



# “Obstacles To Effective Local Governance In Bangladesh: A Critical Examination”

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## Abstract

Union Parishad is the lowest tier of local government institution which provides service to citizens at their doorsteps. It is the only institution that ensures good governance, development planning, implementation, transparency, and accountability for rural areas in Bangladesh. The latest local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009 has created an opportunity to ensure participation and effective service to the citizens. By ensuring the best service to the citizen in local areas, union parishad can improve the living standard of local people and the development of the country as a whole. Moreover, actual sustainable development cannot be insured without the development of the status of local people, and for that union parishad play a catalytic role because of its functions, activities, role, and responsibility towards the citizen. Local institutions like union parishad ensure the best service to the citizen for promoting democracy, good governance, people participation, etc. Over the last few decades, Bangladesh see rapid growth but in local areas, people still face the problem of getting services because of institutional and outside reasons. In this research, we have been finding out the current problems which are being faced by the citizen in a particular union parishad in Feni Sadar Upazila. This is exploratory and descriptive research where survey method deployed on citizens and interviewing on union parishad bodies has been used based on multi-stage sampling in mixed approach. This is based on primary data in the area of 2 no Panchgachia union in Feni Sadar upazila at Feni district, where 200 respondents (190 citizens and 10 union parishad members) are taken by random sampling method. The findings of the study prove that most people face different kinds of problems when they seek service from union parishad. Reason of those challenges as respondent pointed out political, educational, economic, and social structure play a very significant role in terms of getting service from union parishad. This study reveals some ways to solve those problems for providing effective service to the citizen in the local area.

**Keywords:** Decentralization, Elected body, Local resident.

# “Chapter One”

## **1.1 Introduction:**

Union parishad is the lowest organ of local government. Union parishad act works as a medium of delivering service to the citizens in the local area. The central government can't perform all the activities or provide all the services to the citizens due to its huge functions and lots of constraints. That's why the local government has a huge role and responsibility. Union parishad is one of the lowest organs of the government whose function is to deliver the essential service to the people at their doorstep (Basu, 2015). Today, local government become an integral part of the overall governance process of any country which means an intra-sovereign government unit within the sovereign state dealing mainly with local affairs, administered by local authorities and subordinate to the state government and also said to be a good device for the diffusion of democracy at the grass-root level for inclusive development (Haque, 2008). Now union parishad has a lot of functions to perform - through Ward Shava there is a citizens gathering, composed of all individuals enlisted in the voter list of a ward, and conducts meetings chaired by the respective ward member under the advisor ship of female member (Uddin, 2019). Union parishad is recognized as an undeniable part because of its importance of service delivery and for development activities. The function of local government is vast. A Union Parishad is entrusted to resolve local disputes both civil and criminal at the local level through a village court under the provisions of the village courts Act of 2006 (Sowdagar, 2013). The village court is a quasi-judicial and semi-formal court. The village court is governed by the Union Parishad under the leadership of the chairman, along with the other four members, of whom at least two from union parishad members (Khan, 2016). Union parishad has now become one of the most important organs of government to give information to the citizens regarding any issue and service. People's right to access information has a legal and constitutional basis in Bangladesh. Article 39 of the Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees the freedom of thought, conscience, speech, and expression as one of the fundamental rights (Ahmed, Boex, Monem & Panday, 2014). Union parishad plays a vital role for delivering all the services and also improve the standard of living of local areas people. But in service delivery to the citizens, local areas people face a lot of obstacles. For that reason, a lot of people who live in local areas are deprived of their rights. The government provides a lot of services to the citizen as a whole by some local bodies but at ground level, citizens did not get all the services because of a variety of reasons. To identify the problem this research has been conducted. This research will find out is the problem faced by the citizens. Because it's essential to know the problem of local people in rural areas for sustainable development in Bangladesh.

## **1.2 Rationale of the Study:**

Local government is one of the most important components of the federal government. In the past, the government had little influence on local governments. Following that, additional presidential directives were issued to increase the power of local governments. The local government's power and authority were strengthened with pen and paper, but not in fact (Shah, 2006). Union parishad is the medium by which central government delivers all the necessary services to the rural areas people. Union parishad is the term describing

a local institution that helps citizens to get all the services on their doorsteps. Through the union, parishad has been assigned with lots of different functions (mandatory and optional) in Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance 1983, union parishad playing a very significant role at present in across the country (Panday & Huque, 2020). Most of the Union parishad are delivering service to the citizen some infrastructural services, conducting 'Village Court' for settlement of local issues under a short capacity, compiling birth registration where lots of time citizen face problem because of lack of technical knowledge of the union parishad bodies, issuing citizen certificate and supervising health, agricultural and educational service. All over the world where there are different countries are trying to study and improve in this aspect. In Western USA and CANADA are creating the importance this concept to ensuring best service to the citizen in the rural area (Sowdagar, 2013). In the Continent of Africa where most of the countries facing economic, political, social crises also trying to improve the service for better improvement in the local area, South Africa, Morocco, and Nigeria get positive results. Other countries like Tanzania, Kenya, Cameroon, Senegal, Tunisia, etc. are also trying to improve the service in local areas. In Western Europe like the United Kingdom, Spain, the Scandinavian countries are doing exemplary development of the country by ensuring all the service in local areas people. In those countries, all the necessary services are being ensured by the government and the citizen enjoy all the facilities at their home (Haque, 2008).

People's participation, women's participation in local areas development work, democracy, level of awareness, condition of law and order, development activities, political stability are the measurement tools to measure the development in the local area (Bhuiyan, 2011). These tools are describing that there are differences between the Northern and the Southern regions. In Asian country like Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan societies are more advanced and developed because of the effective service from the local area (Barkat, Khan & Badiuzzaman, 2015). Moreover in south Asian country namely- India, Pakistan, Afghanistan has been facing a tremendous amount of problems in terms of providing service to their local areas citizen. To above this discussion refers that the effective and overall development of any country lies on the development of local areas because most of the people live in the local area of any country. If we see the context of Bangladesh union parishad has a significant role in this country. Moreover, union parishad are newly entitled in this country. But union parishad was used as a different entity and different name in past time. Because the Economic and Structural development can't be stable if the service of union parishad is not up to the mark. And as a student of Public Administration, it is important to discuss this content. Public Administration is referring the policy drafting and implementation also (Sharmin, Haque & Islam, 2012). All the policies are taken by the government for the development of the people. And if this content is given importance it is easy to identify and solve all the challenges faced by the citizen to get service from union parishad. Though this country is not fully developed and society are not fully flourishing with all the necessary service. So, all the problems need to be addressed and solve those challenges for effective development.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study:**

- To know the role and responsibilities of local government (union parishad) in service delivery.
- To find out the challenges faced by the citizens to get service from union parishad.
- To provide some effective recommendations to solve those challenges.

### **1.4 Research Questions:**

- What are the functions played by the union parishad?
- What are the role and responsibilities played by the local representatives?
- What are the challenges in the service delivery?
- What are the problems faced by the local representatives in the service delivery?
- What can be done to solve all the problems and challenges in the local government?

### **1.5 Literature Review:**

The central government is responsible for a wide range of duties. However, it is incapable of performing several jobs under varying conditions, which is why the central government established the local government. Relations between central and local governments have long been a source of contention in the framework of local governance (Panday & Huque, 2020). Naturally, the connection between central and local administration in Bangladesh has been authoritative. The fundamental cause for this is the colonial conquest and the loss of democratic rule at the center. Bangladesh has a long-standing and significant tradition of local governance. These four provisions of the constitution are the exclusive source of laws, regulations, and ordinances portal about government in Bangladesh (Hossain, 2018). Local governance in Bangladesh is very underdeveloped, particularly in rural regions. The Union Parishad has no direct influence over the generation of resources from its restricted boundaries. The federal government has control for the selection and payment of personnel wages in the case of Union Parishad. The Union Parishad receives project funding from the central government's ADP (Mohammad, Mohammad & Mohammad, 2019). The distribution is also vulnerable to political intervention. The Union Parishad authorities often do not prepare ahead of time what share of funds they would collect to assist future development initiatives. All of the authority in municipal government is concentrated in the hands of one individual (Hossain, 2018).

Bangladesh has a long and eventful history of local government. With the political and socioeconomic change of the nation, the role and structure of the Union Parishad have been created (Bhuiyan, Islam & Salam, 2019). Nonetheless, as an essential part of the administration, the Constitution of Bangladesh made arrangements to create the local government. Those provisions were laid down in Articles 9, 11, 59, and 60 of the Bangladesh Constitution to safeguard democratic principles and to ensure economic and social justice, and also to provide efficient and required services to the people in the local areas (Hossain, 2018). This constitutional commitment directly indicates a process or a mechanism by which “equal opportunities for all” can be established and

undoubtedly it is possible through a democratic local government with good local government (Mojumder & Panday, 2019).

Currently, political scientists, development practitioners, researchers, and policymakers have received strict attention on local government issues, especially Union Parishad, and at the same time, these issues have played an important role in the development discourse. An important part of good governance is good local services for residents (Ahmed, 2017). In Bangladesh, both in terms of institutionalizing democracy and the well-being of individuals, the issue of good local governance is critical.

Local government is an authority that defines and imposes policies within and smaller than a whole state within a restricted region. In the past, 'local government' and 'central government local extension' used to be confused as being similar to each other (Chowdhury & Panday, 2018). But that isn't at all real. Although the concept of local government is as old as the history of humanity, the only recent time it entered the broad discourse in the academic and practice literature (Shah 2006). Local government bodies have been established at different levels in different periods Laws /Ordinances have been made to form local bodies at the village, Thana, District, and Divisional level from time to time. The genesis of democratic local governance in Bangladesh lies in the spirit of our great liberation war of 1971 (Ahamed & Rahman, 2020). Local government agencies have experienced frequent changes in their roles and responsibilities since their inception. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the first effort was made to create local government institutions. From the British colonial era to the present day, the structure, roles, and financial management of local government agencies have undergone many changes (Hossain & Westergaard, 1999).

Bangladesh has been regarded as one of the world's most centralized nations, over the past few decades, however, major efforts have been undertaken in Bangladesh to strengthen the role and capacity of local government institutions (LGIs) (Nishat, Popov, Mukharjee, Victorovna & Biswas, 2021). But, the local government bodies had never been, independent in Bangladesh, 'self-governing' bodies in the true sense of the term. They could simply be labeled as an extension of the central government with guided and limited local participation (Schroeder, 2019). Although technically, decentralization has taken place, centralization is still on the ground floor. Decentralization takes place because of the provision of efficient service to residents, but because of centralization in the practical sense, residents face difficulties and trouble getting services from local government bodies. Being one of the most corrupt countries in the world, Bangladesh with its severe governance problems can only ignore the need for combating effectively the menace of corruption at its peril (Schroeder, 2019). The negative implications of corruption are conspicuous: it inhibits the operation of market forces, creates bottlenecks in the administrative process, prevents justice and fairness, dampens the spirit of public service, and impedes sustainable development (Rahman, 2016). A lot of action is taken by the government to provide the best service to the people. One of them is the current local government Act. It has created an incentive to ensure that all the facilities at their doorsteps can be delivered to residents.

It can be clearly understood that the provision that assists the decentralization of local government and has some power to provide service to people was not completely followed by the central body, which is why the delivery of services was not up to the mark, particularly in the union parishad (Roy & Howlader, 2020). At the ground level, there is a lot of difference between theory and practice, which is why research needs to be undertaken to find the problems faced by people in service delivery from local government bodies in union parishad. In terms of service delivery to the parishad of the citizens' union, which is a major local government entity, problems from within and outside are also faced.

## “Chapter Two”

### Research Methodology

#### 2.1 Research Design:

In this study, survey design is used to collect information from citizens and interview local government representatives because it is more reliable than any other design for quantitative research. It is well known that surveys and interviews could be widely used for exploratory research. It helps in getting more organized information so that the findings of the survey can be generalized. The structured and semi-structured questionnaire for quantitative information and face-to-face in-depth interview is conducted used to collect information from union parishad bodies for qualitative information.

#### 2.2 Research Method:

A survey method has been deployed to carry out this research from randomly selected respondents. Also, the interview has been carried out to acquire information from local authorities (union Parishad). Data has been collected by using a semi-structured questionnaire.

