Citizens' Trust in Public Institutions in Bangladesh

Citizens' Trust in Public Institutions in Bangladesh:

Performance, Satisfaction and Good Governance

By

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This book is dedicated to my parents

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ABSTRACT

Public institutions are the fundamental instrument for implementing policy. Citizens' faith in public institutions is a critical indicator of democracy's strength. Institutional trustworthiness encompasses trust issues, such as operational processes, standards, intuitive norms, impartiality, access, and treatment equity; the absence of any of these factors results in distrust. Bangladesh's governance is deficient, and public institutions cannot function effectively. Citizens' trust erodes in these conditions, resulting in distrust, a low degree of faith in democracy, and a deterrent to trusting in public institutions. Keeping these considerations in mind, the current study attempts to ascertain the level of trust in public institutions, emphasizing concerns about good governance in public organizations. Citizens' trust has become crucial in evaluating governance and citizen-government interfaces across nations. As a result, 'trust' has consumed both space and impact on public administration. The population and institutions of the state have lofty goals. Another critical potential is the political crisis in Bangladesh's local government, which requires the people to rely on local institutions administered by central government-appointed officials. As a result, the study's overall goal is to determine the relationship between residents' trust in local government and the following question: "Is trust dependent on a citizen's socioeconomic background?" "What influence do selected trust creation indices have on citizens?"-is another question. This study used both qualitative and quantitative methods since blended approaches mitigate the flaws of each technique. The qualitative method was chosen since the investigation could occur in its natural context and would primarily provide descriptive information about the relationship between service delivery and rural local government trust indicators. The accurate figures are mapped using the quantitative method. The research's primary goal is to describe the scope of the function and the factors that determine how it is implemented at the union level. Data is collected in its natural setting and then interpreted using a mixed-method approach. It's merely to urge that we extend our notion of performance, recognizing that more significant standards are only necessary if they result in better public experiences. The purpose of this research was to see if there was a trust gap among locals. The study can potentially validate existing trust literature and generate new knowledge in

this area, thereby understanding various stakeholder groups and policy experts. This research looked into the community's level of trust in Union Parishad (UP) and the factors that influence citizen trust. This study may be helpful to academics, scholars, and other researchers. The study's findings are expected to be beneficial in policy formulation and in building trust in UP. Understanding the picture of local government institutions is crucial for policymakers. Trust is a critical component of "institutional image and service delivery" in this regard. If there is a lack of trust, it must be acknowledged and addressed.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACO:	Authoritarian Cultural Orientation
ACA:	Anti-Corruption Agencies
BDO:	Basic Democracy Order
CBOs:	Community-based organizations
DC:	Deputy Commissioner
ESCAP:	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FGD:	Focused Group Discussion
GoB:	Government of Bangladesh
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
IEDCR:	Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control, and Research
IS:	Information Systems
KII:	Key Informant Interview
LG:	Local Government
LGIs:	Local Government Institutions
LSG:	Local Self Governance
MP:	Member of the Parliament
NGOs:	Non-governmental organizations
NILG:	National Institute of Local Government
NORHED:	Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development
OGD:	Open Government Data
OECD:	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCs:	Standing Committees
SEM:	Structural Equation Modeling
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UP:	Union Parishad
UZP:	Upazila Parishad

PART ONE:

CITIZENS' TRUST IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF BANGLADESH: DOES GOOD GOVERNANCE MATTER?

