

ROLE OF GUWAHATI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION IN CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND ITS SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract:

The Guwahati Municipal Corporation has provided wide variety of services . It is seen that the Corporation is following the Swachh Bharat path along with making Guwahati a metro politian city. In today's scenario it is very important to have a better relation with the society in any kind of business. Every organisation thinks to achieve its goal by keeping its customer satisfied and its sustainability. The paper aims at examining whether consumer satisfaction dimensions have been discharged properly in the services of Guwahati Muncipal Corporation. It is found that that man projects are running under the Guwahati Muncipal Corporation, but it has not been able to discharge its duties properly for which the people of Guwahati are not able to maintain a proper customer relation management with the Guwahati Muncipal Corporation. The paper aims to provide some pragmatic guidelines to make the consumer satisfaction durability long in the services of Guwahati Muncipal Corporation .

Key words: Consumer, satisfaction, Sustainability, Guwahati Municipal Corporation.

Introduction:

Guwahati city, the capital of Assam is located on the south bank of river Brahmaputra towards the south eastern side of Kamrup district. Guwahati is situated on the southern bank of river Brahmaputra with its cardinal points as 26⁰10' north latitude and 92⁰49' east longitude. It is located towards the south-eastern side of Kamrup district surrounded by Nalbari district in the North, Darrang and Marigaon districts in the East, Meghalaya State in the south and Goalpara & Barpeta districts in the West. The entire GMC area is divided into 31 municipal wards and each municipal ward is further divided into 2, 3 or 4 Area Sabhas. Presently, there are 90 Area Sabhas. GMC works under Guwahati Development Department, Assam. The GMC is the creation of the Guwahati Municipal Corporation Act 1971. The Corporation was duly constituted in 1974 in the first meeting of the elected councilors as per provision of Sec.45 of this Act(Choudhury 2010). Since the GMC is trying to make it a metrocity so the services of the corporation has a major role to play and its significance is shown in various way by providing training for people to get self employed , providing houses to them, providing online services for the citizens. Under these circumstances four project services have been taken into account where consumer satisfaction and its sustainability will give fruitful result(GMC,2018). These are- i) National urban livelihood mission ii) Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation iii) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana iv) E-Governance

The study will be conducted in such a way so that it will be helpful for formulating various schemes and policies by the corporation. Keeping in mind all these aspects a discussion has been made on consumer satisfaction and its impacts on all the above four aspects and it has been shown how these relations prove to be essential to run an organization..

OBJECTIVES:

The general objective of the study is to examine how through the services of Guwahti Municipal Corporation the consumers are satisfied and the sustainability can be made speedy for more benefit with least cost. To fulfill this general objective the specific objectives have been taken under study. This is-

- To examine the services provided to the citizen's satisfaction by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Boshoff, Christo; Mazibuko, Noxolo Eileen (2008) they studied on to develop an instrument with sound psychometric properties that can be used by municipalities to measure and assess customer satisfaction with a waste management service and also they research on the satisfaction of residents of a municipality with its waste management services. Mokhlis Safiek, Yaleakhoetal

Aleesa (2011) they studied on to examine the quality of municipal services provided by local government in southern Thailand; and also to identify the most important service quality dimensions that determine citizen satisfaction. Bello MU, Martin D and Kasim R (2017) studied on a review of effects of Quality Municipal Services on Citizen Satisfaction in Malaysian Municipal Council where the examination of Local Government and Municipal Service Delivery in Malaysia was done. Govender Krishna(2016) study conducted among a convenience sample of managers and employees from the Revenue and Customer Relations Management department of a major metropolitan municipality in South Africa, to address the aforementioned problem. Slack Enid (2016) studied on correct pricing which will improve the efficiency with which resources are used to provide the services that residents and businesses want and also in compact development. Vanessa R. Levesque, Kathleen P. Bell, Aram J. K. Calhoun(2016) studied on Planning for Sustainability in Small Municipalities which include Influence of Interest Groups, Growth Patterns, and Institutional Characteristics. Muniswami Samadri (2018) studied on income and disbursement of urban local bodies of Kurnool Municipal Corporation which shows that the growing urbanization has affected not only economic structure of the state and country but also its social and cultural profiles. Markarda Jochen, Ravenb Rob etal (2012) have studied on sustainability transitions and found new conceptual developments and serve as stepping-stones in the maturation of sustainability transition studies, by linking with the scholarly literatures of management studies, sociology, policy studies, economic geography, and modeling.

