



Empirical Analysis of Rural Local Government in Bangladesh: Problems and Way Out

Ruhul Amin

Department of Public Administration, Comilla University, Bangladesh | rubelcou@gmail.com

Received: 02-05-2023

Reviewed: 10-05-2023 Accepted: 31-05-2023

Abstract

The government might be national, provincial, state, or municipal. Local government refers to the administration of a locality or small community, such as a village, town, or city, by the body representing the local population, with a considerable level of autonomy, earning at least a part of its income from local taxes, and spending the proceeds on services. One of the most important preconditions for the growth of local governments is the democratization of governmental management. The breaking up of ownership monopolies fosters the growth of economies with many structures. The establishment of government powers that are both durable and effective is required in order to generate adequate conditions for business. These conditions must encompass a wide variety of factors, including favorable rules of play, the protection of ownership rights, and so on. The study utilizes both primary and secondary information and also make use of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected through a set of semi-structured questionnaire & interviewing of different stakeholders in local government. Under Qualitative data, information was collected through survey method and KII. Besides, the secondary data was collected through the books, journals, reports and newspaper. The number of total respondents was 50. Finally, Descriptive, analytical and empirical methods was use to analyses the data. The study will help in understanding the transformation of local government in Bangladesh and in future measures to strengthen it.

Keywords: Empirical Analysis, Local Government, Union Parishad, Rural Development, Bangladesh

Introduction

Decentralization is essential to democratic practice and good government. To maintain public administration efficiency and effectiveness, it is also important. Democratic governance and administration depend on democratically elected local, regional, and national authorities. The term "local government" refers to a government that is organized at the municipal or county level. Local government has always been present in Bengal. From one generation to the next, only the shapes changed (Sowdagar, 2013). In ancient and medieval Bengal, most of the government was run by village organizations, which set the rules for how things were run. The

government of the village was left up to the people who lived there. The king was happy with the amount of tax money that it brought in. There were institutions that were supported by the government, like village headmen and village councils that were made up of people of many different religions. These were enacted with a dual objective in mind: first, to levy taxes, and second, to maintain social cohesion among the populace in order to maintain productivity levels, as well as to ensure that the kingdom remains content and successful (S. M. A. Ehsan, 2021). The initiative to improve the engagement of excluded and underprivileged populations and societal segments in public affairs also places a special responsibility on local governments. In order to fulfill their role as community leaders, local authorities should be allowed to determine the proper kinds of public involvement and civic engagement (Fakhrul, 2015).

The aims of this study is to answer the questions about the direction of local government in Bangladesh over the past four decades, including how it has been handled by successive administrations and whether or not recent changes have benefited the general populace rather than just the political elite. The study also makes an effort to pin down the obstacles standing in the way of the localized changes being put into practice. The goal of this study is to give some basic information about how local governments have changed under different rural governments. Through a detailed review of the literature, this article tries to shed light on the reforms of local government in order to find connections between the central government and their political views.

Literature Review

Bangladesh inherited the colonial structure of local government as a result of its 190-year and 24-year rule by the British Raj and Pakistan, respectively (Panday, 2011). In the modern age of states, the idea of local government has been essential to making it easier for the central government to provide services (Islam, 2018). In order to operate as participatory institutions that are sensitive to the needs and demands of all residents, local governments must be given the ability and funding to do so. This is a requirement of grassroots local governance. It is also focused with enhancing local democracy and empowering groups like CBOs and NGOs to take part as equal players in processes for enhancing local development and governance quality (Aminuzzmaan, 2013).

Decentralization, which refers to the distribution of major authority, including the capacity to enact laws and generate income, to locally elected organizations and subnational entities, is closely tied to local governance (Conyers 1983). Delegation is a more thorough kind of decentralization whereby central governments give semi-autonomous bodies control over decision-making and management of public services. Although they are not completely under the supervision of the federal government, these organizations are ultimately answerable to it. These groups frequently exercise a lot of judgment while making decisions. (Siddiqui, 2005). Separate legal frameworks for various LGIs aren't helping local governance in Bangladesh; instead, they're making it more difficult and causing functional overlap, ambiguous interactions between the central and local levels, and tense interactions with the local bureaucrats who want to dominate the elected bodies (Rahman and Ahmed, 2015, 16).

Also, it's still hard to get people to come to open budget meetings for the same reasons that make public participation hard in general, like general apathy, lack of knowledge about

how important open budget meetings are, and the idea that participatory budgeting is a partisan process, etc. (Ehsan, 2020). Rural development has become a unique area of study, practice, and policy. According to a recent definition provided by the World Bank and Indeed, rural development is a method used to enhance the social and economic well-being of a particular population. Every government has officials who care about how money is spent and whether it gets to the needy. Agriculture is not the only aspect of rural development. For the complete elevation of our rural people, we must have an integrated strategy and plan. We require a thriving, independent economy for our rural communities. We need to organize small and cottage enterprises for our rural regions on a broad scale for this reason (Mohiudin, 1998).

