



Service Quality and Citizen Satisfaction: A Study on Some Selected Union Parishods (UP) in Bangladesh.

¹ Mst. Shumshunnahar, *Ph.D.*, ² Md. Ruhul Amin, *Ph.D.*

¹ Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration, Comilla University, Cumilla
Bangladesh.

² Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration, Comilla University, Cumilla
Bangladesh.

Abstract: The purpose of this research is to investigate Bangladeshi citizens' happiness with UP in order to identify the institutional aspects that contribute to such satisfaction. The impact of various demographic factors on participants' levels of contentment has also been investigated. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in this study. Adult citizens of 10 UPs in Bangladesh were surveyed through questionnaire to compile the necessary information and statistics. In addition, the researcher conducted a number of in-depth interviews with significant participants. Data from both primary and secondary sources has been analyzed and drawn conclusions from. Several predictions made about the effects of institutional and demographic factors have been verified. The purpose of this research is to determine how content the general public is with UP. To evaluate its impact on customers' happiness, researchers have looked at a variety of explanatory variables, including the institution's openness, competence, accessibility, promise fulfilment, and performance. The survey found that overall UP satisfaction was rather poor. Institutional characteristics such as openness and effectiveness have been demonstrated to have a significant impact on how happy people in Bangladesh are with UP. Important aspects of UP contentment are the organization's overall effectiveness in service delivery and its openness in planning and decision making. Age and gender are the most influential demographic factors in creating happiness. Both the young and the elderly report lower levels of satisfaction than the middle-aged. However, empirical research suggests that trust characteristics tend to vary by region, culture, and setting.

Keywords: Service Quality, Citizen, Satisfaction, Union Parishods (UP), Bangladesh.

1.Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Local government is a significant aspect of central government that is developed by locally elected representatives to help properly allocated welfare functions. Local government is one of the generally recognised political and institutional structures within the contemporary state framework, regardless of geographical, ideological, or political differences. Bangladesh's economy is one of the worlds least developed. Country growth cannot be completely realized without the advancement of the rural community. In Bangladesh, over 72 percent of the entire population lives in rural regions (World Bank report 2012). With this in mind, the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has launched a project to transform Bangladesh into a "Digital Bangladesh" by 2021, bringing government services to the doorsteps of rural people. A lack of corporate governance is a barrier to the country's economic success. The national government must carry out several responsibilities. However, it is incapable of completing several jobs in various conditions, which is why the national government established the local government. Bangladesh has a long and significant tradition of local administration (Aker and et all: 2018).

The construction and functions of local government have been expanded in accordance with the country's socioeconomic and political transformation. Nonetheless, the Bangladesh Constitution (Articles 9, 11, 59, and 60)

included provisions for establishing local government as an inseparable body of managing state affairs in order to protect democratic ideals and economic and social fairness. Union parishad, as the lowest tier of local government, has a duty to help the local people by providing fresh, clean and arsenic-free water, developing a transit framework and donating to educational and religious organizations. However, owing to budgetary constraints, they are unable to sufficiently satisfy local residents. If the Union Parishad could overcome running monetary shortages and administrative corruption by improving the decentralization process, it may be a strong aspect of local level growth (Sachdev, S. B. & Verma, H. V: 2004).

For many decades, politicians, policymakers, academics, and public management practitioners have been concerned about the status of public sector performance in general, and rural government administration in particular. This problem is exacerbated by the ongoing demand on union parishads to deliver effective services to people, a circumstance that frequently drives them to devise measures to improve their performance.

2. Rational of the Study

Local government is a crucial institution for overseeing regional economic growth and securing democratic advancement at the sub-national and grassroots levels of a nation. In general, local government only exercises its authority in accordance with laws or orders from higher levels of government, and every nation has a particular type of local government that is unique from that of other nations. The phrase "local government" can be interpreted in a variety of ways, but generally it refers to the power to plan and carry out actions inside of a designated territory that is not the entire state. The focus on decision- and action-making freedom that the alternative local self-government places is significant (Srivastava, 1980).

It is a legal entity that has been established for the purpose of managing the local affairs of a human settlement, supporting pro-people causes, and taking part in local development. Local government's most crucial component is the union parishad. UP is a government agency that promotes development at the grassroots level. VII. Vision 2021 This institution must be a prominent institution at the union level according to the five-year plan. It must be more efficient, functional, active, trustworthy, and dependable as a result. Some of the reasons why this type of research is required are listed below: 1) to understand the current level of service delivery. 2) to investigate how well services are delivered. 3) for identifying the current issues with service delivery. 4. to pinpoint the elements that raise public satisfaction and track out the best way to address issues at hand. Therefore, this study will assist government policy makers in developing effective policies, implementing the Nation Education Policy 2010, enhancing secondary school performance, and identifying the difficulties faced by secondary schools in Bangladesh. Additionally, as part of the current government's election promise, this study contributes to the creation of a digital Bangladesh. Because Digital Bangla, also known as "Sonar Bangla of the 21st century," is utterly unattainable without high-quality education.

3. Objectives of the Study

Overall goal of this study is to find out the present status of service delivery and people satisfaction. The Specific objectives are-

- ❖ To analyse the effectiveness of service delivery of union parishad;
- ❖ To find the prevailing problems that faced by delivering service;
- ❖ To examine the level of citizen satisfaction about the quality of service.

In accordance with the findings, the study will provide with rational, effective and practical recommendations to remove those constraints to make UPs more capable and vibrant.

4. Scope of the Research

The main goal of this study is to identify the variables that influence the provision of high-quality services and citizen satisfaction at the union parishad level. As a result, the analysis of these ten union parishads will probably show a streamlined method of service provision at the union level. The other aspects of rural government are not the study's primary emphasis or objective. zilla parishad or upazilla are two examples. These are outside the study's purview. Municipality and City Corporation are also excluded. It has been purposely left out of the research. Because it is challenging to reach numerous levels of local governments within the allotted timeframe. This study's major goal is to strengthen the relationship between service providers and average residents. The collaboration between service providers and average residents has been emphasized in this study. The research's emphasis is noted as being on the efficiency of service delivery, current issues, and the degree of citizen satisfaction with service delivery.

5. Literature review

For the purpose of conducting the study, the following books, journals, e-books, and other publications that are pertinent to the research topic have been studied.

Saleheen (2015) has attempted in his study "Public Service Delivery- Role of Union Digital Centre (UDC) and Impact on Improving Governance and Development: A Case Study of Narayanganj District, Bangladesh" to assess the current status of e-service(s) and what the prospective of e-service(s) would be by minimizing the gap. It has also attempted to identify the barriers/challenges to implementing public e-services in UDC. Due to time and resource restrictions, only a subset of Narayanganj was studied (Saleheen: 2015).

