

# **Strengthening Local Government in Bangladesh**

**The Role of Empowerment, Participation  
and Leadership**



# **Strengthening Local Government in Bangladesh**

**The Role of Empowerment, Participation  
and Leadership**

**Mohammad Samiul Islam**



**OSDER  
PUBLICATIONS**

# **Strengthening Local Government in Bangladesh**

The Role of Empowerment, Participation and Leadership

Mohammad Samiul Islam

First Published  
August 2014

Copyright©Editor

ISBN: 978-984-91161-0-3

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, copied, distributed or transmitted in any form or by any means or stored in a database or retrieval system without prior written permission of the Author or the publisher or in accordance with prevailing copyright, design and patent laws.

Cover Design  
Md. Shahjahan Kazi

Published by **Osder Publications**, House 9/A (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor), Road 15 (New), 28 (Old), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka 1209, *Business Office*: 131 DIT Extension Road, Dhaka-1000. Bangladesh and printed by Osder Printers.

Printed in Bangladesh, August 2014

Price BDT 300.00, US\$ 15

*Dedicated to*  
My Mother Mrs Shamsunnahar



# Foreword

Strengthening of Local Government is highly essential to secure citizen rights by Local Self-Government (LSG) bodies. If the latest cannot satisfy local inhabitants' expectation, the central government itself will fail to accomplish the development at grass root level. In this study entitled 'Strengthening Local Government System-the role of empowerment, participation and leadership' the author identifies some limitations of the Union Parishad (UP) in activating its mechanism. The UP is the lowest tier of LSG and also the working body of the local authority to the door steps of rural citizens. This study has focused on the role of empowerment, participation and leadership in strengthening the Local Government and identifies the existing hindrances and provides guidelines.

Mr. Mohammad Samiul Islam, a young researcher of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet has attempted a commendable endeavor to this particular field in a humble way. He addresses couples of important issues like the effective role of leadership, individual and institutional empowerment and effective people's representative participation in strengthening the Local Government. Nevertheless, he does not express any strong view of his own on the issues of current controversy; rather, focuses his discussion on some technical issues. Strengthening Local Government System in Bangladesh represents a full-fledged research-based book. I hope Samiul's work would be a source of inspiration towards such works in future.

The author has performed substantial field work in collecting real data in preparing the manuscript. There is no doubt that this book will be useful to teachers, researchers and students who are interested to learn about the state of LGS in Bangladesh.

I congratulate the author and also wish the book to get wide readership.

Professor Md. Aminul Haque Bhuyan, Ph.D.  
Vice Chancellor  
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST)  
Sylhet-3114, Bangladesh.





# Preface

Empowerment, Participation and Leadership are the keystone of strengthening of Local Government System in Bangladesh and they are critical in securing citizen rights from the government since before independence to so far. Although, many government had took initiatives for the enhancement of local government performance. The different local government expert committees and commissions suggested significant policy recommendations but reality is very difficult at the field level regarding local representative bodies like Union Parishads (UPs). This study is also a little effort to describe the real scenario of local self-government at the Union Parishads. The study is based on extensive fieldwork undertaken by the author in the local government system of Bangladesh during the period from July 2011 to October 2012.

The book consists of seven chapters. The introductory chapter discusses research problems, research questions, methodology, rationale and significance of the study. Chapter 2 explores the core concepts, explains the major theories and conceptual framework. Chapter 3 reviews the major literature on empowerment, participation and leadership, in an attempt to figure out the factors determining the strengths of local government system. Chapter 4 makes a review of Union Parishad on the institutional arrangements of committees to perform its strengths in providing public services. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 thoroughly investigate the role of empowerment, participation and leadership in strengthening local government system in Bangladesh in holding the government to account in the light of the theoretical framework backed by primary and secondary data. The final chapter makes an analysis of study findings and policy recommendation based on the survey, FGD and case study and results drawn from the previous chapters.

This study presents three major findings. Firstly, the leadership quality does not perfect for the strengthening of Union Parishad. Secondly, Institutional and individual less empowerment of UP is also liable before mentioned conditions. Thirdly, Unwillingness of Political Government have been carrying out this condition of UP since the inception of independence of Bangladesh. This book also has implications for the study of strengthening local government system in Bangladesh.

This study was basically undertaken to write my M.Phil dissertation at the University of Dhaka during 2009–2010. I want to take this moment to put on record here my gratitude to several persons and institutions whose assistance – financial, academic, and personal – has been essential to the production of this work. First of all, I want to acknowledge my indebtedness to my supervisor Professor Mahbubur Rahman for his precious, constructive comments and a thorough vacuum cleaning of earlier drafts of this manuscript and for being exceptionally nice to me throughout my M.Phil studies.

Thanks are due to those elected representatives of Union Parishads in Kishoreganj who had overwhelmingly responded to my questionnaire/ interview and in turn cheered me up to carry this work forward. I am thankful to Kamrunnahar Luna (Vice Chairman, Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila) Mr. Nure Alom Siddiky (Upazila Nirbahi Officer), Mr. Abdur Razzak, Mr. Salahuddin (UP Chairman), Akhlina (UP female member) for their critical role in getting access to necessary information and documents in the respective UP secretariat which were invaluable inputs to be included in my dissertation to give it a final shape.

I would like to record my gratitude to the University Grant Commission (UGC) for providing me financial assistance to conduct the study. I also like to express my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Aka Firowz Ahmad, Professor, Department of Public Administration, University of Dhaka for taking his personal interest and care in the publication of this book.

Last but not least, my parents deserve special thanks for their tolerance and understanding throughout the study period. While, I have been greatly benefited by the help and cooperation of many people and institutions, I alone am responsible for any shortcomings of this work.

Mohammad Samiul Islam  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Public Administration  
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology  
Sylhet

# Content

Foreword	vii
Preface	ix
List of Figures and Tables	xv
List of Acronyms	xvi
<b>Chapter One</b>	
<b><i>Introductory Discussion</i></b>	17
Introduction	17
Background of the Study	17
Justification and Significant	18
Objectives	21
Research Questions	21
Variables of the Study	21
Methodology	22
Limitations of the Study	28
Structure of the Book	29
Conclusion	30
<b>Chapter Two</b>	
<b><i>Theoretical and Conceptual Framework</i></b>	31
Introduction	31
Operational Definition	31
Empowerment	31
Cycle of Empowerment	34
Characteristics of Empowered People	34
Participation	34
Elements of Participation	36
The Participative Process	37
Leadership	37
Components of Leadership	38
Local Government	39
Strengthening of local government System	39
Conceptual Framework	40
Leadership and its Development at Union Parishad	41
Local Government and Leadership in Bangladesh	44
Conclusion	49
<b>Chapter Three</b>	
<b><i>Review of Literature</i></b>	51
The Contribution of Empowerment to Strengthen Local Government System	51
Participation of Elected Local People Representatives is Mandatory for Strengthening of Local Government System	53

The Role of Effective Leadership in Strengthening Local Government System	55
Decentralization	58
<b>Chapter Four</b>	
<b><i>Union Parishad in Bangladesh</i></b>	63
Introduction	63
Evolution of Union Parishad in Bangladesh	63
Legal Basis of the Union Parishad	66
Union Parishad at Present	67
Issues of Union Parishad	68
Structure of the UP	69
Term of Union Parishads	69
Personnel Systems of Union Parishad	70
Responsibilities of the UP	70
The UP Standing Committees	71
Conclusion	75
<b>Chapter Five</b>	
<b><i>Empowerment, Participation and Leadership : Current Realities</i></b>	77
Strengthening Local Government System through Effective Leadership	77
Effective Leadership in Union Parishad (UP)	79
Political Pressure	81
Excessive Control of the Central Government on Union Parishad	81
Mismanagement of Local Resources	81
Absence of Proper Co-ordination	82
No Transportation Facilities for Elected Members of Union Parishads	82
Strengthening Local government Bodies through Empowerment (Institutional & Individual)	82
Which Policies are Followed in the Distribution of Delegated Duties, responsibilities and allocation of wealth and resources in Union Parishad (UP)	87
Whether Empowerment and People's Representatives Participation are Required or not for Implementation of Development Projects and Plans in the Study Area.	88
Insufficient Fund	88
Inefficient Administration and Village Court	88
Partial Accountability and Transparency	89
Insufficient Manpower	89
Institutional Inefficiency	90
Strengthening local government System through People's Representative Participation	90
The Procedure of Involvement of Local People in the Development Programs and Planning	94

Elected Representatives are Disagreed in the Participation of Development Activities	97
The Level of Awareness is Growing up Among the Local People	97
Positive Approaches Exist through Personal Initiatives	97
Some Hindrances of People's Representative Participation at the UP level	97
<b>Chapter Six</b>	
<b><i>Strengthening of Local Government: The Empirical Findings</i></b>	99
Introduction	99
Knowledge of the UP Chairmen and Members on UP Ordinance, roles and responsibilities	99
Problem with the Standing Committees	100
Limitation of the Knowledge Regarding Village Courts	100
Limitation of the Collection of UP based Revenue	101
Lacking of the Knowledge Regarding Using tax	101
Lacking of Knowledge Regarding Budget Procedure	101
Irregular Book Keeping	102
Awareness Regarding Audit	102
Irregular Office Timing	102
Uneven UP Meeting	103
Register Keeping	103
Selection of VGF Cards Beneficiaries	103
Annual Development Plan	104
Scheme Implementations	104
Coordination with Stakeholders	105
Negligible Women Participation	105
Elite Control	106
<b>Chapter Seven</b>	
<b><i>Concluding Remarks</i></b>	107
Introduction	107
Analysis of the Study Findings	107
Recommendations	110
Conclusion	111
<b>Bibliography</b>	115
<b>Annexure</b>	121
<b>Index</b>	125



## **List of tables and figures**

Figure 1: Design of the Study	23
Figure 2: The Process of Empowerment.	33
Figure 3: Cycle of Empowerment.	34
Figure 4: The Participative Process.	37
Figure 5: Conceptual Framework.	40
Figure 6: Administrative Structure of Union Parishad.	69
Figure 7: Difficulty for Office Management.	77
Figure 8: Taking decision on the spot whenever happen incident.	78
Figure 9: Whether having ability or not to encourage the people who are under leadership.	78
Figure 10: Having unwanted experience among your group's members.	79
Figure 11: The level of accountability has shown in Union Parishad.	83
Figure 12: Different category of efficiency to provide services by Ups.	84
Figure 13: Union Parishad personnel assumed to local people with cultural aspect.	84
Figure 14: UP has been sustaining with its competence.	85
Figure 15: Measurement of satisfaction to produce existing outcomes of UP.	85
Figure 16: Having question or not concerning effectiveness of Leadership.	86
Figure 17: Whether every UP member is empowered or not.	86
Figure 18: Union Parishad has communicating network with relating others organizations.	87
Figure 19: Number of meeting conducted by UP in a month.	91
Figure 20: UP members have been giving opinions in a meeting without influence.	91
Figure 21: Development projects took whiles the previous two 2009-10 and 2010-2011 fiscal years.	92
Figure 22: UP arranged meeting for the approval of projects.	93
Figure 23: Elected members are involved with the project planning and implementation.	93
Figure 24: UP considered opinion for projects planning and implementation.	94
Figure 25: UPs have been influence by local leaders of Political Parties.	94
Figure 26: The existence of project implementation committee has in your locality.	95
Figure 27: The existing rules and regulations of Ups are advantageous to the participation of local people's representatives in development projects.	95
Figure 28: The existing UP structure is a barrier to local people's participation in development activities.	96
Figure 29: The reluctances of local people have in participation of project implementation activities.	96
Table 1: Union Parishad, Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila	27
Map 1: Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila	28

# List of Acronyms

ADP	Annual Development Program
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
UP	Union Parishad
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
LGIs	Local Government Institutions
RQ	Research Question
LPC	Least Preferred Co-workers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MPs	Member of Parliaments
CARR	Committee for Administrative Reorganization/Reform
DC	Deputy Commissioner
LGRD&C	Local Government and Rural Development and Cooperative
SMC	School Management Committee
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
TR	Test Relief
VGF	Vulnerable Group Fund
KHABIKA	Kajer Binimoye Khaddo (Food for Works Programme)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Program



## Chapter One

# Introductory Discussion

### Introduction

The history of local government in our country dates back to 1870 (Khan, M. M. 2010). Since then it has gone through various stages and experimentation. At present, we are still looking for the appropriate structure of the local government system in Bangladesh. Much discussion and debate is going on regarding the structure, activities, accountability and transparency. Moreover, politicization of these local institutions as well as their management structure is another concern issue regarding local government system in Bangladesh. Civil societies, researchers and academicians as well as donor agencies have been suggesting the government to bring overall efficiency of the local government in Bangladesh. Few of them are trying to take change in policy level while others are creating awareness among the citizens through traditional methods like seminars, symposiums and workshops. There have been discussions on decentralization and vesting proper authority to the local government to carry out their functions but it seems that slight change is taking place here (Majumder; 2003).

Local government institutions are very much significant part of the central government for development activities. It is the icon of decentralization of power for delivering government service to the door of citizen. However, the present scenario of local government in Bangladesh cannot fulfill the expectation of local citizens (Rahman, S. 2011). There are so many reasons behind this failure which make it as a motionless organization. Existing local government structure has different tiers such as Zila Parishad at district level, Upazila Parishad at Upzila level, and Union Parishad. Zila Parishad is the least active institution among these institutions. Upazila Parishad functions irregularly. However, Union Parishad works more actively than other local government institutions.

In Bangladesh, Union Parishad has been tracing its destiny through various experiments and has not found its desire objectives yet. Many reform commissions were formed to strength this institution and various recommendations were suggested by these commissions but unfortunately most of them were not executed. Moreover in different times,

different Military ruler used these institutions for their own purposes. Furthermore, democratic government also failed to strengthen them. The existing literature refers that the pre-requisites of strengthen local governments are effective role of local leadership, empowerment of Union Parishad, and active participation of people's representatives. This study tries to explore the necessity of those terms in order to strengthen Union Parishad as a local self-government institution in Bangladesh. From this point it has been tried to explore the real obstacles which are responsible for less effective Union Parishad as a local self-government unit in Bangladesh.

### **Background of the Study**

Local government in Bangladesh has a long history. As described in the historical background of local government above, Bangladesh was colonized for a long period of time by the British East India Company and British Crown. Foreign domination continued under Pakistani rule. None of these foreign rulers made efforts to make local government institutions decentralized and delegate authority to the rural level (Huque, 1988). Local government in Bangladesh has traditionally been dependent on central government for most of its activities (Noor, 1996). The tradition of local government system in Bangladesh has a long history in its present form its origin can be traced to the demand for self government in British India<sup>1</sup>. Initially, Local government was developed by the British to maintain law and order situation in the rural areas with the help of local elite's backed by local police. The local elites were nominated in the local government system from among those who were confidence by the colonial authority and the village police<sup>2</sup> (the chowkidars) was paid by taxing the villagers (through the local government of the village punchayets in the 1870s (Khan 2010) and the union and District Boards after 1885). More than one hundred and thirty years have passed since the creation of the act and local government at union level through the year has changes its name, area, function, power from time to time. Subsequently as the demand for the self government increased among the Indians, more functions, were given to the local government institutions notably feeder roads, basic health services and primary education but with limited access to development funds and as such the service and development function of these institutions remained

---

<sup>1</sup> British India means before separation of India and Pakistan. Today, Bangladesh also exists under the Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup> Gram Police, who has been serving as a security of village under controlled by Union Parishad in Bangladesh.

marginal. A more important development that followed subsequently was the gradual concession made to Indians for selecting their local government representatives through election in place of nominations. By the time the British had to leave India (1947) both the tiers of local government (the union and the District Boards) had become fully elective (Hussain, 2003). In retrospect, this can be said to be a significant achievement of the British particularly in undivided Bengal. No less significant was the fact that in British Bengal several union Board chairman got elected at a later stage to the District Boards, some even to the Bengal legislature showing how the local government institutions could play an important role in training people's representatives for higher political responsibilities.

Unfortunately, during the Pakistan period (1947-71) this dynamic trend of the growth of representative institutions was significant lost particularly under the Martial law administration of the Ayub Khan (1947-69). In 1959, Ayub introduced his particular variety of local government institutions known as the 'Basic Democracies'<sup>3</sup> under which the local government representatives known as the 'Basic Democrats' became the Electoral College for election of the President. It was alleged that the government in power under this system of controlled democracy, tried to win the votes of the basic democrats through questionable means allotment of 'Food for Works' wheat under PL 480. It could be argued that there was an economic rationale for giving such funds to the local government institutions but the people in general interpreted this motive differently. In 1969, during the period of anti-Ayub movement the institution of basic democracies came under sever attack.

After Independence of Bangladesh, it was expected that the above distortion of the development of local government institution would be corrected. Indeed the constitution of Bangladesh (effective from March 1973) provided in article 59 (GOB.1990) that Local Governments in every administrative unit of the Republic is entrusted to bodies composed of person in accordance with law. Everybody such as is referred to in clause (i) shall subject to this constitution and in other law, perform with in the appropriate administrative unit, such functions shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament which may include functions relating to administration and work of public officers, maintenance of public order, the preparation and implementation of plans relating to public services and economic development. In article 60 the constitution provided that

---

<sup>3</sup> It has introduced by Field Marshal Ayub Khan. In the history of democracy, it is called limited democracy; especially it known as Ayub Formula.

for the purpose of giving full effect to the provision of Article 59 the shall by law confer power to the local government bodies referred to in the article including power to impose taxes for local purpose to prepare their budgets and maintain funds (GOB, 1990).

Therefore, as far as the constitution of the country was concerned, it showed considerable insight in the task of development of viable self-government institutions in this country. However as far as the implementation of the objective was concerned, the achievement was far from satisfactory. The reasons for failure of the local government institutions to grow as self-governing institutions as envisaged in the constitution were both (i) structural and (ii) functional.

### **Justification and Significance**

Local government is an extended part of central government. Main objective of local government is to assist the central government to achieve its goal in Local level. Historically, the local government system of this country has been developed in different regimes in different ways. These local institutions are conducted by locally elected representatives. In practical, this system has been used infavour of ruling party's interest. Therefore, Local Government system has failed to prove its competence for non-cooperation of major political parties. The local government system is not strong enough due to the existing problems of Local Government such as weak administrative capacity, a limited financial ability, inefficient personnel and little people's participation etc. For these reasons, this study has relevance about empowerment, participation and leadership in strengthening local government system. Ensuring good governance will not be sustained if people's participation, empowerment and effective role of leadership are absent there.

Twenty first century is guiding in an era of new hopes and aspirations for the good governance, as the citizen of Bangladesh can now look forward with pride and hope for having some outstanding and significant moments that have taken place in the last two decades for their all out development. We require both our hands to pray to our creator. So the active cooperation between men and women is a must for real development for developing country like Bangladesh. Such study will provide equal treatment to deliver government services to the citizens. But these services provided by central government to the local people through local people's institution. Hence, there is an urgent need to explore what reasons are the responsible for strengthening of local

government system. There are some vital different issues especially on empowerment, participation, and leadership can promote strengthening to local government system. By which local inhabitant would be increase their awareness and they can motivate themselves and it will make easy access to public institutions and political parties in national and local government.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to envisage empowerment, participation, leadership in strengthening local government system. The study has required some specific objectives by which broad objective would be perform. More specific objectives of this study are as follows-

- To review the role of Leadership quality for strengthening a Union Parishad.
- To measure the pre-requisite empowerment for strengthen a Union Parishad.
- To assess the role of Union Parishad as a primary tier of local government as well as rural institution.
- To examine the empowerment and participation condition of the UP chairmen and members in development projects and plans.

### **Research Questions**

The study aims to explore the following research questions:

- Are the leadership, empowering process and people's representative participation related with the existing strengthening concept of local government system?
- What extent of leadership performances related with effective local governance?
- How much institutional & individual empowerment related with the strengthening of Local Government?
- How do the functional bodies of UP work?
- What are the main barriers in existing UP standing committee system?

### **Variables of the Study**

It reveals from the research objectives as well as research questions that leadership, empowerment and participation of the people's representatives are main components of this study. So, these components are acting here as the independent variables. Besides this, there is another variable, which is strengthening of local government. It is called dependent variable because it varies by the performance of above mention variables.

**Independent Variables**

- i. Leadership
- ii. Empowerment
- iii. People's representative Participation

**Dependent Variables**

Strengthening of Local Government

**Methodology**

*What you have done* is important arena in research, but *how have you done* is more than important' (Cresswell, 2003) the process to conduct a study is marked as methodology. Different approaches and methods have been used here according to the research objectives and research questions. These are described below:

This study is conducted by using multiple research methods such as Survey, Interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Case Studies.

***Case-study Method***

The term 'case study' usually refers to a fairly intensive examination of a single unit such as person, a small group of people or indeed a single organization. The case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events such as individual life cycles, organizational processes, neighborhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries. According to Yin '...case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context' (Yin:2003). As the study mentioned earlier that the main concern is 'how' Union Parishads (UPs) are strengthened in the local government system so that it could provide better services to the citizens. That means the study has been described the current situation that whether it strengthened or not and has explored about its hindrance of strengthening if it has. As it is a contemporary phenomenon and it is a part of real life so case study design will appropriate for the study. This study takes Rashidabad Union Parishad as case study. The purpose of this study has highly been served by using case study method.

***Survey Method***

The contribution of local government system in the socio-economic and political development of rural people is enormous. Survey method has been used survey method to collect data from the selected number of UP members and chairmen. Structured questionnaire is used here to collect from elected people's representatives in rural local government in Bangladesh.

***Interview Method***

It is the most significant method to get direct and accurate data from primary data sources. In this method, the interviewer asks each respondent in a face to face situation and over phone with a list of predetermined questions and records the replies of the respondents in the

space provided in the questionnaire. In this study, selective cases have been interviewed for primary data collection following both the structure and unstructured questionnaire.

**Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

This study has been arranged FGD in Binnati and Boulai UP to collect in-depth knowledge on the subject of strengthening of the system of local government in Bangladesh. A focus group study can be simply defined as a discussion in which a small number (usually six to twelve) of respondents, under the guidance of a researcher/ moderator, talk about topics that are believed to be of special importance to the investigation (Folch-Lyon and Trost, 1981).

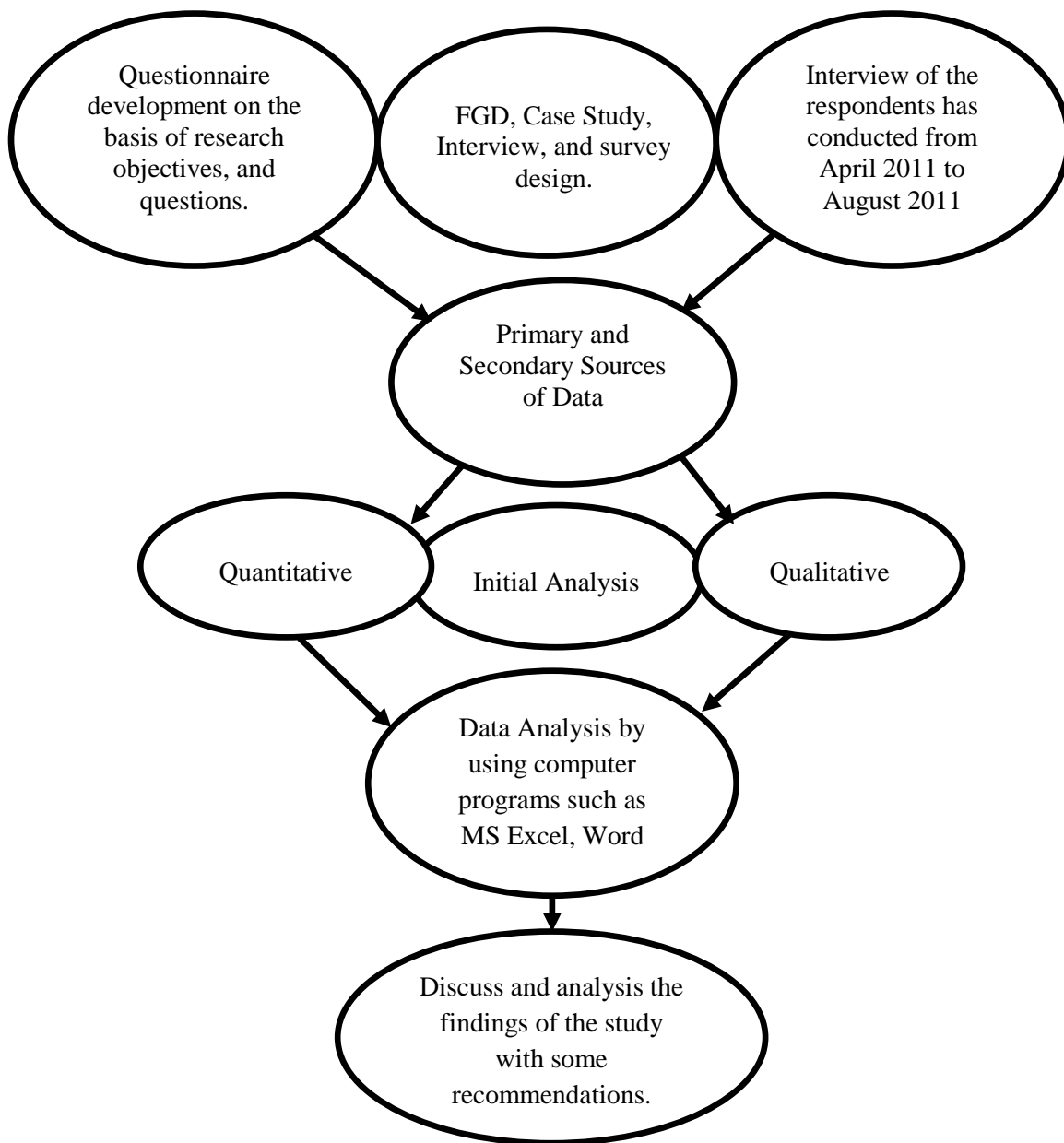


Figure-1: Design of the study

## **Collection of Data**

Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study and primary and secondary sources were used to collect data.

### ***Primary Sources***

As the key focus of this study is the strengthening of local government system and to identify the factors affecting on the strengthening process. So the researcher's key respondents are the elected chairmen and members for interview. Eleven Chairmen of different Union Parishads have also interviewed. To compare the role of men and women members they were specially interviewed.

### ***Secondary Sources***

Data has collected from relevant secondary sources such as from the general administration of Union Parishad, various articles, books, news papers, study reports, research monographs and internet. The researcher has also used varieties of documents, reports, official notes so that the researcher can get the real and valid information about how far strengthening of Union Parishad in local government system.

### ***Method of Data Collection***

Four trained and skilled field assistants were employed for field level data collection. The questionnaire was prepared in Bengali for easy understanding. The questionnaire was pre-tested for measuring validity and applicability before its final use. The primary data was collected through FGD<sup>4</sup> and Individual Interviews. Data were also collated from selected published research materials and reports of various local government commissions/ committees. Data were collected from 10 May 2011 to 15 August 2011.

### ***Rationale of Mixed Method***

This study has conducted Mixed Method Approach. It is one in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g., consequence-oriented, problem-centered, and pluralistic). It employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information (e.g., on instruments) as well text information (e.g., on interviews) so that the final database represent both qualitative and qualitative information. Open-ended and

---

<sup>4</sup> FGD means Focus Group Discussion which has been used for qualitative data collection.



close ended both types of questionnaire were used in this study. Two types of questions required to explore understanding how UPs could be strengthened in the study area. Moreover, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used for qualitative data collection regarding this study. FGD study has provided in-depth knowledge about the strengthening of local government system.

Mixed method is mainly a combination of qualitative and quantitative method. 'A qualitative research seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants'. The researcher has also examined the term strengthening of local government system as per chairmen, male and women members' view. It is clear from the evidence that participation of UP members (male & female) has been increasing but not satisfactory level. What are the factors affecting it to be strengthened properly; this study has described the process of all of these that involve various factors of Empowerment (individual and institutional empowerment), Participation (elected representatives) and Leadership.

Through qualitative study the researcher tried to analyze the term 'strengthening of local government' from both chairmen and members view. Researcher is also tried to sketch the formal position of women Councilor by collecting information from them. The researcher's effort has been also given to find out some suggestion from their opinions to strengthen Union Parishad as a local government body in this context. And the reason of choosing quantitative approach is that this study has tried to find out the answer of the research questions from numerical point perspective. As the researcher took a big number of respondents and also used structured and semi structured questioner, quantitative method helped to get perfect result.

This study has been conducted by using both the qualitative and quantitative approach of research. Based on the research questions and objective, qualitative approach was chosen because the elected members and concern citizens have had a natural setting. And the reason of choosing quantitative approach is that this study has tried to find out the answer of the research questions from numerical point perspective.

The qualitative method is preferred because the actual findings of the study are beyond anticipation of the researcher. This research is expected to be exploratory and inductive in nature and it focuses on the existing problems of recognizing the members of Union Parishad. Qualitative research deals more with theory building rather than testing and

researcher proceeds toward the study with some conceptual notions regarding probable theory in advance may be used in the study. Theories have been raised from the analysis of data or existing theory can be applied to innovating new theory by linking with findings of the study. There is flexibility in qualitative study where the researcher enjoys freedom in using theories and hypothesis to change as event unfold. In the qualitative study all phases like, enlarging and restructuring of research questions, data collection, data analysis, conceptual framework building and modifying go on almost simultaneously and interact with each others. According to Maxwell (1996) this method is the best suited for some specific purpose ; understanding meaning , context, identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences, generating new theories and understanding the process by which actions take place and developing causal explanations (Maxwell; 1996, 19-20). In this study, the qualitative approach will help researcher to look into what importance of empowerment, participation (male & female) and leadership in the local government for improving strength of it. And to identify the factors which influence strengthening of local government system.