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory Discussion

Trust has become a major concern for many researchers and authorities in recent years, with many believing that the public's eroding trust in the government is now a global problem (Cook, 2001; Fukuyama, 1995). Politicians, media, and the people are increasingly concerned about a loss of faith in governance and the negative consequences for government and societal cohesion (Bok, 2001). The public sector is increasingly aware that good governance necessitates the most significant standards of transparency, accountability, public integrity, accessibility, effectiveness, efficacy, equity, and involvement (Kim & Jho, 2005; Weber & Carter, 2003). Governance is vital for the success of trust and confidence, and governance is critical for the growth of faith and credibility. Furthermore, governance prescriptions must shift to collaboratively agreed-upon sustainable development plans (Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 2002). Government trust may give "governance capital," causing individuals to collaborate with the government whenever it adopts controversial policies with long-term benefits (Bratton et al., 2005). The public considers the issue of public service quality to be one of the essential aspects of government. The public's government opinion must not change considerably as long as they are cynical and distrustful of the government (parliament, political groups, president and prime minister, etc.) (Kim, 2010). The efficient and successful distribution of goods and services is the primary point of contact between citizens and the government. Efficiency and economy are concerned with the regulations, budgets, and personnel used to deliver government services. The functioning of the government is measured in terms of quality or effectiveness. The primary focus is improving service delivery and access since this is the first point of interaction between people and the government (Cario, 2008). The majority of responses mentioned in the section on satisfaction generally relate to trust. In this article, we will make a few specific statements to highlight that high or low levels of trust are not entirely due to the excellent or impaired functioning of organizations (Van de Walle &

Bouckaert, 2003). High levels of trust promote authoritarian government; trust reflects a good democratic attitude. This means that cultural and political factors always skew trust opinions. The term "good governance" does not always imply a high level of confidence and contentment. Clientelistic relationships often lead to high happiness levels, and controlling dictators generally take a high degree of demonstrating people's faith. As a result, trust and satisfaction metrics must always be read in their context. The public's trust in government is growing since sources of information have shifted; the term's meaning and content have gone as well. Whereas trust in government meant believing that the government would not become autocratic or arbitrarily detain people, nowadays it relates to more practical concerns such as service delivery reliability and the anticipation that policy will reflect one's interests. Evaluations of public services will almost certainly not be utilized to assess one's level of faith in government in political systems when public services are flawless. It is challenging to examine the relationship between good governance and the level of trust when it is unclear what drives trust in government and whether it has anything to do with government. As a result, it appears that good governance affects trust and has been addressed due to these developments (Bouckaert & Van de Walle, 2003). People should participate in how they have been governed to be empowered. That's why democratic structures are critical for improving government trust. As a result, increasing public faith in government is becoming a priority for central and municipal governments to efficiently implement policy initiatives and achieve good governance. The current study aims to determine the relationship between governance and trust in Bangladesh's governmental institutions.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

❖ To investigate the nature of trust-building in selection of Bangladeshi institutions.
❖ To find out the nexus between citizens' trust and good governance in Bangladesh.
❖ To make some recommendations for the establishment of trust in particular Bangladeshi institutions.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

Government institutions are considered to be losing citizens' faith due to ineffective and inefficient administration, which has resulted in social and

economic problems (Kim 2010). For decades, these countries' public institutions have been elitist, and those in power use public resources for personal benefit. As a result, most residents are frequently ignored and denied access to even essential government services (Jamil et al., 2013b). Considering goodwill to assess citizen trust in government institutions has increased recently. An institution is a set of rules, responsibilities, routines, and standards. These are put into practice by the institution's residents. Police officers, medics, nurses, and government workers, for example, are expected to understand and put into effect the regulations, standards and guidelines, and official positions that they are assigned. Officials like this bring ordinary folks into contact with government entities. Institutions are rated based on their activities and interactions with citizens, whether incumbents are performing their obligations and duties, as well as their responsiveness to residents (Sztompka 1999). This leads to procedural trust based on normative or professional practices and norms. Whenever rules, operating procedures, and other processes are followed correctly, the best results in the field of trust are believed to be achieved. The failure of public institutions to operate according to established norms is referred to as a lack of faith in them. As a result, the state's legitimacy is eroding, and the state-society relationship is deteriorating (Hutchison & Johnson, 2011). To put it another way, good governance is essential for building confidence. In Bangladesh, good governance has been a difficulty. The study contributes to understanding the nature of trust development in selected institutions and the relationship between citizen trust and good governance in Bangladesh. Scholars, researchers, and other professionals may benefit from the study. The research could validate current trust literature and provide new insights into this subject, which could help enhance the knowledge of various stakeholder groups and policymaking researchers.