Hosne Ara Popy (2016) said that "Citizens' Trust in Union Parishad (UP): An Institutional Perspective," she writes in her paper. Ended up attempting to investigate citizens' faith in UP in Bangladesh with the explicit goal of determining the institutional aspects that impact their degree of trust. The researcher also investigated several demographic characteristics to see how they affected trust. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed in this study. To collect the necessary data and information, a questionnaire survey was administered to adult inhabitants of two UPs in Bangladesh. In addition, the researcher conducted key informant interviews. This study found a low degree of trust in UP. Transparency and performance have been proven to be crucial in determining the amount of confidence in UP from a Bangladeshi standpoint. Overall service delivery performance and transparency in planning and decision making are significant variables in UP's institutional trust.

Basher, Muhammad Khademul (2017) attempted to investigate the dynamics of people' confidence in LGIs in Bangladesh in his paper "Citizens' Trust in Local Government Institutions in Bangladesh." It contained the trust pattern inside the LGIs. Furthermore, governance characteristics such as accountability, transparency, and public engagement have been examined as explanatory factors to assess the influence on trust. In the end, the study found a high degree of trust in LGIs based on actual facts. The important informants, on the other hand, were more or less skeptical about this discovery. However, empirical evidence, key informant observations, and a summary of focus group talks revealed that people trust Union Parishad (UP) more than Upazila Parishad (UZP).

Askvik (2011) explored the notion of trust in Bangladesh and the major elements impacting trust. In Bangladesh, the study discovered a mismatch between institutional trust and theoretical trust patterns. It exposed a perplexing situation in Bangladesh. According to the poll findings from this study, respondents do not believe government workers and politicians are dependable, trustworthy, or competent. However, in comparison to other nations, their faith in specific institutions, such as the Parliament and the Central Government, is quite strong.

The roles of UPs, their problems, citizens' levels of satisfaction with UPs, and variables that influence citizens' contentment with union parishads are mostly discussed in the literature cited above. But the major focus of this study is on the efficiency of service delivery, variables that influence efficiency, issues with service delivery already in place, and people' happiness with service delivery.

6. Research Methodology

In general, research methodology is a procedure for gathering data and other information in order to accomplish the study objectives. The strategies, tools, and processes used for data collecting are the main areas of concentration. It could consist of surveys, interviews, research publications, and research methodology. The concept of research technique includes data collection tools as well (Aminuzzaman, 1991). Finding out the current issues with union parishad service delivery is the aim of this study. This study combines an emphasis on asking questions with both a qualitative and quantitative research technique.

a. Research Design

The quantitative investigation was understood in order to ascertain and qualify the link between dependent and independent variables. Various statistical approaches were used to express the relationship between the variables (Haque, S.M.S: 2005). The following flow chart displays an overview of the study design. Figure 01: Proposed Research Design.

b. Selection of the Study Area

For the purpose of this study, the ten unions of the two different Upazilla of Cumilla district viz Chandina, and Bourua have been selected. The ten definite unions are Medhya, Keran khal, Barera, Mahichal, and Batakashi

unions of Chandina upazilla under Cumilla district. Galimpur, Chi mura, Dakshin shilmuri, Uttar shilmuri and Purbo narayanpur unions of Bourua upazilla under Cumilla district.

c. Data collection Methods

In order to draw some inferences on the findings, it is necessary to analyze the collected data quantitatively. So, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approach will be applied to achieve the objectives of this study. In this research, the following methods will be used:

- ❖ **Content Analysis:** Content Analysis includes collecting data from all relevant books, documents, articles, journals, published and unpublished research works and online articles that are found to be available. It can allow for both quantitative and qualitative operations. It can also provide valuable historical/cultural insights over time through analysis of texts.
- ❖ **Interview (Face-to-Face Interview):** A face- to face interviews will be conducted. The perception of the researcher is that they should deal with utmost care in acquiring information from them and that's why the face-to-face interview method with semi-structured oral interview is suitable for this purpose.
- ❖ **Questionnaire Survey:** The semi-structured questionnaire survey will be conducted in this research for the purpose of collecting primary data. It is one of the effective methods of collecting primary data.

d. Sources of Data and Sampling

Both primary and secondary sources will be used to get the data. The available literature, including educational statistics, books, seminar papers, media stories, earlier research projects, reports, etc., will be mined for secondary data. Primary data will be gathered using questionnaire surveys and interviews. For the purpose of the structured questionnaire survey, the full sample will be included in the random sampling process.

e. Sample Size

A total 200 (Two hundred) respondents have been selected from the ten unions of two upzilla under cumilla district. The composition of the respondents is as follows:

Table-01: Distribution of Sample size.

Upazila	Name of Union	UP members and Staff	Mass People	Total Respondents
Chandina Upazila	Medhya	2	18	20
	Keral Khal	2	18	20
	Barera	2	18	20
	Mahichal	2	18	20
	Batakashi	2	18	20
Borura Upazila	Galimpur	2	18	20
	Chi mura	2	18	20
	Dakshin Shilmuri	2	18	20
	Uttor Shilmuri	2	18	20
	Purba Narayanpur	2	18	20
Total=	Ten UPs	20	180	200

f. Data Collection Technique

In this research, different types of data collection procedure will be conducted to collect the primary and secondary data. The primary data will be collected by using structured questionnaire from key respondents and asking set of questions from experts' interview. The secondary data will gather through content analysis from the research articles, text books and dailies while documents survey scheme from various webpage.

g. Data Processing

The Collected data will be coded, calculated, analyzed, sorted, summarized, classified, formatted and tabulated according to the objective of the research. The collected data will be also processed systematically in different research approaches according to the predetermined variables.

h. Data Analysis

The data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. After processing, the collected data will be analysed and interpreted by using some statistical tools and techniques. Moreover, the collected data will be categorized, tabulated, analysed using SPSS (Statistical Packages for the social Sciences) method. It has also been used MS-Word, Excel for the purpose of analysing the data.

7. Growth and Evolution of Union Parishad

Bangladesh's local government system has a lengthy evolutionary history and a legal foundation. UP did not appear suddenly. In the year 1870, during the British era, the word union was first used (Aminuzzaman 2013). According to local government history, the urban local government was the first to be established during the nineteenth century's British rule, and then the rural local governments followed (Aminuzzaman 2013). Since the British colonial era till the present, local government's organizational structure, functions, and fiscal management system have experienced significant modifications (Haque 2009). Various laws and ordinances have occasionally been passed to create these bodies at the Village, Thana, District, and Divisional levels.

