



Assessing citizen satisfaction with paurashava (Municipality) service delivery in Bangladesh: A study based on the citizen charter

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Abstract

The Citizen Charter (CC) is a central instrument in providing public services and is measured the most effective tool for implementing the principles of New Public Management (NPM). This study explores how satisfied the service receivers are with the quality of basic services provided by four selected Paurashava under a Citizen's Charter. Though both service providers (LGIs) and citizens recognized the LGIs mostly followed the Citizen's Charter strategies implemented around 2009, citizens were normally more positive. This study evaluates the level of satisfaction among citizens in Bangladesh regarding the delivery of services by Paurashava, as stated in the Citizen Charter (CC). The study was carried out in Rajshahi and Jhenaidah districts. It employed quantitative approach, which included survey method. A total of 160 citizens (both male and female) were interviewed for this study as a sample by using the Simple Random Sampling technique. Descriptive statistics was applied in this study to analyze the data. The findings reveal that 49.4% of the respondent's express satisfaction with the time it takes to deliver services, whereas 34.3% express dissatisfaction. The level of satisfaction with service quality is 41.9%, while 37.5% of individuals are dissatisfied. Service delivery transparency achieved a satisfaction rate of 53.1%, while 30% of individuals still expressed dissatisfaction. Significantly, 44.4% of the participants expressed dissatisfaction regarding the expenses associated with the services. Capacities that require improvement are the enhancement of complaint resolution responsiveness, the development of garbage disposal and sanitation, and the increase of transparency and accountability. Recommendations encompass implementing thorough surveillance, continuing education, and significant investments in infrastructure to cultivate improved confidence and satisfaction among citizens regarding urban local governance.

Keywords: Citizen's charter, local government institutions, citizen's satisfaction, public service quality

Introduction

A well-functioning and effective local government, particularly Paurashavas which manage towns and cities, are vital for guaranteeing the well-being of citizens in Bangladesh. All these municipal councils play a pivotal role by providing needed services that directly touch people's day-to-day lives (Hood, 1997) ^[1]. This study assesses the level of satisfaction among people on the service delivery of Paurashava. It explicitly observes the experiences of inhabitants to find both the positive aspects and areas that need improvement. Gaining an understanding of diverse viewpoints is vital for improving local management and promoting a more comfortable environment. Bangladesh has two different local government systems: 1) Rural and 2) Urban. Rural areas have a three-tiered organization with Union Parishads at the village area, Upazila Parishads at the sub-district unit, and Zilla Parishads at the district level. As opposed to, urban areas are administered by either Paurashavas (municipalities) or a single, higher-level City Corporation. (Panday, 2011) ^[2].

An essential strategy for increasing public services is the approval of the Citizen Charter (CC). The main objective of the Citizen Charter is to tackle inefficiencies, delays in response, and lack of efficacy by prioritizing timely service delivery, responsiveness to the requirements of residents, and achieving improved overall outcomes (Razzaque, 2016) ^[3]. This study investigates the residents' perception of the services offered by Paurashavas, utilizing the Citizen Charter as a standard for assessing the quality of service.

This study conducts surveys among inhabitants to measure many areas of service delivery, such as waiting times,

service quality, staff conduct, information dissemination, compliance with the Citizen Charter, and the presence of officials. This research intends to provide insights for improving Paurashavas' service delivery and efficacy by assessing areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Ultimately, this will contribute to better governance and enhance the quality of life for people. Undeniably! By strengthening Paurashava and ensuring their effectiveness, we can finally attain two main goals: developed governance and a better quality of life for Bangladeshi residents. This is because effective local governments directly address the regular needs of residents through necessary services.

Methods and Materials

Study Design

A cross-sectional design of the research was conducted, applying quantitative approach to assess citizen satisfaction with Paurashava (Municipality) service delivery in Bangladesh according to the citizen charters (CC). The study was carried out from January 2019 to March 2023 in the four Paurashavas in Bangladesh.