METHODOLOGY: The study is basically analytical as well as descriptive conducted empirically. Both the primary and secondary data are used, where primary datas are collected through field survey, personnel interview and questionnaire. The sample collection was taken as 30 respondents from the GMC employees and 50 consumers i.e. the citizens of Guwahati are selected for this purpose Secondary data are compiled from various office memos of the GMC. All of these datas are analyzed through tables and diagrams.

1. NATIONAL URBAN LIVELIHOOD MISSION (NULM):

It focuses on the social component, mobilization and institutional development. Also it promote self help group by giving loans to the people.

It also helps in the self employment programme(SEP) where the independent worker gets a loan of two lakhs with less interest rate.

It also has Employment skill training and placement (ESTP)

It has shelter for Urban Homeless(SUH)

Table no 1: for SEP forms provided and loans approved in the last two years:

Serial no	years	Application received	Loan approved
1	2015-2016	145	30
2	2016-2017	324	90
3	2017-2018	300	75

Source: MIS records of NULM and field survey.

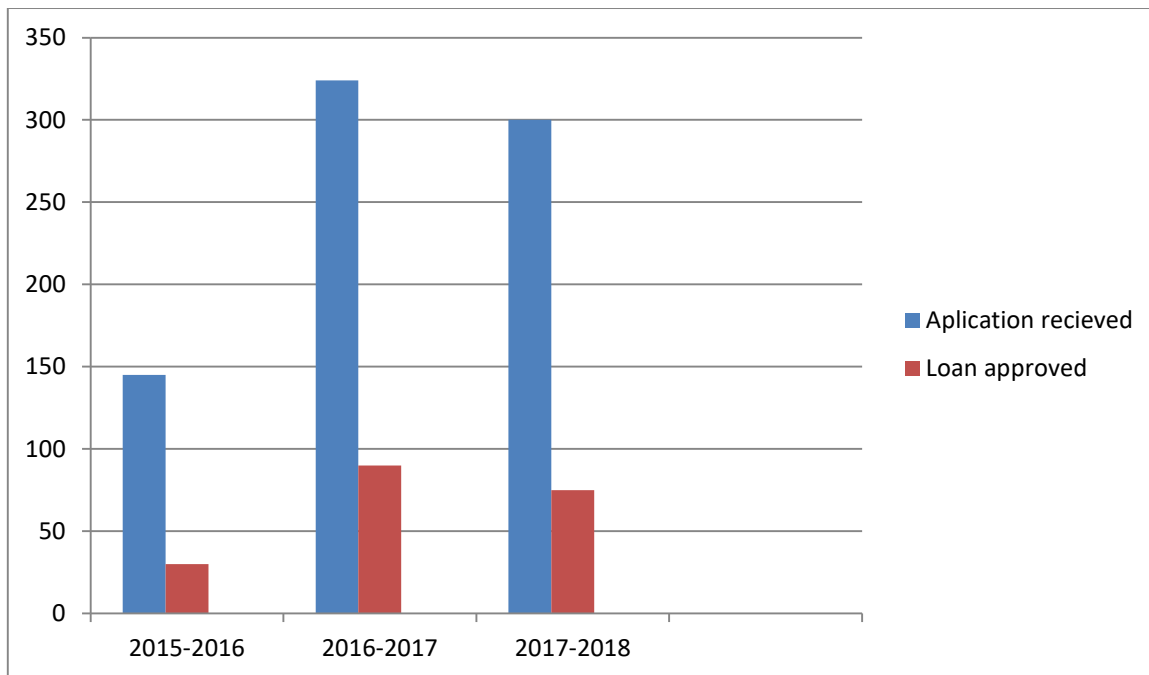


Figure 1

From the figure no 1 it is clearly found that the Guwahati Municipal corporation has received many applications in the last three years but due to slow work progress and delaying the loan process compels the applicants feel harassment. As for the year 2017-2018 their work is still processing as lots of verifications are required before the loan is approved. A questionnaire is put forward to 80 respondents on the performance work of skill development programmes

Q1. Is GMC providing all the required skill development programmes to the unemployed people ?