#### 2.3 Data Collection:

Data has been collected from 2 kinds of sources:

1. Primary sources.
2. Secondary Sources.

Information has been collected from primary and secondary sources. In the study, the primary Source of data has been collected through different methods. They are:

- Survey on local citizens.
- In-depth Interview on local government (Union Parishad's) bodies.

Secondary sources are appropriate as the basic source of evidence for a study. Secondary sources of data have been used to improve this study. Secondary data have been collected from-

- ✓ Different books,
- ✓ E-books,
- ✓ Journals,
- ✓ Articles,
- ✓ Reports of different organizations,
- ✓ Reports on various committees and commissions on local government,
- ✓ Research works,
- ✓ Daily newspapers.

#### **2.4 Sampling technique and sample:**

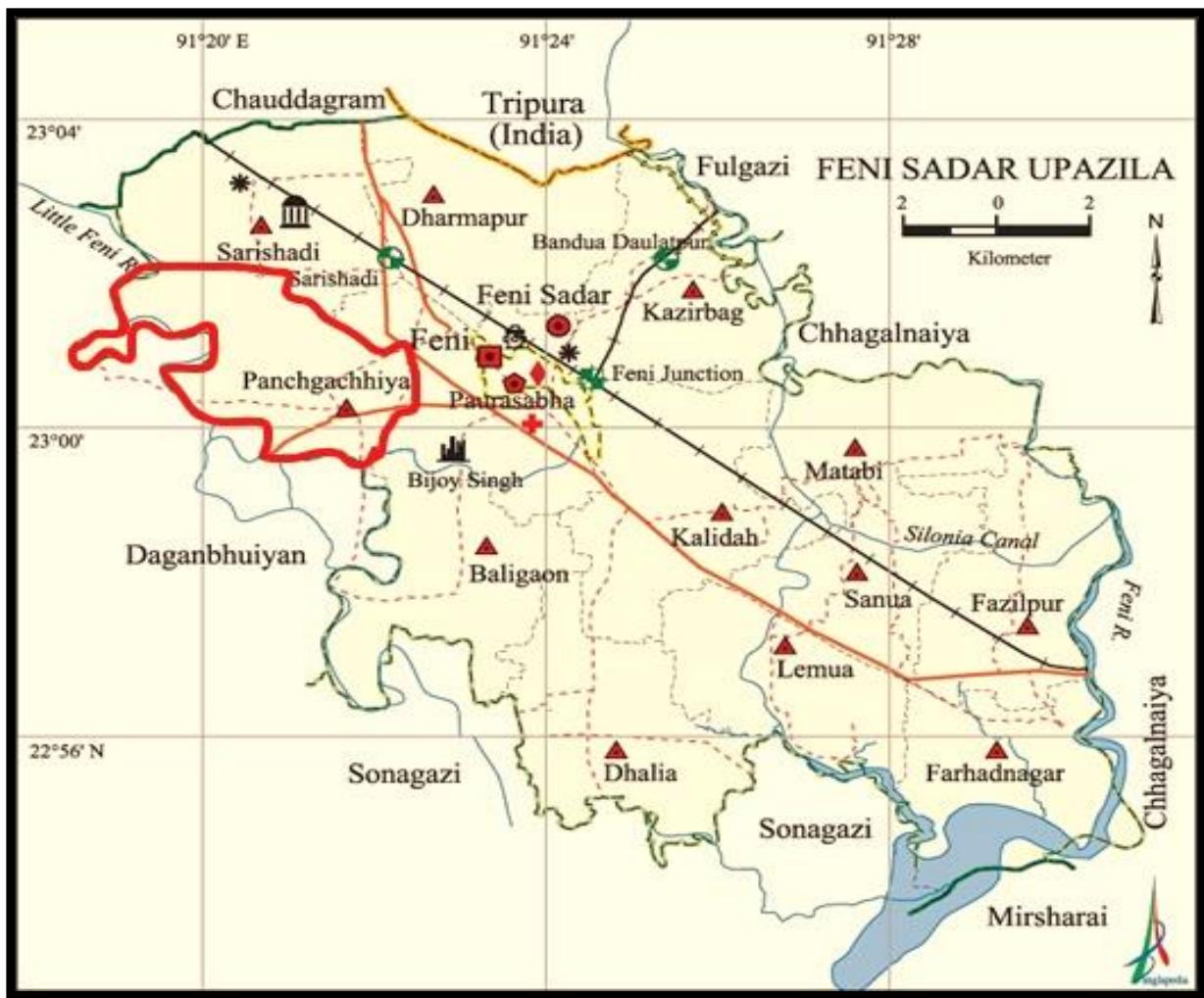
Multi-stage sampling methods have been applied in this research as the population size is vast and curtailing the number would be possible if more than one sampling method is enforced to select a standard sample size. At the first stage, from 9 words of 2 no Panchgachia union in Feni Sadar Upazila, 6 words has been selected randomly by using the lottery method. After selecting 6 words, at the second stage, 40 people has been selected randomly. And, at the final stage different age groups' data has been collected from each word.

Respondents	Sample Size	Sampling Method
Citizen	190	Random Sampling method
Union Parishad bodies	10	
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	

[Table No.1: Sampling & Sample Size]

#### **2.5 Research area:**

Selecting a specific area is very important for conducting a research program properly. My research area is in 2 no Panchgachia Union which is located in Feni Sadar Upazila in Feni District. This area has been selected considering some reasonable advantages. This area is in my maternal home and very easy for me for collecting data. Besides, this area is well known to me. That is why, this study area, logically, has been selected for completing the research successfully.



[Figure No 1: Map of the Study Area]

[Source: <https://en.banglapedia.org/images/2/2a/FeniSadarpazila.jpg>]

## 2.6 Data Processing and Editing:

Collected data have been organized characteristically, and then the statistical method has been applied to them. Quantitative data have been presented in the tables and the responses have been shown in percentage. Data from the table have been discussed. Quantitative data have been also analyzed and discussed in this research. Moreover, the collected information and data have been processed also through Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel.

## 2.7 Data Analysis & Presentation:

Analysis of data obtained from interview schedule and survey, the interviews have been conducted face to face for ensuring flexibility of interviews and authenticity of data. Both open and closed-ended question has been included in the schedule. Close-ended questions have been used to save time and open-ended questions to get in-depth knowledge and insight, as well as personal experiences and observations. Data have been presented through both tabular and graphical forms and analyzed with Microsoft Excel.

## Operational Definition

### Decentralization

Decentralization entails the redistribution of power of an operation or organization rather than a centralized one to several local offices or authorities. It applies to the transfer of power from a central government to state and local governments. It recognizes the transition of the authority of an activity or organization to several local offices or authorities rather than to a single one. Decentralization refers to the transition of authority in a political-administrative and local hierarchy from the central government to lower levels (Crook & Manor, 1998). Decentralization is used for a wide variety of transfers from central governments to state, local or local governments of "locus of decision making" (Slater, 2010). The best general definition of decentralization is given by Rondinelli in 1981. This describes the concept as a shift from the central government of responsibility to (a) field units of central government ministers and departments, (b) subordinate units or levels of government, (c) semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, and (d) area-wide, provincial or functional authorities (Rondinelli, 1981). In different countries, there are different forms of decentralization.

They include

- Political decentralization,
- Administrative decentralization,

According to Rondinelli (1981), administrative decentralization takes four different forms such as-

1. De-concentration,
2. Delegation,
3. Devolution,
4. Deregulation (Privatization).

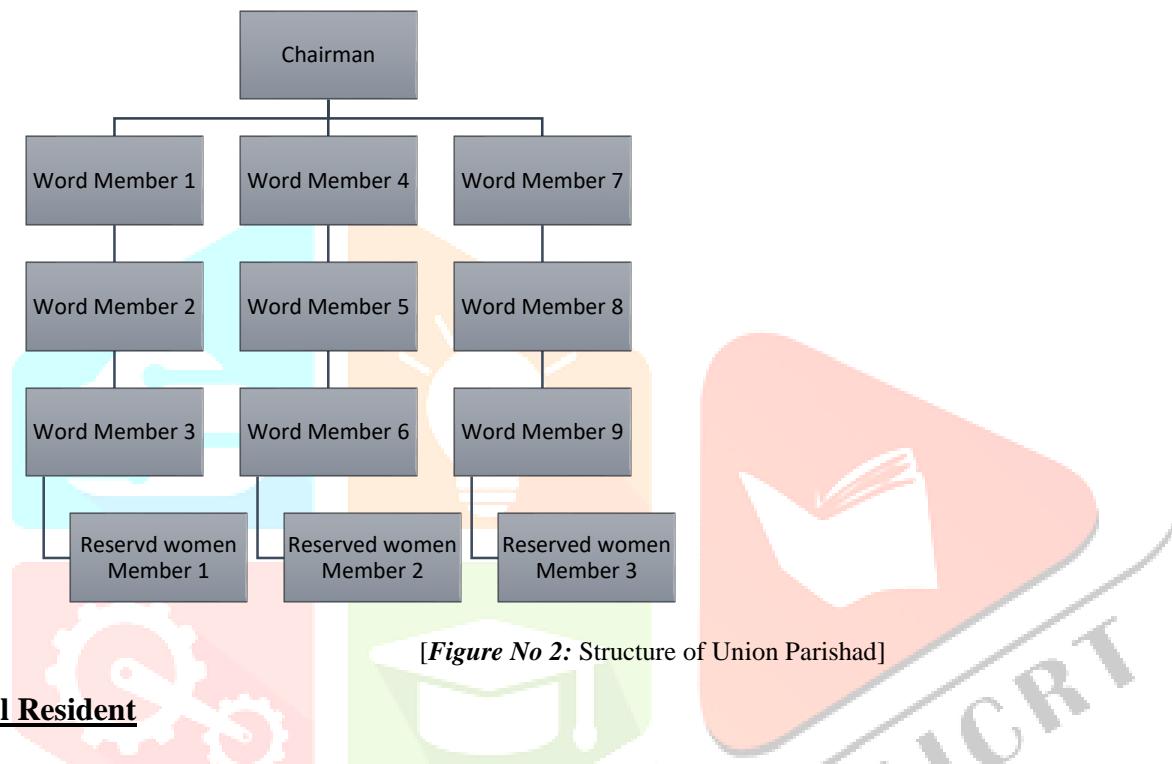
- Fiscal decentralization,
- Market decentralization.

### Elected Body

In local areas, more precisely in union parishad, two types of the body perform their function to provide service to the citizens. One is a selected body another is an elected body. The selected body is known as the executive officer and the elected body means the local political officials which are elected by direct voting by the people of the local area (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2007). This body was elected for 5 years. A union parishad consists of a chairman and twelve-word members including three members exclusively reserved for women. Union Parishads are formed under the Local Government (Union Parishads) Act, 2009 (Panday & Chowdhury, 2021). The composition of union parishad is:

- ✓ **Chairman:** The chairman of the Union Parishad was directly elected by the Union's citizens.
- ✓ **Members:** Nine-word members directly elected by the citizens of the word by voting. Each of them represents one word in a union.
- ✓ **Reserved Women Members:** There were three seats reserved for women in the n union parishad. Each of the female members is directly elected by three wards of male and female voters within the Union.

- The structure of the union parishad is given below-



### Local Resident

The people who live in the surrounding area are known as residents. Local residents are indigenous or naturalized citizens of a state or nation predominantly living in rural areas who owe allegiance to and are entitled to the security of their government. In Bangladesh, people are known as local residents who live in rural areas (Waheduzzaman & As-Saber, 2015). They live mostly in villages under some single union parishad. The central government provides them with all sorts of services through various agencies. For this study, the local resident means those people who are currently living or have lived within the territory of 2 no Panchgachia union in Feni Sadar upazila in Feni districts. Apart from that, all the people who have worked in this area for any kind of purpose are also included in this study as the local population. Also, some people who do not live here but have to come for getting services from the union parishad are included in the unfair evaluation process.

