

The Role of Citizen Charter in Accelerating Public Service Delivery in Land Management: A Case Study of Upazila Land Offices

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Declaration of Originality

I, undersigned, on behalf of the research team would like to declare that this is an original report of our research and it has been written by us and has not been submitted for any previous degree or project. Due references have been provided on all supporting literature and resources.

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We are not above error. Therefore, we beg pardon for any error that may be happened unconsciously in this report.

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Acronym

AC	Assistant Commissioner
ACL	Assistant Commissioner (Land)
ACLO	Assistant Commissioner (Land) Office
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
CC	Citizen Charter
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DCR	Duplicate Carbon Receipt
DPED	Deputy Executive Project Director
FD	Finance Division
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
NGO	Non-government organization
QS	Questionnaire survey
RTI	Right to Information
SEIP	Skills for Employment Investment Program
ULAO	Union land assistant officer
ULO	Union land office

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Executive Summary

Background: The proactive disclosure of relevant information is very important to get services. It is also considered as one of the powerful tools in terms of dominating others. In land management services, information is a very important element both for service providers and service recipients. If service recipients have much information about their expected services, they would manage easily to get services. On the other hand, if people engaged in service delivery provide proper information to service recipients, it would also be easy to receive services. Moreover, if service recipients do not have much information, they would face a lot of problems and challenges in getting services. And, if the service providers conceal relevant information to service recipients, it would also create barriers to getting services. In these cases, service providers can dominate over service recipients and push them to follow undue and immoral ways in getting services. Under these circumstances, considering their urgency of needs, the value of time, and business, the service recipients find no option but to involve in immoral practices to receive hassle-free services. Therefore, it is clear that information can be used as a means of providing smooth service delivery on one hand and concealing proper information, the service recipients can also be pushed in immoral practices on the other hand. Considering the existing situation, the government is always trying to provide services to its citizens smoothly and easily through adopting and introducing different mechanisms and initiatives. The introduction of the citizen-charter in public offices is one of such initiatives.

Purpose of the Study: This study investigated the contribution of citizen charter in accelerating public service delivery in land management in the country. It also explored the perception of service recipients about the citizen charter and factors affecting in implementation of the citizen charter.

Methodology: It is a qualitative research and both primary and secondary data have been used in this study. For collecting primary data, Upazila Land Office (ACL) office has been selected as the unit of analysis. A total of eight ACL offices have been selected purposively from four districts—Dhaka, Kishorganj, Rajshahi, and Joypurhat—under the administrative control of two divisions: Dhaka and Rajshahi. A total of 160 respondents were selected for this study. The respondents include: Assistant Commissioners (Land), selected sub-ordinate staffs of ACL Offices, service recipients, civil society representatives, and journalists. The respondents were selected purposively. Besides, four focus group discussion sessions were conducted. As the tools for primary data collection, a semi-structured questionnaire (both

open-ended and closed-ended), guided set of questions for KII, checklist of questions for FGD and observation matrix for direct observation were used for the study.

Major findings: The study revealed that citizen charter brings a positive impact on public service delivery in land management. Information about different services, their rate of fees and stipulated time-frame is displayed openly on the citizen charter notice board at the land office and also on its website. It is also revealed that despite some limitations the citizen charter has accelerated the service delivery system. It has become easier due to the introduction of digitization in land administration. However, the study explored that the educational status of the service recipients is not an impending factor to get services from the land administration offices. Rather, the middleman or vested interest group is found as criminal-agent to make the as usual process of getting service difficult. The middleman may be outside of the land administration office or within the office. The study found that the middlemen, outsiders of the office, in collaboration with some lower-level officials of the land offices use to involve in some malpractices including bribery. It is happened due to the complex nature of the land management system and its complicated process of service delivery. Other than shortage of physical facility, the challenges of ACL offices include the less publicity about citizen charter among general people, lack of professionalism and non-cooperative attitude among ACL staffs, lack of proper monitoring, and lack of knowledge of the service recipients about necessary documents for specific service.

Major factors affecting implementation of CC

- * lack of accountability
- * lack of cooperation
- * lack of monitoring
- * lack of professionalism
- * interrupted power supply
- * low internet connectivity
- * less publicity of CC
- * shortage of IT expert personnel
- * lack of knowledge about necessary documents

Major Recommendations

- * Need More IT expert personnel
- * Ensuer accountability
- * Uninterrupted power supply
- * High speed net connection
- * More publicity of CC
- * Development of professionalism
- * Development of cooperative attitude
- * Enhancement of monitoring
- * Need awareness programme
- * Upholding patience and morality
- * Introduction of feedback system

Major Recommendations: Although there is a positive perception about the citizen charter in providing better service delivery at the ACL office in the country, there are

some more scopes to accelerate the service delivery. Some major recommendations are stated below.

It needs more IT expert officials with an uninterrupted power supply and high-speed net connection at the ACLs offices. Accountability and effective monitoring systems should be developed to curtail malpractices. It also needs more publicity about the citizen charter to create more awareness about it. Moreover, a huge campaign is needed to create awareness about the process of receiving services, fees, and levies for different services, sources of land-related information, etc. Initiatives should also be taken

to develop professionalism and cooperative manners among ACL staff. Introduction of feedback—both service providers and service recipients—the system would be an effective mechanism, among many others, at the ACL offices in the country to provide better services and that can be a part citizen charter. As everything is going through a digital system and mechanism, the mode of payment of the land services should also be digital/online. If it is done, it would contribute to curbing corruption at the ACL offices.

Contribution of CC in accelerating service delivery

- *Ensure right to information*
- *More transparent than earlier*
- *More accessible to ACL than earlier*
- *Easier to get various information*
- *Accelerate service delivery than earlier*
- *Contribute to reduce middleman phenomenon*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Background of the study

In the last two decades, a massive change has been made in every sphere of life around the world. The ever-changing phenomenon with the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT) in the present world motivates people for innovation in performing daily life activities smoothly. It happens from personal life to the working environment. Citizens go for an easy mode of transaction, expecting hassle-free quality services. Private organizations are more advanced in this regard than public offices. Consequently, many reform initiatives have been made in public administration and attempts have also been made to improve the public service delivery system and process. For this, various modern public management concepts such as new public management, good governance, new public administration, new public service, and so forth, are introduced. However, all efforts are made to enhance relationships between public administration and its stakeholders as well as provide better public services to citizens (Spacek & Neshybova, 2010). Consequently, it is observed that public offices are compelled to adopting business-like initiatives to provide better service delivery to recipients. Among many reform initiatives, the government of Bangladesh introduced the citizen charter in 2007 for all public offices for better public service delivery to its citizens.

After the introduction of citizen charter, more than a decade has already passed and much literature is found about different issues of the charter. But few studies are found about the role of citizen charter in land management services in the country. This motivates the researchers to conduct a qualitative study to explore its effectiveness in providing land services as stated in the charter.

Statement of Problem

All over the world, the main task of every government is to ensure the welfare of its citizens by providing better services. So, the government does everything to serve the people, not aiming at making a profit through its activities. To ensure better services, the government takes various initiatives and introduces new mechanisms, changing many traditional systems. The public administration is the heart of providing such services (Jahan, 2006). In Bangladesh, the government also goes with this spirit. It brings many administrative reforms since its independence in 1971 for providing better services, focusing on the common people

in centers service recipients (Khan, 1998). Among them, Citizen Charter which was introduced in 2007 in the country, is now a common phenomenon in all government offices (GoB & UNDP, 2010), displaying the service delivery systems with a stipulated time frame and service charges within the ambit of transparency and accountability (Khan, 2008). In spite of good intentions, the effect of this Charter is hardly amicable (Razzaque, 2012).

In these bleak circumstances, it is very imperative to assess to what extent the citizen charter is deemed to be a vibrant tool to make changes in providing public services. Therefore, this study intends to explore whether the citizen charter is an effective mechanism or not in responsively delivering public services. The Upazila land administration (AC Land) office has been considered for the case in this study.

The rationale of the research

Following the government circular issued in 2007 to introduce citizen charters in all government offices, including AC Land offices, all over the country, it was highly expected that the land management related services will be provided in a transparent mode and smoothly to the common people. Because everybody who has visited the land management offices has a bitter experience and it is widely believed that no one gets services without harassment in terms of mental as well as monetary. However, after the introduction of citizen charters, it has passed about 12 years. But the desired services have not been materialized as expected. Consequently, the Upazila land management offices are still considered as one of the inefficient offices in terms of delivering public services as described in the citizen charter. On the other hand, reviewing the literature it is found that very few research works on the issue have been carried out. Nayem (2010) discusses the problems of implementing the citizen charter at the Upazila land office while Haque and Ahsan (2016) describe it in the context of union Parishad. TIB (2015) made an overall report on land management and its governance challenges which reveals a lethargic picture of service delivery.

However, these researches also recommend good governance in providing public service delivery. Following the suggestions, the government has taken many initiatives to improve the public service delivery system. But the scenario has a little bit been changed. Despite the introduction of citizen charter in every government office for providing better public services to people in a transparent mode, there is still criticism about its implementation and effectiveness.

Therefore, it is very imperative to conduct research to know whether the citizen charter is an effective mechanism or not in providing better public services in land management at the Upazila level land administration (AC land) offices in the country.

Moreover, the study explored both perspectives of the citizen charter—external and internal—in terms of perception or satisfaction of service recipients as well as efficient delivery of services by the service providers. The citizen charter introduced by the Government in 2007 denotes both perspectives and it is followed in this study.

Objectives of the research

The general purpose of the study was to assess the overall effectiveness of the citizen charter in providing public services of Upazilla Land Offices to common people. However, there were some specific objectives. These include as follow:

- To gather and analyze the perception of service recipients about the effectiveness of the citizen charter displayed in Upazilla Land Offices;
- To explore the factors influencing in implementation of citizen charter in Land Offices of Upazilla level; and
- To put forward policy implications for making the citizen charter more effective.

Research questions

To address the objectives mentioned above, this research study puts some questions. These research questions include:

- What do the service recipients think about Citizen Charter in getting services efficiently?
- What are the barriers to the implementation of the Citizen Charter in Upazilla Land Offices?and,
- What are the possible ways to execute the Citizen Charter in Upazilla Land Offices in a transparent mode?

Scope of the study

The proposed study covers the Upazila land administration (AC Land) office in the country. So, its scope includes the whole country. But there are some limitations such as time frame and budget constraints. Due to time limitations, it is not possible to cover all AC Land offices under this study. This is why this study covers eight AC Land offices selected from two divisions—Dhaka and Rajshahi purposively.

However, the land administration office (ACL office) provides several services to the people. Among the services, the major services include: mutation and e-mutation related services, hearing and verdict of miscellaneous cases, providing certified copies of different cases, disputes settlement, land development tax (*kazna*) related services, leasing water bodies, local *hat* (markets), allocation of agricultural and non-agricultural *khas* land, allocation of vested property, rehabilitation of landless people and so on.

Ethical issue

Some common ethical principles are followed in research works. These include: (a) obtain consent from potential research participants; (b) minimize the risk of harm to participants; (c) protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality; (d) avoid using deceptive practices; and (e) give participants the right to refrain any time from participation. These common principles have been followed in this study.