Yes

No

Table no 2: Responce on skill development programs

Sources	Total	YES	NO
GMC employees	30	25	5
Unemployed people	50	35	15
Total	80	60	20

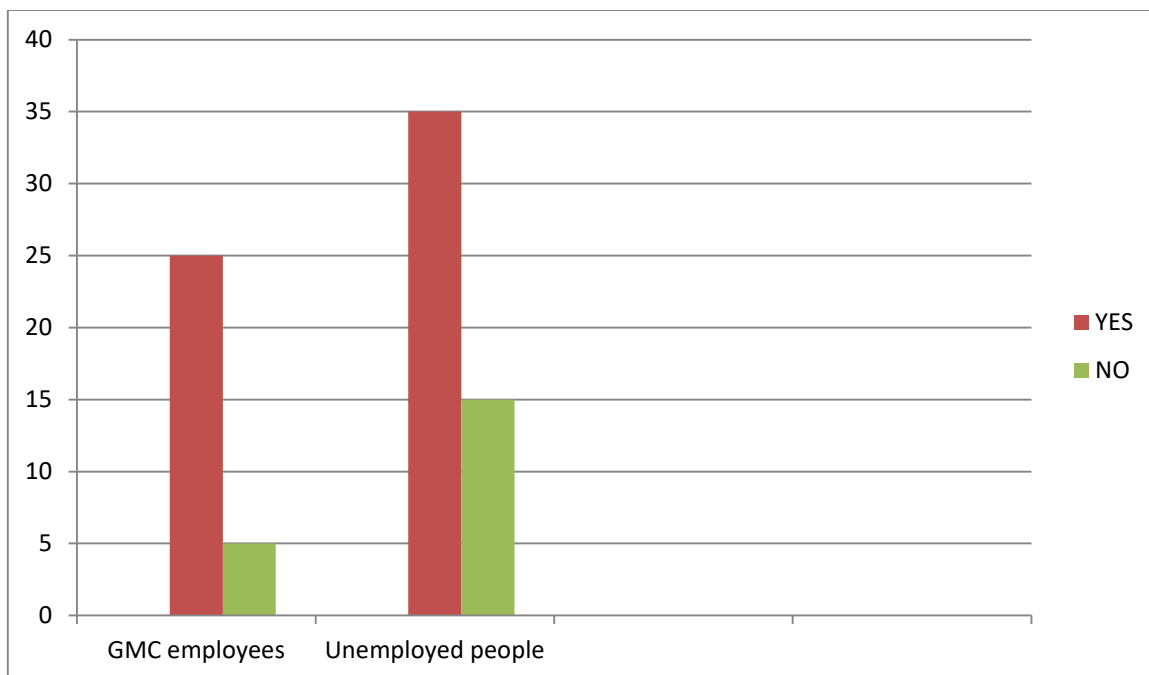


Figure 2

From the above figure 2, it is seen that most of the unemployed people are of the opinion that the GMC is providing some training programs for them so that they get self employed and moreover in some programs it is found to be free of cost that maximum people who are basically from the below poverty line can learn the skill and utilize it for their daily earning.

Street vending comes under NULM and as per the provisions of the National Policy on Urban Street Vendors 2009, The Street Vendors (Protection of livelihood and Regulation of Street vending) Act, 2014 some component are being implemented by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation. The following are the few points found regarding the street vendors of Guwahati City.

- Total 7182 Street Vendors have been identified trading across the city.
- Vending Zones in various locations of the city have been identified to accommodate the existing street vendors to make the road and foot path free from encroachment
- Construction of vending zone at Guwahati Medical College Hospital, Bhangagarh & Sixmile (below flyover towards Panjabari) is completed and vendors are shifted to the vending zone of that locality.

Vendors of 60 respondents are questioned in each 6 zones of 10 per zones about the satisfaction of the services provided by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation.