For this study, the reason for choosing the qualitative approach is to collect in-depth information from the field. Therefore, the case study and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method have been chosen so that it would helpful for explanatory studies and allows studying a problem in detail. The advantage of the FGD method is that it allows examining contemporary events with real life context and using multiple sources of evidence. The disadvantage of the FGD method is that it generally lacks rigor and allows biased views to influence the conclusions. The study is an empirical in the sense that it has several independent and dependent variables i.e. effective leadership, empowerment and people's participation and strengthening of local government system by which applying theoretical assumptions to justify the real scenario with the help of data collected from the field.

### **Population and Unit of Analysis**

Kishoreganj Sadar Upzila is constituted with 11 Union Parishad. All the elected representatives of these Union Parishads have been constituted as the population of this study. Chairmen, general male and members of reserved seats are considered as a unit of analysis in this study. This study area has been selected due to represent all features of Union Parishads in Bangladesh. They have covered area of Union Parishad, a number of residents who have been living permanently. Moreover, there were free access to information, previously known it, and representation of all UPs.

## Sampling and Sample Size

Sampling is the process of selecting a subset of individuals from a larger group of individuals. The selection is done to draw inference about the larger group. In this research, data were collected from 77 elected representatives at the union parishad level (33 for female representatives, 44 for male representatives). The respondents of local elected representatives comprised of chairmen, women members for reserved seats, members for general seats. Sample size is 77 and it has selected purposively on the basis of objectives of this study.

Table-1: Union Parishads, Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila

Name of the union parishad	Numbers of members (female)	Numbers of members (male)	Total number of member
Korshakoirail	03	04	07
Mahinanda	03	04	07
Maria	03	04	07
Chaudasata	03	04	07
Latibabad	03	04	07
Rashidabad	03	04	07
Jasodal	03	04	07
Baulai	03	04	07
Binnati	03	04	07
Maijkhapan	03	04	07
Danapatali	03	04	07
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>77</b>

## Data Processing and Analysis

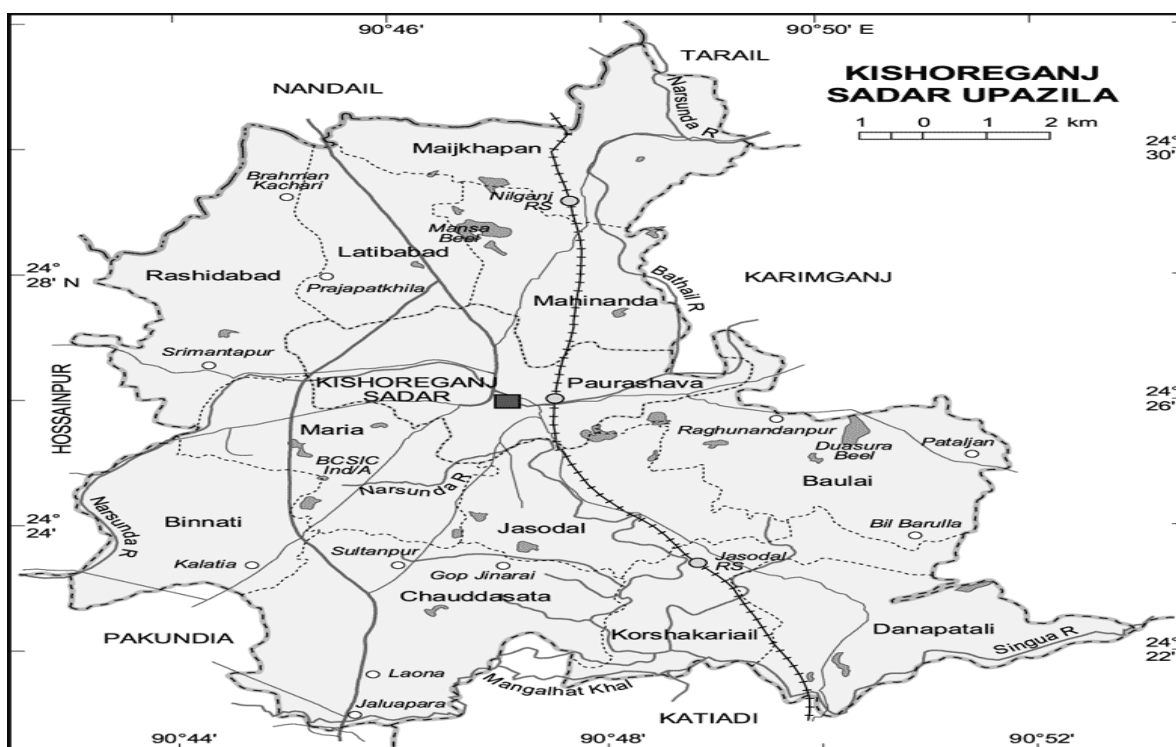
This study has followed in analyzing collected data which found from the field study. The study has organized and prepared data for transcribing interviews, typing field notes and sectioning data based on the sources of information. Then effort has given to obtain general sense about improving strength of local Self-government. The image of UPs have categorized and coded. Afterwards, data is described the themes which has found about improving strength of local self-government to be interconnected. Then researcher has tried to present the description in figures and tables.

The quantitative aspect of data has analyzed by using the factors of the leadership and the respondents reply. The total respondents have brought to percentage and then analyzed the outcome of the result. Then an analytical generalization is made to get to know the necessity of empowerment, participation and leadership will make stronger of local government system. In a word, collected data were characteristically

classified and simple percentage was applied for analysis and presentation of data.

### Study Area

The study area included 11 unions covering whole Sadar Upazila in Kishoreganj district. At the preliminary stage, one union was selected from that upazila, and then eleven unions were selected from same upazila purposively considering easy access, availability of leading local representatives and some other conveniences into consideration. Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila (kishoreganj district) with an area of 193.73 sq km, is bounded by Nandail upazila on the north, Pakundia and Katiadi upazilas on the south, karimganj\_ and Tarail upazilas on the east and Hossainpur and Nandail upazilas on the west. Main River is Narsunda.



Map-1: Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila's Map (Banglapeedia, 2011)

Kishoreganj upazila was established in 1860. It consists of 11 union parishads, one municipality, 9 wards, 125 mouzas and 205 villages. Total Population is 411801; male 49.75%, female 50.25%; Muslim 80%, Hindu 18%, Christian 0.5% and others 1.5% (Available at [http://www.banglapeedia.org/httpdocs/HT/K\\_0271.HTM](http://www.banglapeedia.org/httpdocs/HT/K_0271.HTM), access on 28/05/2011).

### Limitations of the Study

The respondents were not much aware about the duties and functions of the Union Parishad. So they suggested some reform agenda for the strengthening of local government system based on particularly how they

see the UP at present. It would be better if they had some idea about the rules and regulations of the UP. The focus of this study was the strengthening of the Union Parishad, but the members of the Union Parishad are more interested in project implementation than the duties of his or her own committee. The members and Chowkidars do not attend the UP office regularly because they have to do something to feed their family. So it was difficult to make sure all the members and employees of the UP are presented in office for FGD. Local leaders have many complaints against the central government but they had no constructive suggestion on how to make sure strengthening of UP, more accelerate and what reforms are needed for the overcoming existing situation of local government system.

### **Structure of the Book**

This book consists of seven chapters, each of which contains short discussions here.

#### *Chapter One: Introductory Discussion*

Introductory discussion an overview of the discussion that deals with research problem, significance of the study, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study, unit of analysis, and structure of the thesis. The methodology is an attempt to employ various methodological approaches used in this study. Why various methodological approaches used were appropriate for this study, how such usages were justified over others, and how these were incorporated in this study are also discussed in this chapter.

#### *Chapter Two: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework*

This chapter discusses dependent and independent variables and their relationship. It also talks about theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. The relationship between dependent and independent variables is also presented in this chapter.

#### *Chapter Three: Review of Literature*

This chapter incorporates different literatures regarding the study from three aspects such as the contribution of Empowerment to strengthen Local Government System, Participation of elected Local people's representatives is mandatory for strengthening of Local Government System and the role of effective Leadership in strengthening Local Government System.

#### *Chapter Four: Union Parishad in Bangladesh*

Union Parishad in Bangladesh provides a brief historical background and the present status of Union Parishad as well as a short discussion about the system of local government in Bangladesh.

### *Chapter Five: Empowerment, Participation and Leadership in Strengthening Local Government*

This chapter presents the analysis of primary data on independent and dependent variables (i.e., effective leadership, empowerment, participation, and strengthening of local government system).

Discussions on to what extent empowerment, participation and leadership are involved in strengthening local government and how and to what extent these three independent variables affect local government strengthening are dealt with in this chapter as well.

### *Chapter Six: The Empirical Findings of the Strengthening of Local Government*

The analysis of primary data is on the basis of independent & dependent variables. In this chapter, attempts are made to analyze output of the study on the basis of objectives and hypothesis. Moreover, this chapter also discusses the different drawbacks of local government from various aspects which are responsible for that condition.

### *Chapter Seven: Analysis of the study findings and Conclusion*

This chapter discusses the possible remedy and thereafter the conclusion. In this connection, the issues on the objectives of this study, what theories and methodology were used, what was found and which theories were most relevant how and to what extent can findings be generalized, what conclusion can be made on the basis of such findings and how this study can be implicated for further research are highlighted in this chapter.

## **Conclusion**

The Local Government system of Bangladesh has emerged by different rulers who from British and Pakistan directly. From this historical context, it is said that they have introduced various tiers of local government bodies in Bangladesh with the concern for exploiting rural poor people. For that reasons, it has not been working for the common people. After independence of Bangladesh has different government been trying to bring effectiveness and efficiency in these local institutions through various reforms committees and commissions but no government has take proper steps to implement reforms programs. The intellectual community thought government is not cordial to do strengthen of its local authorities but no government could succeed without better performance by local self-government bodies. So, government should focus strengthening in local government from different perspectives namely empowerment, participation and leadership.

## Chapter Two

# The Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

### **Introduction**

There are two specific purposes of this chapter. First, to operationalize the key concept of the studies and second is to explain the existing literatures which have used on this study. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of empowerment, participation and leadership from theoretical context. The last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw major changes in the local government system worldwide (Bovaird & Loffler, 2002). Bangladesh was no exception from medieval times to the present, the country has experienced several changes and effected decentralizations in the local government systems to make it effective and efficient (Sarker, 2006). The government and international development partners have also put emphasis on pro-rural development by strengthening the local government system in the country. In attempt to achieve strong local governance, the government has introduced several reforms and decentralization programs to bring the government close to the people. To explore the local government system of Bangladesh in the context of strengthening, this chapter has been discussed different theories which have been used to explain data of this research.

### **Operational Definition**

To operationalize all the concepts of this study, they are categorized under four main headings.

- Empowerment
- Participation
- Leadership and
- Strengthening of local government system

### **Empowerment**

The term “Empowerment” is a multi-dimensional concept. Usually it has been using for disadvantage community like “women” or “individual”.

On the other side, it has been using for to increase institutional capacity or strengthen. The empowerment has been shown in this study from organizational perspectives. It means delegating decision making start at the bottom by understanding the needs of the employees; clarify the organizational mission, vision and values; clearly specify the tasks, roles, and rewards for employees; delegates responsibility; built teams to encourage co-operative behavior; encourage intelligent risk taking; trust members to perform; and hold elected representatives accountable for result (Quinn and Spreitzer, 2001).

Almost every society has within it some minority groups that feel incapable of controlling their own destiny. Similarly, most work organizations have a number of employees who believe that they are dependent on others and that their own efforts will have little impact on performance. This powerlessness contributes to the frustrating experience of low self-efficacy, the conviction among people that they cannot successfully perform their jobs or make meaningful contributions. Problems with self-efficacy are often caused by major organizational changes that are beyond the employees' control. Problems may also stem from having to work under an authoritarian leader, within a reward system that fails to reinforce competence or innovation, or in a job that lacks variety, discretion, or role clarity.

Fortunately, individual perceptions of low levels of self-efficacy can be raised by empowering employees. Empowerment is any process that provides greater autonomy to employees through the sharing of relevant information and the provision of control over factors affecting job performance. Empowerment helps remove the conditions that cause powerlessness while enhancing employee feelings of self-efficacy (Ford and Fottler, 1995). Empowerment authorizes employees to cope with situations and enables them to take control of problems as they arise. Five broad approaches to empowerment have been suggested:

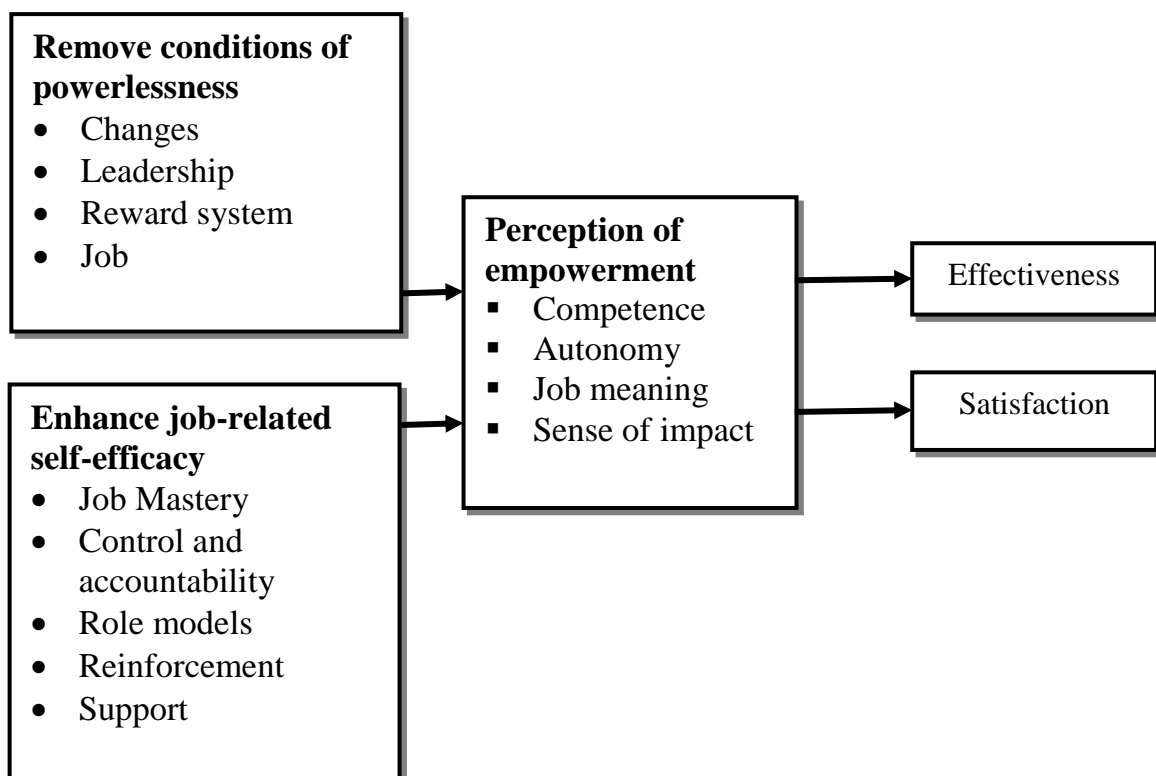
1. Helping employees achieve job mastery (giving proper training, coaching, and guided experience that will result in initial successes).
2. Allowing more control (giving them discretion over job performance and then holding them accountable for outcomes) (Bowen and Lawler, 1995).
3. Providing successful role models (allowing them to observe peers who already perform successfully on the job).



4. Using social reinforcement and persuasion (giving praise, encouragement, and verbal feedback designed to raise self-confidence)
5. Giving emotional support (providing reduction of stress and anxiety through better role definition, task assistance, and honest caring).

When leaders (managers) use these approaches, employees begin believing that they are competent and valued, that their jobs have meaning and impact, and that they have opportunities to use their talents. In effect, when they have been legitimately empowered, it is more likely that their efforts will pay off in both personal satisfaction and the kind of results that the organization values.

This chain of events is illustrated in the following



*Figure-2: The Process of Empowerment*

A major review of the theoretical literature on empowerment concluded that it is the result of four cognitions by employees- meaning and purpose to one's work role, competence in the skills and abilities required, autonomy and control over how one does the work assigned and a sense of personal impact over relevant organizational outcomes. A study conducted in a manufacturing firm and a service organization showed that all four of those dimensions were necessary to produce a positive impact on organizational effectiveness and individual satisfaction (Spreitzer and Nason, 1997, pp. 679-704).

## Cycle of Empowerment

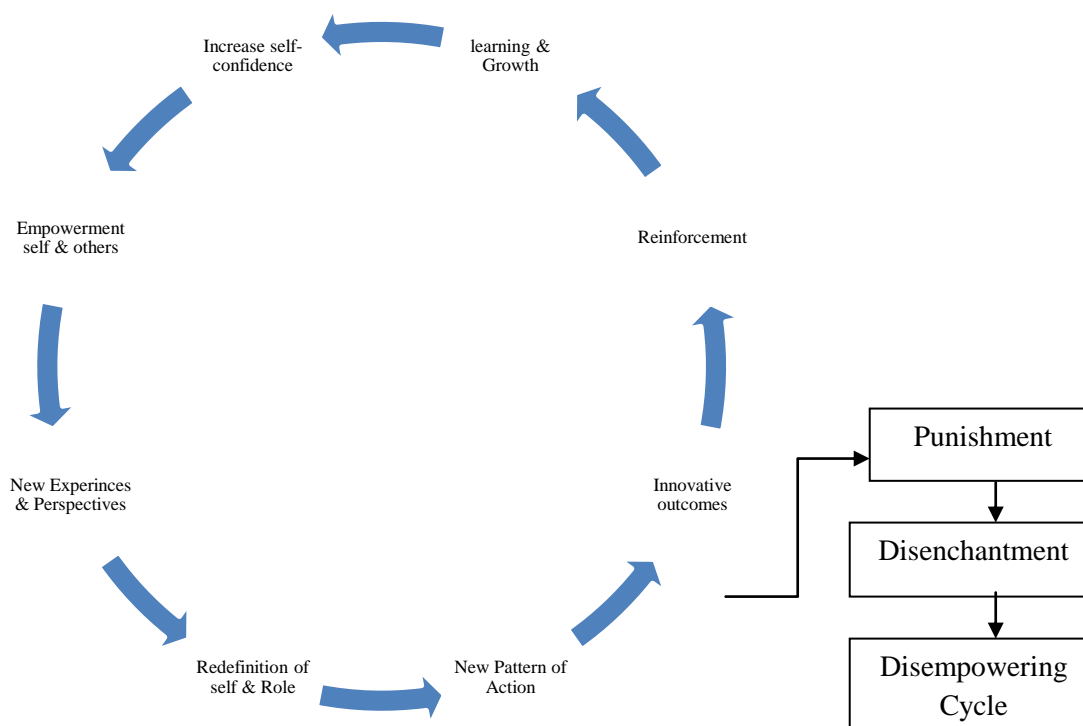


Figure-3: Cycle of Empowerment

### Characteristics of Empowered People

Quinn and Spreitzer have identified four characteristics of empowered people. These are:

- Empowered people have a sense of self-determination (this meaning that they are free to choose how to do their work; they are not micro-managed).
- Empowered people have a sense of meaning (they feel that their work is important to them; they care about what they are doing).
- Empowered people have a sense of competence (this means that they are confident about their ability to do their work well; they know they can perform).
- Empowered people have a sense of impact (this means that members believe they can have influence on their work unit; others listen to their ideas).

### Participation

As the term 'participation' falls in common usage, Wenger drawing on Webster's dictionary has defined it: 'to have or take a part or share with others (in some activity, enterprise, etc.)... participation refers to a process of taking part and also to the relations with others that reflect this process' (2003, p. 55). Thus the word 'participation' implies both action

and correlation, which suggests an act for developing a relationship in achieving a goal. It is not only a gathering or engaging or collaboration of specific people; as such it is not something we turn on and off. 'Participation is broader than mere engagement in practice' (Wenger 2003, p. 57); it is continuous sharing of activities to reach a goal. However, when participation is put together with people it gets a more extended meaning such as: 'the organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control' (Stiefel & Wolfe 1994, p. 5). In this sense, people's participation is a process through which common, remote, poor and disempowered people obtain significant control/empowerment over development programs that have been scheduled for their benefit. Some authors argued people-participation means when people act like a customer or stakeholder, which happened in the traditional model of governance (Barten et al. 2002; Paul 1987). In the same way, people's participation has been argued that it can happen in different ways, like: consultation, involvement or engagement (Callahan 2009; Ostrander & Portney 2007). Here, people's participation can be defined as the synergic action of individuals with local government institutions (LGIs) to raise awareness and bring about change in the implementation of local development programs and services. Through participation, people get meaningful performance in local government decisions that affect them (Blair 2000). Crook and Manor thus clearly defined participation as people's 'active engagement with public institutions' (1998, p. 7). People's participation can finally be defined as people-centred development (ESCAP 1998), that develops a coalition between communities and local government institutions agreeing to work together for 'achieving mutual goals' (Carley 2006, p. 250). However, in rural Bangladesh people are not seen as an obvious part for development (Mahmud 2004; Rahman 2006).

Participation is a development approach which recognizes the need to involve disadvantaged segments of the population in the design and implementation of policies concerning their well-being. The participation itself has become a major issue in the development discourse. Socio-economic development cannot be completely achieved without the active participation of respective individuals. Participation refer to people are closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political process that affects their lives (Human Development Report, 1993). It is seen as the means for a widening and redistributing of opportunities to take part in societal decision making, in contributing to development and in benefits from its fruits (Oakley). This study has

conceived the term participation as a spontaneous involvement of elected representatives of Union Parishads to perform their duties and responsibilities for the people in the studied area.

### *Elements of Participation*

Participative managers consult with their employees, bringing them in on problems and decisions so that they work together as a team. The managers are not autocrats, but neither are they managers who abandon their management responsibilities. Participative managers still retain ultimate responsibility for the operation of their units, but they have learned to share operating responsibility with those who perform the work. The result is that employees feel a sense of involvement in group goals. It follows that participation is the mental and emotional involvement of people in group situations that encourages them to contribute to group goals and share responsibility for them. There are three important ideas in this definition-involvement, contribution, and responsibility.

#### *i. Involvement*

First, and probably foremost, participation means meaningful involvement rather than mere muscular activity. A person who participates is ego-involved instead of merely task involved. Some managers/leaders mistake task involvement for true participation. They go through the motions of participation, but nothing more. They hold meetings, ask opinions, and so on, but all the time it is perfectly clear to employees that their manager/leader is an autocratic boss who wants no ideas. These empty managerial actions constitute pseudo participation, with the result that employees fail to become ego-involved.

#### *ii. Motivation to Contribute*

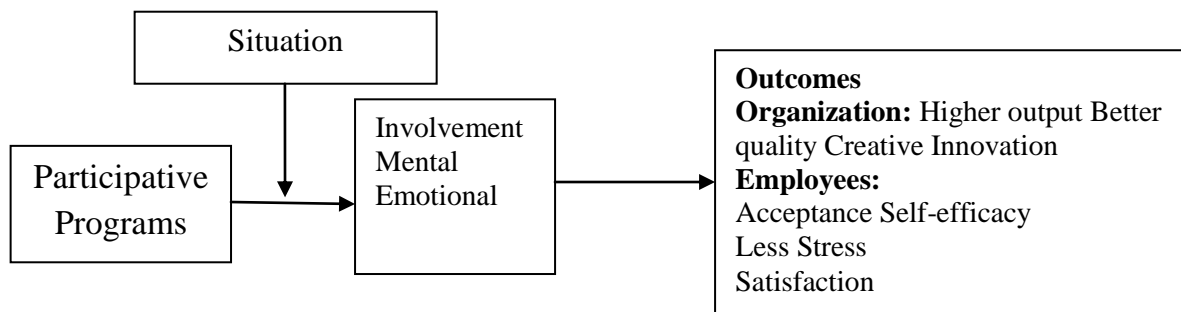
A second concept in participation is that it motivates people to contribute. They are empowered to release their own resources of initiative and creativity toward the objectives of the organization, just as Theory 'Y' predicts. In this way participation differs from consent. The practice of consent uses only the creativity of the manager/leader, which brings ideas to the group for the members' consent. Participation especially improves motivation by helping employees understand and clarify their paths toward goals. According to path-goal model of leadership, the improved understanding of path-goal relationships produces a heightened sense of responsibility for goal attainment.

### *iii. Acceptance of Responsibility*

Participation encourages people to accept responsibility in their group's activities. It is a social process by which people become self-involved in an organization and want to see it work successfully. When they talk about their organization, they begin to say we not they. When they see a job problem, it is ours not theirs. Participation helps them become good organizational citizens rather than no responsible, machinelike performers.

### ***The Participative Process***

A simple model of the participative process is shown in figure-3. It indicates that in many situations participative programs result in mental and emotional involvement that produces generally favorable outcomes for both the employees and the organization. Participating employees are generally more satisfied with their work and their supervisor, and their self-efficacy rises as a result of their new-found empowerment (Smith and Brannick, 1990).



*Figure-4: The Participative Process*

## **Leadership**

Generally a leader is someone who unites the people in achieving in some certain goals. Leadership can be defined as one's ability to get others to willingly follow. Every organization needs leaders at every level. A leader must be able to communicate his or her vision among his followers. He or she must communicate clearly and passionately, as passion is communicable. Actually leadership is the quality of the behavior of the individual whereby a guide people on their activities in an organized effort (Bernard, 1948). It is the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of the goal (Robbins, 2004). A good leader must have the discipline to work toward his or her vision single-mindedly, as well as to direct his or her actions and those of the team toward the goal. Action is the mark of a leader. A leader does not suffer analysis paralysis but is always doing something in pursuit of the vision, inspiring others to do the same. Leadership is a process of persuading people to work

willingly and enthusiastically in order to achieve goals (Islam & Khan 2006, 211). Another key word is effective leadership. Effective leadership is always needed for development of organization and institutions. So we need to effective leadership for strengthening of local government system. In this study, leadership refers to elected representatives of Union Parishads at the grass root level in rural local government in kishoregonj sadar upazila.

### ***Components of Leadership***

Leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically toward achieving objectives. It is the critical factor that helps an individual or a group identify its goals and then motivates and assists in achieving the stated goals. The three important elements in the definition are influence/support, voluntary effort, and goal achievement. Without leadership, an organization would be only a confusion of people and machines, just as an orchestra without conductor would be only musicians and instruments. The orchestra and all other organizations require leadership to develop their precious assets to the fullest (Newstrom and Davis, 2005).

Despite the multitude of ways in which leadership has been conceptualized, the following components can be identified as central to the phenomenon: a) Leadership is a process; b) leadership involves influence, c) leadership occurs in groups, and d) leadership involves common goals. Based on these components, Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse 2010).

Defining leadership as a process means that it is not a trait or characteristic that resides in the leader, but rather a transactional event that occurs between the leader and the followers. Process implies that a leader affects and is affected by followers. It emphasizes that leadership is not a linear, one-way event, but rather an interactive event. When leadership is defined in this manner, it becomes available to everyone.

Leadership involves influence. It is concerned with how the leader affects followers. Influence is the sine qua non of leadership. Without influence leadership does not exist. Leadership occurs in groups. Groups are the context in which leadership takes place. Leadership involves influencing a group of individuals who have common purpose. This can be a small task group, a community group, or a large group encompassing an entire organization.

Leadership includes attention to common goals. Leaders direct their energies toward individuals who are trying to achieve something together. By common, we mean that the leaders and followers have a mutual purpose. Attention to common goals gives leadership an ethical overtone because it stresses the need for leaders to work with followers to achieve selected goals. Stressing mutually lessens the possibility that leaders might act toward followers in ways that are forced or unethical. It also increases the possibility that leaders and followers will work together toward a common good (Rost 1991). Throughout this discussion, the people who engage in leadership will be called leaders, and those toward whom leadership is directed will be called followers. Both leaders and followers are involved together in the leadership process. Leaders need followers, and followers need leaders (Burns, 1978; Heller & Van Til, 1983; Hollander, 1992; Jago, 1982). Although leaders and followers are closely linked, it is the leader who often initiates the relationship, creates the communication linkages, and carries the burden for maintaining the relationship.

### **Local Government**

Local government is basically an organized social entity with a feeling of oneness. By definition, local government means an intra-sovereign governmental unit within the sovereign state dealing mainly with local affairs, administered by local authorities and subordinate to the state government (Jahan, 1997:92). In political terms, it is concerned with the government of a specific local area, constituting a political sub-division of a nation, state or other major political unit. In the performance of its functions, it acts as the agent of the state. In other words, the local government is an integral part of the political mechanism for government in a country. Then, as body corporate with juristic person, it represents a legal concept (Muttalib and Khan, 1983). According to the article 59(1) of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, "Local Government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies, composed of persons elected in accordance with law" (GOB, 1993).

### **Strengthening of Local Government**

Local government is basically an organized social entity with a feeling of oneness. By definition, local government means an intra-sovereign governmental unit within the sovereign state dealing mainly with local affairs, administered by local authorities and subordinate to the state government (Jahan, 1997). The strength and development of local government depends on various factors. The researcher has presented

some factors like people's participation, empowerment and effective leadership etc. If those factors work together accordingly then local government institution would be strengthened. Subsequently, researcher has identified in strengthening local government system is dependent variable for this study.

### Conceptual Framework

This paper is based on few basic concepts and terms which have been discussed to develop and analyze the research questions, objectives and test of hypothesis of this investigation. The conceptual framework presented the relationship between the specific concepts which have been studied. This framework is constructed on the basis of theoretical framework and literature review.