Study setting

In this study, two districts of two divisions of Bangladesh have been selected purposively. These two districts are the Rajshahi district of the Rajshahi division and the Jhenaidah district of the Khulna division of Bangladesh. Four Paurashavas have been selected purposively from these two districts. These four Paurashava are Charchat Paurashava, Godagari Paurashava of Rajshahi district, and Jhenaidah Paurashava and Shaikupa Paurashava of Jhenaidah district. Simple Random Sampling (SRS) has been applied to select

two wards from each found Paurashava of two districts. The main reason behind the selection of the study areas is that these Paurashava are located in diverse locations in two divisions of Bangladesh. These deferent locations and demographics create an opportunity for the researcher to study cross-sectional variations. The study areas are in the comparatively better accessible geographic regions with respect to data collection, as the researcher utilizes his personal and institutional networks to collect data.

Sample size and sampling procedure

The selection of wide-ranging citizens for the interviews is conducted using a random sampling method. This method is based on the assumption that the chosen respondents are representative of the larger population in terms of their socio-economic, political, and cultural characteristics. A total 160 general citizens were interviewed for this study as sample, 10 from each ward and a total of 20 from each Paurashava.

Data Collection

Primary data was collected from the respondents of the study areas through a questionnaire survey. A semi-structured questionnaire containing both open and closed-ended questions was developed to collect relevant data. After the preparation of the interview schedules, to make them error-free, a pre-test was done through a pilot survey. Necessary adaptations were made in the schedules in the light of pre-testing. The researcher himself and a group of trained research assistants-built rapport first with the respondents and then approached them to ask questions and write down answers in front of them. It is challenging to extract appropriate qualitative data using an interview schedule for the qualitative study

Statistical Analysis

At first, the researcher verified, reviewed and scrutinized the collected data to avoid any errors and inconsistency. Then, the data was arranged and tabulated based on demonstrable indicators of the set objectives. Descriptive statistics were used in this study to analyze quantitative data. The IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25, was used for processing and analyzing the data.

Ethical Approval

Research cannot be conducted without addressing ethical concerns. The researcher rigorously adhered to all ethical principles associated with academic research throughout every phase of the study. Prior to data collection, the respondents were provided with information regarding the research objectives and their consent was obtained. However, the respondents were guaranteed that this information would solely be utilized for academic research and their names and positions would never be employed as a code. The researcher collected primary data, and in certain instances, a research assistant with prior orientation also contributed to the data collection. The researcher employed suitable methodologies and tools to analyze and interpret data, and independently authored the dissertation. Ultimately, the research performance will undergo evaluation and receive approval from the governing body of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies, located at the University of Rajshahi in Bangladesh.

Result and Analysis

Citizens' Satisfaction with the Service Delivery of Paurashava according to the CC

The present study investigates the effectiveness of the CC, a strategic tool intended to improve accountability, transparency, and efficiency in urban services in Bangladesh. Citizens' Charter (CC) is one of the organizational tools and techniques with the primary objective of improving the eminence of service offered to citizens thereby ensuring better citizen satisfaction. Citizen's Charter was developed first in the United Kingdom in 1991 as a program showing commitment to public sector reform (Falconer and Ross, 1999) [4]. The CC aims to increase citizen's satisfaction by setting clear service delivery timeframe. By examining data from 160 participants, the study investigates their insights of how timely, high-quality, and protocol-compliant Paurashava executives are. These findings offer vital insights into the Citizen's Charter's effectiveness in attaining its objectives and determine areas for development to better serve urban communities.

1. Level of Respondents' Satisfaction with the Service Delivery of Paurashava according to the CC

Table 1, summarizes how satisfied people are with various services provided by their local Paurashava according to the Citizen Charter (CC). The Citizen Charter is a document that outlines the services the Paurashava promises to deliver and the standards they aim to achieve. Nearly 49.4% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the time taken by Paurashava officials to deliver services, indicating a positive perception of service timeliness. Nevertheless, a considerable 34.3% expressed dissatisfaction, emphasizing a noteworthy aspect that requires attention in order to enhance the efficiency of service delivery. Regarding the quality of services offered following the implementation of the CC, 41.9% of participants expressed satisfaction, indicating a generally positive perception of service enhancements. Nevertheless, a substantial 37.5% of respondents voiced dissatisfaction, indicating that the quality of services is still below expectations for a significant portion of the population. The conduct of Paurashava officials was positively acknowledged, with 59.4% of participants expressing their contentment. These findings show that the Paurashava excels in interpersonal interactions and professionalism. Nonetheless, a substantial proportion of respondents (28.1%) expressed dissatisfaction, suggesting that there is still scope for improving the way officials engage with citizens.

