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Dedication.....

To my parents

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation entitled “Are Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) beneficiaries satisfied with the service delivery of the program?—A study on two Union Parishads (UPs) of Bangladesh” submitted to the PPG Program of North South University, Bangladesh for the Degree of Master in Public Policy and Governance (MPPG) is an original work of mine. No part of it, in any form, has been copied from other sources without acknowledgment or submitted to any other university or institute for any degree or diploma. Views and expressions of the thesis bear the responsibility of mine with the exclusion of SIPG for any error and omission to it.

Signature with date

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Abstract

This study endeavors to explore the beneficiary's level of satisfaction with the service delivery process and output of the vulnerable group development (VGD) program of Union Parishad (UP) in Bangladesh with the specific aim to determine the institutional factors that affect their satisfaction level. The expectation level of the beneficiaries and its influence on satisfaction has also been taken into consideration. Inadequate access and weak participation of rural people to the services of local government institutions (LGIs) in Bangladesh seem to follow an upward trend nowadays. Besides lack of transparency, downward accountability, and limited institutional visibility of these organizations are also considered as important drawbacks of pro-people service delivery. All these factors trigger to conduct this research focusing on the national targeted food aid social safety net program (SSNP) especially to know the extent of beneficiaries' satisfaction level in case of VGD program service delivery and the interplaying mechanisms shaping the satisfaction level of beneficiaries.

VGD program is the largest SSNP in Bangladesh in terms of its financial volume targeting to improve the living standards of the poorest and most disadvantaged women in rural areas. Besides, achieving various sustainable development goals (SDGs) on time such as no poverty, zero hunger, gender equality, etc. by this developing country largely depends on the successful implementation of this program. This research tries to address those issues considering the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries. Both primary and secondary data have been gathered through a semi-structured questionnaire and in-depth interview of VGD beneficiaries along with key informants (KIs) of two UPs for analysis and inferences. Data has been interpreted in the form of qualitative narratives based on interviews, case studies, review of the process of delivery, and content analysis of rules, regulation, circulars, and policies.

Research finding reveals that VGD beneficiaries' level of satisfaction between the UPs varies noticeably depending on the institutional factors. Some factors (e.g. time and cost issue etc.) adversely affect their satisfaction level but the intensity

varies between the UPs, whereas issues like responsiveness etc. are common in their findings i.e. beneficiaries seem to be satisfied in both UPs. Variations have been found between the UPs in the cases of transparency as well as the existence of micro-level corruptions at different stages of VGD program. The service delivery process of Bailchhari UP of Banskhali Upazila seems to be more transparent and less corrupted than Kachuai UP of Patiya Upazila.

Such variations have been diagnosed by an in-depth background analysis of collected data or information. It reveals that the level of education and experiences of UP officials, the residency of UP officials in their locality as well as the less manipulation by MPs and other local prominent figures at different stages of this program are the major reasons of such variations. Beneficiaries' level of expectation is non-functional in both UPs due to their lower socio-political status as well as the limited level of participation in the local government functions. Interestingly, contemporary satisfaction literature does not fully match with the findings of the research. The deviations could perhaps be explained by the argument, political-economic behavior, patron-client relationship; individual integrity, social structure, political affiliation, etc.

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List of Abbreviations

DO	Delivery/Demand Order
ECT	Expectation-Confirmation Theory
EGPP	Employment Generation Program
FFW	Food for Work
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FSVGD	Food Security Vulnerable Group Development
FYP	Five Years Plan
GO	Government Order
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HRM	Human Resource Management
IGVGD	Income Generation Vulnerable Group Development
KIs	Key Informants
LGI	Local Government Institution
LGSP	Local governance support project
MP	Member of Parliament
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
REMP	Rural Employment & Road Maintenance Program
RMP	Rural maintenance Program
SAM	Social accountability mechanism
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SSNPs	Social Safety Net Programs
TAG	Transfer Assurance Guide
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad

UPGP	Union Parishad governance project
UVC	Upazila VGD Committee
UWAO	Upazila Women Affairs officer
UzP	Upazila Parishad
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WFP	World Food Programme

Chapter 1

1.1 Background

The Union Parishad (UP) is the first tier in the pyramidal hierarchy of local bodies in Bangladesh. It had been originated in the British era having different names. The erstwhile union council was renamed as Union Panchayet (village arbitrary council). Later, the Union Panchayet was renamed as Union Parishad through PO No. 22 of 1973 (Aminuzzaman, 1993). This 145 years old institution became UP in 1973. After the liberation war of 1971, UP has been constituted under the constitutional provision of Bangladesh. According to Article 59 and 60 of the constitution, the formation, responsibilities, and functions of these local government institutions (LGIs) have been described. From the very beginning of its inception, it has faced several challenges in its functions and responsibilities but it has always its existence there. According to Local Government (UP) Act-2009, each UP consists of an elected UP chairman, twelve elected members (including three female representatives) and one permanent official appointed by the government. Along with other functions, UP operates several social safety net programs in different forms for the poor and ultra-poor people in rural areas¹. Nowadays, there are 136 social safety net programs in Bangladesh. Among all these programs, vulnerable group development (VGD) program is one of the largest ten safety net programs². According to this program, there are two components of VGD packages

¹ **Social Safety Net (SSN) programs**- "Social Safety Net Programs are a set of public measures, which a society provides for its members to protect them from various types of economic and social hardships, resulting from a substantial decline in income due to various types of contingencies such as loss of cultivable land, crop failure, land and homestead loss due to river erosion, sickness, maternity, invalidity, old age or death of earning household members" (Barkat-e-Khuda, 2011). In Bangladesh, this kind of programs mainly focuses on the basic necessity of individuals such as shelter, food, education, cloth, and health. For example, Vulnerable Group Development (VGD), Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF), Old-Age Allowances, etc. There are two types of SSNPs. These are the food rationing and post-disaster relief program. This type of program was started after independence in 1971. After the famine of 1974, the first change took place in the program and Food for Work (FFW) came out. Later, VGF started with targeting poor women in 1975 (Pradhan et al. 2014).

² **Vulnerable Group of development (VGD)**- It is one of the national targeted food aid social safety net programs aimed at improving the lives of the poorest and most disadvantaged women in rural Bangladesh. In 1975, it started as the relief program, subsequently evolved into a program which provides training and

which are food security component (FSVGD) and income generation component (IGVGD). But, the quality of service delivery of Union Parishad is sometimes a matter of great concern (Sarker, 2013). From that perspective, understanding citizen satisfaction with public service delivery is often seen as a relatively easy and effective means of evaluating actual service quality (Lewis & Pattinasarany, 2009). In case of the VGD program, several challenges such as the exclusion of poorest of the poor from IGVGD, issue of coordination among a large number of implementing partners, some leakage and corruption at different stages have been observed by different researchers (Begum, 2018). For this reason, the general notion of the beneficiary's satisfaction regarding the service delivery as critical as VGD program seems to play a significant role in local level development management and institutional trust.

1.2 Statement of the problem

There are so many works on local government institutions (LGIs). These institutions go under several institutional challenges to provide service delivery at the root level. A lack of vision, a lack of commitment as well as the integrity of the leadership of local representatives is observed in some cases (Aminuzzaman, 2011). Low participation in project selection as well as in decision-making process of UP by the common people and civil society is observed, although there is the provision of the UP Act to be transparent and participatory (Aminuzzaman, 2013). Major decisions are taken without considering the opinion of the mass people especially, the marginal poor, women or destitute (Aminuzzaman, 2013). It has been found that UP is not transparent and accountable enough to the mass people. Even the female members of the UP face gender discrimination in the decision-making process (Khan, n.d.). The lack of community member's awareness about the overall functions of UP such as social safety net programs, sanitation, violence against women, etc. sometimes create a problem for the proper functioning of UP (Khan, n.d.). Though there is a provision of the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009 to be participatory and transparent, people have

saving opportunities with the intent of creating a lasting impact on the lives of its beneficiaries. (Barkat-e-Khuda, 2011).

a very low level of access and information as regards in the welfare issues of Union Parishad. In many Asian countries like the Philippines and Indonesia, LGIs play a significant role in the socio-economic development of that country. But evidence shows that UPs in Bangladesh cannot play an effective role at the grassroots level (Adhikary, 2010). This affects the service delivery process to the rural people directly and indirectly. The rural-based development agenda of the government such as 7th five years plan (FYP), vision 2021, LGSP (Local governance support project), UPGP (Union Parishad governance project) are actively assisting the government to mitigate the present challenges in terms of improving service delivery to LGIs (World Bank, n.d.). All these are priority based agenda targeting to become a middle-income country by 2021 as well as for attaining the sustainable development goals (SDGs) according to the election manifesto 2018 of the present Bangladesh Awami League government. Achieving various sustainable development goals (SDGs) on time such as no poverty, zero hunger, gender equality, etc. by this developing country largely depends on the successful implementation of this program.

But, various problems have been found while operating projects and plans such as in the form of social safety net programs in different UPs of Bangladesh. Some of the existing problems are low-level of political commitment, ineffective program management, and delivery, weak partnerships at all levels of the government including policy-makers, service providers, community, NGOs, local elites, local representatives, beneficiaries, etc. (Barkat-e-Khuda, 2011). Wrongly selection process of the types of work to be undertaken, poor food grain delivery system, little access to quality services, and inadequate considerations towards improvement in the quality of services, etc. are other major problems. Wrong targeting of beneficiaries, maximum leakages, poor financial management and payment system including timely transfer of assistance at the field level, and weak monitoring and supervision at different levels are also prime concerns for this program (Barkat-e-Khuda, 2011). For overcoming these predominant challenges as well as strengthening the institutional condition of local governance of Bangladesh including the development of service delivery mechanism of all tiers of the

local government, myriad of initiatives have been taken by the government, particularly in UPs, with response to the agenda of international development agencies (Rab, 2017). In spite of those efforts, the effectiveness of LGIs is not visible satisfactorily having an impact on the level of beneficiary's satisfaction.

People's engagement in the functions of UP is the part of a social accountability mechanism (SAM), necessary for creating citizens' demand (Chowdhury, 2016). The author mentions some obstacles to peoples' access to citizen engagement include the cost of social accountability, religious codes and patriarchal restrictions on women's movement, lack of people's participation in meetings, lack of education and awareness of citizens, and mistrust of the elected officials by the citizen due to the institutionalization of corruption, etc. Apart from that, very few research has been conducted to measure the quality of service delivery of UP. For this reason, getting an idea on the beneficiary's satisfaction level is essential to measure the effectiveness of these social safety net programs. In the case of VGD, there are approximately Seven Lac Fifty Thousand direct beneficiaries of this program. Indirect beneficiaries from beneficiaries' households are approximately 3.75 million. As this program covers nationwide, the annual expenditure of the government is over US\$140 million and it is increasing day by day (Begum, 2018). At present, VGD program is one of the largest ten safety net programs in Bangladesh involving several implementing agencies such as the Department of Women Affairs (DWA) under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. Other partners include the Ministry of Food, World Food Program (WFP), local government institutions such as Upazilla Parishad, Union Parishad; BRAC, and other local NGOs (Begum, 2018). Considering all those issues, it is essential to get an idea on the satisfaction level of beneficiaries for the justification of this program whether it is successful or not.

Excessive financial dependency over the central government made the UP susceptible to political and administrative control (Khan, n.d.). Sometimes, there is excessive political pressure over UP in VGD/VGF card distribution. Shortage of manpower in UP, as well as poor coordination of UP activities, are other reasons for

their low working capability and their ineffective performance (Khan, n.d.). This kind of problem contributes to lowering the satisfaction level of rural people. On the other hand, according to section five and six of “The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act-2009” there is the provision of conducting open meetings at “ward” level at least two times in a single year where important decisions relating to the final selection of beneficiaries of different government social safety net programs as well as other development programs need to be finalized. All important decisions made by ‘ward’ committee should be displayed at the open and viewable place for the proper dissemination of information to common people (Section 6 (2) of “The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act-2009”) as because “it is argued that access to information is also important to allow the citizen to know their rights and overcome social exclusion” (Harande, 2009). Effectiveness of these programs is sometimes questionable to the common people. In most of the cases, this area is unrevealed for researchers as well as policymakers of the government. From that point of view, it will add ‘food for thought’ to the key stakeholders for unrevealing different corners of local government.

As UPs are regarded as the frontline local government organizations closest to rural people, the scope and quality of service delivery is one of the most critical areas that have significantly tinted the “credibility” and “institutional image” of this institution (Aminuzzaman, 2010). Overall performance in service delivery and transparency in planning and decision making are critical factors of institutional trust of UP. But due to the failure of the UPs to respond to the dire need of the rural people, particularly the poor and disadvantaged in particular, often tend to seek services from alternative sources like the NGOs and private providers (Aminuzzaman, 2010). This leads to a very low level of trust towards the UP officials and leadership (Aminuzzaman, 2013). Lack of transparency, low level of institutional visibility, weak management, weak participatory process, and downward accountability guides to the development of ‘low satisfaction’ which ultimately contributing to the development of “low trust” as well (Popy, 2016).

1.3 Significance of the study

Previous research works have been conducted on the institutional challenges, financial management and other issues of the Union Parishad of Bangladesh. But those works have not adequately touched the issue of citizen's satisfaction on pro-poor service delivery being provided by the Union Parishad as a whole. So this study attempted to explore the "satisfaction scenario" between poor and vulnerable citizens; and Union Parishad.

Over the year, the declining trend of satisfaction in terms of public service delivery is a common phenomenon around the world, especially in 3rd world countries. It is even sometimes visible in the advanced democratic countries also (Walle, Roosbroek, & Bouckaert, 2008). As the smallest tier of LGIs, it is a potential threat for UP also. According to the report published by World Bank in 2015, 65.72% of the population lives in rural areas of Bangladesh. Besides, there are 10 city corporations and 307 pourashavas (municipality) in urban areas and 4554 Union Parishads (UPs) as elected LGIs (Aminuzzaman, 2013). For this larger number of populations, especially for the poor and disadvantageous group, the government provides basic welfare services as a measure of protection and fulfillment of fundamental needs through UP. So, as a service provider organization, fidelity of citizens towards UP is mandatory. It triggers the popularity and acceptance of this institution as well. From the perspectives of citizens' perception, this study is very much significant for that reason. Moreover, the present study tries to reveal the intangible common platform of faithfulness between citizen and UP.

