-25	3
OBC	21-28	5
SC/ST	21-29	6
Physically Disadvantaged	21-29	6

5.4.13 Another issue concerning the permissible age for appearing in the CSE pertains to the cut-off date for determining the eligibility in terms of age. Presently, a candidate must have attained the age of 21 years and must not have attained the age of 30 years on 1st August in the year of the CSE. It has been argued that:

- i. Candidates born between 1st January and 1st August reach the prescribed upper age limit one year before the candidates who are born not earlier than 2nd of August. This is disadvantageous to such candidates.

<sup>47</sup>Diagram 7.1, Report of the Alagh Committee

<sup>48</sup>Diagrams 7.13 and 7.14, Report of the Alagh Committee

- ii. Registration of births and deaths, though compulsory, has spread thinly in most parts of the country. In rural and backward areas, the practice of getting a birth certificate at the time of birth is seldom followed. This results in random determination of the date of birth at the time of admission to schools. Generally, since school sessions begin in the month of August, there is a tendency to randomly select the date of birth prior to the beginning of the session.

5.4.14 The Commission has obtained information from the Union Public Service Commission regarding month-wise date of birth of applicants to the Civil Services Examination. Out of 3.3 lakh candidates who applied for the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination, 2007, the figures for month-wise date of birth are as follows:

Sl. No.	Month	Dates of Birth of Candidates (%)
1.	January	9.61
2.	February	7.01
3.	March	7.88
4.	April	7.42
5.	May	9.45
6.	June	10.98
7.	July	13.72
8.	August	8.79
9.	September	6.09
10.	October	6.43
11.	November	5.56
12.	December	7.05

5.4.15 From Table 5.8, it appears that there is some bunching in the registration of date of births in the months prior to August. However, the Commission has also obtained information from the Office of the Registrar General of India regarding month-wise live births based on the Sample Registration System (SRS) data of 2004-06. The average percentage of month-wise sample live births in India for the period 2004-06 is as follows:

**Table 5.9: Month-wise Distribution of Dates of Birth (SRS) - Provisional**

Sl. No.	Month	Dates of Birth (%)
1.	January	8.9
2.	February	7.3
3.	March	7.4
4.	April	7.3
5.	May	7.6
6.	June	8.9
7.	July	8.4
8.	August	9.2
9.	September	8.5
10.	October	9.2
11.	November	8.6
12.	December	8.8

5.4.16 As can be seen, the births are more or less evenly distributed with a slightly higher figure for August and October. The Commission has deliberated on the issue and it is of the view that there is no visible merit in changing the cut-off date to determine the eligibility in terms of age.

#### 5.4.17 Recommendations

- a. **The permissible age for appearing in the Civil Services Examination should be 21 to 25 years for general candidates, 21 to 28 years for candidates from OBC and 21 to 29 years for candidates from SC/ST as also for those who are physically challenged.**
- b. **The number of permissible attempts in the Civil Services Examination should be 3, 5, 6 and 6 respectively for general candidates, candidates from OBC, candidates from SC/ST and physically challenged candidates respectively.**
- c. **The present cut-off date for determining the eligibility in terms of age (i.e. 1st of August in the year of the examination) may continue.**

## 5.5 Structure of the Civil Services Examination

### 5.5.1 The Existing Structure

5.5.1.1 The present structure of the Civil Services Examination (CSE) is based on the recommendations made by the Kothari Committee (with minor modifications made by the Satish Chandra Committee). The details of the structure are presented in Table 5.1. Briefly, the CSE is conducted in three successive stages viz. the Preliminary Examination, the Main Examination and the Personality Test. The Preliminary Examination consists of two objective type papers and is meant only for initial screening of candidates. One of the papers tests the general knowledge of the candidates and the other tests them in any one of a large number of optional subjects. Only those candidates who qualify in the Preliminary Examination are eligible for admission to the Main Examination, which consists of a written examination of conventional type papers and a Personality Test. The conventional type papers test the candidates in (a) compulsory subjects in the form of one Essay paper, one paper each testing proficiency in the English language and any of the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution and two papers on ‘General Studies’, and (b) two optional subjects having two papers each. The test for proficiency in English and any other Indian language is only of a qualifying nature.