Limitations/Challenges of the study

To conduct this type of research it would be needed more time but it was not possible in this research as it was supposed to be completed within four months after the approval. In the meantime, the pandemic COVID-19 situation hampered the normal activities in the country, causing serious problems for data collection. So, the pandemic situation emerged as one of the biggest challenges to conduct the research works. Hence, the collection of data during the pandemic COVID-19 was challenging. Therefore, it was not possible to cover a wide range of respondents, representing all over the country. However, it is believed that the selection of study areas would represent the country due to its nature of services provided by the Upazila land offices in Bangladesh.

Chapter plan

The report has been divided into six chapters. The background of the study has been discussed in the introductory chapter. Besides, statements of the problem, the rationale of the study, objectives, and research questions have also been included in this chapter. In chapter two, the research methodology has been presented while the literature review and discussion on the thematic issues such as the right to information, transparency, accountability, education, awareness have been discussed in chapter three. In chapter four, data have been presented and discussed. In chapter five, data analysis and the findings have been presented, and finally, in the last, chapter six, recommendations and conclusions have been put here.

Moreover, references and appendixes have also been added in the last part of this study report.

Conclusion

The land administration office is very close to the mass people. Therefore, everybody expects good services from this office. The introduction of the citizen charter is an initiative to provide better services.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW and THEMATIC ISSUES

Literature review

Bangladesh is a small country but densely populated. Consequently, land asset, among many others, is one of the central issues of people's life. Naturally, the researchers, academics, and development activists have special attention to land management, its tenure system, land administration, and its services, and so on. Therefore, several research works related to land management systems are found and these works are viewed from different perspectives. Among many works, some relevant works are discussed below. However, in this section, the literature related to the land management system was stated first and then literature reviewed related to citizen charter was placed in the later part.

Jabbar depicts the conceptual issues of land tenure systems in the country. Referring to the two-hundred years' practices, he discusses the land tenure system in this region. He states '*a feudalist production relation (Zamindari system) was instituted in Bengal, as elsewhere in India, by the colonial government via the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793...After partition in 1947, Zamindari system was abolished by the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act 1950 (Jabbar, 1978).*' However, he also discusses the political economy of land reform and the land tenure system in the country (Jabbar, 1974).

Land administration and land management system is a complicated issue. Understanding this issue is not so easy. To improve the land administration and land management systems, several initiatives have been undertaken by successive governments. These include National Land Use Policy-2001, *Khas*Land Settlement Policy-1997, Non-agricultural *khas*Land Settlement Policy-1995, Jal Mohal Management Policy-2009, Land Reform Act-1989, and so forth.

Hasibur Rahman has made an overview of land use and land susceptibility in the country. He made a detailed overview of land use and its pattern. He revealed the adverse effect of man-made causes and pollutions in the shrinking of the cropped land in the country (Rahman, 2002).

Barkat and others made extensive work on land management, land policy in the country. They also suggest a feasible land use policy (Barkat, *et.al.*, 2007).

Choudhury and others describe that the land management sector is spotted as one of the leading factors in corruption cases in the country. They tried to put a model of land management by scanning the current paper-based maps and convert the images into scalable vector graphics (svg) format into a database. They observed if their model is adopted it will

ensure both transparency and efficiency in the land management system (Chowdhury, *et.al.*, 2011). In his works, Zulfiqar emphasizes the potentials for a sustainable land management system in the country (Zulfiqar, 2011). Dey and his associates have shown the degradation of agro-based land due to inappropriate management of land in the country (Dey, *et al.*, 2012). In his works, Shoeb analyzed the corruptions practices and inefficiencies in different sectors of land administration in the country (Shoeb, 2013).

However, Talukder, *et. al.* find the land management system in the country suffers from an outdated system and lack of modernization. They also find corruption, incompetence, and lack of transparency in the land management system in the country. Among many others, corruption and the use of old methods in land management are identified for inefficiency in this sector. Discussing the limitation of land survey and land management system, in their study, they reveal the bottlenecks and barriers in the sector and stress on coming out from such old system, replacing modern system and mechanisms. The writers discuss and emphasize the introduction of the digital land system such as GPS-based land surveying, automatic map drawing, online management system, and so forth. They also describe its impact on land management in the country (Talukder, *et. al.*, 2014).

Discussing various issues related to land rights, disputes, and its settlement mechanisms and problems of land administration, Shahidul, and his associates find that *'the present land laws, land administration, and land management are not only full of intricacy, procedural difficulties, and mismanagement but also not accessible and responsive to the interest of the common people'* (Islam, *et.al.*, 2015).

The background study prepared for the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) states that *'...land administration system in Bangladesh is still conventional and characterized by inefficiencies and corruption'* (Hossain, 2015, p. 6). The study reveals that the existing system of land administration and management is inadequate and inefficient. It also states that *'the diversity of ways by which land records is updated and the problems associated with each, give rise to numerous disputes in which the rich and powerful inevitably enjoy the upper hand'* (Hossain, 2015, p. 22).

However, the background study describes the whole land administration and management system in the country. It states the land tenure system also. It further elaborately discusses the land governance and administrative system. The study states:

'The current administrative structure of land management in Bangladesh is built around three core functions: (i) record keeping, (ii) registration, and (iii) settlement. The core functions of land administration are maintained by various departments of two Ministries, The Ministry of Land (MoL) and the Ministry of Law, Justice and

Parliamentary Affairs (MLJP). While the MoL discharges most of the land-related activities including survey, collection of land development tax, the arbitration process, the MLJP mainly records land mutation and transfers (Hossain, 2015, p. 20).'

Further, the study describes the main function of land administration. It states that:

'The main task of the land administration is to conduct land surveys and maintain a clean record of land in an efficient manner. In Bangladesh, to investigate cadastre and ownership, three surveys, namely CS (Cadastral Survey, 1888 - 1940), SA (State Acquisition Survey, 1956 -1962), and RS (Revisionary Settlement Survey, since 1965) were conducted. The survey process usually takes a fairly longer time to complete surveys and regional surveys—12 years to 15 years in particular as the whole process includes a visit of the site, investigating the cadastral and ownership and preparing the mouzama and Khaitan. Nonetheless, the survey is also not free from distortions due to inefficient and corrupt practices of field surveyors (Hossain, 2015, p. 21).'

However, the study presents a clear picture of the land administration and management system, the process of different activities and services, functions and responsibilities of different government agencies, malpractices done by the officials concerned, bottlenecks, barriers, and other issues related to landowners. Therefore, the study finds a lack of coordination and disintegration as several ministries, departments, and other sub-ordinate offices are related to the land administration and management system in the country. Consequently, the study recommends the use of information and communication technology (ICT), among others, for better land administration and management. Among many other initiatives and mechanisms, the government has already introduced a digital land record and information system. The government has been taking various initiatives to modernize the land administration and land management system for better management and services.

Referring to the characteristics of land use and regional development of Bangladesh, the researchers embodied three scenarios—baseline, ecological protection priority, and economic growth. Considering these issues and land use patterns, they pretend the future changes of land systems in Bangladesh till 2030 (Hasan, *et. al.*,2017).

Referring to many positive initiatives, Islam reveals that the land management and services delivery system is still complicated. Identifying land management as one of the corrupt public service sectors, he reveals that the settlement process is complicated and not transparent. Consequently, the service receivers become victims of staff of land offices (Islam, 2018).

Therefore, after reviewing the foregoing pieces of literature, it is evident that land is an important input asset of people's life and it is a very essential part of life. Most of the people

are living around land and its effective uses. For this, its management is a very important issue. The government is also trying to manage it effectively with efficiency using various modern and ICT-based mechanisms so that citizens of the country can get the land management services easily.

The introduction of the citizen charter is, among many others, an initiative to accelerate the land management services to citizens in the country. The government of Bangladesh, in 2007, introduced the citizen charter at all public offices. The citizen charter is also introduced at the ACL offices all over the country, aiming to provide better land-related services to service recipients. But many studies reveal the charter could not bring impacts as expected due to manifold problems. However, some more literatures are reviewed and discussed below.

The government introduced citizen charters in all ministries in 2007. Many researchers observed that the initiative was seemed to be simplified the paperwork and routine works. Sarker observes that there is a lack of understanding across the civil service as far as the citizen charter is concerned. It is hard to observe any changes in the service quality of public agencies (Sarkr, 2009). Khan also observes that in many cases both service providers and service recipients are ignorant about the charters (Khan, 2008).

Abbas describes that service seekers face multiple problems in getting land management services. Despite many initiatives, the land management system has not been fully digitized all over the country. There are triangular problems in land digitalization. Different departments/offices work under different ministries. Some offices are under the ministry of land while some are under the ministry of law. Consequently, there is a lack of coordination among the offices. Bottleneck among these offices hampers to uphold the spirit of the citizen charter. It brings unnecessary suffering to service recipients. The ACL office itself is not an independent office to provide all services digitally. Many services depend on other offices which are beyond its jurisdiction (Abbas, 2020).

The foregoing discussions make it clear that the land administration is still one of the major public offices that is very close to mass people. So, better land management and better land-related service delivery to its recipients are considered as a very important issue. Therefore, citizen charter could be a vibrant tool to accelerate better services. But the pieces of literature reveal that it could not bring impacts on efficient service delivery as expected.

Thematic issues considered in the study

As it is stated that thematic issues will be considered in analyzing data, this study finds some thematic issues. The main theme is service delivery. Under this main theme, some sub-

themes are also identified such as the right to information, transparency, accountability, education and awareness, middlemen, and morality. A brief discussion has been made about these issues below.

Service delivery

Service delivery is a relationship between public administration and citizens. It can be treated as contact between public officials and citizens during certain services. The relationship is based on give and take—seek and provide—services (Martins & Ledimo, 2015). The service delivery should be done efficiently and it should also be in a customer-friendly manner, unnecessary hazard-free, and reliable (OECD, 2020). So, service delivery is a set of activities involved both the service providers and service seekers. It is also involved transparency, accountability, and coordination among the stakeholders. Satisfaction with the services depends on meeting the service seeker's expectation and need. (Kostopoulos & Lodorfos, 2020). It also depends on the feelings of the clients that they have not been ignored in any way during the service receiving period. They have not been experienced unexpected events, even in paying extra-money for getting services at any circumstances.

Right to information

Information is very crucial in the exercise of political and economic power. It also empowers people to get services they are entitled to and hold accountable officials responsible for it. Transparency International defines information as '*Information is the most important weapon against corruption*' (Transparency International, 2003). Now to get information has become right. In Bangladesh, the Government of Bangladesh passed the Act—Right to Information (RTI) Act-2009, allowing everyone to get information as a right (GoB, 2009). The RTI promotes empowering citizens, ensuring transparency and accountability, curbing corruption and malpractices, and so on. There is an 'information officer' or an 'assigned officer' at every public office to provide information. The RTI ensures to get information from every office except a few restricted issues including security. There are some procedures to get information from an office. Everybody has the right to get his required information following the procedures. The introduction of the citizen charter has also contributed to ensuring the right to information.

