

Citizen Satisfaction with Web-Based Public Services: In Bagerhat Sadar Upazila

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1 CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the study

Across the world, governments are increasingly using digital tools to provide public services to citizens more efficiently. The government of Bangladesh has joined this trend with its "Digital Bangladesh" vision, aiming to use online platforms to deliver essential services to people all over the country. By moving services online, the government hopes to make it easier for people to access the help they need from home or nearby rather than having to travel to a government office. These web-based services can help people with various tasks, such as applying for certificates, checking records, paying bills, and more.

For rural areas like Baruipara Union in Bagerhat Sadar Upazila, the availability of these digital services is especially important. Many residents in these areas may find it difficult or time-consuming to visit government offices in person. By offering services online, the government can save citizens time and effort. However, while the shift to online services has great potential, it does not always work as smoothly as planned. Some citizens face challenges such as poor internet connections, limited knowledge about how to use online services, and a lack of guidance on where to get help if something goes wrong. These issues can prevent people from using the services effectively, making it harder for them to fully benefit from the government's digital efforts.

This research aims to understand how people in Baruipara Union feel about these online services and how satisfied they are with using them. By identifying the areas where these services are working well and the places where they fall short, this study will provide a clearer picture of what needs improvement. Ultimately, the goal is to find ways to make online services more effective and user-friendly, so they truly meet the needs of the people in Baruipara Union.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The introduction of online public services in Bangladesh aims to provide citizens with quicker and easier access to government services, especially for those in remote areas. However, in practice, many people in rural areas like Baruipara Union face various challenges that make it difficult to fully benefit from these digital services. Despite efforts to improve accessibility, several obstacles still affect how successfully residents can use online platforms for services such as certificate applications, record checking, or payments.

One major issue is the accessibility of these services. For instance, internet connectivity in some parts of Baruipara Union is weak or unreliable, making it difficult for people to stay connected long enough to complete tasks. Even when internet access is available, not everyone has the devices or technical skills to navigate online platforms effectively. This digital divide means that while some people can easily use these services, others are left behind due to limited access or knowledge.

Another problem is the usability of these online services. Many residents may not be familiar with the structure or design of these platforms, leading to confusion or mistakes when trying to access information or complete applications. The lack of user-friendly instructions or guidance can discourage people from using these services, especially those who are less experienced with technology. Additionally, citizens may face frequent technical issues, such as website downtime or slow response times, which further impact their experience and willingness to use the services again in the future.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore these specific challenges and understand how they impact citizen satisfaction with web-based public services in Baruipara Union. By identifying and analyzing these barriers, the research will aim to suggest ways to improve the design, accessibility, and support for these digital services, so that more people can use them effectively and with greater ease. Ultimately, this research hopes to provide insights that will help make online public services more practical and beneficial for all residents, leading to higher satisfaction and better engagement with government services.

1.3 Research questions

- What factors influence citizens' satisfaction with web-based public services in Baruipara Union?
- What challenges do residents face in accessing and using these online services?
- How reliable and user-friendly are these services for people with varying levels of technical skills?
- Do citizens feel they receive adequate support from local authorities when using these web-based services?

Understanding these factors is crucial for improving the effectiveness and user-friendliness of web-based public services, ultimately leading to higher citizen satisfaction.

1.4 Aim

The aim of this research is to thoroughly examine the current state of web-based public services in Baruipara Union, Bagerhat Sadar Upazila, and to evaluate the level of citizen satisfaction with these services. This study intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of how well these digital platforms are meeting the needs of local residents and whether they are effective in enhancing accessibility to government services.

By analyzing various factors such as usability, reliability, and the availability of support from local authorities, the research seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current web-based service offerings. Additionally, it aims to explore the specific challenges and barriers that hinder residents from fully benefiting from these services. Ultimately, the goal is to provide insights and recommendations that can help improve the quality and effectiveness of web-based public services, leading to greater citizen satisfaction and more efficient government service delivery in Baruipara Union. This study aspires to contribute valuable information that can inform policymakers and local authorities in their efforts to enhance digital service accessibility and usability for all citizens.

1.5 Objectives

The specific objectives of the research are:

- To investigate the accessibility of web-based public services in Baruipara Union.

- To determine how easily residents, particularly those with limited technical skills, can use these services.
- To evaluate the quality, reliability, and efficiency of these services.
- To assess if citizens receive adequate assistance from local.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study holds significant importance for several reasons. First, it aims to contribute to a better understanding of how web-based public services are currently functioning in Baruipara Union. By examining citizens' satisfaction levels, the research will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of these digital services and whether they are meeting the needs of the local community.