1.4 Research objectives

The objective is to explore the status of beneficiary's satisfaction over VGD service delivery of Union Parishad. Understanding the extent of satisfaction, it is also important to know the critical factors and the interplaying mechanisms that shape the satisfaction level of the VGD beneficiaries. All these contribute to measuring the effectiveness of service delivery of VGD program.

1.5 Research questions

This research raises the following questions to investigate the various aspects of the proposed study.

- a. What is the extent of beneficiary's satisfaction on UP in case of VGD service delivery?
- b. What are the critical factors shaping the satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries?

1.6 Methodological Overview

This study uses both primary and secondary data. An open-ended questionnaire on ten VGD beneficiaries in two selected UPs (five from each UP) has been used for data or information collection. Qualitative data have been gathered by selective case studies based on the willingness and availability of respondents. The method includes an in-depth interview of beneficiaries and key informants (KIs) such as Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officers (UNO), Upazila Women Affairs Officer (UWAO), local UP chairmen, members, female members, and local elites (teacher and NGO worker). Separate questionnaires have been used for each category of interviewees. As the interview with KIs is essential to validate the information received from beneficiaries, selective questions have been asked to them for systematic data collection. The proper record-keeping method has been followed to gather all sorts of data e.g. audio recording with prior permission, taking notes, etc.

For getting secondary data, relevant books, research papers, articles, different documents (e.g. Registers, etc.), government circulars and policies have been used to collect the necessary information. Both Union Parishads (UPs) have been selected as a unit of analyses based on their poverty map, the total number of beneficiaries reside, population, geography, and frequency of study, etc.

Table 1: Methodology of Data Collection

Variables	Methodology
Process	Content analysis, Interview, Direct observations, etc.
Output	Interview, Content analysis, Direct observations, etc.
Expectations of the beneficiaries	In-depth interview, Focused Group Discussion (FGD)

1.7 Scope of the Study

The public representatives and policymakers need to get an idea on 'institutional image' of the Union Parishad for various reasons, especially for making rules, regulations, etc. Getting such an idea on "institutional image" is important to measure if there is any breach of trust between UP and citizen. As UP bears several institutional challenges, it is important to be concerned with the satisfaction of citizens. If people get dissatisfied, they may maintain a safe distance from UP as well as local representatives. This may hamper the vision of the government that indirectly influences the popularity of the Government as well. This study will test and analyze the satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries by collecting and comparing data from two UPs based on their performance in terms of service delivery. Service delivery process and output; and expectation of the beneficiaries have been taken into consideration as variables to measure the satisfaction level.

1.8 Limitation

The limited knowledge and understandings of the beneficiaries on their rights and responsibilities are the major limitations of this study. As the beneficiaries are from the ultra-poor segment of the society, they are devoid of light of education in most of the cases. So, it is difficult to get a satisfactory answer from them. As they are not fully aware of the fact of VGD, they seem to be passive and unwilling to participate in the discussion. This may be due to their tendency of 'unknown fear' originated from the shortage of their knowledge. Again, the key informants tend to push the ball in other's court all times. This happens probably from the ground of the non-internalization of the ownership of their duties etc. Nevertheless, the researcher tried to address such limitations by rapport building and through ensuring complete anonymity of the respondents and the key informants. Building interpersonal skills with patience was another way of data collection. Sometimes, it is difficult to get the proper information from key informants due to their back-dated or poor knowledge on VGD policies. Moreover, they are too busy with their daily activities. So, it is hard to manage time from them. The researcher tried to wipe out such barriers by incorporating relevant

data or information from the policies as well as giving additional time according to their convenience. Sometimes, it is quite difficult to collect data or information from a qualitative point of view as the respondents do not have a sufficient level of knowledge to explain it from their positions. It has been tried to cover up by making specific questions to them. Finally, the time constraint of field data collection is another obstacle of this study.

1.9 Structure of the Study

This study comprises of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, and significance of the study. It also includes research questions, scope, and limitation of the study. It further describes the methodology adopted for the study and concludes with the organization of the study.

The second chapter has two parts. First part represents the literature review, conceptual discussion on satisfaction, and service delivery. It deals with the theoretical aspect of satisfaction including its operational definition. The second part represents the analytical framework of the study. This chapter also includes operationalization of dependent and independent variables along with indicators.

The third chapter outlines the overview and history of social safety net programs. It precedes with then VGD specific discussions along with policies. This chapter furthermore discusses with the service delivery process of VGD through UP and the relationship with beneficiaries satisfaction.

The fourth chapter presents an empirical analysis and interpretation of data gathered from the field study and its analysis in the light of the analytical framework.

The fifth chapter attempts to conclude major objectives in the light of theoretical framework and observation concerning the research questions. It draws a conclusion based on chapter four.

Chapter 2

Literature review

The purpose of this chapter is to gather information on the findings of other researchers or studies that are closely related to the study being in the process. It helps the researcher to fill in the gaps and extend prior studies. It also provides a framework for establishing the importance of study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings (Aminuzzaman, 2011). This section is divided into two parts describing relevant literature relating to citizens satisfaction on service delivery, UP as well as social safety net programs respectively.

2.1 Service delivery: Citizens' satisfaction perspectives

Satisfaction is an indicator of good governance around the world (Bouckaert & Walle, 2003). The term citizen satisfaction (used interchangeably with the terms, consumer satisfaction, and client satisfaction) refers to "the totality of an individual's subjective evaluation of various attributes or dimensions of a good or service he/she consumes" (Njoh, 1994). Different politicians and researchers have been showing their growing interest in this issue for a longer period. Plenty of researches on satisfaction and trust are available. But the majority of those are related to job satisfaction or satisfaction with private enterprises. However, literature related to satisfaction on public service delivery has been searched to find out the research gap. The following literature highlights the contributions of the scholars in satisfaction and trust research.

Kampen et al. (2006) argued how satisfaction with service delivery affects trust in public agencies in an empirical setting. Their empirical result suggested that the impact of a negative experience with a public agency is much more pronounced than the effect of a positive one. They found that decreasing the number of disappointed clients has a stronger effect on increasing trust in the public sector than increasing the number of well-pleased clients.

Lewis et al. (2009) described that studies of satisfaction with public services in developing countries are largely descriptive. They tried to analyze the effect of

governance conditions on satisfaction with local education services in Indonesia. According to the authors, this study makes three contributions to the growing literature on satisfaction with public services in developing countries. Firstly, it employs a wide range of objective measures of subject quality in explaining satisfaction with education. Secondly, expectations and predispositions are controlled for by using a wide variety of proxies, including household socio-demographics, household socioeconomic status, and geographic variables. Finally, this paper provides some empirical evidence on the influence of governance factors in explaining household satisfaction with education service delivery.

Deichmann and Lall, (2003) investigated the question how well do so-called scorecards or report cards measure public service delivery accurately, or do personal and community characteristics have a significant impact on residents' assessment of service quality? They developed a framework where actual levels of services received, as well as expectations about service performance, influence a household's satisfaction with service delivery. The authors found that satisfaction increases with improvements in the household's service status, a finding that supports the use of scorecard initiatives.

Ali R. et. al., (2015) tried to find out the influence of perceived value, customer expectation, corporate image and perceived service quality on customer satisfaction. They revealed “number of notable findings including the empirical verification that value, customer expectation, and corporate image significantly enhancing customer satisfaction. They also observed that perceived service quality is negatively related to customer satisfaction but insignificant”. Their result also showed that there is no differentiation among variables, assuming to be provided by gender in determining customer satisfaction.

A qualitative approach has been utilized by Karim R. (2015) to examine the process; benefits of recent innovations initiated by the government and analyze the people's perceptions. He found that utilizing the e-government infrastructure, the government of Bangladesh has reached to the people and provided services at their

doorsteps by establishing the national web portal through which citizen can access their useful services.

Askvik S. et al. (2010) examined the patterns of popular trust in political and public institutions in Nepal. They focused to what extent such trust is linked to citizen’s social and political identities and citizen’s perceptions of institutional performance. Their findings demonstrated that trust in public institutions varies extensively.

Rahim & Shirazi (2017) evaluated the performance of public sectors in Pakistan through citizen’s satisfaction with local public service delivery in the context of the 2001 devolution plan. They found that satisfaction level declined significantly when the devolution plan was rolled back and people living in urban city districts are comparatively more satisfied than inhabitants of rural areas. They also found heterogeneity in satisfaction across different provinces, suggesting the need for institutional and political reforms.

Table 2: Summary overview of literature studied

Name of Authors	Major Findings
Kampen (2006)	Decreasing the number of disappointed clients has a stronger effect on increasing satisfaction and trust in the public sector than increasing the number of well-pleased clients.
Lewis (2009)	Governance factors influence household satisfaction with education service delivery in Indonesia.
Deichmann (2003)	Satisfaction increases with improvements in the household’s service status, a finding that supports the use of scorecard initiatives.
Ali (2015)	Perceived service quality is negatively related to customer satisfaction but insignificant.
Karim (2015)	By utilizing the e-government infrastructure, the citizen can access their useful services.
Askvik (2010)	Trust in public institutions varies extensively.
Rahim & Shirazi (2018)	People living in urban city districts are comparatively more satisfied than inhabitants of rural areas in Pakistan.

2.2 UP and VGD: Reviewing literature

Several types of research have been carried out on UP of Bangladesh by eminent local government specialist and scholars. The following reviews highlight the feature of UP and their services relating to social safety programs such as VGD.

De Hoog et al. (1990) tried to find out the sources of citizen satisfaction with local government fragmentarily. They employed “a comparison group design to jointly assess three theoretical accounts of the source of satisfaction”. Their result pointed to a very understandable account of satisfaction with local government. They considered the relationship from both sides. From the individual's side of the relationship, they found an important role for local government efficacy and attachment to the local community. And on the government's, side, their model pointed to what officials do for citizens: provision of some level and quality of services.

Aminuzzaman, (2010) in his paper found that a significant majority of the rural people especially the poor are not even marginally satisfied with the types and nature of the services being delivered by UP. Furthermore, it is striking to note that dissatisfaction is significantly higher among women. The author also mentioned that lack of appropriate rules and regulation, ineffective monitoring, lack of accountability and transparency, political manipulation, and non-cooperation from Upazila based bureaucracy are the major findings of his research.

The study done by Basher (2017) endeavored to explore citizens' level of trust in LGIs in Bangladesh with a specific aim to determine the governance features that affect their level of trust. The author mainly used surveys conducted by Public Policy and Governance (PPG) program of North South University. Based on empirical data, he found that people have higher trust in Union Parishad (UP) compared to Upazila Parishad (UzP). From the regression analysis, he also found that only accountability and transparency have a significant influence on citizen's trust in LGIs.

Popy (2016) in her research tried to explore citizens' level of trust on UP in Bangladesh with a specific aim to determine the institutional factors that affect their level of trust. This study has observed a low level of trust over UP. Among the

institutional factors, transparency and performance are found to be influential in determining the trust level on UP in Bangladesh perspectives.

Chowdhury S. (2016) found that participation of people through Ward Shava (WS) and Open Budget Meeting (OBM) of UP enabled Social Accountability Mechanism (SAM) in the lowest administrative tier of Bangladesh. Institutionalization of SAM, State-civil society synergy and transparency were some critical factors in the success of SAM. The author mentioned some challenges ought to be resolved to secure more participation of citizens and more responsiveness of the UP functionaries.

Aminuzzaman (2010) discussed the history and origin of UP, relevant concept of policies, and the existing set up of local government institutions in Bangladesh. He also discussed the present governance challenges for the UPs in terms of service delivery.

Aminuzzaman (2011, 2014) argued that there are several challenges for the UPs while performing services at the union level in Bangladesh. Major challenges mentioned by the author are the dominance of UP chairman in decision making, lack of honesty and integrity of the local public representatives, centralized project design and implementation, lack of coordination between elected representatives and the local officials, etc.

Khan (n.d.) in his study explored the legal and practical constraints behind the functioning of UPs. According to the author, major obstacles in performing the responsibilities of the UPs are financial insolvency, administrative complexities, lack of coordination, lack of public awareness, etc.

Barkat-E-Khuda (2011) reviewed the social safety net programs in Bangladesh. The major findings include the highest school enrolment especially among girls and reducing the gender gap as the result of SSNPs. Other findings include “additional employment generation; provision of food during the crisis; building infrastructure; and increased access to and utilization of maternal health care services.” He suggested that high priority is required with utmost importance for ensuring the rights and entitlements of the disadvantaged groups. This group includes both the urban poor and the poor living in rural areas. To achieve those goals, the author prescribes “the need to

sustain high-level political commitment, strengthen program management, better targeting of beneficiaries, minimize leakages, improve financial management and payment systems, and strengthen monitoring and supervision”.

Robanno & Smith (2013) applied “recent advances in multidimensional measurement analysis to develop a straightforward method for summarizing changes in groups of eligibility (screening) indicators for various social safety net programs”. By applying their method to a BRAC ultra-poverty program in Bangladesh, they found this program is contributing greatly to reduce multidimensional poverty for those with a larger initial number of deprivations. This improvement is most associated with better food security and with the acquisition of basic assets. They also showed “how evaluation evidence can be used to help improve the selection of eligibility characteristics of potential participants”.

Haider & Mahamud (2017) analyzed “the beneficiary selection and allowance utilization of social safety net programs in Bangladesh through using field-level primary data”. It finds that social safety net transfers are not always distributed among the poor and vulnerable group people who deserve to receive the allocation for fighting against poverty and vulnerability. The study findings also indicate that majority of the received allowance money (about 60%) is spent for purchasing food meaning that in spite of taking shelter under the umbrella of a social safety net (SSN); people remain in a vulnerable situation. They suggested “taking initiatives to increase in allowance amount change in the beneficiary selection procedure and intensification of monitoring that may contribute to promote human rights and social protection in Bangladesh through facilitating peoples’ access to SSN programs and boosting up SSN allowance amounts for fighting against poverty and vulnerability”.