The Panchayet System, which included five or more members, was the first type of LGI in this area (Haque 2009). The Village Chowkidari Act created Union Panchayets to oversee the administration of the village by maintaining law and order, planning socio-cultural events, and collecting funds to support Chowkidars (village police) in Bengal (Haque 2009). In general, the Panchayets helped the administration (Haque 2009). According to Siddiquei (2005), these Panchayet were answerable to the magistrates, who also chose them. Members of the Chowkidari system were not seen as the voice of the people but rather as government employees (Haque, 2009).

Union Committee was first formed in 1885 by the Local Self-Government Act (Haque 2009). The Union Committee was responsible for a village's 12 square miles, and its members were chosen by the division's commissioner (Siddiquei, 2005). Later, it was changed such that locals would elect the head of the Union Committee (Siddiquei 2005). This committee was given duties relating to roads, schools, hospitals, and infrastructure (Siddiquei, 2005).

The Village Self-Government Act superseded the earlier law and went into effect in 1919 (Haque 2009). Union Board (UB) was the name given to the newly reorganised entity. Except for Sylhet and the Chandpur Hill Tracts, every district saw the formation of the UB (Siddiquei, 2005). Six to nine individuals made up UB (Siddiquei 2005). The remaining ones were picked by the district magistrates, with 4 to 6 of them being elected (Siddiquei 2005). UB was responsible for overseeing Chowkidars, maintaining infrastructure, sanitation, and health, and constructing schools and hospitals, among other things. In Pakistan, this UB persisted till 1959 (Siddiquei 2005).

Later, Union Councils were created as the local government's rural tier. After Bangladesh gained its independence in 1971, the Union Council's name was changed back to Union Panchayet, and a manager was chosen to oversee the Panchayet's operations. Union Panchayat (UP) was once again converted to Union Parishad (UP) in 1973. The Local Government Ordinance of 1976 brought forth a more notable, obvious transformation. A UP is made up of one elected chairman, nine elected members, two nominated female members, and two peasant representative members, according to the provisions of this law. The Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance, which was introduced in 1983, brought about a considerable transformation (Haque 2009). The Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance of 1986, the Local Government (Union Parishad Second Amendment) Act of 1997, and the Local Government (Amendment) Act of 2001 were the last three. The current UP system in Bangladesh is a progression of various laws and regulations throughout time.

8. Present Structural Arrangement of Union Parishad

In Bangladesh, there are two different kinds of LGIs: rural and urban. As the lowest level of local administration in rural regions, the UP was established in 1870 (Aminuzzaman 2013). It persisted for 145 years under several names. In Bangladesh, there are typically 12 UPs per upazila. The general organogram of local government is shown in the following diagram.

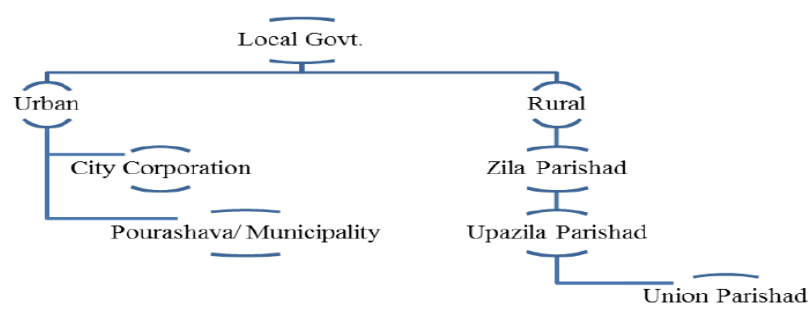


Figure-02: Organogram of Local Government.

The current form of UP is the result of four significant policy changes over the preceding decades, namely: a) streamlining UP's representational base by dividing it into nine wards; b) strengthening UP's female representation by reserving three seats; c) financial strengthening through direct fund transfers like block grants; and d) building UP complexes for all UPs (Rahman & Ahmed 2015).

UP Act of 2009 governs the current UP system. A union is split into 9 wards, which are regarded as its authority, in accordance with the provisions of the statute. A UP is composed of a chairman, nine elected members, and three elected women. The UP chairperson and members are chosen at large for a five-year term. Three seats will be set up for women in accordance with UP Act section 10(3). However, there are also some hired workers at UP. For UP, a secretary and a computer operator/accountant have been appointed by the government or a recognized government body in accordance with section 62. The government foots the bill for their wages. If more employees is required, UP may hire them with prior approval from the government; their salaries will only come from local funds in the state of UP. A UP also has one dafadar and nine to twelve village police. Records management and all types of registration, such as birth, death, etc., fall within the purview of the UP secretary.

The UP Act, 2009 included essential local governance characteristics. This act introduced citizen charter, open ward shavas, and open budget to improve accountability, transparency, participation, service delivery, and women's empowerment (Aminuzzaman 2013). The procedures for adopting these additional parts are still being developed (Aminuzzaman 2010). According to section 45 of the UP Act, a UP has 13 SCs to perform the following functions: a. Finance and establishment b. Audit and accounts c. taxation d. Education, health, and family planning e. Agriculture, Fisheries, livestock, and other development works f. rural development g. law and order maintenance h. birth and death registration i. sanitation, water supply, and drainage j. social welfare and epidemic control k. Tree plantation l. Women and child welfare.

9. Scenario of Citizen Satisfaction and Union Parishad

Citizen satisfaction with public service delivery is another name for contentment with the standard of public services. It may be characterized as the public's opinion about the standard of the products and services that the government offers. This covers subjects like public health and elementary education. As a result, it may be assumed that the definition of citizens' satisfaction with the quality of public services is people's views of the particular public services provided by the local and federal governments.

9.1 Citizen Satisfaction-A conceptual framework

A "function of the differences between expectation and performance along the quality dimensions" is how service quality is described in the industry. The relationship between service quality and citizen satisfaction is quite strong; therefore, greater service quality may help guarantee citizen contentment. A conceptual framework for citizen satisfaction is explained in Figure-03.

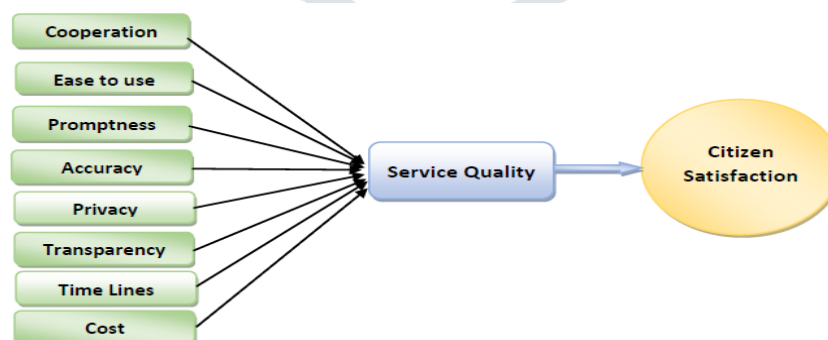


Figure-03: Conceptual framework.