Transparency

Transparency is one of the core elements of good governance (UNDP, 1997). It ensures mass people access to information. 'Hide and seek' in providing information creates confusion among people, leading to mistrust about the officials responsible for it. So, openness in

providing information and access to it easily by mass people makes it transparent. Transparency contributes to curbing corruption and malpractices. It also enables efficiency in providing services. World Bank observes '*transparency and information pervade good governance and reinforce accountability*' (World Bank , 1994).

Accountability

World Bank describes accountability as '*Government and its employees should be held responsible for their actions*' (World Bank , 1994). Schedler describes that accountability is the obligation of public officials to inform about and to explain what they are doing (Schedler, 1999, p. 14). Bovens defines accountability from two perspectives: accountability as an icon and accountability as an institutional arrangement (Bovens, 2007). Accountability is considered as the hallmark of good governance and the essence of good governance cannot be realized unless public officials are being held accountable for their official responsibilities. But the traditional accountability mechanisms are prevalent in the country (Sarkr, 2009).

Education

Education, we mean, is a process of acquiring knowledge—particular knowledge or skills, preparing maturity in life, enabling powers of judgment. It also facilitates gaining morality, values, customs, beliefs, and habits. However, education develops in us a perspective of looking at life and the world around us, motivating us to change into something better. It lessens the challenges faced in life, creating opportunities to achieve better possibilities—prosperity, growth, development—in the collective sphere or individual life. Education also makes aware people of their rights and responsibilities. However, education can be formal and non-formal (Encyclopedia of Britannica, 2020).

Awareness

Awareness is considered as having knowledge of something—time, tasks, results, responsibilities, rights, and so forth. It gains through education. Awareness may be either to be self-awareness or to inform others about issues, services, responsibilities, rights, etc. Again, it may be an individual (self) and community (collective) awareness (Eurich, 2018). It is very important because it creates a better understanding of oneself, it enables oneself as a unique and conscious individual. It also empowers someone to identify areas and make better changes for improvements. Therefore, individual awareness creates the ability to focus and concentrate on their own actions and thoughts (Gafoor, 2012). It also enables us to evaluate own-self, manage our own emotion, values, perceptions, behavior, and beliefs (Sayers,

2006). Therefore, the purpose of awareness is to uplift a better standard from a lower one—it may be attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, services, service delivery, efficiency, etc.

Middlemen

Generally, the concept of a middleman appeared as a negative phenomenon. But it is not like that in every sector (Rubinstein & Wolinsky, 1987). There are some specific sectors that required the middlemanship. The concept of the middlemanship can be labeled as an agent who works in favour of his client. The middlemen always try to protect and uphold the interest of their clients (Olsson, Gadde, & Hulthen, 2013). For example, it is very popular in the sports sector. The renowned players appoint an agent to maintain and uphold their communication and interest. They work as a lobbyist in favor of their clients. It appears in a professional manner in this sector. It is not labeled as a negative brand in such sectors.

But it becomes a negative concept whenever it is practiced in wrongdoing or unethical manners. The concept or the term 'agent' or 'middleman' then turned into '*dalal*' who are in most cases involved in malpractices. They try to provide services to their clients through undue procedures and even illegal ways.

Morality

Generally, morality refers to a code of conduct accepted by all. Haidt describes an elaborate definition of morality. According to him, morality is '*interlocking sets of values, virtues, norms, practices, identities, technologies, and evolved psychological mechanism that works together to suppress or regulate self-interest and make cooperative societies possible*' (Haidt, 2011, p. 270). The purpose of morality, among others, is '*to keep society from falling apart*' (Pojman, 2000). So, morality can be referred to right, acceptable and good in performing tasks.

Conclusion

Efficient service delivery depends on many issues such as education, proper information, transparency, accountability, morality, and so forth. These are interrelated. To get better services, both the parties—service providers and service recipients—are supposed to accustom these issues. Both the parties should also be sincere about their responsibilities that would contribute to providing smooth services and reduce malpractices.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology

(i) Research Approach and Method

Every empirical research has an implicit, if not explicit, research design (Yin, 2009). Research design is basically a strategy or guide that a researcher follows in executing a research project. This particular study was about the effectiveness of citizen charter and for having a generalized view of the effectiveness of this important public service instrument, the citizen charter was taken as case for this study and the Upazilla Land Office was taken as unit of analysis. A case study is a systematic investigation of a study, a setting or a single subject, or a single depository of a document or a specific event (Berg, 2009:p. 31). This study dealt with 'what', 'why' and 'how' questions which were similar to Yin's (2003) argument, what stands for the explanatory case study, and the investigation of this scholarship was an explanatory case study. As Bryman pointed out that a case study gives the platform to use both quantitative and qualitative research (Bryman, 2003), hence the researchers employed a qualitative research approach, with occasional use of the quantitative approach in the study. A case study is the most obvious choice which gave the strength to explain how the citizen charter worked in the study areas in Bangladesh.

(ii) Selection of the study area and its rationale

As mentioned above, the Upazila land management (AC Land) office has been selected as unit of analysis, therefore, two divisions out of eight were selected purposively. Then, eight AC Land offices from four districts were selected purposively. As this study was a qualitative one in the nature of research inquiry, the selection of the study areas was considered a representative picture of the country.

This study investigated the role of citizen charter in accelerating public service delivery in land management services in the country. Therefore, Upazila Land Office which is better known as AC (land) office were chosen for this study as unit of analysis. A total of eight AC (land) offices were selected purposively from four districts namely—Narsingdi, Kishorganj, Rajshahi, and Joypurhat—of two divisions—Dhaka and Rajshahi—for this study. The Upazila AC (land) offices were Bajitpur and Vairab of Kishorganj district, Monohordi, and Shibpur of Narsingdi district, Paba and Boalia of Rajshahi District, and Kalai and Joypurhatsadar of Joypurhat district. Dhaka division was selected considering developed one compared to other divisions and Rajshahi division was selected considering less developed compared to Dhaka division. Therefore, it is justified that the selection of divisions would

represent the whole country, featuring developed and less developed divisions of the country. On the other hand, four districts—Narsingdi is considered comparatively developed to Kishorganj district, and Rajshahi district is also considered developed one compared to Joypurhat district. The selection of districts was also featured as developed and less developed districts. The selection of ACL offices was also done considering the same phenomenon. Therefore, it can be said that the selection of the study areas was very rationale and it would represent the whole country as the nature of services provided by the ACL offices is almost the same in the country.

(iii) Data Sources

Both primary and secondary sources have been used in the study for data collection. Primary data have been collected from a range of respondents categories such as service providers and service recipients. Data have been validated through crosschecking one respondent's views with the other and primary data have also been crosschecked with secondary data. Secondary data have been collected from various books, journal papers, reports and websites, and so on.

(iv) Sample size

As the study was dominantly a qualitative nature of the inquiry, the sample size was determined on basis of demand to need the fulfillment of objectives. However, the total number of respondents was 160. The Assistant Commissioners (AC) (land) of these offices were consulted as key informant interviewees while some other officials such as Nazirs, certificate assistants, surveyors, tahsildars (union land assistant officials) were interviewed. Besides, a total of 96 service recipients were surveyed with a structured and semi-structured questionnaire. Moreover, representatives of civil society organizations were also interviewed. The number of this category is eight. Further, a total of 16 local journalists were also interviewed. In addition, four focus group discussion sessions were conducted. Among them, two focus group discussion sessions were conducted with service recipients. One FGD was conducted in Pabaupazila and the other one was conducted in Monohordi Upazila. On the other hand, two focus group discussion sessions were also conducted with local journalists. One was conducted in Joypurhat Sadar and another was conducted in Rajshahi. Five to six persons were invited to each FGD session.

However, the respondents have been selected purposively. The following table-1 depicts at a glance the sample size:

Table 1 Sample size: at a glance

Respondents	No	Total	Method
AC Land	8x1	8	KII
Nazir/related officials	8x1	8	Interview
Canungo/certificate assistant/related officials	8x1	8	Do
Union land assist officials	8x1	8	Do
Surveyor/related officials	8x1	8	Do
Service recipients (12 from each area)	8x12	96	Survey &FGD
Civil society activists	8x1	8	Interview
Journalists	8x2	16	Interview &FGD
Total respondents		160	

(v) Data Collection Techniques

Data have been collected using a number of data collection techniques which were suitable with qualitative research approach, i.e. in-depth interviews, questionnaire survey, focus group discussions (FGDs), conducting key informants interview (KII) and direct observation.

Face to face in-depth interviews:

The in-depth interview is one of the most appropriate methods for gathering primary data from individual participants. The interview is aimed at exploring individual beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and opinions using open-ended questionnaires specifically designed for different categories of respondents. This means that rather than having pre-set, specific close-ended questions, the interviews were guided by mainly open-ended questions arranged by thematic order. Interviews were conducted with officials of the AC Land office and other individuals engaged in this service providing process of the same office, representatives of civil society organizations and journalists.

Questionnaire survey:

The questionnaire is one of the important tools of data collection from the field level since it influences the type and quality of information obtained from a respondent. In this study, to

get data from the service recipients a questionnaire survey has been administered using both—open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Focus group discussion:

Focus group discussion (FGD) is a unique form of strategy for data collection under qualitative research in which attitudes, opinions, or perceptions towards an issue, product, service, or program are explored through a free and open discussion (Kumar, 2011). As this study explores the service delivery issue, FGD has been considered as a very effective tool as a strategy of qualitative data collection. However, a total of four focus group discussions (FGD) have been conducted with selective respondents to get more in-depth and valid data. On average, five to six respondents have been included in each FGD session.

Direct Observation:

Observation means seeing with purpose. It is a close look or view of situations with some definite purpose. It does not end with mere seeing but calls for the recording of data as noticed by the observer. However, observing human activities is not straight-forward. There is an ongoing tension between 'overt' and 'covert' observations. People may behave quite differently when they know they are being observed (overt observation) compared with how they behave naturally when they do not think they are being observed (covert observation) (Patton 2002, Flick 2009). By considering the ethical tensions around 'covert' observation, the study follows the 'overt' observation method (where applicable) being aware of some of the potential effects.

Key informants interview:

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) have been conducted for data collection from the field level. The KIIs have been conducted with the assistant commissioners (land), officials of AC land offices, and other concerned stakeholders such as union land assistant officials, *nazir*, certificate assistants, surveyors, and so on.

(vi) Data analysis and presentation plan

As a means of thematic analysis, survey, interview, and FGD data have been presented into different sub-themes under the main theme—service delivery and then analyzed for generalizing inner meaning. For data processing and analyzing, thematic and conversational analysis have been adopted. Themes are abstract constructs identified by researchers before, during, and after data collection. Many themes have also been identified during the literature

review, as well as while conducting the fieldwork and collecting the field data. Themes are constructed with general themes arising from reading the literature and sub-themes arising through the progression of the study (Lincoln&Denzin 2005).

However, different types of computer software such as MS Word, MS Excel, SPSS have been used for processing and analyzing data and where applicable, these have been presented in different forms like pie charts, charts, tables, figures, and so on.