Table 3: Summary overview of literature studied

Name of Authors	Major Findings
DeHoog (1990)	Satisfaction with the local government requires considerable relationship from both sides.
Aminuzzaman (2010)	A significant majority of the rural people (especially the poor and women) are not even marginally satisfied with the types and nature of the services being delivered by UP.
Basher(2017)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People have higher trust in Union Parishad (UP) compared to Upazila Parishad (UzP). 2. Only accountability and transparency have a significant influence on citizen's trust in LGIs.
Popy (2016)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observed a low level of trust over UP 2. Transparency and performance are influential in determining the trust level on UP.
Chowdhury (2016)	Ward Shava (WS) and Open Budget Meeting (OBM) enabled the Social Accountability Mechanism (SAM) of UP.
Aminuzzaman (2010, 2011, 2014)	<p>Major challenges for the UPs are-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the dominance of UP chairman in decision making, • lack of honesty and integrity of the local public representatives, • centralized project design and implementation, • lack of coordination between elected representatives and the local officials etc.
Khan (n.d.)	<p>Major legal and practical constraints of the UPs include-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial insolvency • administrative complexities • lack of coordination • lack of public awareness etc.
Barkat-E-Khuda (2011)	SSNPs led to increased school enrolment of girls, generating employment opportunities and increased access to maternal health care services.
Robanno & Smith (2013)	BRAC ultra-poverty programs have a greater impact on reducing multidimensional poverty for those with a larger initial number of deprivations.
Haider & Mahamud (2017)	Allowances are insufficient given in SSNPs

The above-mentioned pieces of work describe the impact of the relationship on satisfaction, major factors affecting satisfaction on public sectors such as health, education, etc. and satisfaction on private business enterprises. Few researches are related to satisfaction on urban city services, overall performances of UP, comparing satisfaction among various local government institutions (LGIs) such as UP, Upazila Parishad (UzP), measuring the effectiveness of social safety net programs (e.g. old

allowances programs, widow allowances etc.) and their various dimensions. But researches related to satisfaction targeting VGD beneficiaries and the performance of UPs in this regard are found to be inadequate. Conducting such kind of research is very important from the perspectives of Bangladesh as this is the largest social safety net programs in this country. From that point of view, this study is very much significant to address such research gap.

VGD program aims to increase the earning potential and social empowerment of the most disadvantaged rural women. So, measuring satisfaction from their perspectives is crucial as women are about 49.6 % of the total population in Bangladesh. This research would be helpful to get an overall idea on the effectiveness of this program especially at the point of service delivery so that future policymakers and researchers can review this program to make it a success for the welfare of the country.

2.3 Satisfaction: A Conceptual Overview

This part gives an overview of satisfaction and quality of service delivery, a different perspective, and categories of satisfaction with relevant variables, a profound insight how satisfaction is built, and the theoretical foundation of satisfaction. Reviewing the overall satisfaction concept, the next part will cover the analytical framework of this study with the indicators of the explanatory variables to extend our understanding about the relationship between the level of satisfaction and satisfaction variables.

2.3.1 Satisfaction is a part of outcome quality that is an indicator of good governance (Bouckaert & Walle, 2003). It is reflected by “the degree of congruence between expectation and accomplishment” (Heidegger, Saal, & Nuebling, 2006). So, satisfaction comes from the expectation of the client regarding a service or product based on performance. Different researchers show how the level of satisfaction varies from person to person or service to service. It depends on physical and psychological variables as well. It is found that organizationally committed employees are more productive and address the needs of customers because they identify with the organization’s valuing of customers and such customer service performance leads to customer satisfaction (Allen & Grisaffe, 2001 cited in Conway & Briner 2015).

Satisfaction with public services can be prominent at different levels. At the ground level, the operational quality of public service is very important to see how service quality translates into service satisfaction. Wall, 2017 argued that satisfaction with public services is a complex phenomenon. It combines expectations, experiences and prior attitudes. It is not just the direct reflection of experienced service quality but also relates to broader attitudes to government, such as trust in government. It is also crucial to remind that people who have not experienced services also have opinions about that service and those general opinions differ from more specific ones (Walle, 2017).

According to Jones (2000), satisfaction can broadly be classified as-

- Transaction-specific satisfaction, and
- Overall satisfaction

2.3.1.1 Transaction-specific satisfaction- It refers to “the consumer’s dis/satisfaction with a discrete service encounter” (Bitner & Hubbert cited on Jones & Suh, 2000). This type of satisfaction may not be perfectly co-related with overall satisfaction since service quality is likely to vary from experience to experience, causing varying levels of transaction-specific satisfaction (Parasuraman cited on Jones & Suh 2000).

2.3.1.2 Overall satisfaction- It refers to “the consumer’s overall dis/satisfaction with the organization based on all encounters and experiences with that particular organization” (Bitner & Hubbert cited on Jones & Suh, 2000). This kind of satisfaction may be used on many transactions or a few, depending on the number of times the consumer has used a particular provider. (Jones & Suh, 2000). It can be viewed as a moving average that is relatively stable and more similar to an overall attitude.

Table 4- Typology of satisfaction (Jones & Suh, 2000)

Sl. No.	Category	Attributes/Characteristics
1.	Transaction-specific satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer’s satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a ‘single service encounter’ • Service quality is likely to vary from experience to experience

2.	Overall satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer’s satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a company based on all his/her experiences with the firm over a while. • It is likely to remain relatively stable.
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2.3.2 Quality of service delivery is defined as the degree to which a given service or activity promotes the satisfaction of clients. It is an interactive process between the service provider and the service recipient. The underlying principle is that satisfaction with the public sector is proportionate to the quality of public service delivery. Better quality of public services leads to the satisfaction of users, which, in turn, increase trust in government.

To improve the quality of services, modernization of the public sector is a prerequisite according to authors (Bouckaert & Walle, 2003). Kampen, Maddens, and Vermunt (2003) mentioned that such significant satisfaction with public service delivery leads to trust in government. In the same way, satisfaction with public services at the local level is strongly linked with the confidence in government (Van Ryzin, Muzzio and Immerwahr 2004 cited in Kampen, Walle, & Bouckaert 2006).

Quality of public service delivery at local level includes capability of UP to identify and respond to the critical needs of the poor, pro-poor program design and project selection, creating awareness-building program on constitutional rights of the people, providing non-class biased services, and sensitive to pro-poor interventions etc. lead to building institutional confidence at the local level (Aminuzzaman, 2007).

The model proposed by Conway and Briner in 2015 explored the relationship between unit-level organizational commitment and customer attitudes which is mediated via employees’ customer service delivery such as queuing time, serving time, service quality, etc. They suggested that organizational commitment is a feature of units delivering fast and quality service that involves attitude towards the employee, customer service behavior, etc. It is therefore important how human resource management and management practices translate into customer satisfaction (Hong et al., 2013 cited in Conway & Briner 2015).

2.4 Variables of Satisfaction

While reviewing articles, various variables influencing satisfaction have been found in the existing literatures. All these variables are found to be important measuring the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries related to the service delivery process. Different researchers conduct their research on this issue by taking various public sectors in their consideration. For example, Ali et al. (2015) assessed the level of satisfaction in a particular public sector by investigating the variables such as perceived value, customer expectation, corporate image, and perceived service quality. Some variables are significant and some are insignificant depending on various perspectives. Serra (1995) found the two most potent shapers of citizens' satisfaction with bureaucracy. These are their assessment of the process that includes promptness, efficiency, and fairness. Another one is their assessments of the behavior of street-level bureaucrats with whom they interacted in terms of knowledgeableness, courtesy, and openness to criticism. Here are the major findings of variables related to satisfactions enlisted below.

Table 5: Satisfaction variables

Expectations (Lewis 2009; Ali 2015)
Efficacy (DeHoog 1990)
Decreasing the number of disappointed clients (Kampen 2006)
Transparency (Monem 2007)
Attachment to the local community (DeHoog 1990)
Perceived service quality (Bouckaert 2003; Ali 2015)
Gender (Aminuzzaman 2010)
Customer loyalty (Jones 2000)
Scope for participation (Monem 2007)
Process (Kampen 2003)
Perceived value of the institute (Ali 2015)
Promptness, efficiency, and fairness (Serra 1995)
Institutional image (Ali 2015)

Honesty and integrity of service providers (Aminuzzaman 2010)
Knowledgeableness, courtesy, and openness to criticism (Serra 1995)
User-friendliness (Monem 2007)
Output (Kampen 2003)
Governance conditions (Lewis 2009)

2.5 Theoretical framework

There are different theories on satisfaction and quality of service delivery. For this research, basic theories applied to measure the quality of service delivery are micro-performance theory and expectation-confirmation theory. Considering the socio-political culture of Bangladesh, ground reality and nature of governance, both approaches appear to be relevant and context-specific.

2.5.1 Micro-performance theory (Kampen et al. 2003)

Micro-performance theory was developed by Jarl K. Kampen, Bart Maddens and Jeroen Vermunt in 2003. The theory argues that the quality of the service can be measured by applying two notable components namely process and output. By using the process, the output is obtained and it is the ultimate goal of the client for consulting the particular administration. It includes friendliness of personnel, accessibility to the public service, etc. Both components can be regulated by administrative intervention. The reported level of satisfaction with both process and output are predicates that are the level of engagement and satisfaction of the clients. This theory broadly argues that the level of satisfaction will affect not only output but also the trust in the governmental institutions. If we measure the quality of this service delivery process and output of UP, it will be helpful to assess and understand the level and dimensions of service satisfaction with particular reference.

2.5.2 Expectation confirmation theory (Oliver, 1977&1980)

Another important theory is expectation confirmation theory. This cognitive theory seeks to explain post-purchase or post-adoption satisfaction. This is done as a function of expectations, perceived performance, and disconfirmation of beliefs. The basic structure of this theory was developed in a series of two papers written by Richard L.

Oliver in 1977 and 1980. The concept of Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) is simple. According to this theory, satisfaction depends on 'variation of expectation' either positively and negatively. Before any event, we have an expectation. If that expectation meets positively, we are satisfied and if not, we are dissatisfied. The elegant simplicity of ECT makes it a powerful explanatory tool" (Jiang & Klein, n.d.).

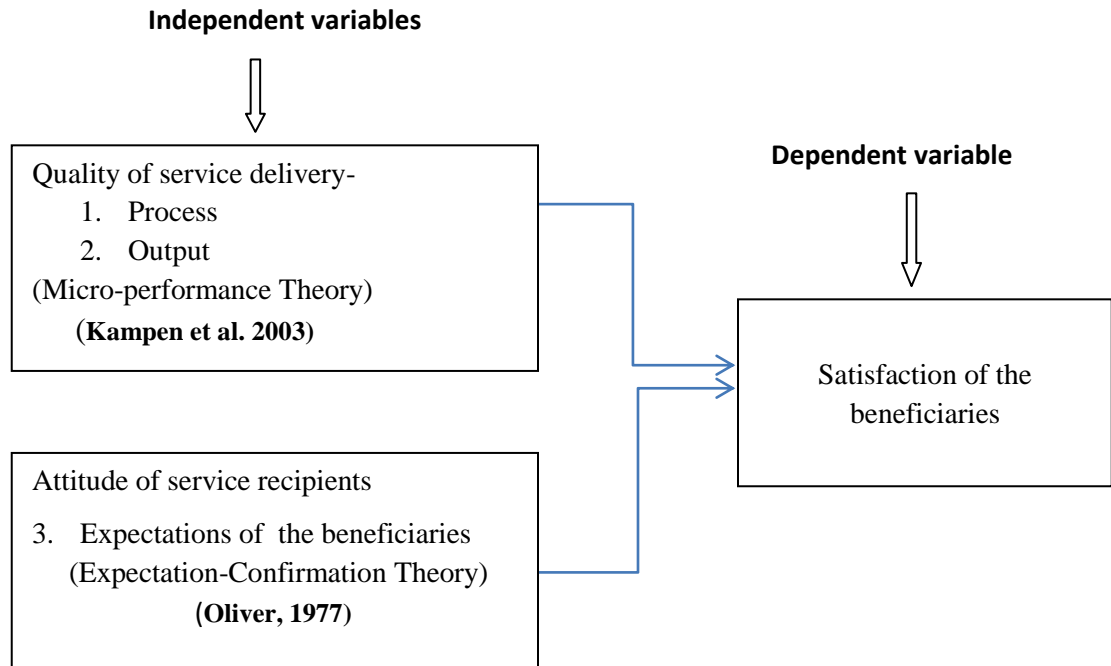
Negative disconfirmation occurs when performance is less than expectations. On the other hand, "positive disconfirmation occurs when performance is greater than expectations. So customer satisfaction results in the disconfirmation of prior expectations, i.e., if the service provider meets or exceeds expectations, then the customer is more likely to be satisfied" (Rust et al., 1995 cited in The IUP Journal of Bank Management, Vol. XI, No. 4, 2012). According to this theory, the expectation of the service recipients is the root cause of their satisfaction. So, the expectation is the third variable of this study besides process and output.

The expectation of the beneficiaries in this study can be measured by considering their perceptions. This would be helpful to get an idea of their personal opinions reflecting their philosophy.

2.6 Analytical framework

By reviewing the above mentioned theoretical propositions of satisfaction extensively, the analytical framework for this study has been formulated. This study uses this framework to present the argument of this study. Explanatory variables have been chosen by reviewing the relevant theories of satisfaction. The selected dependent variable is "satisfaction of the beneficiaries". Process, output and the expectancy of beneficiaries are the independent variables of which first two's are service-delivery oriented variables in this study. Considering these variables, this study uses the following framework for the assessment of satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries.

Figure 1: Analytical Framework



2.7 Operational definition of satisfaction

Based on the above discussions, the definition of satisfaction for this research is henceforth the total outcome of an individual's subjective evaluation of performance regarding the consumption of a service or product. It originates from the efficient service delivery of the organization that includes the process and output of the service. The expectation of the individuals is also a significant factor of satisfaction established in different theoretical propositions. So, satisfaction is the aggregation of several impact factors originated from individuals' expectation and institutional performance.

2.8 Measurement Indicators of variables

- a) Feedback from the beneficiaries is the information about reactions to the services provided by UP officials that can be used as a basis for improvement and is the measuring unit of satisfaction in this study.
- b) Time analysis refers to the state whether the service delivery of VGD is giving at a definite date or time in each month or not.
- c) Cost analysis refers to the state whether VGD beneficiaries are spending extra money as transport cost or others while getting the services from UP.