61.9% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the clarity and accessibility of information delivered by Paurashava officials. Conversely, 26.2% of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction, emphasizing the requirement for improved and easily accessible methods of sharing information. Concerning the availability of officials during citizen visits, 55.6% of respondents expressed satisfaction, indicating that executives are generally accessible to the public. However, a substantial proportion of 30.6% expressed dissatisfaction, indicating that increasing the visibility and accessibility of officials may contribute to a higher level of citizen satisfaction. In accordance with the CC, the satisfaction rating for transparency in service delivery was 53.1%, indicating that more than half of the respondents opinion the services as transparent. Nevertheless, 30% expressed dissatisfaction, which highlights persistent concerns

regarding transparency and the requirement for increased openness and accountability. 51.2% of respondents expressed a positive rating for the honesty of Paurashava officials, indicating a generally favorable perception of the integrity of these officials. Nevertheless, a remarkable proportion of 33.1% of participants expressed dissatisfaction, proposing that a substantial number of individual’s harbor doubts regarding the integrity of the authorities. This issue necessitates intensive efforts to foster improved confidence.

Community opinion on Paurashava officials seems divided. The level of trust and confidence in the Paurashava officials was evenly split, with 43.1% of respondents expressing both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This division highlights the necessity of enhancing trust and confidence by improving the reliability and consistency of service delivery. The pressing issue was the resolution of complaints in cases of problems, with only 31.2% of respondents expressing satisfaction, while a combined 52.5% expressed dissatisfaction or strong dissatisfaction. This highlights a vital area where the Paurashava must improve its ability to promptly and efficiently address complaints. Finally, the

level of satisfaction with the service expense, as indicated by the CC, was comparatively low, 25% of participants expressed satisfaction and a substantial 44.4% expressing dissatisfaction. This finding emphasizes the belief that the charge of services may not correspond with the value obtained, indicating a requirement for evaluations of costs and potential modifications to guarantee equitable and rational service costs.

These findings deliver valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of Paurashava service delivery as observed by citizens. They focused on the importance of continuous improvement in accordance with the Citizen Charter to enhance local governance and service provision. Out of the 160 participants, 16 individuals (10%) indicated a high level of dissatisfaction, while 55 individuals (34.38%) specified a lower level of dissatisfaction. Conversely, a total of 6.25% of the respondents expressed high satisfaction. Furthermore, 79 respondents, making up 49.38%, reported being satisfied with the service delivery period of time. This distribution shows the different degrees of satisfaction with the compliance to service deadlines established by the Citizen Charter.

Table 1: Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Service Delivery of Paurashava according to the CC (N = 160)

Statements	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Don’t know
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Time Taken by the Paurashava Officials to Deliver Services according to CC	16 (10%)	55 (34.3%)	10 (6.2%)	79 (49.4%)	-
Level of Respondents’ satisfaction with the quality of the services of the Paurashava after introducing CC	11 (6.9%)	60 (37.5%)	8 (5%)	67 (41.9%)	14 (8.7%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Behavior of Paurashava Officials as Service Seekers	8 (5%)	45 (28.1%)	11 (6.9%)	95 (59.4%)	1 (0.6%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Process of Providing Information by the Paurashava Officials	12 (7.5%)	42 (26.2%)	6 (3.8%)	99 (61.9%)	1 (0.6%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Availability of Paurashava Officials at their Desks during Visits of Citizens	7 (4.4%)	49 (30.6%)	11 (6.9%)	89 (55.6%)	4 (2.5%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Transparency of Paurashava Officials in Service Delivery according to the CC	3 (1.9%)	48 (30%)	6 (3.7%)	85 (53.1%)	18 (11.3%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Honesty of Paurashava Officials	6 (3.8%)	53 (33.1%)	6 (3.8%)	82 (51.2%)	13 (8.1%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Trust and Confidence of the Paurashava Officials	4 (2.5%)	69 (43.1%)	7 (4.4%)	69 (43.1%)	11 (6.9%)
Extent of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Solutions of their Complaints in the Paurashava When Things Go Wrong	27 (16.9%)	57 (35.6%)	-	50 (31.2%)	26 (16.3%)
Level of Respondents’ Satisfaction with the Service Cost of Paurashava according to CC	36 (22.5%)	71 (44.4%)	5 (3.1%)	40 (25%)	8 (5%)