### 5.5.2 Reasons for Adopting the Present Structure

5.5.2.1 One of the reasons for recommending such a sequential process of selection in the form of preliminary examination, main examination and personality test was as follows<sup>49</sup>:

*“A selection process consisting of sequential stages, one following the other, is necessary, apart from any other reason, because of the large number of candidates. The average quality of candidates would get “richer” as the stream proceeds from one stage to the next. It would also become more homogeneous. A selection process divided into a sequence of stages would make it possible to concentrate the available testing resources credible candidates likely to make the grade instead of dispersing them sparsely on a very large number of candidates many of whom are of indifferent quality...”*

Another reason for having a sequential screening test was because:

*“The selection process should be so designed that it attracts as many deserving candidates as possible from different parts of the country to compete in the examinations... The proposed Preliminary Examination is one step in that direction.”<sup>50</sup>*

<sup>49</sup>Paragraph 1.22, Report of the Kothari Committee  
<sup>50</sup>ibid, paragraph 1.21

5.5.2.2 One major outcome of this scheme has been that the Civil Services Examinations, as they are annually conducted by the UPSC, have become elaborate affairs and take more than a year to complete. The long time taken is a national loss because this detracts from the civil servant's career by that extent of time. The Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) that select candidates for the MBA degree do not take more than three months to complete the process of selection, even though they also handle a very large number of candidates. The entrance examinations conducted by these Institutes, test the candidates in respect of their analytical abilities, logic, comprehension, problem-solving abilities, precision and overall knowledge. Since these examinations are on the basis of objective-type questions, the time taken to conduct the examinations is significantly less.

5.5.2.3 The Kothari Committee had based its 'new scheme' on the 'comprehensive method' of selection. The Committee was of the view that, *"from the point of view of the role and functions of the civil services today the case for the comprehensive method is very strong. The immense tasks of development and reconstruction impose on a public servant the need for continual learning of new knowledge and skills: a sort of continuing self-renewal. Unless a person is intellectually outstanding and temperamentally and motivationally suitable for the service to which he is appointed, he is unlikely to make the contribution expected of him. For a person to give his best to a service, he must belong to the service not only intellectually but also emotionally. The person and the service must be compatible in every way."*<sup>51</sup>

5.5.2.4 Thus, the objectives for introducing the 'comprehensive method' were two fold: (a) to select persons who are capable of continuously acquiring knowledge and skills, and (b) to find aspirants who are temperamentally and motivationally suited and emotionally attached to the service to which they are appointed. Given these twin objectives, as far as the structure of the examinations is concerned, the Commission feels that it cannot be gainsaid that the Combined Admission Test (CAT) which selects entrants to the IIMs fails to provide candidates having a propensity and aptitude for acquiring new knowledge and skills. Further, on the basis of the structure of the Civil Services Examination as it exists today, it is difficult to maintain that the successful candidates are temperamentally and motivationally suited to the service they have been allocated at the completion of the one year long process.

5.5.2.5 Basically, the present sequential examination system was necessitated due to the large number of candidates appearing in the CSE. As mentioned earlier, the Kothari Committee had introduced the Preliminary Examination as a screening test for identifying the serious candidates and broadening the base of recruitment and which was easy to administer. This was the reason for having objective type and multiple-choice questions. The screening

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<sup>51</sup>Paragraph 1.18, Report of the Kothari Committee

provided a manageable number of candidates for the Main Examination which consisted of conventional type papers.

5.5.2.6 The Commission is of the view that though there is a case for continuing with these two components of the examination process, there is little merit in having them sequentially in the manner in which it is administered today, that is, first the papers of the Preliminary Examination are evaluated and the results declared, followed by filling up of forms for the Main Examination leading to its conduct, evaluation of answer-books and declaration of the list of candidates for the Personality Test. Instead, the Commission is of the view that both the Preliminary Examination having an objective type paper and the Main Examination having conventional type papers (including the language papers and essay paper) could be administered at one stage, one after the another on consecutive days. The multiple-choice objective type paper for the Preliminary Examination could be evaluated first and the evaluation for the conventional type papers for the Main Examination could be undertaken for only those candidates who have scored a threshold level of marks. The advantage of this system would be that it would substantially reduce the time taken for completing an examination cycle. Additionally, it would not be necessary for candidates to fill up forms twice and also travel twice for appearing in the examinations.

5.5.2.7 A view point has been expressed that in the proposed system – where the preliminary and main examinations are held together – the logistics of administering the Main examination to such a large number of candidates could pose some difficulty. The Commission, however, feels that there are other examination systems wherein a much larger number of candidates answer conventional descriptive type question papers, and these are conducted quite efficiently. For example, the Central Board for Secondary Examination (CBSE) handles a much larger number of candidates in more diverse subjects. It is therefore felt that conducting an examination for about 4 lakh candidates should not pose insurmountable problems. Nonetheless, an alternative model for achieving the same results can also be considered.