A brief description of service quality parameters are given below: -

- ❖ **Timeliness:** refers to the number of days required to deliver certificate (set by the government) against the number of visits made by a citizen to get the certificate in reality.
- ❖ **Cooperation:** means assistance or help provided by UP operators.
- ❖ **Ease of use:** Ease of use refers to simplicity of procedure in availing of the certificate.
- ❖ **Promptness:** means zero or acceptable minimum waiting time for citizen at the counters in UPs.
- ❖ **Accuracy:** Accuracy refers to correctness of the certificates delivered.

- ❖ **Privacy:** Privacy refers to protecting the confidentiality of the documents/proof submitted by citizen.
- ❖ **Service Cost:** Fees/charged for procuring the certificate.
- ❖ **Transparency:** Clarity and visibility of the procedure in the entire application process work flow. This also results in knowing the status of applications at any given point in time.

9.2 Service Delivery Patterns of Union Parishad

The lowest tier of government service delivery, UPs offer a variety of services to rural populations in large numbers. The potentials listed below are some of the most notable:

- ❖ In order to carry out both conventional and non-traditional development operations, UPs have the capacity to absorb and manage extra financial resources.
- ❖ Using new, inventive methods and delegated authority, UPs are able to mobilize extra funds for their own development operations.
- ❖ UPs may mobilize "social capital," such as women, community members, and union facilitators, to ensure "social accountability" and "quality assurance" of service delivery.
- ❖ With the proper "watch dog" role of the community, UPs have the ability to be more "responsive" to community needs and "accountable" to the community at large.
- ❖ Greater levels of community involvement have improved the quality and longevity of UP projects.

With increased coordination and collaboration between field-level GOB extension agencies/workers and UP elected officials, especially the UP-Standing Committees, the UP complex might be established as a "development hub."

10. Research Findings and Analysis

10.1 Data obtained from the UP Members & Staffs (Questionnaire-1)

A total 20 (Chairman and Secretary) officials were surveyed with the questionnaire-1 to gather information about the service delivery patterns of UPs. The collected data analysis are given below.

10.1.1 Gender & Age

By considering the socio-economic conditions and also affiliation with the social institutions maximum respondent were male in lieu of female.

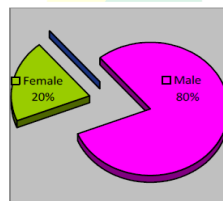


Figure-04: Gender basis scenario of respondents (Source: Field Survey). N=20.

The above graph, 16 were male and 4 were female respondents as a sample and the graph shows 80% was male and 20% was female respondents.

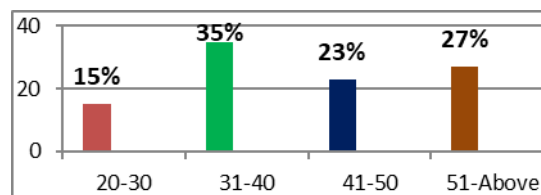


Figure- 05: Age of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

The figure revealed that 15% of the respondents fall within the age range of (20-30) years. 35% respondent's age range was (31-40) years. 23% respondent's age was (41-50) years and finally, 27% respondent's age was (51-above).

10.1.2 Marital Status

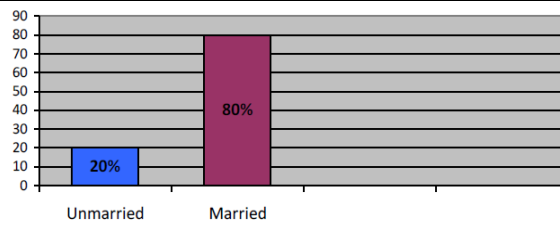


Figure- 06: Marital Status of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, maximum respondents (80%) were married and 20% were found unmarried. Maximum respondents were enough experienced and skilled in their job.

10.1.3 Educational Qualifications

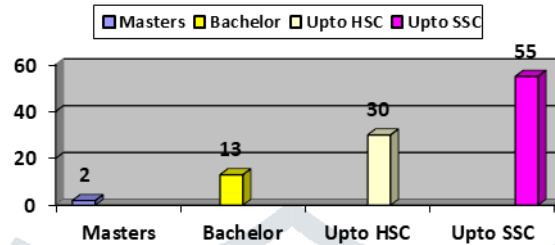


Figure-07: Educational qualification of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, 15% respondents were either graduates or post graduates. It is little bit good sign that educated peoples were available in local areas that involved the activities at the local level. Another 30% respondents completed higher secondary level education. Besides, 55% respondents completed the secondary level of education.

10.1.4 Perceptions about UPs functions

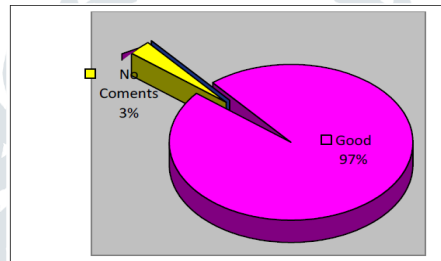


Figure-08: Perception about eservice of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, maximum respondents (97%) said that they have the clear idea about UPs functions. Another 3% respondents were claimed that they were not much ideas about the UPs functions and never interested to talk with this issue.

10.1.5 Level of ICT Training

The figure below shows that the data of ICT training.

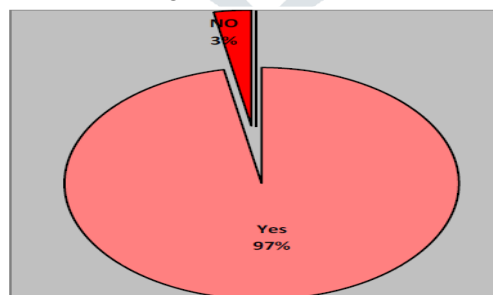


Figure-09: Scenario of ICT training performance of UP members and Staff.

The above chart revealed that the maximum respondents (97%) got different type of ICT trainings which helped them to enrich their ICT expertise. On the other hand, 5% respondents said that they didn't get any ICT related training during the joining on UPs. However, the below figure shows that the level of ICT training which the employees got during their service life.

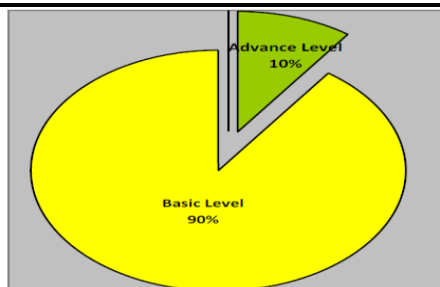


Figure-10: Scenario of level of ICT training (Source: Field Survey).