- d) User-friendliness refers to the attitude or behavior of the UP officials (either elected or appointed) towards the VGD beneficiaries.
- e) Transparency refers to what extent VGD beneficiaries have access to the information of VGD related service delivery such as dissemination of information by UP relating to the time and date of distribution, spots of distribution and other relevant information.
- f) Clientelism refers to what extents UP officials are giving priority to their well-wishers or relatives instead of VGD beneficiaries while giving services.
- g) Flexibility refers to what extent UP officials are treating VGD beneficiaries in case of service delivery if there is any mistake or irregularities committed by them.
- h) Point of distribution refers to the places from where services are being delivered by UP officials.
- i) Responsiveness refers to what extent UP officials (both elected and appointed) are reachable if there is an unsettled issue raised by beneficiaries.
- j) Training refers to what extent VGD beneficiaries are getting opportunities to receive income-generating training from appointed NGOs.
- k) Micro-level corruption refers to what extent UP officials or other related service providers (if any) are involved in unlawful demand of money or other advantages from VGD beneficiaries.
- l) Perception of the beneficiaries is the cognition of their senses towards various offers provided by the government aiming to make it more pro-people by introducing different extra facilities for them.

Table 6- Operationalization of dependent and independent variables along with indicators.

Sl. No.	Dependent variables	Operational definition	Indicators	Sources of Data	Data Collection Method
1	Satisfaction of the beneficiaries	Fulfillment of the expectations of VGD beneficiaries based on the service delivery process and output.	Feedback from the beneficiaries	Primary data	In-depth interview with beneficiaries and KIs. Secondary data analysis etc.
Sl. No.	Independent variables	Operational definition	Indicators	Sources of Data	Data Collection Method
1	Process	Series of Actions done by UP officials to provide desired services to VGD beneficiaries.	1.Time and cost issue 2. User-friendliness 3. Flexibility 4.Transparency 5.Point of distribution	Both Primary (e.g. Questionnaire, interview with KIs, etc.) and secondary data such as citizen charter, other documents, etc.	In-depth interview with beneficiaries and KIs. Secondary data analysis etc.
2	Output	The outcome of the service delivery process of VGD based on some considerations.	1.Responsiveness 2.Clientelism 3.Training 4.Micro-level corruption	Both Primary (e.g. Questionnaire, interview with KIs, etc.) and secondary data such as citizen charter, other documents, etc.	In depth interview with beneficiaries and KIs. Secondary data analysis etc.
3	Expectation of the beneficiaries	A strong belief of the VGD beneficiaries about the service delivery process and output which are expected to go in favor of them.	Perception of the beneficiaries	Primary data	In depth interview with beneficiaries and KIs. Use of satisfaction scale, secondary data analysis.

In summary, different variables are operationalized by using various indicators such as time, and cost issue; user-friendliness, etc. in this study. All of these indicators have been selected as the components of institutional governance as well as from citizen’s perspectives. Both dependent and independent variables of this study have been measured by formulating a questionnaire based on the factors affecting variables.

Chapter 3

Overview of Vulnerable Development Group (VGD) program

This chapter begins with the introduction of the social safety net program in Bangladesh over the years. It proceeds further with a brief overview of its roles. The chapter also illustrates the legal framework and policies guidelines of VGD program and concludes with the present institutional features.

3.1 The Concept of “Social Safety Net”

The term ‘social protection’ was the widely used concept before the term ‘social safety net’. During 1980, social safety net came first as the result of problems regarding structural adjustment that lately popularized in East Asia during the financial crisis. But programs of similar nature have long been in practice before 1980s in different forms such as rural works program, relief to areas deeply affected by natural calamity, etc. (Khan N. J., 2012).

Bangladesh has a long history of Social Safety Net programs. It primarily started due to food shortage caused in a post-war, cyclone and flood-affected country in the 1970s and 1980s. If we look chronologically at the reformation of this program, this is as follows-

Table 7: Chronological history of VGD Program

1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Public works and food aid in the post-war, flood-affected country facing food shortage.	Safety net program transition from relief to development.	Introduction of conditional transfers i.e. food for education (as more effective use of food aid), female student stipend, etc.	Shift from protection to protection & promotion by building resilience; and geographic targeting.	Employment guarantee and continuation of conditional transfers and graduation oriented programs.
Food-based relief for temporary food insecurity in the early years after independence.	Graduation concept so that development could be sustained by building household resilience to shocks.	Social protection approach addressing different needs of the population.	Ladder approach to enhance productive inclusion for building resilience to shocks.	Ladder approach to enhance productive inclusion.

Source- (Begum, 2018)

Such flagship social safety net programs include Rural Maintenance Program (RMP), Rural Employment & Road Maintenance Program (RERMP), Employment Generation Program for the poorest (EGPP), Work for Money (previously known as Food for Work), and Vulnerable Group Development (VGD), etc.

3.2 Origin of Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) program

As a humanitarian response to food insecurity in war and natural disaster affected country, the government of Bangladesh introduced Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF), a food-based relief program in 1975. By 1980s, several concerns have been emerged such as the need for graduation models i.e. transitioning from relief to development to build household-level resilience for long term sustainable development. Another concern is the need to focus on women as traditional sources of male protection had been significantly eroded by war and famine, and female-headed households were likely to be in greater poverty. Focus on women was an unconventional approach then. Finally, concern was on the opportunity for utilizing the grassroots presence and network of a large number of NGOs, supported by the donors. The VGF program, therefore, was reoriented from relief to development with a focus on women, to become VGD program in 1982. VGF program continues to exist in its original form for unconditional food aid and cash during festivals, lean seasons and natural disasters (Begum, 2018).

Nowadays, Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) program is one of the largest safety-net programs assisted by the World Food Programme (WFP) targeted at the poor woman in Bangladesh. Since this program was started to assist war, famine and flood victims in the early '70s, it has evolved to become one of the WFP's key program strategies to assist poor women to escape poverty line of less than 1805 kcal intake a day and enable them to participate in government and NGO-supported development activities (Begum, 2018).

3.3 Goal

The program's ultimate goal is to bring sustainable development to the lives of members of ultra-poor households (Department of Women Affairs, 2019).

3.4 Aim and Objectives

It aims to reach ultra-poor rural women with complementary inputs that will improve their nutrition and enhance their livelihoods and self-reliance. Over 24 months, the VGD assistance package includes (Department of Women Affairs, 2019)-

- a. Fortified wheat flour or rice to offset the opportunity costs of participating in training programs and to improve nutrition;
- b. Training in health and nutrition, civil and legal rights, literacy and numeracy, HIV awareness and prevention measures, child trafficking, budget management, and income-generating activities;
- c. Enrolment in personal savings programs;
- d. Micro-credit aimed at securing small business to enhance livelihood security; and
- e. NGO membership for women who repay loans.

The long-term objective of this program is to make 'positive change in the livelihood of ultra-poor women with attention to protect further deterioration of living condition'. It includes the positive socio-economic development of poor rural women in Bangladesh so that they can successfully cross the ultra-poor condition by combatting against food insecurity, lack of nutrition, economic insecurity, etc.

There are two short-term objectives (Department of Women Affairs, 2019). This is-

- a. Increased food consumption and income generation activities. It is done by assisting rural poor women by supplying daily food intake demand as well as creating training opportunities for making them an expert. It also encourages them to collect initial capital for investment and make them capable to get credit and making them eligible to include in running development program.
- b. Promote healthy behavior and women empowerment. It means active participation of poor women in practical education as well as other human resource development training programs to make them capable and developing a positive attitude.

3.5 Components of VGD program

The VGD program has two components (Department of Women Affairs, 2019).

- a. Income Generating VGD (IGVGD) - It is only operational in seven districts in Northern Bangladesh.
- b. Food Security VGD (FSVGD) - It is operational in all remaining districts across the country.

Both components together serve about 3.75 million beneficiaries from the ultra-poor households. In the IGVGD component, beneficiaries receive a monthly ration of 30 KGs of wheat or 25 KGs of fortified flour and in the FSVGD program, beneficiaries receive 15 kg flour and taka 150 per month. All the programs are similar in their beneficiary targeting approach and development package service delivery (Data Analysis and Technical Assistance Ltd, 2007).

3.6 Eligibility and Selection criteria of Beneficiary

To be eligible for this program, a potential beneficiary must meet any of the following criteria such as- (Department of Women Affairs, 2019)-

- a. widowed, separated/deserted/divorced or has a husband who is unable to work;
- b. has severe food insecurity;
- c. landless or owns less than 0.5 acres of land;
- d. has very low and irregular family income or works as casual labor;
- e. from a household headed by a woman.

A woman can become a VGD beneficiary only once and cannot be simultaneously benefitted from other development programs.

3.7 Selection Process

Ministry of Women and Child related Affairs publishes circular at least four months before of the cycle containing essential information related to the management of VGD and the guidelines for the selection of women describing elaborately. It also contains information relating to the total allotted number of VGD cards at Upazila level, timeframe and detailed selection process, etc. The process is sequentially as follows (Department of Women Affairs, 2019)-

- a. Formation of four members 'small team' by Union VGD Committee in the presence of Upazila Women Affairs Officer (UWAO). The members of this team include concerned male and female ward member, government officer, and NGO representative.
- b. Dissemination of information among the villagers relating to terms and conditions of the selection of women, and collecting name and address of women by open discussion and meeting at the local community.
- c. This team will visit the house of each primarily selected woman according to the list and fill the related information of the supplied datasheet.
- d. Union VGD women selection committee will collect all the lists from different wards; consolidate and validate it before sending to the chairperson of Upazila VGD committee via UWAO.
- e. As a chairperson of Upazila VGD committee, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) will re-check the list and approve it finally.
- f. Each union will preserve this final list and display it in the notice board for a definite period.
- g. If there is any discrepancy, Upazila VGD committee will investigate by forming a joined committee comprising of two to three members.
- h. After approving the final list by Upazila VGD Committee, VGD card will be issued and distributed in favor of each selected woman by taking the interview at Upazila level. During the distribution of card, there should be the mandatory representation of concerned union TAG (Transfer Assurance Guide) officer.

3.8 Delivery Process

After making the final list, the process of food delivery starts immediately. The delivery process of food generally follows the following steps (Department of Women Affairs, 2019).

Step-1

Ministry of Woman and Child related affairs will issue government order (GO) containing the amount of food, Upazila wise number of VGD cardholders, transport, and other

related costs, etc. and send it to the Directorate of Woman related affairs for taking necessary actions.

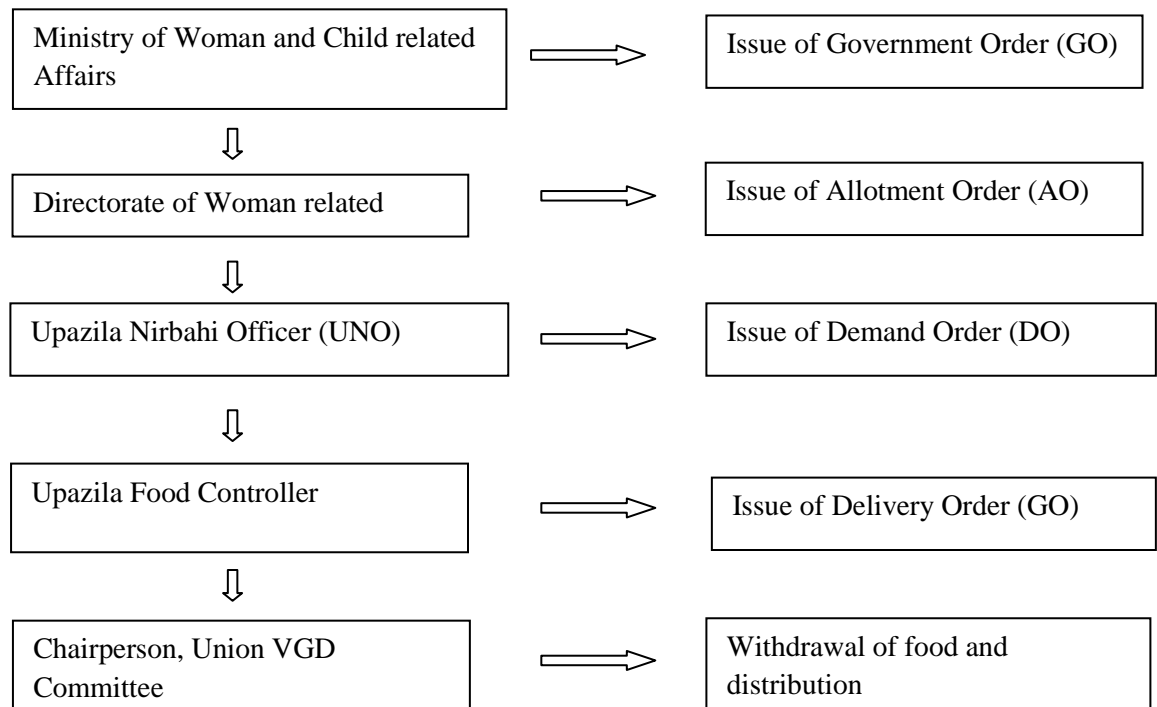
Step-2

Directorate of Woman related affairs will issue allotment order (AO) to Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) by mentioning card numbers to the respective Upazila including the amount of food.

Step-3

UNO will officially inform the Upazila Food Controller (UFC) for issuing demand order (DO) in favor of UP Chairman.

Flow Chart: 2 Process of official steps



(Source- Department of Women Affairs, 2019)

Step-4

Upazila Food Controller will issue delivery order (DO) to the authority of local food silo for delivering allotted food to the respective union.

Step-5

The withdrawing authority of food will ensure the accuracy of the amount per card and other qualities such as moisture, dust, insects, date of expiry or the existence of harmful elements, etc. If there is any question of quality, the higher authority will take necessary action in this regard.

Step-6

UP chairman will take necessary actions for the proper distribution of food from the UP complex in favor of beneficiaries after withdrawing food from food silo. At the time of distribution, there should be the mandatory presence of at least three members of Union VGD Committee, TAG officer as well as the representative of NGO. Everybody will look after the delivery process and put their signature in the master roll register of food distribution.