5.5.2.8 In this alternative model, the civil services examinations will be conducted in the following manner. After the Preliminary Examination, the tabulation of result should be possible within a month. Based on the results, the candidates to be called for interview (whose number may be approximately two to three times the number of available vacancies) would be short-listed in accordance with their ranking. Only these short-listed candidates would be eligible for appearing in the Main Examination which would be conducted within two months of the Preliminary Examination. In other words the Main Examination and interview process could start almost simultaneously. This model would also achieve

the objective of compressing the examination cycle although it does tend to give a higher weightage to the Preliminary Examination in screening the candidates.

5.5.2.9 The Government may take a considered view and adopt one of the above-mentioned models in consultation with the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

### 5.5.3 The Issue of Optional Subject Papers

5.5.3.1 In the case of the Preliminary Examination, the Kothari Committee had recommended five objective type papers of equal weightage to test candidates in (a) any Indian language listed in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution, (b) English language, (c) General Studies, (d) & (e) one Optional Subject in two papers from a list of subjects.<sup>52</sup> The Government did not accept this scheme and presently the candidates are tested in two objective type papers consisting of General Studies (150 marks) and Optional Subject (300 marks). The optional subject can be chosen from a list 23 subjects from Humanities/Social Sciences, Science and Technology/Medical and Commerce streams.<sup>53</sup> There is no weight to the marks obtained in the Preliminary Examination.

5.5.3.2 The Alagh Committee had also deliberated on the nature of the Preliminary Examination. With regard to the general studies paper, it was of the view that it should be recast into a 'Civil Services Aptitude Test' paper with emphasis on comprehension, logical reasoning, problem solving and data analysis.<sup>54</sup> However, in case of the optional subject paper, it did not fully agree with the view that optional subjects do not provide a level playing field as also to the fact that the success ratio of various subjects varies widely. The Committee felt that 'there is a need for testing academic knowledge in some depth'. Hence it recommended the upgradation of the level of the optional subject paper to the honours level of a good university.<sup>55</sup> It also proposed a weight of 25% to the Preliminary Examination in the overall scheme.<sup>56</sup>

5.5.3.3 In the Main Examination, the weightage of compulsory subjects is 26.08% while that of Optional Subjects is 52.16% (Table 5.1). On the recommendation of the Kothari Committee, 47 subjects were included in the list of optional subjects including language and literature of one of 23 languages. The Satish Chandra Committee recommended the removal of French, German, Russian and Spanish from the language and literature group and inclusion of Education, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering and Medical Science as new optional subjects. At the time of review by the Alagh Committee, there were 51 optional subjects in the list and suggestions had been received for inclusion of nearly 50 more subjects.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Paragraph 3.10, *ibid*

<sup>53</sup>Paragraph 8.4.2, Report of the Alagh Committee

<sup>54</sup>paragraph 8.4.3, *ibid*

<sup>55</sup>paragraph 8.4.4, *ibid*

<sup>56</sup>paragraph 8.4.11, *ibid*

<sup>57</sup>paragraph 8.5.4.1, Report of the Alagh Committee

5.5.3.4. The Kothari Committee had felt that an examination consisting of only compulsory subjects without any optional papers would drastically reduce the base of recruitment, as the compulsory subjects would generally be related to *'national development, modern administration and management', facilities for the study of which 'are at present strictly limited'*.<sup>58</sup> However, as the Committee was of the view that the written examination was intended to assess the intellectual qualities and depth of understanding of a candidate, it was assumed by the Committee that *'a candidate would offer as one of the optional subjects, the subject which he may have studied for the honours or masters degree'*.<sup>59</sup> The importance of this assumption in the context of the present structure of the examination and actual experience cannot be underestimated. This issue was considered by the Alagh Committee in great detail. The Alagh Committee doubted the very utility of re-examining the candidates in their own subjects. It emphasized that *'what is important is the relevance of a subject to the job requirements of a civil servant, especially in the changing scenario'*.<sup>60</sup> It pointed out the following issues in relation to the testing of candidates in optional subjects:

- i. Large number of optional subjects presents problems of question setting and evaluation of answer scripts. The fact that these could be answered in any of the 18 languages of the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution clogs the system.
- ii. The threshold of difficulty could not be maintained at the same level among the optional subjects.
- iii. It is difficult to balance streams like Humanities, Social Sciences, Engineering and Medical Science.

5.5.3.5 The Alagh Committee observed that candidates were opting for optional subjects on the basis of 'scorability' and not on the basis of their own specialization. Thus, in the CSE 1999, as many as 41% of candidates preferred to take the examination with both optional subjects different from those which they had studied in college/university. The figures for such candidates for the years 2000 to 2005 are 40%, 36%, 44%, 46%, 41% and 48% respectively.<sup>61</sup> Such high percentages vitiate the basic assumption made by the Kothari Committee as mentioned above. Given the inadequacies of the present system, the Alagh Committee recommended the replacement of optional subjects with a set of three compulsory papers on:

- (a) Sustainable Development and Social Justice,
- (b) Science and Technology in Society, and
- (c) Democratic Governance, Public Systems and Human Rights.