In this figure, 10% of the total respondents do not have ICT training and 90% of the respondents have the ICT-related "Basic Level" training. The information shows that the highest number of respondents exposed to "basic level" ICT training.

10.1.6 Scenario of maintaining law and order situation

UPs one of the major functions is to maintain the law-and-order situation. In light of the local government rules the UPs maintain the law-and-order situation in cooperation with government other institutions.

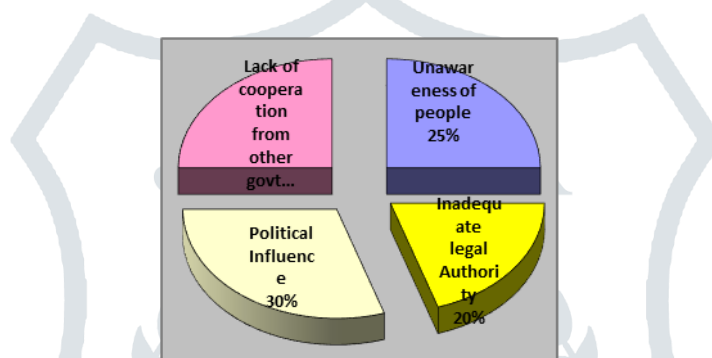


Figure-11: Scenario of maintain law and order situation (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, 20% said they had inadequate legal authority. 30% thought they had to face unlawful pressures from politicians and locally influential people. Even at times, they were insulted by the police. 25% opined that illiteracy of and lack of awareness among people was a problem in maintaining law and order effectively. 25% replied that they had not get proper support from other government institutions for conducting different kind of functions.

10.1.7 Scenario of UPs public health and family planning program

To improve access to family planning and maternity services, the Bangladeshi government has decentralized health care facilities further towards the rural population. Each community clinic serves 6,000 people, and the Union Health and Family Welfare Centre is well-stocked with skilled personnel and logistical materials. Despite this, health care indicators reveal that maternity and family planning services are not used and are not accessible to enough people.

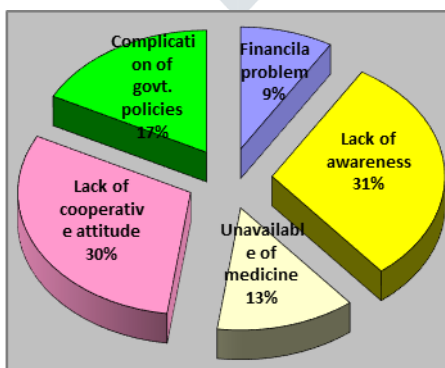


Figure-12: Scenario of UPs public health and family planning program (Source: Field Survey).

31% of the respondents identified lack of public awareness about public health and family planning as the major problem. 13% talked about unavailability of medicine, 30% blamed lack of cooperative attitude and initiative on the part of the health workers and 17% found complications in the government policy as the major constraint. 9% indicated to financial constraint.

10.1.8 Scenario of Maintenance Local Resources

Union Parishad (UP) is the lowest tier of rural local government plays an important role to fulfill the demand and aspiration of local people and the overall development of the country.

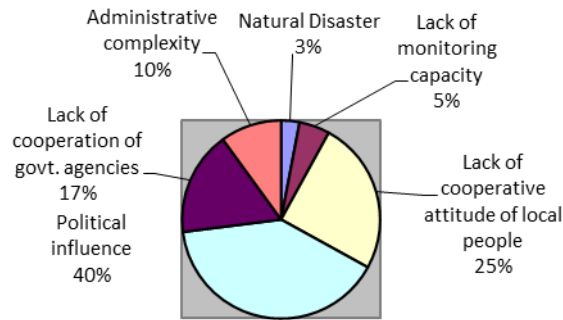


Figure-13: Scenario of maintain local resources (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, 10% respondent claims that they have faced administrative complexity to mobilize the local resources. Another, 3% of the respondents replied that they sometimes faced natural disaster which hamper the resource mobilization. 5% of the respondents replied that lack of monitoring capacity which hamper the resource mobilization. 25% said that the political influences hamper the resource mobilization. On the other hand, 17% respondents replied that lack of government agencies cooperation creates different kinds of problems in mobilizing local resources.

10.1.9 Scenario of UPs Tax Collection

Taxation is one of the most important sources of revenue for municipal governments. However, the final success in raising tax money rests with the people's judgement. Increasing people's awareness and willingness to pay taxes will extend the scope of accountability and openness in UP resource usage, paving the path for the establishment of a functional and thriving local government system.

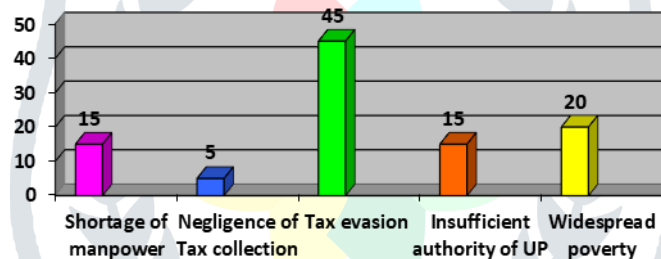


Figure-14: Scenario of UPs tax collection (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, 45% of the respondents held the view that tax evasion tendency in people in general was liable for poor tax collection. 15% mentioned about insufficient authority of the UP to take effective actions against tax defaulters. 20% considered widespread poverty of the UP residents as the major constraint in collecting taxes. 15% blamed shortage of manpower of UPs in collecting taxes. 5% identified negligence of the tax collectors as a major constraint.

10.1.10 Scenario of fighting against women violence, dowry, and child marriage

It is one of the vital function of UPs to control women violence, dowry and child marriage in rural areas in Bangladesh. Local government unit specially UPs working to combat this situation. But, different types of limitations hamper its activities.

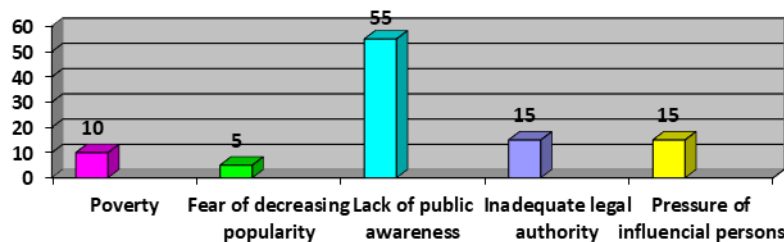


Figure-15: Scenario of fighting against women violence dowry and child marriage.