Step-7

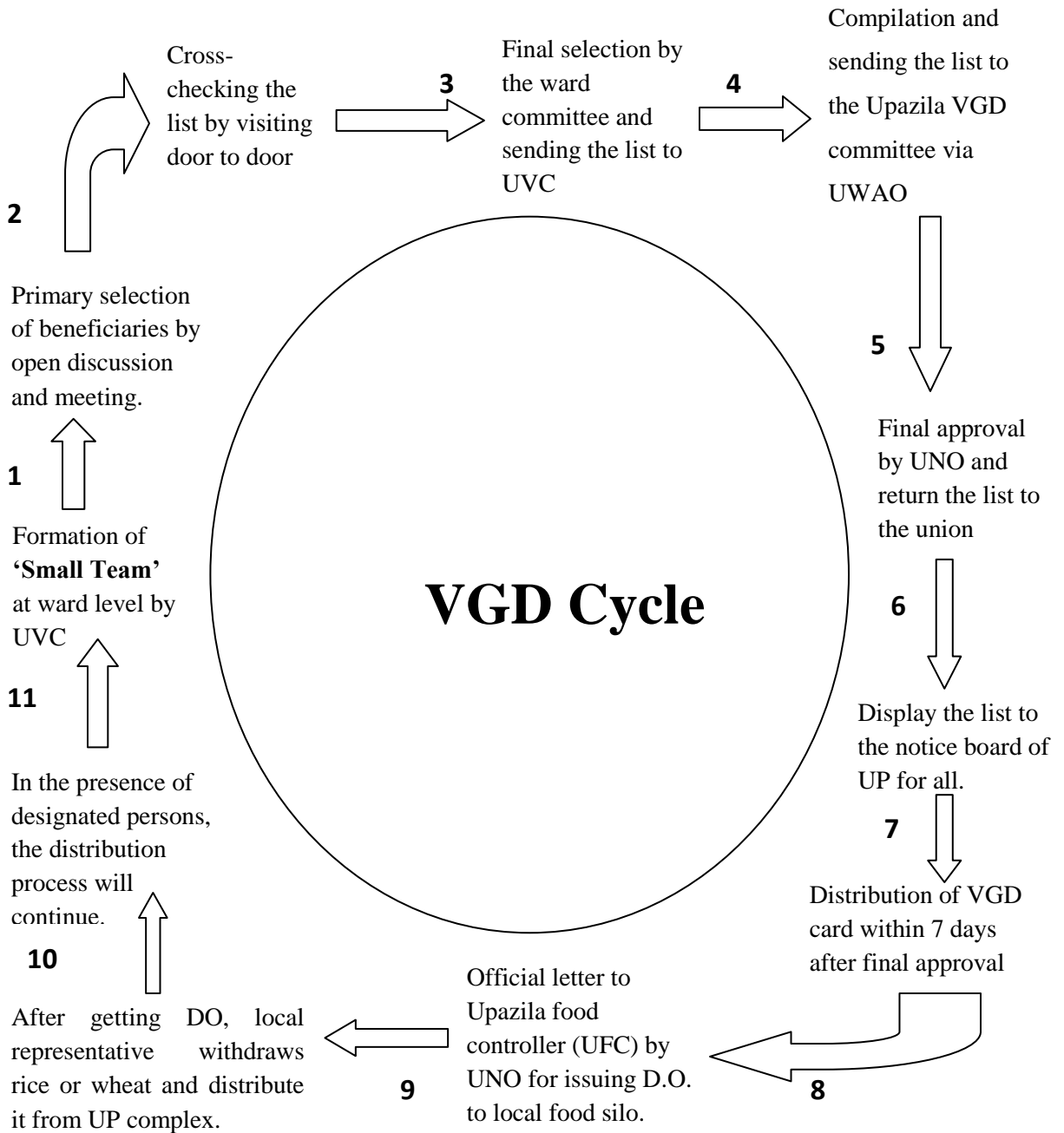
Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO) will examine the Savings Register of UP whether the monthly savings of VGD beneficiaries are being registered properly by NGO or not.

3.9 Terms and conditions for the distribution of food

There are several terms and conditions need to be followed by concerned stakeholders while distributing the food. This condition may vary from place to place due to various reasons. Following points should be kept in mind during the distribution of food (Department of Women Affairs, 2019).

- a. There should be a definite date and time every month for the distribution of food. The tenure between the two dates of distribution should not be more than one month. The written permission from UNO is required if there are any changes in the date of distribution.
- b. Each VGD beneficiary will get 30 KG rice or wheat in each month for a complete cycle. UP Chairman and other officials will ensure the amount of rice for each beneficiary.

Flowchart 3:- The VGD Cycle (at a glance)



Source- Developed by the researcher.

- c. If there is a shortage of rice in the food silo, UP chairman and UWAO will change the type of food (for example giving flour instead of rice or vice versa) by taking permission from Ministry of Woman and Child related affairs. But the amount should be the same.
- d. Government has the authority to postpone the aid at any time and take necessary actions against the liable persons if there is any mismanagement or misinterpretation of policy.
- e. If there is an issue of changing the point of distribution instead of UP complex to any other advantageous places based on the application of VGD beneficiaries, it can be done by taking prior permission from UNO and UWAO.
- f. VGD beneficiary can select a nominee to withdraw food in favor of her up to for four months in case of serious illness or due to pregnancy etc.

Department of Women Affairs under the Ministry of Women and Child related Affairs of Bangladesh is entitled to implement VGD program at field level. They attempt to make a difference to the extremely poor women through a social safety net program. This program is one of the components aiming to improve the nutritional status of women, children, and adolescents through improved food consumption, education, skills development, livelihood diversification, and risk mitigation, etc. This is done by bringing sustainable improvement to the lives of ultra-poor households. For ensuring this goal, this is necessary to find out the reasons why some beneficiaries are not able to sustain the improvement in food security brought about by this program and how some of them can graduate out of poverty once they enter this program.

Chapter 4

Methodology, Data Presentation, and Analysis

This chapter presents details of data collection, interpretation of collected data including socio-demographic features of the respondents as well as scaling methods of the study. It attempts to present empirical data and field-based observations of the study by content analysis, interview details, and several case studies. It also aims to analyze the empirical observations in line with the analytical framework. In this study, the raised research questions are the extent of citizen's satisfaction on UP in case of VGD service delivery, and to find out the critical factors shaping the satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries respectively.

4.1 Questionnaire

The semi-structured questionnaire approved by the supervisor has been formulated by considering various institutional factors that are related to the internal governance of the organization (Appendix II and III). Such factors include user-friendliness, responsiveness, flexibility, transparency, etc. of Union Parishad (UP) as an institution. The questionnaire consists of both open and close-ended questions and segmented into three parts. The first part covers the profile of the respondents whereas the second part of the questionnaire asks about different services related to the satisfaction of beneficiaries. Based on these two parts, they have been finally asked to give feedback getting idea on their satisfaction level. The focus of the interview questions primarily dealt with the process and output of VGD service delivery keeping in mind the objectives and questions of this research as well. Various forms of data collection include written notes, audio recording, etc. to prevent the missing of information.

4.2 Sample Sizes

Ten VGD beneficiaries have been selected as case studies with five from each Union Parishad. Most of them were from previous VGD cycle so that they can share their views from own experience. The in-depth interview has been taken also from key

informants including UP representatives and UP officials such as UP chairman, UP Secretary, UP member, and female UP member; Upazila officials such as Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO), Upazila Female Affairs Officer (UFAO), etc. and social elites such as school teacher, NGO personnel ,etc.

4.3 Data Collection Method

“Selection of respondents in qualitative research is purposeful; participants are selected who can best inform the research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Kuper, Reeves, & Levinson, 2008). It is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases. For this study, selective cases have been used to get a deeper insight into a local phenomenon. It is generally assuming that qualitative research can be carried out with five different methods such as narrative research, grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, and case study (Creswell J., 2014). In this research, qualitative data have been gathered and adopted to discover information based on research problems and to look for the respondent’s reaction towards it. Such an approach helped the respondents to express their opinions outside the questions asked. No hypothesis has been tested as this study is qualitative in nature.

Qualitative data has been synthesized by compiling the narratives with focused keywords in mind such as extent and status of satisfaction, nature or process of service delivery, the extent of expectation, responsiveness in terms of distribution, and discretion of UP, etc. However, a case study is not a probability sampling but a purposeful sampling. All sampling procedures, whether purposeful or probability, are designed to capture elements of both similarity and differences. Comparative case studies cover two or more cases that share the same goal in a way that produces more generalizable knowledge about causal questions. The cases are selected in this study using extreme or deviant case sampling method. Extreme or deviant case sampling means selecting cases that are unusual or special in some way, such as outstanding success or notable failures.

4.4 Sources of data

The study was conducted based on primary as well as secondary data. Primary data was gathered through a semi-structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews whereas secondary data were obtained from the content analysis of relevant policy documents, literature, copies of contracts, relevant circulars, websites, etc. In-depth interview of key informants has been aimed to rationalize the statement of beneficiaries and to get conclusive proof of findings.

4.5 Background of study areas

Two unions of Chattogram division have been selected as a unit of analyses (Appendix I). These are Kachuai union of Patiya Upazila and Bailchhari union of Banskali Upazila. Kachuai is a union with an area of 11,919 acres containing eight villages and 20,974 populations (Human Consensus Report, 2011). Geographically this is a diversified union in Patiya Upazila consisting of both hilly and plain area. The poverty level is also high in this union making an ideal place for conducting research. VGD related information is available at the government web portal but seems to be insufficient.

Bailchhari is a union of twelve villages with about 22,000 people (Human Consensus Report, 2011). Agriculture and daily laborer are their main professions. While visiting union web portal, it has been observed that the list of VGD beneficiaries is available at their website for informing the common people. The reason behind selecting this union is that it is an ideal union from the research point of view as people living in this area are typically poor and more or less dependent on social safety net programs. Moreover, this is the oldest union Parishad of South Chattogram region had been established in 1922. This study considers a small segment of respondents from both unions as this is qualitative research. Sometimes the beneficiaries feel shy and reluctant to participate in discussions. In some cases, they respond very slowly in front of the researcher due to socio-cultural and ritualistic factors. However, attempts have been taken to find out the variations in satisfaction between UPs, if exist, depending on the type of services they receive.

4.6 Profile of the respondent

The profile of the respondents has been studied on a small scale to get an overview of their socio-economic status as well as their demographic features. Age, education, income, etc. are regarded as important socio-demographic determinants for the better understandings of their experience and awareness from the socio-cultural context. So, it can be inferred that the findings may reflect relatively authentic, experienced and evidence-based understandings of the quite adult population under survey. The beneficiaries were categorized into three age groups ranging from ages 21 to 50. Most of them belong to the age category 31 to 40. Their mean age is 36.7 which represent them capable but a little bit aged group of people. The second factor is their level of literacy.

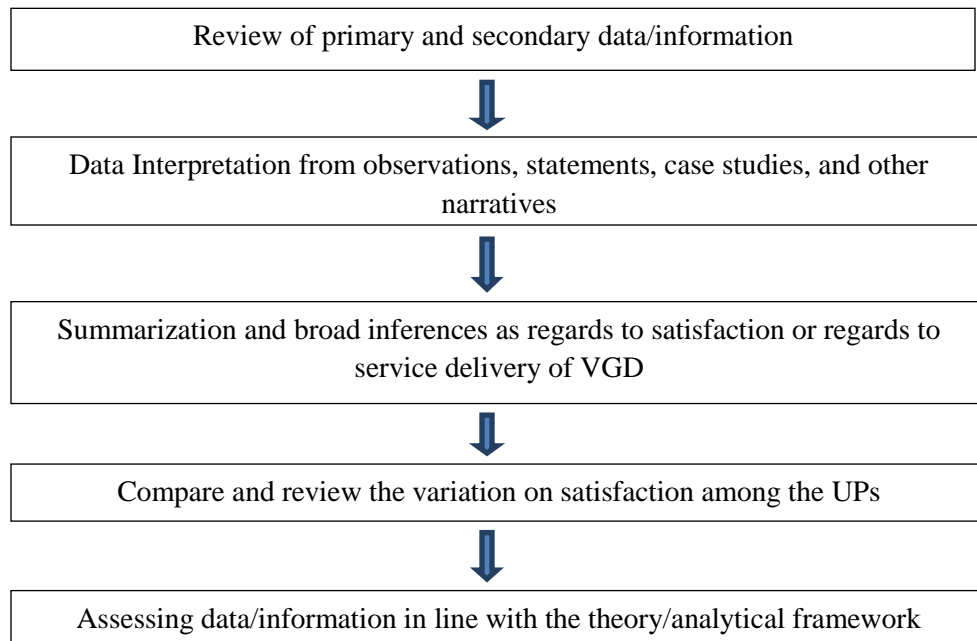
The research found that out of ten respondents, three are illiterate, four can write their name only, two completed their primary level and the rest one completed the secondary school. It indicates most of them are illiterate. It is widely believed that rural people have little or no access to UP facilities. Sometimes, they do not have the minimum opportunity to get services from a local government institution in comparison to educated people. So, from an inclusive viewpoint, this study attempted to cover VGD beneficiaries from different educational levels. The mean income of the beneficiaries is 4700 BDT which is very little amount to run their family. Few of them (three out of ten) have income more than 6000 BDT. Nevertheless, their economic status represents that almost all of them are a disadvantageous group of people. Their profession is also representing their life which is full of uncertainty and insecurity.

4.7 Data Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation

The research objective and research questions, focusing on the dynamics of the beneficiary's satisfaction and the related institutional factors, were at the core point of consideration in this study. In spite of having several limitations of beneficiaries and key informants in terms of their level of education, knowledge gap, limitations in their understandings, etc. the researcher tried to focus those points which are interlinked

with the selected variables. The way of representing data, and its further analysis and interpretation should be like as the following flowchart-

Flowchart 4: The way of data interpretation



Mode of satisfaction is a changeable issue depending on various factors. These factors may be intrinsic or extrinsic in nature. Intrinsic factors are related to the mode of service delivery of the organization, whereas extrinsic factors depend on other surrounding issues such as the level of expectation of the beneficiaries, etc. The indicators which have been selected for this research are the major discussing points here. This research shows how these factors are directly or indirectly intermingled with satisfaction.

According to this program, beneficiaries should be selected from the ultra-poor part of society. This portion of the society is, in general, devoid of education, the full brim of uncertainty, unbound level of fundamental needs, etc. So, it was challenging for the researcher to avail satisfactory feedback regarding satisfaction. From the direct observation of beneficiaries, it seemed that the definition of satisfaction is quite different from their point of view. So, keeping them on the right track of research was one of the major challenges for the researcher. Sometimes, the absence of in-depth knowledge of key informants was another obstacle for getting the right answer.

The respondents are not regular service recipients of UP. As they visit infrequently, it is difficult to measure their satisfaction level considering only a single recipient of service in comparison to multiple service recipients. So, an in-depth interview of key informants has been carried out to fill the information gap as well as for its validation. Besides, it would be convenient for the researcher to make a clear distinction on findings based on the data received from two unions.