Conclusion

Conducting research methodology is a very important part. This study is mainly conducted following the qualitative nature of the research inquiry.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION and DISCUSSION

Data Presentation and Discussion

This section presents data gathered from the field level of different categories and makes a discussion on it. However, data have been presented dividing quantitative part and qualitative part.

Quantitative Part: Survey data presentation and discussion

Data have been categorized into different groups such as survey data, KII’s data, FGD’s data, and observation. In the first section, survey data have been presented followed by KII, FGD, and observation.

Basic information about the respondents

The study was conducted in eight Upazilas from four districts of two divisions. It has already been mentioned in the methodology chapter. However, the total number of respondents was 160. Among them, as many as 96 were service recipients and 12 from each Upazila—were surveyed for this study. The rest of the respondents belong to assistant commissioners (land), land administration office-related officials, other related officials of Upazila land offices, civil society representatives, and journalists. The following pie chart (figure-1) shows it.

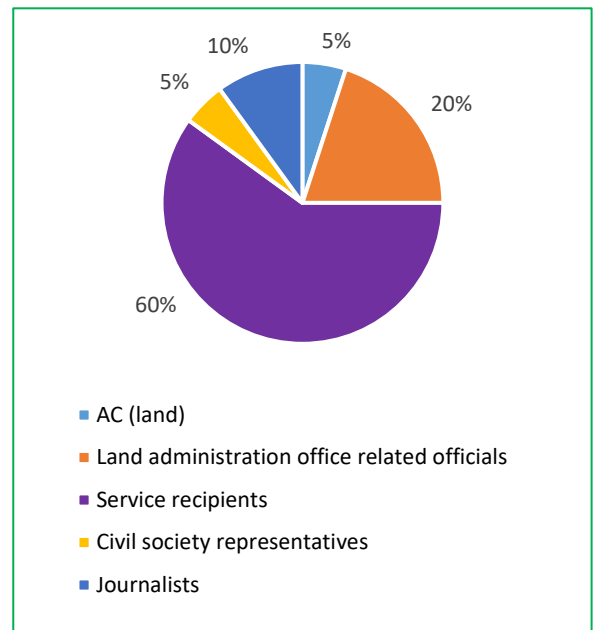


Figure 1 Respondents of different categories

However, among the respondents of the service recipients, 78 were male and the rest 18 was female. In the figure-2, it shows details.

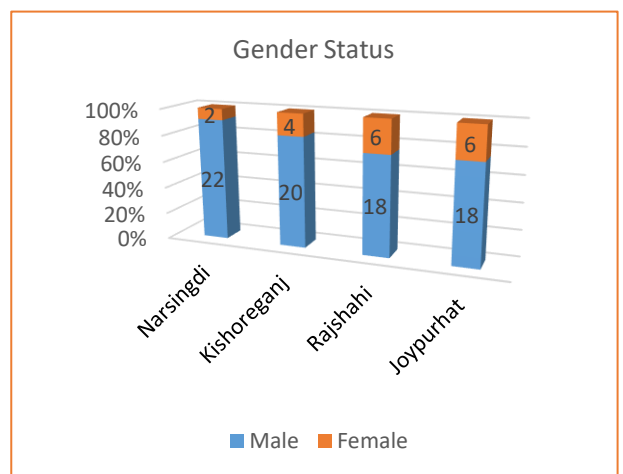


Figure 2 District wise gender status

Education makes a man very aware of his rights. This study also explored the educational status of the service recipients. It is presented in the figure-3.

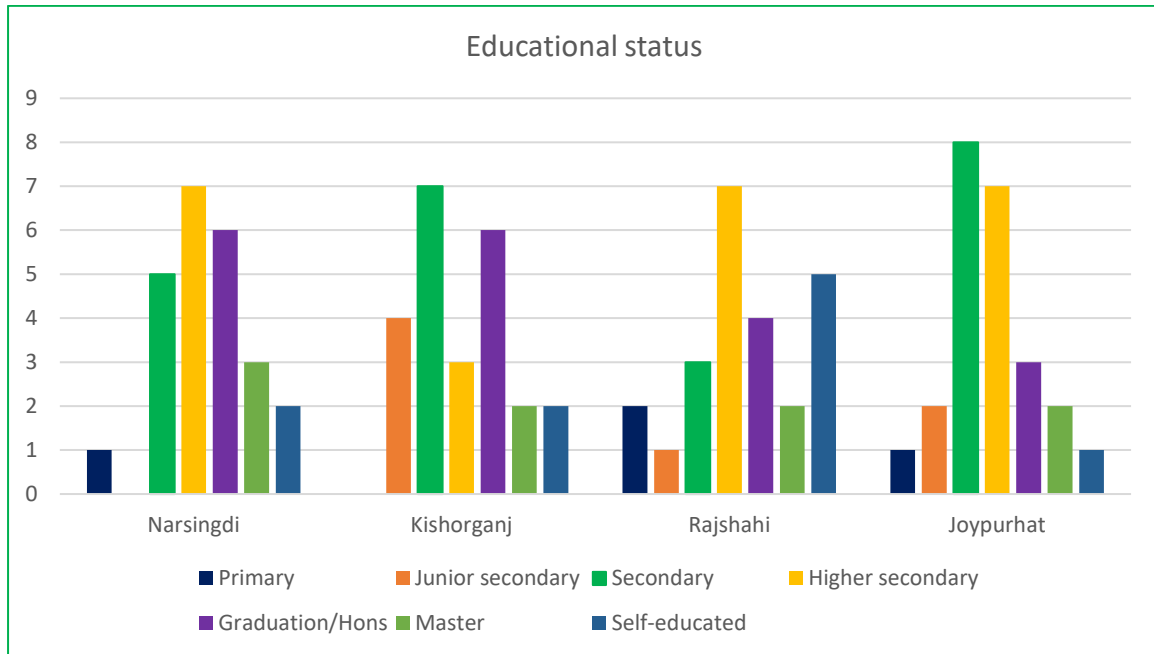


Figure 3 District wise educational status of the respondents

On the other hand, the study further explored the professional status of the respondents who visited the ACL for getting different types of services. The figure-4 reveals the professional status of the service recipients.

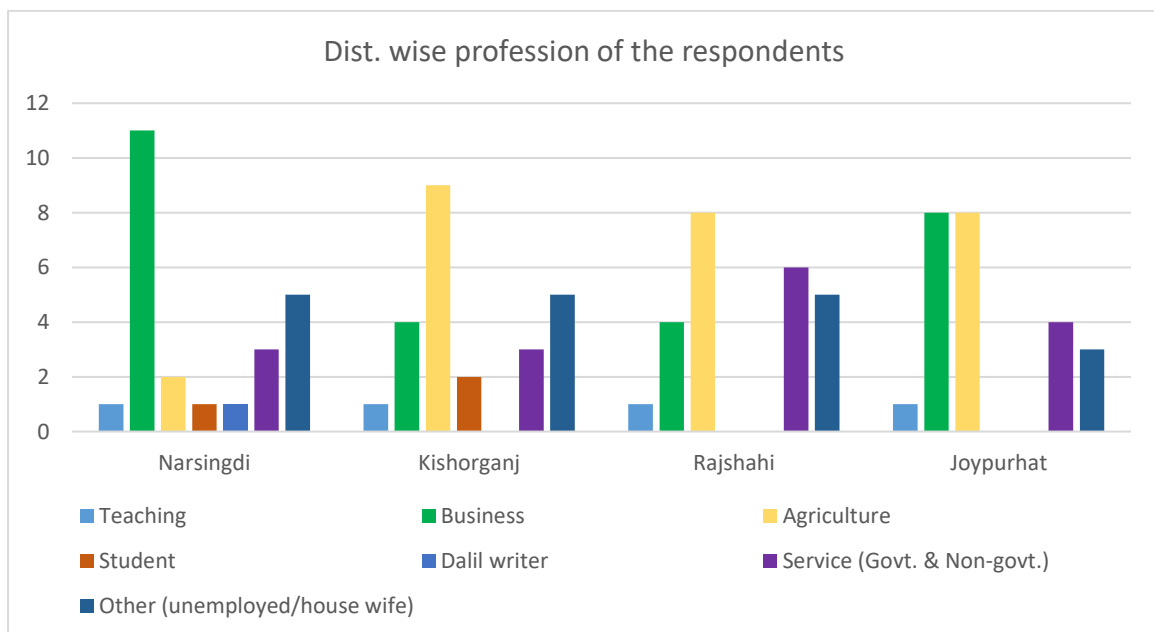


Figure 4 Dist. wise professional status of the respondents

Land services

The Upazila land administration office better known as AC (land) office provides a number of services. These include mutation, miscellaneous case, allocation of agricultural and non-agricultural '*khas*' land, renewal of the lease of *hat-bazar*, lease of water bodies (*jalmohol*), allocation habitats at *Ashrayan* project, renewal of the lease of vested property, old mutation '*khatian*' provision, '*jabedanakal*' provision and so forth.

However, the people, most in the cases, come to this office for mutation. When the service recipients were surveyed, it was revealed that the mutation service was dominated (81%) in getting services at the land offices. It was followed by the miscase related service. It is shown in the following table-2.

Table 2 District-wise recipients visit land offices to get service

Name of District	Mutation	Miscase related Service	Old mutation case katiyan related	Jabeda copy of miscase	Total
Narsingdi	21	2	1	0	24
	87.5%	8.3%	4.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Kishorganj	20	3	0	1	24
	83.3%	12.5%	0.0%	4.2%	100.0%
Rajshahi	21	0	1	2	24
	87.5%	0.0%	4.2%	8.3%	100.0%
Joypurhat	16	4	1	3	24
	66.7%	16.7%	4.2%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	78	9	3	6	96
	81.2%	9.4%	3.1%	6.2%	100.0%

Awareness of service recipients

The educational qualification has a little impact on application submission knowledge for rendering services at the land office. The study reveals (table-3) that there is no significant correlation between educational qualification and awareness/knowledge about the submission of applications for getting services at the land administration offices. The table depicts that 80 percent of the self-educated respondents know where the application has to be submitted for mutation service while 75 percent of the primary educated respondents also know about it. On the other hand, 89 percent of the Master's degree respondents, 74 percent graduate respondents, 78 percent secondary graduates, 75 percent higher secondary graduates, 71 percent junior secondary educated respondents respectively know about it.

Therefore, it indicates that education does not matter about knowledge of submission of application for getting service at the land offices. There may be two reasons broadly—one is

the low educated service recipients visit land offices with the help of agents or relatives who is well-known about land offices in one hand; and the second reason is the educated service recipients come to know it from the citizen charter notice board displayed in front of the land offices or from offices, on the other hand.

Table 3 Relation between education and awareness of submission of application

Educational qualification	Knowledge about the submission of application for mutation		Total
	Yes	No	
Primary	3	1	4
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	5	2	7
	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Secondary	18	5	23
	78.3%	21.7%	100.0%
Higher secondary	18	6	24
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Graduation/Hons	14	5	19
	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
Master	8	1	9
	88.9%	11.1%	100.0%
Self-educated	8	2	10
	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	74	22	96
	77.1%	22.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.096 ^a	6	.982
Likelihood Ratio	1.208	6	.976
Linear-by-Linear Association	.239	1	.625
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .92.

