

**ORIENTATIONS OF WOMEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATORS OF ORISSA, INDIA**

by

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### Introduction

Public administrators have definitely forerun the subject of public administration through generations in the course of history. With high specialization of present day, public administrators are not necessarily products of the department of public administration. Irrespective of the origin from any branch of academic career, recruited on the basis of merit, an administrator in India might have an outlook for the subject of public administration relevant in its field of operation. Therefore, this relevance needs a testing.

Recruitment of woman administrators is a process of later half of twentieth century that developed with logic of gender equity from the west. Indian women had instantaneous gain by participating in the National Struggle for Independence and the gender equity getting coded into the Constitution of India. Despite the constitutional provisions, the socio-cultural practices did not justify the legal share of Indian women in politics and administration for last 54 years that followed the independence.

States of India have figurative differences in gender ratio in all fields. Literacy and education seem to be the prime determinant in woman participation. Orissa has evolved as an independent state in India very lately in 1936 purely on linguistic basis and the state again acquiring its shape almost after total disintegration of the peripheral parts. There have been many historical events that delayed the development of the area and did not favour building a strong administrative unit with standing culture. The present state administration is in the same pattern as a federal unit of India but weak political leadership in the state had not brought a strong administrative heritage.

Women have very rarely traded the administrative fields of Orissa. Once a domain of men, very few women could enter into civil service arena of 'All India Cadre' (Indian Administrative Service) qualifying as 'Senior Administrator'. Moreover, those who belong to this category, may not necessarily of state origin. On the other hand the promoted

category of the state cadre of administrators (Orissa Administrative Service) forms one-third of total senior administrators of the state. Among this one-third, there is a drought of women administrators because there had been virtual exclusion of women in Orissa Administrative Service due to non-competition of women based on socio-cultural restraints in one hand and low education profile on the other<sup>1</sup>. Educated women rarely opted to appear the competitive examination; they have confined to medical and other jobs familiarly accepted in the society.

Late eighty's and early ninety's of last century determined the entry of women into fields of administration with international awakenings of women from Fourth International Conference of Women, Beijing and Reservation for Women in Grassroots Governments of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Municipal Institutions of India. Orissa administration issued an order of reservation for women in Orissa Administrative Services and in admissions into the Engineering Colleges of Orissa in 1992. This has ushered a situation of entry of women into administration.

The subject of public administration at postgraduate level is available separately in Utkal University from 1996-97 though the major portion of the courses of the subject is taught as a combined subject with political science. Out of over hundreds of colleges offering courses in Bachelor's degrees, only one interior college i.e., B. N. M. A. College, Paliabindha near Bhadrak offers Bachelor degree in Public Administration. Thus the subject Public Administration is new for the state. Recent development in the state headquarter Bhubaneswar is the Regional Branch of Indian Institute of Public Administration that points to the importance of the subject of public administration to the member administrators and others.

The survey of the opinions of the senior women public administrators about public administration is selected for presentation as a part of the study of women administrators as a whole, not making a contrast with their male counterparts. Rather it is taken as a representative sample of administrators on this viewpoint.

*Statistics of Women in Administration of Orissa*

Women administrators are quite sparse. This disposition list of senior public administrators of Orissa shown in Table No. 1 represents administrators who entered their service at least 20 years back<sup>2</sup>. The trends before 20 years was a shrunken field for women who either did not want to be administrators or were denied access by the society. The entire recruitment to Orissa Administrative Service until 1990 was as low as 1.16 %.<sup>3</sup>

**Table No. 1**  
Bird's Eye-view on Figures of Women Administrators of Orissa

Sl. No.	Rank	Women	Men	Total	% (Women)
1.	I. A. S. Officer	12	191	203	5.91
2.	I. P. S. Officer	07	114	121	5.79
3.	I. F. S. Officer	02	122	124	1.13
4.	State Cadre OAS:				
	a). S.A.G. (Senior Administrative Grade)	00	007	007	0.0
	b). S.G.S.T.S (Senior Grade in Super Time Scale)	00	008	008	0.0
	c). S.T.S. (Super Time Scale)	00	057	057	0.0
	d). O. A. S. I	02	199	201	0.99
5.	O. A. S. II (Before Reservation, 1992)	12	1022	1034	1.16

Following the Resolution No. 43328 - 2M - 54 / 92/ Gen of 23 --12 - 1992 that reserved one third of vacancies for women categorizes as Scheduled Caste women (5 %); Scheduled Tribe Women (7.66%); Physically Handicapped women (1%); Women from Sports (0.33%); General (18.33%). All these combined together makes 33.32 reservation for women<sup>4</sup>. The recruitment to Orissa Administrative Service (OAS) following 1992 Resolution allowed a sizeable number of women into the field of

administration. Every recruitment year admitted number of women administrators more than total number of women administrators existing until 1992.