In regards to time and cost analysis, the researcher observed that required time and cost for getting the services directly affect the satisfaction level of beneficiaries. The scenery is not satisfactory in most of the cases for both UPs. Because, according to beneficiaries, the receiving date and time of rice are not fixed at all. As there is no definite date, beneficiaries remain uncertain of getting rice in every month. According to the female UP member of Kachuai, Patiya-

২০ তারিখের পরে হলে কখন চালটা দিচ্ছেন, খালি জিজ্ঞেস করে।

(If the date is more than 20th, they always ask about the date.)

The reason behind has been inquired by the researcher. According to the policies, it is the responsibility of UP to collect rice from Upazila food silo after getting delivery order (DO) from Upazila. But, it has been found that insufficient budget for transport, as well as delayed delivery order, is the major reasons for irregular date of distribution in most of the cases. Local representatives and the government officials tried to explain the reasons behind in their way to keep them in a safe position. Whatever it is, the fact is that beneficiaries are in the worst situation due to the uncertainty of date and it adversely affects their satisfaction level on UP. Now the question is about the role of monitoring authority. What are they doing in such cases? While asking about this point to UNO & UWAO, they replied-

When we visit food silo and audit their stock suddenly, sometimes we get some sorts of anomalies. We instantly ask for explanation to UP so that they do not repeat it in the future.

But the fact is that such kind of problems still prevails in two UPs found from the research. Research also revealed that the present VGD cycle of 2019-2020, started from January 2019; beneficiaries got their rice after two months. Besides, UP officials tend to

distribute rice to the beneficiaries on the same day of bringing it from Upazila. This is another problem for the beneficiaries as it takes almost all day long or goes frequently in the latter part of the day. However, the major findings on this issue can be shown as follows-

Table 8: Time issue and Satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. Unsure/Open-ended date of delivery. 2. In general, beneficiaries are dissatisfied with the delivery time.	The record reveals that the date and time of delivery vary significantly ranges from 10th to 20th day of a month. Budget in regards to the transport found to be insufficient for UP.
UP chairman	Agree with the delay but according to them, it is late due to the issue of delivery orders (D.O.) lately from Upazila. Try to distribute rice by the 20th day of each month.	
Female UP member	Similar observation made by UP chairman	
NGO representatives and UWAO	1. No definite date and time of delivery of services. 2. Delivery is generally delayed and in extreme cases for 2-3 months. 3. UP's tendency towards the delay in delivery is due to insufficient transport cost.	
School Teacher (A key informant)	Have no idea on this issue.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	Beneficiaries did not lodge any complaint to them regarding this issue.	

All the beneficiaries, officials and social elites have the same opinion of delaying. But, the reason behind is not clear. UP representatives tend to make Upazila officials responsible for this problem. On the other hand, UWAO and NGO make UP responsible for their sufferings. But, the fact is that getting assistances irregularly by the beneficiaries is against the policy of the government.

Besides, VGD beneficiaries need to wait a longer period for the UP officials at the date of distribution. Beneficiaries in this program are all female as well as important members of their family. So, waiting for a long time hampers their daily household activities. At this point, the researcher asked the beneficiaries how long they need to wait. Their answer was as follows-

কতক্ষণ বোয়, তারপর অফিসার আইলি দেজে এরি

(We wait for the indefinite time. After coming, they distribute)

Their answer reveals the uncertainty of their waiting time lasting from early morning to noon. Waiting longer period due to the delay of officials may affect their satisfaction level also. Though UP officials denied this delaying due to their late coming at the office, it is found to be significant as most of the beneficiaries gave the same statement. Again, from the interview, it has been observed that beneficiaries spend more than hundred takas each month as their transport costs. Besides, they are bound to pay some hidden costs taken by Chawkidar or other officials. But the interesting observation by the researcher is that nobody raises this issue before any officials or representatives, though it is an extra burden for them. From the social science point of view, this kind of patron-client relationship tends to catalyze them becoming silent.

Case Study 1-

Ayesha Begum, a 44 years old female VGD beneficiary, lives at ward number six of Kachuai union of Patiya Upazila, visits union council every month for receiving rice which is about eight kilometers from her place of residence. For coming to UP, she uses a local taxi that costs 20 TK as transport cost. While coming back from union council, she spends 100-110 TK usually for carrying 30 KG rice with her. She has to manage this additional cost every month at anyhow. Asking a question on this issue, Ayesha Begum replied-

“সরকার আঁরারে এত কিছু দেব, আর আঁরা পএঁাশ-একশ টিয়া হরচ গরিত ন পাইরগুম না!!!
(Government is serving us a lot, so why should not we spend only 50, 100TK?)

Like her, almost all beneficiaries have the same opinion and consider it as their responsibility to manage such costs. For this reason, nobody raises this issue in front of the representatives.

In general, beneficiaries are silent on this issue but this is a component of dissatisfaction affecting their satisfaction level. There is a circular from the ministry of women related affairs, mentioning the distribution of rice from ward level to provide the service to doorsteps to the beneficiaries (Appendix IV). But UP seems to be reluctant in this case. While asking to UP chairmen, they replied it is difficult for them to monitor and control the distribution process closely from ward level other than UP. Such steps

would be encouraging for the local touts for taking illegal advantages. These logics are somewhat reasonable but go against the welfare of beneficiaries.

In comparison to Bailchhari union, Kachuai union tends to be more problematic in terms of the cost issue. They need to spend more money or other commodities at different stages of this cycle, and most of the money they spend at local levels to different vested groups. Although, the situation seems to be improving day by day still there is the existence of extra costs varied from case to case. This interpretation has been made based on the information taken from key informants such as UP chairman, UWAO and NGO.

Table 9: Cost issue and Satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. Transport cost is more than 100 TK in general. 2. Dissatisfied with extra cost.	Circular reveals that point of distribution should be from ward level. But beneficiaries tend to be reluctant in this issue as they have low understandings and not aware of their rights because of relatively low or no education.
UP chairman	1. Difficult for the beneficiaries to manage the cost. 2. Quite difficult to supervise the service delivery process at ward level that may encourage local corruption.	
Female UP member	Though government circular exists for the distribution of rice at ward level but seems to be unusual in case of its implementation.	
NGO representatives and UWAO	Unwillingness, as well as political interferences with local representatives, makes it difficult to implement the policy in most of the cases.	
School Teacher (A key informant)	The government should come forward to addressing such cost-related issues.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	It would be helpful for them providing some sorts of support in terms of transport cost or others.	

Besides the issue of time and cost, the attitude of the UP officials is also an important institutional factor for measuring satisfaction. In most of the cases, beneficiaries are with the background of little or no education. So, in general, maintaining proper manner and etiquettes with the UP officials is not possible for them. Besides, having a minimal sense of official decorum such as “yes sir” attitude is mandatory in South Asian culture especially in the public offices for getting services easily. From that point of view, the behavior of the officials towards beneficiaries carries

significant value for achieving a good image as an organization. While answering on the user-friendliness of UP officials, they gave their positive feedback towards the officials. Almost all of them replied that UP officials are well-behaved in maximum cases and they usually don't face any difficulties due to their behavior. Their statement might be true for most of the UP officials and representatives as most of them are young and well-educated nowadays. In spite of those considerations, such kind of traditional feedback seems to be confusing for the researcher as it does not go all times with the existing official culture of South Asian countries. After discussing many points, one beneficiary suddenly quoted personally that (obviously after ensuring complete anonymity of her)-

আঁরার তো হাত-পা বাঁধাঁ (We are tied in the chain)

This speech reveals her '**unknown fear**' as well as '**hidden pain**' to take any step against powerful local figures. Most of the beneficiaries are bound to carry out illegal orders of local political figures due to discrepancies in the selection process. They need to accept their orders without showing any negligence, as most of the beneficiaries have no strong financial or social back up as well as belong to the ultra-poor part of the society. For these reasons, it is very difficult to bring out any satisfactory answers from them regarding the behavior of UP officials.

Information gathered from UWAO and NGO representatives revealed also such kinds of 'unknown fear' of the beneficiaries. It might be originated from their low education and uncertainty of their daily life. This leads to the lower expectation of beneficiaries and confined their focus only on getting 30 KG of rice. From all these perspectives, the behavior of UP officials is not a matter of great concern for them. Rather they overlook such odd behavior of officials if they face any.

Table 10: User-friendliness and Satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. UP officials are well-behaved in most of the cases. 2. Did not experience any difficulties. 3. Highly satisfied in terms of their behavior and attitudes.	In most of the cases, UP officials found to be user-friendly. In some cases, they face odd behavior also. But unknown fear and uncertainty of their daily life keep them remaining silent.
UP chairman and Female UP member	1. The behavior of the officials is up-to-the-mark in most of the cases. 2. Beneficiaries did not lodge any complaint to them.	
NGO representatives and Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO).	Observing scenario is quite satisfactory in terms of their behavior, though little chaos is visible in a few cases at the date of distribution.	
UP secretary and School Teacher (A key informant)	Beneficiaries with little or no education are short-tempered sometimes. For this reason, it is challenging to handle with utmost cordial behavior.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	Beneficiaries did not lodge any complaint to them.	

Theoretical constructs reveal that transparency in the managerial and functional process significantly affect overall institutional trust and satisfaction (Butler, 1991). So, it can be assumed that if UP is transparent enough as an institution in their decision-making process, financial matters and service delivery method, people likely to feel safe considering that public money is not being misused. Rather, this local government institution will help work in favor of the development of the rural people which helping them eventually to build up more dependency on UP. It may infer from the result that a large section of respondents has experienced overall institutional transparency. The UPs in their decision-making process, administrative works as expected by the VGD beneficiaries exist in the selected UPs. During the field visits to the respective UPs, the researcher also found evidence of visible transparency practices such as citizen's charter, displaying information in the notice board, etc. which are supposed to be demonstrated by UP Act and rules.

Transparency of the institution is an important component for achieving the satisfaction of the service recipients. In the case of VGD, transparency of UP includes the dissemination of information properly by notice or display board, the proper way of

selection of beneficiaries, access to related information anytime, VGD service-related citizen charter, etc. Both unions have their mechanism of such functions and ensuring their transparency in broad senses. But, it is not satisfactory in all cases. For instances, transparency at the selection level of VGD beneficiaries seems to be absent in most of the cases. Though there is a Ward Committee for primary selection, the existence of this committee is not more than a '**pocket committee**' (according to NGO personnel) for the powerful stakeholders overall.

Almost all the key informants including UP chairman and others confessed before the researcher that selection of beneficiaries is more or less biased in all over the country. Wicked political interference at the selection process is broadly responsible for such biases. In both units of analyses, strong interferences at the selection process by the powerful politicians have been revealed by the researcher based on the data collected from UP representatives as well as government officials. Information needs to mention here that this research is basically on measuring the satisfaction level of beneficiaries who have already enrolled in this program. But the selection process seems to be important for this study because the biased selection process injects the '**seeds of corruption**' to this program affecting the steps subsequently.

In the service delivery process of this program, circulating essential information such as date and time of distributing rice, amount of rice given, paying any extra money at any stages of services, etc. are the key factors of ensuring transparency. From those points of queries, it has been found that beneficiaries got the information related to the date of distributing rice timely via their correspondent ward members or Chawkidars. There is no single objection of miscommunication found by the researcher in this case proving that this process is quite transparent.

However, according to VGD policies, it is mandatory to provide 30 kg of rice for each beneficiary. But not only the beneficiaries but also the key informants acknowledged that the amount of rice given is not accurate in weight at few cases. On average, each sack has a shortage of 200 to 500gm of rice usually. This happens when

rice is given in open condition using 50 kg sack instead of 30kg. Relating to this issue, the speech of the female UP member of Patiya is-

Patiya is a big Upazila of 17 unions. So, it is difficult for the dealer to deliver rice in 30 kg sack all times. Again, people of Chattogram usually prefer 'Atap' (non-boiled) rice instead of boiled rice, but they get rarely 'Atap' rice for their regular consumption.

This enhances the probability of corruption as well as deceitful functions during delivery as there is no fair practice in the amount and type of rice given by the UP. The condition seems to be better in Bailchhari union of Banskhal Upazila than Kachuai union of Patiya Upazila. Finally, it can be concluded that the lack of transparency in the amount and type of rice given also reduces their satisfaction level in many cases.

Table 11: Transparency and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. Get VGD related information timely by chawkidar, UP member or by other means 2. According to their opinion, all the processes are transparent and hassle-free.	1. Selection process seems to be biased and non-transparent due to political interferences resulting in unlawful pressure from different stakeholders. 2. Once the beneficiaries have been selected anyhow, their prime concern is only getting 30 KG rice. Due to little or no education, low understandings and self-centered attitudes of the beneficiaries, very few issues get priority over this.
UP chairman & Female UP member	Although, the selection process is not satisfactory all times the process of service delivery is systematically fair and transparent.	
NGO personnel and UWAO.	Mostly, the selection committee works as a 'Pocket Committee' of powerful elites.	
UP secretary	Try to maintain their records having no obligation from others.	
UNO	Records and registers seem to be up-to-date as well as having no significant complaint from others during the inspection.	

Clientelism is a political or social system based on the relation of the client to the patron with the client giving political or financial support to the patron. Existence of clientelism in the service delivery process is considered as a common scenario in all sectors of Bangladesh. From that perspective, clientelism in the service delivery process of VGD needs to be verified as it is linked with beneficiaries' satisfaction as well. Each union has 85 beneficiaries in general and it takes only two hours to distribute rice among them according to the serial number of wards. For that reason, it is not difficult for them to

distribute rice properly. To get an idea on clientelism, the researcher asked the question as follows-

Have you any bitter experience of partiality made by the UP officials or by somebody such as giving favor to someone by breaking the queue?

The answer of the beneficiaries is quite traditional i.e. they did not face any kind of favoritism at their tenure even for a single time according to their statement except unusual cases. Beneficiaries of both unions had the same answer on this question. Key informants (KIs) such as Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO) and Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) also replied the same answer-

Clientelism may exist in some cases. But, nobody visits our offices to lodge any complaint or they remain silent while visiting the UPs. It is quite difficult to get information on clientelism if nobody shares it to us. We appoint TAG officers at each union to look after such issues during the delivery of rice.