The test result reveals that there is no relation between educational status and knowledge about application submission for getting services as the p-value of the chi-square test shows a very hi-value 0.982. Therefore, the null-hypothesis is rejected here.

On the other hand, the following chi-square test (table-4) result shows that there is little impact of educational qualification on awareness or knowledge about the fee for mutation

service. The chi-square table reveals that there is no relation between education and knowledge of fees of different services as the p-value of the test is 0.216(>0.05).

Table 4 Relation between education and knowledge about the fee for service

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.308 ^a	6	.216
Likelihood Ratio	8.727	6	.190
Linear-by-Linear Association	.052	1	.820
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

The above chi-square test table-4 represents the following table-5. It reveals the details of the educational status of service recipients and their knowledge about the fee for mutation. It shows that there is little difference in knowledge of service fees between higher educated and lower educated service recipients.

Table 5 Relation between education and knowledge about a fee of mutation service

Educational qualification	Knowledge about fees of mutation		Total
	Yes (Govt. fixed rate_Tk. 1150)	No (More than that)	
Primary	3	1	4
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	4	3	7
	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
Secondary	18	5	23
	78.3%	21.7%	100.0%
Higher secondary	22	2	24
	91.7%	8.3%	100.0%
Graduation/Hons	11	8	19
	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
Master	6	3	9
	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Self-educated	8	2	10
	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	72	24	96
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%

The same result reveals about the government fixed fees of different services. The chi-square table- 6 shows that there is no relation between educational status and knowledge of service recipients about government fixed rate for different services as the p-value is revealed 0.171(>0.05).

Table 6 Relation between education and government fixed fees for other services

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.039 ^a	6	.171
Likelihood Ratio	10.856	6	.093
Linear-by-Linear Association	.053	1	.818
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.25.

The forgoing survey results show that there is little association between the educational status of service recipients and awareness/knowledge in terms of submission of application for service, different fees of different services. The study reveals that most of the service seekers do not visit alone the land administration offices for getting their services.

Middleman phenomenon

The study reveals that the educational status of the service seekers does not matter to visit the land offices for getting services. The table-7 shows that there is little statistical significance between the educational status of service recipients and visit land offices for service seeking. It shows that 56 percent with the master degree service recipients respondents, 53 percent graduates, 71 percent higher secondary graduates, 80 percent self-educated, 86 percent junior secondary and 75 percent primary educated respondents respectively visited the land offices with an agent or known people/relatives who are familiar with the land-related issues and official matters. The overall scenario is that as many as 66 percent of the total respondents visited the land offices with agents or known people and the rest 34 percent of the respondents visited the land offices alone.

Table 7 Relation between the educational status of service recipients and a visit to ACL office

Educational qualification	Service recipients visit to land offices		Total
	Alone/own	With known people/agent	
Primary	1	3	4
	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	1	6	7
	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
Secondary	9	14	23
	39.1%	60.9%	100.0%
Higher secondary	7	17	24
	29.2%	70.8%	100.0%
Graduation/Hons	9	10	19
	47.4%	52.6%	100.0%
Master	4	5	9
	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
Self-educated	2	8	10
	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Total	33	63	96
	34.4%	65.6%	100.0%

Therefore, it can be predicted that the service recipients comprehend that they would receive better services if they take the help of agents or known people/relatives rather than going alone to seek services from the land offices. The following chi-square tests (table-8) also indicate the same results.

Table 8 Relation between the educational status of service recipients and a visit to ACL office

Chi-square tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.670 ^a	6	.587
Likelihood Ratio	4.886	6	.559
Linear-by-Linear Association	.152	1	.697
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.38. The test results show that the educational status of the service seekers does not affect getting of services whether they visit the land office alone or not as the chi-square test value is 4.67 and p-value is 0.587 which is greater than 0.05.

Transparency and Accountability

The citizen charter is a document where services, its rate of fees, time-frame to get services, and the name and designation of dealing officials are clearly described. It makes transparency

in terms of disclosing information to its service recipients. It also contributes to accelerating service delivery, reducing corruption subsequently ensuring hassle-free service delivery. It further brings a positive impact on the mind of service seekers. If it is implemented accordingly, it can be ensured transparency and accountability in a true sense.

Due to the citizen charter, the land-related service recipients have the opportunity to know the rate of fees of different services easily. Somehow the service recipients know it (already discussed above). The following table-9 also shows that most of the service recipients—75 percent of the respondents, know the government rate fees for mutation service while the rest—25 percent of the respondents, is not aware of the fixed rate of fees for this service. Although most of the service recipients know the fixed-rate, as many as 33 percent of the respondents claim that they have received the service by paying the fixed fees or the services can be got by paying the fixed fees. But they informed while talking aside, they paid some extra-money in the name 'tea-taking' as the officials expect it after providing services. In most cases, they do not pay the extra money willingly, beyond the government fixed rate, the respondents affirm. On the other hand, as many as 67 percent of the respondents express their different opinion in this regard. Whatever the fee is fixed or not, the service recipients have to pay more than the fixed fees, they claim. Therefore, it demands to explore why it is happening. However, primarily some reasons are revealed and shown in the table-10. Moreover, the study reveals that to some extent there is a lack of accountability especially at the lower level at the land offices and it is one of the reasons for demanding the extra-money by the officials from the service recipients.

Table 9 Relation between service fee knowledge and getting services at govt. fixed-rate

Knowledge about fees of mutation and Service received/to be received in exchange for government fixed rate of service fees					
			Service received/to be received in exchange of government fixed rate of service fees		Total
			Yes	No	
Knowledge about fees of mutation	Yes (Tk. 1150)	Count	25	47	72
		% of Total	26.0%	49.0%	75.0%
	No (More than that)	Count	7	17	24
		% of Total	7.3%	17.7%	25.0%
Total		Count	32	64	96
		% of Total	33.3%	66.7%	100.0 %

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.250 ^a	1	.617		
Continuity Correction ^b	.063	1	.803		
Likelihood Ratio	.254	1	.614		
Fisher's Exact Test				.803	.407
Linear-by-Linear Association	.247	1	.619		
N of Valid Cases	96				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The above chi-square tests result also reflects the table-9 results. It reveals that knowledge about mutation fee is not important to get the service at a fixed fee as the test shows a very high p-value of 0.617.

The study reveals that most of the service recipients made a common complaint that they would not have been got their services by paying the government fixed rate fees or there is little chance to get services by paying the fixed fees. Either it is labeled by offering a cup of tea or sweet, the service recipients have to pay more than the fixed fees. Otherwise, they have to face harassment at least mentally, the interviewees claim. The following table-10 reveals that as many as 69 percent of the respondents claim that they would not have been got their expected services by paying the government fixed rate fees. They presented different experiences such as they had to pay extra money to some clerical officials and agents. They claimed that a few people could manage services from land offices without extra-payment. It is observed that the clerical officials or agents take such undue opportunities due to the complex nature of the land management system.

Table 10 Reasons for not getting services by paying govt. fixed fee

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Extra payment to land office Nazir and& employees	21	21.9	31.8	31.8
Extra payment at union land office employees	10	10.4	15.2	47.0
Extra payment to Nazir	6	6.3	9.1	56.1
No proper service/treatment without extra money	26	27.1	39.4	95.5
Due to the agent, extra money has to pay	2	2.1	3.0	98.5
Due to own ignorance	1	1.0	1.5	100.0
Total	66	68.8	100.0	
Missing	30	31.3		
Total	96	100.0		

Transparency and awareness

The Act—Right to Information—makes transparency in many cases which contributes to reducing corruption, hassle, harassment and ultimately accelerate service delivery. It also makes aware of services among people. The citizen charter can also be considered as one of the vibrant tools to accelerate land-related services to its recipients. But to what extent it contributes to making people aware of land-related services? The study explores the answer to this query. The study also explores whether there is any relation or not between educational qualification and gathering information which contributes to making service recipients aware of their rights and services.

The following table-11 reveals that there is a relation between the educational status of service recipients and gathering information. As many as 60 percent of the respondents are of the opinion of the impact of educational qualification in terms of gathering information about different services and their fees. They also notice that the citizen charter board is displayed in front of the land offices. The chi-square test results also reflect it.

Table 11 Relation between educational status and knowledge about citizen charter

Educational qualification		Knowledge about citizen charter board hangs in front of office/wall/signboard, showing services and fees		Total
		Yes	No	
Primary	Count	3	1	4
	% within Education qualification	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	Count	1	6	7
	% within Education qualification	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
Secondary	Count	11	12	23
	% within Education qualification	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
Higher secondary	Count	18	6	24
	% within Education qualification	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Graduation/ Hons	Count	11	8	19
	% within Education qualification	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
Master	Count	6	3	9
	% within Education qualification	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Self-educated	Count	8	2	10
	% within Education qualification	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	58	38	96
	% within Education qualification	60.4%	39.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.045 ^a	6	.061
Likelihood Ratio	12.484	6	.052
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.611	1	.057
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.58.

According to the association test above, educational qualification plays a role to know the citizen charter board/ banner/poster of different fees for different services. As the p-value of the chi-square test shows a very low value of 0.061(<0.1). It indicates there is a relationship between educational qualification and gathers of information. It also hints that education makes people aware of getting information or gathering information in receiving services.

However, the following chi-square test also reveals that there is a link between education/knowledge and information in terms of getting services.

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.375 ^a	1	.012		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.309	1	.021		
Likelihood Ratio	6.698	1	.010		
Fisher's Exact Test				.015	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.309	1	.012		
N of Valid Cases	96				

The abovetest shows that there is a relationship between knowledge about the duration of servicetime-frame and getting services at the stipulated time as the p-value of the test is less 0.012(<0.05). Therefore, it can be said that education makes people aware of getting services in time. It is revealed through this study.

Accountability and awareness

Disclosure of information may be considered as one of the mechanisms to ensure accountability. The citizen charter discloses different information such as kind of services, rate of fees, officials responsible to provide services, time-frame for providing services, and so forth. Therefore, the citizen charter can be considered as a tool to ensure accountability as Scheduler describes that accountability is the obligation of public officials to inform about and to explain what they are doing (Schedler, 1999, p. 14). Awareness can be also considered as another mechanism to ensure accountability.

The study explores the relationship between service received in time as stipulated in the citizen charter and service received by paying the government fixed fees in terms of accountability and awareness. The study reveals that most of the respondents—66 percent, know about the stipulated time for different services and they have got services as set in the citizen charter while the rest—34 percent, express their different opinions for not getting services within the set time. It indicates that most of the service recipients are aware of the time. But does it ensure to get services by paying the government fixed fees? The study reveals that it does not ensure to get services by paying the government fixed fee as displayed in the citizen charter board since as many as 67 percent of the respondents claim that they have not got services as expected and described in the citizen charter (table-12). Does it indicate that disclosure of information could not ensure accountability here—provide services

by paying the government fixed service fees? The following chi-square test (table-13) also indicates it.