Table no 3: Street vendors responding to the facilities provided by the GMC

Serial no	Sources	Satisfied	Not satisfied
1	Zone 1	7	3
2	Zone 2	5	5
3	Zone 3	6	4
4	Zone 4	8	2
5	Zone 5	4	6
6	Zone 6	5	5

Source : Field survey and personal interview

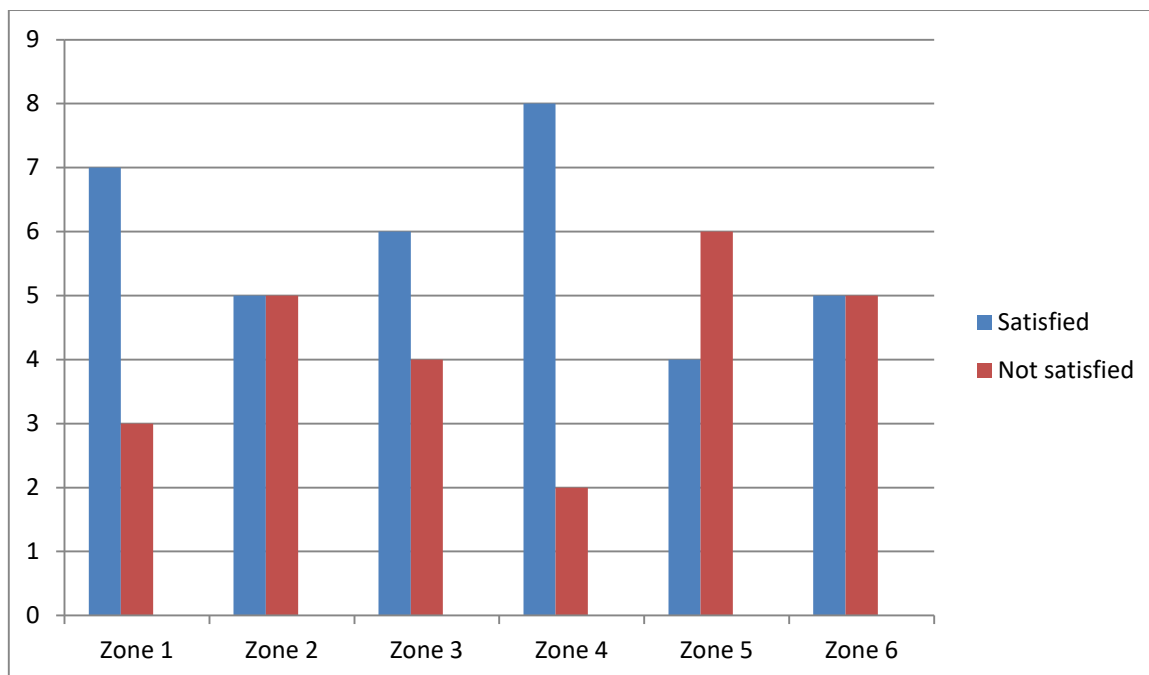


Figure 3

From the above diagram it is clearly depicted that the street vendors are not fully satisfied with the facilities provided by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation. The vendors are of the opinion that though in some zones more spaces are provided to do their business, but in some areas this is not provided and due to constraint in space the marketing cannot be done in proper way. Moreover the problem of unauthorized vendors are more which results in blockage of roadside footpaths . The hygienic parts needs to be looked more thoroughly and disposal of waste management in that particular area needs more attention which will help the city to look more cleaner and healthier.

2. Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)

The purpose of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is to (i) ensure that every household has access to a tap with assured supply of water and a sewerage connection; (ii) increase the amenity value of cities by developing greenery and well maintained open spaces (e.g. parks); and (iii) reduce pollution by switching to public transport or constructing facilities for non-motorized transport (e.g. walking and cycling). All these outcomes are valued by citizens, particularly women, and indicators and standards have been prescribed by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) in the form of Service Level Benchmarks (SLBs).

The Mission focuses on the following Thrust Areas:

- I.water supply,
- II.sewerage facilities and Septage management,
- III.storm water drains to reduce flooding,
- IV.pedestrian, non-motorized and public transport facilities, parking spaces, and
- V.Enhancing amenity value of cities by creating and upgrading green spaces, parks and recreation centers, especially for children and aged people.