From the direct observation of the attitudes of beneficiaries, it is found that almost all of them gave the same answer without thinking more. It brings three sorts of explanations of their given answer. Firstly, they may satisfy as there is no existence of nepotism practically due to the limited number of beneficiaries. Secondly, they did not express it due to their 'unknown fear'. Perhaps, few of them have been victimized of such kind of nepotism but nobody wanted to disclose it for the sake of their interest. A VGD beneficiary of 35 years old of Bailchhari union of Banskhali Upazila, does not want to disclose her name, expressed her disappointment in the following way at one stage of the interview-

এডে তো আঁরা কেউ কিছু নহোঁই!!! (We don't speak anything there)

This reveals their incapability in many cases by preventing their freedom of speech. As they have no strong socio-political backup, it is better to ignore such situations. Lastly, as this kind of clientelism is a common scenario in the socio-political context of Bangladesh especially at the society of having strong power distance, this is not an issue of concern for them rather considering it very simple. Their only concern is to get 30 kg of rice without judging anything logically. From those broader

considerations, clientelism does not affect the satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries significantly. However, UP officials of Bailchhari union seems to be highly educated and experienced than Kachuai union. It helps to make the situation more well-balanced for the beneficiaries and more control over their functions. In this case, the behavioral tendency of the beneficiaries seems to be opportunistic revealing their scope of taking chances from UP. Similar opinions have been gathered from the key informants while taking in-depth interview.

Table 12: Clientelism and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. Clientelism in the form of nepotism or partiality is quite unusual for the beneficiaries. 2. Satisfied with the way of delivery of service in a broader sense.	1. Beneficiaries seem to be inexperienced enough or ignoring intentionally the existence of nepotism. Because the absence of nepotism is quite unusual in South Asian administrative culture.
UP chairman and Female UP member UP Secretary	Clientelism in the form of unethical practices is not granted by them.	2. Sometimes, beneficiaries may overlook such incidents as do not want to be a 'problem creator'. So remaining silent is the best option for them. It has been originated from 'uncertainty' as well as 'unknown fear' as stated by the UWAO and NGO personnel.
NGO representatives and Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO).	1. The delivery process is almost systematically in the right order. 2. Beneficiaries remain silent in most of the cases due to 'uncertainty' as well as 'unknown fear' from their surroundings having no space for them.	
School Teacher (A key informant)	No idea or experience of malpractices illustrated by beneficiaries to them.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	It is difficult to get information on clientelism if nobody shares their experiences. TAG officers appointed by UNO are at the point of distribution to look after such issues.	

The biased selection process may influence the flexibility of UP officials in terms of their job attitudes. Again, the satisfaction of the beneficiaries largely depends on the flexibility of UP officials in rendering their services. It directly affects their satisfaction level either positively or negatively. But, flexible service delivery by UP officials largely depends on the type of services as demanded by beneficiaries. So, it varies from service to service. However, sometimes UP officials render their services which are unfair from

the legal point of view. But they tend to ignore such legal points from the ground of increasing their popularity or from the tendency of unethical practices of power.

As this is a common human tendency to get some privileges from others legally or illegally, especially people with extreme poverty level, beneficiaries also intend to grab such kind of privileges from UP officials. The reason for such tendency lies with their social status, education, financial solvency, etc. allowing them to avail such privileges logically or illogically only for their interest. According to the expectation-confirmation theory, this way of positive or negative expectation affects their satisfaction level as well. The researcher asked the beneficiaries on few VGD related services whether UP officials serve satisfactorily in the following cases or not-

1. if somebody forgets to bring the VGD card,
2. unable to put signature as a receiver
3. absent due to illness and
4. need to break the serial in case of urgency, etc.

The researcher found similar results in both unions for these four questions. In both cases, UP officials are flexible enough for the last three services, whether not flexible in the services of the first category mentioned above. If the respondent forgets to bring the VGD card, the officials don't consider usually. Again, if the respondents are seriously ill at the date of delivery, the officials usually consider such cases and allow other persons to take rice instead of the beneficiary or allow them to take rice in other dates. The officials are also reluctant in the case of giving fingerprint instead of a signature by the beneficiaries who do not know how to write their names. Beneficiaries are also allowed to break the serial if it is urgent. Regarding this, the opinion of Bailchhari UP chairman is as follows-

We don't allow them to receive rice without VGD card. Here we have a storeroom, so we advise them to come on the following date with the card. If we allow them without the card, they tend to make such malpractices frequently. Again, at the state of emergency such as serious illness or for other unavoidable circumstances of beneficiaries, we try to co-operate them.

Since most of the beneficiaries are well-known to UP officials or other local representatives, they try to manage such exceptional cases positively. Beneficiaries also tend to pick such advantages of situations in favor of them. This is one kind of **'win-win situation'** found by the researcher. In this case, UP officials usually apply their discretionary practices by ignoring the policies sometimes. Informal attestation from local elites, the socio-political status of the representatives and inclined or submissive attitudes of the beneficiaries are the basic foundations of getting such favor from UP officials.

But the fear is that frequent use of such discretionary practices by UP officials tends to enhance the probability of misusing the power. While talking with UP officials about this issue, they tried to show their logics in favor of them. According to them, if they wait for final approval from Upazila, the beneficiaries would be the sufferer as those processes require more time and sometimes require good relation with Upazila officials. In some cases, the Upazila VGD Committee is the final approval authority of giving such kind of decisions that requires more administrative processes. For this reason, they take prior permission from Upazila informally.

In their point of view, this is helpful from both sides as it increases their authority over them. This is the way by which the flexibility of UP officials is helping to enhance the satisfaction level of beneficiaries. Nevertheless, practicing such informal decisions repeatedly seems to be harmful to the overall image of UP as a local government entity. This may turn their pro-people attitude to more aggressive and autocratic attitude in the long run. Developing such kind of attitude would be threatening for UP in terms of its institutional legitimacy. Considering all those issues, it can be said that flexibility of UP in the above-mentioned cases is satisfactory for the beneficiaries either in a right or wrong way but such malpractices become threatening for UP as well as an institution from the legal point of view.

Table 13: Flexibility and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. UP officials are flexible but flexibility varies from case to case. For instance, UP officials are flexible if beneficiaries are unable to put a signature, absent due to illness, during their urgency, etc. 2. But not flexible if they forget to bring VGD card, etc.	1. Beneficiaries seem to be inexperienced enough or ignoring intentionally the existence of nepotism. Because the absence of nepotism is quite unusual in South Asian administrative culture.
UP chairman and Female UP member UP Secretary	Flexible for the welfare of beneficiaries by applying their discretions.	2. Sometimes, beneficiaries do not want to be a 'problem creator'. So remaining silent is the best option for them originated from their 'uncertainty' as well as 'unknown fear'.
NGO representatives and Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO).	UP officials are flexible. In most of the cases, such flexibility is the result of mutual understanding among different stakeholders.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	UP's are flexible in some cases from the ground of the necessity of beneficiaries. But sometimes tend to violate the policies intentionally.	

There are clear instructions from the Ministry of Women Affairs regarding the distribution of rice from the ward level (Annexure IV). It is assuming that such decision has been taken for the welfare of beneficiaries aiming to save their transport cost. But this decision has not been implemented properly found by the researcher. There may have several reasons behind this failure of implementation at the local level. As mentioned by the UWAO of Banskali Upazila about this issue-

It is almost impossible to implement this decision without strong political commitment as most of the local representatives are backed by the politicians. I, along with my district officer, have already directed UP officials several times to shift the point of distribution at ward level. But, they are not interested at all as such shifting requires more transport cost for them.

But UP chairmen of both unions have different logics in this case. According to them-

Besides additional costs, it will create the problems of direct monitoring at ward level and allows the scope of local touts to be involved in corruptions due to the shortage of manpower.

Changing the point of distribution seems to be helpful for the beneficiaries to save their additional costs. Besides, increasing the budget for transport would be effective for UP to distribute food from the ward level. One important finding of this study is that no beneficiary raises this logical issue of changing the point of distribution before UP, although they are spending extra money each month. Sometimes, beneficiaries are not well-informed about this issue due to lack of information. But, they feel changing the point of distribution would be better for them in terms of financial savings. But nobody dares to represent it before UP officials due to **'unknown fear'** and **'self-restrained mentality'** of the beneficiaries hindering them to become active in taking such decisions in the majority of the cases. Beneficiaries would be satisfied more if this decision can be implemented according to circular.

Effective responses towards the demand of beneficiaries is another vital issues need to be considered by UP officials for attaining their satisfaction. To get an idea on their responsibility towards beneficiaries, the researcher asked several questions. These questions are related to the responsiveness of UP officials such as:-

1. shifting point of distribution based on beneficiaries demand,
2. selecting another member of the family instead of beneficiaries due to serious illness or during pregnancy,
3. sanctioning loan timely,
4. withdrawing 50% of the deposit at any time and
5. withdrawing total deposited money by the nominee after death.

Getting the answer to these questions from the respondents would be helpful to decide whether UP officials are responsive in their functions or not. Besides, these services are not a regular job for UP or Upazila officials but very much relevant from the beneficiaries point of view. Beneficiaries visit UP for these services only at special cases or during their urgency. So, proper and prompt actions need to be taken by the authority in such special cases.

Questions selected here are directly related to the responsibilities of different stakeholders such as UP officials, local representatives, government offices of Upazila,

etc. According to VGD policies, all these issues require final approval from Upazila. But the fact is that in most of the cases UP officials take final decisions by making discretionary practices without sending it to Upazila. Their ground point of logic is that the ideal official process is time-consuming as all the decisions come from the Upazila VGD committee according to policy. So, they allow such kind of malpractices for the sake of beneficiaries. But core findings from the researcher's direct observation is that UP officials tend to ignore the rules intentionally or unintentionally. In most of the cases, they know very little about the policies confessing it innocently in front of the researcher. In other cases, they tend to misuse power by overlooking the policies.

Another interesting observation is that the researcher got a similar kind of answer for a specific question from all the beneficiaries. It signifies a similar experience gathered by the beneficiaries for a single service. UP officials are indeed responsive towards the urgency of the beneficiaries in most of the cases. But, the fact is that they are not well-informed about the policy which is important for them. For instance, according to VGD policies, beneficiaries are entitled to take loan after the completion of successful training or have the provision of withdrawing half of the deposited amount at any time of the cycle due to their urgency. But this information is unknown to both UP officials and beneficiaries.

They know very little about the essential services of VGD. For this reason, the researcher did not get any satisfactory answer while asking above-mentioned questions to beneficiaries. This is significant because the government prioritizes sustainable development of the beneficiaries by introducing various income-generating training programs, but the implementing agencies seem not functioning properly at the root level due to information gap among different stakeholders. This is against the spirit of this highly focused social safety net program.

In this study, only two cases have been found where two beneficiaries applied for the loan and got it timely. On the other hand, a single case has been found where a nominee applied for the deposited amount after the death of beneficiary but got it after the completion of the whole cycle. It is because all the monthly savings of the

beneficiaries are deposited in a single bank account. So, it is not possible to withdraw money for a single beneficiary before the end of the cycle. But, ultimately this is a problem for the nominee as he/she has to wait till the completion of the cycle. Finally, it is found that beneficiaries are marginally satisfied with the responsiveness issue of UP officials but varies from service to service.

Table 14: Responsiveness and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responsiveness varies frequently from service to service. For example, UP official's response promptly in case of serious illness of the beneficiaries. 2. Sometimes, beneficiaries do not have essential information such as taking the loan or withdrawing 50% deposit at any time. 3. Responses slowly in case of withdrawing deposited money after the death of beneficiaries. For these reasons, the satisfaction level also varies from service to service. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The researcher found some symptoms of over-activity by the UP officials. For example- there is a clear provision in the VGD policies on how to select nominee after the death of beneficiaries, approval of certain services from UNO, etc. But, UP frequently ignores those issues by applying their authority knowingly or unknowingly which is a clear violation of existing VGD policies.
UP chairman and Female UP member UP Secretary	They try to response cordially in case of the urgency of the beneficiaries.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Beneficiaries are ignorant about the major rules of VGD policies, as they are not well-informed by the officials. It represents some sorts of information gap between UP and Upazila due to the frequent reluctances of union and Upazila offices as well.
NGO representatives and Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO).	Sometimes, responsiveness leads to violation of existing policies that are unexpected.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	UP officials are supportive to the welfare of beneficiaries but tend to violate the law sometimes.	

Government of Bangladesh introduces two types of the training program for the beneficiaries which are awareness-building program and income-generating programs. The awareness-building program includes training in health and nutrition, civil and legal rights, literacy and numeracy, HIV awareness and prevention measures, child trafficking,

budget management, etc. whereas income-generating activities include training on poultry, tailoring, vegetation, tree plantation, animal husbandry, dairy farming, etc. Generally, the government appoints different NGOs in this program for providing essential training to the VGD beneficiaries. There is a written agreement between NGOs and government mentioning different terms and conditions of training.

According to this agreement, it is the responsibility of NGOs conducting training programs and supporting beneficiaries to get a loan from different financial organizations. Other responsibilities of NGO is to monitor the rice distribution process, collect monthly installment from beneficiaries, monitor the master roll and other registers, and provide other essential supports. But while collecting field data, it has been observed that NGOs are not in a satisfactory position in terms of their performances. Research also reveals that such organizations are non- functional in most of the cases due to various reasons such as lately appointed by the government, insufficient budget for training, etc.

In the previous cycle of 2017-2018 in both UPs, respondents got training only for 5-6 times in two years and such training is found to be conventional for them. Because no single beneficiary has been found in that cycle who took loan after training and utilized it successfully. Their financial condition remained almost the same before and after the VGD cycle. Some of the beneficiaries do not even know the basic information on the loan system of this program. An only single case has been found in both UPs who took loan after getting training in the previous cycles and utilized it successfully.

Case study 2-

One of the successful beneficiaries, Jhorna Shil, 38 years of age, from ward number five of Bailchhari union, Banskhali Upazila, have two sons and one daughter. She completed her secondary level from the local school. Her husband died in a road accident 10 years ago. As a widowed woman, she has no way to earn money for maintaining her four members' family. Before including in the cycle, she worked hard as a household worker. But she was enrolled in the VGD cycle finally by local UP member and got training on tailoring from NGO. After completing training successfully, she bought three (3) sewing

machines and started her own business. From this income, she is running her family. Her children are now studying at the secondary level. She is now a successful entrepreneur in her locality. As a local entrepreneur, she is supplying clothes in the local market and doing business with her products. While asking about her success, she replied-

“These machines are sewing my dream.”