<sup>58</sup>Paragraph 1.32, Report of the Kothari Committee

<sup>59</sup>Paragraph 3.30, Report of the Kothari Committee

<sup>60</sup>Paragraph 8.5.4.2, Report of the Alagh Committee

<sup>61</sup>Source: Information provided by UPSC.

5.5.3.6 The curriculum and the general objectives of each compulsory subject would be designed to bring out the issues or the problems which the civil services would need to address. The Committee also noted that in countries like France and the UK, the Civil Services Examinations have a focus on human rights, economic and social development, administrative and environmental law, public systems management, science and technology and economics and accountancy. Thus, in order to moor the examinations to the demands of a civil service of the 21st century, the papers on the compulsory subjects would need to cover issues related to our society, social structure, political and administrative governance, emerging areas of change and modern developments in science and technology as they affect society at large. This, in the view of the Committee, would give a specific focus to the civil services recruitment process, rather than keeping it as a general 'fishing' process with a degree of randomness to it.<sup>62</sup> The Committee also felt that this would reduce the total time taken to conduct the examination by three to six months.<sup>63</sup>

5.5.3.7 The Commission agrees with the conclusions reached by the Alagh Committee. However, it is of the view that this should also apply to the Preliminary Examination. In other words, the Preliminary Examination should consist of an objective type test having one or two papers on general studies. The Main Examination should consist of conventional type compulsory papers dealing with the Constitution of India, the Indian legal system, Indian economy, polity, history and culture etc. A Committee may be constituted by the Government in consultation with the UPSC, to decide on the structure and syllabi of the compulsory papers for both, the Preliminary and Main Examinations. Further, the Commission is of the view that sufficient lead time may be provided to the prospective candidates for the civil services from the date of acceptance of these recommendations.

#### 5.5.4 Essay Paper

5.5.4.1 The Alagh Committee had recommended the merger of the Essay paper with the compulsory language papers and allowing for a weight of 5% to the marks obtained in them. The Commission is of the view that the essay paper should not be merged with the language papers which only test the language proficiency of the candidates. There should be a separate Essay paper in the Main Examination for testing the candidates' ability and skills in comprehension, analysis and presentation as also their knowledge and language skills. As mentioned earlier, the evaluation of the essay paper should only be done in case of candidates who have scored a threshold level of marks in the Preliminary Examination.

#### 5.5.5 Language Papers

5.5.5.1 The Kothari Committee had found it imperative that candidates be tested in their knowledge of English and at least one Eighth Schedule language. The Alagh Committee

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<sup>62</sup>Paragraph 8.5.11, Report of the Alagh Committee

<sup>63</sup>Paragraph 8.6, Report of the Alagh Committee

had also endorsed this view. However, it felt that the standard of testing should be upgraded to a slightly higher level from the present matriculation level and a 5% weightage should be given to the marks obtained in these papers. It also recommended the merger of the separate Essay paper into the language papers.

5.5.5.2 While endorsing the view of the Alagh Committee regarding continuance of testing of proficiency in English and one Eighth Schedule language, the Commission feels that modern methods of standardization and grading of testing in language skills should be adopted and accordingly, appropriate tests should be designed. Grading systems and standardization as adopted in the United Kingdom may be examined for this purpose. Further, the Commission feels that no weight need to be attributed to testing of language skills.

#### 5.5.5.3 Recommendations

- a. ***Structure of Examination:*** Either of the following two models may be adopted for compressing the examination cycle.
  - i. **The Preliminary and Main Examinations for the Civil Services Examination would be conducted together on two to three consecutive days. Evaluation of papers for the Main Examination should be done in case of only those candidates who have secured a threshold level of marks in the Preliminary Examination. The personality test would follow thereafter.**

OR

- ii. **Based on the results of the Preliminary Examination, candidates eligible for taking the main examination and the personality test would be short listed in accordance with their rankings. Only these short-listed candidates would be eligible for appearing in the Main Examination, which would be conducted within two months of the Preliminary Examination. The short list would be limited to about two to three times of the number of vacancies available. Thus it would be possible to start the Personality Test and the Main Examination almost simultaneously.**