Objective of Study

It appears that the challenges of local administration in Bangladesh are essentially structural in the sense that they are the result of structural abnormalities in body politics deriving from a prior federal heritage as opposed to a unitary present. Accordingly, the objectives of this study are delineating the bellow:

- To study rural local government issues in Bangladesh.
- To investigate the historical context of administrative pattern and its influence on the structure of existing local government.
- To understand local government issues, functioning, and dysfunction.

Research Method

The term "research methodology" describes a method for gathering data and information in order to achieve the study's objectives (M. Aminuzzaman Saluddin, 1998). In particular, in terms of corporate governance, this study integrated the qualitative and quantitative approaches.

- a. **Research Design:** The quantitative research used to regulate and qualify the rapport among the dependent and independent variables. Different statistical tools were used to express the relationship between variables. (Kumar Ranjit, 2011).
- b. **Selection of the Study Area:** Three different areas of Gaibandha district were selected purposively for conducting this study. Number of rickshaw pullers and their socio-economic status are given important emphasis to select the study area.
- c. **Data collection Methods:** To draw some conclusions from the findings, the collected data must be quantitatively analyzed. To achieve the study's objectives, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. The following methods used in this study:
 - ❖ **Content Analysis:** Content analysis entails gathering information from all important documents, books, journals, articles, online articles and research works. It has both quantitative and qualitative capabilities. Content analysis can also provide historical and cultural insights over time.
 - ❖ **Interview:** A face-to-face interviews will be conducted. According to the researcher, face-to-face interviews with semi-structured oral interviews are appropriate for gathering information from them.

- ❖ **Survey method:** In this study, a semi-structured questionnaire survey will be used to collect primary data. It's one of the most efficient ways to gather primary data.
- d. **Sources of Data and Sampling procedure:** Primary and secondary sources were used to gather information. Secondary data were gathered from various sources, such as educational statistics, books, seminar papers, newspaper reports, previous research works, and reports. Interviews and questionnaire surveys were used to collect primary data (M. Aminuzzaman Saluddin, 1998). Purposive sampling was used on the entire sample to conduct a semi-structured questionnaire survey. Primary data has been collected from two *Upazilas* from Gaibandha district in Bangladesh and respondents were 50 respectively. The respondent was taken on the basis of purposive sampling in every union *parishad*. In the following table depicts that—

Table-01: Scenario of Study area.

Upazila Parishad	District	Division
Gobindagonj	Gaibandha	Rangpur
Palashbari		

For this study, secondary data were collected from review of the available literature on local government to get relevant information. The secondary materials were basically- official documents, government policies and acts, statistical reports of NGOs, research studies and newspaper clippings.

- e. **Data Processing:** According to the research objectives, the data was coded, calculated, analyzed, sorted, summarized, classified, formatted, and tabulated. The data was also methodically processed using different research approaches based on predetermined variables.
- f. **Data Analysis:** Information was gathered from both the primary as well as the secondary sources. The information was analyzed and interpreted using statistical tools and techniques after processing. In addition, using the SPSS method, the data was classified, tabulated, and analyzed (Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences). Data was analyzed using Microsoft Word and Excel.

History of Local Government Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, local government (LG) has a long history. The origins of the current local government institution may be traced back to British India's desire for self-rule. The British established local government to maintain peace and order in rural areas with the help of a local elite backed up by local police. Local elites were to be picked from among those whom the colonial administration trusted to serve in local government bodies (Shah Md. Azimul Ehsan and et al., 2012). The British rulers devised this system in order to sustain their political, economic, and administrative aims, as well as their extortion practice across the colonies. In 1870, the "*Choukidary Panchayet*" was set up as the institution for running the local government. From the time of the British to the time of the modern government of Bangladesh,

this structure was changed and given new names (Faguet, 2017). It was called a three-tier Union Committee in 1885, a two-tier Union Board in 1919, a four-tier Union Council in 1959, and a Union Parishad in 1971. (1973). After 1973, the Union Parishad took the place of the village council as the top level of local government in Bangladesh. It's important to note that rural and urban areas in Bangladesh each have their own unique set of local government institutions. Union Parishad, Upazilla Parishad, and Zilla Parishad are the three levels of rural local government, whereas *Pourashavas*' and Municipality make up urban local administration (S. Ahmed, 2007). After 1971, the local government system decentralized in the following ways:

Mujib Period (1972-1975) - Mujib prioritized national issues above neighborhood issues. The Awami League did not elect or delegate power to any of the higher-level councils. The Awami League did not decentralize local governance or establish grassroots democracy in 1973, even though the Union Parishad (Council) was supposed to do so. Politically and personally, the Awami League's senior executives did not support a more democratic administration. Sheikh Mujib's "governor system" at the district level and presidential supervision under BAKSAL (Mohammad & Huq, 2016). Local governance was reformed by the Awami League under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman after independence in 1971:

- ❖ The system of fundamental democracies was abolished, and pre-independence government institutions were disbanded.
- ❖ In order to fill the vacuum left by the dissolution of several government entities, public officials were given permission to establish committees at various levels of government. For the time being, local duties would be handled by the newly formed committees (Faguet, 2017).
- ❖ District governorships began in 1973. This created a three-tiered organization with a directly elected Union Parishad (Council), a sub-divisional officer-led Thana development committee, and a deputy commissioner-led Zila Parishad (Shah Md. Azimul Ehsan and et al., 2012).