Moreover, identifying the challenges and barriers that citizens face in accessing and using these services is crucial. This understanding can help local authorities and policymakers recognize the gaps in service delivery and the areas that require improvement. If the study successfully highlights these issues, it can serve as a guide for decision-makers to develop strategies that enhance the quality and accessibility of web-based public services.

Additionally, the findings of this research could lead to increased citizen engagement with government services. When residents feel satisfied with the services available to them, they are more likely to utilize them, leading to better overall community welfare. Improved public service delivery can foster greater trust in local authorities and encourage more active participation in governance.

Finally, this study can provide a framework for future research on digital public services in other regions. By documenting the experiences of citizens in Baruipara Union, it can serve as a reference point for similar studies elsewhere, ultimately contributing to the broader goal of improving public service delivery through digital means across Bangladesh and beyond.

1.7 Variables

This study will focus on two main variables: dependent and independent.

Independent	Dependent
Accessibility, Usability, Service quality, Support	Citizen satisfaction

1.8 Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research is that citizen satisfaction with web-based public services in Baruipara Union is influenced by the level of awareness and education regarding these services. It is assumed that the lack of awareness and understanding about the availability and use of web-based services negatively impacts citizen satisfaction. Improving awareness and providing education on how to access and utilize these services is expected to lead to higher satisfaction among citizens.

1.9 Area of the study

The study will be conducted in Baruipara Union, located in Bagerhat Sadar Upazila, within the Khulna Division of Bangladesh. This area was chosen due to its ongoing efforts to integrate digital technology into public service delivery. As a rural community, Baruipara Union presents unique challenges and opportunities in accessing web-based services.

The research will focus on gathering responses from at least 50 residents of Baruipara Union, ensuring a representative sample that reflects the diverse demographics of the area. By collecting feedback from individuals of various age groups and socio-economic backgrounds, the study aims to identify key factors influencing citizen satisfaction with web-based public services. This localized approach will provide valuable insights into how effectively these services are meeting the needs of the community and highlight areas for potential improvement.



1.10 Methodology

This research will employ both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Methods	Explanation
Qualitative	Surveys and interviews will be conducted to gather data from residents.
Quantitative	Analyzed to measure the level of satisfaction and identify key factors affecting it.

1.11 Sample size

There will be total 50 respondents:

Respondents	Numbers
Male	25
Female	25
Total:	50

1.12 Sampling method

A random sampling method will be used to select participants for the study.

Sampling Method	Details
Method	Random sampling method will be used to select participants for the study.
Population	Include a total of 50 participants, consisting of 20 females and 30 males.
Purpose	This approach ensures that every individual in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample, minimizing bias.

1.13 Source of data

The study will rely on both primary and secondary data sources.

Sources of Data	Explanation
Primary	Collected through surveys and interviews with residents
Secondary	Existing literature, government reports, and other relevant sources

1.14 Data processing

Data processing is a crucial step in this research. After collecting data from the surveys and interviews using tools such as Google Forms, the information will be organized and prepared for analysis using MS Word and MS Excel. First, the responses will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Any incomplete or unclear responses will be noted and addressed.

Next, the qualitative data, such as open-ended answers from interviews, will be input into MS Word for analysis to identify common themes and insights. This will help in understanding the experiences and opinions of the participants regarding web-based public services.

On the other hand, quantitative data from the surveys will be input into MS Excel for statistical analysis. This data will be used to measure the level of satisfaction among citizens and to determine how different factors affect their experiences with the services.

Overall, this systematic approach to data processing, using MS Word, MS Excel, and Google Forms, will ensure that the findings are reliable and can provide valuable insights for improving web-based public services in Baruipara Union.

1.15 Limitations of the study

Time Constraints: Due to limited time, it may not be possible to gather as much data or conduct as many interviews as needed, which could reduce the depth of the research.

Communication Gaps: Some participants may have difficulty understanding the questions due to differences in literacy levels or familiarity with technology, which may lead to unclear or incomplete responses.

Limited Access to Data: Certain information on public services may be restricted or unavailable, limiting the researcher's ability to fully explore some aspects of the study.

Sample Size Limitations: With only 50 participants, the study may not fully capture the views of the entire population, which can affect how widely the findings apply.

2. CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Literature Review:

Dwivedi et al. (2017) explored the global adoption of e-government services, focusing on factors influencing their success and challenges in implementation. Their findings suggest that citizens' satisfaction with such services depends heavily on accessibility, ease of use, and perceived usefulness. The study highlights that while e-government initiatives aim to make public services more efficient, challenges such as lack of digital literacy, trust in online platforms, and infrastructure deficits persist. These findings are relevant to Baruipara Union, where limited awareness of web-based services might hinder adoption despite government efforts to improve service delivery.

Heeks (2002) emphasized the concept of the "digital divide," particularly in rural and underdeveloped regions. His research underscores that access to digital resources is often unequal due to socio-economic disparities. Rural areas, like Baruipara Union, frequently face issues such as inadequate internet infrastructure, low levels of education, and financial constraints that prevent the widespread use of web-based public services. Addressing these barriers is critical to enhancing citizen satisfaction and ensuring equitable access to government services.

Hossain et al. (2019) conducted a study on the effectiveness of web-based service delivery in developing countries, with a specific focus on South Asia. Their research identified that while web-based services have the potential to bridge gaps in traditional service delivery, a lack of awareness and trust in these platforms remains a significant hurdle. The study also emphasized that proper training programs and promotional campaigns are essential to educate citizens about the benefits of online services, a recommendation that could be applied to Baruipara Union.

According to Carter and Bélanger (2005), citizen satisfaction in e-governance initiatives is largely driven by a citizen-centric approach that prioritizes user needs. Their research shows that services designed with the end-user in mind—incorporating user-friendly interfaces, multilingual support, and responsive customer service—are more likely to succeed. For Baruipara Union, applying such

principles could significantly enhance satisfaction levels by addressing local needs and preferences.

A study by Sharma and Gupta (2020) highlighted the critical role of awareness campaigns in promoting the adoption of web-based public services. They found that many citizens in rural areas are unaware of available digital platforms or how to access them. This lack of awareness contributes to low adoption rates. In the context of Baruipara Union, initiatives like workshops or community outreach programs could be vital in bridging the knowledge gap and fostering trust in online services.

Siddiqui et al. (2018) examined the role of Union Digital Centers (UDCs) in promoting e-governance in Bangladesh. Their study concluded that while UDCs have significantly improved access to government services, challenges such as limited internet speed, outdated equipment, and a lack of skilled personnel persist. These issues are particularly relevant to Baruipara Union, where UDCs might serve as a primary point of access for web-based services. Strengthening these centers could enhance citizen satisfaction.

Gefen et al. (2003) explored the role of trust in the adoption of e-services, arguing that a lack of trust in online platforms can deter users from engaging with them. Their research found that trust is influenced by factors such as perceived security, reliability, and the transparency of service providers. For Baruipara Union, building trust through secure platforms and effective communication could significantly improve the uptake of web-based public services.

Misra et al. (2021) investigated the infrastructural challenges that rural areas face when adopting e-governance services. Their findings revealed that poor internet connectivity, frequent power outages, and lack of technical support are major barriers to effective service delivery. These challenges resonate with the conditions in Baruipara Union, where infrastructural improvements are necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of web-based services.

Zhao et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of digital literacy in determining citizen satisfaction with online services. Their study found that citizens who lack basic computer skills are less likely

to benefit from e-governance initiatives. This finding is directly applicable to Baruipara Union, where efforts to improve digital literacy through training programs could lead to higher satisfaction rates.

A study by Alam and Mahbub (2022) in Bangladesh identified the perceived benefits and challenges associated with e-government services. While citizens recognized the convenience and time-saving aspects of online platforms, they also reported frustrations due to technical glitches, slow responses, and lack of assistance. These insights suggest that addressing such issues could play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of web-based services in Baruipara Union.

3. CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Introduction to the Web

The term "web" refers to the World Wide Web (WWW), a system of interlinked documents and multimedia resources that are accessed via the internet. Invented in 1989 by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the web has revolutionized the way people communicate, access information, and interact with various services. Initially designed to facilitate academic and research-based information sharing, the web has grown to include everything from social media to e-commerce and public service platforms.

Web technologies operate through web browsers such as Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Microsoft Edge, enabling users to access resources hosted on servers worldwide. By leveraging the web, governments, organizations, and individuals have found innovative ways to deliver services efficiently and transparently.