- b. Content:**
- i. The Preliminary Examination should consist of an objective type test having one or two papers on general studies including the Constitution of India, the Indian legal system, Indian economy, polity, history and culture. There should be no optional subjects.**
  - ii. The Main Examination should consist of two papers only in the compulsory subjects. These compulsory subjects may include Constitution of India, Indian legal system, Indian economy, polity, history and culture etc. The question papers should be of the conventional descriptive type. Besides, there should be a separate essay paper as a part of the Main Examination.**
- c. Steps may be taken by DOPT in consultation with the UPSC to finalise the syllabi of compulsory subjects for the both the preliminary and main examination, for the recruitment cycle 2010. This could later on be dovetailed with the recommendation of the “Expert Committee” suggested in Paragraph 5.3.6.**

## **5.6 Allocation of Service and Appearing in the Examination after Allocation of Service**

5.6.1 At present, allotment of services to successful candidates is done before they report for training, on the basis of their position in the merit list and preferences expressed by them. It has been mentioned earlier that the Kothari Committee had recommended such a scheme as the final stage of its three-stage process, which was not accepted by Government. The Alagh Committee had also looked at the question of allotment of services. To help selected candidates to make an informed choice of service, it recommended that:

*“the selected candidates may be required to exercise their service preferences only on the completion of the Foundation Course at LBSNAA but the allocation would continue to be on the basis of the original merit list prepared by the UPSC.”<sup>64</sup>*

5.6.2 The Commission agrees with the recommendation of the Alagh Committee and recommends that allotment of services to the successful candidates should be done only on the completion of the Foundation Course, but should be on the basis of the merit list prepared by the UPSC.

<sup>64</sup>Paragraph 10.3.3

## 5.7 Other Modes of Induction into the Civil Services

5.7.1 On the pattern of examinations conducted by the UPSC, many of the State Public Service Commissions also conduct examinations to select candidates for the State Civil Services. As per Rule 4, read with Rules 8 and 9 of the IAS (Recruitment Rules), 1954 recruitment to the IAS shall be by the following methods –

- i. 66 2/3rd per cent shall be by direct recruitment by a competitive examination;
- ii. 28 1/3rd per cent shall be by promotion from the State Civil Service; and
- iii. 5 per cent shall be by selection from among members of other services.

5.7.2 As per the Indian Administrative Service (Appointment By Selection) Regulations, 1997, the State Government shall consider the case of a person not belonging to the State Civil Service but serving in connection with the affairs of the State who is of outstanding merit and ability and holds a Gazetted post in a substantive capacity, and has completed not less than 8 years of continuous service under the State Government. Thus, in case of the State of Karnataka, the total authorized strength of IAS posts is 259, out of which 181 posts are filled by direct recruitment and 78 posts are being filled through promotion. Out of these 78 posts, 67 are being filled by officers promoted from the State Civil Service (SCS) and 11 seats are being filled by officers promoted from the non-SCS.<sup>65</sup>

5.7.3 The general practice is that officers of the State Civil Service get inducted into the IAS in about eight to twenty-five years, there being wide variations across States. This has been a cause of major grievance on the part of the State Civil Service officers. Also in some cases, the officers selected for the IAS have very few years of service left and get such seniority that they have to be appointed to posts not commensurate with their actual seniority as state civil service officers. After deliberations, the Commission is of the considered view that the induction of officers of the State Civil Services into the IAS should be done by the UPSC on the basis of a common examination. However, instead of having an ad-hoc or sporadic system of examination or having a system of 'Special Recruitment drives', the UPSC should conduct an annual examination for officers from the State Civil Service who have completed 8-10 years of service in Grade 'A'. The eligibility criteria should also include norms such as an upper age limit of 40 years etc. On the basis of this examination, the UPSC should provide the State Governments with an eligibility list. State Governments should fill up their quota for promotion to the IAS on the basis of this eligibility list. Such a system of induction would not only address the grievances of the State Civil Service

Officers, but also ensure fairness in the selection process and result in induction of better human resources. However, in order to ensure that the existing officers in the State Civil Services are not denied adequate opportunities, the examination in the next two years may be conducted without any upper age limit and thereafter an upper age limit of 40 years may be introduced. The Commission also feels that a maximum of two attempts should be allowed to an eligible candidate for taking this examination. The same principles should also be applicable to all state civil services, which have a promotion quota in the other All India Services (IPS and IFS).

5.7.4 Presently, apart from direct recruitment, induction into the Group 'A' Central Services is also done by way of promotion of officers on the basis of Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) and 'vigilance clearance'. Further, in case of many of the Central Services, there is no direct recruitment to Group 'B' posts. The ratio of Group 'A' posts to be filled up by direct recruitment and by way of promotion as well as the mechanism varies from Service to Service. Thus, the Commission is of the view that induction by way of promotion into Group 'A' Central Services should, in addition to consideration of ACRs, also be done by way of examination on the basis of the criteria as mentioned above. However, as these Services have a specific functional role, the nature of the examination, ratio of posts to be filled by promotion etc. should be decided by the concerned departments in consultation with the UPSC.