## “Chapter Three”

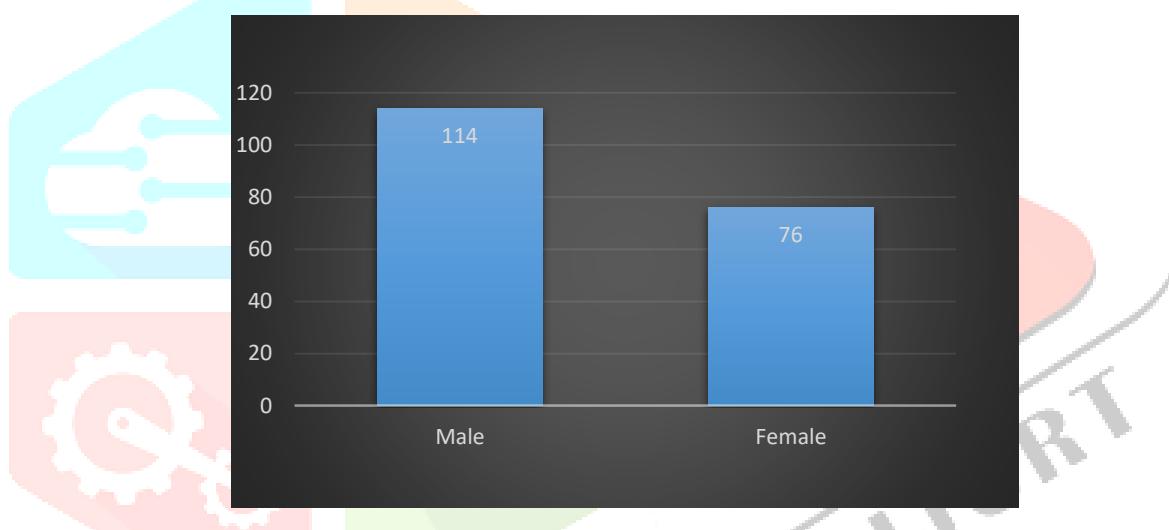
# Data Presentation & Analysis

### Data Presentation & Analysis:

After the completion of data collection, lots of time had been spent analyzing and understanding those data. Various types of information are gathered in this research paper. Here various opinions of citizens and union parishad bodies are identified regarding the challenges of the citizen to get service from union parishad. I tried to show data presentation and data analysis based on a survey by tables, charts, graphs, etc. Both Quantitative and qualitative data have been recorded and analyzed by using a statistical tool like Microsoft Excel.

### 3.1 Demographic Information of Respondents:

#### 3.1.1 Categorizations based on Respondents Type (n=190)



**Figure No: 3.1.1:** Categorizations of Respondents Gender.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

190 respondents have participated in this research which consists of 114 males and 76 females based on the random sampling method. Male is 60% separately and female is the 40% of total respondents. All respondents were collected from the study area. They are selected random sampling for fulfilling the research objective under the survey method. Males are dominated in the quantity since they are most available for the data. Also, females are not willing to respond like males (Figure No. 3.1.1).

### 3.1.2 Categorizations based on Respondents Age (n=190)

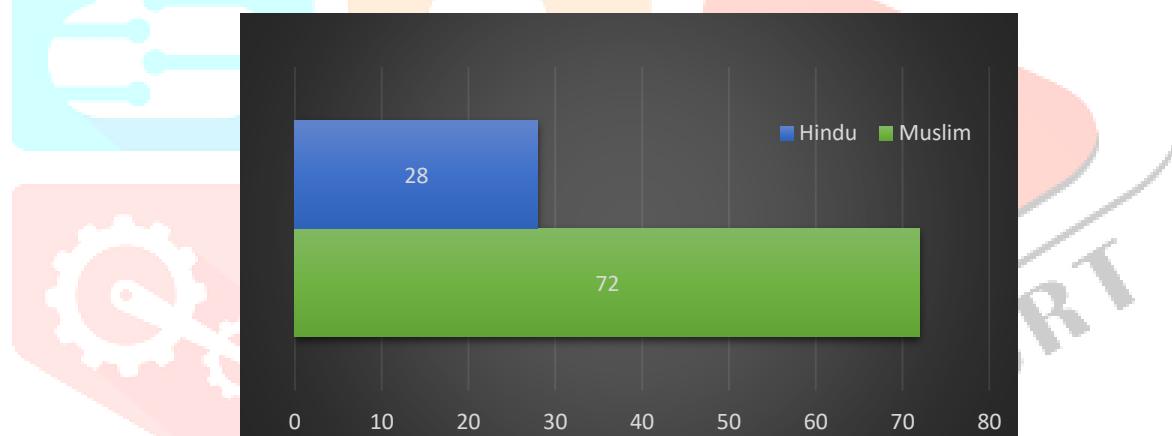
Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
20-30	35	19%
31-40	67	35%
41-50	52	27%
51-60	21	11%
61-70	15	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table No: 3.1.2:** Categorizations of Respondents Age.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this survey, 190 respondents give their opinion where highest respondent, age is (31-40) and the percentage of this age is 35%. The lowest portion of the age of (61-70) and there are different ages people are responded who are lives in the different ward. Young people consist most of the respondents because of the availability and the helpfulness to conduct this vast survey. Although old people are willing to give a response the lack of knowledge gave young people advantages to feature as the quantity (Table 3.1.2).

### 3.1.3 Categorizations based on Respondents Religion (n=190)



**Figure No: 3.1.3:** Categorizations of Respondents Religion.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

From the statistical evaluation of gathered data at 2 no Panchgachia union in Feni district, the numbers of total respondents are 190. Based on religion there are 133 Muslims and 57 Hindus participate in the survey. A small piece of information needs to be understood that the union is heavily Muslim-dominated. Other religious people are a small minority in the whole district. In this survey, only Muslims and Hindus participated and no other religious people are not found that only Muslim and Hindu people take in data collection (Figure no: 3.1.3).

### 3.1.4 Categorizations based on respondents Word no (n=190)

Word No	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	21	11%
2	57	30%
5	35	18%
7	29	15%
8	28	15%
9	20	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100%</b>

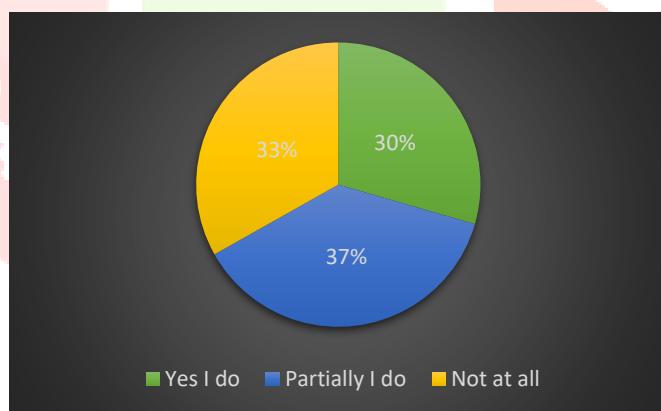
**Table No: 3.1.4:** Categorizations of Respondents word no.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this survey, the numbers of total respondents are 190. On the base of the word, 2 no word in Panchgachia union has the highest percentage which is 30%, and the lowest percentage is 11 from words 1 and 9. The word no 5 has a slightly higher response than the words no 7 and 8. Because of the pandemic reason, people from the different word are reluctant to attend this survey, for that the percentage is different from one word to another 3.1.4)

### 3.2 Citizens review on the different questions:

#### 3.2.1 Do you know what kind of service you can get from Union Parishad?

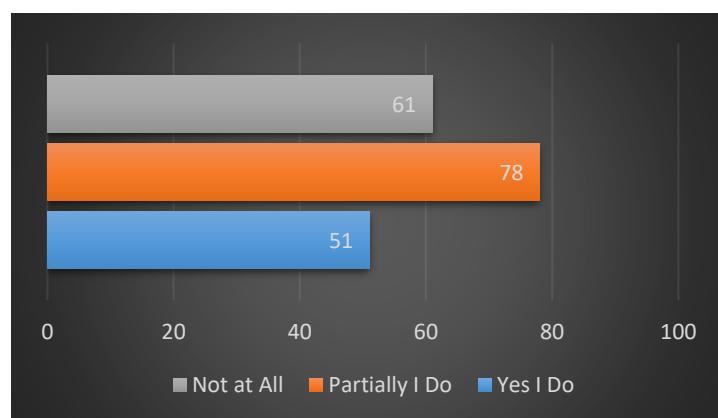


**Figure No: 3.2.1**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the survey on 2 no Panchgachia union in Feni Sadar upazila, in the response of the knowledge about the service from union parishad, 30% people know what kinds of service from union parishad they can get while 37% people partially know about those services which they can get from union parishad. 33% of people don't know about those services and one thing worth mentioning is that most of them are marginal people who live on the poverty line or below the line. A big amount of women who are housewives as the profession and illiterate or little literate doesn't know about what kind of service they can get from union parishad also. That can be found all over the country if a similar survey can be done all around the country.

### 3.2.2 Do you know what functions are played by Union Parishad?

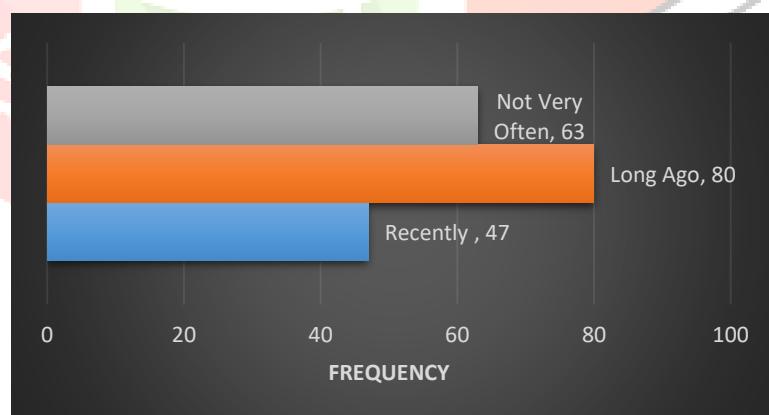


**Figure No: 3.2.2**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

From a field survey of 2 no Panchgachia union, it is found that in response to the knowledge regarding the functions of union parishad, only 27% local people are correctly aware of the functions and activities of union parishad. The majority 41% people describe their knowledge as partially and most of them are either students or those who went to union parishad for any work. Also, some people know about the various function and activities partially from ward shava. 35% of people don't know about the function of union parishad and alarmingly most they are women, besides marginal people don't know about those functions. Also, many young people do not know although they have taken some services from union parishad before this.

### 3.2.3 What was the last time you went to Union Parishad for any service?

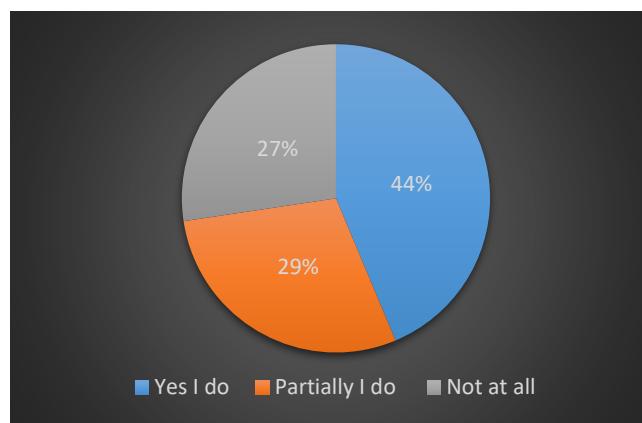


**Figure No: 3.2.3**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

The research survey find out that 25% of residents recently went to union parishad for any work or service. Most of the respondents said they have gone union parishad for documentation purposes. The majority 42% people went union parishad long ago and of 33% people couldn't remember last when they went union parishad or never went union parishad in their lifetime. Surprisingly most of them are women or those who live in or under the poverty line. If they need any service from union parishad in most of the cases they sent any male member from their family but they didn't go to union parishad in person even if it necessary because of social barriers.