The General Ziaur Rahman's Period (1975-1981) - In August 1975, Major General Ziaur Rahman took over as the head of the military government. Still, Gen. Zia was very important in getting the country's local government back up and running. Zia passed the Local Government Ordinance in 1976, which set up Gram Sbaha (village councils) as a way to spread power down to the village level. In 1980, two years after General Zia was elected president, all 68,000 villages in Bangladesh had their Gram Sbahas changed into Gram Sarkar (village government) (Hossain & Habib, 2018). The Gram Sarkar had the gram pradhan (village executive) and eleven other villagers elected to represent various social strata. The Gram Sarkar was a mini-government capable of organizing and promoting initiatives. The changes launched by General Zia were distinct from previous decentralization plans. The bureaucracy was granted unfettered authority over the local governments (Hasina & Hasan, 2015). These local governing entities maintained the decentralized version of decentralization.

Ershad's Period (1982-1990)- General Zia was killed in a military coup d'état in 1981. In March 1982, Ershad took over as the new military leader and ended the Gram Sarkar. Ershad started reforms in his first year in office to make the government less centralized. He got rid of old subdivisions and turned Thanas into Upazillas (sub-district) (Haque, 2020). Ershad and his companions of the Upazilla model said in hundreds of public forums at the outset of the reform

that increasing access and encouraging participation were their top priorities. In defiance of this promise to the people, the military administration did all in its power to undermine the country's democratic forces and shore up the dictatorial bureaucracy (Md. Maniruzzaman, 2016). Similar to how Pakistani dictator Ayub Khan employed the Basic Democracies system in the 1960s and the Gram Sarkar in the 1970s, Bangladesh's political history was replicated in the 1980s when the Upazilla was politicized in favor of the governing military dictatorship (Fakhrul, 2015).

Khaleda Zia's Period (1991-1996) - Prime Minister Khaleda Zia approved the Local Government (Upazilla Parishad and Upazilla Administration Reorganization) (Repeal) Ordinance, 1991, few months after taking office. In June 1992, a cabinet division decision replaced the Upazilla Parishad with Thana government. Since her party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), had few Upazilla chairmen, Khaleda Zia wanted to depoliticize the system (Khan, 2008). During her five-year administration, Begum Khaleda Zia failed to implement any new type of local government. As a result, Begum Khaleda Zia is condemned for the pervasive crisis in governance. The institutions of local administration have become weakened (Hasan, 2019). The effective participation of the NGO rendered the ineffective local government agencies useless.

Sheikh Hasina's Period (1996-2001) - In May 1997, the Bangladesh Awami League government, which had been in charge since 1996, set up a Local Government Commission and put out a report called "Report on Strengthening Local Government Institutions." The Commission suggested that there be four levels of local government: Gram/Palli (Village) Parishad, Union Parishad, Thana/Upazilla Parishad, and Zila (District) Parishad (Hasina & Hasan, 2015). Despite the fact that local government bodies were allowed to exercise some degree of local autonomy, they were subject to tight supervision by either the central government or a higher body in the administrative structure of the state. Westergard (2000) makes the observation that "much like the past local government systems, the central government controls the local bodies in all respects" (Hasan, 2019).

Begum Khaleda Zia's Period (2001-2006) - A new local government system was implemented in 2001. To replace Gram Parishad, use Gram Sarkar. Recent legislation has authorized gram sarkars. These corpuses will come from wards. Gram Sarkars denotes one or two villages with 3,000 or more residents each. The GS will be led by the UP representative who won the ward's election and will also include other people who were selected by the ward's voters in a general assembly under the direction of a "prescribed/directing authority" (Plan, 2012). The government sometimes entrusts the Gram Sarkar (GS), which has certain obligations, with additional duties. Gram Sarkars will have the power to create and choose the members of issue-based standing committees as appropriate (Khan, 2008). All facets of society have questioned the process used to develop the Gram Sarkar Act and how the members were chosen in each ward. In the sovereign nation of Bangladesh, local government units have never really been "self-governed." They essentially serve as an extension of the federal government, with little local involvement. Municipal administrations have historically been ineffective in managing finances and institutions and lacking in both popular and political trust (Sharmin et al., 2012).

Sheikh Hasina (2009–present) - The government promised to carry out its election platform, which included plans to spread power out and make local governments stronger. In

February 2009, the Local Government Commission was taken away (Hasan, 2019). During this time, some changes were made. Here's what they are:

- ❖ Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009;
- ❖ Abolished Gram Sarker;
- ❖ Local Government (Paurosova) Act 2009;
- ❖ Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009;
- ❖ Upazila Act 2009;
- ❖ Organization, structure and activities of Upazila were revised and specified focusing on Upazila act 1998 (Khan, 2008)
- ❖ Creating two positions of Upazila vice chairman (one reserved for woman);
- ❖ Regulations of the responsibilities, power and facilities of the Upazila Chairman and Vice- Chairman;
- ❖ Regulation on budget process (preparation and approval) of Upazila
- ❖ Charter of duties of Upazila public officials;
- ❖ Regulation for using revenue of Upazila (August, 2009); and
- ❖ Regulation for using development fund of Upazila (October, 2009) (Hasina & Hasan, 2015).