**Table No. 2**  
Number of Women Recruited following 1992 Reservation

Sl. No.	Recruitment Year	Women recruited
1.	1993	23
2.	1994	20
3.	1997	18

Thus a good number of women entered into administration. Before these batches, the women candidates in administration were counted by fingers.

### III

#### *Background of the Study*

Unlike developed countries, no background data is available about administrators of Orissa for analysis. There is no publication that deals with bio-data of the administrators. The seniority based Civil List maintained by the Government of Orissa had been abandoned for last 12 years since January 1989. Only for internal use, one Disposition List is prepared by the Government once every 2 to 3 years mentioning the posting and promotion of the senior cadre administrators from which some statistical figures may be available.

Secondly, the senior administrative officers are a 'difficult-to-be-studied' group for their position and duties. Limitation of approach, want of their time, odd duty hours, discriminating grade and level make them non-vulnerable to be studied.

In spite of these restraints, the author had undertaken this job of interviewing as many of the women administrators as possible due to personal acquaintance. Even sometimes the study had been undertaken through any possible or available route. Sometimes a questionnaire was served by Fax contacting over phone and the response received by Fax.

*The Objectives of the Study*

The women administrators do not necessarily come from a definite subject like Public Administration or Political Science or Economics. Many of them also come from other streams of humanities like English, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy or science faculties like Physics, Chemistry, Botany or Zoology or even professional wings like Engineering and Medicine.

All the recruits into administration undergo a course of probation with basic teaching and field training. The institution for such training is Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie for Indian Administrative Services and Gopabandhu Academy of Administration for Orissa Administrative Services. The senior Orissa Administrative Service candidates on being promoted to the Indian Administrative Service undergo a course at the National Academy at Mussoorie.

Included in the administrative training, a course of Public Administration with practical utility and submission of a paper or synopsis on any issue of administrative relevance at the end of the training. Thus each administrator comes into close contact with the subject of Public Administration and its curriculum.

The objective of this study is:

- 1. To understand exactly what knowledge, skills and aptitudes are expected of Public Administration professionals.*
- 2. To know the relevance of various subjects of the curriculum of Public Administration to the realities of administration.*
- 3. Application of the findings for the benefit of students of Public Administration in India by suitably framing the curriculum of Public Administration.*
- 4. Ideology of the Women Administrators of Orissa for enrolment of more and more women into fields of administration on gender-equity basis.*

*Bio-data of the Respondent Administrators*

Here in this study the responses of 25 women administrators have been analysed though more than 25 have responded beyond the date of analysis.

## Grade:

04 from Indian Administrative Service  
21 from Orissa Administrative Service

## Educational Background:

Post-graduate with M. Phil		
Pol. Science	- 2	
Sociology	- 1	
Zoology-	1	
English -	1	
Botany	- 1	
Post-graduate		
Pol. Science	- 4	
Sociology	- 3	
Economics	- 2	
History	- 2	
English -	1	
Psychology	- 1	
Philosophy	- 1	
Sanskrit	- 1	
Anthropology	- 1	
Physics-	1	
Chemistry	- 1	
Bachelor's Degree		
B. Sc. (Chem)	- 1	

Degree Earned in the field of Public Administration:  
None

Special Training Programs in Public Administration:  
Probational Training for IAS and OAS recruits

Current Membership of Major Professional Bodies:		
IAS Association	-	04
OAS Association	-	21
IIPA Membership	-	07

Length of Public Service:		
More than 20 years:	- 02	
10 to 20 years	- 02	
< 10 years	- 21	

Ethnic Minority:	-	-	-	None
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*Awareness and Interest of Women Public Administrators for the  
subject of Public Administration*

The academic origin of the public administrators being diverse and the introduction of the subject of public administration very recent, the awareness and interest of the administrators is of importance. This was elucidated from the familiarity of the women administrators with the degree programs of Public Administration offered by universities in India. Among the respondent administrators, 25 % were not familiar with post-graduate schemes and 60 % were unaware of the undergraduate Public Administration courses offered by the Indian Universities. The subject being new to the universities as a separate post-graduate department might have not come to their knowledge. The other factor being the colleges and the university department of Public Administration have not consulted any of them for the purpose of program development, placement assistance, guest lecturing, collaborative research or part-time teaching.