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

2. Factors Most Important to Respondents when Receiving Timely Services from Paurashava

Table 2 defines the crucial factors that respondents prioritize when it arises to receiving speedy services from the Paurashava. The survey results show that a considerable proportion of participants (63.75%) preferred services that adhere to established procedures and regulations, as they recognized ‘For due process’ as the most necessary factor. In the meantime, a substantial portion of the respondents (25.63%) underscored the importance of ‘Using your known officials’. This finding recommends that individuals trust familiar employees to confirm efficient service delivery. Furthermore, it is worth noting that a smaller percentage of respondents stated alternative factors. These factors comprise ‘By bribing’ (5.63%), ‘Lobbying politely’ (1.25%), and ‘Using a middleman’ (3.75%).

Table 2: Factors Most Important to Respondents when Receiving Timely Services from Paurashava

Satisfaction Status	Frequency	Percentage
For due process	102	63.75
Using your known officials	41	25.63
By bribing	09	05.63
Lobbying in a polite way	02	01.25
Using middleman	06	03.75
Total	160	100

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

3. Respondents’ Perception of Officials’ Attentiveness and Carefulness to Their Needs

Table 3 shows the respondents’ assessments of the attentiveness and carefulness exhibited by Paurashava officials in addressing their needs. Of the participants, 15 individuals (9.38%) described officials as ‘Very careful,’ 40% observed officials as ‘Partly careful’, and another 40%

measured officials as ‘Careful.’ The data indicates that many participants see Paurashava officials as attentive and meticulous in addressing their demands, with 89.38% expressing different levels of carefulness. However, a fraction of the participants (8.75%) still perceives those officials are not careful. Understanding these respondent’s perceptions is crucial. By identifying areas where inhabitants are dissatisfied with official’s behavior, Paurashava can develop their service delivery and ultimately increase citizen satisfaction with urban local governance.

Table 3: Respondents' Perception of Officials' Attentiveness and Carefulness to Their Needs

Status of Carefulness	Frequency	Percentage
Very Careful	15	9.38
Partly Careful	64	40.00
Careful	64	40.00
Not Careful	14	8.75
Do not know	03	1.88
Total	160	100

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

4. Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Information Provision by Paurashava Officials among Respondents

Table 4 offers an overview of the explanations cited by the respondents for their dissatisfaction with the information

provision by Paurashava officials (in Table 1). Efficient communication and dissemination of information play an important role in the functioning of urban governance. Analyzing the reasons behind citizen dissatisfaction with Paurashava services can be incredibly beneficial. By pinpointing these factors, we can classify areas where information delivery can be enhanced. This, in turn, could lead to a more informed citizenry and potentially a more satisfied inhabitant.

By investigating into the factors why people are dissatisfied with Paurashava services, we can gain dear insights. These insights can then be used to classify weaknesses in how information is delivered to citizens. By improving these communication processes, Paurashava can confirm citizens are better informed and potentially more satisfied with the services they receive. Within the sample of respondents, the reasons most frequently cited for dissatisfaction with the information provided by the subjects under study are as follows: ‘They do not provide appropriate information’ was mentioned by 10% of respondents; ‘They provide wrong information’ was mentioned by 6.25% respondents; and ‘They are negligent to their duty providing information’ was mentioned by 5% respondents. Further factors stated include interruptions in internet service, perceived arrogance of officers, delays in providing information, ineffective responses, and a lack of well considerate behavior.