From the above graph, 55% identified lack of awareness on those issues as the major problem in this respect. 15% said that they had no defined legal authority to take effective punitive action against those involved in women persecution, dowry or child marriage. 10% felt that poverty was a major constraint. 15% opined those pressures from

locally influential persons also thwarted bold actions against such crimes. 5% replied they did not take appropriate actions in fear of losing popularity.

10.1.11 Obstacles of Functional Union Parishad

The respondents expressed their views on obstacles in functional UPs are as outlined below.

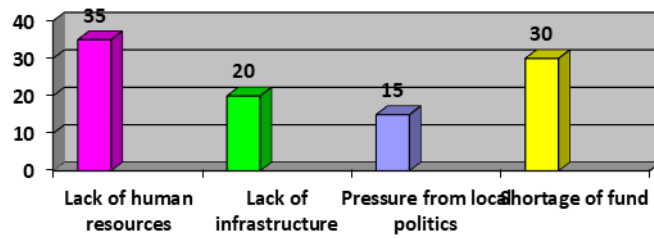


Figure-16: Obstacles of Functional UPs (Source: Field Survey).

The above figure revealed that the majority of respondents argue that "Lack of human resources" constitutes the worst barriers to conduct the functions of UPs at local level. Lack of infrastructure for service delivery which was viewed by 20% of the respondents. Besides these, 15% argued that pressure from the local politics was create problems to provide service delivery. Another, shortage of fund was the important obstacle to provide need base facilities for the rural people.

10.2 Data Collection from Citizens (Questionnaire-II)

A total of 180 beneficiaries were surveyed with the questionnaire-II to obtain their perceptions on the UPs service delivery for ensuring citizens satisfaction. The analyses of the data collection are given below.

10.2.1 Scenario of Gender and Age

The demographic profile such as gender, age group and literacy level of the respondents is presented in pie-chart below.

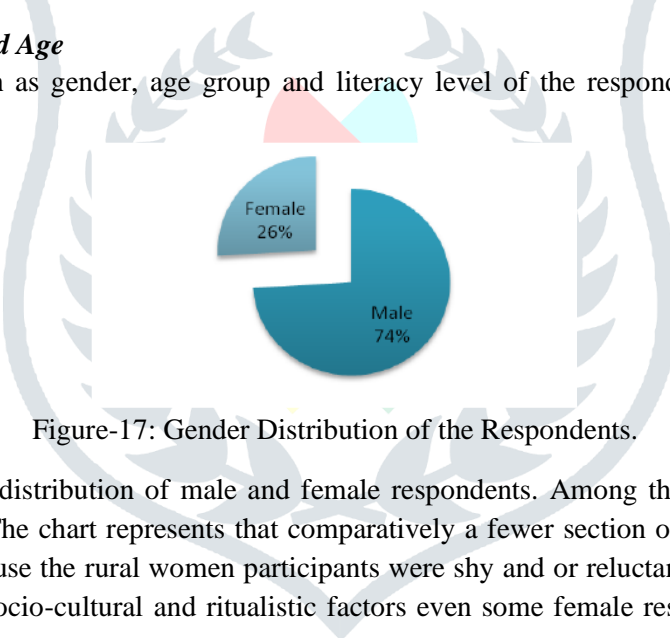


Figure-17: Gender Distribution of the Respondents.

The chart above presents the distribution of male and female respondents. Among the total respondents 74% were male and 26% were female. The chart represents that comparatively a fewer section of women were covered during survey than men. This is because the rural women participants were shy and or reluctant to engage in any discussion. In some cases, due to some socio-cultural and ritualistic factors even some female respondents were less willing to respond to an external researcher.

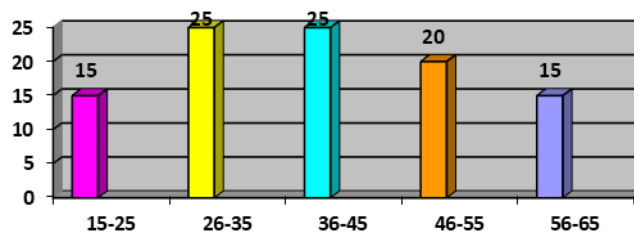


Figure-18: Age distribution of the Respondents, n=180.

The respondents were categorized into 5 age groups. It appears that most of the populations (69%) belong to 26-55 age group. It implies that most of them are adult and matured respondents. The mean of the age group is 49.93 which reflects that a matured section of respondents was covered by the study. Age, maturity, in the cultural context of Bangladesh, is considered important and necessary to have a better level of knowledge, wisdom, experience and awareness. So, it can be inferred as that the findings may reflect relatively authentic, experienced and evidence-based understanding of the quite adult population under survey.

10.2.2 Scenario of Literacy rate

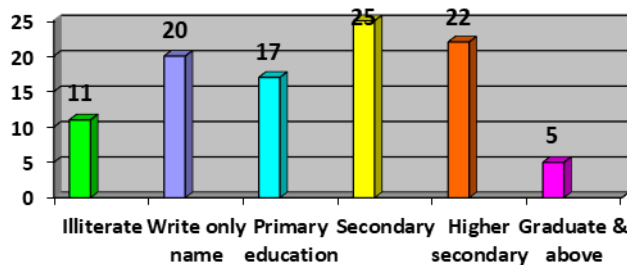


Figure-19: Literacy level of the Respondents (%), n=180.

The table represents their level of literacy. Out of 180 respondents, 11% are illiterate, 20% can write their name only, 42% belong to primary and secondary level, 22% are from higher secondary level and only 5% respondents are graduate and above. The study covered more or less both literate and illiterate people. It is widely believed in rural Bangladesh that the educated people tend to have more access to UP facilities. Even they probably receive more opportunity from the UP than the illiterate people. So, the study attempted to cover the local individuals from each educational level to attain an inclusive viewpoint. Likewise, 69% of the total sample populations were literate which is almost proportionate not only to the overall literacy rate of the unions but also to the overall literacy rate.

10.2.3 Marital Status

The below figure represented the marital status of the respondents at the local level.

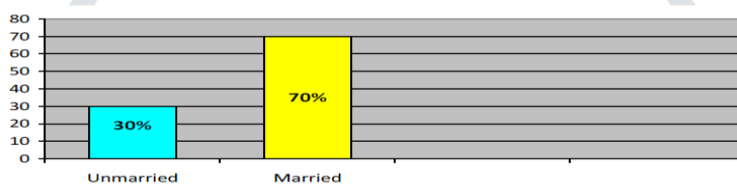


Figure-20: Marital Status of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, maximum respondents (70%) were married and 20% were found unmarried. From the total respondents some were service provider and another were service receivers.