In March 2009, UPZ Parishad started doing its work. In March 2011, Shujan secretary Badiul Alam Majumder said at a roundtable meeting that the government limited the power of local government representatives by making them advisers to the Upazila Parishad (Md. Maniruzzaman, 2016). There were some disagreements about who had the most power between the representatives of the local government and the MP.

Constitutional and Legal Basis of Local Government in Bangladesh

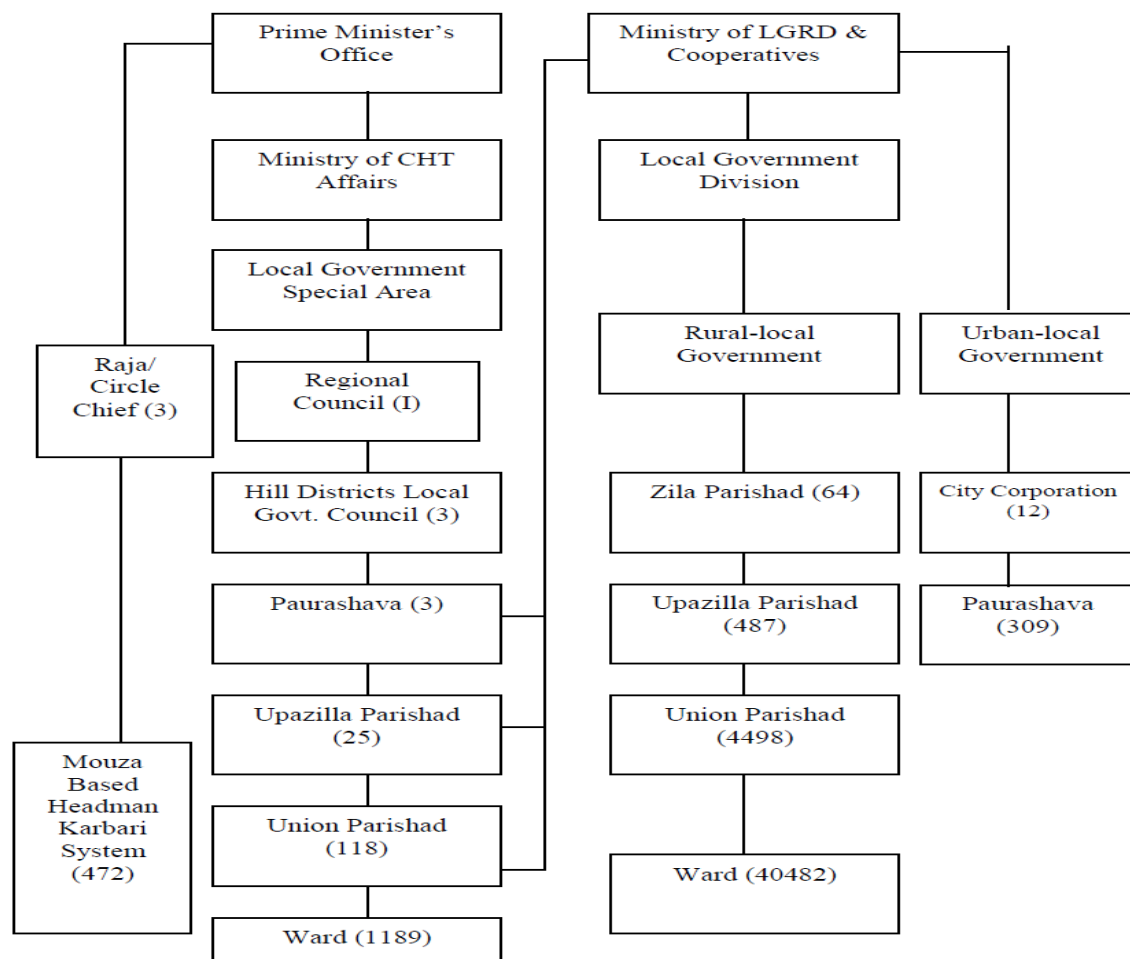
Local government is legally recognized in any democratic nation by an act of Parliament or the Constitution. Local government's legal foundation and tasks were explicitly stated in Bangladesh's 1972 Constitution (Sharmin et al., 2012). According to Article 59, Chapter III of the Constitution, "Local government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to organizations comprised of citizens elected in line with law." The People's Republic of Bangladesh Constitution, as amended up to the 30th of November 1998, states in Article 60 that "for the purpose of giving full effect to the provision of article fifty-nine, Parliament shall, by law, confer powers on the local government bodies referred to in that article, including the power to impose taxes for local purposes, to prepare their budgets, and to maintain funds" (Coupe et al., 2012). These include budgeting and financial management. It is difficult to devolve power if local government institutions' responsibilities and obligations are not specified by the Constitution or legislative law or if the government cannot cede authority to locally elected entities (T. Ahmed & Akter, 2022). It is obvious that the Constitution clearly outlines the legal foundation for local government, and that Article 59 of Chapter III ensures the devolution of authority to local government organizations (Islam, 2015).