#### **5.7.5 Recommendations**

- a. The induction of officers of the State Civil Services into the IAS should be done by the UPSC on the basis of a common examination.**
- b. UPSC should conduct such an examination annually for officers from the State Civil Services who have completed 8 to 10 years of service in Grade 'A' posts. The eligibility criteria should also include norms such as an upper age limit of 40 years etc. On the basis of this examination, the UPSC should provide the State Governments with an eligibility list. The State Governments should fill up their quota for promotion to the IAS on the basis of this eligibility list. A maximum of two attempts should be allowed to an eligible candidate for taking this examination. To ensure that the existing officers in the State Civil Services are not denied adequate opportunities, the examination in the next two years may be conducted for all such eligible officers and the upper age limit of 40 years may be introduced, thereafter.**

- c. **The mechanism mentioned above should also be applied in case of induction into other All India Services at the State level.**
- d. **Induction by way of promotion into Group ‘A’ Central Services should, in addition to consideration of ACRs, also be done through conduct of examination on the basis of the criteria as mentioned above. The nature of the examination, ratio of posts to be filled by promotion etc. should be decided by the concerned departments in consultation with the UPSC.**

### 5.8 Allotment of Cadres to the All India Services

5.8.1 The present system for allotment of cadres for the All India Services has been a matter of continuing debate. Till 2007, the allotment of cadres was a mix of a merit-based allotment to insiders in fulfilment of their choice of home state, combined with a random roster system for those who did not qualify for their home State. Candidates were not required to give their preference for any other State apart from their home State. This system achieved a balanced distribution of officers to various States but had a disadvantage in that high ranking candidates, at times, were not getting their home State due to lack of sufficient insider vacancies in that category and were therefore, relegated by the roster to a State which may not be a preferred option for the officer. This often became a source of long-term disappointment, particularly for candidates who had obtained high ranks but found that the process gave no weightage to their rank once they failed to qualify for the insider vacancies in their home cadre. This sense of dissatisfaction that merit did not appear to play a sufficient role in cadre allotment, was compounded by a complex randomized allotment process for outsiders that made it difficult to satisfy the needs of all aspirants. The earlier system – limited zonal preferences – although it led to a greater degree of satisfaction, resulted in reduced inter-regional mobility.

5.8.2 The different systems of cadre allotment which have been tried from time to time, are indicated below:

- a. Merit-cum-preference system (1947 to 1965)
- b. Roster system i.e. allocating candidates except SCs / STs and women, according to their rank in the merit list to the cadres arranged in alphabetical order (1966 to 1977)
- c. Limited Zonal Preference System: (i) Vertical limited zonal preference (1978)  
(ii) Horizontal Zonal preference system (1979 to 1983)

- d. Roster system of allocation without any special dispensation (1984 till 2007).<sup>66</sup>

5.8.3 Government has now formulated a new Cadre Allocation Policy (2008).<sup>67</sup> This policy seeks to achieve a balance between the need for posting officers to different parts of the country and the “preferences” of the officers. The highlight of the policy is that officers are allocated to different cadres primarily on the basis of merit and their preferences. This, however, is subject to the reservation roster and the underlying principle of maintaining a ratio of 1:2 between the insiders and outsiders. The Commission is of the view that the new policy mitigates to a great extent the shortcomings that characterized the earlier cadre allocation policy. The Commission endorses the new policy but with some observations which are mentioned below:

5.8.4 It has been noted that there is reluctance on the part of candidates from outside the North East to serve in that region while at the same time the few ‘insiders’ from the North East who qualify for the services are not assured of allotment in their State/region.<sup>68</sup> The Government of Nagaland for example has been representing<sup>69</sup> that the “chances of a Naga IAS Officer getting a home cadre is actually only 1 in 12 whereas according to the general principle of IAS cadre allotment rules, it should have been one out of 3 vacancies”. Also, these States have small cadres and the chances of having more than one insider vacancy are remote. In view of the special characteristics of the North Eastern States as well as the apparent reluctance of officers from outside to serve in these States, it is felt that there is justification for a special dispensation by which ‘insider officers’ (those domiciled in Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura and Sikkim) are given a chance to serve in their own States. This could be done by allotting at least one vacancy in each of the relevant cadres for persons domiciled in the States listed above. This would mean that every year in a cadre e.g. Nagaland, at least one vacancy - irrespective of the number of vacancies in that year - will be earmarked for a successful candidate from Nagaland desirous of working there.