It is found that out of five thrust areas, water supply & sewerage are the main focus areaat present as it create great obstacles in the way of beautification of the Guwahati City. Since GMDA, Jal Board are involved in number of water supply projects hence no project is found to be submitted to the Board of the Corporation .

Parks & open spaces are mandatory component that are to be looked upon for the people of Guwahati and so a planned project is stated below as per the Government plan.

State Annual Action Plan (SAAP): Assam has for (04) AMRUT cities, following amount is distributed among the 04 ULBs. The details of the proposal is shown in the table no 4 as below -

Sl.No.	Name of the project	Total Project cost
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		(Crores)
1	Providing New Green Park at Paltan Bazar Fish Market	5.49
2	Mahavir Udyan, Fancy Bazar	4.32
3	Nalini Bala Devi Park, Paltan Bazar	1.6
4	Tarun Ram Phookan Park, Machkhowa	3.82
5	Sankardev Udyan, Bharalumukh	3.77
	Total	19.00

Source: GMC office memorandum Panbazar.

A survey was conducted on the progress of rejuvenation and urban transformation of Guwahati Municipal Corporation and a 90 respondents were asked about its satisfactory level.

Table no 5:Progress of Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation.

Source	Responses as satisfactory	Percentage
GMC Employees(30)	22	73
Citizens of Guwahati(50)	28	57
NGOs (10)	4	40

Source: Field Survey and interview

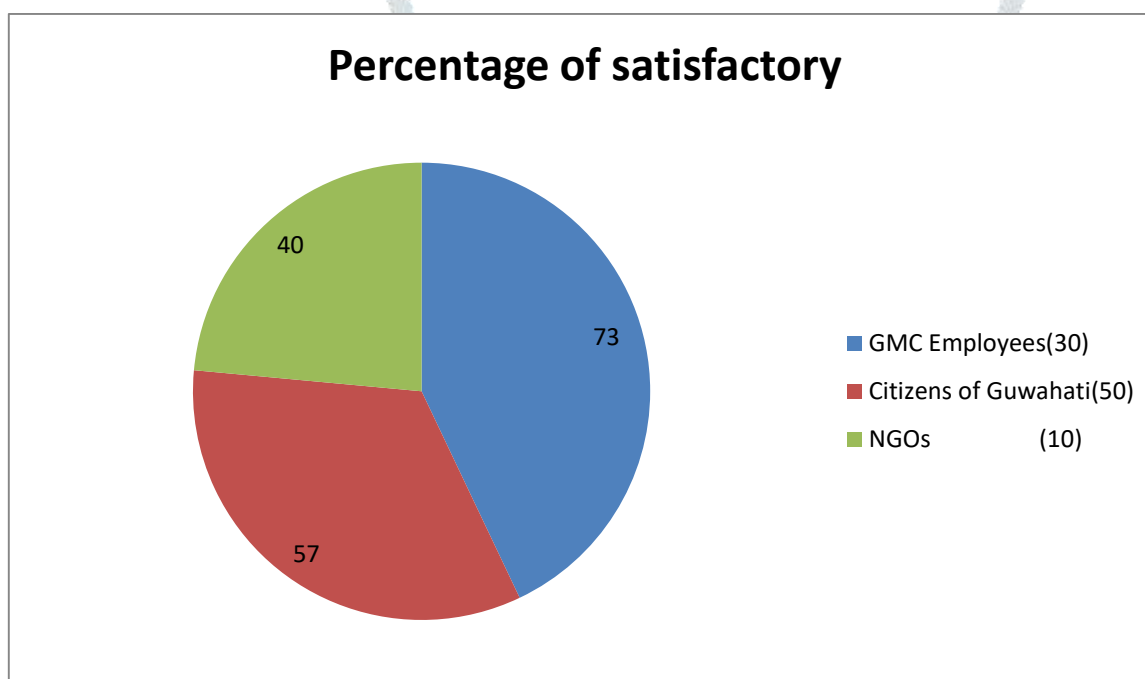


Figure 4

From the above figure it is clearly seen that the work that are done by the GMC are now in progress and people are acknowledging it. But it is also a fact that some of the works that are being done are not so good, for example, the water supply, repairing of drains etc which shows that the people are not satisfied and the sustainability of their work are not managed properly.

3. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)

Housing is one of those basic social conditions that determines the quality of life and welfare of people and places. Rapid urbanization has placed remarkable strain on housing and services land. According to UN HABITAT by 2030, approximately 3 billion people, or about 40 per cent of the world's population, will need proper housing and access to basic infrastructure and services such as water and sanitation systems. This translates into the need to complete 96,150 housing units per day with serviced and documented land from now till

2030. However, ironically supply (especially in the developing world) is often limited by inadequate governance system/ human resource deficiencies/ institutions or regulations which are obsolete or lacking in capacity. The demand survey for the preparation of the HFAPoA (Housing for All Plan of Action) for Guwahati City was carried out by Guwahati Municipal Corporation and a total of 56656 numbers of beneficiaries has been identified in GMC area. The demand survey was carried out by the NGOs empanelled to GMC for solid waste management in association with the Councillors and the Area Sabha Members. The HFAPoA was prepared and submitted to MoHUPA, Govt. of India.

Table no 6: Number of Beneficiaries and Central Assistance required (Rs. in Crores),

Number of Beneficiaries and Central Assistance required (Rs. in Crores)															
Year	Redevelopment through Private Participation (Tenable)			Beneficiary-led Construction			Credit Linked Subsidy			Affordable Housing in Partnership			Total		
	No. of Slums	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount	No. of Slums	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount	No. of Slums	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount	No. of Slums	No. of beneficiaries	Amount	No. of beneficiaries	Amount	
2015-16	1	22	0.22	10	281	4.22	10	649.00	14.28	0	0.00	0.00	952	18.71	
2016-17	1	400	4.00	10	177	2.66	10	351.00	7.72	0	0.00	0.00	928	14.38	
2017-18	1	150	1.50	13	293	4.40	13	455.00	10.01	0	0.00	0.00	898	15.91	
2018-19	1	20	0.20	11	104	1.56	11	166.00	3.65	0	0.00	0.00	290	5.41	
2019-20	1	35	0.35	10	74	1.11	10	104.00	2.29	0	0.00	0.00	213	3.75	
2020-21	1	20	0.20	9	80	1.20	9	117.00	2.57	0	0.00	0.00	217	3.97	
2021-22		0	0.00	4	36.00	0.54	4	53.00	1.17	0	0.00	0.00	89	1.71	
Total	6.00	647	6.47	67.00	1045.00	15.68	67.00	1895.00	41.69	0	0.00	0.00	3587	63.84	

Source: GMC office data Uzan bazaar Guwahati.

From the above data it is found that the number of beneficiaries are more and the allotment of the houses for construction could not be done in a proper manner as demand is more and supply is less. Though the Guwahati Municipal Corporation is trying their best, the verification process and other financial matters takes time which results in the dissatisfaction among the people. As per the survey conducted on the basis of personal interview to 40 respondents of citizens who applied for the scheme the following result was drawn.

Table no 7: Responses towards the satisfaction level for the work progress on PMAY

Response	Source Citizen of Guwahati	Percentage
Satisfied	23	58
Not Satisfied	17	42
Total	40	100