3.2 Understanding Web-Based Public Services

Web-based public services refer to the provision of government or public sector services through digital platforms accessible over the internet. These services are designed to enhance accessibility, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and improve the overall experience of citizens in interacting with public authorities. Examples of such services include online tax filing, land registration, e-health services, e-education, and e-voting systems.

The advent of web-based public services marked a shift from traditional service delivery models, which often required physical presence and extensive paperwork, to streamlined, efficient, and user-friendly digital processes. These platforms are often integrated with databases and automated systems to provide real-time updates and reduce manual errors.

3.3 Evolution of Web-Based Public Services

The journey of web-based public services began in the late 1990s as part of the broader global e-government movement. The United States and European countries were among the pioneers in adopting e-governance, launching initiatives to digitize public administration and make services more accessible to their citizens. For instance, the U.S. introduced its "E-Government Act" in 2002 to promote electronic government services and processes.

Asian nations such as South Korea and Singapore soon followed, implementing robust digital platforms that enabled citizens to access a wide range of public services online. These countries became global leaders in e-governance due to their early adoption of technology and focus on digital literacy.

3.4 Current Global Scenario of Web-Based Public Services

Today, web-based public services are a cornerstone of governance in many countries. Developed nations, including Denmark, Estonia, and Finland, have established comprehensive digital ecosystems that allow citizens to perform tasks such as registering births, applying for passports, or accessing healthcare services entirely online. Estonia, for example, is renowned for its e-residency program and fully digitized government services, setting a global benchmark.

In developing countries, the adoption of web-based public services has been slower due to challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited internet access, and low digital literacy. However, initiatives like India's Digital India program and Rwanda's e-government platforms have demonstrated significant progress in bridging the digital divide. International organizations, including the United Nations, emphasize the importance of e-governance in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusivity.

3.5 The Current Situation in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, web-based public services have been gradually gaining traction over the past decade. The government's "Digital Bangladesh" initiative, launched in 2009, aims to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy by integrating digital technologies into various sectors. Union Digital Centers (UDCs) have been established across rural areas to provide citizens with access to online services such as birth registration, passport applications, and agricultural information.

Despite these advancements, challenges persist. Limited internet penetration in rural areas, low levels of digital literacy, and technical issues often hinder the effective delivery of web-based services. Additionally, a lack of public awareness about the availability of such services prevents many citizens from utilizing them. However, the government is working on expanding infrastructure, providing training programs, and introducing user-friendly platforms to address these barriers.

3.6 Legal and Policy Framework in Bangladesh

The legal and policy framework for web-based public services in Bangladesh is shaped by several acts and initiatives:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act, 2006: This act provides the legal foundation for promoting ICT use in governance and service delivery.

National ICT Policy, 2018: This policy outlines the government's vision to use ICT as a tool for socio-economic development. It emphasizes the importance of e-governance and the delivery of web-based public services.

Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2009: By promoting transparency and accountability, this act indirectly supports the development of web-based platforms to facilitate access to information.

Digital Security Act, 2018: This act ensures the protection of digital platforms and the secure delivery of web-based services, though it has also faced criticism for its perceived restrictions on freedom of speech.

These laws and policies provide a framework for the development and regulation of web-based public services in Bangladesh. However, their successful implementation requires coordinated efforts among government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and civil society organizations.

3.7 Challenges and Opportunities

- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Many rural areas in Bangladesh still lack reliable internet connectivity and electricity, making it difficult to access web-based services.
- **Digital Literacy:** A significant portion of the population lacks the skills needed to navigate online platforms effectively.
- **Technical Issues:** Outdated technology and limited technical support can cause delays and inefficiencies.
- **Trust Issues:** Concerns about data security and misuse of personal information often deter citizens from using online services.
- **Mobile Penetration:** With increasing mobile phone usage, mobile-friendly platforms could make web-based services more accessible.
- **Private Sector Collaboration:** Partnerships with private companies can help develop innovative solutions and improve service delivery.

- International Support: Bangladesh can leverage international funding and expertise to enhance its e-governance initiatives.

Web-based public services represent a transformative approach to governance, offering significant benefits such as improved accessibility, transparency, and efficiency. While developed nations have set global benchmarks in e-governance, countries like Bangladesh are making steady progress despite facing numerous challenges. By addressing issues related to infrastructure, digital literacy, and trust, Bangladesh can further enhance the effectiveness of its web-based public services, contributing to the broader goals of "Digital Bangladesh" and sustainable development. With continued investment in technology, education, and public awareness, web-based public services can play a pivotal role in improving the quality of life for citizens across the nation.