5.8.5 Under the new system proposed above, the list of successful candidates would be taken and if candidate(s) is/are available from the above-mentioned seven States and if a successful candidate has opted for the respective home cadre, then he/she should be first allotted to that cadre. Such an allotment would have to be done irrespective of whether the vacancy is for that category or not. In case there are more than one eligible insider candidates, then the allotment may be done in the order – ST, SC, OBC, and General candidates. This may, however distort the inter-se distribution among the General, OBC and SC/ST categories at the national level. Therefore having done this allotment, a slight adjustment may be required in the allocation of vacancies among the different categories in a few other States. Once the

<sup>66</sup>Report of the Group for reviewing the policy for cadre allocation of IAS officers

<sup>67</sup>Government Letter No. 14015/27/2005-AIS (I); Dated- 21st Feb. 2008.

<sup>68</sup>Government of Nagaland has pointed out that in last 12 years, 5 Naga IAS officers have been allotted to other States even as 10 outsiders initially allotted to Nagaland cadre subsequently got their cadres changed leading to a shortage of IAS RR officers in that State

<sup>69</sup>Chief Minister, Nagaland's letter dated 13th July 2005 to Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

insider quota of the small North Eastern States is filled up, then further allocation may be done as per the policy issued by the Government of India in 2008.

### 5.8.6 Recommendations

- a. **The following amendments should be made in the new Cadre Allocation Policy (2008) for allocation of Cadre to candidates selected for the IAS:**
  - i. **At least one vacancy each year in each of the cadres of AGMUT<sup>70</sup> (only for the State of Arunachal Pradesh) Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura may be allotted to a successful candidate domiciled therein provided he/she has opted for his/her home State. This may be done even if there is no ‘insider’ vacancy in these cadres.**
  - ii. **In case there is more than one eligible candidate, then the allotment may be done in the order – ST, SC, OBC and General candidates, as applicable to each state.**
  - iii. **Once the home State quota of the above-mentioned North Eastern States is filled up, further allocation may be done as per the Cadre Allocation Policy (2008), after making adjustments necessitated by the changes recommended above.**

## 5.9 The Union Public Service Commission

### 5.9.1 Role and Functions

5.9.1.1 The first Public Service Commission was set up on October 1st, 1926 by the British Indian Government in response to the demands of the Indian leaders. The scope of this Commission was further widened under the Government of India Act, 1935 and the Commission was named the Federal Public Service Commission. After Independence, a constitutional status was accorded to it and it was called the Union Public Service Commission. The Union Public Service Commission has been entrusted with the following duties and role under the Constitution:<sup>71</sup>

1. Recruitment to services & posts under the Union through conduct of competitive examinations;
2. Recruitment to services & posts under the Central Government by Selection through Interviews;

<sup>70</sup>AGMUT: Assam-Meghalaya, Goa, Manipur-Tripura and Union Territories

<sup>71</sup>Extracted from the Website of UPSC (<http://www.upsc.gov.in>)

3. Advising on the suitability of officers for appointment on promotion as well as transfer-on-deputation;
4. Advising the Government on all matters relating to methods of Recruitment to various services and posts;
5. Disciplinary cases relating to different civil services; and
6. Miscellaneous matters relating to grant of extraordinary pensions, reimbursement of legal expenses etc.

5.9.1.2 Thus broadly the functions of the UPSC could be categorized as follows:

- a. Recruitment
- b. Promotions
- c. Disciplinary matters
- d. Miscellaneous matters

### 5.9.2 Recruitment

5.9.2.1 Article 320(1) of the Constitution provides:

*“ It shall be the duty of the Union and the State Public Service Commissions to conduct examinations for appointments to the services of the Union and the services of the State respectively”.*

5.9.2.2 Accordingly, the UPSC conducts the following examinations:<sup>72</sup>

1. Civil Services [Preliminary] Examination
2. Civil Services [Main] Examination
3. Engineering Services Examination
4. Indian Forest Service Examination
5. Indian Economic Service/Indian Statistical Service Examination
6. Geologists' Examination
7. Combined Medical Services Examination
8. Special Class Railway Apprentices Examination

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<sup>72</sup>Extracted from the Website of UPSC (<http://www.upsc.gov.in>)

9. National Defence Academy and Naval Academy Examination.
10. Combined Defence Services Examination.
11. Section Officers'/Stenographers' Limited Departmental Competitive Examination.
12. Central Police Forces (Assistant Commandants) Examination

5.9.2.3 Conducting these examinations and recommending the names of suitable candidates is one of the most important functions of the UPSC. Besides, the UPSC also conducts recruitments by having direct interviews (or through recruitment tests) for vacancies in Government of India that are not covered by the competitive examinations.