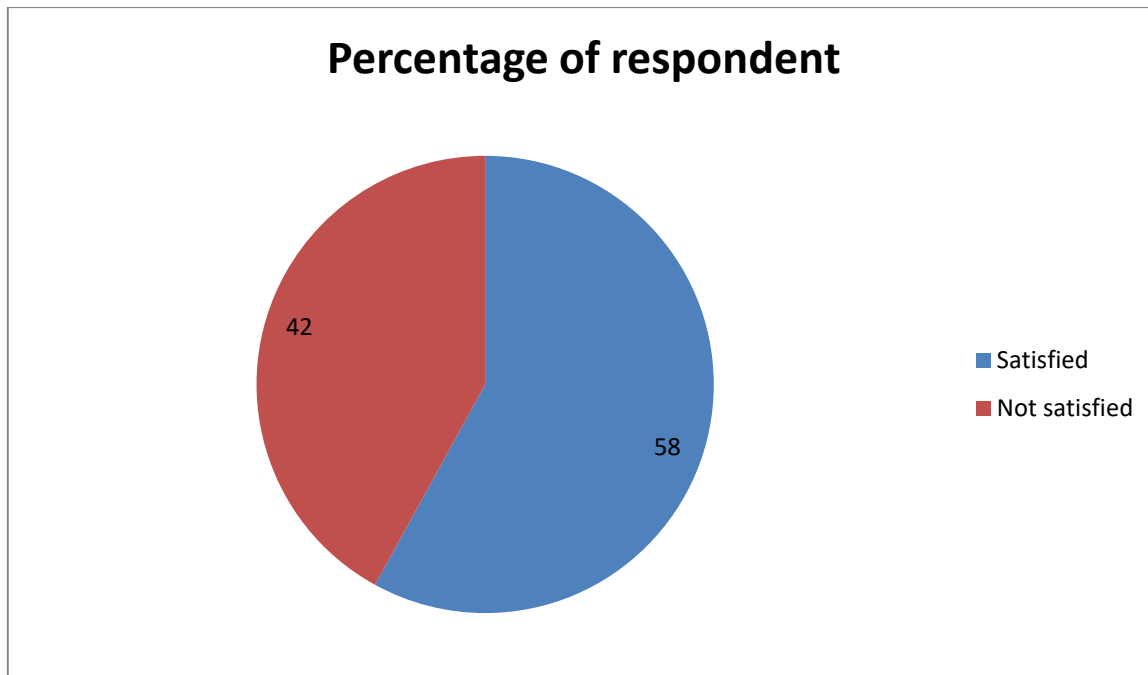


Figure 5

From the above diagram it is clearly seen that though the people are happy with the project work, still 42% of the respondents are not happy. The work is going on and they are not sure for how long it will continue. It is seen that the work pressure is more and number of employees involved in executing the work is less. The people who submit their documents needs to be verified in a proper way so that no wrong person gets the benefits and the real needy people are deprived of it. There is lack of cooperation found in the departmental people and which dissatisfied the consumer on the terms of their responses and work progress.

4. E-Governance

E-Governance is an opportunity to transform the corporation’s commitment to be citizen centric, provide cost-effective services and enhance governance through improved access to accurate information and transparent and responsive democratic institutions. Thus e-Governance is no longer an experiment in administrative reform but a permanent part of the governing process. For both government organizations and citizens, its advantages are far reaching in comparison to investment in establishing E-Governance.

With a view to enhance service delivery and automation of activities, GMC intends to launch the following web-based software solutions-

- a) Unicode Compliant Bilingual (English/Assamese) Official Website for GMC.
- b) Upgradation of the existing Online Property Tax System.
- c) Online Birth and Death Certificate Registration System.
- d) Public Grievance Redressal System
- e) Human Resource Management System (HRMS).
- f) GMC Mobile App for Public Grievance
- g) Online Trade License System.

Q2. Are the online services provided by the GMC upto the expectation of the citizens?

Yes

No

No Comments

Tableno: 8. Expectation of citizens towards online services by GMC.

Serial No	Source	Yes	No	No Comments
1	GMC employees(30)	22	4	4
2	Citizens of Guwahati(young generation) (25)	12	13	nil
3	Senior Citizens(15)	10	5	nil