### 3.2.4 Do you face any problems when you go for any service from Union Parishad?

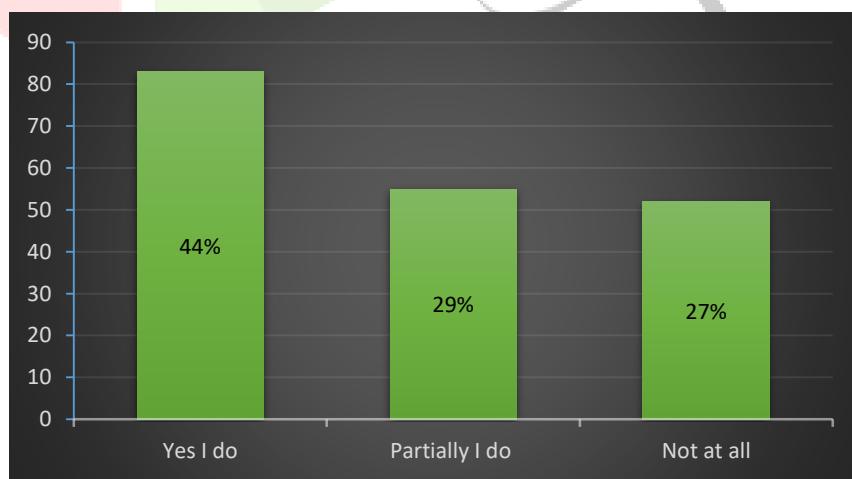


**Figure No: 3.2.4**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

One general hypothesis among the people who live in the survey area is that the situation of the union parishad and its services is not satisfactory at all and this survey also fine similar kinds of responses from the respondents. The field survey shows that 44% of respondents face different kinds of problems when they went to union parishad seeking any service. Those problems can be traced from small to large. For example, the union parishad office is in the last corner in the union for that lots of people from other sides face transportsations problems or those who are old and women they face difficulties. In addition to that, many corruption and nepotism exist in the service delivery from the union parishad. 29% people say they face little difficulties or problems when they went union parishad for any service. Those types of problems can be identified as the bad behavior from the secretary of the union parishad of the law enforcement people working in the union parishad. 27% local people express that they didn't face any problem when they went union parishad.

### 3.2.5 Is there any administrative problem in service delivery you have faced?



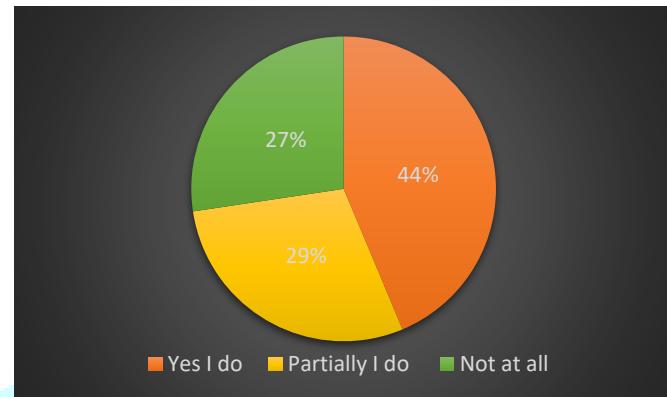
**Figure No: 3.2.5**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

The field survey shows that 44% of respondents face the administrative problem when they went to union parishad seeking any service, such as sometimes they were said to come to any particular date but when they go there they have to wait a long time for signing any documents besides there always some internet issue.

29% of people say they face little administrative difficulties or problems when they went union parishad for any service such as submit any documents or need to talk with chairmen. 27% of local people express that they didn't face any administrative problem when they went union parishad it is a matter of concern that most of them have a political connection.

### 3.2.6 Is there any corruption in service delivery you have faced?

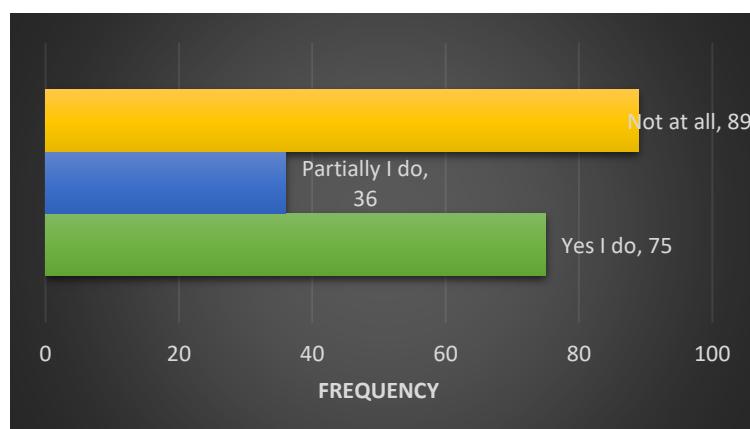


**Figure No: 3.2.6**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the field survey in the Panchgachia union, 44% of people describe that they have faced corruption in service delivery. Some of those express their anger towards some local representative bodies. Some of them share their story of how they give bribes to the local representative to get their work done. Also, sometimes those people who have different political connections face the level of corruption. Besides all the tender of development work was assigned to local representative bodies' construction Company. Also, some time in village court local representative bodies partially give the verdict to their favorite people. 29% of people say they have faced little or very low amount of corruption when they went for any service from union parishad. The level of transparency is very poor. If anyone raises their voice then coincidentally they face various problems. 27% of people express that they didn't face any corruption in service delivery again those who belong to the same political parties as their leader, they say no corruption wasn't taking place as much as they know.

### 3.2.7 Do you get your service in time?

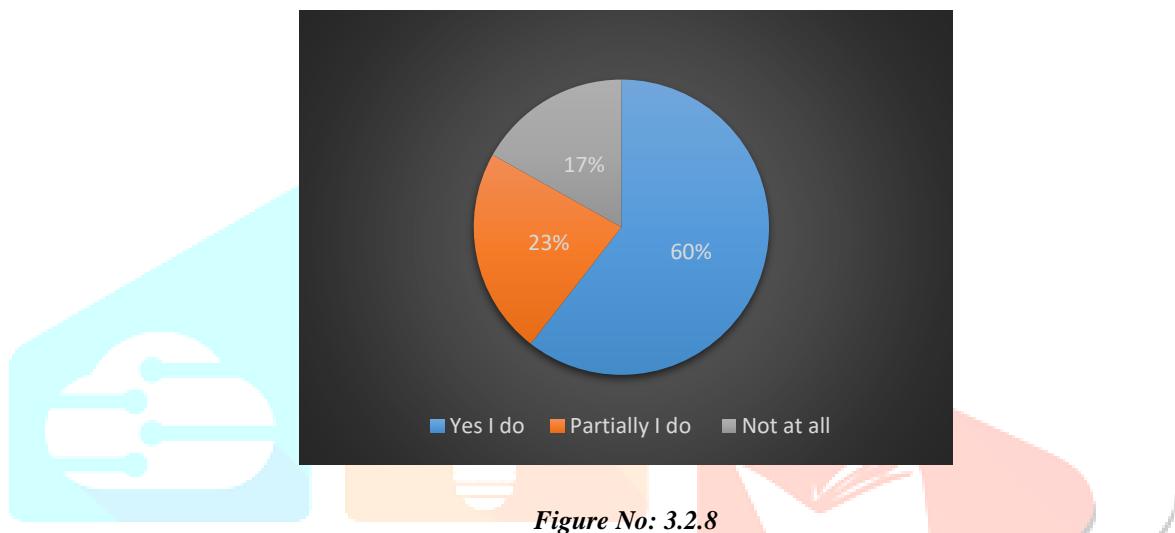


**Figure No: 3.2.7**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the field survey in 2 no Panchgachia union, 75 people state that they get their service in time. Residents said whenever they went union parishad for any service they get their service in the proper period. On the other hand, 36 people said they partially get their service in time. Some of the residents said due to some issues at many times they face some form of difficulties, but that is not very often. But on the contrary, 89 residents said they didn't get their service in time. Some of the residents state that they need urgent help from the union parishad but in many cases, they didn't get their service in a desirable time. According to the respondents most of the time the people from union parishad state the internet or server issues along with other paperwork problems.

### 3.2.8 Do you think personal relationships have any impact on service delivery?

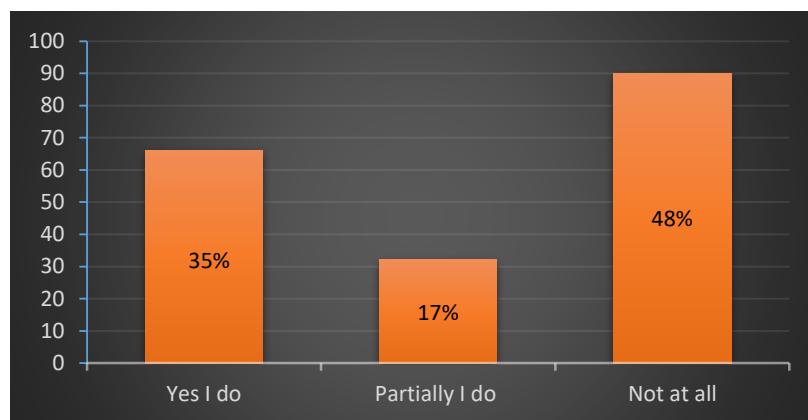


*Figure No: 3.2.8*

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this survey, 60% of respondents agree that personal relationships have a very big and strong impact on service delivery. Some people say that they face tremendous problems because of their bad relationship with the particular local representative. Besides, a few people express their anger because they have to go union parishad a lot of times for any service, the reason behind that they say something unwell about particular local representative. 23% of people partially agree with this notion that personal relationships have an impact on service delivery. 17% of people disagree with this and said that local representatives are very good at their work and they put their relationship aside in service delivery. But it is a matter of contradiction that some of them said that this local representative or that local representative are corrupt.

### 3.2.9 Do you face any extra challenges or facilities because of your gender?

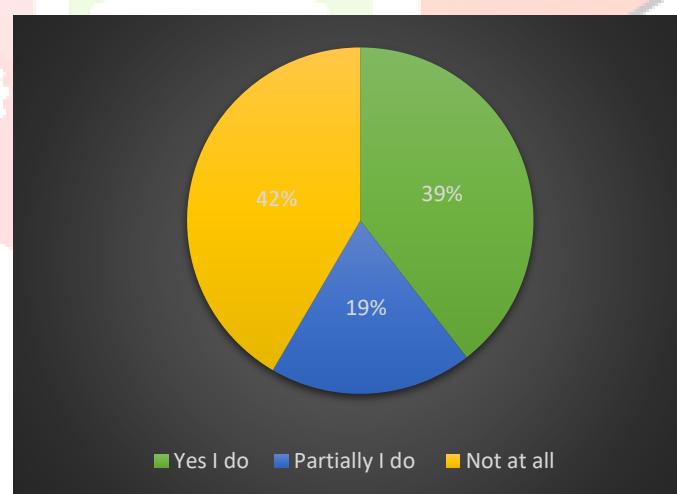


**Figure No: 3.2.9**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

From a field survey of 2 no Panchgachia union it is found out that in response to the challenges or facilities based on gender- 35% of people agree that they face problems or facilities because of their gender. It is a matter of concern that a large portion is women. They have faced various problems because of their biological information. Some women say that they have to convince their family before going out. Besides lots of marginal women face the problem when they went to union parishad for any relief help. Some of them said that they are not strong enough like men to go union parishad several times for allowance. 17% of people partially agree that they face problems or facilities because of their gender. 48% of people say they didn't face any problem or facilities because of their gender. Of this 48%, most of them are men.