10.2.4 Occupational Status of the Respondents

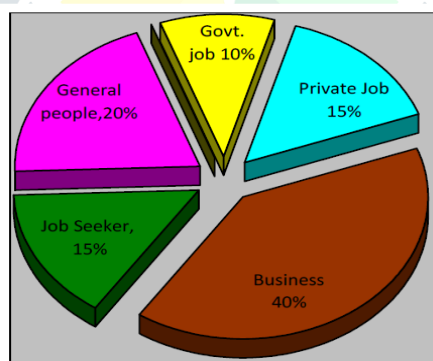


Figure-21: Occupational Status of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

The above figure revealed that most of the respondents were businessman and their scenario is 40%. In this category, small and medium enterprise owners, contactors etc. came to the UPs for various purposes. Another, 15% respondents said that they involved in private jobs like: NGOs, educational institutions, financial organizations etc. Besides, 10% respondents argued that they were government service holder. On the other hand, 15% respondents said that they were searching jobs in different organizations. Besides, 20% respondents said that they were general people like: old people, housewife, retired serviceman etc. they took different types of facilities from the UPs.

10.2.5 Perceptions about e-service delivery

Now-a-days e-service delivery plays an important role to provide easy and quick service to the mass peoples at grassroots level. To identify the effectiveness of this service here I tried to identify their perception regarding e-service delivery at UPs.

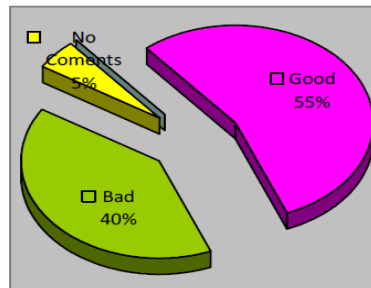


Figure-22: Perception about e-service of the Respondents (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, maximum respondent (55%) perceptions about e-service delivery at the local level were quite good and they were satisfied with getting quick services. Another 40% claimed that they were unsatisfied with the e-service delivery. They argued that the service process was so complicated and also the concern service providers were not much cooperative with them. On the other hand, 5% respondents were not shown interest to provide information with unknown fear.

10.2.6 Level of overall knowledge on UPs activities

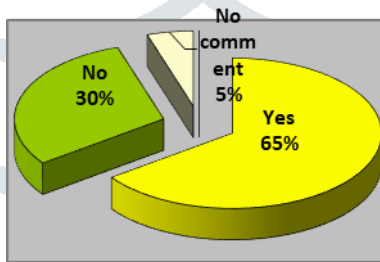


Figure-23: Scenario of overall knowledge of UPs activities (Source: Field Survey).

The results shows that 65% of the citizens of union parishads have the knowledge about functions of UPs clearly. Another, 30% respondents said that they not clear ideas about the functions of the UPs. On the other hand, 5% respondents were not feeling interest to provide any kind of information regarding UPs functions. Therefore, people are comparatively less aware about the UPs activities.

10.2.7 Scenario of maintenance law and order situation of UPs

UPs one of the major functions is to maintain the law-and-order situation. In light of the local government rules the UPs maintain the law-and-order situation in cooperation with government other institutions.

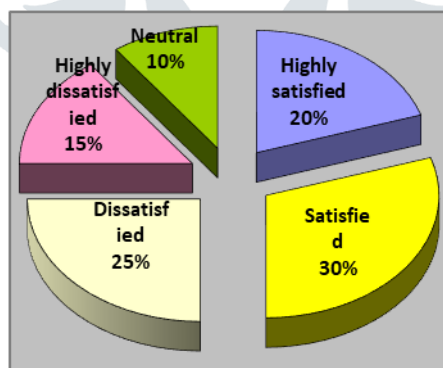


Figure-24: Scenario of maintenance law and order situation of UPs (Source: Field Survey).

From the above figure, 20% respondents said that they were highly satisfied for getting services from the UPs. Another, 30% opined that they were satisfied with the service quality of UPs. Besides, 25% replied that they were dissatisfied with the service of UPs. They claimed that the service quality wasn't in slandered level and faced difficulties in getting services provided by the UPs. On the other hand, 15% claimed that they were highly dissatisfaction of UPs services. Another, 10% of the respondents were not feel interest to provide any kind of information regarding this issue.

10.2.8 Scenario of UPs public health and family planning program

The Government of Bangladesh has decentralized health care facilities more towards the rural community to ensure better access to maternity and family planning services. Community Clinic for every six thousand populations and Union Health and Family Welfare Centre are well equipped with trained manpower and adequate logistic supplies. Despite all these, health service indicator shows insufficient access to and utilization of maternity and family planning services.

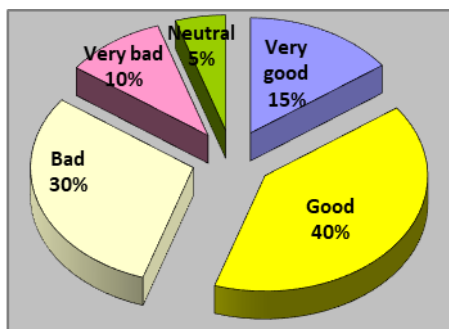


Figure-25: Scenario of UPs public health and family planning program.

From the above pie-chart, 15% respondents said that the services were very good and they were satisfied for getting services from UPs. Another, 40% opined that the service quality of UPs were quite good. Besides, 30% replied that the service quality of UPs were bad. They claimed that the service quality wasn't in slandered level and faced difficulties in getting services provided by the UPs. On the other hand, 10% claimed that the UPs services were very bad. Another, 5% of the respondents were not feel interest to provide any kind of information regarding this issue.

10.2.9 Scenario of fighting against women violence, dowry, and child marriage

It is one of the vital function of UPs to control women violence, dowry and child marriage in rural areas in Bangladesh. The perceptions of local citizens about the local government unit specially UPs working to combat this situation are given following graph.

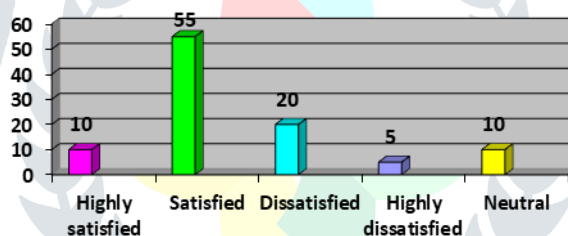


Figure-26: Scenario of UPs fighting against women violence, dowry, and child marriage.

From the above graph, almost 65% from the respondents were satisfied and highly satisfied with combating violence against women, dowry and child marriage. Another, 25% of the respondents were more or less dissatisfied with these issues. On the other hand, 10% the respondents were in neutral in response to these issues.