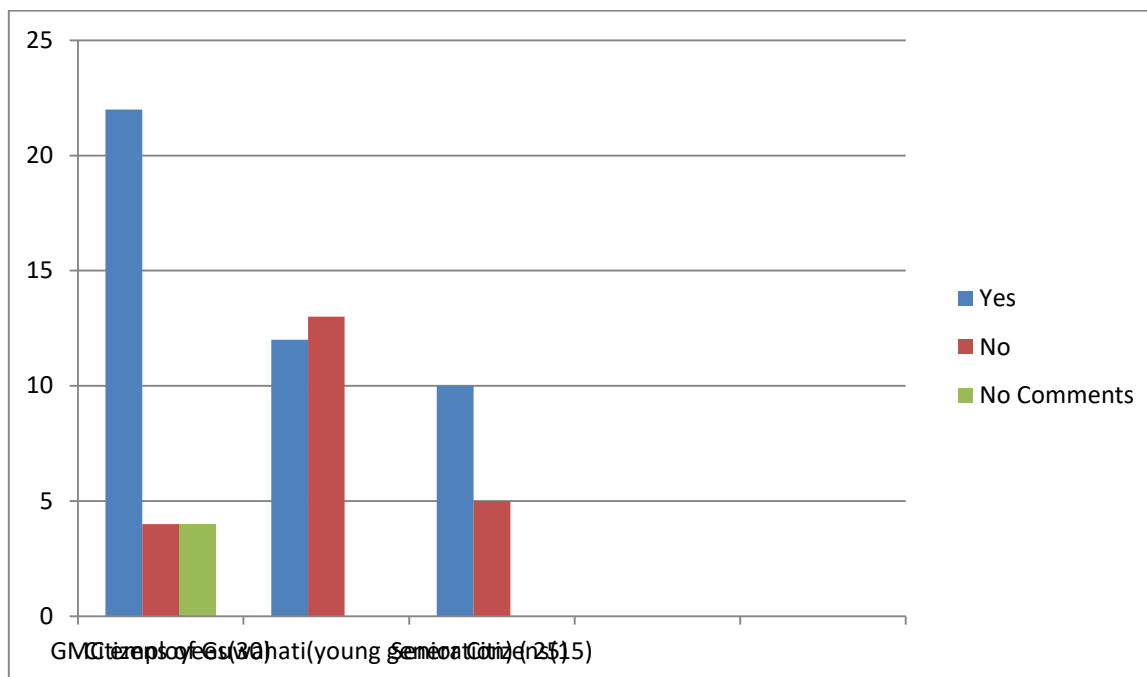


Figure 6

From the above figure it is observed that most of the respondents are of the opinion that the Guwahati Municipal Corporation is trying to build its customer relation by providing online facilities which otherwise used to create problems for the citizens of Guwahati. The Guwahati Municipal Corporation is trying to retain its position in the eyes of the citizens by providing some latest technologies so that they can sustain for a long time and can be competent enough to compete with the other metro cities' municipal corporation..

FINDINGS:

1. It is found that the GMC is trying to provide the skill development programs to the needy people but still the number of people enrolled for the programs are not enough to serve the purpose of self dependent.
2. Street Vendors are provided spaces in all the areas for doing their business but still some unauthorized vendors are creating trouble which the GMC needs to look into.
3. GMC is not able to eradicate the footpath vendors and needs to provide more spaces for the street vendors' .Disposal of garbage and hygienic parts need more attention.
4. In fact the GMC is not able to provide the water supply in all the area of the city though they have started the project four years ago.
5. Disposal of proper sewage system is still found lacking and proper monitoring and detailed planned work is needed for it.
6. It is found that the allotment of free areas for children, elderly person are must needed and the work must be completed soon as per the plan.

7. Allotment of houses to the needy people is still far from what is expected from the GMC by the local people.
8. GMC needs to focus on the e governance so that it makes a new entry to the world of online system and makes it easy for the people to access the GMC office.
9. No doubt the GMC is trying in different ways to provide better services to the people but still it is lacking in discharging their duties properly which results in the dissatisfaction among the people of Guwahati.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. The Guwahati Municipal Corporation must advertise more on the skill development programs so that more people comes to know about it and can take advantage of it.
2. The Guwahati Municipal corporation must make strict rules in order to stop unauthorized vending and should impose heavy fines on them if they donot follow the rules and regulation as laid by the corporation.
3. The disposal of garbage must be taken care of by providing, more litter bins near the shops and bid dustbins to dump the waste material.
4. The Guwahati Municipal corporation must planned out free space for recreational values and also for the vendors to sell the goods in a proper manner.
5. The work progress of water supply must be speedy in order to fulfil the need of the citizen of Guwahati.
6. The Guwahati Municipal Corporation must employed more people to make the work smoother in the allotment progress of houses to the beneficiaries and must see that the consumers are not harassed anymore and can build a good relationship with its consumer.
7. The Corporation must make new strategies to build strong relationship with the consumer so that it can achieve its target and can rebuild its lost glory.

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