1.4 Overview of Research Methodology

This research uses a mixed methodology approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The fundamental advantage of mixed methods research is that it allows quantitative testing approaches utilizing survey data and qualitative data from in-depth interviews and documentation. The mixed-method also avoids quantitative and qualitative methodologies' flaws, limits, and biases (Creswell, 2003). The quantitative questionnaire survey method allowed respondents to express their general views on the elements that influence the implementation of good governance and trust in Bangladesh. This study used both qualitative and quantitative methods

since combined approaches mitigate the limitations of each technique. The process has been selected because the inquiry would take place in its natural setting and primarily give descriptive information regarding the relationship between delivering services and rural local government in the perspective of 'good governance' metrics. The actual figures are represented using the quantitative method. The fundamental purpose of the research is to define the scope of function and the elements that influence its implementation at the union level. In a mixed-method approach, data is collected naturally and subsequently interpreted. The qualitative method has provided an opportunity to examine the issues that deter from forming trust in diverse government institutions in Bangladesh.

1.5 Methodological Discussion

This section looks into a quantitative research design in which data was collected from Union Parishad service providers and service users using a questionnaire survey and key informant interview. In this study, Union Parishads were used as the primary research units. It also discusses why the study's research method was chosen and some of the difficulties faced during the field survey. This study aimed to learn how people and service providers perceived various services. As a result, only individuals who have used Union Parishad services and are thus better educated about those services are included. As a result, citizens' perceptions of the effectiveness of Union Parishad services and their level of satisfaction are accurately represented in this study.

1.5.1 Methodology

"Citizens' Trust in Public Institutions in Bangladesh: Does Good Governance Matter?" is the title of this study, which includes extensive fieldwork in six (06) UPs in Sylhet, Narayanganj, and Cumilla Districts. The study intends to provide a framework for the researchers to complete the purpose and conduct the investigation. The supervisory supports for determining what technique and policies would engage in an investigation are the type of difficulty to be assessed and the set of questions to be answered. Two main approaches are used in scientific research: qualitative and quantitative methodologies. According to Creswell (2003), research strategies can be classified into three categories: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. A mixed technique approach would be used in the offering study. The mixed-method addresses the drawbacks of both qualitative approaches whilst maximizing the benefits of both. A mixed

approach is simply a methodology that compares qualitative information. As the research is focused on its specific location, in which the quantitative research method would have been used to analyze the data, the qualitative approach is used as a leading approach. The mixture approach influences the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and the advantages and disadvantages of a section because the researcher wants to analyze the experiences from the participant's perspective. It is more appropriate to use a mixed method. This research focuses on citizens' perception of service quality delivery performance as the measure of good governance. Diverse performers, including administrators, residents, and local political representatives, differ in their approaches to gaining insight. As a result, three focus group discussions (FGDs) for this report were held. In three districts, focus groups involving citizens were held at the local level. The participants came from various backgrounds, ages, and occupations in the local area. FGDs were carried out to induce comprehensive information regarding citizens' experiences of Union Parishad service delivery and determine the primary issues they faced in obtaining service, their expectations for improved performance, and the extent of satisfaction citizens espoused in obtaining services in various areas.