**Table No. 3**  
Awareness of Women Public Administrators of Orissa  
about Public Administration degree programs offered by  
universities in India

University Programs in Public Administration	Familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not Familiar
B. A. degree in Public Administration	03	07	15
M. A. in Public Administration/Public Policy	16	03	06
Other Public Administration programs			
Seminars of IIPA (Reg. Br.)	08	06	07
Symposia of Urban Dev. Agency	02	05	18

Apart from the university curriculum, the familiarity of the Public Administrators was noted based on the Public Administration Journal they were reading. As much as 32 % of them were familiar with the popular *Indian Journal of Public Administration* published by Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi and 20 % somewhat familiar with the journal. Only 12 % of them were familiar with *Nagarlok*, another urban affairs quarterly of IIPA and an equal figure somewhat familiar with it. Very rarely there was familiarity with a foreign Public Administration Journal like *Public Administration Review* (USA), *Public Management* (USA) or *Public Administration* (UK). Some of the Women

Administrators of Orissa were acquainted with the *Quarterly Journal of Rural Development* published by National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad. The latter journal has documentation on recent topics on Problems and Management of Panchayati Raj Institutions that gained momentum in fields of rural administration. Another journal dealing at length on current issues is *The Administrator*, published by Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, is "familiar" to 16 % and "somewhat" familiar to 12 % of Women Public Administrators of Orissa.

**Table No. 4**  
Familiarity of Women Public Administrators of Orissa about  
Public Administration Journals they read.

Journal in the field of Public Administration	Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
<i>Indian Journal of Public Administration</i>	08	05	08
<i>Nagarlok</i>	03	03	15
<i>Public Administration Review</i> (USA)	01	02	18
<i>Public Management</i> (USA)	01	00	20
<i>Public Administration</i> (UK)	02	02	21
Any other (specify)			
<i>Quarterly J of Rural Dev.</i> (NIRD)	03	03	19
<i>Administrator</i>	04	03	18

The practical usefulness of the articles published in the Public Administration Journals were rated as "definitely useful" by 72 % and "somewhat useful" by 28 % of respondents.

## VII

### *Women Administrators Response on Marketability of Public Administration and Suggestions for Improvement Courses:*

100 % of the respondent administrators agreed on benefit a public administrator can avail from university Public Administration courses, yet 80 % expressed their opinion on value of degree or diploma of Public Administration for a career in today's public service.

Studies at post-graduate level were commented as more valuable than undergraduate level by 64 % of respondents.

**Table No. 5**  
Opinion of Women Public Administrators of Orissa about  
Relevance and Scope of Public Administration to career

Statements about Public Administration Programs	responses			
	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Don't Know	Strongly Disagree
A degree or diploma in Public Administration is valuable as a basis for a career in today's public service.	03	17	05	
Public Administrators, regardless of their other educational background, can benefit from university Public Administration courses.	20	05	00	
Public Administrators management is a useful subject for Public Administrators only if studies at a postgraduate level as opposed to undergraduate	06	10	09	

The respondent administrators, based on their field priorities and realities expressed "extremely important" to courses: Personnel Management (56 %); Government and Politics (52 %), Local Government and Politics (52 %), "very important" to courses: Administrative Law (68 %), Policy Analysis (56 %), Administrative Theories (44 %), Information Technology (52 %), Public Administration in Western Nations eg. UK, USA (48 %), Cultural Diversity in Public Administration (52 %), Women in Administration (60 %) and "important" to courses: Budgeting / Financial Accounting (48 %), Business Studies (56 %), Comparative Public Administration (60 %), Development Administration (52 %) as shown in Table No. 6.

**Table No. 6**  
Suggestions of Women Public Administrators of Orissa on  
Course Preparation in Public Administration

Courses in Public Administration Program	Unimportant	A Little impo.	Important	Very impo.	Extremely Important
Administrative Law	00	00	05	17	08

Administrative Theories	00	04	10	11	00
Government & Politics	00	00	05	07	13
Budgeting / Financial Accounting	00	03	12	10	00
Business Studies	00	05	14	06	00
Comparative Public Administration	00	00	15	10	00
Development Administration	00	04	13	05	00
Environmental Studies	00	00	06	10	09
Information Technologies	00	00	07	13	05
Local Government / Politics	00	00	02	10	13
Public Sector in Marketing	00	13	06	06	00
Organizational Behaviour	00	02	06	10	07
Personnel Management	00	00	00	11	14
Policy Analysis	00	00	09	14	02
Public Administration in Western Nations e.g., UK / USA	00	07	06	12	00
Public Administration in Third World Countries	00	00	09	16	00
Cultural Diversity in Public Administration	00	02	10	13	00
Public Sector Ethics	00	09	07	09	00
Social Policy Analysis	03	06	10	06	00
Statistical Methods	00	10	10	05	00
Strategic Management	03	12	07	03	00
Women in Administration	00	00	10	15	00

Some of the respondents recommended specific strategies for developing public service professionalism among undergraduate and postgraduate students who are studying in Public administration degree programs in the Indian Universities. 24 % respondents suggested Post-graduate Urban / Rural Government Management Courses and 20 % Post-graduate Disaster Management Courses.