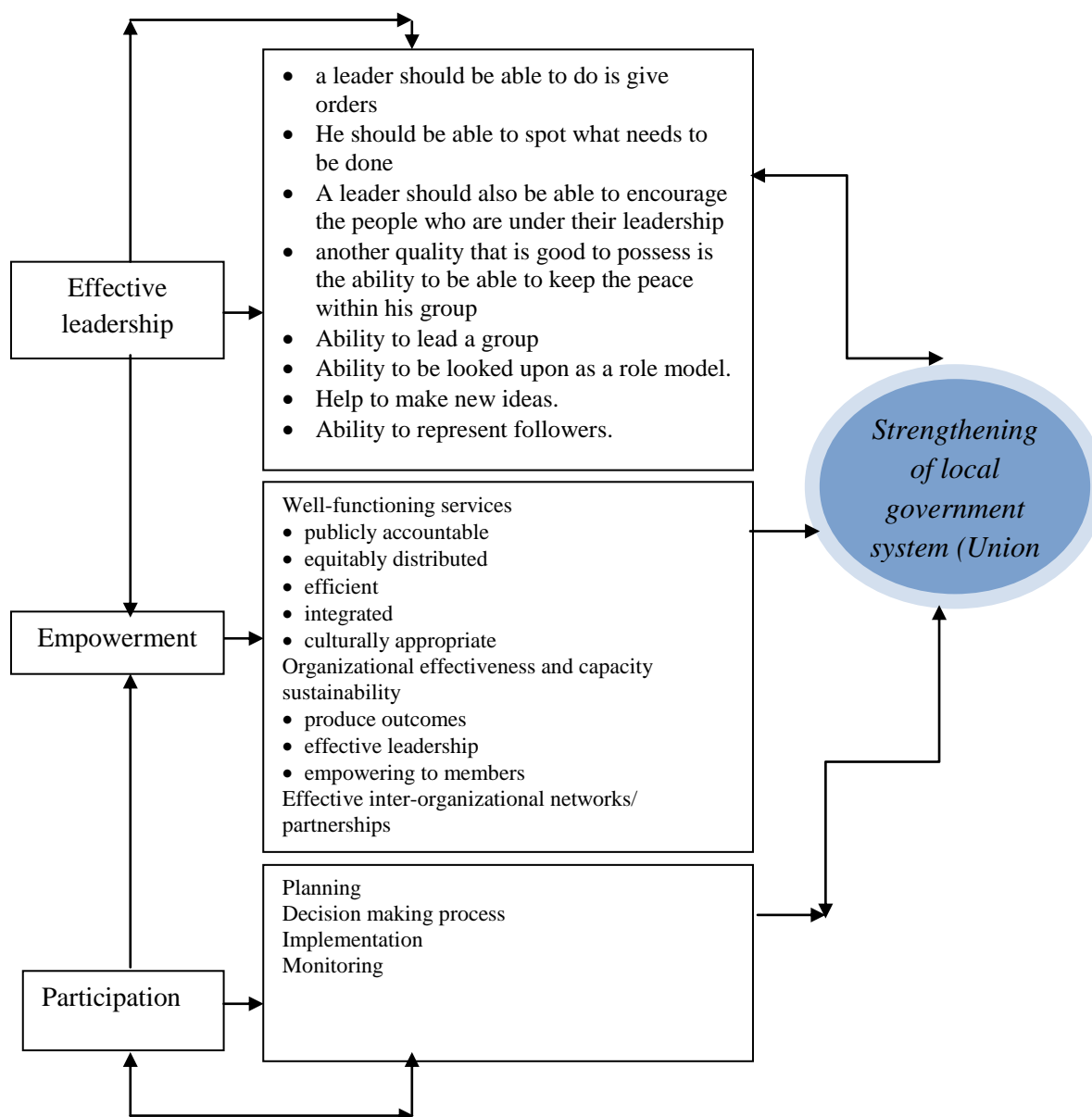


Figure-5: Conceptual Framework. Source: The Author, 2012.



### **Leadership and its Development at the Union Parishad (UP)**

The evidence (Roy 1937, Tinker 1968) shows that there were no local government organizations in pre-British Bengal. Mukherjee (1974) indicated that there was however, a kind of gram sabha (village assembly) consisting of the prominent persons of the village. Later, during the British time, the gram sabha turned into the panchayat which was a council of five. The British rulers in Bengal engaged this council in collecting revenue for them while Mukherjee (1974) identified the panchayat as the formal assembly of the village. Tinker (1968:19) observed that this body was only rarely representative of the village as a whole; it might be drawn from the members of the founding families or from Brahmins and superior cultivators.

The British East-India Company entered Bengal as sea-based traders before Aurangzaib (a Mughal ruler of India during 1658-1707) captured the throne of Delhi in 1658. The company later captured the whole of India and monopolized her trade, but when India was annexed to the British Crown after 1857, they in the name of mass participation, decentralized power in rural areas of the country. The British thus tried to create a supportive group of rural people as a strategy of their long-term rule.

With this view in mind, the village panchayat, which had been responsible for the collection of revenue at the beginning of the British period, was changed by the British administrators. Instead, they introduced a new land revenue system, the permanent settlement system. The permanent settlement act of 1793 created an emerging class of Zamindars (feudal lords) who were responsible for the collection of land revenue from the raiyats (farmers) as well as the maintenance of local administration at supra-village level. Tepper (1966) observed that since the British East India Company turned over revenue collection to the Zamindars, rural administration at the village level and collecting information on the raiyats became secondary. And as the system evolved the permanent settlement failed to fulfill the obligation of the local administration (Rashiduzzaman 1968,1)

By the middle of the nineteenth century the British authorities had difficulty in performing one of their basic tasks, the maintenance of law and order in the village. The Zamindari System failed administratively and created anarchy through merciless oppression of the raiyats. Moreover, the years of the 1860s, as Tepper (1966:46) observed were a period of agrarian unrest. In that critical situation, the province of Bengal was sub-divided (1869) into several police districts, and in 1870 the first

local government in rural Bengal (Bangladesh and West Bengal in India) came under the village chaukidari act (see act vi of 1870, Bengal Code).

Under the provisions of 1870 Act the district magistrate was empowered to create a chaukidari panchayat consisting of five local villages (for more details, see Roy, 1937). Since the chaukidari panchayats were nominated bodies they acted as agents of the government—a position Tinker (1968: 40) describes as the servants of the sarkar (govt). Still the Act of 1870 did create a kind of formal local government at the village level.

Since the panchayat was not an elected body, the system continued to be autocratic and unpopular. The Chaukidari Panchayat was followed by the Bengal Local self-government Bill of 1893. This bill was proposed by lord Rippon who at that time was the head of the government of India. Lord Rippon suggested a committee to administer a union of villages within an area of twelve square miles (Tepper, 1966:49). Thus the Bengal Local Self Government had inspired an administrative change from the intra-village to inter-village level. Under Act of 1885 a union committee consisting of a number of villages was set up (Rashiduzzaman 1968).

In the year 1905 Bengal was partitioned, the available statistics reveal that there was a massive failure of the local bodies (the union committee) in the areas that now constitute Bangladesh (see Bengal Administration Report 1903: VIII). Moreover, the years of traditional British rule ended with the outbreak World War I in 1914. Indian nationalist leaders agitated for independence. This led the British government to give more attention to local government and to placing more people in elite-leadership positions in the villages. The elite might then act as a supportive force for the government.

The Bengal Local self-government Act of 1885 was once again amended. The village self government act of 1919 set up the system of union Boards that lasted with some modifications, down to Ayub khan's in position of Basic Democracies in 1959 (Blair, 1974:99). It is observed that once again the Act of 1919 abandoned the villages. The Union Board was given expanded power and an independent income through raising taxes, which still prevails in Bangladesh.

The Union Board was subsequently (1959) named the Union council; and after liberation (1971), it was renamed the Union Parishad. The Union parishad is the lowest unit of local government organization in rural Bangladesh; each UP normally contains several villages. Each of

the Union Parishads is governed by a group of members and chairman directly elected by the people for a period of three years (see Local Government Manuals 1974).

The Union Parishad as a supra-village local government organization had prevailed in Bangladesh even after the independence of the country (1971) until 1974. To end this part of the discussion, it may be concluded that local government during Moghul and British rule in Bengal (as well as in India) was imposed from the top to create a structure of hierarchical domination to deprive the masses. After the independence of Bangladesh and India (1947) each country formulated their own policies for development of the countryside.

Local leadership in developing countries is also related to the cultural aspect of power and authority and their application to the processes of governing localities. In a study on Bangladesh, Khan (1999: 40-41) records four variations of such leaders: elderly or senior village headmen, dispute settlers, village politicians, and people acknowledged as men of honour. Using a framework of exploring the offer and receipt of advice, counsel, assistance and material support Khan points to the contribution of social institutions and personal initiatives in developing traits of leadership in local councils. Association with the provision of human services and witnessing their results can make a significant contribution to the development of leadership in remote areas that are usually not covered by the network of support expected from the central political elite. Leadership in local government institutions can be viewed with reference to a variety of ideas, and the context is extremely important. In public organisations, the tasks of defining institutional goals and missions and determining the means to achieve them are performed through an elaborate process in which various actors participate. The public sector operates in a different environment than the private sector in terms of the lack of competition and the monopolistic nature of public services. The incentive structures are different from those in the private sector, and public organisations often have less autonomy, particularly on matters of finance and human resource management.

In the absence of formal arrangements to prepare leaders for local government, the process is dependent on informal sources in developing countries. Hereditary position in society and related linkages continue to be valuable assets. Networking skills extend to a range of tasks, such as securing nomination from the major political parties, running an effective campaign that usually involves huge expenses, and maintaining constant communication with constituencies as well as with the central leadership,

while also performing the tasks expected of leaders by the public. In recent years, experience in student politics has been found to be a factor, and several former student union leaders have assumed leadership of local councils.

Local body elections help bring out some of the traits required for leadership, although their influence has been limited due to the overbearing presence of appointed officials in making decisions. Therefore, effective leadership depends upon a combination of organisational skills, political experience, and social position. Also a number of external forces play a considerable part, including the extent of Local participation the ability to win followers and retain them, and the scope for providing public services. These factors are determined by the nature of the regime in power and the circumstances prevailing in the country.

Leadership development attempts to engage the participation and commitment of current and potential leaders, provide them with opportunities for building skills, connect them to new information and resources, enlarge their perspectives on their community and how it might change, and help them create new relationships' (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh & Vidal 2001:27). Leaders are a critical element of the capacity of a community and can be developed in a variety of ways, including by training. However, it is difficult to proceed with the task of local leadership development if the rhetoric of decentralization conceals the real intention of central governments to retain control over local affairs. In this regard it is necessary to examine the role of the government and society in facilitating the identification of potential leaders and in guiding them through a process that prepares them to perform leadership functions in local government.

### **Local Government and Leadership in Bangladesh**

It is difficult to present a simple description of the structure of local government in Bangladesh due to the numerous changes that have taken place since the birth of the country in 1971. Yet, while every change in government has been followed by the introduction of new bodies and the abolition of existing ones, four recognisable levels of government can be discerned. Under the current system, the villages lie at the lowest level, although they have not always been governed through formal local councils. The *Gram Sarkar Bill 2003* was enacted in the Parliament "for involving people at grassroots level in planning and carrying out development activities" (*The Daily Independent*, 27 February 2003). The

new village level local councils have remained as ineffective as their predecessors, introduced in 1980.

Approximately 5-15 villages are grouped under a union. Previously, the union council was a key component of the system, particularly as the lowest tier of local government for a long time. The next highest level of local government, the upazila (sub-district), has also undergone the fate of the *Gram Sarkars*. The upazila councils were introduced in 1982 and suspended in 1991. They were restored in the mid-1990 and continue to function as the Parliament is debating their future. The district councils are at the top of the structure of Local Government which also includes the municipal corporations in the metropolitan cities. Local Government systems have operated in Bangladesh (previously East Pakistan and before that East Bengal in British India) for a considerable length of time. Various British, Pakistani and Bangladeshi governments have tried to introduce changes in the local government system with the stated objectives of enhancing local participation and improving conditions in the localities. Leadership development was expected to be a natural consequence of such reforms. In developing nations, traditional values in religion and social organisation work against rational bureaucratisation and the extension of power by the central political parties (see Cowan, 1958). The development of local leadership in Bangladesh has been strongly influenced by such factors.

In the early twentieth century a lack of communication facilities and the inaccessibility of the central government compelled villagers to organize themselves into administrative units. Thus traditions and local customs contributed to the formation of village bodies consisting of the elderly, with highly placed villagers looking after the implementation of the laws of the land. In this way, the earlier days of British rule facilitated the development of local leadership across the territory currently known as Bangladesh.

Throughout British rule (1757-1947) and Pakistani rule (1947-1971), leadership in the rural areas was concentrated in the hands of local landlords, wealthy farmers and religious leaders who emerged as staunch supporters of the ruling elite. In the course of time, the agents of the landlords, officials from government offices and the local moneylenders wielded real power and thus performed leadership functions in many localities (Tinker 1954:55).

While some of the reforms from the British period did initiate the process of incorporating a wider section of the population into local councils, an absence of facilities for the development of leadership and a

lack of opportunities for challenging and competing with the established traditional leaders negated the prospects of change.

A new system of local government called Basic Democracy was introduced in 1959. Its objective to promote local democracy raised the potential for participation of local leaders, and it could have led to the emergence of new leadership in the localities. But such possibilities were stifled due to the 'overbearing intervention of officials in local government affairs' (Huque 1972:6). The experiment with grassroots democracy opened up opportunities for local leaders to play a critical role in national affairs, such as serving as an electoral college to elect the President of the country. On the negative side, it also prompted efforts by the central government to install its supporters in these local councils.

The structure of Local Government institutions in Bangladesh has also had an impact on the development of Local Leadership. They are composed of a mix of ex-officio and members appointed by the government as well as elected representatives. The relationship between appointed and elected officials has not been clearly demarcated, with the councils being continuously dominated by appointed officials. Until the late 1970s Local Government councils were led by government officials who were appointed by virtue of their position as heads of geographical administrative units. Most of the items on the agenda of local council meetings were initiated and decided upon by the officials of the central bureaucracy. Rahman (1962:31) found that under the system of Basic Democracy, 85 percent of all issues on local council agendas were put there by communications from the central government.

After the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 there was an expectation of enhancement of power to the representatives of the people in the local councils. *The Bangladesh Local Councils and Municipal Committees (Dissolution and Administration) (Amendment) Order 1972* dissolved local government councils throughout the country. It provided that their functions were to be performed by a committee appointed by the sub-divisional officer of the central government. Thus, the previous trend not only continued; there were also clear signs of shifting more power from elected representatives to government officials (Huque 1988:47).

The practice of including representative elements in the local councils was initiated in the 1970s. But the culture of bureaucratic domination prevalent in Bangladesh hardly allowed the elected elements to play an effective role. At the same time, the nature of leadership practiced by the union council members contributed to the problem. Most of the local leaders were inclined to support decisions recommended by the council

chairs or proposed by the bureaucrats in charge of the councils. Although the main function of these councils at the *thana* level (being sub-districts, later designated as *upazila*) was the coordination of activities of the union councils, in practice they operated as an association of union councils rather than as a different tier of local government (Khan 1984:31-42).

Village based Local Government institutions were introduced for the first time in Bangladesh in 1980 (Government of Bangladesh 1980). Several assessments of the village-based institutions have revealed that they had no impact on the development of local leadership. But there had been some contextual changes. For example the determinants of leadership had shifted from traditional influence in the localities to possession of wealth and access to the ruling political party leaders and government officials (Huque 1988:147). Following a change of government in 1982, the village-based system of local government was suspended. In 1982, the new military government of Bangladesh reversed the policy of extending local government institutions to the lowest level and emphasized decentralization by creating 64 administrative districts out of the 21 that then existed. Some 464 sub-districts were to be the centre of operations for all development activities. Thus the prospects of developing local leadership were affected as they were dependent on the support of the ruling political parties and field officials of the central bureaucracy. A plan to extend the local government structure down to the lowest level—the village—could not be launched due to the unfavorable political climate, which posed a threat to the government (Zafarullah 1997:41).

The first military government of Bangladesh came to power in 1975, and sought to build a support base through local government institutions. The strategy had worked for the military government of Pakistan earlier in 1959. The trend continued in independent Bangladesh and successive regimes sought to establish a power base at the grass roots by drawing upon the support of local leaders. In the process, local government institutions were reorganised, abolished and reintroduced several times.

However, most of the stated objectives of bringing the communities closer to the centre and increasing participation by a wider section of the population remained unfulfilled. Local leadership remained constrained by their dependence on the centre. Thus the evolution of local leadership in Bangladesh followed a distinct pattern that was influenced by hereditary and colonial factors. Local leadership was assumed and provided by the privileged and wealthy members of the community, and this pattern has continued to reinforce itself over the decades.

The accountability of elected leaders is predominantly towards the central government and not towards the electorate. In spite of repeated assertions, successive governments have been unwilling to decentralize and have even been keen "to retain effective control over the localities through local councils and their leaders" (Huque 1986:91). A recent assessment by the Asian Development Bank (2001:18) found that the strong rhetoric of decentralization does not match the reality, and the 'centre retains a great deal of control, particularly over rural local government'. The study also revealed that the 'governments have manipulated local government institutions in their own political interests'. In a subsequent report, the World Bank (2001:2) has identified a number of weaknesses in Bangladesh's 'policies, patterns and practices of public administration' and some of these are related to the problems of leadership development in different sectors. Thus the evolution of local government institutions has been characterized by minor changes introduced with the interest of the central rulers in mind. Starting with early efforts during pre-British rule to establish a sound system for revenue collection through a band of trusted local leaders, the trend continued over the British period. As the objective was simply to maintain order and collect revenue, influential and wealthy landowners who were capable of enforcing the demands of the centre provided leadership of local councils. The system was allowed to continue undisturbed as it served the interests of both the local leaders and the central leaders.

The non-representative nature of the local councils has been a matter of concern in Bangladesh. In most cases, councils have continued to be chaired by bureaucrats or individuals nominated by the central government, despite successive governments having indicated an intention to establish representative councils with elected chairpersons.

The provision of directly elected chairs for the important sub-district councils in 1982 was a step towards the development of local government in Bangladesh. There was a shift in power as the official members nominated by the central government could only participate in the discussions and express their opinions, but did not have the right to vote. However, actual decentralization was not accomplished. In spite of being headed by elected chairs, the councils have not been free from potential domination by the bureaucrats and members nominated by the government. Throughout their period of operation there have been reports of tension and conflict between the government officials and the elected chairs (eg, Huque 1986: 88-89). The structure and manner of operation of



the local councils has imposed a further set of impediments to local leadership development. Various stipulations regarding the organization of meetings and the formulation and implementation of policies have always been in favour of a strong bureaucratic presence in the councils. Surveys of rural councillors during the 1970s revealed that the majorities were educated up to the secondary level and approximately half had had previous experience as Local Government officials (Ahmed 1984:59). The low level of academic attainment and lack of experience of other Local councilors made it easy for the more educated and more experienced officials to establish dominance over the councils. This affected the prospect of local leaders playing a prominent role in the operation of councils.

Another aspect that has impacted on the development of local leadership has been the extremely weak financial capability of the local councils. The union councils have been constantly dependent on grants from the central government for survival (see, eg, Huque 1989:15-47). During interviews in July and August 2003 a number of union council chair stated that the village councils have no authority to collect revenue and that, while the union councils have a few sources of revenue, they usually do not collect any revenue. There is a long list of sources from which the sub-district councils could collect revenue, but the money actually collected is negligible. These councils, therefore, have "had to be dependent on the development grants provided by the national government or other agencies", which are unpredictable and irregular (Hasan & Huque 1994:97). As a result, leadership at this level has only flourished on a limited range of matters. The sub-district councils have had limited authority in preparing and implementing development plans, and their activities have been closely controlled by the central government. Allocations of funds to local projects have always been determined by regulations and guidelines from the Ministries of Finance and Planning (eg, Government of Bangladesh 1983). The sub-district councilors, similar to their counterparts at the union level, are unable to assert their leadership. Obviously, the relationship between elected and non-elected officials is asymmetrical and the representatives of the people always play second fiddle to the appointed officials. There has been little encouragement and few facilities for the elected leaders to assert their position in the system.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has been discussed three aspects of Local Government system namely Empowerment, Participation and Leadership those are

directly or indirectly related to the strengthening of Local Government institutions. The term Empowerment refers to individual and institutional empowerment of Union Parishad and Participation explores the effective participation of Local people's representatives as well as the role of Local Leadership and its development at Union Parishad. The study has been talked about process and cycle of empowerment. It has also been analyzed features of empowered people. The process and components of participation has been explained here.

## Chapter Three

# Review of Literature

There are a number of literatures available where intellectuals and researchers discussed about the activities and shortcomings of the Union Parishad of Bangladesh, based on those findings a brief review is presented.

### **The Contribution of Empowerment to Strengthen Local Government System**

Professor Mahbubur Rahman (2001) has mentioned in his article entitled “*Local Government in Bangladesh: A study on Institutional Restructuring*” that Local government institutions are non-sovereign community having the legal right and the necessary organization to regulate its own affairs. The history of local government in Bangladesh dates from ancient times. With the change of government, the policy on local government it was also kept changing. Such changes were generally dictated by the imperative of legitimizing and broadening the narrow base of the power-holders in the national government. Throughout the ages, changes have taken place through restructuring and the institutions we inherit today are the result of those restructuring. But still there is a wide gap between what is called ideal and real. But it must be admitted that local government institutions contributed immensely for the improvement of the country. Local government at the rural level in Bangladesh is mainly limited to Union Parishad<sup>1</sup>. With the installation of the previous caretaker government, the authorities have constituted a Local Government Commission to find the ways and means to get the benefit of the local government institutions. The commission suggested that local government institution should be strengthen to provide better services to the citizen or people. Therefore, this study inspired further study empowerment, participation and leadership in strengthening local government system: a study on elected members at union parishad level.

Yukl & Becker (2006) mentioned in their article, “*Effective Empowerment in Organizations*” that Psychological empowerment is the perception that workers can help determine their own work roles,

---

<sup>1</sup> Professor Mahbubur Rahman (2001) *Local Government in Bangladesh: A study on Institutional Restructuring*, Journal of Social Science Review, vol.18, No. 1, pp 127-142.

accomplish meaningful work, and influence important decisions. Empowerment has been studied from different perspectives, including employee perceptions, leadership behaviors, and management programs. Despite positive rhetoric, programs designed to increase empowerment seldom achieve the benefits promised. Inconclusive and seemingly contradictory outcomes stem from the fact that few companies give employees significant control and access to management information. A half century of research suggests that empowerment strategies can offer real benefits. The study outlines facilitating conditions for effective empowerment, including characteristics of organizations, leaders, employees, and the work itself<sup>2</sup>. It has contributed to know indicators of empowerment in organization and also assisted for the development of conceptual framework of mentioned study.

Ullah, Md. Anwar and Ponguquan, Dr. Soparth (2010) stated in their article '*Financial Resources Mobilization Performance of Rural Local Government: Case Study of Three Union Parishad in Bangladesh*' that Union Parishads (councils) being the century old rural local government in Bangladesh are yet to fulfill the expectations of rural citizen which is mainly due to own resources constraints including miserable local resources mobilization. This paper focuses on Union Parishads recent revenue trend and performance from five years secondary data (2003-2007) and primary data collected from Parishad representatives, local people, government officials and national experts. Finding of the study shows that despite revenue potentials, weak revenue administration, inadequate adjustments and assignments of local revenue sources including lack of union functionaries training become impediments on local revenue enhancement. Other finding of the study suggests that in the absence of valuation based tax assessment system, households housing pattern and literacy rate can be significant determinants in ascertaining annual average holding tax revenue while per capita household holding tax, remittances, agricultural land ownership, households having electricity connections can be used as significant variables to determine the taxpayers ability to pay holding tax.

Ullah, Md. Anwar and Ponguquan, Dr. Soparth (2011) mentioned in their article entitled '*Revenue Mobilisation Performance of Union Parishad in Bangladesh: Is It Convergence of Central-Local Relations*' that Despite several local revenue sources Union Parishads (Councils) in Bangladesh are yet to perform optimal local revenue mobilisation. This paper evaluates Unions revenue trend and performance, budget and planning practices, effect of central grants on local revenue in the

---

<sup>2</sup> Yukl & Becker (2006). *Effective Empowerment in Organizations*, Organization Management Journal, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp210-231

backdrop of central government recent initiative for Unions capacity building. Analysis includes three representative Unions in a comparative perspective and uses secondary and primary data (from Parishad functionaries, local citizen, government officials and national experts). Findings show that open budget discussion, discretionary and performance grants have positive impact on local revenue collection while this study raises question about sustainability of the revenue augmentation due to disparity of deconcentrated allocations system and feeble local democratic governance. Study recommends making adjustments in local revenue shares, increase discretionary grants, and validation of local participatory governance<sup>3</sup>. This study has implications for local revenue mobilisation through convergence of central-local policy and strategy, especially for developing countries having similar local socio-economic and revenue source footings.

### **Participation of Elected Local People Representatives is required for Strengthening of Local Government System**

Mustafizur Rahman Khan and Fardaus Ara (2006) stated in their article '*Women, Participation and Empowerment in Local Government: Bangladesh Union Parishad Perspectives*' that Mainstreaming women through gender specific policies is an acknowledged precondition for achieving meaningful development in any developing country like Bangladesh. Yet it is only recently that this issue has been recognized as such in the context of policy reforms in both administrative and local government arenas. Recent local government reform in Bangladesh has led to creation of quota for women in grassroots democratic institutions. In the context of local government, women's concerns had surfaced intermittently and were highlighted in the government reform agenda as evident in the last Local Government Reform of 1997. As a consequential effect Local Government (Union Parishad) Amendment Act 1997 was promulgated. It provides 3 directly elected women members in the Union Parishad from 3 reserved seats. However, there are serious lacunas in gender balancing both in terms of governance policy and reform agenda. Union Parishad is the most popular democratic institution at the grassroots level<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, the state of women's participation at this level is crucial and deserves special attention to empower them as participation and empowerment are closely related.

---

<sup>3</sup> Md. Anwar Ullah and Dr. Soparth Ponguquan (2010) stated in their article "*Financial Resources Mobilization Performance of Rural Local Government: Case Study of Three Union Parishad in Bangladesh*", Asian Social Science, vol. 6, No. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Mustafizur Rahman Khan and Fardaus Ara (2006) "Women, Participation and Empowerment in Local Government: Bangladesh Union Parishad Perspectives" Asian Affairs, Vol. 29, No. 1 :73-00, January-March.

A.B.M.S. Zahur (2011) stated in his writing '*Meaningful Local Governments*' that what is needed is creating a system of vibrant local democracy through elected local government at each administrative unit. These bodies must be autonomous, transparent, responsive, inclusive and accountable to the people<sup>5</sup>. This study has mentioned what to do for meaningful local government but there is no explanation how it could be achieved. This is actual gap between meaningful local governments and enduring study.

Mohammed Asaduzzaman (2009) wrote in his article '*Development Role of Local Governance Institutions in Bangladesh*' that Local governance institutions are widely recognized as the best ground in which people can learn the art of governance through their own experiences and the reality that exists around them. Local government is also always, in all circumstances, considered as the important vehicle and only the means to provide state benefits and services to the local inhabitants. This paper attempts to analyze the performance of local governance institutions (public, non-profit and private) in Bangladesh in a critical and a comparative manner. It is found that, despite frequent reform measures, the public institutions have failed to become people-oriented democratic units due to strong intervention of formal and informal actors. As a result, corruption has burgeoned and pervaded every sector of the country as fatal disease, and has become an inevitable part of the daily life in Bangladesh. The findings of this paper indicate that the public institution is structurally stronger than the non-profit and private institutions but functionally weaker. The paper also suggests that strong public institutions can not work effectively and efficiently given their various malfunctioning practices, while comparatively weak institutional structures (NGOs) are able to work efficiently due to their good practices<sup>6</sup>. As a result, it is recommended that in order to eradicate and overcome the features of poor governance, the partnership form of local governance system might be the best possible solution in aid recipient countries like Bangladesh.

Bishawjit Mallick (2004) showed in his book namely *Local government: Local people's institution* that it is exploring the importance and changing pattern of local government in Bangladesh. With strong

---

<sup>5</sup> A.B.M.S Zahur (2011). *Meaningful Local Government*, Published in Daily Star, January 21.

<sup>6</sup> Mohammed Asaduzzaman (2009). Development Role of Local Governance Institutions in Bangladesh, Nepalese Journal of Public Policy and Governance, Vol. xxiv, No.1, July.

information base, this addresses the tier approaches of local government, power structure and role of different stakeholders in local government planning<sup>7</sup>. He also demonstrates the shortcomings of local government and proposals for reframing the local government structures. It has already given basic concepts about local government structures, functions, power structure and role of different stakeholders in the local level planning by which mentioned study would be helpful.

Eminent economist Dr. Hussain Zillur Rahman (2003) said that the latest trend in the emerging democratic and developing countries is to strengthen the local government system. But in our country the local government is the weakest among the government organs in terms of both power and independence. Everyone is stressing the need of a strengthened local government but it is not being materialized. Even the NGO could not take the initiatives or a firm stance to this end because the local government bodies see them as their rival<sup>8</sup>. So without a few exceptions they could not do any work in collaboration.