### 3.2.10 Do you get any extra challenges or facilities because of your economic condition?



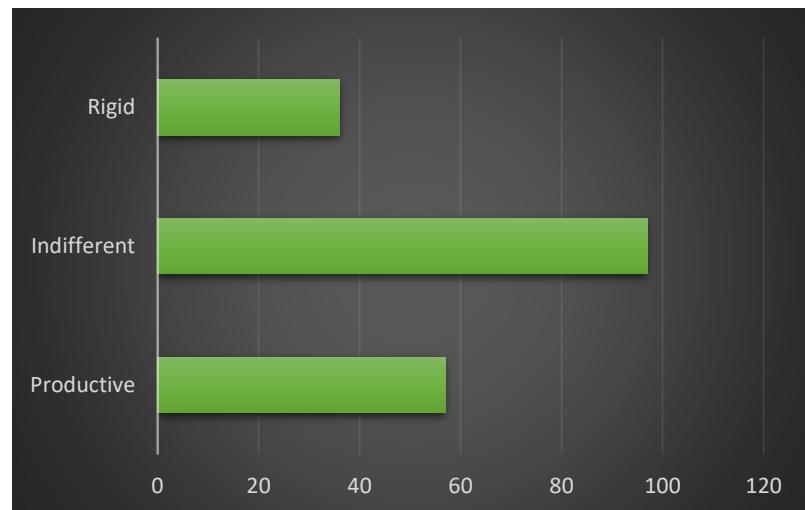
**Figure No: 3.2.10**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this survey, 39% of people say they have faced some extra challenges or facilities because of their economic condition. Most of the marginal people who live in the poverty line state that they didn't have much money so that they are unable to give some money to the local representative for quick service, in addition sometimes poor people cannot afford to stop their work and go to union parishad for any service because if they do so they won't get money to feed their family. Also, some of them said that they have better economic conditions for that they get quick service. 19% of people partially agree that they face challenges or facilities because of

their economic condition. A big amount of people around 42% people say they didn't face any challenges or facilities because of their economic condition.

### 3.2.11 What is the attitude of elected representatives for providing service?

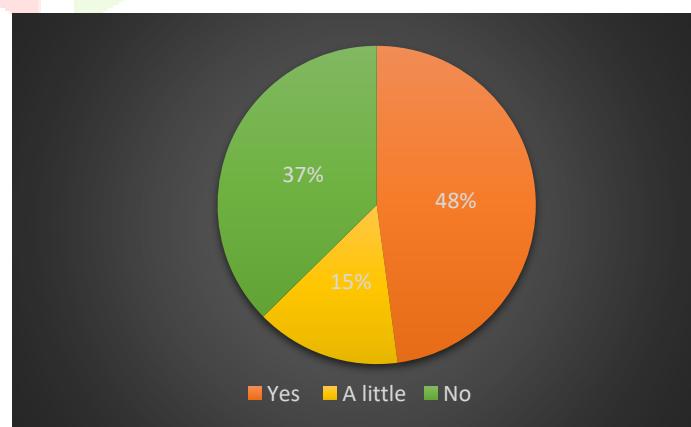


**Figure No: 3.2.11**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In response on what is the attitude of elected representatives in service delivery, 57 people said local representatives have a productive attitude in service delivery. Some of them are very willing to work for the people, said some respondents. On the other hand, 97 people said that the attitude of local representatives is indifferent. Most of the respondents said that most of the local representatives are very much indifferent in service delivery. Mainly reserved women representatives are not very much productive according to some women. Besides some male local representatives are not aware of their responsibilities for that they cannot give productive service to the citizen. 36 people said that the attitude of the local representative is rigid in service delivery. They are very much inflexible in service delivery to local people.

### 3.2.12 Do you have any political connections?



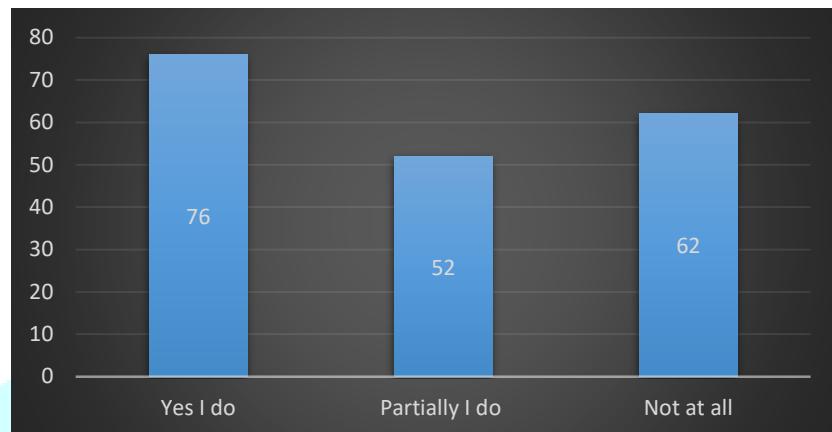
**Figure No: 3.2.12**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

Political connection is very much normal in the local area. In this survey, 48% of people express that they have a strong political connection or they are very much associated with politics. Though this is the biggest portion a few women have political connection or association with politics. Most of the women are not

politically connected and it's a matter of concern that most of the women are not willing to be part of politics. Though women are an integrated part of any work at the field level only a few women are connected with politics. Most of the men and young males are connected with politics. 15% of people said that they had little political connection. And 37% of people don't have any political connection. Of that, 37 percent most of them are women and those who are poor or live below the poverty line.

### 3.2.13 Do you face any extra challenges or facilities because of your political connection?

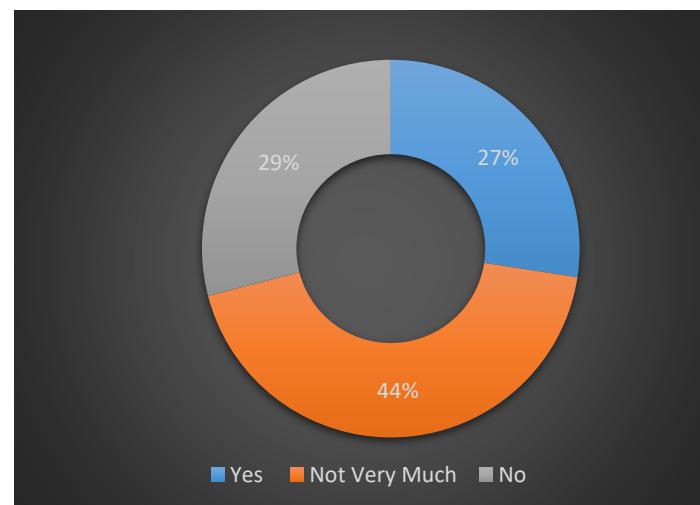


**Figure No: 3.2.13**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this survey, 40% of people said that they face some extra challenges or facilities because of their political connection. Some of them said that they face lots of problems and harassment because of their different political connection and ideology. Some of those state that they didn't get their service because of their political connection but on the other hand those who have political connections those people get their service easily. Besides, some people agree that they get some facilities because of their political connection. 27% of people partially agree that they face some facilities or challenges because of their political connection on some occasions. 33% of people said that they didn't face any facilities or challenges because of their political connection. But need to be taken into consideration that a lot of those in 33 percent are politically connected.

### 3.2.14 Do the elected representatives have political goodwill?

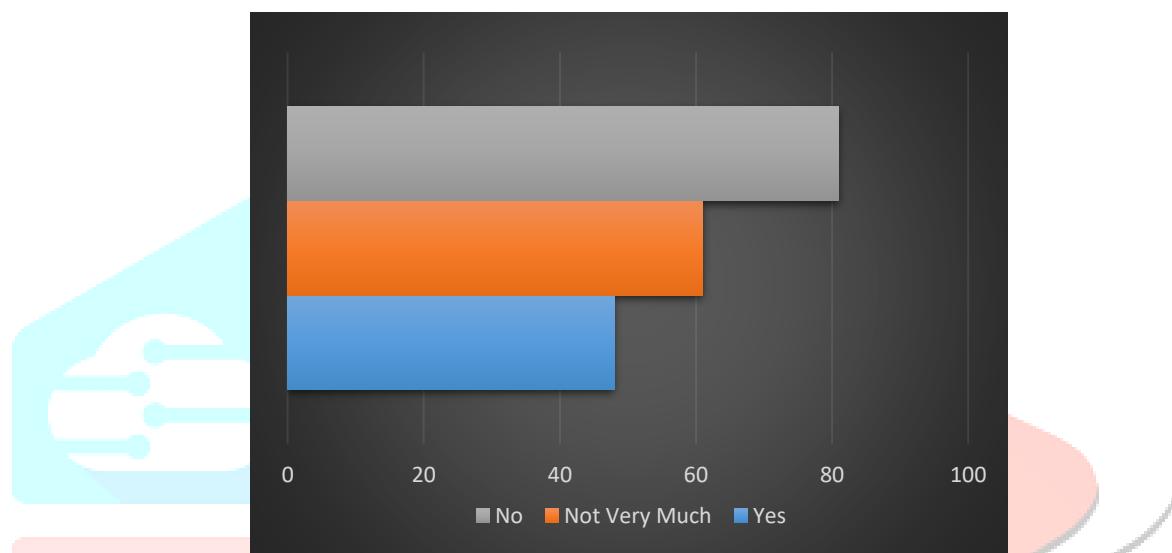


**Figure No: 3.2.14**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In response to the political goodwill of elected representatives in service delivery, 27% of people said local representatives have political goodwill. Some of them are very willing to work for the people, said some respondents. On the other hand, 44% of people said that the political goodwill of local representatives is not very much. Most of the respondents said that most of the local representatives are very much partial, for that those who want to work for citizens didn't get any chance to do so. Besides interpersonal clashes and political clashes are very much common at the field level. Also, local representatives are politically biased at some times. 29% of people said that there is no political goodwill among a local representative. Respondents express their anger towards some local representatives because they make barriers in other local representatives' work.

### 3.2.15 Do the elected representatives aware and careful about their role and responsibility?



*Figure No: 3.2.15*

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the field survey on 2 no Panchgachia unions, in response to the awareness of local representatives about their role and responsibility- 25% of people said that local representatives are very much careful about their role and responsibility. Some of the local representatives are young and well educated for that they are very much careful about their work, others are also careful about their prescribed role and responsibility, according to those 25 percent people. On the other hand, 32% of people said local representatives are not very much careful about their prescribed roles and responsibility. Most of the local representatives have no clear idea or knowledge about their role and responsibility until they were elected. For that those local representatives cannot provide effective service to the citizens said most of the respondents. But 43% of people said most of the local representatives are not aware and careful about their role and responsibility. They don't have clear knowledge about their role and responsibility. Most of the local representatives are not well educated for that they don't have proper knowledge about their role and responsibility that is why they are careless about their prescribed role and responsibility.

### 3.2.16 Do the people get justice from the village court?

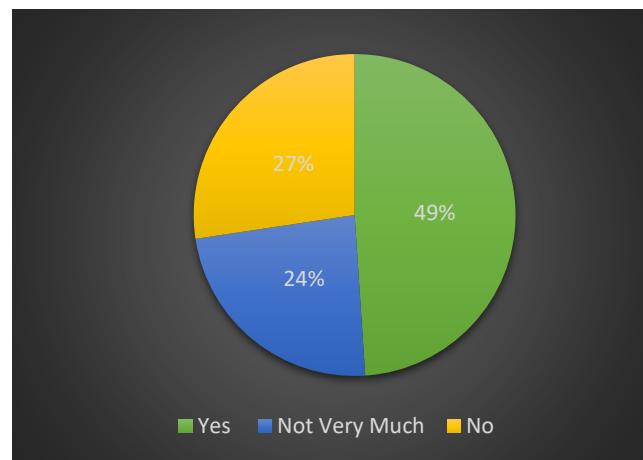


Figure No: 3.2.16

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the field research the in Panchgachia union, 49% of people say they get justice from the village court. Most of the respondents said that they get justice from the village court if they go with any complaints. Though some respondents said they get justice but it took some time but they are happy to get justice. On the other hand, 24% of people said partially people get justice from the village court. Sometimes people get the justice they didn't get the justice they wanted. 27% of respondents disagree that people didn't get justice from the village court. They said some local representatives are very much biased and give verdicts to their favorable parties. Some of the respondents said they didn't get justice because of their political affiliation or personal relationship.