## VIII

### *Search of Public Administration Values for Public Administrators*

Managerial skills and competencies are merits of Public Administrators. The skills and competencies were placed before the respondents for determining their relative importance. Most of the characteristics were categorized as "important" and "very important". Very few items (like, commitment to efficient and effective management, time management skills) were marked as "extremely important" and some (like, evaluating employee productivity, influencing superiors and peers, mentoring employees in career development) as "a little important".

**Table No. 7**  
Opinion of Respondents on Managerial Skills and Competencies considered valuable for Public Administrators

Managerial skills and Competencies for Public Administrators	Unimportant	A Little impo.	Important	Very impo.	Extremely Important
Assertive	00	01	14	10	00
Commitment to democratic values in work place	00	00	10	15	00
Commitment to efficient and effective management.	00	00	04	10	11
Commitment to public sector ethos	00	00	09	10	06
Counseling and disciplining employee	00	05	05	08	07
Designing research studies	00	02	07	12	04
Evaluating employee productivity	03	11	06	03	02
Influencing superiors and peers	00	14	09	02	00

Information technology skills (e.g., using WWW, databases, Internet, web pages)	00	04	14	07	00
Interpersonal communication skills	00	08	14	03	00
Knowledge of legal processes	00	00	03	14	08
Participative decision-making skills	00	00	05	18	02
Managing conflict in the work group	00	04	13	08	00
Managing cultural diversity in the work place	00	07	18	00	00
Mentoring employees in career development	00	10	10	05	00
Numerary skills (e.g., using mathematical and statistical techniques)	06	07	12	00	00
Problem solving and decision making skills	00	04	07	14	00
Public presentation skills	02	10	11	02	00
Representing your organization to external constituencies	03	08	08	06	00
Teamwork building skills	00	07	13	05	00
Time management skills	00	00	00	10	15

Sometimes there are many cofactors peeping at the administrators' work fields. The opinion, comments, suggestions of the observant surroundings have some importance on administration and the administrator. So, awareness of such information has some importance. Large number of respondents marked it as "very important" to be informed on public opinion poll results on policy issue, MPs / MLAs and their views on policy issues, the business community and their views on policy issues, Local consumer groups and their views on policy issues, Women groups and their views on Public Administration, Ethnic minor groups and their views on policy issues, Policy issues of major political parties of India, Public policy trends in Western countries and public policy trends in the developed countries.

**Table No. 8**  
Opinion of Respondents on importance of local views

Public Policy Issues	Unimportant	A Little impo.	Important	Very important	Extremely Important
Public opinion poll results on policy issue	00	00	06	19	00
MPs/MLAs and their views on policy issues	00	00	10	15	00
The business community and their views on policy issues	00	00	09	16	00
Trade unions and their views on policy issues	00	00	08	17	00
Local consumer groups and their views on policy issues	00	00	07	18	00
Women groups and their views on Public Admn.	00	00	07	18	00
Ethnic minority groups and their views on policy issues	00	00	10	15	00
Policy issues of major political parties in India	00	00	07	18	00
Public policy trends in Western countries	00	05	09	11	00
Public policy trends in the developed countries	00	05	10	10	00

The response to certain current issues like bureaucratic improvement of India, reservation in public sector and globalization of market place has been obtained.

On bureaucratic improvement, 60 % had opined that the position is not improving, 24 % as status quo and 16 % as improving.

All the respondents have accepted reservation in Public Sector. The women administrators have expressed the feeling of gender bias in past years of recruitment and in the work place. Some of them have referred to an publication for women of Indian

Administrative Service<sup>5</sup>. They opt for reservation of women candidates. Each of the respondents has sincere effort in motivating qualified fellow women to compete for the job of public administrator.

When globalization of market place is the go of the day, 60 % respondents have viewed it as "troublesome for India" and rest 40 % as "necessary".

## IX

### *Views of Women Public Administrators on Cultural Diversity Management Issues*

56 % of respondents opined that public administrators in India in managing culturally diverse work force require special competence. Rest 44 % did not pay any importance to such competence.

The opinion on special knowledge and skill necessary to manage culturally diverse work force, 60 % stressed on personal interest, 24 on general managing capability and 16 % on being aware on the degree of diversity at work place.

Without any ethnic minority administrator as respondent, none of the administrators interviewed pointed to the existence of barriers in professional advancement in government organization.

None of the woman administrator could visualize any barrier to their professional advancement as woman.

## X

### *Conclusion*

Women administrators of Orissa with diverse academic origin are oriented in the pattern of prevalent administrative techniques. Most of them are aware about the existence of public administration courses in the Indian Universities. They pay tremendous regard to the attributes and values of public administration. They respond in making the courses of studies of the student of Public Administration practical, utility based and marketable and to qualify as professionals. Their evaluation of administrative

behaviour and current events make this study of value to public administrator and public administration.

Over and above, the respondent women administrators reply positively on the issue of reservation. Each one of them wanted gender justice in administrative machinery and have personal attempts for making fellow women fit for the purpose.

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