Functions and Responsibilities of Local Government Institutions

The wards have been tasked with a wide range of responsibilities, including garbage collection, sewage system upkeep, canal and drain maintenance, dam maintenance, aiding in

the administration of medical facilities and educational institutions, and project oversight (S. A. Ehsan, 2020). VDCs perform a broader range of activities and functions. These include irrigation, soil erosion programs and river control, electricity generation, community buildings, land-utilization plans, and veterinary services and animal disease control in the agricultural sector (Shah Md. Azimul Ehsan and et al., 2012).

Figure-01: Administrative Structure of Central-local Government.



Source: Nahar, 2023

Other objectives of VDCs include the provision of drinking water, the building and maintenance of rural roads and bridges, the establishment of primary schools, the supervision and management of schools within the area, the provision of adult education, and the establishment of primary schools. Protecting girls and women is a top priority for VDCs, as are empowering women in the community. This includes caring for orphaned and disabled children (S. M. A. Ehsan, 2021). Also, the Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Municipalities are the most important institutions in charge of development. They should make yearly plans for development, do feasibility studies, choose, monitor, and evaluate projects, and work with non-government organizations (NGOs). A resource map of the area should be made, and objective data should be gathered (Hasan, 2019). The legal responsibilities of municipalities include those of VDCs, but they also go above and beyond those responsibilities

in a way that fits the needs of cities and the usually higher levels of resources (Hasina & Hasan, 2015).

Findings and Analysis

Age of the Respondents

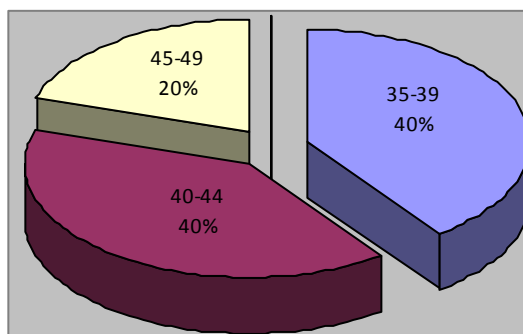


Figure-02: Scenario of Respondents' age.

This table exemplifies the age categories of the respondents where we found 40% respondents are in age group 35-39; 40% respondents belong in 40-44 age groups; and 20% respondents are in the age group of 45-49. Here, we can see that more than half of the respondents are in matured age group that is really needed for these types of position.

Occupation of the Respondents

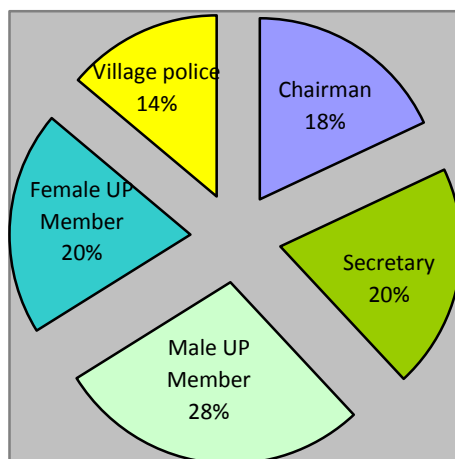


Figure-03: Scenario of occupational status.

The above table enunciates that among the local administration 09 Chairmen are respondents (18%), 10 are secretaries (20%), 14 respondents are male UP Members (28%), 10 females Up Members (20%) and 7 village polices (14%). We have selected them as respondents because of showing the representativeness in our study. As our study areas are two upazillas from Gaibandha district, we studied the people from administration that were proportionately distributed.

Sex of the Respondents

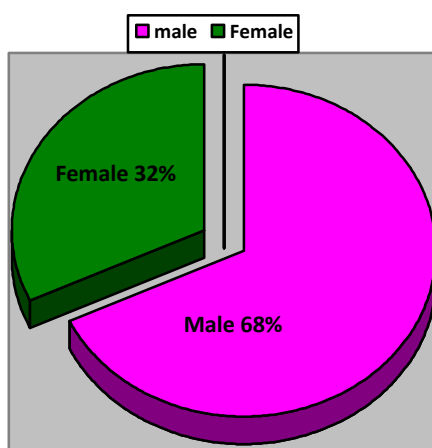


Figure-04: Scenario of Respondents.

From the above table it is found that among the respondents' male are the most dominant, which contains 68% and only 32% are female. As we have taken two upazillas from Gaibandha district, it quite natural that the number of female and male respondents would be 16 and 34.