Table 12 Relation between service received in time and service got paying govt. fixed-rate

Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter * Service received by paying government fixed-rate/fee					
			Service received by paying government fixed-rate/fee		Total
			Yes	No	
Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter	Yes	Count	23	40	63
		% of Total	24.0%	41.7%	65.6%
	No	Count	7	26	33
		% of Total	7.3%	27.1%	34.4%
Total		Count	30	66	96
		% of Total	31.2%	68.8%	100.0%

Table 13 Relation between time and govt. fixed fee for receiving services

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.358 ^a	1	.125		
Continuity Correction	1.700	1	.192		
Likelihood Ratio	2.451	1	.117		
Fisher's Exact Test				.165	.095
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.334	1	.127		
N of Valid Cases	96				
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.31.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

The chi-square test results (table-13) show that there is no relationship between information and awareness in terms of ensuring accountability. It shows that service received by government fixed rate does not affect the time-frame set in the citizen charter to provide services as the p-value of the test is 0.125(>0.05).

The study reveals that most of the service recipients (66%) have got services in time as described in the citizen charter. Does it mean that the service recipients are satisfied with getting services in time? The study reveals a mixed result over satisfaction over the services they have got (table-14). Although most of the clients have received services in time, as many as 34 percent of the respondents are satisfied with services followed by about 43 percent

moderately satisfied. As many as 22 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with the services provided.

Table 14 Relation between service time-frame and satisfaction over services got

Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter and satisfaction over services got							
			Service recipients are satisfied with services				Total
			Very satisfied	Satisfied	Moderate satisfied	Not satisfied	
Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter	Yes	Count	1	20	28	14	63
		% within Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter	1.6%	31.7%	44.4%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within	100.0%	60.6%	68.3%	66.7%	65.6%
	No	Count	0	13	13	7	33
		% within	0.0%	39.4%	39.4%	21.2%	100.0%
		% within	0.0%	39.4%	31.7%	33.3%	34.4%
Total	Count	1	33	41	21	96	
	% within	1.0%	34.4%	42.7%	21.9%	100.0%	
	% within	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.032 ^a	3	.794
Likelihood Ratio	1.344	3	.719
Linear-by-Linear Association	.111	1	.740
N of Valid Cases	96		
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .34.			

The above chi-square test result shows that there is no relationship between service received in time as specified in the citizen charter and satisfaction over services they got as the p-value of the test is higher 0.794.

But there is a relation between the service received paying by the government fixed fees and satisfaction. The chi-square test (table-15) reveals that there are relationships between service received by paying government fixed-rate/fee and satisfaction over the services the recipient got as the p-value of the test is 0.114.

Table 15 Relation between service received paying govt. fixed-rate and satisfaction

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.946 ^a	3	.114
Likelihood Ratio	6.124	3	.106
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.786	1	.029
N of Valid Cases	96		
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.			

Presentation and Discussion of Qualitative Data

The forthcoming section is dedicated to the presentation and discussion of qualitative data collected through KIIs, FGDs, and direct observations.

Key Informant Interviews

The qualitative data were collected through conducting KII and in-depth interviews. The assistant commissioners (land) were interviewed as the Key Informant. Besides, other officials of the land administration such as union assistant land officials (tahsildar), *Nazir*, certificate assistants, surveyors were also interviewed for collecting data about citizen charter (CC), its role to accelerate service delivery, its impact on the land management service, problems to implement CC, people's perception about CC and so forth.

All the Assistant Commissioners brought under KIIs claimed that the citizen charter is playing an important role to accelerate land-related services to service recipients. They also claimed that it has brought transparency in providing services and accountability of officials engaged in delivering services. They assert that educated people visited to ACL offices for different services express their positive attitudes about citizen charter as they get various services related information from the citizen charter board displayed in front of the land offices. The key informants (KIs) claim that citizen charter is also available on the official websites of ACL offices. But, as a part of the investigation, when the websites were visited, it was not found user-friendly. Even the websites contained insufficient information related to land services.

In replying to the barriers faced by the service recipients, the interviewees disclosed that disruption in supply of electricity and slow internet speed are identified as the major barriers and challenges in providing services as stipulated in the citizen charter. Despite such challenges, they were committed to providing services in accordance with the citizen charter,

the interviewees claimed. In general, they emphasized on uninterrupted supply of electricity, high-speed broadband internet service, and more IT expert officials/staff to provide land services smoothly.

However, one interviewee said, *'illiteracy is still one of the challenges in implementing the citizen charter at the ACL office. Illiterate and less educated people do not try to understand many issues related to official formalities. They just want to get services.'*

On the other hand, the interviewees think that most of the service recipients have known the rate of fees of different services from the citizen charter board displayed in front of the ACL offices and other official sources. The survey data have also corroborated with the perception of the key informants. It indicates that there is transparency in terms of disclosing information to all. Moreover, the key informants assert that there is formal mechanism to ensure accountability of the officials engaged in providing services. Among many of them, monitoring and inspection are notable to ensure accountability of the officials at the ACL and its related offices. The key informants claim that the higher authority inspects land offices and monitors the activities of ACL and Union Land Offices regularly. The formal process of accountability is also ensured through monitoring the pending list of the activities, some of the interviewees claimed.

Regarding creating awareness among mass people about the citizen charter, some of the interviewees asserted that they inform the service receivers in different ways such as describing the different rates and fees of services, and generally it is done man to man. However, they stressed more publicity about citizen charter among mass people.

About allegations of taking extra money (bribe), beyond the government fixed fees for services, the interviewees like ACLs claimed that whenever they received such allegations they take necessary actions against such kinds of corrupted officials. It is informed that some of the lower level office staffs are involved in such malpractices. On the other hand, some of the interviewees claimed that some middlemen (agents) are involved in such malpractices and it is done outside the land office premises. If the service recipients are not aware of the manner and process of service delivery, they found no option but to take undue help from such type of middlemen.

One interviewee said, *'there is an allegation about taking bribes against some lower-level office staffs. In general, we hear this type of allegation but nobody files specific complaints against specific staff. They make general complaints about the office staff. It makes difficult*

to take action against those who are real culprits. Therefore, lack of sufficient evidence, I failed to impose punishment.'

On the other hand, the interviewees from the officials other than ACL offices claimed that the citizen charter brings many positive impacts on land management services. Earlier, they used to face pressure to provide services within a short time. Now every service has a specific time-frame. Nobody can put pressure on them to get services before the specific time-frame. It makes it easier for them to work stress-free.

They said the citizen charter also makes information available regarding fees for different services and officials responsible to provide it. It makes them relief from unnecessary queries faced earlier frequently. They also said that the citizen charter has brought transparency and accountability in their daily activities. Transparency in terms of providing pro-active disclosure of information regarding different services has been ensured and accountability in terms of performing their tasks within the stipulated time-frame has also been confirmed. Besides, they have been asked if anybody fails to perform their responsibilities within the time-frame.

One participant said, *'there is no option to keep tasks pending as the list of works/tasks are uploaded in digital platform. If anybody fails to perform one's specific responsibilities within a specific time-frame, he/she has to face investigation and query for his/her responsibilities. Thus, accountability has been ensured, he thinks.'* Service seekers are now more aware of their services than previous time. The citizen charter makes this awareness among the service recipients, they believe.

However, the interviewees asserted that they face in general other problems such as disruption of electricity supply, low speed of internet, and so forth. Some of them asserted that they have been lacking technical knowledge to handle net browsing and other technical problems. They need more training to operate technology smartly, they said.

About allegations about taking extra-money beyond the government fixed fees for specific services, all the participants asserted that they provide services by receiving the fixed fees. Such type of allegation is not true. But they claimed that the middlemen (agents) moving outside the office premises used to involve in such type of malpractices. They also claimed that they do not put any pressure to pay extra money for services. But some service receivers pay sometimes extra money willingly, for getting speedy services. It should not be treated as a bribe, they mentioned.

One participant said, *'we are not all clean people. There are some people who are involved in such malpractices. Everybody knows it at his/her office. We are in lower level staffs. The ACL sir warns sometimes. But after a few days, it becomes as usual. He observes that it happens for many reasons. Sometimes the service recipients themselves provoke to do such malpractices. So, only the officials are not alone responsible for such misconducts. The service recipients are also responsible for this. Both are responsible. He observes that sometimes the service recipients seem very impatient and want to get services before the stipulated period. In such cases, they provoke the office staff to provide services as soon as possible. During this situation, the officials take the opportunities and try to speed up the services taking some extra-money (bribe). He admits that he has also committed such malpractices sometimes. They are pushed to do such malpractices, he thinks. He advises that the service seekers should come with patience and should wait up to the cut-off-date. Because getting services may be delayed due to valid reasons and unavoidable circumstances.'*

Another participant opined that *'moral degradation is one of the reasons for bribe culture in our country. People have deviated from moral values. They want services and sometimes demand undue facilities at any cost, considering their own gain ignoring other's interest.'*

About non-cooperation, the participants claimed that they cooperate from the very beginning of the service process. In some cases, the service recipients may face non-cooperation from the delivery side. If such type of event has happened, it is incidental and may be happened unintentionally or for other official emergencies. *'We are very serious to provide services sincerely according to direction and advice of our ACL sir'*, the interviewees claimed.

From the foregoing discussion, it is found that the overall impact of the citizen charter in service delivery at ACL offices is positive; though there are some other constraints and challenges to smooth and effective service delivery. It would further likely speed up if the challenges can be removed.

Focus group discussion

A total of four focus group discussion(FGD) sessions were conducted. Two FGDs were conducted with the service recipients. One FGD was conducted at Monohardi Upazila of Narsinghdi district and another was conducted at Paba Upazila of Rajshahi district. On the

other hand, two FGDs were conducted with journalists. One was conducted at Boalia, Rajshahi and the other was conducted at Joypurhat Sadar Upazila of Joypurhat district.

The service recipients who took part in the FGD sessions opined more or less the same information. They admitted that in many cases the citizen charter is playing a very positive role in accelerating land service delivery. They assert that they can now know the service names and their fees and they can also know the stipulated time-frame for different services. But there is a mixed reaction about getting services by paying the government fixed fees as described in the citizen charter notice board. Most of the participants claimed that they are compelled to pay more money than the fixed rate.

'I observed that one service recipient has been refused to provide service by paying the government fixed fee for mutation and asked the man to come two days later to take his document' one participant shares his practical experience, saying that they knew the man who came from 10 miles away. *'It is just mental harassment and it is done to force the man to pay extra money to expedite the service delivery'*, the participant claimed.

All the participants shared their different experiences gained during getting their services at the land offices. During sharing experiences, some participants told that although there is an opportunity to talk to higher officials, everybody (who are victims) does not show interest to speak to ACL especially regarding 'extra-money' claimed by some officials engaged in providing services due to harassment.

'Sometimes 'extra money' is claimed by 'borobabu'¹ just before issuing a DCR. If you failed to meet his demand, he may be asked to come later to take it. Consequently, one is compelled to pay a 'bribe', considering his/her time-value and other hassles to come again', another participant shared his experience.