1.5.2 Sampling Method and Sample Size

The sample was selected using a purposeful sampling technique. A wide range of people from various socioeconomic backgrounds, such as age, religion, gender, education, and occupation, can be included in the study. The main goal of this selection method was to have as many people as possible who were involved in the study process and who were easily available. A total of 120 people would be included in the sample, including both service seekers and service providers. This research region was chosen to support a wide range of ideas and types of respondents, including authorities, citizens, and local-level politicians. It is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Study Area and Criteria of Respondent

Study Area		Criteria of Respondents		Total	Grand Total
District	Union	Local Politicians/ Representatives	Citizens		
Syhlet	• Srimongol Union • Borolekha Union	10	30	40	120
Narayanganj	• Madanpur Union • Kanchpur Union	10	30	40	
Comilla	• Baropara Union • Bijoypur Union	10	30	40	

1.5.3 Sources of Data

To obtain the exact details of this research, material from both primary and secondary sources has been collected. The information for the inquiry was gathered from various sources, including journals, papers, thesis publications, key informant interviews, and surveys, among others. The following are the specific resources used in this study:

a. Primary Data

Primary data is data that have been collected for the research scheme by an investigator. The preliminary data needed for this inquiry would be acquired using a purposive sampling questionnaire survey with a varied group of respondents from unions. As part of a key informant interview, staff and local political representatives would be interviewed. For this study, three focus group discussions (FGDs) were held.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data is used to materialize raw information and available resources regularly. Secondary data for this study would be gathered from various sources, including books, papers, journals, publications, reports on

websites, and office records, among others. The researchers rely heavily on the findings of previous investigations on citizens' trust in public institutions in general—furthermore, secondary materials aided in developing a theoretical framework for this study.

1.5.4 Data Collection Technique

Specifically, this study used questionnaire survey methods as a decisive approach for data collection because it is so effective that it is used most frequently. Furthermore, it speeds up data collection from large, different, and widely scattered groups of people (Aminuzzaman, 1991). A key informant interview would be an additional source of data. Citizens would be surveyed, and local elected officials and staff would be interviewed. Focused Group Discussion (FGD) also served well in obtaining qualitative data.

1.5.5 Post Field Work Phase

The information gathered from the structured questionnaires is entered, analyzed, and interpreted at this step. The research is conducted from the viewpoints addressed in this study. Finally, the parameters were used to evaluate the quality-of-service delivery.

1.5.6 Data Analysis

The full data were collected and captured in excel writings to simplify data analysis. They were edited, tagged, tabularized, and categorized to meet the study's objectives. Proper and straightforward empirical instruments would have been used to investigate the facts. By clarifying records, a link between data and variables was established. The results are presented in descriptive writing style and rational analysis. Additionally, the study is supported in terms of the research objective, which provides insight into the investigation's findings.

1.5.7 Limitations and Challenges

It should be emphasized that the study's geographical area is limited in terms of sampling. There were just six Union Parishads among three districts covered. The interviewers ran into various issues when performing the interviews. Some service users were hesitant to respond at first, but after learning about their role and importance in the successful

delivery of services, they answered enthusiastically. Second, the Union Parishad's premises remained congested, prohibiting some participants from providing more thorough comments. The dispute of obtaining quantitative data from numerous districts was challenging due to the geographical diversity. Finally, due to time and budget constraints, the analysis was restricted to only one layer of local administration, the Union Parishad. A comparative assessment of two or more organizations where service is supplied would be ideal.

1.6 Summary of Methodological Discussion

This study is an example of exploratory social research. To accomplish the research aims, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches would be used. Primary data would be gathered through surveys and interviews with key informants. The key informant interview (KII) technique is beneficial for eliciting information from respondents on the research topic. Purposive sampling entails the researcher selecting specific units. The researcher's primary objective would be to ensure that the selection is representative. Age, gender, geographic area, frequency of service use, and economic status of 80 individuals from each (30x3=90) unit would be chosen to participate in the questionnaire survey. To clarify the quantitative data, ten people (10x3=30) from each unit will be interviewed to ascertain the perspectives of service recipients, officials, and representatives. The problem was then discussed in three focus group discussions (FGDs). FGDs were conducted with ten to twelve respondents. In three districts, FGDs were conducted, including citizens at the grassroots (Union Parishad). To accomplish the research objectives, data analysis and interpretation would be performed by examining, categorizing, tabulating, evaluating, and combining qualitative and quantitative data.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter aims to overview the primary themes covered in this study. The researcher examined the aspects that affect the delivery of services and good governance in order to achieve sustainable development. More precisely, the study identifies the variables that influence service delivery strategies at the Union level in Bangladesh. Governance has developed into a critical subject in emerging countries. As a result, many countries are pursuing good governance and adopting established governance concepts to attain the desired economic growth on a sustainable basis. The researcher attempted to quantify the effectiveness of LGIs in service