Occupation of the Respondents

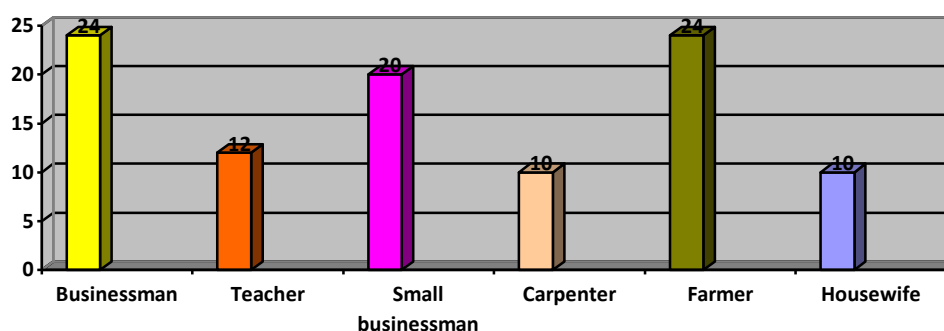


Figure-05: Occupational Status of the Respondents

The table demonstrates that majority of the respondents are farmer and businessman considering 24% and 24% individually. Teacher and small businessman contain the similar percentage of 12% and only 20% respondents are carpenter and housewives individually.

Education level of the Respondents

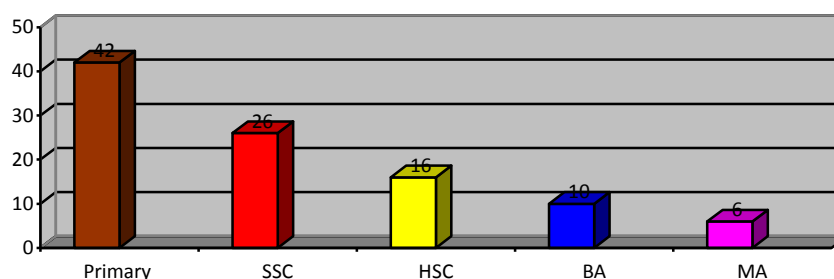


Figure-06: Educational status of the Respondents

According to the education level, the above table delve into that 42% respondents are in primary level; 26% are in SSC level. Respondents with the education level HSC contain 16% and only 10% respondents have B.A and 6% respondents are M.A. level of education. The literacy condition is not satisfactory at all.

Monthly Income of the Respondents

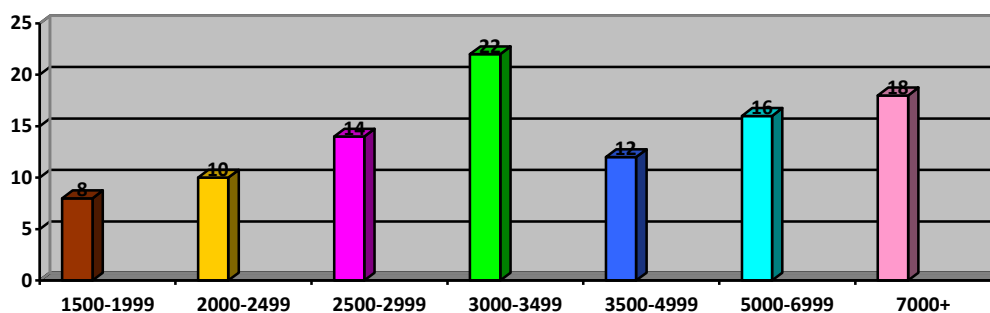


Figure-07: Monthly income status of the respondents.

From the above table we found that, highest percentage (22%) of the respondents' monthly income in between Tk. 3000-3499. Respondents with monthly income Tk.1500-1999 are 8%. 10% respondents have the similar income level i.e. Tk. 2000-2499 and the highest income level (7000+) respondents are about 18%.

What kind of problem you face to do the work in your locality?

Table-02: Problem statements scenario of the respondents.

Types of problem	Respondents	Percentage
Pressure of local MP	12	24
Non-cooperation of local administration	9	18
Inadequate manpower	6	12
Non-cooperation of people	8	16
Local Terrorism	5	10
Insufficient amount of Budget	10	20
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2021 (Multiple response)

From the above table it is seen that pressure of local MP, inadequate manpower and insufficient amount of budget are largely responsible to create a problem to do the work in their locality, which contains 24%, 18% and 12% respectively. 16% respondents said that non-cooperation of local administration create problem for their work. Other responses like non-cooperation of people, local terrorism contain lower percentage, but it is significant for this study to get a full-fledged idea.

Do you have access to all facilities given by the government?

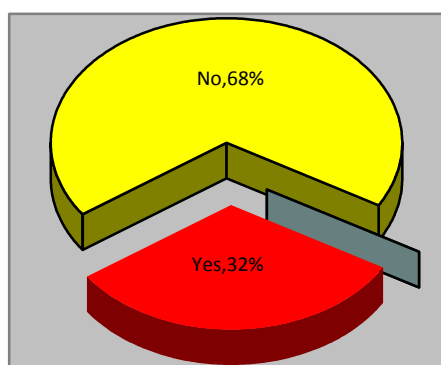


Figure-08: Scenario of access of facilities.

The above Table described that among the all respondents, 32% have no access to all facilities whereas 68% have access to all facilities. But the question is why most of the respondents said they did not get the all facilities. The answer regarding this question is very vivid to all. They said it for the nepotism and corruption.

What kind of success you already have achieved during your period?