Table 4: Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Information Provision by Paurashava Officials among Respondents

Reasons of Dissatisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Internet service is off	05	3.13
Officers are arrogant and often put up a power display	03	1.88
They provide the wrong information	10	6.25
They want much information that is difficult to collect	01	0.63
They provide information in very slow	05	3.13
They respond clumsily to any request for information	01	0.63
They do not provide appropriate information	16	10.00
The behavior of the officers is not Cordial	05	3.13
They are negligent in their duty to provide information	08	5.00
Total	61	100

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

5. Adherence to Citizen Charter Provisions by Officials during Service Delivery as Perceived by Respondents

Table 5 measures how respondents perceive the extent to which officials comply with the provisions of the Citizen Charter when providing services. Assessing the public's opinion of how healthy authorities follow the terms of the Charter offers valuable insights into the efficiency of its implementation and its influence on the quality of services. The table shows the distribution of responses from respondents regarding their insight of officials' compliance with CC provisions during the delivery of services. Out of the respondents, 43.7% reported that officials comply with the provisions of the Charter, while 90 individuals (56.25%) had a varied observation.

Table 5: Adherence to Citizen Charter Provisions by Officials during Service Delivery as Perceived by Respondents

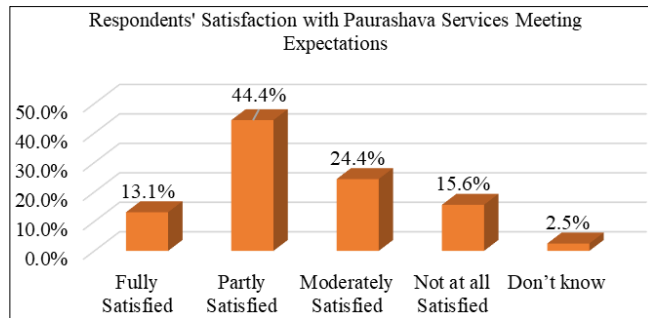
Opinion of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	43.75
No	90	56.25
Total	160	100

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

6. Extent of Respondents' Satisfaction with Paurashava Services Meeting Expectations

Figure 1 deals a complete insight into respondents' satisfaction level regarding the Paurashava services in satisfying their hopes and needs. How contented individuals are with a service directly reflects how well it's functioning and how involved inhabitants are. In simpler terms, satisfaction levels act as an important pointer for both the service's efficiency and citizen involvement. They specify how well service delivery make even with public expectations. The figure shows the distribution of satisfaction ratings among 160 respondents regarding the extent to which Paurashava services satisfy their hopes and aspirations. There is an extensive range of opinions shows, 21 respondents, accounting for 13.13% of the total, reported that the services entirely satisfied their potentials. Conversely, a good number of respondents (44.38%) indicated that the services only partially fulfilled their expectations. This suggests that although several components of the services were acceptable, specific areas necessitate improvement. An additional 39 respondents (24.38%) identified a moderate level of satisfaction,

suggesting a balanced perspective where the services met certain expectations but fell short in other extents.



Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

Fig 1: Extent of Respondents' Satisfaction with Paurashava Services Meeting Expectations

7. Incidence of Complaints Made to Paurashava by Respondents regarding Untimely Service Delivery

Table 6 documents the frequency of grievances filed by respondents with the Paurashava on the problem of delayed service delivery. Grievances serve as an important means of receiving feedback, providing valuable information on citizen dissatisfaction, and classifying areas that need enhancement in service delivery. The table presents the responses of 160 respondents regarding whether they had lodged complaints about delayed service delivery. Out of them, 68.75% of respondents stated that they had not filed any complaints. The majority in questions could suggest either a dearth of notable problems regarding punctuality or possible obstacles to filing grievances, such as perceived ineffectiveness or a lack of knowledge about the available choices for lodging grievances. Then again., 50 respondents (31.25%) stated they had complained about the delayed provision of services. This substantial minority highlights significant dissatisfaction and put emphasis on the need to address the promptness of service delivery to progress overall satisfaction and trust in the paurashava.