### **The Role of Effective Leadership in Strengthening Local Government System**

Ahmed Shafiqul Huque (2007) stated in his article '*Local Leadership: Development, Problems and Potential in Bangladesh*' that Local government institutions in developing countries are expected to perform a number of functions, including the development of elected leadership. In Bangladesh, the expansion of the decentralized local government system has facilitated the entry of an increasing number of participants into the system. Successive regimes have undertaken a number of local government reforms over the past four decades. New institutions have been created to replace the old, with the stated aims being to improve the delivery of services and extend participation at the local level. But the outcome remains unclear as the volatile political situation in Bangladesh has had an impact on the development of leadership from all sources, including local institutions. Based on research and observations extending over a period of two decades, this article examines the background and evolution of local government institutions as well as their structure and mode of operation to identify problems relating to local leadership development. Key findings are that there has been a persistent tendency to retain control by the central government and a

---

<sup>7</sup> Bishawjit Mallick (2004). *Local Government: Local People's Institution*, A.H. Development Publishing House, Dhaka.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Zillur Rahman Hossain (2003). *Local Government in the New Century*, cited in M Anisuzzaman, (2003). Sound Financial Base is Imperative to Effective Local Government, The Bangladesh Observer, March 02, Page, 5.

centralized bureaucracy has negated the prospect of developing a pool of capable and effective elected leaders in the localities. There is an absence of specific strategies and facilities for local leadership development. Thus the family, non-governmental organizations and the political parties emerge as the main agents involved in leadership development for elected Local Government institutions although their performance in this respect is far from satisfactory<sup>9</sup>. This study has already focused on development of leadership in the local level. The strengthening of local government system is required effective role of leadership. It has identified some problems, absence of specific strategies and facilities for Local Leadership development. This knowledge has assisted for the carrying out this study.

Sazeda Akther (2004) in her Article '*Women's empowerment, participation and leadership in local Self-Government System in Bangladesh: A study on elected UP women members*' stated that In Bangladesh, although women constituted half of the population, women are victims of inequality, abuse, suppression and exploitation. Women's access to political office is hampered historically by the belief that women cannot hold a difficult job. The concept of women empowerment in Bangladesh got a new twist when the Union Parishad (second amendment) Act 1997 was promulgated and the provisions were made for reservation of three seats for the women in each union parishad and municipality and direct election on those. Since then this is considered as the main means for the political empowerment of the women especially for the rural women. In this context, if any institutions want institutionalize then it must be ensure male and female participation with equally<sup>10</sup>. Otherwise it will not bring effectiveness. So we need to ensure women's participation in local self Government for improving strengthens of it. But after reviewing this article it has focused on women's empowerment, participation, leadership in local self-government system but mentioned study has been conducted wider range than that with general aspects which would increase stronger of existing system.

Sidorenko, Alexandre (2006) focused on Empowerment and participation is closely inter-related. In a sense, these two notions in

---

<sup>9</sup> Ahmed Shafiqul Huque (1988). *Politics and Administration in Bangladesh*, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, pp. 20-64.

<sup>10</sup> Sazeda Akter (2004) *Women's empowerment, participation, & leadership in local self govt. system of Bangladesh: A Study on elected female members of Union Parisad*, Quarterly Journal of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, Vol. 9.



social policy are indivisible: empowering people means promoting opportunities for their participation, while participation requires empowering people to enable them to exercise this human right. Both empowerment and participation can be economic, social, or political. They both are applicable at different levels; from individual to family to community to national and up to global level. People are empowered through participation<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, the study has inspired to mention study.

UN ESCAP (2003) has conducted a *Comparative Study on Local Government in Asia and the Pacific* and published an article. In this article, UN ESCAP describes that Local Government bodies in Bangladesh are managed by a combination of elected people and appointed personnel. The Chairman and members of the *Zila Parishads*, including women, are all elected by direct vote. In addition, elected Chairmen of *Upazilas* and Municipalities would also become members of the *Parishads*, without voting rights. The District Commissioner (or Chief Civil Administrator) would serve as Executive Officer of the *Parishad* while the MPs elected for the *Zila* would be available as Advisers to the *Parishad*. In the case of the appointed people, for such levels as the *Thana/Upazila Parishad*, *Zila Parishads* and urban local governments (*Pourashavas* and City Corporation), there is both staff directly recruited by the local body as well as some sent on deputation from the central government<sup>12</sup>. Appointments at *Gram* and Union *Parishads* are all locally done and the people selected are also generally from within the locality.

Zarina Rahman Khan (1999) has explored in her article '*NGOs and Local Government Reform in Bangladesh*' that today it is an accepted fact among concerned parties in Bangladesh that an effectively strong local government system is one of the essential preconditions for ensuring good governance. Again, economic progress and development requires good governance with accountability delivery mechanisms as much as it needs sound and pragmatic development policies. Adequately empowered and accountable local government institutions are essential vehicles for ensuring formulation and implementation of such policies.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Sidorenko, Alexandre (2006). *Empowerment & Participation in Policy Action on Ageing*, UN Programme on Ageing, International Design for All Conference 2006, Rovaniemi, Finland

<sup>12</sup> UN ESCAP (2003) *Comparative Study on Local Government in Asia and the Pacific*, <http://www.unescap.org/huset/lgstudy/>

<sup>13</sup> Zariana Rahman Khan (1999) *NGOs and Local Government Reform in Bangladesh* The Journal of Social Studies, No. 84, pp47-64

### **Decentralization for Strengthening of Local Government System**

M. M. Khan (2009) refers in his book '*Decentralization in Bangladesh Myth or Reality*' that decentralization is not an easy process. Decentralization efforts need to be nurtured by constant, gradual and careful experimentation over many years. He attempts to critically analyze decentralization efforts in Bangladesh. Special emphasis has been placed on major decentralization efforts and their impact on the country's local government system. The author includes discussion on the last caretaker government's endeavor to recognize the local government system. The concepts of local government have generated from the concepts of decentralization. The central government has delegated its power, functions to local level. It has been possibly done by using decentralization idea<sup>14</sup>. Accordingly the study has been assisted to conduct this study.

Nizam Ahmed (1988) mentioned in his article *Experiment in Local Government Reform in Bangladesh* that since it assumed power in March 1982 the government of General Ershad has under taken a number of measures to reform local government and administration in Bangladesh. The measures were introduced on the recommendations (june 1982) of the committee for Administrative Reorganization/ Reform (CARR) and provide, inter alia, for abolishing the sub-division as a tier of administration, democratizing the rural local government, devolving adequate authority and responsibility to various local councils and enhancing popular and political control over the local bureaucracy. To the protagonists of reform, these represent a big leap toward designing a new governmental system in rural Bangladesh. The main objective of this article is to examine the important features of the Ershad government reforms and to assess their politico-administrative implications, focusing upon three issues<sup>15</sup>. First, the article identifies the areas in which the new measures differ from local government reforms carried out in the past. Second, it elaborates some of the major problem that cropped up during the process of implementation of reforms, and third, it identifies a number of drawbacks that are likely to limit the potential of the reforms.

---

<sup>14</sup> M.M. Khan (2009) *Decentralization in Bangladesh Myth or Reality?* A.H. Development Publishing House, Dhaka , Bangladesh.

<sup>15</sup> Nizam Ahmed (1988) *Experiments in Local Government Reform in Bangladesh*, Asian Survey, vol. 28, No. 8, August.

Pranab Kumar Panday (2011) stated in his article *Local Government System in Bangladesh: How Far is it Decentralised?* That this paper aims to provide a better understanding of the power decentralisation process at the local level in Bangladesh. More specifically, this paper intends to explore whether or not the much needed autonomy has been built into the decentralisation process. The paper is basically based on the review of secondary materials. However, efforts have been made to consult all the available local government commission reports. The study findings suggest that despite having Constitutional recognition of the establishment of a strong and independent local government system, the political leadership of Bangladesh has initiated different reforms to bring changes to the structure of the Local Government Institutions (LGIs) in the name of decentralisation<sup>16</sup>. However, the main intentions behind most of the reforms have been to strengthen their political base in the particular area. As a result, these institutions could not be established as a focal point of development where people would have the power to monitor and control their constituencies.

Rahman (2006) has written that Union Parishad has twenty two functions and these can be classified into some categories –civic functions, police, defense, revenue and administrative functions, development activities and judicial functions. Union Parishad ensures all these activities by means of six committees-discipline committee, health and family planning committee, agriculture, health and environment committee, fishery and livestock committee and other committees. Local self-government is a must for the promotion and development of democracy and it helps to solve local problems using local resources.

Kazi Zahid Hossain in his article '*Upazilla System is essential for increasing strength of Local Government in Bangladesh*' acknowledged that Local Self-government in different level of administration is important for effectiveness and strength for the aim of importance of domestic process and create the spirit of democracy among people. It is more important to give more power to local self- Government institutions for increasing people's participation in development activities in the different countries in the present world (develop & developing countries). The principles of elected government have described in every level of administration in the Bangladesh constitution and have explained it with specifically about role & functions of local government. The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of

---

<sup>16</sup> Pranab Kumar Panday (2011) *Local Government System in Bangladesh: How Far is it Decentralised?* LEX LOCALIS, vol. 9, No. 3.

the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible to peasants' workers and women (Article- 9). Another Article mentioned that the republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed (Article-11).

Talukdar (2009) stated in his books '*Rural Local Government in Bangladesh*' that understanding the local government in Bangladesh is indeed difficult without tracing its historical legacy. He attempts to make a review of such evolutionary background with particular focus to the rural local government in Bangladesh. Basically this book holds a tailor made approach to the development of the rural local government in Bangladesh. It has stressed back to the concern of absence of the local government commission, national decentralization policy and sub-national borrowing authority in Bangladesh. Firstly he explained a general overview of the rural local government in Bangladesh including its institutional, managerial and structural arrangements. It also provides a chronological glimpse of the ordinances including the significant changes being made by the recent past military backed caretaker government in Bangladesh. He assesses the legislative inconsistencies of the local government in Bangladesh, and unleashes the political perspective of the local government development. It also presents the context of fiscal decentralization and issues of rural local governance in Bangladesh<sup>17</sup>. Actually the study has selected union parishad which is the lowest tier of local government and it has located in the rural area. Therefore, this study is closely associated with the mentioned study regarding local government system.

Kamal Siddiqui, (1995) in his book *Local Government in Bangladesh* mentioned that Local Governments have been carrying out some drawbacks especially organizational weakness. Local government may degenerate in to narrow minded, weak, possessive and ignorant institutions promoting separatism and inertia. Strength, weaknesses and problems of Local Government are obviously generalizations which need to be tested in a specific context. Firstly, there may be for perfectly valid reasons a substantial divergence between de jure and de facto local government, in a given country. Secondly, the actual quality and character of local government is determined by host of factors such as national and local traditions, customary defense patterns, political pressures, party influence and discipline, bureaucratic professionalism,

---

<sup>17</sup> Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar (2009) *Rural Local Government in Bangladesh*, Osder Publications, Dhaka.

economic resource controls social organization and beliefs, geographical realities, and finally the nature of the central state. It goes without saying that the relative influences of these factors on local government will vary from country to country. And yet, the point to underscore here is that the efficacy and effectiveness of a local government system cannot be isolated from the universe in which it is located<sup>18</sup>. To sum up, local government perhaps has no substitute. If it has weaknesses and problems, these are often the product of extraneous circumstances as described above, and these are not beyond correction in a long term perspective.

---

<sup>18</sup> Kamal Siddiqui (1992). *Local Government in South Asia: A Comparative study*, University Press Limited, Dhaka.



## Chapter Four

# Union Parishad in Bangladesh

### Introduction

Local government of Bangladesh is in a limbo. As a political institution to ensure public participation in development activities, local government is yet to take proper shape in Bangladesh. Since independence 1971 successive governments have tried to use the local government system for their own political interest. No regime demonstrated its interest in reducing central control over rural local institutions. The party or regime in power has wanted to make the local government representatives their power base and manipulated the system to this end (Dr. Rahman 2006). The present local government system has three tiers. Union parishad is the lowest tier among them and it is called mass people's institution among others. However, Union Parishad the century old institution has been serving people within its limited resources and authority. The institution directly and indirectly controlled by the central government from its inception. Historically Union Parishad failed to follow a unique standard of governing system because of fragile and inconsistency practice of democracy in the country. Union Parishads are struggling for image crisis because of suffering from scarcity of resources, little control over jurisdiction, political interference to meet its local need.

### Evolution of Union Parishad in Bangladesh

There is a long and traditional history of local government in Bangladesh. Existence of local government may be found since very long time in this subcontinent. During the ancient, medieval, British, Pakistan and Bangladesh periods initiatives were taken to enable Local Government to function properly.

Panchayet System was an old local government institution in this region. The term '*panchayet*' implies an assembly of five or more persons. The term was in vogue in Bengal, as in the rest of northern India, since time immemorial. During the ancient period this village assembly or panchayet which was either nominated by the king or elected by the people of a village, was left undisturbed in the overall management of the administration of the village.

The composition of the panchayets was such that they represented different classes and castes. The panchayets distributed land among the

villagers, collected tax from them and paid to the government its due share. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* mentioned the *grama-vrddhas* (village elders) who were the esteemed members of the village assembly and whose duty was to assist the government officials in deciding petty disputes in the villages<sup>1</sup>.

The present structure of local government in Bangladesh had its origin in British colonial period. The first attempt at establishing local government institution was made during the latter part of the nineteenth century. The structure, functions and financial management of local government institutions have undergone many changes from the British colonial period to the present day.

It is recorded in history that the villages were self reliant before the colonial rule. Every village had its own community based organization known as Panchayet. All the adult members of the village society constituted it. Apart from taking decisions in social matters adjudication in disputes and maintenance of law and order were among its responsibilities. The Panchayers used to mobilize resources for the discharge of their traditional functions. The Panchayet evolved naturally out of the social needs and was based on public opinion. There was no legal basis or authority behind them.

During the British rule the Bengal village Chowkidari Act was passed in 1870 with administrative, economic and political objectives. This paved the way for setting up local government body under the law. Under this Act several villages were organized into a Union and Chowkidari Panchayet (Organization) was set up in each Union. The Chowkidari Panchayet had five members who were appointed by the government for three years. The Panchayets were responsible for appointment of Chowkidars (village police) for maintenance of law and order. The village police were paid through collection of Chowkidari tax from the villagers.

Under the Chowkidari system members were considered as government functionaries rather than representative of the villagers. The Panchayets were used mainly to assist the administration in maintaining law and order and for collection of tax. They had no role and function in respect of development activities. For these reasons the need for local government bodies with greater responsibility was felt replacing the Chowkidari Panchayet, A major step in this direction was marked by the

---

<sup>1</sup> See for details 'the National Encyclopaedia of Bangladesh', Published by the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh. [http://banglapedia.org/HT/P\\_0062.HTM](http://banglapedia.org/HT/P_0062.HTM)



passing of the Bengal Local Self Government Act in 1885. Under these Act Union Committees, Local Government Boards and District Boards were set up respectively.

The Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919 abolished Chowkidari Panchayet and Union Committee and in their place set up Union Board and District Board. Two third of the members of Union Board were elected and one third nominated. The system of nomination was abolished in 1946. The main function of Union Board was maintenance of law and order, roads and bridges, provision of health care, charitable dispensaries and primary school, water supply and assistance to the District Board. The Union Board could dispose of minor criminal cases and was given the authority to levy Union rate.

During Pakistan period under the Basic Democracy Order of 1959 Local Government bodies were set up at four tiers viz. Union Council at Union level, Thana Council at Thana level, and District Council at District level and Divisional Council at Divisional level. On average a Union comprised an area with 10,000 inhabitants and the Union Council was constituted with 10 to 15 members. Two third of the members were elected by voters and one third was nominated by the government. The system of nomination was abolished after the introduction of the constitution. The members used to elect a chairman and one vice chairman among them. In addition, the Union Council was given 37 functions among which agriculture development, water supply, and education, communications, and social welfare were included. The Union Council was also given the authority to set up conciliation court and the members were given judicial power under the Muslim Family and Marriage Ordinance of 1961. Under the Basic Democracies Ordinance, 1959 the Union Council was authorized to impose taxes on property and other sources to build its own fund in addition to existing Chowkidari fund.

Government grant was given for rural works programme and for constitution of Union Parishad office. The present local government system in Bangladesh had its origin in British colonial period. The self-governing local Panchayets that functioned at village level gradually became weak and disappeared soon after the colonial rulers established their authority over the length and breadth of the country. Local government institution was introduced by the colonial rulers at village level in Bengal in 1870 to further their administrative control and on economic and political considerations. In 1885 Union Committees were formed at the village level, Local Boards at the Sub-Divisional level and

District Boards at the District level under the Bengal Local Self Government Act. The members of these bodies were both nominated and elected. The local bodies had no autonomy, though the names of local government bodies were changed during Pakistan period their status remained almost the same with very little increase in autonomy. After Bangladesh became independent decision was taken to strengthen local government institutions at three levels and to make provision for women members. In 1982 Upazila Parishad was established as an elected local government body at Thana level. Earlier efforts at forming Gram Sarkar<sup>2</sup> and Palli Parishad at village level did not succeed. The Upazila system introduced in 1982 was abolished in 1991. Since inception the local government institutions were given the responsibilities for maintenance of law and order infrastructures development and their maintenance, health, education etc. within their area<sup>3</sup>.

### **Legal Basis of the Union Parishad**

The Union Parishad owes its existence to the constitution of Bangladesh. Article 59 of the Constitution of Bangladesh states:

1. Local government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies composed of persons elected in accordance with the law.
2. Everybody such as is referred to in Clause (i) shall, subject to this Constitution and any other law, perform within the appropriate administrative unit, such functions as shall be prescribed by Acts of Parliament, which may include functions relating to:
  - a. administration and the work of public offices
  - b. the maintenance of public order; and
  - c. the preparation and implementation of plans relating to public services and economic development.

Article 60 states: For the purpose of giving full effect to the provision of Article 59, Parliament shall by law confer powers on the local government bodies referred to in that Article, including power to impose taxes for local purposes, to prepare their budgets and to maintain funds. However, under the Fourth Amendment of the constitution in 1975, this

---

<sup>2</sup> This system is not actually directly elected body but it has been performing to the immediate past four party alliances government in Bangladesh. This was working for rural peoples.

<sup>3</sup> See for details Official website of Local Government Division, Ministry of LGRD & C, <http://www.lgd.gov.bd/html/about.html>

provision was abolished. In Chapter II of the Constitution, corrected up to 28 February, 1979, there is only one sentence on local government, in Clause 9:

“The state shall encourage local government bodies composed of representatives from relevant areas and in these bodies, there shall be as far as possible, special representation of peasants, workers and women.”

Under the Twelfth Amendment of the Constitution in 1991, it has been stated:

‘Local government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies composed of persons elected in accordance with law. Every local body shall perform within the appropriate administrative unit such functions as shall be prescribed by Acts of Parliament, which may include functions relating to:

- d. administration and the work of public offices
- e. the maintenance of public order; and
- f. the preparation and implementation of plans relating to public services and economic development.’

In 1992, the Local Government Structure Review Commission recommended major changes in the structure, composition, functions and finances of rural local government bodies in Bangladesh in order to facilitate local government activities and also to ensure people’s participation in them. Accordingly the Jatiya Sangsad (National Parliament) passed the Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Act 1993. According to this law, a union was divided into nine wards, in each UP it reserved 3 seats exclusively for women member, provision for forming standing committees were introduced. Provision for direct election of the 3 women members of the reserved seat of the UP was introduced in the Local Government (Union Parishad) (Second Amendment) Act, 1997.

### **Union Parishad at Present**

In order to understand the functions of the UP Standing Committee, which is our focal point of this research, we need to know about the present Union Parishad. UPs are governed by the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983. In 1988, 1993 and 1997 major changes occurred with respect to the structure and composition of UPs. However, these amendments have been incorporated in the 1983 Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance (as modified till date). The structure and composition of the UP are based on these amendments. It

may be mentioned that a UP is known by a local name assigned by the DC.

The structure, power and functions of the Union Parishad in Bangladesh have been changed many times since its inception in the ancient period. The present structure of the UP came through the demand of the people and the thoughts of the political leaders. The present UP has its legal basis in the constitution.

At present in Bangladesh, the Union Parishad is constituted under the legal basis of the constitution of Bangladesh. In section 9, 10, 11, 59 and 60 of the constitution the formation, responsibility and functions of the local government institutions has been described. Based on those sections the Union Parishad operates according to The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983 and its elections are held according to the Union Parishad (Election) Rules 1983.

The Union Parishad is constituted of 1 Chairman and 12 members. Among the 12 members, 3 seats are reserved for women. Each Union is divided into 9 wards and each ward has 1 member elected directly by people's votes. Every 3 ward's voters will elect 1 women members for the reserved seats. But any women voter of the Union can be elected a members for any of the 9 wards besides the reserved 3 seats. The chairman will be elected by direct vote of the voters of his or her Union. The term of a Union Parishad will be from its first meeting 5 years. But it will continue to work until the first meeting of the next Union Parishad holds its first meeting even if it exceeds the 5 year limit. The functions of the Union Parishad are of 5 types. These are

- a. Civic functions,
- b. Police and Security,
- c. Revenue and Administration,
- d. Development and Poverty Alleviation,
- e. Judicial functions.

The government pays the remuneration of the chairman and members of the UP. The income sources of the UP are very limited and the duties and functions are enormous.

### **Issues of Union Parishad**

Since inception the local government institutions were given the responsibilities for maintenance of law and order, infrastructures development and their maintenance, health, education etc. within their area. Though they had sources of own, revenue income foremost of their

activities they mainly relied on various grants from the government. At present only Union Parishad in an elected local government body. There is no elected body at the Thana level and though Zilla Parishad is a local government at District level there is no elected body for their management.

**Structure of the UP**

According to the latest amendments of the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983 a union is divided into nine wards. Each UP consists of a Chairman and nine members in the general seats—one for each ward. In addition, three seats have been exclusively reserved for women members, who are elected by the voters of the concerned three wards. The voters of the entire union directly elect the UP Chairman, and the voters of the concerned ward on the basis of adult franchise elect the nine members in the general seats. The chairman is considered a member of the Parishad and both Chairman and members are paid an honorarium by the government.

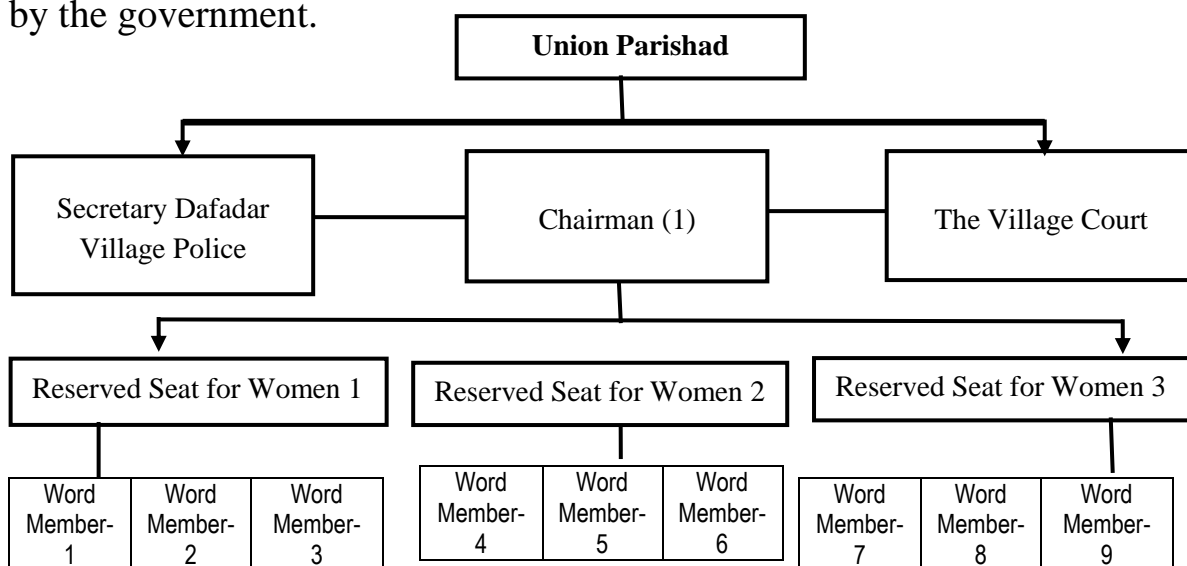


Figure-6: The Administrative Structure of Union Parishad

**Term of Union Parishads**

<sup>4</sup>The term of a Union parishad shall be a period of <sup>5</sup>five years commencing on the day of its first meeting after its constitution<sup>6</sup> Provided

<sup>4</sup> The words and comma “Term of Union Parishads, etc.” were substituted for the words “Term of Union Parishads” by section 2 of the Local Government (Union Parishads) (Amendment) Act, 1992 (Act No. X of 1992).  
<sup>5</sup> The word “five” was substituted for the word “three” by section 2 of the Local Government (Union Parishads) (Amendment) Act, 1992 (Act No. X of 1992).  
<sup>6</sup> The proviso was substituted by section 4 of the Local Government (Union Parishads) (Amendment) Act, 1993 (Act No. XX of 1993).

that, notwithstanding the expiration of its term, a Union Parishad shall continue to function until the first meeting of the Parishad constituted to succeed it. A Union Parishad shall, after its constitution, hold its first meeting on such date, not later than thirty days from the day on which the names of its Chairman and elected members are notified in the *official Gazette*, as may be appointed by the Government<sup>7</sup>.

### **Personnel Systems of Union Parishad**

Local government bodies in Bangladesh are managed by a combination of elected people and appointed personnel. The Chairman and members of the Union *Parishads* including women, are all elected by direct vote. Appointments at Union *Parishads* are all locally done and the people selected are also generally from within the locality. Union *Parishad* have a full time Secretary, 9 *Mahalladars* (Neighbourhood Workers) and 1 (Caretaker). There are having a Tax Collector and an Assistant Secretary, who has also been working as an accountant. The Chairman of the Union *Parishad* is the Chief Executive.

### **Responsibilities of the Union Parishad**

The responsibilities of the Union Parishad are determined by law. According to sub-section 2 of section 30 of The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983 the Union Parishad has 10 compulsory responsibilities. These are:

1. Maintenance of law and order and rendering of assistance to the administration in the maintenance of law and order.
2. Adoption of measures for preventing disorder and smuggling.
3. Adoption and implementation of development schemes in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, livestock, education, health, cottage industries, communications, irrigation and flood protection, with a view to improving the economic and social condition of the people.
4. Promotion of family planning.
5. Development and use of local resources.
6. Protection and maintenance of public property, such as roads, bridges, canals, embankments, telephones and electricity lines.
7. Review of development activities undertaken by different agencies at the union level, and submission of recommendations to the Upazila Parishad with regard to the activities of those agencies.
8. Motivation and persuasion of the people to install sanitary latrine.

---

<sup>7</sup> *The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance, 1983*

9. Registration of births, deaths, blind people, beggars and destitute people.

10. Conducting censuses of all kinds<sup>8</sup>.

Besides those compulsory responsibilities, UP has more 38 optional responsibilities described in Part-1 of the Schedule of The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983.

### **The UP Standing Committees**

For decentralization of work and proper solution of problems each Union Parishad can constitute standing committees with its members or co-opted members (if any) which will perform its duties according to the specific rules. Section 38 of The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983 has stated that the Union Parishad can form any committee with prior permission of the authority if it deems necessary. The concept of Union Parishad Standing Committee came from the objective of making the UP more active and efficient. According to the Local Government Union Parishads (Amendment) Acts. 1993 and 2001 each UP will constitute 13 standing committees, one for each of these areas: (a) finance and establishment (b) education and mass education (c) health, family planning and epidemic control (d) audit and accounts (e) agriculture and other development works (f) social welfare and community centers (g) cottage industries and cooperatives (h) law and order (i) welfare of women and children, sports and culture (j) fisheries and livestock (k) conservation of the environment and tree plantation (l) union public works (m) rural water supply and sanitation.<sup>9</sup>

### **Formation of Standing Committee**

The UP forms its standing committees for one year. In every fiscal year in the first meeting of the UP or as soon as possible in the second UP meeting, these committees must be formed. A standing committee elects one of its members as its Chairman, and another member as its Vice-Chairman. One-fourth of the total number of Vice-Chairmen of the standing committees will, subject to the availability of candidates, be elected from among the women members elected from the reserved seats. Furthermore, a UP may co-opt a person of either sex who is not a member of the Parishad but who may in the opinion of the Parishad possess special qualifications for serving on any of the standing

---

<sup>8</sup> Siddiqui, K. (2005) 'Local Government in Bangladesh' The University Press Limited, page 154

<sup>9</sup> Siddiqui, K. (2005) 'Local Government in Bangladesh' The University Press Limited, page 163

committees however such a member does not enjoy any voting rights in standing committee meetings but is deemed to be a member thereof for all others purposes. Besides, the UP may with the previous approval of the Deputy Commissioner (DC), constitute additional standing committees for such purposes as may be prescribed by regulations.

The purpose of the UP standing committee is to assist with the activities of the UP. Some matters are not possible to resolve in the UP office without proper verification. In those cases the UP standing committees conduct on the spot inspection, take peoples opinion, analyze that information gathered and submit them to the UP. When such a matter is put before the UP with the analysis and suggestions from the standing committee then it is easier to implement. The UP decides the working area of a standing committee. Any decision made by the standing committee has to be approved by the UP.

Functions of different standing committees are described below:

#### ***Finance and Establishment Committee***

- To take initiative to increase the income of the Union Parishad
- To ensure the regular attendance of the UP Secretary and the Coukidars/Dafadars
- To supervise the activities of UP employees and inform the UP Chairman for taking adequate steps about any activity against discipline and suggest measures against such activities by the UP employees

#### ***Education and Mass Education***

- To take necessary steps to ensure the attendance of the students in all the education institutes in the Union
- To try to solve any problem occurred in the education program
- To take necessary steps to ensure the attendance of the teachers in all the education institutes in the Union
- To supervise regularly the proper functioning of all the education institutes in the Union and take necessary steps in case of any irregularity
- To take necessary steps to ensure education for those elderly people who could not take education at proper age, so that they can read, write and calculate

#### ***Health, Family Planning and Epidemic Control Committee***

- To take necessary steps to ensure proper healthcare of the local people



- The committee will keep itself informed of the activities of the health and family planning workers in the local area so that they carry out their duty properly. If any irregularity is found, first advise them to solve it and then if necessary request the concerned senior officer to take measures against the responsible persons
- To aware the local people about the family planning matters and give publicity to birth control in the local area.