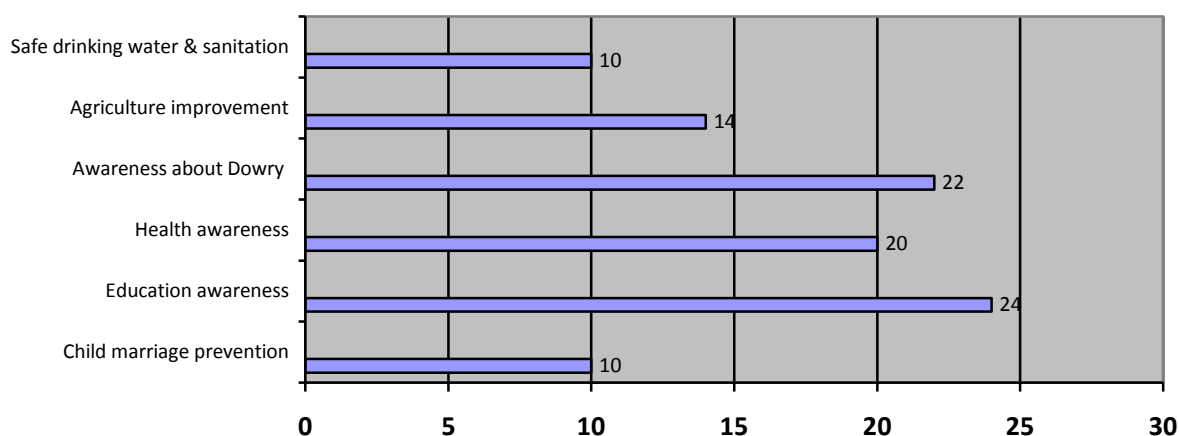


Figure-09: Successful scenario of local government.

The table shows that 22% respondents achieved success to create awareness against dowry and 20% percent respondents are capable to make the awareness about health. 24% percent and 14% percent of the respondents achieved to create the awareness about education and agricultural development individually. 10% respondents achieved the success regarding to provide safe drinking water and sanitation, and 10% achieved the prestige of preventing the child marriage.

Discussion of the Findings

But the system of local government particularly in rural Bangladesh has yet to be built on a sound footing because of the following perennial problems:

- a. The system of local government (LG) is essentially an inheritance from the days of colonialism. It was initially implemented by the British, and after passing via Pakistan,

it made its way to an independent Bangladesh. The experience of LG was conducted inside a federal framework during the time of the British and Pakistan, but since the country of Bangladesh has become independent, it has been running under a unitary system.

- b. While the political structure of the country as a whole has changed from autocratic to democratic, the local government in Bangladesh has not experienced any fundamental changes to adapt to the new unitary system. There has been minimal change to the constitutional law that forms the basis of municipal government.
- c. There is a lot of discord between what the statutes say the local government should be doing and what it really does. However, in practice, only a select few have been given these responsibilities, and they must adhere to central government guidelines.
- d. Local government entities lack sufficient self-sufficiency; as a result, they are unable to mobilize local resources and are forced to rely entirely on central government handouts.
- e. Again, periodic switchover to non-political military administration increases central government political dependence on local governments for legitimacy and local government financial dependent on central government.

Way Out of the Existing Problem in Local Government Institutions

Good governance: accountability, transparency, participation, empowerment, equality, and others—can be integrated into government and local authority activities. Most positive governance traits thrive in decentralized local governments. Thus, improving local government institutions may indicate effective governance. Consider the following issues while reforming local government institutions to establish strong, genuinely decentralized, institutionally successful, financially sustainable, participatory, gender-sensitive, transparent, and accountable governing bodies (Fakhrul, 2015). These include:

- I. The chairman of UP and UZP should be given more authority in order to improve local administration.
- II. To assure honest, respectable, and talented local candidates, disqualification standards must be strict.
- III. Local MPs (Members of Parliament) should not interfere with Union Parishad proceedings and should stay away from them (Coupe et al., 2012).
- IV. It is necessary to have a distinct pay scale for local government. Every Union Parishad should hire an accountant with computer skills (Sowdagar, 2013).
- V. A five-year, statutory local government commission should assess and resolve all local government issues.
- VI. A local individual will be chosen to serve as the executive head of the local body according to the election laws and accountability procedures that come with a decentralized system with an adult franchise (Sharmin et al., 2012).
- VII. Local tax systems have to be modified every five years.
- VIII. It's important to improve the auditing system.
- IX. Establish effective coordination and collaboration (Hasan, 2019).
- X. Strengthening of Institutional Capabilities.

- XI.** Positive contributions made by number of actors.
- XII.** Ensure adequate funding for development activities.
- XIII.** Ensure people's participation on local development.

Conclusion

Existing local government entities are incapable of ensuring the welfare of village communities in the country due to the limited role of local government in development at the local level and the lack of uniformity in their structure and operation. Multiple mutually incompatible functional and structural patterns are operating in the nation. Simultaneously, the pursuit of and experimentation with innovative patterns have not yet halted. It appears that no national consensus has evolved. The local government as a component of the national system has not yet reached a point of equilibrium. It is necessary to aggressively reorganize what is still essentially an outgrowth of colonial and federal heritage in order for it to be consistent with the general governmental superstructure of a unitary state as well as the demand of an independent and growing country. This would necessitate the establishment of a well-defined policy with regard to the organization's center-to-local connection, as well as its structure, functions, finances, and administration, amongst other considerations.

Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

a. Limitations: The following are some limitations of the study-

- ❖ The study's scope is constrained because it only includes two upazillas.
- ❖ Funding and other sources of support for this project weren't enough.
- ❖ In the study areas, there weren't enough studies conducted.
- ❖ During the field visit, several respondents refused to comply by providing the requested information.

b. Future Research Recommendations

The foundation for future research projects is laid by this study. A broad notion, local governance has many different parts. It is exceedingly challenging to include all associated concerns in single research. The study, however, motivates more scholars to investigate a fresh angle on women's empowerment and local government in the context of Bangladesh. The researcher plans to suggest some future studies in light of the current study:

- ❖ Fiscal Accountability of local government.
- ❖ Citizens trust on local government institutions.
- ❖ Central-local government relations in terms of accountability and transparency.

References

Ahmed, S. (2007). *Local Government in Bangladesh : A Review of Reform Efforts from 1972 to 2006*. 1(4), 7–20.

- Ahmed, T., & Akter, T. (2022). Recent Practices of People ' s Participation in Different Avenues of Rural Local Government : Realities and Challenges behind Strengthening Decentralisation in Bangladesh Recent Practices of People ' s Participation in Different Avenues of Rural Local Gov. *PCD Journal*, 10(November). <https://doi.org/10.22146/pcd.v10i1.5096>
- Coupe, S., Choudhury, I., & Mamun, S. H. (2012). *Navigating Local Governance in Bangladesh : Pathways for Institutionalising PAPD*.
- Ehsan, S. A. (2020). The Local Government System in Bangladesh : An Anatomy of Perspectives & Practices. *Sjpg*, 44(2), 1–22.
- Ehsan, S. M. A. (2021). Local governance at the grassroots in Bangladesh: Transforming the rhetoric into reality. *Dynamics of Public Administration*, 38(1), 43–57. <https://doi.org/10.5958/0976-0733.2021.00004.3>
- Faguet, J. P. (2017). Transformation from below in Bangladesh: Decentralization, local governance, and systemic change. *Modern Asian Studies*, 51(6), 1668–1694. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X16000378>
- Fakhrul, I. (2015). The role of local self-government institution for deepening democracy at the grass-root level in Bangladesh. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 7(2), 29–38. <https://doi.org/10.5897/jpapr2015.0311>
- Haque, A. K. M. M. (2020). *Historical Evolution of Rural-Local Government in Bangladesh and Its Current Historical Evolution of Rural-Local Government in Bangladesh and Its Current State*. December. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2511092938>
- Hasan, G. S. (2019). Local Government in Bangladesh : Constitutional Provisions and Reality Local Government in Bangladesh : Constitutional Provisions and Reality. *Metropolitan University Journal*, 1(May), 137–145.
- Hasina, N., & Hasan, G. S. (2015). Reconsideration of Local Government at Village Level: A Legal Study. *Global Disclosure of Economics and Business*, 4(2), 91–99. <https://doi.org/10.18034/gdeb.v4i2.138>
- Hossain, A., & Habib, A. (2018). Dynamics of Local Government and Governance in the Context of Bangladesh. *Green University Review of Social Sciences*, 4(2), 1–15.
- Islam, S. (2015). Review of Public Administration and Management Selection of Development Projects in Local Government : A Comparative Study of Pathalia and Birulia Union Parishad. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 09(06), 1–9.
- Khan, M. M. (2008). *Functioning of Local Government (Union Parishad): Legal and Practical Constraints*.
- Kumar Ranjit. (2011). *Research Methodology- a step-by-step guide for beginners* (third edit). SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd. http://www.sociology.kpi.ua/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Ranjit_Kumar-Research_Methodology_A_Step-by-Step_G.pdf
- M. Aminuzzaman Saluddin. (1998). *Introduction to Social Research*.
- Md. Maniruzzaman, A. K. M. M. H. (2016). Historical Evolution of Rural-Local Government in Bangladesh and Its Current State. *IOSR Journal of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, Volume 25(226), 1–18.
- Mohammad, S., & Huq, S. (2016). Women'S Participation in Local Government: a Tool for Sustainable Development of Bangladesh. *European Journal of Business and Social*

- Sciences*, 4(11), 169–183.
- Plan, W. (2012). *Strengthening Democratic Local Governance (Sdlg) Program in Bangladesh Work Plan 2012*. November 2011.
- Shah Md. Azimul Ehsan and et al. (2012). Revisiting the Reforms of Rural Local Government Institutions in Bangladesh : From Past to Present. *Bangladesh Journal of Administration and Management*, Volume 31.
- Sharmin, Z., Islam, F., & Haque, M. A. (2012). Problems of Strengthening Local Government of Bangladesh. *SUST Studues*, 15(1), 76–84.
- Sowdagar, M. (2013). Challenges of Local Governance : A Study on New Upazila Administration in Bangladesh. *Jagannath University Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 56–73.