Table 6: Incidence of Complaints Made to Paurashava by Respondents regarding Untimely Service Delivery

Satisfaction Status	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	31.25
No	110	68.75
Total	160	100

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

8. Reasons for Dissatisfaction regarding the Service Cost of Paurashava

Table 7 investigates the specific factors contributing to respondents' dissatisfaction over the cost of services offered by the Paurashava. Accepting these grounds is necessary for undertaking financial complications and guaranteeing that municipal services are accessible and inexpensive for all citizens. The table displays data collected from 107 people who showed dissatisfaction with the prices associated with the service. The key cause of dissatisfaction, as reported by 96 respondents (89.72%), is the exorbitant overall service cost. Most respondents expressed great concern about the overall charge of Paurashava services. Further factors contributing to dissatisfaction include the exorbitant costs linked to diverse services. Specially, 2 participants (1.87%) mentioned the burden of steep water bills and license fees.

In addition, three respondents (2.80%) identified the high charge of acquiring a birth certificate as a cause for dissatisfaction.

Table 7: Reasons for Dissatisfaction regarding the Service Cost of Paurashava

Satisfaction Status	Frequency	Percentage
High Service Cost	96	89.72
High Water bill	02	1.87
High License Fee	02	1.87
High Rate of Birth Certificate	03	2.80
They do not get any Service	04	3.73
Total	107	100

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

Respondents' Overall Assessment about the Service Delivery of the Paurashava after Introducing CC

Table 8 displays the respondents' wide-ranging assessment of the service delivery of Paurashava following the implementation of the CC. Nearly, 70.6% of the participants expressed unhappiness with the complications they experienced in accessing services. Only 21.9% reported being satisfied, and a mere 2.5% reported being highly satisfied. These findings indicate a significant level of dissatisfaction with service accessibility. When evaluating the 'infrastructure development of the Paurashava,' a significant majority of respondents, specifically 68.7%, expressed dissatisfaction. In contrast, only 16.3% reported satisfaction, and a mere 0.6% expressed high satisfaction. These findings indicate widespread concerns regarding the state of infrastructure improvements. Regarding the obligation towards elderly citizens and marginalized groups, 55.6% of participants expressed satisfaction, indicating a favorable perception in this domain. However, 30.6% expressed dissatisfaction, suggesting the need for enhancement. The evaluation of 'garbage disposal facilities' indicated that 63.7% of individuals were dissatisfied, while 24.4% were highly dissatisfied. Only 10.6% expressed satisfaction, emphasizing a notable level of discontentment with waste management.

The evaluation of 'Sewerage and sanitation facilities' was also unfavorable, as 65% of participants expressed dissatisfaction and 21.9% expressed strong dissatisfaction. In contrast, only 13.1% reported satisfaction, highlighting the urgent need for significant enhancements in these vital services. In relation to the 'service cost of Paurashava,' 49.4% of individuals expressed dissatisfaction, with an additional 20% expressing a high level of dissatisfaction. In contrast, only 25.6% reported being satisfied, and a mere 2.5% expressed a high level of satisfaction. These findings indicate a prevailing perception that the costs associated with the services provided by Paurashava are not commensurate with their quality. The acquisition of 'building construction permission' from the Paurashava was a matter of concern, with 58.1% expressing dissatisfaction and 13.7% expressing high dissatisfaction. In contrast, only 19.4% were satisfied and 1.3% highly satisfied, suggesting the presence of substantial bureaucratic obstacles. Regarding the 'corruption of the Paurashava,' a majority of respondents (57.4%) expressed dissatisfaction, with a significant portion (21.2%) being highly dissatisfied. Only a small percentage (10.6%) reported being satisfied, and a mere 1.3% expressed high satisfaction. These findings

underscore significant concerns about the integrity and corruption within the Paurashava.

Finally, the evaluation of 'parks and recreation facilities' revealed that 62.5% expressed dissatisfaction and 23.8% expressed strong dissatisfaction, while only 8.1% expressed satisfaction and 0.6% expressed strong satisfaction. These results indicate a significant requirement for enhancements

in public recreational infrastructure. In general, the table demonstrates a notable level of discontent in various aspects of service provision by the Paurashava. This highlights the necessity of implementing specific enhancements to improve the quality of service, decrease corruption, and more effectively address the community's requirements.