### 3.2.17 Do the people get safety programs to support?

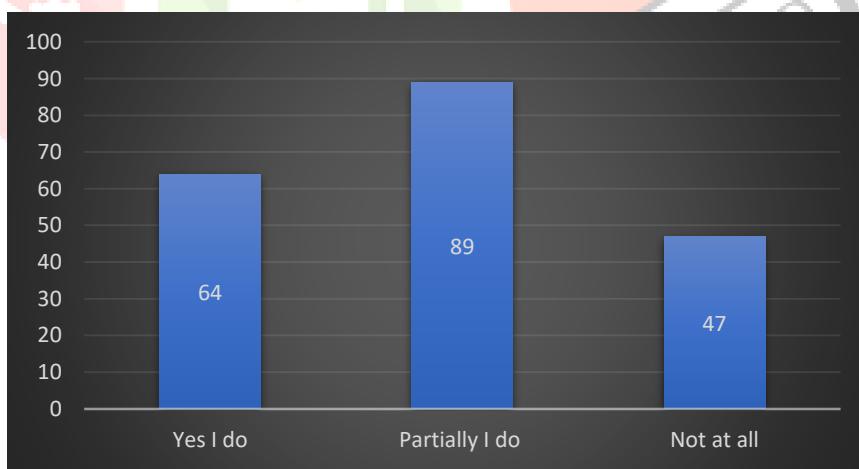


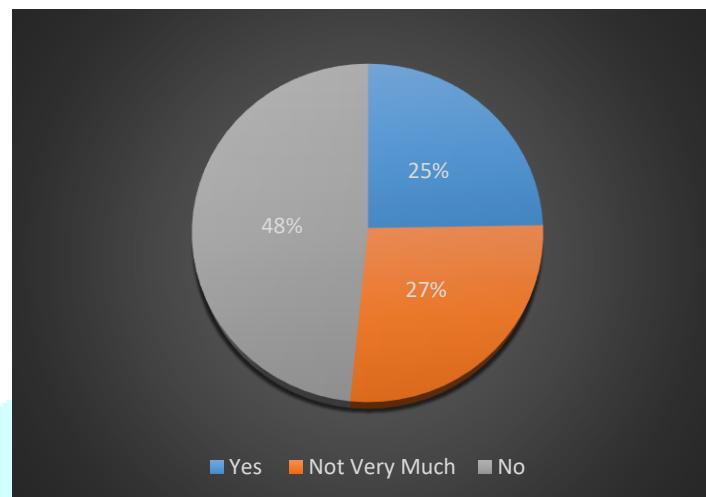
Figure No: 3.2.17

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In response to getting safety net programs to support such as VGD, VGF, Old Age Allowance, and Widow Allowance 34% of respondents said people get those allowances. Some of the respondents are very happy to get those allowances and they express their happiness. On the other hand, 41% of respondents said people partially get those support. Most of the respondents said, there are a lot of people who need those allowances but only a few people get those allowances that are why a lot of people still live in poverty. On the contrary,

25% of people said people didn't get those support. They express their anger towards local representatives. Some of those respondents said those who have a political connection and personal relationships those people get these kinds of support. Also, some of those respondents said local representatives are biased in selecting the beneficiaries.

### 3.2.18 Are you aware of the union digital center?

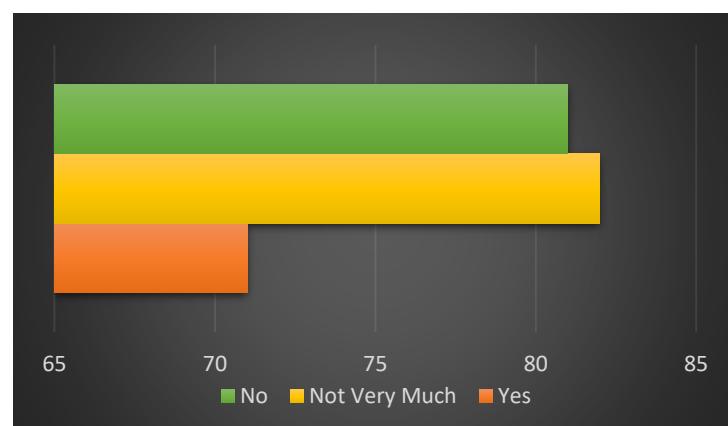


*Figure No: 3.2.18*

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this research on the response of awareness about union digital center, only 25% of people know union digital center. In this survey, those who are little educated and those who often go to union parishad are aware of the union digital center. On the other hand, 27% of people said they have little knowledge about the union digital center. Most of them are aware after going union parishad for any work or through ward shava. But a big portion of respondents, 48% people are not aware of the union digital center. A lot of those respondents heard union digital center for the first time. And a big portion of those respondents is poor or marginal people. Also, a big number of women are not aware of the union digital center.

### 3.2.19 Have you gotten service from union parishad by union digital center?

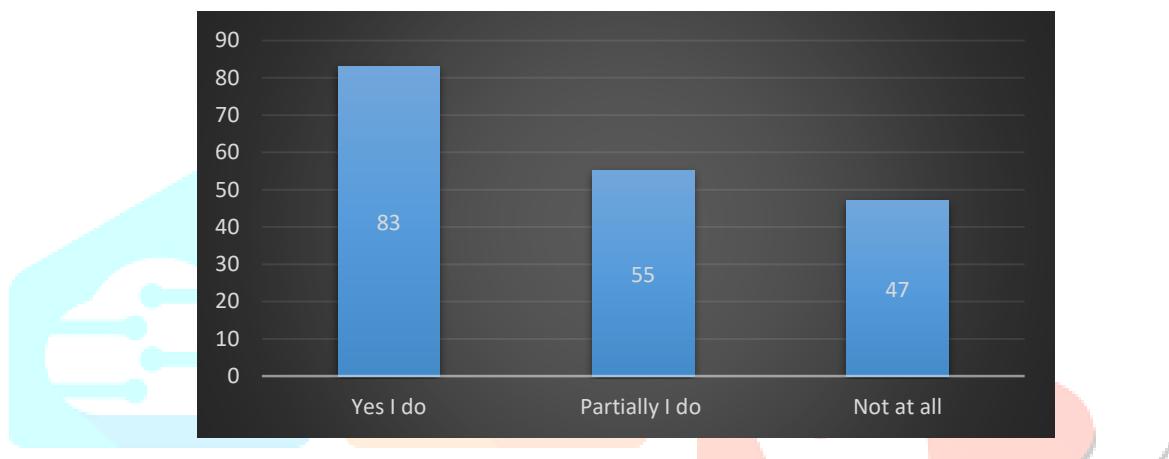


*Figure No: 3.2.19*

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

Under the goal of “Digital Bangladesh,” the central government have built lots of digital center in the union. Nowadays all the services can be provided online if needed. From the field survey on 2 no Panchgachia union, 37% of people said they get service from union parishad by union digital center. In this 37% people, some of were unaware about union digital center. After getting service they got some knowledge about union digital center. 43% of respondents said don’t know if they get any service from union parishad by union digital center. Of this 43 percent, most of them are women and poorer sections people. 20% of respondents said they didn’t get any service from union parishad by union digital center. One important note should consider that lots of people do not have the knowledge about UDC and even if they receive the service through UDC they will not able to differentiate

### 3.2.20 Do you get any lands services from union parishad?

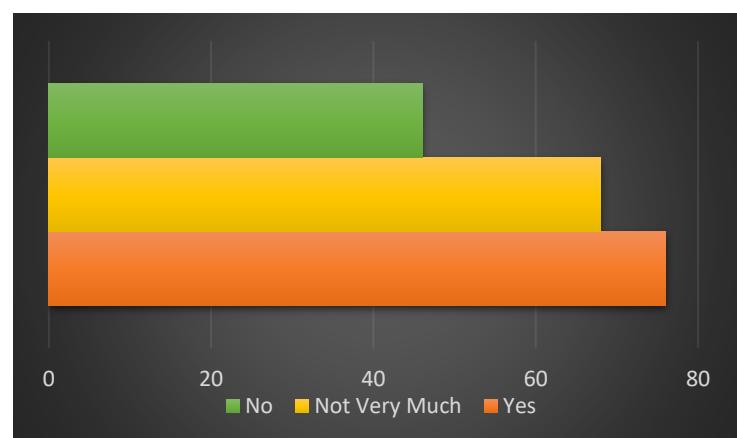


**Figure No: 3.2.20**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this survey, 44% of people said they get land service from union parishad. But most of the respondents said they get service through a different mechanism. On the other hand, 29% of people are not about that. They can’t remember that was they get any service from union parishad about land. Besides most of the female respondents said they didn’t know about that because they were not informed. Surprisingly 27% of people said they didn’t get any service from union parishad about land. In this 27 percent, most of the respondents are youth including male and female.

### 3.2.21 Do you get any Agricultural help from union parishad?

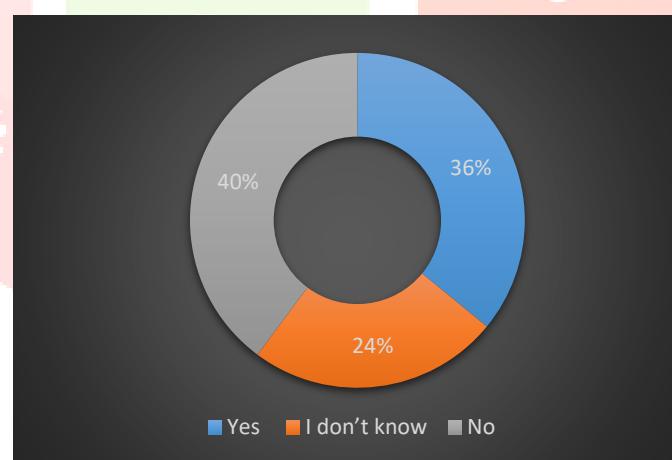


**Figure No: 3.2.21**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

Panchgachia union is very much dependent on agriculture. In the response of did, they get any agricultural help from union parishad, 40% of respondents said yes, they get help from union parishad about agriculture. Most of those respondents said they get some seeds, training, and other stuff from union parishad through ward shava about agriculture. 35% of respondents said they get very little help from union parishad. Some of the respondents said local representatives show nepotism about selecting the beneficiaries. 25% of respondents said they didn't get any help from the union parishad though they went to union parishad seeking help regarding agriculture.

### 3.2.22 Are there enough medical facilities provided by union parishad?

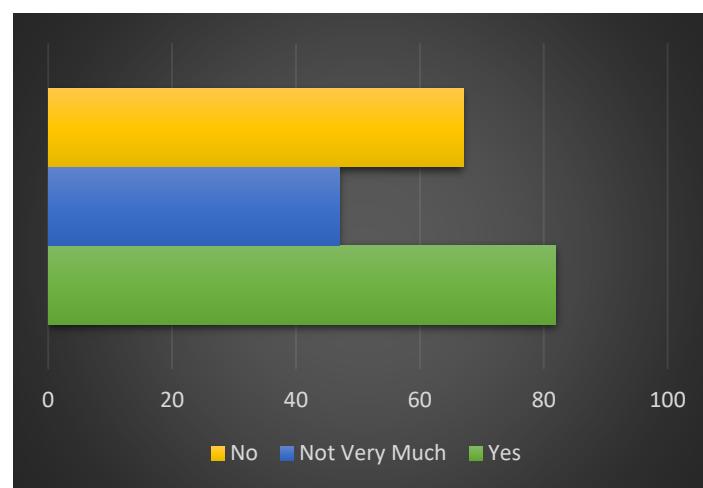


**Figure No: 3.2.22**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this corona pandemic, medical facilities are very much essential for all. In the Panchgachia union, 36% of respondents said they get medical facilities from union parishad. On the other hand, 24% of respondents said they don't know about this issue. But surprisingly 40% of people said that they didn't get any medical help from union parishad. Most of the lower-income people said they don't have enough money to buy medical stuff in the corona pandemic and they didn't get any medical facilities from union parishad.

### 3.2.23 Are primary educations ensured for all?

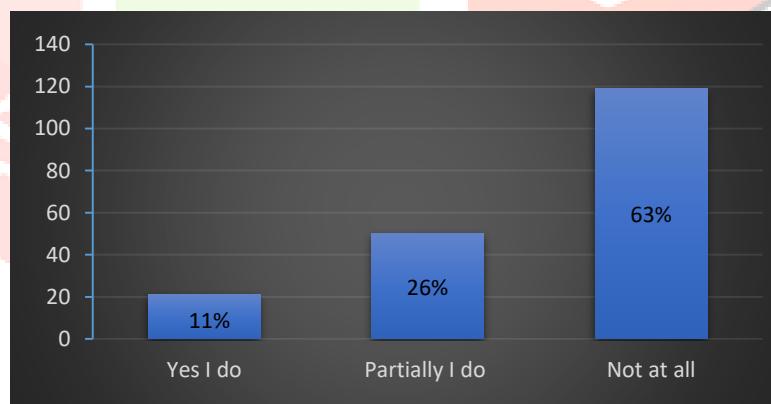


**Figure No: 3.2.23**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the response to ensuring primary education for all, 43% of respondents said yes, primary education is ensured for all. 25% of respondents said they don't know about that. Most of those said for poorer sections people doesn't have these facilities to send their children to school. 32% of respondents said no, primary education is not ensured for all. In this 32 percent, a lot of poorer people said they are bound not to send their children to schools because of educational expenditure. Some of them said their children help them in household activities. That's why they can't send their children to school.