10.2.10 Opinion about the Accountability and Transparency of UPs activities

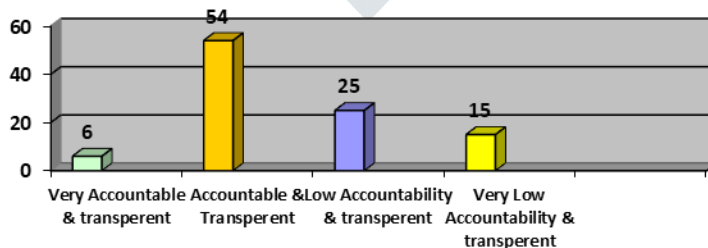


Figure-27: Scenario of UPs Accountability and Transparency.

Regarding the accountability & transparency of UP activities, 54% of the respondents expressed UP activities as accountable & transparent. 6% of the respondents opined that UP activities were 'very accountability & transparent'. In this regard, 25% of the respondents were said that 'low accountability & transparent' of UPs activities. Another, 15% of the respondents claimed that the scenario of accountability & transparency were very low.

10.2.11 Citizens' Perspective on Major Challenges of Union Parishads

Now-a-days citizens have to make a regular connectivity with the UPs because of getting different services. Though plenty of reforms initiated in compare with last decayed. But overall condition is not in satisfactory level. In that

sense, citizens identified some challenges or obstacles which need to be overcome to establish people's-oriented UPs. The identified challenges are given below.

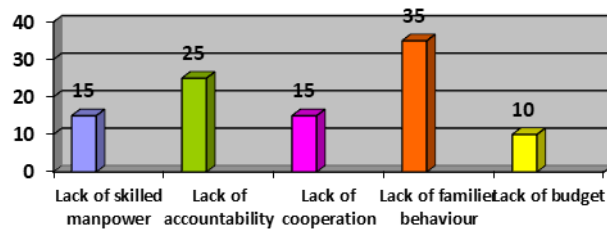


Figure-28: Major Challenges identified by the citizen (Source: Field Survey)

The stature revealed that the huge number of challenges of UPs in Bangladesh where lack of skilled manpower (15%), lack of accountability (25%), lack of cooperation (15%), Lack of familiar behavior (35%) another, lack of sufficient budget (10%) all were claimed as key disputes.

10.2.12 Suggestions of Overcome Existing Situations

The citizens suggested some recommendations to overcome the existing situation in UPs. The suggestions are given below:

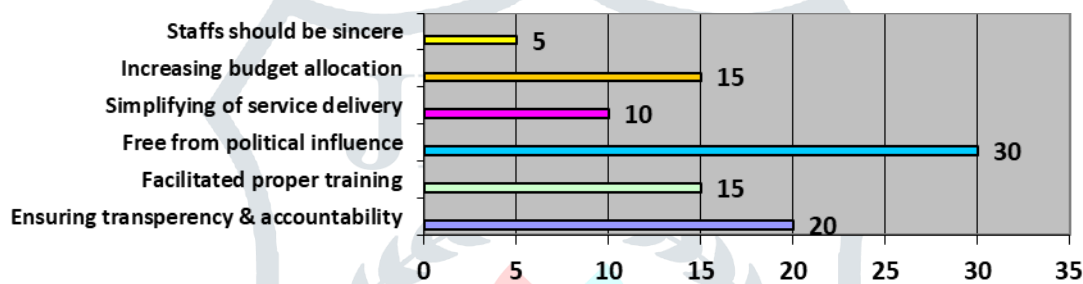


Figure-29: Suggestions of citizens of overcome Existing Situations (Source: Field Survey).

The above graph revealed that, 5% of the respondents argued that the staffs should be more sincere and committed to their providing services to the citizens. Another, 15% respondents said that to increase the budget allocation of UPs to provide better service delivery. Besides, 10% respondents thought that to simplify the UPs service delivery will ensure the effective UPs in Bangladesh. On the other hand, maximum respondents (30%) claimed that now-a-days UPs were highly politicize institute which sometimes faced problem to provide services to the rural peoples. That's why respondents thought that it should be free from political influences for better service delivery. Besides, 15% respondent said that to provide better service delivery need to facilitated proper trainings for increasing staff's expertise and skills. Another, 20% respondents argued that to effective the UPs need to ensure transparency and accountability of UPs.

11. Recommendations and Conclusion

11.1 Recommendations

Bangladesh is confronted with a variety of problems as it implements its ambitious but achievable Digital Bangladesh-2021 plan through local government entities. The most significant system for reaching the top-rated countries in the world is a comprehensive strategy of successful UPs. The following recommendations are based on the primary results of my study:

- Skilled manpower:** In Bangladesh, government officials are the primary implementers of rural development. They should thus be technologically proficient and well-equipped. The objective of a digital Bangladesh is now hampered by a dearth of skilled labor.
- Building Citizens' Awareness:** The majority of Bangladeshi citizens still adhere to a traditional mindset and are critical of how the UP operates. In this situation, government should organize initiatives to educate the populace about the benefits of UPs.
- Enacted Strategic Planning:** To determine the future course of Bangladesh's e-service delivery, a national strategic planning is required. This strategic planning will serve as a roadmap for future e-service delivery and provision. To guarantee individuals' rights to specify necessary legal and regulatory frameworks, legislative action is crucial.

- d. **Make Sure of Financial Flow:** To effective the UPs need to facilitate financial facilities to provide better services to its citizens.
- e. **Increase the Relationship:** The relationship between Members of Parliament (MPs) and the local government should be cooperative and complementary instead of domination and subjugation. MPs should not in any way interfere in the affairs of UPs.
- f. **To facilitated Human Resources:** If UPs are given adequate manpower, they would be able to better identify local needs and problems and devise development plans accordingly.
- g. **Make sure of accountability:** It is imperative to devise social accountability mechanisms to make the UP accountable to the local people.
- h. **Honorarium should be handsome:** Honorarium should be increased to a respectable level. It should be no less than the present demand for the chairman and staffs.
- i. **Flexible of administrative rules & regulations:** The decision-making process ought to be as free of administrative complexity as feasible. To protect this process from political and party pressures, caution must be exercised.
- j. **To arrange proper training facilities:** To build their ability and increase efficiency, elected authorities and appointed officials should both get the proper training.

11.2 Conclusion

The key to long-term growth in Bangladesh, as in other countries, is to strengthen local governments. Bangladesh's progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and efforts to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is dependent on local government and local governance capacity. To make development work really meaningful and sustainable, a "bottom-up" development model that incorporates people directly in decision-making and implementation at the UP is required. Local government, as a key pillar of democratic and public service change, is where democratic development challenges must begin. The justification for shifting power, responsibility, and resources from the national government to its field units to assist them in decision-making, planning, and administration stimulates the need for local government. Bangladesh is a third-world country with a large population. As a result, it is critical to implement a method that will assist in providing better services to this vast population.

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