delivery by examining the selected LGIs' governance practices. The methodological debate is also included in this section. Thus, the study analyzes rural local government performance (Union Parishads). Multiple services and their delivery systems might shed light on it significantly. The next chapter discusses the study's conceptual and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL FOCUS, LITERATURE REVIEW, AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Thus, governance has a considerable impact on policy formulation, implementation, development, and citizen trust (Zafarullah & Huque, 2012). Trust is commonly seen as a critical dependent variable; it may result from variables that contribute to effective governance and promote citizens' trust in public organizations (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008). Governance has been defined in many ways, and its fluid nature makes it a challenging target to hit. Usually, the governance process entails integrating a series of reforms into a country. Governance research leads people to believe that most issues confronting modern societies may be resolved by combining various standards and procedures that promote well-being, including all members of society. Good governance is defined as a set of behaviors and perceptions free of corruption and adhering to the rule of law. Numerous of these values are also emphasized within the scope of public management. However, a critical contrast occurs due to the government's political orientation, whereas public management is based on administrative ideas and procedures. One could argue that governments in developing countries will remain unreachable as soon as the political angle controls the system (Huque, 2015). As a dynamic, complex phenomenon, governance aspires to achieve perfection in government activities within a democratic framework. It is focused on a complex mixture of interactions and interrelationships between various institutions and actors (society, state, civil society, market, global regimes, etc.) as well as between multiple sets of beliefs and practices (capitalist, neoliberalism, social democracy, etc.) (Zafarullah, 2015). This chapter conducts an analysis of relevant literature on trust. It mainly discusses the concepts of trust, the definitions of trust, governance, and good governance, the cognitive emphasis on reliance and good governance, and the link between citizens' trust and good government. Furthermore, an analytical framework is constructed for this study's goal.

2.2 Conceptual Focus

Trust is a vital indicator of governance regarding citizens' faith in government institutions (Mahmud, 2021). This conceptual framework should discuss trust, administration, and good governance. The study's assessment of the issue, in essence, led to the development of a relationship between trust and good governance.

2.2.1 Trust

The concept of trust is a comprehensive organizational and interpersonal phenomenon (Kramer & Tyler, 1995). The factor of trust is the degree of faith in the trustworthy person or his message. While faith in "blind luck" may well be the crucial factor in gambling, absolute zero confidence or entire blind faith in an unknown source does not appear to constitute a trust. To this writer, the concept of trust entails at least a fragment of trust in the objects of the commitment (Giffin, 1967). Whenever the trusting people are assumed to have some information about the trusted object, "trust" is reasonable. A person may also place their faith in another for the sake of their relationship. Closeness, transference from familiarity with similar items, or simply enjoying specific traits of the trusted can all help to establish relational trust. Trust is commonly regarded as a virtue, although it has its limitations. For example, one can trust a scam artist skilled at instilling confidence and ending up in financial devastation. Thus, even to safeguard the trust-giver, a certain level of mistrust may be required (Cario, 2008). Citizens' trust in government bodies is highly crucial in politics and governance. It is an essential source of political strength and governmental legitimacy (Easton, 1975). When parties have favorable impressions of each other, trust develops and the partnership achieves the desired results" (Wheeless & Grotz 1977). Trust in the government may offer "governance capital," which encourages citizens to collaborate with the administration even when it takes controversial decisions with long-term advantages (Cario, 2008). Institutions and policymakers are then faced with the difficult task of setting attainable goals, employing sustainable methods, helping to ensure the credibility of policy initiatives through the role in decision formation, transparent way of discussing these objectives and execution of measures to the population, demonstrating responsibility for actions taken, and sustaining their involvement in the process as a whole and, while new conditions and consequences emerge that make the continued imposition of policy

impossible. As a result, trust in government institutional structures is strongly connected to the integrity of those institutions (Cheema, 2010).