#### ***Audit and Accounts Committee***

- Scrutinize the UP accounts and submit the report to the regular UP meeting 3 times a year.
- To conduct inspection of all UP accounts including the cash book of the secretary at different times.
- Inspection of accounts and works of all budget/skim.
- Inspection of register books of tax collection, assessment, daily collection, income account at different times.
- Instruct the secretary to resolve any irregularity, if found. If the irregularity persists, disclose the matter to the UP meeting for due action against responsible persons.

#### ***Agriculture and other Development Works***

- Take necessary steps towards agricultural development of the UP area
- Motivate the people to use high quality seeds.
- Arrange meetings/drives to disseminate information on diseases and nursing of crops and make an officer of the agricultural department present in those meeting.
- Coordinate between the agriculture department and the local people to make sure that the people get proper service from the employees and officers of the agricultural department.

#### ***Social Welfare and Community Centres Committee***

- Give publicity to the programs of the social welfare department
- Arrange trainings through the social welfare department
- Maintenance of community centres, if any in the UP area

#### ***Cottage Industries and Cooperatives Committee***

- Motivate the local people to be engaged in cottage industry and arrange for necessary training
- Motivate local people to development activities through cooperatives

***Committee for Welfare of Women and Children, Sports and Culture***

- To identify the problems of the women and children of the UP area and take necessary steps to solve them or raise this matter in the UP meeting for taking necessary steps.
- Inform the local people about the harmful effects of dowry, divorce etc.
- Publicity to resist torture against women and children.
- Take necessary steps if any incident of torture against women and children occurs.
- To take necessary steps to inform the local people about provisions of punishment for the crime of torture against women and child.

***Fisheries and Livestock Committee***

- Motivate the people for fish farming and take necessary step.
- Arrange training by officials of the concerned department for the fish farmers.
- Arrange training on livestock rearing for the local people by the officials of the livestock department.
- Inform local people on modern system of fish and livestock farming.

***Committee for Conservation of the Environment and Tree Plantation***

- Publicity for plantation of more trees.
- Undertake tree plantation program on the roadside in the UP area.
- Assist any organization who are interested in tree plantation.
- Take necessary steps to nurture the planted trees.
- Take necessary steps to aware the local people about the importance of conservation of the environment and what they should do to avoid damaging the environment.

***Union Public Works Committee***

- Supervise the progress of public works undertaken by the UP and to ensure that the work is properly done.
- To monitor all works in the UP area undertaken by any department to ensure that the work is done properly.

***Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Committee***

- Take necessary steps to ensure pure drinking water for the UP residents.
- Take necessary steps to ensure healthy sanitation system for the UP residents.

### ***Law and Order Committee***

- Take necessary steps to ensure security in the UP area.
- To supervise the work of the dafadar and choukidar.
- To inform the chairman about any threat to the security of the UP residents<sup>10</sup>.

The Local Government Division of the LGRD&C Ministry in 1989 issued a circular for the formation of a committee in each UP of the country to resist oppression of women. The functions of this committee are as follows:

- to entertain complaints regarding oppression of women and take necessary measures on a priority basis to combat such oppression. Where the committee is unable to solve the problem, the matter is referred in writing to the Upazila Women's Affairs Officer.
- to take all necessary steps to combat the oppression of women.
- to publicise problems faced by women on the UP bulletin board, so that the oppressed women can easily know where to knock for help.
- to hold meetings at least once a month and submit a report to the Upazila Women's Affairs Officer every month on its activities.

### **Conclusion**

In any discussion of Local Government has not been completed without studying basic knowledge of Union Parishad. The strengthen Local Government system has required to socio-economic development of rural area. There is no option without strengthening of Local Government to ensure good governance at the grass route level. Union Parishad is such lowest tier of administrative body. It has required providing basic knowledge for its chairman, members and women members especially female members do not have idea about their duties and responsibilities. In this regards, an attempt has been made to review and analyze the efforts made for bringing about reforms in public administration and local government systems in Bangladesh since its emergence as an independent country in 1971. In the process, it has been observed that unfortunately some reform efforts fell short of expectation in bringing about desired changes in the public administration and local government systems of the country for a number of reasons. But for the sustenance and institutionalization of democratic tradition, values and culture in the

---

<sup>10</sup> See for details 'Skill Development Training Module for the Union Parishad' Published by Neeti Gobeshona Kendro and Plan Bangladesh

polity, an efficient, result oriented, representative, participatory, gender sensitive, transparent, corruption free and neutral public administration and Local Government system are required. There is a consensus that a broad and holistic reform effort has to be initiated in the light of the changes that have taken place in the national and global arenas. Furthermore, this chapter has been described various aspect of Union Parishad including legal basis, structure, functions, formation of standing committees and village court. Elected representatives as well as rural inhabitants have been learned about Union Parishad by this knowledge.

## Chapter Five

# Empowerment, Participation and Leadership: Current Realities

### Strengthening Local Government through Effective role of Leadership

Effective leadership is essential for the development or progress of an organization. Union parishad is also an organization which mention above. The effectiveness of leadership measures on the basis of their performance in the study area. The findings of study have presented in the table below

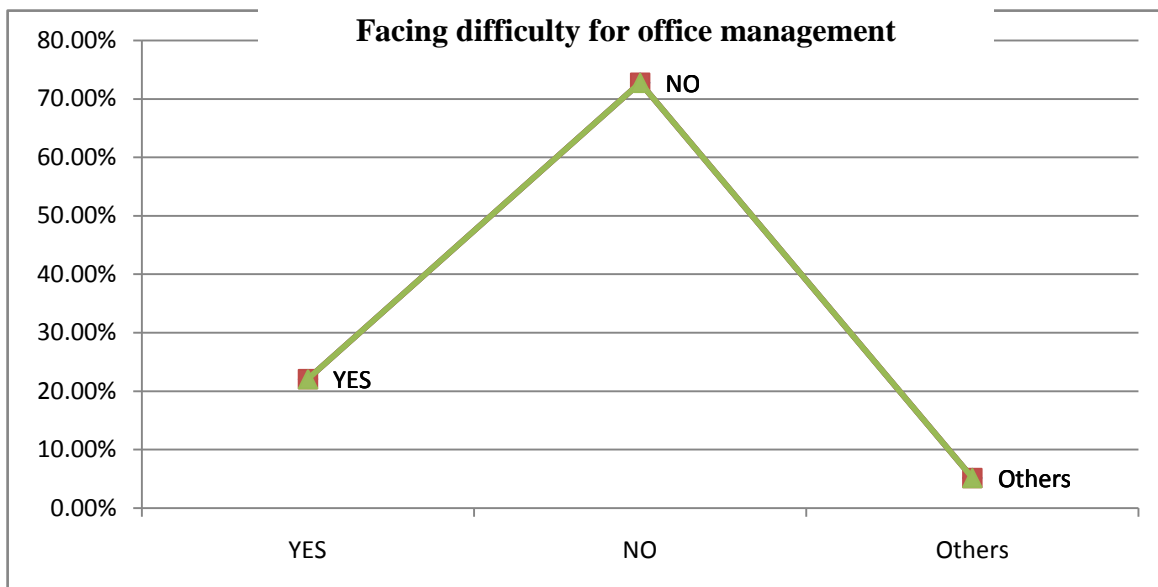


Figure-7: Difficulty for office management

The line graph shows that measurement of difficulty and given order by leader for office management. 22.08% respondent thought that local leaders are facing difficulty to give order in meticulous situation. The significant respondents who mentioned, they are facing difficulty for their office management. In the particular case, these are lack of skilled personnel, Local Political influences and Excessive control of Local administrative authority etc. 72.73 % of the respondent replied that there is no difficulty to give order in any situation. Because, either they are involved with the ruling party nor guided by Local Administrative Authority. But 5.19% respondents have given diverse opinion. Although the significant respondents said that leader is not facing any unwanted behavior to give order to manage administration of UP.

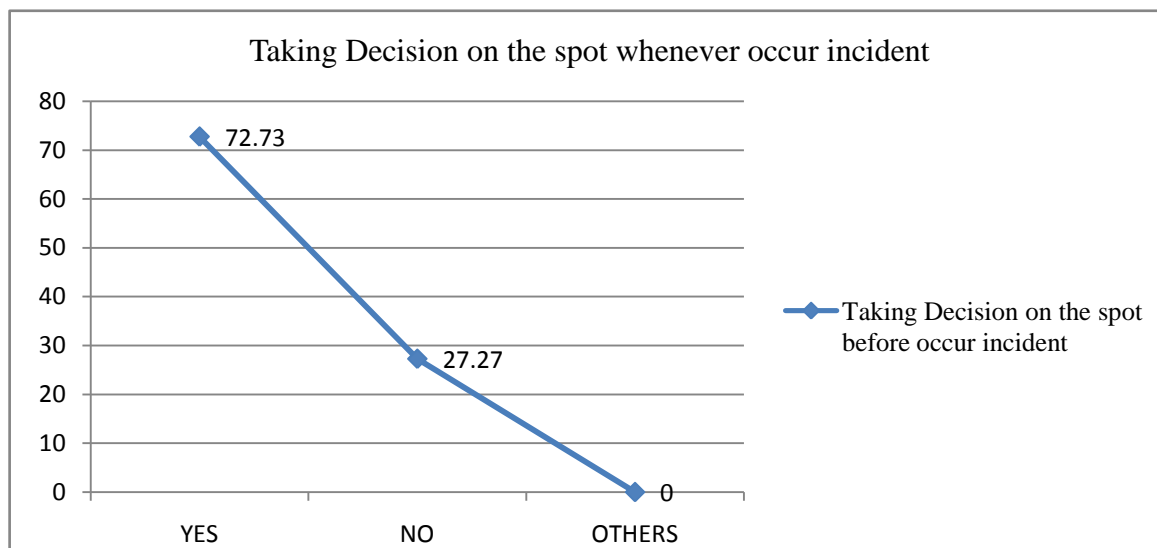


Figure-8: Taking decision on the spot whenever happen incident.

This line graph describes that experience of leadership who took decision on the spot before the situation. But findings of the study is replied that 75.68% respondents thought leader has been carrying out experience a lot regarding taking decision on the spot. It is said that local authority could take decision on the spot but the execution of that decision execute partially. Some factors are working behind that namely local influential family, good relation to the centre (District, Division and Capital). On the contrary, 27.27% identified that they could not take decision on the spot. There are many reasons because; they (chairman, members including male & female) are not capable, courageous, competent and ordinary family background.

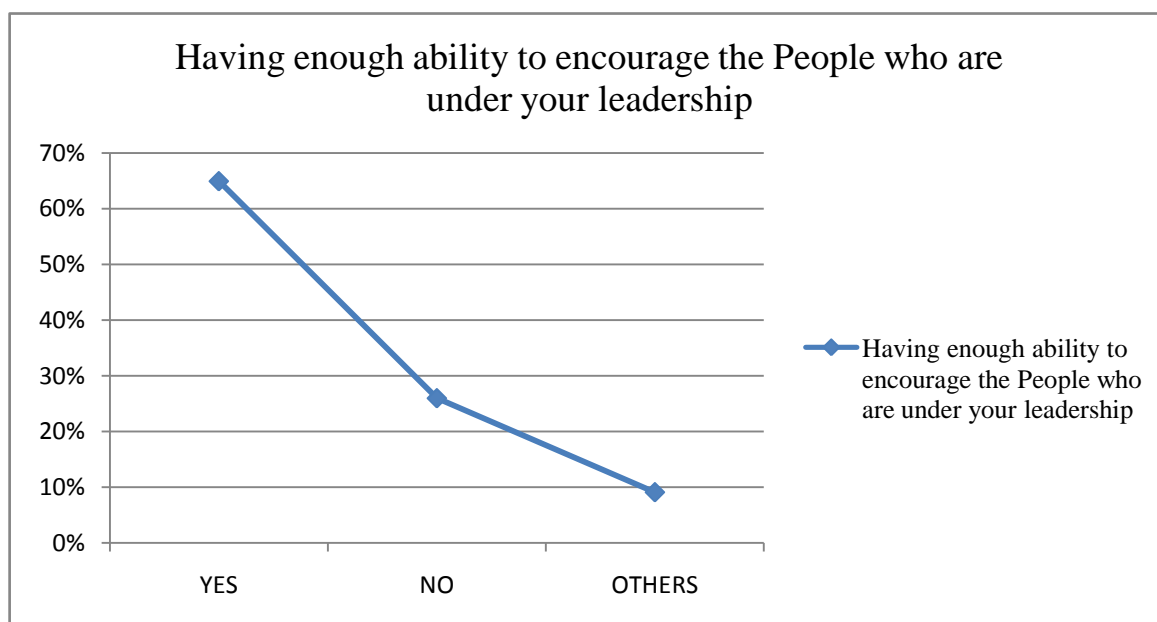


Figure-9: Whether having ability or not to encourage the people who are under leadership.

The line graph shows 64.94% replied that leaders have ability to encourage the people whom remained under their leadership. 25.97% identified that they are not able to encourage their followers. The study found that local representatives have various drawbacks such as no academic qualification; weak bargaining ability etc. 9.09% thought that they are able to encourage their followers but problem is clique and grouping.

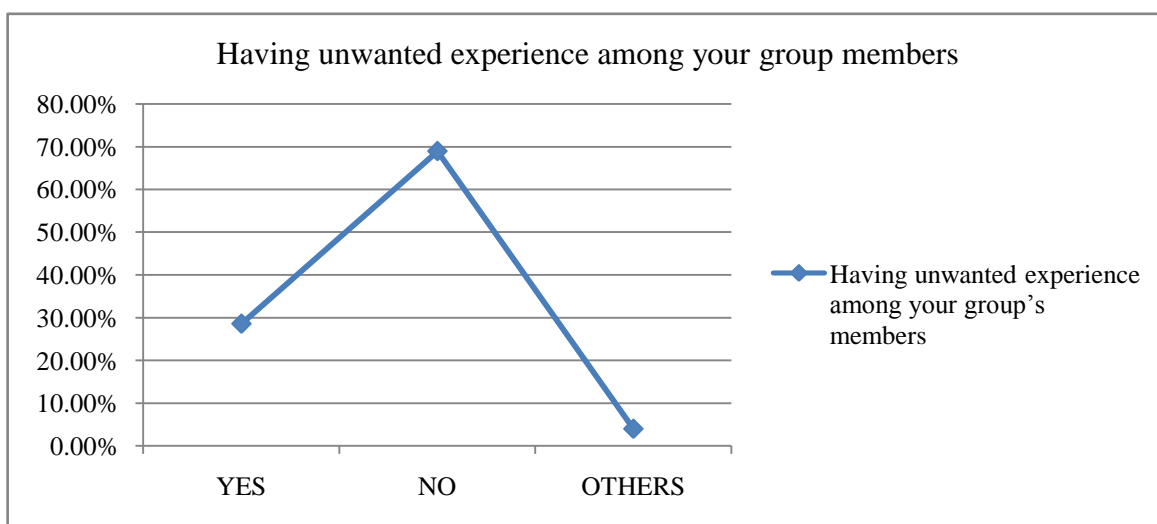


Figure-10: Having unwanted experience among your group’s members.

28.57% recognized that they have discarded experience among their group’s members. 68.92% respondents identified they did not face any critical occurrence among the group members. 5.41% interviewees told that neither faced anxiety experience nor comfortable knowledge regarding collaboration among members in a group.

**Effective Leadership in Union Parishad**

It reveals from the FGD that present leadership of the UP has been working more efficiently than the previous leaderships. They have initiated various types of important programmes for the wellLatibabadeing of their citizens like; enhancement of education, youth development, employment opportunity activities for the youth group ,to extent awareness against corruption in the root level, infrastructure development programs, water and sanitation program, improving transport facilities, maintaining law and order situation, enhancement of tax collection, Monitoring schools through management committee (SMC), perfection of ‘Panchayat’, rehabilitation of the drug addicted, providing security in various festivals... They are also playing an important role to ensure transparency in UP management system which is helping to build modernize UP. According to them above those initiatives were not taken by the earlier leaders.

It also found in the study that Six UP Chairmen out of eleven have no basic knowledge regarding the Union Parishad Ordinance 1983. They do not know the rules and regulations, proclamation and so on. According to these chairmen, they have been learning through daily experience. They informed that the secretary of these UP are playing an important role to teach these rules and regulations. Most of the UP Chairmen informed us that in most the cases, they are always dictated by the UNO. It is found from this study that many times Chairmen do not consider general members opinion where UP chairmen are closely intimate with UNO. However, the pattern of leadership in the study area has reflected in the following case study.

### **Case Study-1**

#### **Leadership pattern of women member in the studied area**

Mariam is a women member of Binnati Union Parishad in Kishoreganj Sadar Upazila. She is a fifty two years old. Her life was a long story of struggles, strains riddles and fight against negative impacts of extreme poverty and Vulnerability. After 12 years of conjugal life with vegetable vender hard core poor husband Abdul Ali she became widow with 03 children of minor ages. The only weapon of Mariam was her education upto class IX. Her generous poor farmer father could not continue further studies expenses and let her gave to marriage in 1972. Because of little education she did not give-up or breaks down but cherished in heart a dream to be changed through educating children. But how She took a very hard and difficult course to earn money. Started handicraft on stitching local quilt is known as kantha for other by night and maid servant work in day time. Day and night work was not enough she started tutorial services to girls' student of the village to earn. Kind and generous UP chairman provided her VGD card. These made her subsistence for survival and maintain education costs of children. Food and Nutrition Security for ultra poor project was extended at Binnati village in 2001. Mariam was included into the program. New route to change opened before her. She organized a group and named it Binnati Ulka Muhila Samity and was elected president of the group. The Programme built in her strong leadership capacity by providing several trainings on leadership, group development and facilitation, social analysis, gender equality, advocacy processes to have access to rights and entitlements for the poor and extremely poor women and poor community people. Her leadership ascended from group resident to Union Federation president to upazila Women Groups Federation president to District Federation president within a span of 8 years starting from 2001. She turned as public leader and elected union parishad member by the people of Binnati union. He ability to advocacy rights and justice in Government for Vulnerable poor women is recognized and praised in community and among people in power structure, Government and different duty bearers. Side by side with leadership she built her economy through utilizing micro-credit in trading, vegetable cultivation and selling, poultry rearing for income and cow fattening.



### **Political Pressure**

FGD shows that two third chairmen and members are nominated by upazila and district level political leaders from both governing and non-governing national political party in the studied area. In this context, those people's representatives have to serve party interest which has been disturbing common interest of local citizens. It is one of the vital and distinguish obstacle for the union parishads. Each and every function and distribution of reliefs, VGF, TR etc. regulate under local political pressure. Political interference in union parishad activities has become a de facto rule that obstructs smooth functioning of the union parishad. So, political pressure should reduce for conducting their activities independently.

### **Excessive Control of the Central Government on Union Parishad**

The Union Parishads (UPs) typically depends on the grant of the national government. Consequently, the UPs are directly or indirectly controlled by the central government's agencies. Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), the executive chief in the Upazila as well as secretary of the Upazila parishad play the main controlling role on UP.

The study found that Upazila system is not working effectively due to conflict among local Member of Parliament (MP) and UNO and Upazila chairmen & vice-chairmen. In this context, UNO is becoming superior to other institutional bodies. This superiority provides a chance to the UNO to control union parishad. Hence, to strengthen the UP political conflict among these local institutions should be abolished and Government officials have to be more co-operate to the elected bodies of Upazila Parishad as well as Union Parishads. In addition, UNO as a public servant has to be manager instead of administrator. This is the main focal point of new public management in modern trend of public administration.

### **Mismanagement of Local Resources**

This study found various sources of income of union parishad. It contains holding tax on annual value of homesteads, Chowkidari (village police) tax, part of the proceeds generated from tax on transfer of land ownership, fee for issuing certificates and such other entertainments, lease money from haat-bazaars & jalmahal, tax on profession, trades and callings/license fee etc. These sources are authorized by union parishad. But union parishads of kishoreganj sadar upazila could not mobilize their local resources due to incapable administration as well as inadequate personnel of parishad. In addition, people representatives thought that If upazila administration assist them providing police force then it will easy

to collect all due taxes. It has proved that elected representatives don't want to lose their vote bank for the collection taxes by using forces directly.

### **Absence of Proper Coordination**

It is revealed from the FGD that, proper coordination among the personnel of UP administration as well as the members of the parishad is absent. There are various reasons behind this such as unskilled employees and different political parties' activists' etc. Management system of union parishad should emphasize on the proper coordination between government and non-government agencies as well as members of UP itself.

### **No Transportation Facilities for Elected Members of Union Parishads (UPs)**

This study found that UP Chairmen have no transportation facilities for conducting their routine work. However, they are to conduct different types of works where they need to visit every corner of UP area. They work for maintaining law and order situation, attending to the Upazila Parishad meetings, as well as social activities. Therefore, they need transport facilities in order to complete their duties and responsibilities as well as government authorized programmes and projects.

In addition, some more findings are available in the study area. These are

- The informal power system is stronger (supported by the patriarchy) than that of the formal power system in UP. The ruling party runs parallel UP;
- Most of the decisions come from top level that means the decision making process is top down. A bottom up decision making process is far away;
- Public resources are managed by the ruling party to strengthen patron-client relationship;
- UP's relationship with MP, ruling party members and local level bureaucrats are not beneficial but sometime a hostile relationship exists;
- Patron-client relationship and patriarchy is very strong and emerging in the UP governance system:

### **Strengthening of Local Government Bodies through Empowerment (Institutional and Individual)**

Empowerment (institutional) of Union Parishads (UPs) would be held well functioning services, organizational effectiveness and capacity, and

inter-organizational networks. The findings of this study are described in the following tables

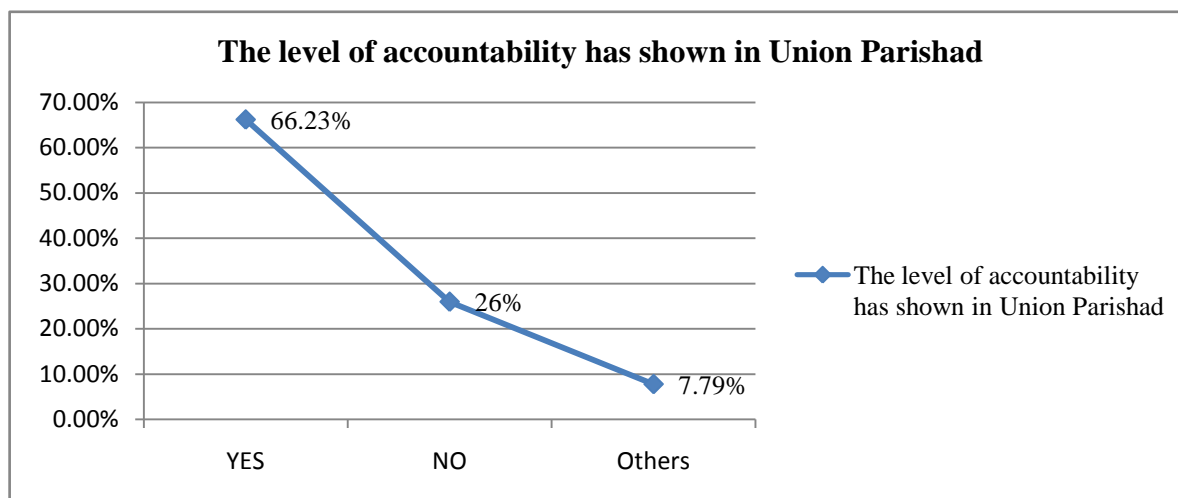


Figure-11: The level of accountability has shown in Union Parishad

The line graph shows that measurement of public accountability of Union Parishad. 66.23% replied that Union Parishad is publicly accountable. 26% thought that Union Parishads are not accountable and 7.79% of the respondents, who don't have any clear perception in this regard.

### Ensuring Accountability through an Informal Way

#### Case: 2

#### Accountability of UP members has ensured through the following procedure

The explanation is how UP accountable to the people. FGD found that ensuring accountability of Union Parishad could be exercised through various ways such as budget discussion, direct asking question to elected leaders and they have to give answer respective questions. As elected leaders, they have to inform to the local people regarding their activities. Because, they are not come from outside while they have to live with local people. Therefore, people's representatives are always accountable to local people even at least 5% people from each and every ward are involved in development projects. Local people thought that they can't do anything without local people's support. UP leaders have been working their responsibilities with the consideration of local people's opinion whereas People can come to their representatives and ask them anything directly. Local People do always criticize them whenever they did anything wrong. Another mechanism of ensuring of accountability of UP can establish through Citizen Charter, the close interaction with mass people, question and answer regarding various things as well as conduct meeting with the local people. Only one chairman took initiative for reaching 100% sanitation in his Union by using own money and hiring young women in each ward to raise awareness and monitor the use of sanitary latrines. Members of the civil society are slightly aware of the roles UPs should have. Only a few persons mentioned that UPs should involve the community and take initiatives more regularly.

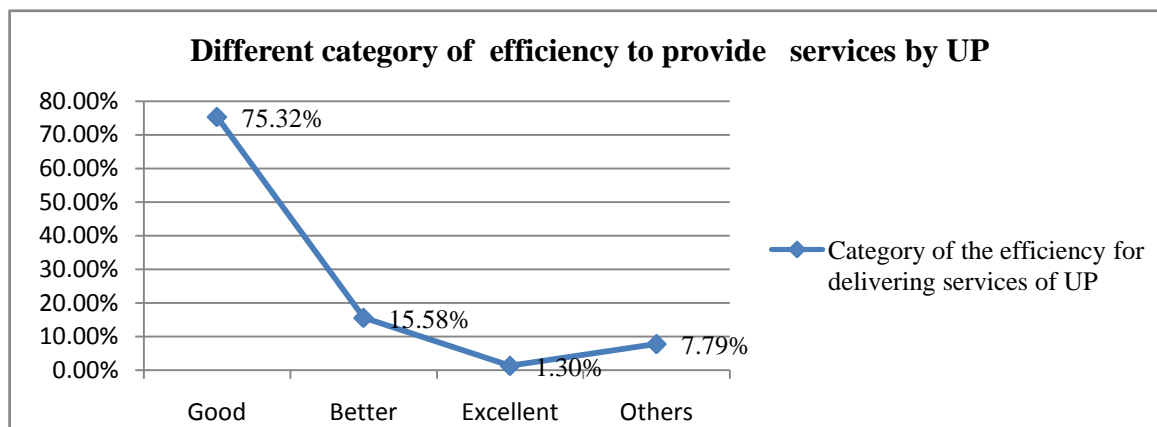


Figure-12: Different category of efficiency to provide services by Ups.

The line graph show that the level of efficiency to deliver service to the local people. 75.32% thought that their efficiency level of delivering services is good for the lowest tier of local government. 15.58 % views are better for the efficiency measurement of delivering services. 1.30% are given comment regarding service quality of UP is excellent. 7.79% of the respondents have given different opinion. The significant result of this study (efficiency level of delivery of services) is good and an insignificant finding is excellent.

What is the real scenario of integration among various departments and members of UP in the studied area. From FGD findings; most of the participants replied that there is comprising integration problem. The result of this study is motionless communication system, limited user and access on information communication technology and inadequate number of personnel.

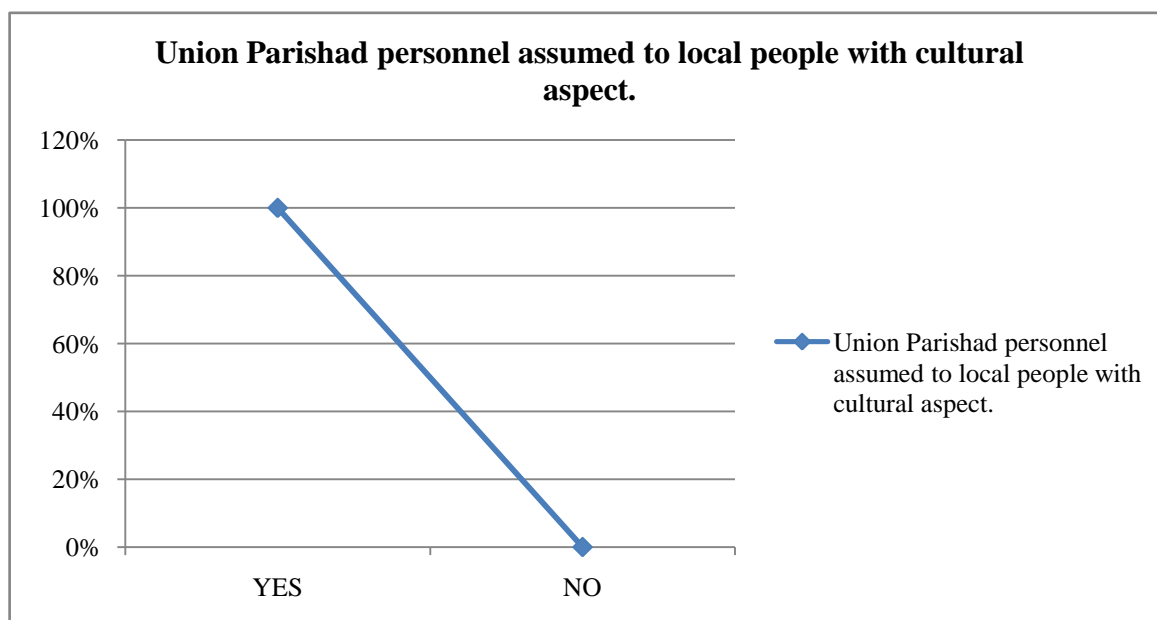


Figure-13: Union Parishad personnel assumed to local people with cultural aspect.