One participant placed an argument, *"If I adamant to pay the government fixed fee or warn the clerks/staff to inform to his/her higher officials such as ACL about his/her undue demand of 'extra-money', 'I shall be caught in a cleft stick. I shall be harassed mentally to get my service and at one stage I shall somehow be compelled to pay extra money to get rid of harassment."* This is one of the mechanisms of some office staff to take extra-money from service receivers.

¹ Head of the assistants (head clerk) at the ACL office

The participants share that the nature of the land management system is very complex and complicated. Due to such complexity, almost every service seeker has to face different types of bothering. Referring to bitter experiences, one participant describes his experiences in following:

"One day, I went to the ACL office for mutation service. I found different kinds of good words hanging on the walls here and there. I was thrilled to see these and I also believed that I would get my service in a pleasant environment. All were okay but when I went to seek service, sufferings gripped me. " ...you don't have this, that Collect these documents and then come here to submit the application", the words I heard at first. After collecting all the documents, I submitted my application for mutation and I was informed of the hearing date. On that day, I came and when asked about my issue I was informed that 'you have missed' to provide another document with the application. Two sets of 'khatiyani' were needed but you provided one set of 'khatiyani'. I asked the office staff, "why didn't you inform me during the submission of my application?". The staff replied, "I thought, you have attached all documents". However, I asked the office staff, from where I would collect the document (khatiyani)? From union/poura land office, the staff replied.

I went to the office (union/poura land office) and asked Tahsildar to provide the 'khatiyani'. He replied, 'You will get it from DC office.' Then, I went to the DC office for the document. Here I was informed, "I need to apply through online for this document." "Can I apply from here?" I asked. 'No,' I was replied and advised, 'to go to cyber-café/ online service providing shop/outlet or own computer or laptop for online application and then print it and paste the court fee on it. Then come.' I enquired, 'From where can I collect court fee?' 'Go to the Court premises and search for a vendor for collecting the stamp, I was replied. ...printing and collecting the stamp, I came back to the DC office for submission of my application. Then I was advised to submit the application with a return envelope of a specific size and the envelope should be contained with a postal ticket. I asked, 'Is there any post office around here?' I was replied, 'I don't know. Ask somebody else.' ...anyway, somehow I managed the ticket and came back to the office again to submit the application for certified copy of 'khatiyani'. Then, I was told, 'Go home and you will be delivered the document to your address mentioned in the envelope by postal channel within two weeks.' Then I asked, 'I need it in emergency basis.

How can I get it?' I was advised to write an application describing my emergency need and again stamp the court fee top on the application. ...so I went again to the Court premises to collect the court fee ticket. However, I submitted the application finally. Then, I asked, 'When shall I get it?' "It depends man! It depends on the availability of our officer.....," I was replied.

However, I collected the copy of the 'khatiyani' from DC office personally and finally I submitted the application to the ACL office for mutation. Then, I was given a hearing date. I went to the ACL office on the date. ...Hearing completed and I was waiting for DCR. At one time, I was informed to pay the mutation fee just before writing the DCR. I was prepared to pay Tk. 1150/- as I knew that record correction fee Tk. 1000/-, notice serve fee Tk. 50/- and mutation khatiyani fee Tk. 100/- Looking at the amount of fee, the 'barobabu' of ACL office became 'startled' and asked me openly in the presence of other service recipients and his office staffs to pay at least Tk. 2000/-. Then I questioned, 'why I will pay more?' He/she replied, 'Everybody pays, so you have to pay.' 'But I am not....' Hearing this... kept silent for a while and I was told, 'Come tomorrow. Today we are very busy with the pending works. You can wait. But it is not sure that you will be provided it today.'

The participant also asserts that 'I wanted to follow the rules and procedures to get the document/services', and, of course, the rules should be followed strictly by everybody.' Anyway, I got my DCR with the payment of Tk. 1200/- on the following day. The 'barobabu' did not refund the extra money and I also did not get involved in quarrel with him for Tk. 50/- only. The interviewee asked the interviewer, 'Are you satisfied/happy with this service?' No option without being satisfied,' the interviewee replied.

Hearing the experiences, another participant makes comment that 'if you went for a contract with a middleman (within the office or outside the office), you would get the service without such mental harassment.'

The participants claim that this is not an incidental event, rather it is a regular phenomenon in land offices. Due to lack of proper information and non-cooperation of officials of the land administration offices, the service recipients frequently face such type of suffering. This is why the service recipients always try to avoid unnecessary harassment, even paying extra fees for particular services. On the other hand, most of the officials are found non-cooperative in terms of providing proper information, some participants claim.

One participant asserts that: *'just it is one's luck to get cooperation and proper information from the ACL office staffs.'*

But all the participants also claim that the 'officers' (ACL) are found very cooperative and they pay heed to their problems and try to solve them sincerely.

The journalists who took part in FGDs also reveal almost the same information about the ACL offices. But they admit that corruption and malpractices have been reduced due to the introduction of citizen charter at land offices. The citizen charter plays an important role in terms of providing information related to different services, their fees, time-frame, officials who are responsible for what services, and so forth.

They observe that after the introduction of the citizen charter, the service delivery system has become more smooth than previous. The service delivery has also been sped up. The ACL is found very cooperative at present time. But some staffs are found involved in some malpractice. On the other hand, the disturbance of agents (middlemen) has also been lessened than the previous time, they observed.

But there are some challenges to implement the citizen charter; such as lack of awareness about it among the mass people. Journalists, civil society representatives, and other stakeholders should be involved in this process, they observed.

Direct Observation

During the study, it is observed that the digitized system has brought positive changes in many cases at the land offices. There is a help desk, complaint box, *satata bazar*² (honesty market), *'kothabolte bell chapon'* (press the Bell button to meet and speak to ACL). It is also observed that there are a number of stickers, describing different information such as the fee for mutation, be aware of *dalal*³ (agent), *'ami ebong amar office durnitimokto'* (I and my office is corruption-free), and so forth. But it is observed and informed that it has not yet been practiced widely by the service seekers.

It is also observed that despite the digital system, there is still some manual process. It is believed that over time this manual system will also be replaced by the digital and online system. It would lessen the visit times of the service recipients to the land offices. It is further

² There is a box to purchase ticket/stamp/ticket for court fee and so on at Boalia Land office.

³Dalal is known locally as the middleman who helps the service seekers in exchange for money beyond the government fixed fees. In some cases, they also engage in irregularities and offer to provide undue and illegal activities by taking bribes.

revealed that the digital system has not yet been made user-friendly. In many cases, the service recipients cannot proceed with their application through their own gadget. Consequently, they are pushed to go for the help of others and it creates opportunities for some people to take extra-money, describing it as a complicated task.

Conclusion

The study reveals that the citizen charter has brought many changes in providing land-related services in the country. Despite some limitations, it brings positive impacts on service delivery.

However, the following chapter makes data analysis and presents the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS and FINDINGS

Data Analysis and Findings

The study revealed that citizen charter has brought a positive impact on public service delivery in land management. Information about different services, their rate of fees, and stipulated time-frame is displayed openly on the citizen charter notice board at the land office and also on its website. It is also revealed that despite some limitations, the citizen charter has accelerated the service delivery system. It has become easier due to the introduction of digitization in land administration.

However, as a means of thematic analysis, data of the different groups of categories i.e. questionnaire survey, interview, and FGD data have been categorized and presented above. Under the main themes—service delivery, a number of sub-themes have been identified for data analysis. In addition, the conversational analysis has also been adopted in the study.

The citizen charter is the commitment through a declaration for providing the best and easy services to the service recipients. The service providing organizations are devoted in realizing the expectations of the citizen. The charter plays a significant role in quickening the government service by establishing user-friendly and accountable administration, ensuring the right to information and transparency, and improving the performance of service providers and stakeholder engagement. However, the citizen charter has been considered as one of the vibrant tools for improving the public service delivery at the Upazila Land (ACL) Offices in Bangladesh where the service recipients will be able to have quick, easy, accurate, and corruption-free services. Based on foregoing discussions of both qualitative and quantitative data, the impacts of citizen charter in service delivery at ACL offices of Bangladesh are found out and generalized in the following analysis:

Role of Citizen Charter in Effective Service delivery

The land service delivery has been considered as the main theme of this study as it is surrounded by a number of issues such as the right to information, transparency, accountability, awareness, and so forth. These issues are important to get better public services and these are considered sub-themes in this study. Both quantitative and qualitative data reveal that the citizen charter has brought positive impacts on these issues. Thus, the citizen charter can be treated as a self-explained document to ensure better public services and a vibrant tool to accelerate better land management services to recipients in the country.

Role of Citizen Charter for Ensuring Right to Information (RTI)

The primary concept of the right to information is to make accessible government information for the citizen. It has become a constitutional obligation for the government as

the constitution of Bangladesh declares for freedom of speech and expression, freedom of thoughts and conscience, and freedom of the press (Government of Bangladesh (GoB), 2015, Article, 39). Citizens, widely considered, are the source of government power in a modern democracy and they have the right to get any information. Bangladesh's government has enacted the Right to Information Act 2009, through which any citizen is empowered to ask any institution for any information, except a few restricted information. Therefore, the introduction of the citizen charter is one of the notable initiatives of the government to get information especially at the land offices in Bangladesh. Both quantitative and qualitative data reveal that the citizen charter has ensured 'right to information' to get land-related services at the ACL offices.

Role of Citizen Charter for Ensuring Transparency

Transparency means *"not only as of the right to access information but also as a tool for enhancing government efficiency and accountability"* (Cucciniello & Nasi, 2014). It has been considered as the critical circumstance for effective policymaking and service delivery in the public sector (Stiglitz, 2002). The transparency and disclosure of information might impact on effectiveness and efficiency of public services (Piotrowsky & Van Ryzin, 2007) where citizen charter is also playing the role of displaying public information. It has been thought that transparency can create a strong relationship between the public administration and the service recipient. The study reveals (FGDs, KIIs, and survey data) that the citizen charter contributes to ensuring transparency, resulting acceleration in providing land management-related services at the ACLs.

Role of Citizen Charter for Ensuring Accountability

Accountability is one of the important ingredients for ensuring good governance. It has been thought of as the answerability, liability, and responsibility for someone's actions or jobs (Mulgan, 2000). Social accountability at the local level has been also considered significant for ensuring corruption-free services. The citizen charter is one of the significant tools for making administration accountable in any form. The study reveals that the citizen charter has established enormous changes at the ACL Offices in Bangladesh. Along with the internal mechanisms of accountability such as sudden visit, scrutiny of official records, and so forth by a higher authority, the service seekers now can also hold the officials answerable about their services. Despite some limitations, the citizen charter makes it easy, accelerating the service delivery to the recipients in the country.

Contribution of citizen charter in achieving good governance

It is observed that citizen charter has contributed to uphold the spirit of good governance. As World Bank (1994) observes that transparency and information infiltrate good governance and reinforce accountability. The study reveals that introduction of citizen charter at the ACL offices in the country brings impacts on disclosing information for different services which are cloaked earlier. It discloses the fees/rate charged for different services, providing with time frame information and names of officials responsible for it. The charter has also contributed to minimizing cost for various services as the service recipients are now well aware of service fees. So, they can render unnecessary expenditure.