### 3.2.24 Do you think the service you get from union parishad is enough for all?



**Figure No: 3.2.24**

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In the survey on Panchgachia union, only 11% of people said the service they get from union parishad is enough. Some of those respondents said there is a lot of room for improvement but they think the service they get is enough. On the other hand, 26% of people said the service they get is not very much enough. Most of the people express that the service they get from union parishad is very little. A massive portion of the respondents, around 63% people said the service they get from union parishad is not enough. Most of the respondents said the service they get is not sufficient for this big union. A lot of people still live on the poverty line. Most of the poorer sections people said they didn't get proper service from union parishad. A lot of change needs to be done for better service delivery to the citizen.

### 3.2.25 What are the extra facilities you want from union parishad

According to the survey statistics, lots of people give lots of comments about extra facilities they want from the union parishad. Some of those are given below-

1. Increase medical facilities especially in the covid-19 situation.
2. Increase agricultural support.
3. Increase the amount of VGF, VGD, Old age pension, Widow Allowances.
4. Increase the human resource of village police/ chowkidar.
5. Regular patrol of police to decrease drug problem.

### 3.2.26 What will be your recommendations for effective service to the citizens

According to the survey statistics, lots of people give lots of recommendations to improve the service of the union parishad and make those services effectivelyome of those are given below-

1. Solve the internet issue of Union Digital Center.
2. Ensure transparency towards the local people.
3. Conduct word shava frequently.
4. Allow women leaders to participate in a local issue.
5. Increase the level of awareness among the poorer or marginal people.
6. Connect youth in different activities.
7. Include functions, roles, and responsibilities of union parishad in lower education level.

## 3.3 Demographic Information of Local Representatives:

### 3.3.1 Categorizations based on Local Representatives Gender (n=10)

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	7	70%
Female	3	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table No: 3.3.1:** Categorizations of Local Representatives Gender.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

10 respondents participate in this interview which is consist of 7 males and 3 females on the basic composition of union parishad, 1 male chairman, and 6-word member who are male, and 3 reserved seat female member. The male is (70%) separately and female is the (30%) of total respondents. All respondents are residents of the study area. (Table No. 4.3.1).

### 3.3.2 Categorizations based on Local Representatives Age (n=10)

Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
31-40	2	20%
41-50	5	50%
51-60	3	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table No: 3.3.2:** Categorizations of Local Representatives Age.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this interview, the number of respondents is 10. The highest of the respondent age is (41-50) and the percentage of this age is 50%. The lowest portion of the age is (51-60). Most of them are from the middle age group. (Table 4.3.2).

### 3.3.3 Categorizations based on Local Representatives Religion (n=10)

Religion	Frequency	Percent (%)
Muslim	10	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table No: 3.3.3:** Categorizations of Local Representatives Religion.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this interview, the number of respondents is 10. All the members and chairmen are Muslim. No other religious local representative's members are not found in that union. (Table 4.3.3).

### 3.3.4 Categorizations based on Local Representatives Income (n=10)

Designation	Income
Chairman	10,000
Word Member	8,500
Reserved Seat	8,500
Women member	

**Table No: 3.3.4:** Categorizations of Local Representatives Income.

[Source: Field Survey at 2 no Panchgachia Union]

In this interview, the number of respondents is 10. According to the union parishad Act, a Chairman would get 10,000 from union parishad, a word Member would get 8,500 from union parishad and a reserved seat Women Member would get 8,500 from union parishad every month. (Table 4.3.4)

### 3.4 Local Representatives Key Informative Interview

#### 3.4.1 What are the functions of union parishad?

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, the functions of union parishad are-

- Rural infrastructure development like- sewerage work, road construction, bridge development, etc.
- Conduct Village court.
- Birth and Death register.
- Register of widow, orphan, and marginal people.
- Provide VGD, VGF, Old age pension, Widow Allowance, etc.
- Rural medical support.
- Agricultural support.
- Maintain law and order.
- Helping in health and family planning.
- Rise tax from the rural households.

#### 3.4.2 What is your role and responsibility in the union parishad?

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, their role and responsibility in union parishad are-

**Chairman-** Issue different certificates, provide safety allowances, conduct village court, look after all the development activities in the union parishad, maintain law and order, help standing committees in taking decisions, etc.

**Word Member-** Helping people to get necessary service, participating to solve the family dispute, making a list of marginal people who need help, distributing government allocations, helping in the development work, play role in the standing committee, etc.

**Reserved Seat Women Member-** Help to solve women and child-related disputes, work in the standing committee, oversee development work in the area, etc.

#### 3.4.3 Are union parishads meetings held regularly?

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, as prescribed in union parishad act a union parishad meetings held regularly. Sometimes for emergency reasons, there are 2/3 or more (if necessary) union parishad meetings take place. It needs to be mentioned that from all of the respondents the answer varied from one to another. Since there are no adequate measures available to cross-check the claims this survey has to relay what the elected officials say about that.

### **3.4.4 Do all the elected Union Parishad members participate in decision-making?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, most of the time all elected union parishad members participate in the decision-making process. But 1 reserved seat women representative said she didn't get any chance to take part in decision-making because she clashed with the chairman. Another word member who is from different political parties alleged that he didn't get a chance either to participate in the decision-making process.

### **3.4.5 Do reserved seat women have enough voice in Union Parishad meetings?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, Most of the word members agreed that reserved seat women members have enough voice in union parishad meetings, but 1 reserved seat women representatives said she didn't get any chance to take part in decision making because of her problem with the chairman. She alleged that the chairman try to keep her apart from union parishad meetings.

### **3.4.6 Do reserved seat women have enough participation in village court regarding women and child cases?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women members, Most of the word members agreed that reserved seat women members have enough voice in union parishad meetings, but reserved women members said they didn't participate in those village courts due to information gap. Some of them said, most of the time they were not informed by union parishad regarding any women and child affair.

### **3.4.7 What is the level of participation of poor/marginalized people in public meetings?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, in most of the word shava or public meetings, the level of participation of poorer and marginal section people are very low. Due to their economic conditions, those people didn't have the time to participate in those meetings rather than work and earn their livelihood.

### **3.4.8 What is the level of participation of women in general public meetings?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member and 3 reserved seat women member, the level of participation of women in general public meetings or word shava is not satisfactory. Due to the social structure and patriarchy system in the rural area, most of the women didn't get a chance to participate in those words shava. But local representatives said they are trying to change this system.

### **3.4.9 Are decisions of the Union Parishad acted upon?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women members, the decisions of the union parishad are acted upon. Most of the time the decisions which are made in meetings are acted but due to the lack of a convenient administrative system, a lot of decisions are not implemented.

### **3.4.10 What is the level of awareness among the citizens about their roles and responsibilities about Union Parishad functions?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women members, the level of awareness among the citizens about their roles and responsibilities in making the Union Parishad functions are very low. Because of the lack of literacy rate and lack of education among the marginal and poorer sections of people, the awareness level is very low. Most of the people didn't know anything about union parishad and their functions.

### **3.4.11 Are Standing Committees functioning properly?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women members, the standing committees are functioning properly. All the committees are properly functioning, but some members said they didn't know when was the last time they attend those meetings. Although all the meetings have to be held at the proper timeline the meeting doesn't hold properly.

### **3.4.12 How fast do people get their necessary service?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, the local representatives try to provide the service to the citizen in time but due to massive geographical area, high population density, and lack of resources, union parishad didn't come up with the needs of the citizen in every time. In addition to those, other problems also contribute to the lack of services.

### **3.4.13 Do union parishad raise taxes from the people?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, union parishad raise taxes from people. Holding tax, land tax, etc. are being collected from local people. But many times people don't willing to pay the tax.

### **3.4.14 What is the status of Women's involvement in development activities?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, the status of Women involvement in development activities are not satisfactory. Due to the social structure and patriarchy system in the rural area, most of the women didn't get a chance to participate in development activities. Some cited education as an issue for this problem. Since lots of people are not educated enough to understand the participation rate is very low. But local representatives said they are trying to change this system.

### **3.4.15 Do women face the patriarchy in their workplace alongside men?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, all the men members, and chairman said women didn't face any patriarchy in their workplace alongside men, but 2 women reserved seat members said sometimes they face problems working alongside men. One thing that needs to be understood is that all the members other than reserved seats women members are male so they didn't have

much knowledge about the patriarchy system. 2 female reserved seat members explicitly said they face many problems but they don't have enough power to solve the issue.

### **3.4.16 What is the problem you have faced working in union parishad?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, the problem they face working in union parishad is-

1. Improper salary.
2. Lack of impersonal trust.
3. Lack of awareness among people.
4. Due to the huge geographical area sometimes services cannot provide effectively.
5. The personal clash among an elected representative.
6. Lack of resources.
7. Insufficient training and knowledge.
8. Population density.
9. Fragile infrastructure.
10. Old social structure.

### **3.4.17 What will be your recommendations to improve the service of union parishad?**

According to the interview of 1 chairman, 6-word member, and 3 reserved seat women member, the recommendations for improving service of union parishad are-

1. Increase the salary of union parishad's chairman, member and reserved seat women member.
2. Improve the infrastructure.
3. Provide proper training and knowledge to elected representatives.
4. Improve political goodwill among elected representatives.
5. Provide enough space, power, and authority to reserved seat women members in service delivery.
6. Women empowerment at work.
7. Decentralization of power and work.
8. Stop nepotism.
9. Attach people in development activities.
10. Proper digitalization in service delivery.
11. Youth engagement in all kinds of activities.
12. Maintain political and social stability.

## Findings & Discussion

The challenges of local government are analyzed from 2 major perspectives. Those are-

- *Citizen's perspective.*
- *Union parishad bodies perspective.*

### **Citizen's Perspectives:**

Citizen's perspectives refer to the thinking of the citizens who live in the particular union. In this case it was 2 no Panchgachia union in Feni Sadar upazila in Feni District. While surveying 190 citizens most of the respondents don't want to talk about anything willingly due to the unknown circumstances, some spokes vigilantly because they think somebody or someone has to address the lacking's existed in the area. Though village people are less afraid to talk about their problems and their daily life conditions, most of the women hesitate to respond frequently. It is alarming that after all the activities are undertaken by the government to develop the rural area by giving sufficient service to the citizens, a subsequent portion of people doesn't know about those as well as didn't get those facilities.

Though there is a good portion of people belong to the Hindu religious group, there are no elected representatives among them. Only three women reserved seat members worked in the union parishad office. In addition, the personal clash between male and female members decreases the service quality in the local area. There are only 2 registered entrepreneurs working in the whole union. But the help from the local representatives is not sufficient. A significant amount of men in the selected area work either in another country or in different cities. That's why the role of women increases significantly. But the participation in the development work or service delivery is not quite well. Due to the social structure, women cannot do whatever they like, and most importantly in 7 out of 10 cases, they didn't find their women representatives to help them.

The present government introduce UDC (Union Digital Center) in their manifesto in 2008 and implement it in 2019-2010 and has the deadline of 2021. The overall mission and vision were to develop the ICT knowledge and infrastructure in the whole country, all the services are currently available online but in-ground a lot of work is currently conduction in traditional methods. Even alarmingly a big amount of the citizens in that union doesn't aware of UDC at all. Although some people are aware of the work of UDC, their knowledge is very limited. Despite the provision to provide the necessary knowledge to the citizens in Union Parishad Act 2009, a lot of people are unaware of the union digital center and its activities. Thus the citizens didn't get their service in time. Though men and women are the same entity in the eyes of law, women face some amount of discrimination in service delivery. Similarly, personal relations with local representatives play a quite significant role since they have the authority to exercise all the activities.