2.2.2 Governance

Governance is articulated in political and academic discourse as a notion encompassing all desirable characteristics that could contribute to more incredible situations in modern states. It is high on governments' and the international community's agendas, as both are eager to see good governance, which can solve many of the problems that plague modern governments. It is supposed to aid in making apologies for previous mistakes and weaknesses in the social, financial, and political systems and establish a roadmap for continued improvement (Huque, 2015). Governance refers to institutional arrangements that are intended to promote accountability, integrity, timeliness, the rule of law, sustainability, equity and inclusion, empowerment, and wide-ranging participation, among other things. Governance refers to the standard, idea, and rule governing government activities in a transparent, participatory, inclusive, and responsive manner. As a result, governance can be nuanced and difficult to detect. In a broad sense, governance refers to the cultural and institutional contexts in which individuals and stakeholders engage and participate in government affairs. It is more than the government's organs (UNESCO, n.d). The traditions and structures by which a country's authority is exercised are referred to as governance. This encompasses the process of selecting, monitoring, and replacing governments, the government's ability to devise and implement sensible policies, and citizens' and the state's respect for the organizations that govern social and economic relations among them (World Bank, n.d.). The term "governance" means the ability of organizational contexts to rule their society (Peters, 1995). According to the World Bank, governance is "the means wherein the power is held in managing a country's economic and social development resources" (World Bank, 1992). Kaufmann et al. (1999a) look at governance from three perspectives, (1) the method whereby governments are chosen, held accountable, supervised, and changed; (2) the ability of governments to effectively manage resources and create, execute, and enforce appropriate laws and rules; and (3) the level of citizen participation in-state activities (UNESCO, n.d).

Governance comprises:

    (a)   Establishing standards and norms, a strategic vision and direction, and high-level goals and policies.

(b) Monitoring leadership and organization effectiveness to ensure that an organization serves the public's best interests, particularly those of the stakeholders served by the mission.

(c) Directing and supervising leadership to ensure the company achieving its required results and operating in a wise, ethical, and legal way.

First, governance means exercising authority and power. Second, for policymaking at several levels, governance necessitates interdependence among a variety of players, including not only government institutions but also non-governmental groups and private businesses. Third, proper governance of these complex interactions at numerous levels necessitates rule-making, rule-following, and rule-enforcement. Finally, the term "governance" encompasses more than only government, emphasizing the significance of networks outside of the hierarchy and market systems of governance- national, international, and global networks exist (Jamil et al., 2013a).

Kauffman et al. (1999a, 2010) define governance in six distinct dimensions:

a) Voice and Accountability: incorporating impressions of a country's residents' ability to participate in the selection of their government, and also their freedom of expression, association, and access to a free press.

b) Political Stability and Violence Absence: capturing perceptions of the government's chance of destabilizing or overthrowing through unlawful or violent means, such as politically motivated violence or terrorism. The government can design and implement sound policies effectively.

c) Governmental Effectiveness: incorporating feedback on the quality of government services, the efficiency of the public sector and its degree of independence from political constraints, the quality of policy making and implementation, and the government's credibility in pursuing such policies.

d) Regulatory Quality: Regulatory quality measures public opinion of the government's capacity to design and enforce effective rules and regulations that allow for and enhance private sector development.

e) Rule of Law: capturing agents' opinions of their confidence in and adherence to society's laws, including the quality of effective enforcement, property rights enforcement, the authorities, and the courts, and also the possibility of crime and violence.