### 5.9.3 Consultation for Framing Recruitment Rules

5.9.3.1 According to Article 320(3)(a) of the Constitution:

*“ The Union Public Service Commission or the State Public Service Commission, as the case may be, shall be consulted –*

- (a) *on all matters relating to methods of recruitment to civil services and for civil posts;*
- (b) *.....”*

The Constitution also stipulates:

*Provided that the President as respects the All India Services and also as respects other services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union, and the Governor, as respects other services and posts in connection with the affairs of a State, may make regulations specifying the matters in which either generally, or in any particular class or case or in any particular circumstances, it shall not be necessary for a Public Service Commission to be consulted.*

5.9.3.2 Keeping in view the aforesaid provisions, the Union Public Service Commission (Exemption from Consultation) Regulations, 1958, as amended from time to time specify cases in which it is not necessary to consult the Commission. Thus, though Government is empowered (Article 309) to make recruitment rules for various services or posts, under Article 320(3) consultation with UPSC is mandatory (except for the cases exempted). Therefore scrutiny of the recruitment rules of various departments and suggesting any changes in them is an important function of the UPSC.

## 5.9.4 Promotions

5.9.4.1 Selections for the All India Services from the State Services are regulated by the respective promotion regulations/rules. These rules provide for a Selection Committee headed by the Chairman or a Member of the UPSC. Similarly, for the Central Services there is a provision for Departmental Promotion Committees to be headed by the Chairman or Member UPSC. Besides, for all Group A posts, wherever the respective Recruitment and Promotion Rules so provide, the UPSC is required to hold meetings of the Departmental Promotion Committees. Over the years this function has expanded in keeping with the expansion in the structure of Government. This can be seen from the fact that in 2006-07 the Commission considered 1253 cases involving 12760 officials in as many as 353 DPC meetings for various posts in the Central Services. This indicates that the Commission has been encumbered with routine administrative matters at the cost of its broader mandate which is to advise the government on the principles of recruitment and promotion. The Commission, elsewhere in the Report, has suggested that an independent Public Service Authority should be entrusted with the task of selecting officers for senior positions in government. For other officers – up to the selection grade - it would be wise to delegate the routine functions of holding DPCs to the Departments concerned. The UPSC should be given the broader mandate of supervising these DPCs through mechanisms including a periodic review and reporting system, audit etc.

## 5.9.5 Disciplinary cases

5.9.5.1 Article 320 (3) (c) of the Constitution provides:

*“The Union Public Service Commission or the State Public Service Commission, as the case may be, shall be consulted –*

*(c) on all disciplinary matters affecting a person serving under the Government of India or the Government of a State in a civil capacity, including memorials or petitions relating to such matters.”*

5.9.5.2 It is further provided that:

*Provided that the President as respects the all-India services and also as respects other services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union, and the Governor, as respects other services and posts in connection with the affairs of a State, may make regulations specifying the matters in which either generally, or in any particular class of case or in any particular circumstances, it shall not be necessary for a Public Service Commission to be consulted.*

5.9.5.3 The Union Public Service Commission (Exemption from Consultation) Regulations, 1958, spell out the cases where such consultation is mandatory. Accordingly, during the year 2006-07 the UPSC had received 1188 disciplinary cases under the above Article including 334 cases brought forward from the previous year and the Commission tendered advice in 622 cases. Of these, effective advice leading to imposition of penalty numbered 522. Out of these, there were 48 cases of dismissal and 6 of removal whereas there were 159 cases of pecuniary penalties, 177 cases of cut in pension, 62 cases of censure and 79 cases where proceedings were dropped. The Commission feels that the time and expertise of the UPSC should not be taken up in dealing with routine and 'minor' disciplinary cases. The Commission in Chapter 14 while examining the disciplinary procedures in government has taken the view that these procedures need to be streamlined as the large number of steps prescribed in the current procedures have rendered them cumbersome and ineffective. The Commission is therefore of the view that consultation with the UPSC should be mandatory only in cases leading to the likely dismissal or removal of a government servant from service and all other types of disciplinary cases should be exempted from the UPSC's purview.

#### 5.9.6 Recommendations

- a. **Promotion of officers through Departmental Promotion Committees (DPC), upto the level of Selection Grade may be delegated to the concerned Departments. The UPSC should supervise the functioning of these DPCs through periodic reviews, audit etc.**
- b. **In the case of disciplinary proceedings, consultation with the UPSC should be mandatory only in cases involving likely dismissal or removal of a government servant.**