The line graph describes that 100 % of the respondents thought that administration of Ups have been adopting with the local people from cultural point of view. No one has different opinion about this question in the study area. They have strong arguments in favor of their answer.

The procedure of adaptation has been used different ways such as the personnel of administration of Union Parishad (UP) are locally recruited. Therefore, they have been belonging same cultural attitude as compare to cultural aspect of local people. Moreover, they have been helping local people to arrange cultural programmes with financial and technical assistance. They have been providing security to complete cultural activities successfully. Union Parishad, itself arranged various sports and cultural programmes with understanding culture of local people.

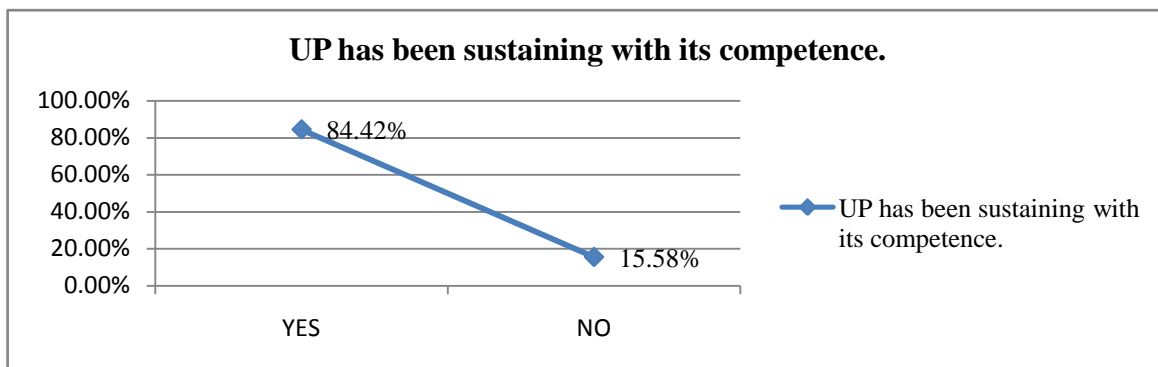


Figure-14: UP has been sustaining with its competence.

Union Parishads (UPs) have been sustaining and no question about its existence. But competence makes differences among existing Union Parishads (UPs) in the studied area. 84.82% said that UP has been sustaining with its competence. 15.58% view union parishad is not sustaining with its competence. Although, that is not significant percentage of respondents but there is no scope to ignore them in this case.

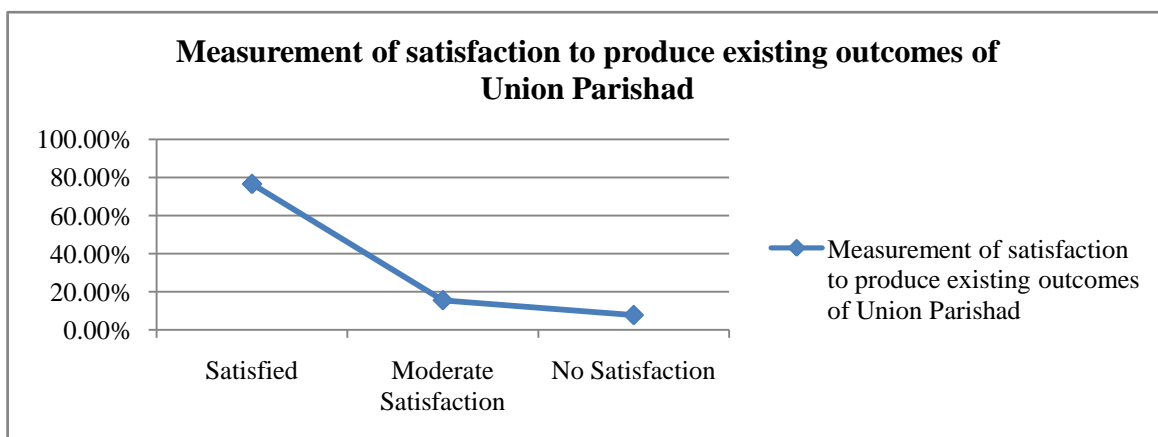


Figure-15: Measurement of satisfaction to produce existing outcomes of Union Parishad.

The line graph shows that 7.79% thought Union Parishads are not producing expected outcomes of Union Parishad. 15.59% of the respondents said that performance of Union Parishad is providing moderate satisfaction. The major portion of the respondents (76.62%) of this study believed that the performance of UP or outcomes of up has been satisfied.

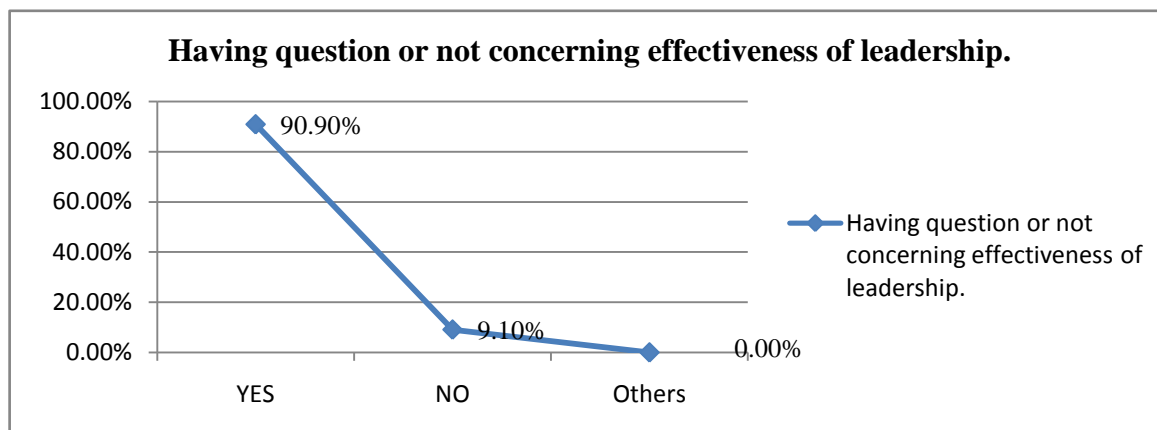


Figure-16: Having question or not concerning effectiveness of leadership.

The line graph presented that 90.90% of total respondents replied; they have big question regarding effectiveness of their leadership. The completion of election; elected representatives do not consider common people interest. They perform as a representative of a particular group not all in a society. Such condition is not helpful for strengthening of local government. 9.10% said that effectiveness of leadership is in the above question in the study area and there is no found others findings in this case.

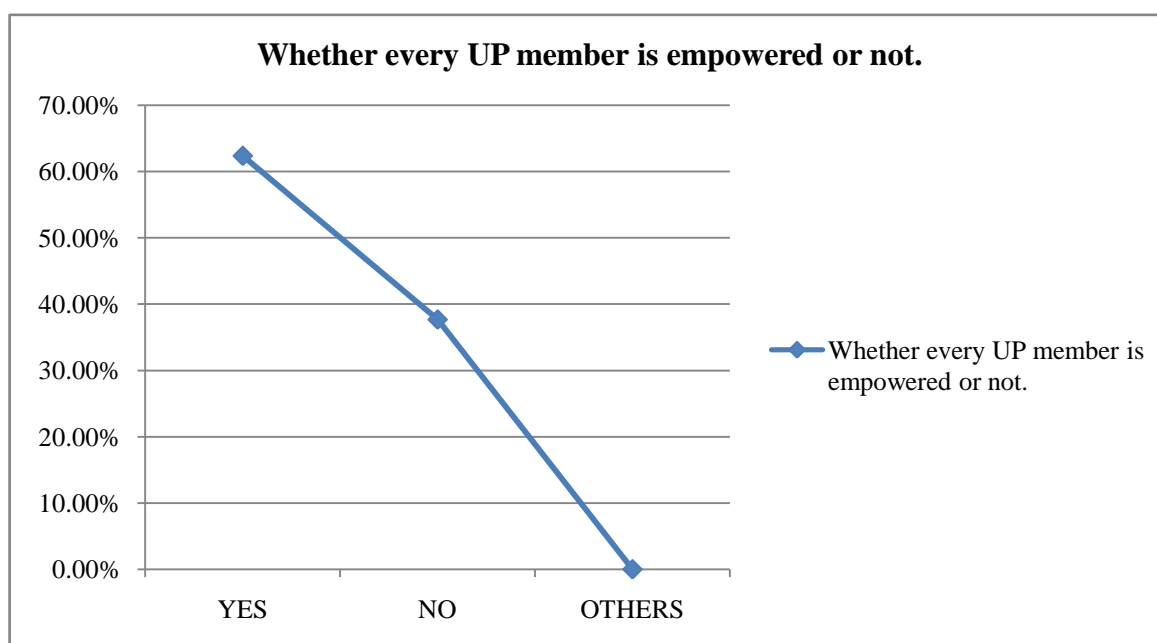


Figure-17: Whether every UP member is empowered or not.

62.34% replied that the elected representatives of Union Parishad are empowered. Here, empowerment means individual or UP member's empowerment. It includes access to information, participation in decision making, awareness about their rights and responsibilities. 37.66% mentioned that elected body of UPs are not empowered. The main reason of disempowerment is illiteracy and absence of political affiliation.

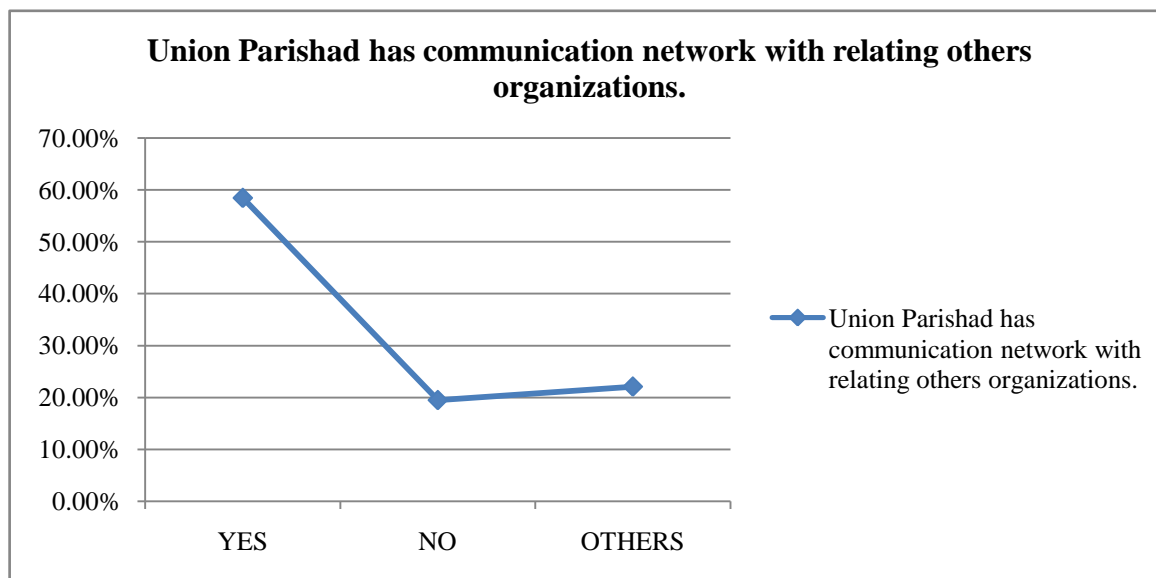


Figure-18: Union Parishad has communicating network with relating others organizations.

58.44% of total respondents found that Union Parishads have communication network with relating others organizations. 22.08% mentioned that there is no strong networking with different organization. 19.48 % of the respondents thought that UPs does not have smooth communication networks among various departments in the Upazila level. Therefore, significant respondents replied that communication networks of UPs have with others organization and they have given explanation in favor of them. UPs have been maintaining communication with different organization through cell phone, personal communication, official letters, face to face meeting, chowkider and internet.

### **Which Policies are Followed in the Distribution of Delegated Duties, Responsibilities and Allocation of Wealth and Resources in Union Parishad**

Equitably distribution is an indicator to measure institutional empowerment like Union Parishad. The research findings shows that distribution policy of UP is to allocate wealth and resources, duties and responsibilities through ensuring existing law, mutual discussion, mutual understanding, Priority basis, and monthly meeting on the basis of density of population, equal distribution of resources. Rests are

distributed based on population, distribution of the responsibilities and duties by chairman to the members' in the consideration of their ascendancy from various aspects such power, education, relation between ruling and opposition political parties etc.

### **Whether Empowerment and People's Participation are Required or Not For Implementation of Development Projects and Plans in the Study Area**

Some of the respondents during this study replied that both concepts namely empowerment and people's participation required for the implementation of development projects and plans in union parishad. Because, the term empowerment could pledge to enhance institutional capacity of UPs and it is required for ensuring successful of development projects. Development programmes and projects could not be implement successfully, if absence of spontaneous and willingness of people's participation. Actually, local people knew where their problem is and how to solve them. People can inform and create pressure on their parishad to mitigate their problem. A little number of them has given different opinion such as both terms are not very important in order to implement development activities. Because, they don't have clear idea what is empowerment and people's participation and their significance due to their ignorance and illiteracy.

### **Insufficient Fund**

The study finding is that Union Parishads of kishoregonj sadar upazila have been facing financial crisis. Holding tax and central government allocation is only source of income. Its source of income is limited. On the other hand, it has to conduct huge volume of work such as agriculture, family planning, health, village court, electronic information service centre etc. Annual allocation of budget of rashidabat union is not enough as per its requirement. It is one of the most significant constraints of union parishad to be stronger institutions. Ongoing fiscal (2011-2012) year it has got 4 lakh for the development purpose but it did not possible to satisfy all members of the parishad. Another problem found there that inefficiency of collection of holding tax. The authority of the union parishad told that they don't have any force so that they could use them if no one want to pay holding tax. In this situation, government budget is not going commensurately with that ups duties and responsibilities.

### **Inefficient Administration and Village Court**

Union parishad consists of one secretary, ten Village Police members, two computer operators and 13 officials of various departments.



Although, UP did not remain pending its business but sometimes secretary could not manage daily workload. UP has distributed its work, resources, TR, KHABIKA, VGF etc. among members (included reserve seats). It has been following distinct distribution policy; whenever Upazila Parishad gives them some responsibilities or allocation then called the meeting and discuss all duties and take resolution with concern all members. In addition, Union Parishad doesn't have any authority to give instantaneous allocation in order to completion of local problems. The selection process of projects of Union Parishad in this study area has arranged open meeting and making resolution in every word; submitted it to union parishad meeting and selected projects on the basis of local priority. These projects are implemented and supervised by chairman, UNO, Vice-chairman of Upazila parishad and Upazila chairman. In addition, UP has to send it to the LGED for preparing estimation of projects. It has done by sub-assistance engineer but union parishad has to pay for that work although UP has no allotment for that purpose. Union Parishad (UP) has been serving quasi judicial activities like village shalis. Government has taken 3years project namely village court. It is conducted by Non-governmental Organization (NGO) but it has presided by UP chairman. There are some problems raise such as dominating inhabitants are not obey the decision of village court, if any jurisdiction goes against them.

### **Partial Accountability and Transparency**

Public organization should be accountable and transparent to its citizen. Moreover, according to the Right to Information Act-2009, Public institutions are bound to provide information to them who required it. But such practice has not been succeeding so far. FGD findings is union parishads have accountability and transparency but not enough. It has seen in the study area is partial. Even they should hang up their citizen charter what services are promoting there but those services did not find in the research location. Ups have been serving to implement government social safety programmes such as VGD, VGF and others reliefs. More or less almost eleven Ups were not accountable and transparent to the people in the study area. In this context, honesty, integrity and good personality are very essential for local leadership.

### **Insufficient Manpower**

Although 13 employees of different departments have been serving in a Union Parishad office but they are not under control of UP directly. Current government has already introduced Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities. For this purpose government has

provided technical person and logistic support. Moreover, that is not sufficient against requirement a UP. The functions of a UP are vast but their manpower is not quite enough. Ensuring effective functioning of UP are required the adequate, skilled and energetic manpower.

### **Institutional Inefficiency**

This study found that almost lion percent of the respondents are illiterate. For this reason, they don't have idea about rules & regulation of UP and do not know how to act or do his job. Such problems have risen in the studied area due to elect fresher's candidates. However, Institutional inefficiency might be solved if government provides training programmes for them. Because, these programmes can boost up skilled of people's representatives in the research area where they will get opportunity to learn managerial skill that will help them to conduct UP by using their merit, competence, commitment, patience and popularity. UP representatives are delegated authority and power officially but they are not empowered enough to perform their roles and responsibilities properly avoiding the pressure of ruling party.

#### **Case: 3**

##### **Strengthening of Local Government System is Co-Related with Ensuring of Empowerment of UP, Participation of People's Representative and Effectiveness of Leadership.**

The Rashidabad UP chairman Mr. Abdur Razzak said that Empowerment, Participation and Leadership are inter-related and indispensable each other in order to establish strengthening of local government system particularly in his constituency area. This system could be enhanced its strengthen by using its individual and institutional empowerment of union parishad and having involvement of local people in the development programmes and projects and must require effective role of local leadership. Whenever these three pillars works together then LG's institution would be reinforce. However, this study area do not belong those three key concepts in their lowest tier of local government system. In this context, some obstacles have been having against intensification of local government. These hindrances are lack of political will, strong voice against politicization, burden of existing rules and regulations for UPs, and lack of qualified local leadership etc.

People's participation includes the involvement of mass people with local development activities. Participation could ensure institutionalization of local government at the lowest tier namely Union Parishad. How people's participation contribute in strengthening local government system. The study has tried to present in the following charts and tables.

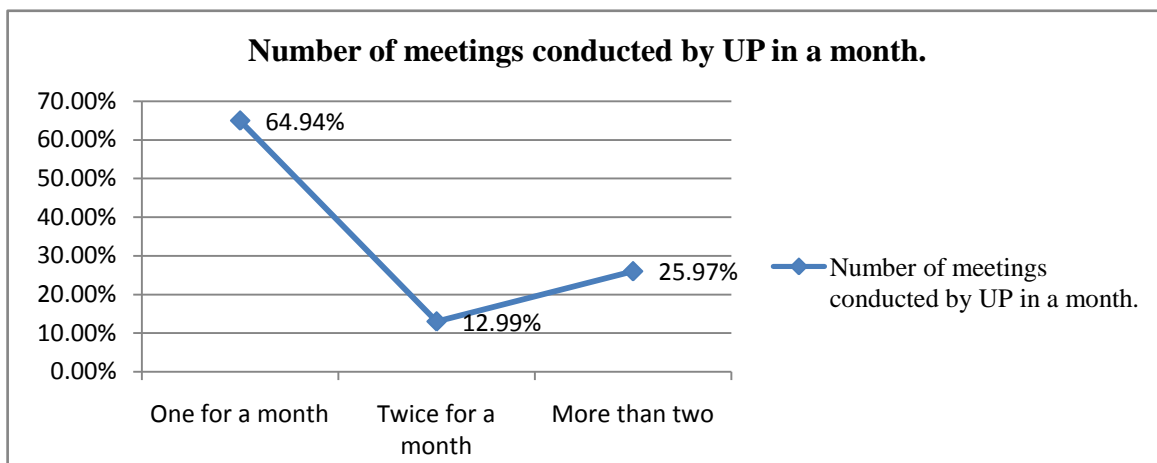


Figure-19: Number of meeting conducted by UP in a month.

64.94% of the total respondents replied that Union Parishads have been conducting meeting once for a month. 12.99% viewed that it has arranged twice a meeting for a month and 25.97% mentioned that more than two meeting for a month which has conducted by Union Parishad. But reality is that Ups have become a one man institution. It means that whatever chairman wants; that wishes would execute by Parishad.

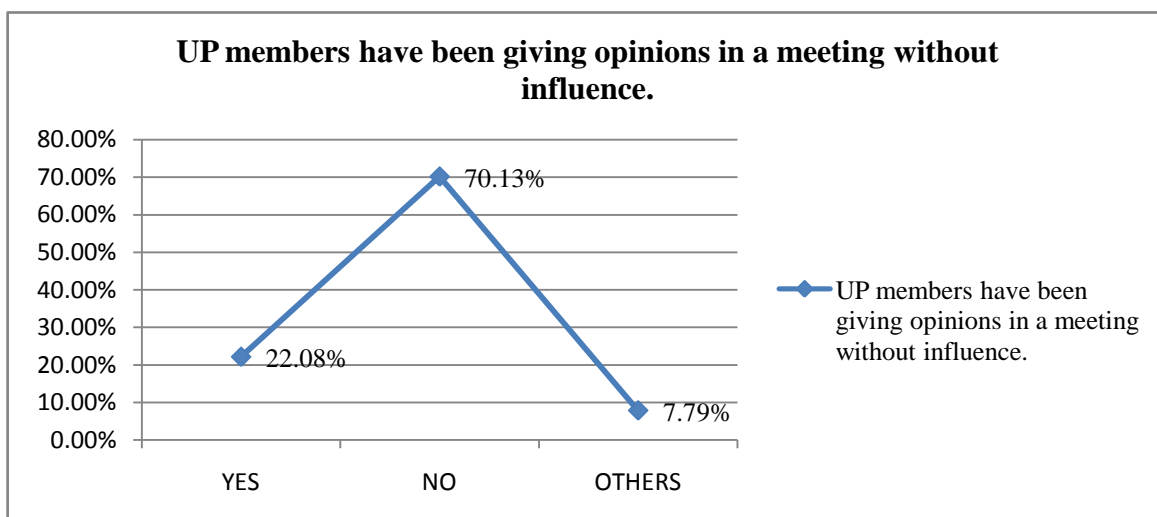


Figure-20: UP members have been giving opinions in a meeting without influence.

70.13% respondents identified that Union Parishad would be an independent body to give its opinion but they replied that each members of Ups has influenced by others. There is having several reasons behind such influence. These reasons are higher education, financially solvency, and muscle power, activist of ruling party, inactive Upazila Parishad and domination of UNO. 22.08% said that Union Parishad is an independent body and they have been expressed their opinion independently in a meeting. It means no one influence by others. Such influence contains influence of Upazila Parishad as well as Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO). 7.79% of the respondents found that UP have not come out either

influence or without influence by governing & non-governing politician in the research area.

Although less significant respondents have believed that they have been delivering their speech in the meeting without influence by others. Consequently, they have some arguments and tried to mention here. Union Parishad has not been facing influence to itself by others. It has done by different way such as; Elected body of UP shouldn't influenced by others, because they have people's mandates, they are people,s representatives, UP has ensured complimentary environment through elected chairmans and members. Because, they are the highest authority for Union Parishad and there is no chance to influence it by others. UP members are completely independent and they have been participating open discussion in the UP meeting. Development activities are needed for local peoples and those are conducted by people. UP staffs are responsible and accountable to the parishad but parishad are collectively accountable to electorate for their performances. In addition, local representatives are comparatively more free than bureaucrats in the local self government especially Union Parishad.

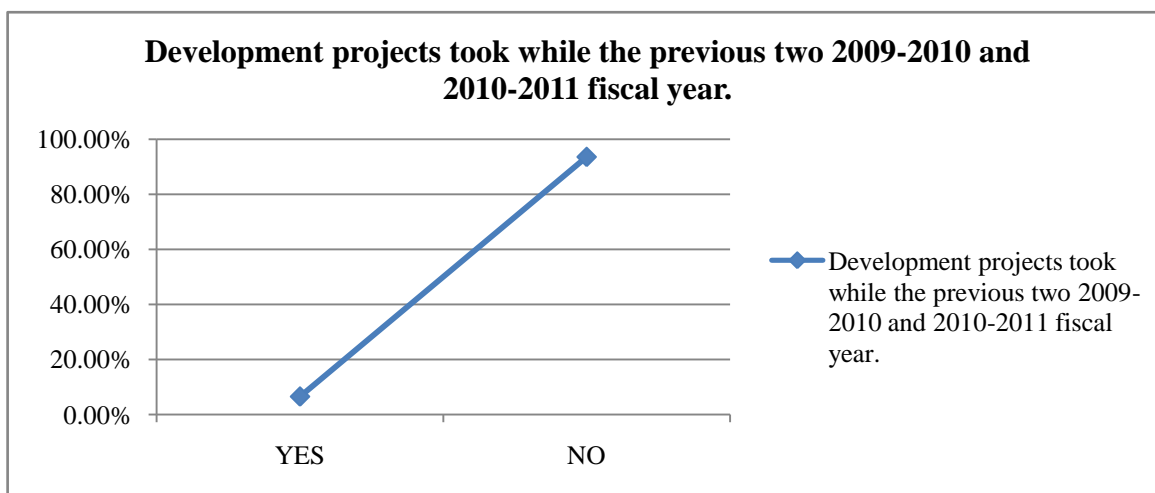


Figure-21: Development projects took whiles the previous two 2009-10 and 2010-11 fiscal year.

Union Parishad has to take and implement various development programmes and projects in its constituency. The bar diagram describes that 6.49 % view that they knew how many projects have taken in the last two fiscal years. But the significant respondents, 93.51% identified that they don't have idea how many programmes took in the immediate past fiscal year namely 2009-2010 & 2010-2011. This ignorance has proved that they are always busy with their own interest not their electorates benefit. So leadership participation could not ensure with their excellence.

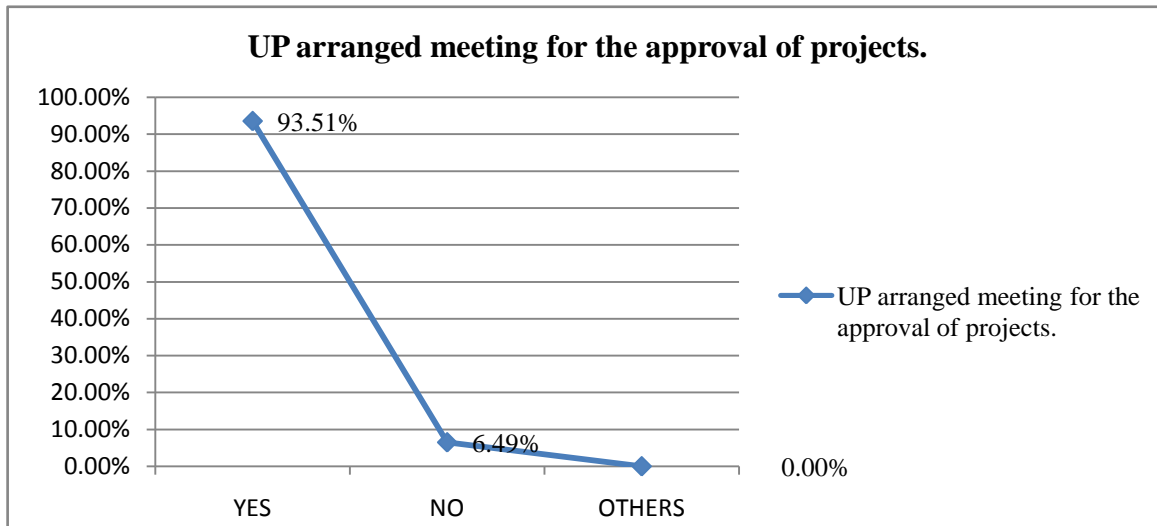


Figure-22: UP arranged meeting for the approval of projects.

93.51% of the total respondent found that UP has arranged once or twice meeting a month in order to approve development projects. The fact is that UP chairman dominate the parishad. As a result, discussion is going on but outcome goes to influential members and chairman. On the other hands, 6.49% thought that no democratic practice is finding in the study area.

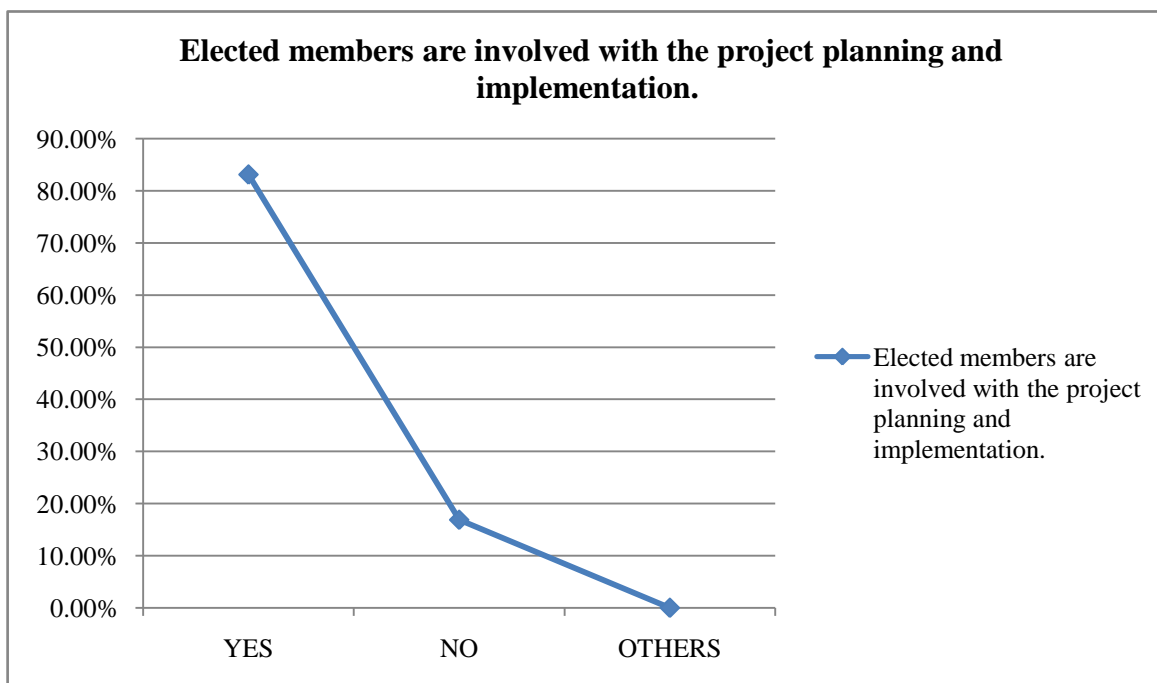


Figure-23: Elected members are involved with the project planning and implementation.