Table 8: Respondents' Overall Assessment about the Service Delivery of the Paurashava after Introducing CC (N = 160)

Statements	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know
Respondents' Assessment of 'Sufferings in Receiving Services'	4 (2.5%)	35 (21.9%)	7 (4.4%)	113 (70.6%)	1 (0.6%)
Respondents' Assessment on 'Infrastructure Development of the Paurashava'	1 (0.6%)	26 (16.3%)	23 (14.4%)	110 (68.7%)	-
Respondents' Assessment of Responsibility to the Old Citizens and Marginalized Groups	3 (1.9%)	89 (55.6%)	12 (7.5%)	49 (30.6%)	7 (4.4%)
Respondents' Assessment of 'Garbage Disposal Facilities of Paurashava'	2 (1.3%)	17 (10.6%)	39 (24.4%)	102 (63.7%)	-
Respondents' Assessment on 'Sewerage and Sanitation Facilities of Paurashava'	-	21 (13.1%)	35 (21.9%)	104 (65%)	-
Respondents' Assessment of 'Service Cost of Paurashava'	4 (2.5%)	41 (25.6%)	32 (20%)	79 (49.4%)	4 (2.5%)
Respondents' Assessment of 'Building Construction's Permission from the Paurashava'	2 (1.3%)	31 (19.4%)	22 (13.7%)	93 (58.1%)	12 (7.5%)
Respondents' Assessment on 'Corruption of the Paurashava'	2 (1.3%)	17 (10.6%)	34 (21.2%)	87 (57.4%)	20 (12.5%)
Respondents' Assessment of 'Parks and Recreations Facilities of the Paurashava'	1 (0.6%)	13 (8.1%)	38 (23.8%)	100 (62.5%)	8 (5%)

Source: Own Survey, March 2019 to 2023

Discussions

The findings of this study offer a thorough assessment of the level of contentment among citizens regarding the provision of services by Paurashava in Bangladesh, subsequent to the implementation of the Citizen Charter (CC). The study emphasizes both the positive aspects and the areas that require enhancement in the endeavors to improve local governance and service provision.

1. Timeliness and Quality of Service Delivery

Approximately half of the participants (49.4%) reported being satisfied with the promptness of service provision, suggesting a favorable result of the implementation of the CC. Nevertheless, the significant level of dissatisfaction (34.3%) underscores the necessity for continuous endeavors to mitigate delays. This suggests a larger problem of inefficiency and limited resources. This aligns with the findings of Bhuiyan & Islam (2023), who discovered that a significant number of individuals expressed dissatisfaction with fundamental services and infrastructure^[5]. The quality of services received a combination of positive and negative feedback, with 41.9% of respondents expressing satisfaction, while 37.5% expressed dissatisfaction. Similarly, Ferdous & Das (2022) emphasized that insufficient evaluation and ineffective management are significant concerns, which align with our findings that indicate the necessity for enhancements in the quality and efficiency of services^[6]. This indicates that although there have been enhancements; there remains a significant disparity between the expectations of citizens and the services that are being offered.

2. Behavior and Accessibility of Officials

The conduct of Paurashava officials was generally regarded positively, with 59.4% of respondents expressing satisfaction. This demonstrates the successful exchange of information and the display of high standards of conduct among individuals in positions of authority. Nevertheless, a notable proportion (28.1%) expressed dissatisfaction,

indicating the necessity for focused training and growth to guarantee consistently favorable engagements with citizens. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Sá & Sintra (2011), which revealed a generally high level of satisfaction with municipal services. However, they also identified lower scores in the "assurance" dimension, suggesting concerns regarding the reliability and trustworthiness of officials^[7]. In addition, although 55.6% of the participants expressed satisfaction with the presence of officials, the dissatisfaction expressed by 30.6% of the participants highlights the need for improved accessibility and responsiveness. Afroj *et al.* (2021) also highlighted the importance of enhancing functional and participatory local governance^[8]. This aligns with the findings of our study, which underlined the requirement for improved training and responsiveness among officials.