Also, the political connection has a great impact on service delivery. Although there is good political stability in the whole union, in service delivery there is some impact due to the political preference. It is a good part though corruption level is very much low in the particular union. But it is a matter of fact that the attitude of local representatives is indifferent, which creates barriers in the service delivery and the development of people's life. Moreover, youth generations comprise one-third of the population, most of them are trying to develop the area by doing a lot of work. Eventually, at present times local representatives are very much eager to work with young generations and lots of activities are currently ongoing with the support of youth. Yet some citizens have their dissatisfactions regarding the justice from village court, most of the people satisfied with the service. But it should be remembered that in the child and women-related dispute, reserved women member doesn't have a big role to perform.

A lot of people in the union live below the poverty line nonetheless some people get allowances from the government. Due to the large population, it is impossible to help everyone with the social safety net programs. Furthermore, for the same reasons, it is difficult to ensure primary educations for all people. However, with the medical service and land service, people are quite happy but in terms of agricultural service, citizens have some dissatisfaction in their minds. It is impossible to satisfy all the people in any particular area but there is some sector where local government, as well as local representatives, have a lot of works to do.

### **Union Parishad Bodies Perspective:**

Union parishads body means the local elected representatives which the duty to implement and exercise along with providing service to the citizens. In this research, they were chairmen, members, and reserved women members. All the elected representatives are very friendly to talk with and willing to answer any questions. Most of them are long-term representatives and all of them are very outspoken. Though most of them are above 40 years all of them are very much active<sup>4</sup> in their constituency except women representatives but some of the reserved women elected representatives don't have a clear view about their role and responsibilities. It can happen due to the insufficiency in their education.

Besides, that personal clash between elected representatives has a great impact on their service delivery. However, they have their explanations of the causes. All of the local representatives are businessmen but some of them have their ventures. According to elected representatives union parishad meetings are held regularly sometimes some extra meetings took place in case of emergencies according to the Union Parishad Act. Besides, all the elected representatives participate in those meetings said by the chairmen and other elected representatives but it is a matter of contradiction with reserved women elected representatives that they didn't have their participation in the meetings. In addition, women member doesn't have enough participation in village court regarding women and child dispute. Also in the public meetings, general women don't have enough participation.

Local representatives point fingers at the social structure and the religious prejudice and taboo among the people for that cause. It is one of the reasons that the poor and marginal section doesn't have sufficient participation in public meetings. Besides that, there is no women member in the union parishad except reserved women members. Also, that creates a lack of awareness and knowledge among the local citizens. It

is a matter of concern that elected representatives are rather a follower of the order from upazila parishad than doing their own. Also, citizens are not very much aware of their role in the union parishad. That's why the service quality is not up to the mark. Though there is no patriarchy system in the union parishad according to the male representatives, women members of the union parishad have different views on their own. That's why standing committees don't function properly. To conclude, though other activities of union parishad held properly according to the local representatives there is a lot of work to do to improve the service quality toward the citizens.

## **Recommendations:**

The success of any organization or institution depends on how much those organizations or the institution take the criticism and change when it's needed. For effective service delivery to the citizen by union parishad here are some recommendations that need to follow for solving the challenges faced by the citizen to get service from local government (union parishad).

**Increase Capacity:** The capacity increase is very much important for the union parishad as well as for other local government institutions since they are the main final point for service delivery to the citizens. The institutional, administrative, technical capacity need to be increased to render service to the local people with maximum output. In addition to that the human resource and technical as well as other resources need to be increased so that the citizens who lived in the area don't face any problems when they seek service from the union parishad. Union parishads should have ample resources to recognize their own local needs.

**Collaboration:** Strong collaboration between the union parishad and other agencies as well as among the elected members needs to be established. All the personal and ideological identities need to be set aside so that everyone can have their opinion heard through the service. Instead of subjugation and sympathy, the partnership between union parishad chairmen, representatives, and local people should be cooperative and complementary. Proper cooperation between the chairman, the delegate, and the reserved seat delegate should be maintained to provide people with 100% service. Furthermore, strong collaboration between civil society and the non-governmental organization needs to be established so that the service can be delivered effectively as well as achieve the goal of SDG.

**Women's Participation:** Equal opportunities and service as male and female representatives should be created. The power and responsibility of female representatives must be expanded, and they must be given adequate room to develop their potential as well as the development of women. This should be changed by incorporating women in the process. Women should have equal opportunity and service as representatives of males and reserved females should have equal control as representatives of males.

**Developments of Co-relationship:** Instead of subjugation and sympathy towards citizens, citizens should be served as citizens, here sometimes we saw the officer's behaviors towards citizens is very much subjugated which is very near to sympathy that's hampers citizens right. there needed a correlation between service providers and service receivers only then the citizens' rights can be reserved.

**Training and Education:** All the local government officials need to have adequate educational qualifications and knowledge about the functions, roles, and responsibilities of the union parishad. Adequate preparation for responsiveness should be required before joining the service. Preparation, such as internships or project work, should be planned. Job-related training, as well as moral training, should be planned both early on and after a specific amount of time on the job.

**Eliminate Corruption:** People's involvement in the need and relevance of the citizen's charter should be increased; they should not look for shortcuts or utilize the invisible hand to acquire better services, nor should they employ bribery. This is only conceivable if individuals cease doing this; according to various surveys, the office of union parishad is growing more corrupt than ever. Bribes are becoming more common as more people participate in them, and local officials are encouraging them as a result of their deficient education training, as previously stated. This unethical behavior is tarnishing the image of both the union parishad and the administration.

**Uses of Modern Technology:** It is critical to upgrade the union parishad office to provide effective and efficient service. New technology should be used in service delivery, and data collecting and separate databases should be maintained so that citizens may readily access their services. Additionally, the bandwidth and digital technology resources must be enhanced to shorten the service time.

**Campaigning:** Distinctive Campaigning and training seasons should be scheduled on an annual basis. Campaigning for residents, who are the primary priority of this office, as well as training for officers on how to engage with and respond to citizens and the government. Campaigning will help cops communicate, and training will help them strengthen their skills. Service-related training, as well as moral training, should be planned both early on and after a specific amount of time on the job.

Apart from those some other measures like- The role of each member of the word and reserved seat member should be decided and ensured that no other member of the word or served member should interfere with the work of either. Word meetings must be held and every member and reserved seat member must be assured to attend those meetings. The involvement of people in word meetings needs to be ensured. It is important to modernize the village court and be separate from any political and social pressure. When delivering services to residents, political perceptions must be set aside. The union parishad must increase the level of awareness among people through various activities that need to be taken to address all the issues in the union parishad service delivery.

### **Limitations found from the study:**

Conducting research and outburst activities, in this point of view the researcher faces some problems to conduct this research which is termed as the limitations of the study. The major limitations of this study are-

- The core problem in doing the research is the time factor, due to the corona pandemic I get a very limited period to collect data from primary sources to do this research work.
- Sometimes respondents aren't given any answer willingly. Therefore it faces some difficulty to take the actual answer.

- Respondents fear to talk about the problem they face to an unknown person willingly. It cost a lot of time to make them comfortable.
- Most men are willing to answer all the questions rather than women.
- Local representatives are unwilling to answer against their upper representatives.
- Union parishad is a vast concept that's why gathering relevant and factual data is tough at ground level.
- This research would be more effective if the respondent include a higher official from the respective district or upazila. But the reason for time and cost management is tough to conduct.
- In this pandemic situation collecting data from the local level is tough because of health concerns.
- To analyze a research technical skill is very important. In this research, we try to use Microsoft Excel software. But lack of experience and technical skill cost a lot of valuable time and energy.

## **Conclusion:**

For all communities, governing is a difficult task. There are different types of local government issues and it is not easy to quantify the full scope of issues in the Union Parishad. Due to its flexible roles, role, and transparency, Union Parishad is one of the most important components. The central government relies on the parish union to provide local citizens with the service. By providing the best facilities, the local government will boost people's status at the grassroots level. Different policies, regulations, services, initiatives, and functions are taken and carried out by the local government based on the need for grassroots people, not depending on the demand of the central government. The promise of the local government system is now clear. As it did for the senate, the executive, and the judiciary, the constitution did not address various local government possibilities in depth. All the current problems can be solved by simple and precise constitutional guidance and it can also help to provide the citizen with effective service. Local government authorities have played an important role throughout history in developing democracy and growing local and national living standards. It lowers the central government's job load. Without successful and accelerated local growth, it is difficult to realize national development objectives. But the current political and administrative intervention in the affairs of the Union Parishad has rendered it ineffective. Currently, the government has taken several steps to meet the "Sustainable Development Goals" embraced by the United Nations to enhance all aspects of people's lives. Then if local government authorities in the Union parishad can ensure efficient and required service and solve all the problems facing local people in local areas, it will then easily ensure sustainable development in all fields of the citizens in the local areas and the entire country as well.

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**Appendix:****Research Questionnaire (01)**

No of the Respondents: .....

**Demographic Information**

Name: -----

Age: -----

Gender: (Male/Female)

Income: -----

Designation: ----- Occupation: -----

**Local Representatives key Informative Interview**

<b>Serial</b>	<b>Questions</b>
1.	What are the function of the union Parishad?
2.	What is your role and responsibility in union parishad?
3.	Are Union Parishad meetings held regularly?
4.	Do all the elected Union Parishad members participate in decision-making?
5.	Do reserved seat women have enough voice in Union Parishad meetings?
6.	Do reserved seat women have enough participation in village court regarding women and child cases?
7.	What is the level of participation of poor/marginalized people in public meetings?
8.	What is the level of participation of women in general public meetings?
9.	Are decisions of the Union Parishad acted upon?
10.	How aware are the citizens about their roles and responsibilities in making the Union Parishad functional?
11.	Are Standing Committees functioning properly?
12.	How fast do people get their necessary service?
13.	Do you raise taxes from the people?
14.	What is the status of Women's involvement in development activities?
15.	Do women face the patriarchy in their workplace alongside men?
16.	What can union parishad do to provide effective service to the citizens?

**Research Questionnaire (02)**

No of the Respondents: .....

**Demographic Information**

Name: -----

Age: -----

Gender: (Male/Female)

Religion: -----

Word No: -----

Income: -----

**Citizen's Review**

Serial	Questions	Review		
1	Do you know what kinds of service you can get from Union Parishad?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
2	Do you know what functions are played by Union Parishad?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
3	What was the last time you went to Union Parishad for any service?	Recently	Long ago	Not very often
4	Do you face any problems when you go for any service in Union Parishad?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
5	Is there any administrative problem in service delivery you have faced?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
6	Is there any corruption in service delivery you have faced?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
7	Do you get your service in time?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
8	Do you think personal relationships have any impact on service delivery?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
9	Do you face any extra challenges or facilities because of your gender?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
10	Do you get any extra challenges or facilities because of your economic condition?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
11	What is the attitude of elected representatives for providing service?	Productive	Indifferent	Rigid
12	Do you have any political connections?	Yes	A little	No

13	Do you face any extra challenges or facilities because of your political connection?	Yes I do	Partially I do	Not at all
14	Do the elected representatives have political goodwill?	Yes	Not very much	No
15	Do the elected representatives aware and careful about their role and responsibility?	Yes	Not very much	No
16	Do the people get justice from the village court?	Yes	Not very much	No
17	Do the people get safety net programs support (VGD, VGF, Old Age Pension, Widow Allowance, etc.)?	Yes	Some times	No
18	Have you been aware of the union digital center?	Yes	Not very much	No
19	Have you gotten service from union parishad by union digital center?	Yes	I don't know	No
20	Do you get any lands services from union parishad?	Yes	I don't know	No
21	Do you get any Agricultural help from union parishad?	Yes	Very little	No
22	Are there enough medical facilities provided by union parishad?	Yes	I don't know	No
23	Are primary educations ensured for all?	Yes	I don't know	No
24	Do you think the service you get from union parishad is enough for all?	Yes	Not very much	No
25	What will be extra facilities you want from union parishad?			
26	What will be your recommendations for effective service to the citizens?			