The line graph shows that 83.12% view elected members are involved to prepare development projects planning and implementation. 16.88% identified that local people’s representatives are not engaged in order to make project planning and implementation.

### The Procedure of Involvement of Local People in the Development Programmes and Planning

The ways of involvement of local people have ensured in the study area through elected representatives who built awareness among local people; assembled people's opinion; Conducted meeting with local elite; local potential people involved in project implementation committee (PIC); Open discussion arranged by UP in every ward so that people can give their opinion in the meeting. UP members prepared their report with consideration of people's opinion by which project plan has prepared on the basis of that report. Parishad has been initiated development projects based on people's requirement. Local People could join in different committee such Implementation Committee, Monitoring committee etc and UP conducted pre project meetings with local people where beneficiaries are also involved in the meeting.

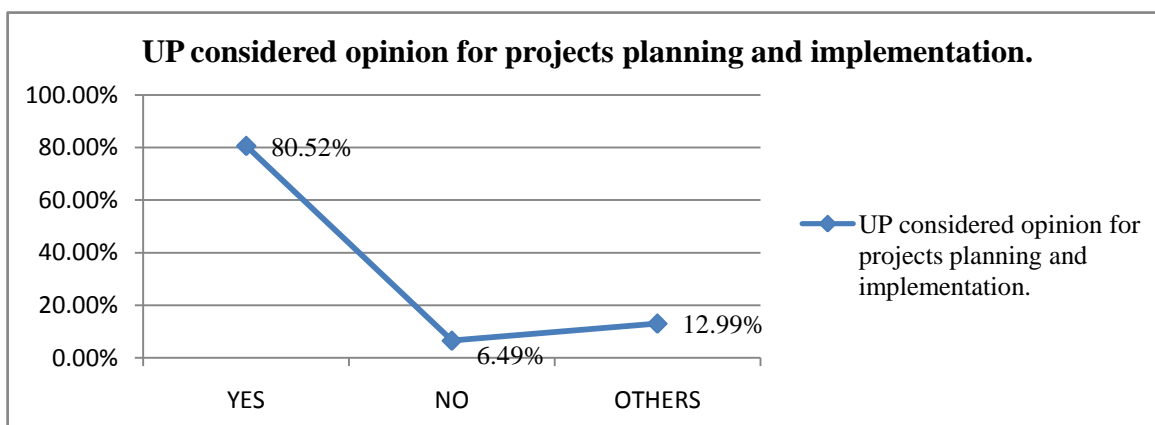


Figure-24: UP considered opinion for projects planning and implementation.

80.52% replied that Union Parishad considered inhabitants and UP member's opinion in order to prepare project planning and implementation. Only 6.49% view UP chairman has not been considered the statement of each and every members of UP about formulation of developing planning and implementation of it. 12.99% thought that Union Parishad could not do anything without help of Upazila Parishad.

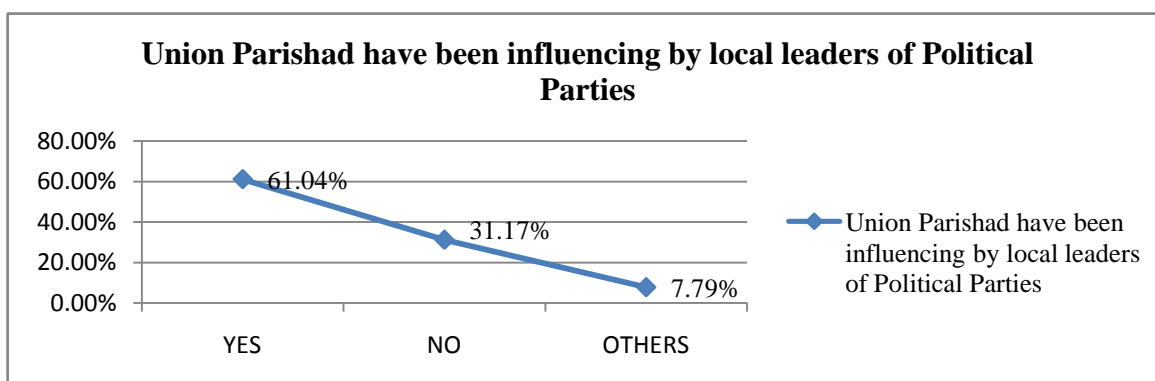


Figure-25: Union Parishads have been influenced by local leaders of Political Parties.

61.04% of the total respondent thought that UP are influenced by local political institution for the selection and implementation of development projects. 31.17% replied that no political influence have on Union Parishad. 7.79% view that it has neither influence by political institution nor having influence on UP. Moreover, Local governing political leaders have been using their party influence to include various projects which will meet up their interest. Hence, it is a great problem in the rural governance particularly union parishad in the study area.

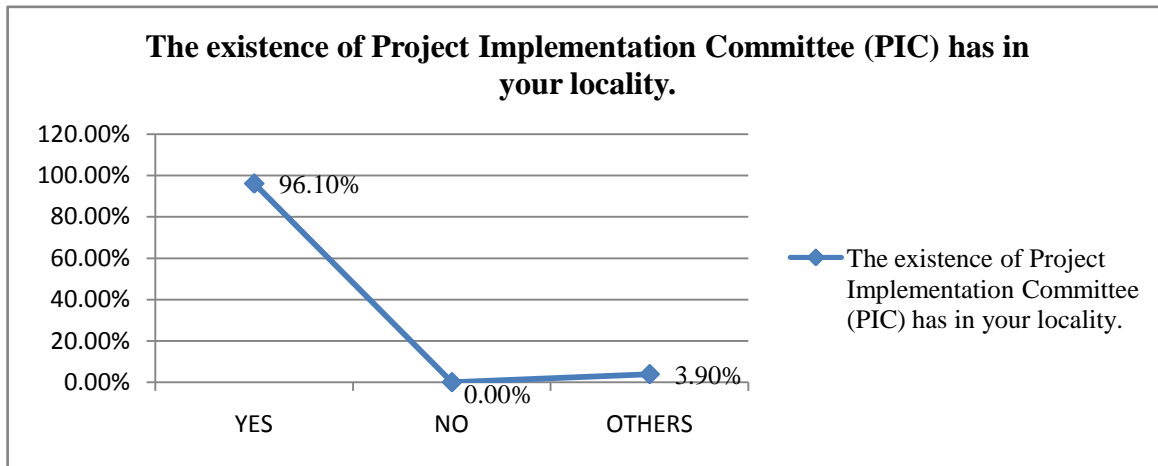


Figure-26: The existence of project implementation committee has in your locality.

96.10% of the total respondent said that they have project implementation committee in the study area. 3.90% replied that they don't have seen project implementation committee (PIC) in the research area.

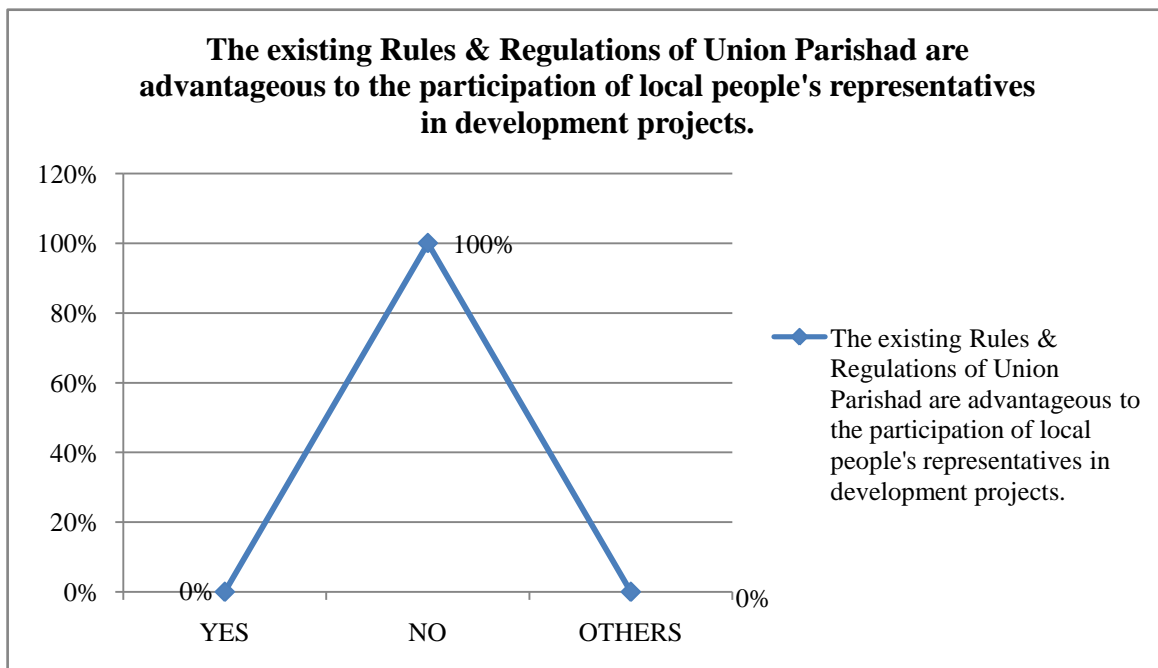


Figure-27: The existing rules and regulations of Union Parishad are advantageous to the participation of local people's representatives in development projects.

100% respondents talked that existing rules and proclamation of UP has not been useful to encourage participation of local people’s representatives in development projects. As government servants has known about the rules and regulations and kept it. So they have been over exercised those rules and proclamation with UP members and chairmen particularly who does not have idea regarding that.

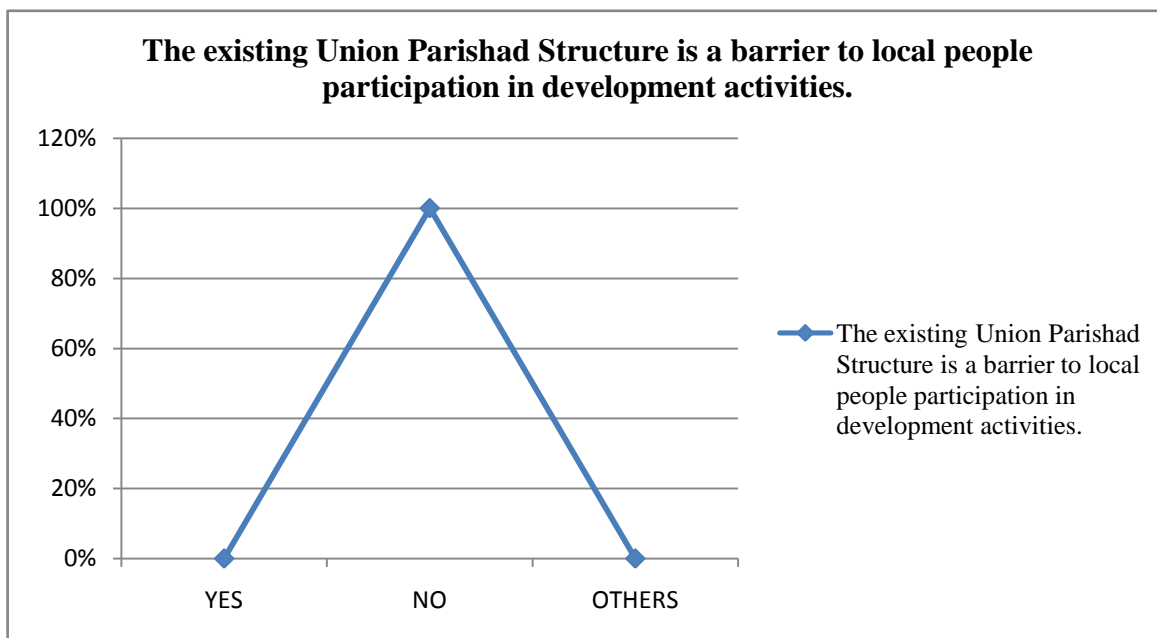


Figure-28: The existing Union Parishad structure is a barrier to local people participation in development activities.

No body found in the study area (100%) who thought that Union Parishad structure is not a barrier to enhance local people’s participation in development activities.

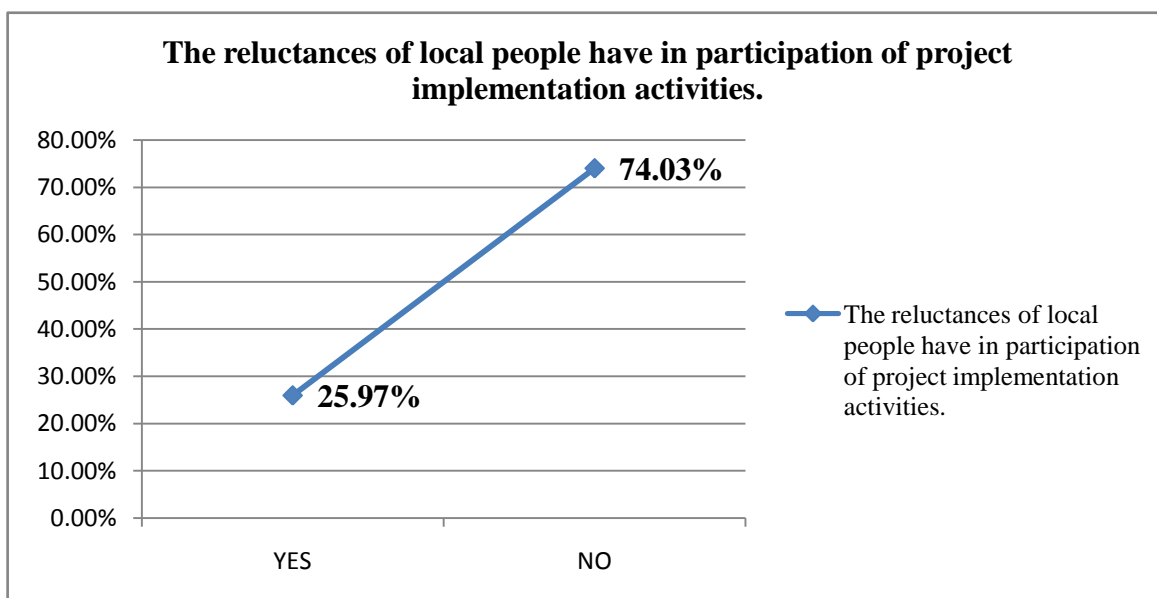


Figure-29: The reluctances of local people have in participation of project implementation activities.



25.97% blamed that local people are reluctant in the participation of project implementation activities. 74.03% replied that local people are eager to participate in developmental planning and project.

### **Elected Representatives are Disagreed in the Participation of Development Activities**

From the FGD findings, elected representatives of the study area are introvert in nature and they are ignorant. They have been carrying out business, insufficient knowledge and competence etc. In addition, if any kind of corruption occurred by the local representatives then they have to face criticism. Ego problem is another reason; corruption and political harassment are also included. Union parishad did not arranged motivation programmes to encourage local people's participation in the local development programmes. Personal interest and benefits both are responsible for the disagreement of people.

### **The Level of Awareness is Growing up Among the Local People**

The rural local people has becoming aware regarding their citizen rights and they want to participate in the development activities of the UP and even women members raised their voice in meeting of parishad.

### **Positive Approaches Exist through Personal Initiatives**

Some positive initiatives are seen in the Union Parishad those are taken by personal interest. Personal affection to their voters, getting popularity and so on are the most common reasons here. Development programs, delivering good governance to the citizens is the most common approaches, practiced by the UP chairman and members. They have been following different strategies such as on the basis of priority of local people's interest, evaluate and assess word members demands, collective decision, and long time discussion in the meeting of parishad as well as considered density of population in the Union Parishad.

### **Some Hindrances of People's Representative Participation at the UP Level**

The local government system has popularized in Bangladesh through the theory of decentralization. Several abortive attempts have been made at decentralization, but the system has remained highly centralized. Consequently, local bodies are characterized by weak administrative capacity, a limited financial and personnel base and little public participation. Hence meaningful participation is not guaranteed by the decentralization. The formal local government structures may neither be the only nor the best way of ensuring public participation.

One of the woman member of an Union Parishad argued that at the decision making level, the attitude of controlling the activities of the people's representatives of the local government by the central government has to change, so that the UP can be a local government in the true sense and not a part of the local administration of the central government. The dependency of UP on central government is an important hindrance of building its own human resource capacity as well as financial capacity.

People's participation in the decision making process is a symbolic process. Practically people's participation especially the poor and vulnerable communities' participation is very limited. In this study has conducted by FGD. It has found some specific hindrances for participation. These are

- The study revealed that the people's representatives have limited access in the decision making process of standing committees mostly because of non functional committees as well as procedural lacking
- Most of the UP members are not aware of their duties and responsibility.
- Meeting of standing committees are not arranged regularly.
- Most of the standing committees activities are not related with monetary matters, so the members are not much interested in the activities of these committees

Hence, it has clearly proved that people's participation in Ups level did not achieve satisfactory level which is not assist ensuring strengthening of local government system.

## Chapter Six

# **Strengthening of Local Government: The Empirical Findings**

### **Introduction**

This study has tried to explore how empowerment, participation and leadership can make sure strengthening of local government in Bangladesh. It has found different drawbacks those cannot promote strengthening of the existing system of local government in Bangladesh. This chapter has been summarized various drawbacks and try to sort out significant issues which are very important for strengthening Union Parishad in Bangladesh. The outcome of this study has been described below.

### **Knowledge of the UP Chairmen and Members on UP Ordinance, roles and responsibilities**

General UP members have a limited vision of their roles and responsibilities. They mainly refer to the concrete activities which are schemes selection and implementation at ward level and relief distribution. In general, they do not take any initiative for the development of their community. The secretaries are familiar with the rules, regulation and concerned ordinances regarding UP.

In this endeavor it is found that in Binnati, Maijkapan and Chaudasata the chairmen used to maintain the office task according to the rules which are provided by their corresponding secretaries. However, it also seen through some cases UP secretaries are use to imply their personal interest in office maintaining procedure. Less knowledge of the UP Chairman regarding its ordinance and rules provide this chance. The study has also found that UP secretaries are more knowledgeable than the UP Chairman. As a result, here most of the chairmen are not interested to know these rules and regulations of UP ordinances. On the other hand, UP chairmen are more interested to know about budgeting, grants, and so on. Even they do not know about their own status and corresponding members among Ups of study locations. In contrary, it is found that in Latibabad, Mahinanda, Maria, and Baulai, Chairmen have better knowledge regarding UP ordinances, rules and regulations. They are very much concerned about their members and development of their Ups. They have

expressed the sign of good leadership through proper development of their own Ups with their previous good experiences.

General UP members and civil society are aware of the concrete activities of the extension staff working in their Union (family planning, health, agriculture), but they are not aware of missing activities from staff at the Union level (public health, fisher and so on); they less aware of the roles of department officials at the Upazila level. Secretary and chairmen are not always very aware about the role of officials of the Upazila level but know about their activities because they have contact with them. In all Unions the extension staff is almost always present at the UP meetings, which was seldom the case in the Maizkapon, Chaudasata, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Danapatali Ups etc. Most people have knowledge about the activities and roles of governmental staff and officials.

### **Problem with the Standing Committees**

The study has found that most of the standing committees are not functional (Chaudasata, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Binnati, Maizkapon and Danapatali). Many committees are formed in paper those are not active in practice. They never sit for once with any agenda. Except some chairmen or secretaries, hardly anyone knows how many standing committees should exist at UP level and what their roles should be. Many of them are unaware of or misunderstand standing committees; they confuse standing committees with Project Implementation committees. Even chairmen and secretaries are not all aware of the 13 committees, they are mostly unable to name even the formed committees of their UP or explain what these do. All interviewed people know about the 13 standing committees but not all the committees are formed and active. Most people know about the activities of the functioning standing committees. In Rashidabad Union no civil society member is involved in the standing committees so the information flow is not guaranteed; furthermore there is no formal reporting of the activities of the committees in regular UP meetings. In Maria Union, elite people are involved in the 4 formed committees and all members assist the regular UP meetings where each committee reports its activities.

### **Limitation of the Knowledge Regarding Village Court**

The village court<sup>1</sup> panel composed of local community members nominated by both parties among them few should be also UP members and the Chairman (Training Manual on Union Parishad Management;

---

<sup>1</sup> Training Manual on Union Parishad Management, Second Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project, 2008, P-42.

2008). The knowledge of laws and rights seem to be limited and very dependent on the personal experiences of the interviewed person. Village court is not functional in some Ups (Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Binnati, Maizkapon and Danapatali), it is functional in others (Latibabad, Mahinanda, Maria, Baulai); however even if the village court is active the civil society does not know the procedure. In both UPs the village court sits each week and the procedure is known by everybody as well by the community.

### **Limitation of the Collection of UP Based Revenue**

Except some female members, most UP members know about the different sources of revenue. The answers given about the amount of tax collection were not the same between members who evaluate the collection. The female members generally have no idea regarding tax collection amounts. The secretary and chairman referred to inconsistent amounts. In one Union UP members expressed the wish to be informed about UP revenue amounts but have not been successful so far. The civil society knows about the different sources of revenue but has no idea of amount. Tax collection level is between 20 and 30%. Everybody, even female UP members and civil society members, has knowledge about the sources of revenue and taxes but not everybody is aware of the amounts collected. In all Unions, tax collection levels are higher than 50%.

### **Lacking of the Knowledge Regarding Assessment of Tax**

Most of the members of Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Binnati, Maizkapon and Danapatali UPs do not know regarding the assessment system, collection and relation with service delivery of the taxes. They only guess the taxes are used for office stationary, salary of village police and so on. In some case they tried to get the information but were not successful. Even chairmen and secretaries do not give the same answer about the tax with service delivery. This limitation is more severe among women UP members. The Chairman is informed but he does not recognize it. Most of the general UP members have also been mentioned the same statements.

### **Lacking of Knowledge Regarding Budget Procedure**

Most of the visited Union had never conducted a participatory budget meeting except Latibabad and Baulai UPs. Budgets are made by chairmen individually and secretaries and submitted in UP meetings. The budget is read orally and there is very little scope for changes. Female members generally do not understand the budget and male members

understand only a little. Some Unions mentioned the involvement of rural elite, but there was no confirmation of this information by Rural Elite. There is no real participation of community people nor is the community informed on budget matters at any time. In Boulai Union the UNDP project funds budget is presented to the community for discussion and adjustment. The regular government budget is not public, only the chairman and secretary know about it. In Binnati Union the whole budget is presented to the public in a meeting where discussion and adjustment can occur.

### **Irregular Book Keeping**

The secretaries seem to give at least one piece of information on expenses/revenue of the previous year at the annual budget UP meeting. UP members hardly mentioned this information, women less than men. In two Unions (Latibabad and Baulai) UP members can look at the book keeping if they wish but nobody does so. In the other Union (Mahinanda and Binnati) UP male members are interested to look at the book keeping but are not allowed. Female UP members (Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Binnati, Maizkapon and Danapatali) generally have no idea about the book keeping. None of the Unions have any internal inspection committees. In all UPs the book keeping is displayed during the annual budget meeting and everybody can look at the book keeping at any time.

### **Awareness Regarding Audit**

Most female UP members are not aware of audits; male UP members know audits sometimes happen, but are not informed of the results or how problems, if any, are solved. Chairmen and secretaries know the procedures and how often they are audited. They say there are mainly no problems, if so these are discussed and solved in a UP meeting. Civil society members are not informed and are mostly unaware of audits. All UP and civil society members know about the audits proceeded by different tiers of government. The results are displayed in UP meetings but there is no formal information given to the community.

### **Irregular Office Timing**

In most cases offices are said to be opened 6 days a week, mainly through village police. However there is no systematic presence of any members neither including chairmen and secretaries, nor fixed times to find them in the UP Office if necessary. Community people locate the chairman through his mobile and meet him directly at his house or business place.

The offices in both UPs are opened every day, the chairmen and secretaries are present every day.

### **Uneven UP Meeting**

UP meetings held on a fixed monthly basis plus special meetings for grants and relief issues. In one Union the meetings are only called based on Upazila letters. Civil societies are mainly aware of the frequency of UP meetings through informal contact, but are not invited to attend nor are they formally informed. Chairmen select topics and facilitate, secretaries send invitations and write meeting minutes. In only one Union a notice board is used to hang up the meeting minutes but only 5 to 8 persons are regular readers of the board. Most of the UP members and all the female members do not know what a meeting minute is. The members sign the minutes without reading or understanding what they are. Some members may be illiterate. When a member is not present in the meeting he is made to sign the minutes afterward. In one Union the UP members never sign any meeting minutes. There is no formal information given to the community on issues discussed and decisions made in UP meetings. In some cases, the UP members formally inform their respective senior personalities only regarding major issues (grants, VGF cards beneficiaries' selection). In all Union Parishads the agenda is set up by the secretary and the chairman, based on the UPs latest activities and Upazila related affairs. In Maria Union the meeting minutes of the previous meeting are automatically read at the beginning of each session.

### **Register Keeping**

The number of registers kept in the 3 visited Unions ranged from 12 to 22 registers. The secretaries are in charge of the registers. Chairmen often don't know how many registers are kept or what they are. UP members are generally not aware of registers. Some know they exist, but don't know exactly how many are maintained and are only able to name a few of them. The permanent residents of UP, with some exception, do not know about registers. Each Up has more than 20 registers and every member can name several of them except one of the members of Maria Union who only mentioned the cash book.

### **Selection of VGF Cards Beneficiaries**

The selection is said to be made by respective UP members in their own wards with the involvement of elite people. Interestingly, the women UP members mentioned in some case (Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, Rashidabad, Binnati, Maizkapon and Danapatali) that they are not

involved in the selection, or they do not have any weight in the decision making. In some cases (Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, and Danapatali), changes in the list were reported and the common perception of UP members is suspected chairmen and secretaries keep VGF cards for their relatives and friends. Every Ups Baulai, Latibabad and Maria makes the selection at the ward level concerned with senior personalities in respective area. Usually, UPs do not bring any changes to the proposed ward lists.

### **Annual Development Plan**

For all Union Parishads ADP includes a submission of a scheme list for receiving governmental grants. There is no real development vision and most projects are infrastructure schemes. UP members say that elite people are involved in scheme selection in each ward, which does not always seem to be the case. The list of schemes is finalized in a UP meeting (mainly the schemes are collected, and sometimes prioritized) before they are submitted to the Upazila. It is not a participative process, as the final decision is made by the chairman, who has the ability to change things during discussions at the Upazila level. UNO might have an influence on decisions. Cost evaluation for scheme is rarely done at the ward level but is done by the chairman. There is no information given to the community about the process of selection. When the grants are distributed for the chosen schemes, the respective UP members form a Project Implementation committee. Even then the community is not formally informed. In Union Parishads the scheme selection is made at the ward level with involvement of rural elite peoples. A prioritization of the schemes is provided at the UP level.

### **Scheme Implementations**

The Project Implementation committee (PIC) is formed by chairman and respective ward UP members who select as members whoever they want from the community. The PIC chairperson is the respective ward UP member. This person manages everything: payments, laborer selection, work monitoring. Other members are only involved in monitoring. Most PIC members know about the cost of the scheme but community people rarely know about it. Sometimes the community living near the scheme is informed before work begins through a formal meeting, but only rarely. The Upazila engineers make the scheme design, pre and post-measurements and supervise. PIC members don't know how to prepare the final report and bills, so the engineers prepare them although they are not habilitated to do so. The Project Implementation committee (PIC) not only implements the schemes but also prepares the final reports and bills.



Union Parishads have supervision committees, which supervise the work implemented by PIC. In Mohinanda Union community people don't know the costs of schemes. In Binnati Union a notice board is fixed near the scheme and costs are displayed.

### **Co-ordination with Stakeholders**

Generally the UPs are passive and do not take initiative for having coordination with the stakeholders active in the Union boundaries. NGOs only coordinate with respective UP ward members when necessary. Civil society members know about the NGOs working in their ward. The governmental extension staff is sometimes invited to UP meetings but the UPs are not aware of their plans. Coordination with department officials happens at the Upazila level with the presence of chairmen but the information remains at this level. UPs have no understanding of means of coordination for developing synergy and joining efforts with stakeholders in order to reach development goals more quickly and efficiently. This is an unknown concept for most UP and civil society members. In all Union Parishads some coordination occurs when needed with NGOs and governmental staff who sometimes assist in UP meetings. In Josodal Union NGOs and governmental staff are regularly invited and present in UP monthly meetings.

### **Negligible Women Participations**

In general the participation of female UP members is very weak, even if they themselves do not say so. They have mostly the same activities as the male members. In one Union female members seemed strong and willing to bring about changes, which was a source of conflict with the UP's male members and its chairman. The participation of women is dependent on the openness of the chairman and general male members. The study found that the attitude of chairmen and members of UP are not suitable for women members particularly in Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Binnati, Maizkapon and Danapatali Union Parishads; among them Latibabad and Maria are exceptional. Although, women members want to raise their citizen's problem independently but they are not getting that opportunity due to domination of UP chairmen and members. The study has mentioned that elected female UP members are not educated and have no power in front of the chairman and other male UP members. The level of education is very low in some female UP members, and some seem to be illiterate. Better educated women generally belong to middle class families which are more conservative and do not allow women to participate in politics. In every UPs female

UP members are active and seen as quickly improving their skills and more reliable than men.