Major Findings of the Study

Illiteracy and Implementation of Citizen Charter

Education makes man aware of his rights. It facilitates getting information and services accordingly. But the study reveals there is a lack of relationship between the educational status of service recipients and getting services. Educational status (table-3) does not matter about the submission of applications for services. The higher level of an educational degree or lower level of educational degree whatever it is, the educational status (tables-7 and 9) of service recipients could not ensure getting services by paying the government fixed fees or visiting the ACL offices alone. But there is a relationship (table-11) between educational status and gathering information. So, it is evident there is little impact on the educational status of service recipients to get services from the ACL offices.

General Awareness and Implementation of Citizen Charter

Awareness is important for ensuring accelerated public service delivery procedures. Public awareness regarding land management might be established through the free flow of information. The citizen charter, having useful information displayed in a visible place, contributes to enhancing public awareness in the country. It provides information on service delivery standards for ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of public organizations. The citizen charter makes aware people of "where to go" and "how to proceed" for the specific service in public offices which also enhances the consciousness of the service providers regarding their responsibilities in service delivery. The citizen charter has also been used for increasing social accountability at the local government system for better public service delivery. However, the service recipients are not well aware of the citizen charter since about 40 percent of the respondents (table-11) do not know about citizen charter hanged in front of the ACL offices. It means there is a lack of initiative from the service provider's side to make

it aware among mass people. It is also revealed in the KIIs. Lack of awareness of service seekers creates opportunities for the service providers to involve in malpractices. It is revealed in the FGDs as well. However, the citizen charter can be a solution to the problems of the service delivery mechanisms in Upazila Land Offices in Bangladesh if it is widely made publicity. Consequently, it would contribute to accelerate and enhance public service delivery procedures, bringing effective, efficient, quick, and corruption-free.

Impediments from Middleman in Implementation of Citizen Charter

The study finds that educational status is not a very important factor to get services from the land administration offices. Rather, in most cases, a middleman is a very important factor to get services and it reduces mental harassment as well as an unnecessary delay in getting services. It is revealed in the FGDs. However, the middleman is appeared due to the complex nature of the land management system. For example, it is not so easy to understand the complex nature of land-related issues for a graduate at the first time of land mutation case but a middleman who is not a graduate is often seen expert about the land management service system owing to his frequent involvement in such activities. The middleman may be outside of the land office or within the office. The study finds the middlemen in collaboration with some lower-level officials of the land offices involve in malpractice in land services. If the ACLs become sincere more about such malpractice, it is possible to curb the phenomenon. However, observing the practical scenario of the selected ACL offices, it can further be said and that the middlemen phenomenon in many cases has been reduced due to introduction of the citizen charter at the ACL offices.

Lack of publicity:

The study reveals that there is a lack of publicity among mass people about the citizen charter. The service recipients are not well informed about the citizen charter which is considered as one of the barriers to its effective implementation. The survey data (table-11), as well as FGDs, reveal it.

Lack of cooperation:

The study reveals that the non-cooperation of the officials of the ACL offices is a common phenomenon in land management services. Most of the service recipients (revealed in survey data and FGDs) claim that they have not got proper cooperation in terms of providing information about required documents for specific services. As a result, it brings unnecessary suffering that impacts the spirit of the citizen charter. During the FGDs, the participants claim that most of the lower-level officials of the ACL offices are found as non-cooperative. They

always try to drip themselves to help the service recipients. However, this attitude of the officials hampers to uphold the spirit of the citizen charter.

Lack of proper monitoring:

The study also finds there is a lack of a monitoring systems at the ACL offices. Although it is told during the KIIs that the higher authority inspects ACL offices suddenly, it does not ensure monitoring of the activities and responsibilities properly. Without proper monitoring, it would be challenging to implement the citizen charter effectively at the ACL offices.

Less user-friendly system:

The service recipients still are not well familiar with the online system. They depend on others for online application for getting services. It appears to the service recipients as less user-friendly system. It is disclosed during the FGDs.

Lack of knowledge about necessary documents:

It is very important to know about necessary documents for getting specific services. The service recipients have a lack of knowledge about this, the study explores. For this, it needs the cooperation of the officials, as well as awareness programmes, should be undertaken.

Lack of professionalism of lower-level officials:

Qualitative data reveal that there is a lack of professionalism among the lower-level officials at the ACL offices. It also reveals that the officials are not sincere about their professional excellence. They want to perform their activities in the traditional mode. It is observed that the officials are not motivated by any factor to bring innovation to their activities.

Malpractices in providing services:

Malpractice is a common phenomenon at the ACL offices. Frankly speaking, malpractice is commonly labeled as bribe culture. It is very common that without paying extra-money either it is a little amount or big no one gets services at the ACL offices. Generally, it is done in the name of `tea or sweet`. Sometimes the service recipients are compelled to pay extra-money. It is revealed during focus group discussions and survey results (table-9).

Some other common issues

Lack of IT expert personnel:

During the KIIs, it is revealed that there is a lack of information technology (IT) expert personnel at the ACL offices. It affects in accelerating service delivery, resulting in barriers to implement the citizen charter.

Uninterrupted electricity facility:

Uninterrupted supply of electricity/power is very important to deliver online services. During the KIIs, it is revealed that frequent disruption in power supply often creates obstacles during input and output of documents on the online system, affecting the delivery of services as stipulated in the citizen charter.

Low speed-net facility:

Both quantitative and qualitative data reveal that along with the disruption of power supply, low speed of internet is one of the major challenges to provide services smoothly. Low speed of internet facility creates delay during putting information in the online system. Often internet connection becomes disrupted and disconnected. Consequently, the delivery of services also becomes disrupted.

Lack of accountability at the ACL office staff:

The FGD data reveal that there is a lack of accountability at the lower level staff of the ACL offices. The participants observed that the officials in many cases are not held accountable for their misconducts. Consequently, they would appear barrier to implement and uphold the spirit of the citizen charter at the ACL offices.

Conclusion

After a decade of introduction of the citizen charter, improvement in service delivery in many areas in the land management system has been observed. Civil servants are well aware of the citizen charter. They have been familiar through different trainings and programmes at different times. But the service recipients are still not well aware of such good initiatives undertaken for their betterment.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS and CONCLUSION

Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, some recommendations have been put forward. It is considered that these recommendations would contribute more to enhance and accelerate the public service delivery at the ACL offices in the country.

Ensure accountability

Ensuring accountability is very important at every office to provide better services. The study reveals that to ensure accountability and monitoring, the higher officials make sudden visit to ACL offices. On the other hand, a pending list of works cannot ensure accountability. It is also observed that there is a lack of accountability especially at the lower level in the land offices. Therefore, accountability should be ensured. There are many mechanisms to ensure accountability. The selection of suitable mechanisms depends on the situation and context. The authority concerned needs to apply suitable mechanisms to ensure accountability especially at the lower level staff of the ACL offices. In many cases, the lower-level officials are held responsible for delivering better services in a better manner. So, they should bring under effective accountable systems.

Need more proper monitoring

Monitoring is another important factor to provide better services. The study reveals that there is a lack of proper monitoring system. Uploading certain numbers of files in the digital device does not ensure proper monitoring. Among many others, monitoring should be done on the basis of feedback received from both the service providers and service recipients. So, a proper monitoring system is very important to accelerate better services.

Development professionalism and cooperative attitudes

Professionalism is a very important factor for providing better services. The study also reveals that there is a lack of professionalism among the staff of the ACL offices in the country. Initiatives such as training programs should be undertaken to develop professional manner among the staffs. The development of professional attitudes also contributes to enhancing cooperative attitudes. Proper cooperation in terms of providing necessary information, rules, and procedures, and so on contributes to accelerating a better service which is the ultimate spirit of the citizen charter.

More publicity about citizen charter for awareness

Publicity is a very important factor to make people aware of information that is very necessary for getting services.

More publicity programs should be arranged to make the citizen charter more familiar to the general people. Such programs would contribute to increasing awareness among the service recipients. If it is done, many hassles can be reduced in getting services.

Development of a more user-friendly system

The online service providing provision has not yet been familiarized to mass people. The service recipients, when come to get services, came to know that digital or online system has been introduced to provide services. As a result, it jiggles the service recipients a bit for the first time and they become dependent on others to get the services. So, it needs to develop a more user-friendly system so that the service recipients need fewer visits to ACL offices to get services.

More IT expert personnel

As the study reveals that there is a shortage of IT expert personnel, it needs more IT expert personnel at the ACL and its sub-ordinate offices to accelerate services. On the other hand, the existing officials should be trained up for handling modern IT equipment. It would contribute to accelerating the land-related services.

Uninterrupted supply of electricity

An uninterrupted power supply is very important to provide better services. All the service providers claim that they often face such problems in providing services. Disruption in the supply of electricity creates an unexpected delays in providing services that also creates agony among the service recipients.

Hi-speed broadband internet network

Along with the uninterrupted power supply, it also needs high-speed internet connection facility. Due to the low speed and low-band connectivity of the internet, it creates an unnecessary delay in providing services to its recipients. It happens more when the services are connected to central server. So, high-speed net-connection is very important.

Upholding patience and morality to curb corruption and malpractices

Patience and morality are the great virtues of the human beings. The service recipients should be more patient during getting services. For this, the service providers should also maintain neutrality in providing services. They should ensure transparency in delivering services so that the service recipients can be assured that they would not be cheated or marginalized in providing services. Upholding the patience and the morality of both parties are important to curb corruption and malpractices at the ACL offices. These virtues would also contribute to providing better services.

Introduction of a feedback system

Feedback is very important to revise and redesign provisions for providing services. So, the introduction of a feedback system may bring fruitful results in providing land-related services to its recipients. For this, feedback should be received from both of the parties—service providers and service recipients. Based on the feedback, mechanisms to provide services may be revised or redesigned and suitable mechanisms should be practiced for better delivery of services.

Automation in service tracking

The introduction of a service tracking system can be one of the effective tools for customer satisfaction. For such it needs automation. Such an automation system would contribute to lessen visit times to ACL offices, reducing unnecessary sufferings. It would also contribute to halting the middlemen culture, resulting in positive impact good practices in providing services. It would further reduce the malpractices, including the bribery phenomenon.

Evaluation of service provisions regularly

Regular evaluation of service provisions would bring a positive impact of providing better services. As nothing is static, periodical evaluation is very important. Through evaluation, new ideas and innovations may have appeared that would contribute to providing better management and better services.

Conclusion

Despite many positive impacts of the citizen charter in accelerating land management services in the country, the study reveals some major causes of poor service delivery. Among them, some are the shortage of IT expert personnel, lack of existing employee capacity, complicated land management system, lack of accountability of ACL office staffs, lack of awareness among service recipients, lack of coordination among different public offices, corruption, discrimination in providing services, and lack of proper monitoring. However, there are lots of scopes to do more research on these particular issues and the researchers interested can take initiatives in the future to conduct research in these areas.

Therefore, the authority concerned needs to pay attention to minimize these pressing issues that would contribute to uphold the spirit of the citizen charter in the country.

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and
ANNEXURES**

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