3. Transparency and Honesty

Based on our findings, there is a moderate level of trust, with 53.1% satisfaction in transparency and 51.2% in honesty, in Paurashava officials. However, there is still great potential for improvement. This aligns with the findings of Rodríguez *et al.* (2009), who emphasized the significance of quality and satisfaction aspects in bolstering the trust of municipal institutions among citizens^[9]. The issue of corruption, which was emphasized by 57.4% of participants in our study, is also evident in the research conducted by Mohammadi & Sedeqi (2023). Their study revealed below-average satisfaction with public services in a different municipal setting, thereby emphasizing the presence of systemic problems related to governance and integrity^[10].

4. Complaint Resolution and Service Costs

An area of utmost importance that was highlighted is the handling of complaints, as only 31.2% of participants reported being content with it. This highlights a notable inadequacy in the Paurashava's capacity to promptly and efficiently handle citizen complaints. Furthermore, a

significant aspect of dissatisfaction among respondents was the expense of the services, as 44.4% of them believed that the costs were not commensurate with the value they received. Ahsan *et al.* (2021) have provided evidence that supports the discontent regarding cost and efficiency. They observed notable discrepancies in service provision and a lack of responsibility, notably impacting economically disadvantaged groups^[11]. This suggests the necessity for a comprehensive evaluation of service pricing and cost frameworks to guarantee equity and accessibility.

5. Perception of Infrastructure and Essential Services

The perception of infrastructure and essential services is characterized by a prevailing discontentment with the state of infrastructure, waste disposal, sewerage, and sanitation facilities. This sentiment is consistent with the findings of Bhuiyan & Islam (2023), who identified inadequate infrastructure and resource scarcity as significant concerns. Similarly, the study conducted by Viola and Sukmana (2023) revealed that infrastructure facilities in rural areas received high satisfaction levels. This suggests that metropolitan areas such as Paurashava may require more focused investments to enhance important services.

6. Corruption and Recreational Facilities

A significant number of respondents, 57.4%, expressed dissatisfaction due to concerns about corruption. This emphasizes a widespread problem that erodes trust and confidence in the Paurashava. Implementing more rigorous supervision and adopting transparent procedures are essential for rebuilding public trust in response to corruption. Furthermore, there was a notable insufficiency in the availability of parks and recreational amenities, resulting in a significant level of discontentment (62.5%). These findings align with the research conducted by Mbassi *et al.* (2019), which highlights that not all dimensions of service quality have an equal impact on citizen satisfaction^[12]. Specifically, factors such as accessibility and involvement are identified as particularly important. This highlights the necessity of placing more emphasis on improving public recreational areas in order to enhance the residents' quality of life.

To summarize, findings of this study align with the wider body of literature on municipal service provision, emphasizing shared obstacles such as ineffectiveness, limited resources, and the necessity for enhanced governance and infrastructure. The findings from additional research studies support the need for focused enhancements in openness, accountability, and resource management in order to increase citizen satisfaction with Paurashava services.

Recommendations

According to the study results, there are several important suggestions that can be made to improve the delivery of Paurashava services. It is essential to enhance the promptness and excellence of services by implementing strong monitoring systems and providing ongoing training for officials. Enhancing transparency and accountability through the implementation of anti-corruption measures and frequent public disclosures can foster public confidence. It is crucial to improve complaint resolution processes by establishing specialized units and establishing clear communication channels in order to foster citizen

confidence. It is essential to evaluate and modify service expenses to ensure equity and allocate funds towards crucial infrastructure, particularly in waste management and sanitation. Ultimately, placing a higher importance on the advancement of recreational amenities will enhance the overall standard of living for inhabitants.

Conclusions

The introduction of the CC in Bangladesh's Paurashava has improved in significant enhancements in certain service delivery areas. Nevertheless, there are still notable obstacles that need to be addressed, specifically regarding the level of service provided, the clarity of information, the resolution of complaints, and the necessary infrastructure. By implementing specific interventions and consistently striving for improvement, local governments can effectively address these issues and improve their ability to meet the needs and expectations of their citizens. This will ultimately lead to increase satisfaction and trust in local governance.

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