### **Elite Control**

The local elite also influence the routine activities of the UP officials. Like other actors, the UP development programs are controlled by the local elite. Traditionally, the rural elite are known as landlords, and they hold strong power at the local level. Land is the only means of their power. It is learned that although the local elite do not possess any political affiliation, they always favor the ruling party. They also maintain good relationships with the local government officials by dint of their social position. According to the participants, the local elite are popularly known as the vote bank. As a result, the UP officials always favor them and provide undue services and benefits to get their support, especially during the national and local elections. Finally, this kind of dilemma, according to the participants, leads to massive corruption at the local level.

## Chapter Seven

# Concluding Remarks

### **Introduction**

The study has been tried to suggest some recommendations in order to cover strengthening of local government in Bangladesh from the view of leadership quality, pre-requisition of empowerment, and participation of the UP chairmen and members in development projects and plan at UP level. It has found some constraints of UP from organizational perspectives including empowerment, participation and leadership for establishing strengthen of local government system in Bangladesh. It is not an easy task to implement these steps with in short time in the present antagonistic political culture in Bangladesh. Actually, the strengthening of local government is a political agenda and it has been used by the political parties to gain in power. In that case, they do not want to complete or solve this issue. Although it is said that development should spread out from city to rural area. If they have to execute this purpose then power should not be centralize. Only decentralization process can delivered better services to rural people. So, decentralization is the key component to implement the central government development activities in the study area.

### **Analysis of Study Findings**

The study has been shown that effective leadership means incorporation of some distinct attribute such as a leader should be able to give orders, to spot what needs to be done, to encourage the people who are under their leadership, to possess is the ability to be able to keep the peace within his group, to lead a group, to be looked upon as a role model, help to make new ideas and ability to represent followers etc. If these indicators have been functioning together at a time then the role of leadership would call effective leadership. The existing literatures and theories suggested that the strengthening of local government requires effective leadership. Here, the study found a causal relationship between effective leadership and strengthening of local government. This empirical research found various inability of local leadership in this study. These are 22.08% respondents recognized that they have been facing difficulty to manage office personnel. 22.27% are unable to take decision on the spot before

happening incident. 25.97% leaders' thought that they do not have enough ability to encourage their followers. 28.57% have experienced to face unwanted and unexpected behavior of followers. The quantitative findings show that significant number of leadership have satisfied on their performance in the context of effective leadership. On the other hand, less but not ignore the opinion of existing leadership, they thought or recognized their performance is not satisfactory level. Therefore, it is said that the study mentioned causal relationship between effective leadership and strengthening of local government in the conceptual framework. As the result of this study, it does not find all the indicators of effective leadership in the study area. So, the existing leadership could not influence the strengthening of local government. The result of the qualitative study has also found a significant result. Such study explore some important reasons behind less strengthening of local government like Excessive control of the central government on Union Parishad, mismanagement of local resources, absence of proper coordination, no transportation facilities for elected members of UP, top down decision making process, and political pressure etc.

The empowerment of UP means a process by which both of institution and individual would be empower from organizational perspective. The study has been sorted out some indicators for the measurement of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. For the understanding of institutional and individual empowerment, the study has been identified some tools after review of literatures and theoretical analysis. These are well functioning services, organizational effectiveness and capacity sustainability and effective inter-organizational networks. The basis of well functioning services of UP is publicly accountability, equitably distribution of allocation and services, efficiently perform proper integration among personnel and members of UP, and adaptation with local culture etc. The study has not been found all indicators of well functioning services of UP in the study area. Although 66.23% of UP is publicly accountable. On the contrary, 25.98% and 7.79% respondents have given revised opinion. So, it is said that UP of Kishoregonj Sadar Upazila has not been providing completely well services. However, their efficiency level is good. It is a significant value. However, this result is not showing overall result of this study. Besides, UP is a lowest tier of local government system in Bangladesh. Permanent resident of UP have been got priority to get employment in the UP. Therefore, they can easily match with the local people in the context of cultural approaches. 76.62% thought that they are satisfied about UP

services. 37.66% respondent replied that UP members are not empowered. It has a number of good reasons such as illiteracy, irregular participation in meeting and ignorance of rules, regulation, and procedures and proclamation of UP. Government has been implemented social security programs and development projects through local institution. In this context, these institutions have to communicate respective related organization. Therefore, Communication network is more important for the successful completion of development projects. However, the result of this study show that 58.44% replied UP has such network; 19.48% and 22.08% replied that there is no networking with others organizations respectively. The study explore some significant reasons for less empowering of UP. It includes insufficient fund, inefficient administration and village courts, partial accountability and transparency, inadequate personnel as well as institutional inefficiency. These are main hurdles to develop institutional and individual empowerment of UP. The strengthening of local government requires institutional and individual empowerment of UP members. In this analysis, it is said that the result of the study found less empowerment of UP members and institution by which the strengthening of local government could not be possible to achieve it in the research area.

The strengthening of local government requires effective leadership, institutional and individual empowerment of UP; and participation of elected members. The study has been explored a cause and effect relationship among independent and dependent variables. It means that the level of participation as much as increased and besides the level of strengthening of local government is going up and down. No one expects, execute strengthening of local government without participation, it is not possible here. There are some variables between participation and strengthening of local government which are functioning as intervening variables. These are increase democracy, empower people, mobilize resources and energy, develop holistic and integrated approaches and achieve better decisions and effective services. The causal relationship of independent and dependent variables determined by those indicators which have known as intervene variable and significant valued. The study found that 64.94% elected members replied their UP meeting has been holding one for a month and 25.97% mentioned more than two for a month. The statistical data show that they are not following any unique rules for the arrangement of UP meeting. It cannot encourage the participation of elected members of UP by which UP would be strengthen. Another significant factor is delivering speech in a meeting. But reality is that in the study area, 22.08% and 7.79% thought that they

are not free to give their opinion. Influential chairmen and members are playing dominated role especially it has been happening for UP women members. This is a great hindrance to exercise strengthening of local government. The study found that 83% members are involved to take project planning and implementation. On the other hand, 16.88% members replied that they do not have involvement with project planning and implementation. In this case, UP chairman has become more powerful than his or her authority which is discourage the participation of elected members of UP. Another finding is local political influence on UP for selection and implementation of development projects. Sometimes, personal relation with chairman can influence project approval and implementation in the study area. Furthermore, 100% members thought that the existing rules and regulations of UP are not advantageous to the participation of elected members in development.

This study found some significant barriers to discourage participation of elected members. These are introvert, ignorance, busyness, insufficient knowledge. Finally, they have lack of awareness about their duties and responsibilities. Although, Upazila administration has been providing training to them.

### **Recommendations**

This study has been mentioned that strengthening of local government system is required for delivering better services to the local citizens. Accordingly the government has formed different committees and commissions to reform local government system in order to enhance its capacity so that local people can be benefited. This research suggested that some initiatives for enhancing strengthening of UP as a lowest tier of local self-government. These are-

- Bottom-up decision making must be required for strengthening of UP. Because, citizens are closely related with the bottom level personnel and know well about sadness and happiness of citizens.
- Strengthening of local government system is a political agenda. It requires the political commitment of all political parties whereas ruling party must cordial to execute that issue without outside influence.
- Chairmen and general UP members must change their patriarchal behavior and assist to perform their female UP members. Women UP members should have educational qualification and fight against all kinds of undue domination and influence.

- This is time to rethink about minimum educational qualification of local people's representatives.
- Local leadership have characterized by professionalism. They need to learn managerial knowledge.
- Upazila parishad has to effective and omit excessive administrative control by UNO on elected representatives of Union Parishad in the study area.
- Ruling party has to less control and must prevent political pressure on local authorities of Union Parishads.
- Government should reorganize of Union Parishad in order to reduce its institutional inefficiency.
- Sufficient personnel are required for better performance.
- Excessive workload of UP Chairmen and members should rearrange for their better performance.
- Need to proper management and mobilization of local and national resources.
- Union Parishads have to arrange regular meetings of the standing committees to ensure participation of local leadership so that local government system could be strengthen.
- Government should provide skill development training for the elected representatives especially women members as well as employees of Union Parishad.
- Government has increased honorarium of Ups chairman & members by the circulation of proclamation on 31 January 2008; 3000 for chairman and 1500 for members. So, this honorary is not quite enough as per their status. Therefore, make sure adequate honorarium for them. Honorarium should be increased to a respectable level. It should be not less than tk. 10,000 per month for the chairman and tk. 7,000 for the members.
- Transportation facilities of Union Parishads are required to provide outstanding services to their local area.
- Have to promote specific status of UP chairmen and members.
- UP must reduce its dependency on the central government in order to get government grant or fund and besides expand their own sources of income for increasing strengthening of Union Parishad.

## Conclusion

The Union Parishad deals with local administrative and establishment issues, ensuring law and order services related to public welfare, and formulation and implementation of local economic and social development plans. Almost all Union Parishads of study area have yet to form a set of departmental standing committees to carry out their tasks properly as well. It is impossible to realize national development goals without proper and accelerated local development. But persistent political and administrative interference in the UP affairs has made it ineffective. This trend has been continuing in the independent country of Bangladesh so far. This study identified some issues through focus group discussion those are working behind inactive or less strong local government system in Bangladesh particularly in union parishad. Although, Union Parishad has vast volume of work but it doesn't have adequate personnel, and financial solvency. In this circumstance, Union Parishad requires to increase strengthening itself. It is an essential in order to completion of huge volume of work. Strengthening of Union Parishad means adequate allocation of resources and freedom of expenses of it, skilled and efficient administration; empowered UP members as well as institutionalization of Union Parishad. Performance of leadership has been required with effectiveness, competence and commitment to the village citizens. Finally, it may mention that local government system either strengthens or not it depends on the political decision. So we should enlarge social movement in good turn of effective, efficient and strengthens of local government system especially Union parishad as a grassroots level institution. Whatever, local government experts and development activist said that UP has to face hurdles in every step. It does not have power to take decision, plan and projects independently and there is no own sources of income, absence of adequate wealth and no way to get it which was sending estimated fund. If it had full autonomy, adequate sources of income, and financial power then it can contribute a lot for the social development activities. UP is related with good and bad feeling of local people. So, no one should come in Union Parishad who have political ambitious, dishonesty and financially corrupted person. UP needs a leader who has educational qualification, honesty, and huge confidence of local people. Accountability and transparency of UP may be established, if Up get honest, good moral character and educated leader and accelerate the trend of people wellbeing and development activities. But the government has taken good initiatives to introduce direct election in UP level for the purpose of involvement of women in various social



development programs in the UP level. Somehow, this purpose did not fulfill due to domination of male members and chairmen. On the other hand, UP women members do not have the definite roles and its explanation regarding their duties, responsibilities and power. Finally, If government want to develop urban and rural area equally then must withdraw administrative and political control on Union Parishads of Chaudasata, Korshakoirail, Rashidabad, Jasodal, Binnati, Maizkapon, Latibabad, Maria, Baulai and Danapatali. Some terms and conditions are required for the strengthening of local government system especially union parishad such as power of tax impose and collection, to recruit required personnels, to take development plan and projects and implementation it, and promote priority to select social welfare project independently.



# Bibliography

- Ahmed, Nizam (1988) *Experiments in Local Government Reform in Bangladesh*, [online] Asian Survey, vol. 28, No. 8, August. Available from <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2644588> [Accessed: 3rd March, 2012].
- Ahmed, Shafiqul Huque (2007). *Local Leadership: Development, Problems and Potential in Bangladesh*, The Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration Vol. 29, No. 2 p 223-239.
- Ahmed, Tofail (1993). *Decentralization and the Local State Under Peripheral Capitalism*, Academic Publishers, Dhaka.
- Ahmed, Tofail (2000). *Reform Agenda for Field Administration and Local Government*, COAST Trust, Bhola and Community Development Library, Dhaka.
- Akter, Sazeda (2004) *Women's empowerment, participation, & leadership in local self govt. system of Bangladesh: A Study on elected female members of Union Parisad*, Quarterly Journal of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, Vol. 9.
- Ali, Quazi Azher (1995) *Decentralised Administration in Bangladesh*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Ann E. Brown (2001) *Biographical Dictionary of Management*, Thoemmes Press.
- Asaduzzaman, Mohammed (2009). Development Role of Local Governance Institutions in Bangladesh, [online] Nepalese Journal of Public Policy and Governance, Vol. xxiv, No.1, July. Available from: <http://www.pactu.edu.np/contents/njpg/7-dr-mohammed-asaduzzaman-fevelopment-role-of-the-local-governance-institutions-in-bangladesh.pdf> [Accessed: 2nd March, 2012].
- Barnard, Chester I. (1948). *Organization and Management*, Harvard University Press, USA
- Carla S. Smith and Michael T. Brannick, (1990). A Role and Expectancy Model of Participative Decision-Making: A Replication and Theoretical Extension, *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, pp91-104.
- Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Task Force Report, *Policy Brief on Administrative Reform and Strengthening of the Local Government System*.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Sage Publications, London
- David E. Bowen and Edward E. Lawler III, (1995). "Empowering Service Employees", *Sloan Management Review*, pp73-83.
- Dr. M. Islam and Abdul A. Khan (2006). *Fundamentals of Management*; Abir Publications, Dhaka, P-211.
- Folch-Lyon and Trost, G. F. (1981). *Conducting focus group sessions*, *Studies in Family Planning*. Vol. 12, No-12.
- Government of Bangladesh (1990). *The Local Government (UPs) Ordinance, 1983 (Ordinance No. L I of 1983)*. Modified up to 31st December 1990. Dhaka: Ministry of Law, Justice and parliamentary Affairs.

- Gretchen M. Spreitzer, Mark A. Kizilos, and Stephen W. Nason,(1997). *A Dimensional Analysis of the Relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Effectiveness, Satisfaction and Strain*, Journal of Management, vol. 23, no. 5, pp679-704.
- Haque, Dr. Sk. Tawfique M. (2011) *Challenges of People's Participation at Local Governance: A Case Study on the Standing Committees of Union Parishad in Bangladesh*. Available from: [www.pactu.edu.np](http://www.pactu.edu.np) [Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2012].
- Hossain, Dr. Zillur Rahman, (2003) Local Government in the New Century, cited in M Asiuzzaman, (2003). Sound Financial Base is Imperative to Effective Local Government, The Bangladesh Observer, March 02, Page, 5.
- Huque, A. Shafiqul (1988). *Politics and Administration in Bangladesh*, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh,pp-20-64.
- Hussain, Dr. Akhter. (2003). Local Government in Bangladesh: Victim of Narrow Political Interest, The Bangladesh Observer, April 02, Page, 4.
- Ibid.*
- J.M. Nicholas,(1990) *Managing business & engineering projects, concepts & implementation*, Prentice Hall International Editions.
- Jahan, Mahmud et.al (2002). *Source of Women's empowerment in Bangladesh: An analysis*, Quarterly Journal of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, Vol. 23.
- Jahan, Momtaz (1997). *The Changing Structure of Local Government in Bangladesh: An overview in Administration, communication and society*, Vol-1, No-1 January-June, Dhaka , Shiskha O Shanskriti Charcha.
- John W. Newstrom and Keith Davis, (2005). *Organizational Behaviour*, Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited, New Delhi.
- Judith R Gordon, *Management & Organisational behaviour*, Allyn & Bacon, 1990
- Kaler, J. (1999), "*Understanding Participation*" in Journal of Business Ethics, Vol. 21, No. 2/3, Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Karl, M. (1995). *Women, Empowerment, Participation and Decision Making*; Zed Books Ltd. London.
- Khan , M. Rahman and Ara, F. (2006). "Women, Participation and Empowerment in Local Government: Bangladesh Union Parishad Perspectives" [online] Asian Affairs, Vol. 29, No. 1:73-00, January-March. Available from: <http://www.cdrb.org/journal/current/1/3.pdf> [Accessed: 2nd March, 2012].
- Khan, M. M. (2009) *Decentralization in Bangladesh Myth or Reality?* A. H. Development Publishing House, Dhaka , Bangladesh.
- Khan, M. M. (2010) *Functioning of Local Government (Union Parishad): Legal and Practical Constraints* [online] available from: <http://www.dwatch-bd.org/L&P%20constraints.pdf> [Accessed: 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2012].
- Khan, M. M. (2011) "Revenue Mobilisation Performance of Union Parishad in Bangladesh: Is It Convergence of Central-Local Relations" [online] Asian Social Science, vol. 7, No. 2. Available from: <http://ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ass/article/view/6972> [Accessed: on 3rd March, 2012].
- Khan, M.M. (1991), "Critical Issues in the Selection Process of Local Leaders in Rural Bangladesh, Journal of Local Government, Vol. 20, No. 01

- Khan, M.M. (2011). *Local Government in Bangladesh*, A. H. Development Publishing House, Dhaka , Bangladesh.
- Khan, Niaz Ahmed (1993). *Towards an Understanding of Participation, The Conceptual Labyrinth Revisited in Administrative Change*, Vol- XX, No-1, pp. 106-120.
- Khan, Zariana Rahman (1999) *NGOs and Local Government Reform in Bangladesh*, The Journal of Social Studies, No. 84, pp47-64.
- Mallick, Bishawjit (2004). *Local Government: Local People's Institution*, A.H. Development Publishing House, Dhaka.
- Mojumder, Bdhiul Alam (2003). *Study Circle Discussion Guide Union Parishad*, [online] Study Circle Bangladesh, available from: [www.studycirclebangladesh.info/admin/publication/2006091368.pdf](http://www.studycirclebangladesh.info/admin/publication/2006091368.pdf) [Accessed: 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2012].
- Noor, A. (1996). *Local Government in Bangladesh: Problems and issues*, Journal of Local Government NILG, Vol. No-1, PP15-28, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Peter G. Northouse (2010). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, India.
- Pranab Kumar Panday (2011). *Local Government System in Bangladesh: How Far is it Decentralised?* [online] LEX LOCALIS, vol. 9, No. 3. Available from: <http://pub.lex-localis.info/index.php/LexLocalis/article/view/9.3.205-230%282011%29/0> [Accessed: 3rd March, 2012].
- Quinn ; Robert E. and Spreitzer; Gretchen M. (2001). *Organizational Dynamics*, Sage Publication.
- Rahman, A.H.M. Aminur (1990). *Politics of Rural Local Self-Government in Bangladesh*, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Rahman, Mahbubur (2001). *Local Government in Bangladesh: A study on Institutional Restructuring*, Journal of Social Science Review, vol. 18, no. 1, pp127-142.
- Rahman, Md. Saidur (2011). *Challenges of Local Government Institution in Bangladesh*, available from: [http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Md.\\_Saidur\\_Rahman](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Md._Saidur_Rahman) [Accessed: 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2012].
- Rahman, Mohammad Shamsur (2006) *Public Administration Theory and Bangladesh Administration*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Khan Brothers & Co, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Rahman, Taibur, (2006). “*Empowering Local Government through People's Participation*” [online] Official website of Local Government Division, Ministry of LGRD & C, Available from: <http://www.lgd.gov.bd/html/about.html> [Accessed: 25th February, 2012].
- Robert C. Ford and Myron D. Fottler, (1995). “*Empowerment: A Matter of Degree*”, *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 9, no. 3, pp21-23; a case and multiple perspectives on it appear in Lawrence R. Rothstein, *The Empowerment Effort that came undone*, Harvard Business Review, January-February 1995, pp20-31.
- Rost, J. C. (1991). *Leadership for the twenty-first century*. New York: Praeger.

- Samad, M. (2002), *Participation of the Rural Poor in Government and NGO Programs*, Mowla Brothers, Dhaka.
- Siddiqui, Kamal (1992). *Local Government in South Asia: A Comparative study*, University Press Limited, Dhaka.
- Sidorenko, Alexandre (2006). *Empowerment & Participation in Policy Action on Ageing, UN Programme on Ageing*, International Design for All Conference 2006, Rovaniemi, Finland
- Social Science Review, (1997). A journal of Social Science, University of Dhaka, Vol. 14.
- Strunz H., Dorsch M., Management, Oldenbourg Verlag München Wien, 2001
- Talukdar, Mohammad Rafiqul Islam (2009). *Rural Local Government in Bangladesh*, Osder Publications, Dhaka.
- The Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration Vol. 29, No. 2 (December 2007): 223-239
- The Government of Bangladesh (GOB), 1990.
- Traning Manual on Union Parishad Management (2008) Second Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Co-operatives, P-42
- Twyman C. (1998). *Policy frameworks and context I: Issues and linkages to poverty, natural resources, and desertification*, Department of Geography, University of Sheffield.
- Ullah, Md. Anwar and Ponguquan, Dr. Soparth (2010) stated in their article “*Financial Resources Mobilization Performance of Rural Local Government: Case Study of Three Union Parishad in Bangladesh*”, [online] Asian Social Science, vol. 6, No. 11. Available from: <http://ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ass/article/view/6741> [ Accessed: 3rd March,2012].
- Wilcox D (2003). *The Guide to Effective Participation*, September, available from: <http://www.partnerships.org.uk>. [Accessed: 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2012].
- Yin, R.K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, [online] Sage Publications. Available from: [http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/K\\_0271.HTM](http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/K_0271.HTM). [Accessed: 23rd March, 2012].
- Yukl & Becker (2006). *Effective Empowerment in Organizations*, Organization Management Journal, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp210-231
- Zahur, A.B.M.S (2011). *Meaningful Local Government*, Published in Daily Star, January 21.
- URL Sources:
- <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/business/blake.html> [Accessed: 15 October 2011].
- <http://www.mech.uq.edu.au/subjects/e4390/Em1mod08/sld041.htm> [Accessed: 25th October 2011].
- <http://www.mech.uq.edu.au/subjects/e4390/Em1mod08/sld046.htm> [Accessed: 9th October 2011].
- [http://www.nwleadership.com/docs/grid\\_revisited.htm](http://www.nwleadership.com/docs/grid_revisited.htm) [Accessed: 25th October 2011].

<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/history/grid.html> [Accessed: 9<sup>th</sup> October 2011].

<http://psychology.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.geocities.com%2FAthens%2FForum%2F1650%2Fhtml>

[Latibabadlanchard.html](http://www.geocities.com%2FAthens%2FForum%2F1650%2Fhtml) [Accessed: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011].

[http://psychology.about.com/msub\\_ioleader5.htm](http://psychology.about.com/msub_ioleader5.htm)[Accessed: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2011].

[http://ollie.dccd.edu/mgmt1374/book\\_contents/4directing/leading/lead.htm](http://ollie.dccd.edu/mgmt1374/book_contents/4directing/leading/lead.htm)  
[Accessed: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011].

<http://workstar.net/library/grid.htm> [Accessed: 16th October 2011].

<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/history/grid.html> [Accessed: 15th October 2011].





**Questionnaire for ‘Empowerment, Participation  
and Leadership in Strengthening Local  
Government System: A Study on Elected  
Members at Union Parishad Level’.**  
(For the Elected Representatives of Union Parishads)  
Questionnaire – ‘Kha’

Name: ..... Age :.....

Sex : ..... Educational Status : .....

Address : .....

---

**Leadership**

1. Did you face any difficulty to give order in a particular situation?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) Others...

2. Do you have any experience to take decision on the spot before the situation demand?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) Others

3. Do you think that you have enough ability to encourage the people who are under your leadership?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) Others

4. If No, Why...

5. Did you have any unwanted experience among your group’s members?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) Others

6. Can you remember, anybody challenged your leadership into the group?

Ans:

7. How many followers you have who are following you as a role model?

Ans:

8. Did you introduce anything in your Union Parishad which did not done by previous leader?

Ans:

### Empowerment

Well-functioning services:

9. Is this Parishad publicly accountable?

Ans: a) Yes                      b) No                      c) others...

10. If Yes, How...

11. What is the policy to distribute all duties, responsibilities and allocation?

Ans:

12. How much efficiently delivering your services to the people?

Ans: a) Good              b) Better              c) Excellent              d) Others.....

13. Is there any problem regarding integration among various departments and members of this parishad?

Ans:

14. Is Administration of Union Parishad adopted with local people with cultural aspect?

Ans: a) Yes                      b) No

15. If Yes, How...

Organizational effectiveness and capacity:

16. Is UP sustaining with its competence?

Ans: a) Yes                      b) No

17. Are you satisfied to produce existing outcomes of Union Parishad?

Ans: a) Satisfied              b) Moderate              c) Not Satisfied

18. Do you have any question regarding effectiveness of leadership?

Ans: a) Yes                      b) No                      c) Others...

19. Is each member of your Parishad empowered?

Ans: a) Yes                      b) No                      c) Others...

20. Does Union Parishad has communication network with relating others organizations?

Ans: a) Yes                      b) No

21. If yes, how.....

22. Does empowerment and people's participation required implementing development projects and plans in union parishad?

Answer:

23. Does strengthening local government system establish by empowerment of UP, participation of people and effective leadership?

Answer:

### Participation

24. What is strategy you are following to take decision regarding the development activities of UP?

Ans:

25. How many meetings you are usually holding in your UP?

Ans: a) One for one month b) twice for a month c) More than two

26. Can all members of UP get the opportunity to give their opinion without influence by others?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) Others

27. If Yes, How

28. Do you know how many development projects have been undertaken in your union in the financial year 2009-2010 and 2010-2011?

Ans: a) Yes b) No

29. Does any discussion take place in the UP before taking any project?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) others...

30. Are the local people involved in project planning and implementation?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) others...

31. If the answer is 'Yes', how the local people are involved?

Ans:

32. Are your opinions considered properly in project planning as well as implementation?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) others...

33. Do the local political institutions apply any influence in selecting as well as implementing development projects?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) Others...

34. Is there any influence from political party/party members for inclusion in Project

Ans:

35. Do you have Implementation Committee (PIC) in your locality?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) others...

36. Do you think the existing Laws/Rules of Union Parishad are helpful to the participation of local people in development projects/development activities?

Ans: a) Yes b) No c) others...

37. If the answer is 'No', why?
38. Do you think the existing Union Parishad Structure is a barrier to local people Participation in development activities?  
Ans: a) Yes b) No
39. If the answer is 'Yes', why?
40. Is there any evidence- where local people disagree/reluctant in participation of project implementation activities or inclusion of Project Implementation Committee after being requested by the Union Parishad representatives?  
Ans: a) Yes b) No
41. If the answer is 'Yes', why?
42. What are the factors that influence in participation of local people in development Projects?  
Ans:
43. Do you think people's participation make sure to enhance capacity of local government?  
Ans:
44. What can you do to extent popularity of union parishad as a people's institution?  
Answer:
45. Do you think the strengthening of local government bodies depended on its institutional empowerment?  
Answer:
46. What are the factors that influence in non-participation of local people in development projects?  
Ans:
47. What is your perception in strengthening of Union Parishad as Local government body?  
Answer:
48. What is your suggestion for strengthening of Union Parishad as a Local government unit?  
Answer:

*Thank you once again for your kind cooperation*

# Index

## A

Acceptance of Responsibility, 37  
Accountability, 83, 90, 113  
ADP, 104  
Audit, 73, 102

## B

Basic Democracy, 46, 65  
Basic Democrats, 19  
Book Keeping, 102  
British India, 18, 45  
Budget Procedure, 102

## C

CARR, 58  
Central Government, 81  
Chairman, 57, 68, 69, 70, 72, 99, 101, 102  
Chowkidars, 29, 64  
Coordination, 105

## D

Decentralization, 58, 115, 116  
Delegated Duties, 88  
District Board, 65  
District Commissioner, 57

## E

Effectiveness, 116  
Elite Control, 106  
Employees, 115  
Empowerment, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 57, 77, 83, 88, 116, 118, 119, 121, 122

## G

GOB, 19, 39, 118  
Group, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

## I

Implementation, 88, 95, 100, 104, 123, 124  
Influence, 38  
Institutional Restructuring, 51, 117  
inter-organizational networks, 83, 108  
*Involvement*, 36

## L

Leadership, 21, 25, 30, 31, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 50, 55, 77, 79, 115, 117, 118, 121  
LGED, 89  
Local Governance, 54, 55, 115, 116  
Local People's Institution, 55, 117

## M

Member, 69, 81  
Monitoring, 79, 95  
*Motivation to Contribute*, 36  
NGO, 55, 90, 118

## O

Office Timing, 103  
Ordinance, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 80, 99, 116  
Organization, 52, 64, 90, 115, 119  
Organizational effectiveness, 122

## P

People's Representative, 91, 99  
People's Representative Participation, 91, 99  
PIC, 95, 96, 104, 123  
Planning, 49, 115  
Political Parties, 96  
Process, 33, 37, 38, 117

## R

Register, 103  
Resources Mobilization, 52, 53, 118  
Responsibilities, 70, 88

## S

Satisfaction, 116  
self-determination, 34  
Strengthening of Local Government, 30, 39, 53, 58, 83, 99  
Structure, 29, 67, 69, 116, 124

## T

TR, 81, 89  
Transparency, 90

**U**

Union Board, 42, 43, 65

Union Council, 65

Union Parishad, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 41, 43, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 59, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 75, 76, 79, 80, 81, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101, 108, 111, 112, 116, 117, 118, 121, 122, 124, 125

UNO, 80, 81, 89, 92, 104, 111

UP, 21, 22, 23, 25, 29, 41, 43, 56, 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100,

99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 122, 123

UP Standing Committees, 71

Upazila Parishad, 17, 57, 66, 71, 81, 82, 89, 92, 95

**V**

VGF, 81, 89, 90, 103, 104

Village Court, 101

village police, 18, 64, 81, 101, 103

village punchayets, 18

**Z**

Zila Parishad, 17

for Strengthening Local Government System