The research found in the present VGD cycles of both unions without having any officially appointed NGOs by the government, though seven months have already been passed. For this reason, beneficiaries did not get any training yet in the present cycle. UP officials are also found to be reluctant in taking any necessary steps in this regard. UP chairman of Kachuai, Patiya described their mode of relation like as follows-

We do not participate in the deposit collection process of NGOs. They do it by themselves. We do not know whether they are giving training to beneficiaries or not. They do their job without communicating with us.

In most of the cases, they do not monitor their activities regularly. Research also found that this type of communication gap between the activities of NGO and UP officials affects their overall performances. This contributes to the lower satisfaction of beneficiaries resulting in the downward performance of organizations as well.

Another important issue is most of the beneficiaries have already taken a loan from other NGOs such as Grameen Bank, ASA, etc. For this reason, they are not interested to take another loan from other organizations. Moreover, without getting proper training, successful utilization of money is a challenging issue for them. Sometimes, they misuse their money without using it in income-generating sources.

Besides, NGO's don't collect any wishlist from the beneficiaries, though it is mentioned in VGD policies. This list is very important to get proper training on a priority basis. In most of the cases, NGOs traditionally provide training without considering the wishlist and giving essential information such as the mechanism of loan processing, the mechanism of withdrawing deposit, etc. For this reason, beneficiaries do not have any idea about the loan process. Asking NGOs about these issues, 'PROTYASHI' the local NGO in Patiya told-

The government should appoint us at the very beginning of the cycle so that we can provide training them effectively. Again, we have some shortages or limitations in terms of training materials. For this reason, we cannot arrange training for them according to their wish. We have some scarcity in training centers also. Moreover, beneficiaries are not interested to take training as there is no training allowance for them.

Another problem lies with this training program is that NGOs gives training to the beneficiaries other than the rice distributing day. For training, it requires additional cost for them. It would be a pleasant issue for them if it happens on the same date of rice distribution. Because spending each penny unnecessarily is a matter of dissatisfaction for this ultra-poor group of people.

However, according to UWAO Banskali, they have the provisions for loan to support the beneficiaries in several income-generating initiatives. Few of them have already availed the loan and become succeeded in their life also. But most of them are not interested at all to take the loan as it requires multiple recommendations from the UP chairman or from other officials that is a lengthy and discouraging way ultimately. In spite of having training and loan information in some cases, they don't apply for a loan due to the hindrances originated from the side of their husband as well as from other family members.

From the points discussed above, several issues have been raised and need to be addressed properly for the welfare of the beneficiaries. The present role of NGOs in training and other programs seems not to be satisfactory due to the presence of such unbound size of problems. The proper monitoring systems, as well as timely taken steps, seem to be recommended for making NGOs active in their duties.

Table 15: Training and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get training infrequently in a cycle including no definite date and time in most of the cases. 2. Beneficiaries are not able to place their wishlist before NGO as they are not being asked for that. 3. After training, they get loan rarely due to the lack of assistance from training providers as well as the uncertainty of getting a loan. 4. For this reason, beneficiaries are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied in regards to training. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Several anomalies have been found by the researcher while playing a role by NGOs, UP officials, Upazila offices and Government as well. 2. These include- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. reluctances in training program including the open-ended date in every month, b. reluctances in circulating necessary information. c. not taking wishlist from the beneficiaries, d. not appointing capable NGOs and resource personnel's by the Government, e. lack of proper technical support by the NGO's, etc. f. the communication gap between officials and NGOs.
UP chairman and Female UP member UP Secretary	Most of the cases, NGOs do not communicate with them especially during training.	
NGO representatives and Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The government does not provide any training allowances to the beneficiaries. So, they are not interested to participate in the training program resulting in low attendance. 2. The training program is also ineffective sometimes due to lack of proper technical support, resource personnel, etc. 	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	The government should appoint carefully the capable NGOs at the very beginning of the program.	

If they properly perform their duties, the poverty would be reduced at the satisfactory level is the ultimate goal of the government. Moreover, the relationship between UP officials and NGOs are very much important and should be complementary so that both of them work together for the welfare of the beneficiaries. Any kind of misunderstandings between these organizations seems to hamper their day to day activities. Before all, the government should select and appoint the right NGOs considering their capabilities to give training at the local level. From the research, it has also been observed that NGOs are just performing their routine duties without

internalizing the real demand of the hardcore poor. Performing their duties wholeheartedly will make tremendous effects in the living standard of beneficiaries. This is important for enhancing their satisfaction level towards UP and for maximizing the images of the government as well.

Nowadays, corruption is considered as one of the major components to measure the efficiency of the organization all over the world. Existence of corruption negatively affects the images of an organization leading dissatisfaction to service recipients. In Bangladesh, the existence of micro-level corruption in VGD program is significant as this is the largest social safety net program targeting the ultra-poor people of the society. Corruption may exist in different levels and forms of VGD cycle but may be considered as minor issues to the beneficiaries knowingly or unknowingly. So it is pertinent to unveil those issues to measure the satisfaction of beneficiaries considering all circumstances.

The researcher asked the beneficiaries about the existence of corruption at different levels, especially at the service delivery stages. But the response of the beneficiaries was not at the expected level while talking with them on this issue. In this program, different vested groups are involved from top to bottom having the scope to participate in undue activities. Beneficiaries' unwillingness to share their experiences was a challenging job for the researcher to unveil such black issues. Nobody wants to be a **'problem creator'** by bringing that information into the light. Taking an in-depth interview of respondents with the condition of anonymities revealed some significant findings regarding the corruption issue. Their statement indicates the selection process of the beneficiaries is more or less manipulated and greatly influenced by the UP officials, local elites, and even sometimes by the local member of the parliament (MP). Their undue interferences patronize the development of corruption at different stages of this program seem to be prominent in Kachuai union of Patiya Upazila.

Now the question is what type of corruption usually takes place at the selection process and how it happens. According to the respondents, they need to pay extra money for final selection and the given amount varies from case to case ranging from

300-3000 BDT. Some of the respondents also added that they try to offer money as a bribe to the local Chawkidar or muscle man to draw their attention for final selection. Local representatives such as UP member, UP female member, Chawkidar and the local touts are usually involved in this corruption process directly or indirectly. In some cases, there is the unofficial involvement of public representatives with a highly political background. Most of the beneficiaries of both UPs had the experience of paying extra money though the intensity seems to be high in Kachuai union of Patiya Upazila. One of those beneficiaries from Kachuai union expressed the way of demanding extra money by the local touts-

আঁরে তিন হাজার টিয়া দিলি, আই কার্ড গরি দিয়ুম।
(If you give me 3000tk, I will manage your card).

Interestingly, respondents from the running cycle of both unions did not acknowledge giving any extra money at the service delivery process. This is because the present cycle is at the very beginning stage and will continue until 24 months. So, none of them want to be victimized by sharing the hidden issues. Besides, they have very limited knowledge of multi-dimensional corruptions in the service delivery process. The scenario is likely that they are participating in the corruption issues without knowing it deeply because undue practices usually take place in different forms without clarifying clearly to the beneficiaries. Taking additional money with the monthly deposited amount, extra money as application processing fee during selection, etc. are some of the examples of undue practices.

Case study 3-

Khairunnesa, one of the beneficiaries of Patiya Upazila, paid 220 TK each month to UP officials but does not know the clear clarification of this amount. She has been informed by the officials that after two years she will get the money back. Like Khairunnesa, all the beneficiaries of her cycle paid 220TK each month to UP officials. After explaining to her that she is supposed to pay TK 200 but paying an addition of 20 TK, she responded-

“আঁরারে য়ুন দিতু হয়, আঁরা য়ুন দি” (we give what is demanded from us)

Moreover, in their cycle, they are bound to manage their bags because UP officials do not provide them any bag for carrying rice. Sometimes, they need to pay extra money for the bag. She has no complaints for that, rather satisfied with the ground that she is getting 30 kg rice every month without any cost that is helpful to manage three times food in a day.

Again, corruption may take place other than monetary forms such as giving rice in underweight condition during the delivery of food at food silo or the UP (though UP chairman balances that amount in the following month according to his statement), collection of monthly savings by Upazila office instead of NGO, taking rice as bribe by the Chawkidar or by other local touts, consuming money illegally from the beneficiaries by NGOs, etc. However, UP officials of both unions denied the existence of corruption in the present cycle but acknowledged its prior existence. According to UP chairman of Bailchhari union of Banskhal Upazila-

I, openly, declared the battle against corruption in my union. If anybody provides information about corruption at any stage of the VGD program, I will reward the informer. This is my commitment to them. Corruption might be taken place at past but now my union is free from such illegal functions.

He also added beneficiaries are now receiving rice in a 30 KG sealed bag after introducing by the government. So, the amount of rice given is in the right weight now. But the fact is that still there are some problems in the amount and type of rice given as rice is not given in sealed bags every month due to its unavailability. The intensity of corruption may vary from union to union or from person to person but corruption seems to prevail in various forms according to the beneficiaries and key informants.

Information gathered from NGO representative and UWAO of Patiya Upazila reveals some other interesting observations. From their experiences, they shared to the researcher how corruption takes place to the whole process of this program secretly. In some unions, selection of beneficiaries is sometimes manipulated by the ward committee. It is done by selecting fake VGD beneficiaries who have no real identity. They use fake national identity (NID) card or other documents and use those documents for making the final list. Allotted rice for them is usually withdrawn by illegal persons

redistributing it among themselves. Such kind of activities is not possible without strong political back up as well as the involvement of UP officials. According to them, such incidents are very rare nowadays because other watchdog organizations (e.g. Upazila anti-corruption committee, etc.) suddenly verify the list and the higher officials also monitor the VGD program frequently.

Case study- 4

Ex-chairman of Kachuai Union Parishad included almost all of his relatives to the social safety programs, those who have already included in other programs. By doing malpractices, he included people who can do other works or having other jobs, etc. For keeping the vote bank safe, he has done such kind of illegal practices. To manage the common voters, he used to spend 200-500tk per voter before the election. By using this technique he used to manage the voters. About his strategies, one local female UP member replied –

“গরিবরা কি করবে, তাদেরতো ভোটের আগে টাকা দিয়ে কিনে ফেলে”

(What the poor can do? They are bought before the election).

A similar case found for other representative known as Peyer member in his locality. That member included most of his relatives in the social safety net programs, even who were living abroad. For his actions, several extremely poor and aged persons dropped out from the final list. These are a few examples of corruption taken place at different times.

Bur, the situation is far better nowadays according to the respondents. Most of the local representatives and officials are well-educated, young and possesses high ethical values contributing to the positive up-gradation of situation. Besides, UP officials need to send the master roll register to Upazila offices for inspection. So, it is not so easy to manipulate at present. However, beneficiaries seem to be suffered from unknown fear originated generally from the undue political practices at different stages of this program. The silence of the beneficiaries in many cases represents their consent on a limited level of satisfaction over UP.

Table 16: Micro-level corruption and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. No corruption takes place in their cycle mentioned by the beneficiaries. 2. They used to hear about corruption in various forms in the earlier cycles.	1. Both the UP chairman and the UWAO confessed that there was the existence of corruption at different levels previously. 2. Major allegations of corruption take place at the selection stage done by local political elites, Chawkidar and by others in most of the cases.
UP chairman and Female UP member UP Secretary	Do not allow any kind of unlawful activities by the Chawkidar or by other persons, though it might have happened in the earlier cycles.	3. Other allegations of corruption include the amount of rice given, taking bribe while withdrawing deposit by the officials, etc. 4. In spite of improving the present situation, beneficiaries are not interested to disclose the issue of corruption as they have very little or no education resulting in unknown fear, uncertainty, lower understandings, etc.
NGO representatives and UWAO	No corruption in the amount of rice given at present as the government provides 30 KG sack for each beneficiary. It may take place in the selection process in different ways.	
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	1. Nobody lodge any complaint of corruption against UP. It is very difficult to address corruption issues if no specific ground has been found. 2. Existence of corruption in the selection process is due to several reasons. Political interference is one of the major reasons.	

Perception of the beneficiaries seems to be another important factor for internalizing their expectations. The expectation has various dimensions that can be classified in both subjective and objective forms. Besides, assistance in the form of getting rice may not be sufficient for the ultra-poor beneficiaries to maintain their family at large. But, managing such a huge amount of rice for the beneficiaries is a matter of challenge for the government of Bangladesh with their limited resources as this is a densely populated country. So, the World Food Programme (WFP) or other national or international bodies are important counterparts for the government supporting with their logistics.

Nevertheless, the perception of the beneficiaries seems to be higher in various issues of this program. For instance, most of the beneficiaries raised their vocals in favor

of getting the subsidy from the government on their deposited amount as the amount of bank interest rate is almost negligible to them. Besides, they expect a large amount of soft loan after getting training, transport cost for carrying the rice, training allowances, increasing the amount of rice given, and other facilities, etc. To some extent, their expectation is logical but a burden for the government as well.

Their unbound level of expectation can be explained from a different point of view. First of all, it is the common nature of human being having no limitations in their expectation level. As beneficiaries belong to the ultra-poor segments of the society, their expectation level also knows no bounds due to their limited or no understandings. Sometimes, they elevate their expectations so high without rational thinking as well as considering the affordability of the government. To some extent, free of cost items carry very little value reducing its importance to others. From such considerations, it is found that perceptions of the beneficiaries may affect their satisfaction level indirectly through the beneficiaries seem to be happy apparently with the present structure of this program. Not only the beneficiaries but also the key informants possess multi-dimensional perceptions in many cases.

But, findings reveal that such kind of expectations is being rarely expressed by them in front of UP officials or other key persons. Their extreme level of poverty, the limited option of choices, limited freedom of speech, unknown fear originated from the uncertainty of their daily life, etc. seem to contribute of developing such '**self-restrained attitude**' to the beneficiaries reducing their level of expectation as well. Research also reveals that such hindrances catalyze their inactive participation in this program and indirectly helping to make all the major decisions by the local representatives or by others. Moreover, raising such issues by the beneficiaries to UP officials carries very little value in most of the cases, alluring them to become silent. This arises from the ground of their authoritative mode of understandings. From the merit of theoretical explanations, such findings seem to be supportive of the basics of expectation-confirmation theory.

Table 17: Level of expectation and satisfaction

Respondents	Observation	Inferences
VGD beneficiaries	1. No expectations, rather happy with the present features of this program. 2. But, the scenario found to be different while taking an in-depth interview with a significant mode of perceptions.	1. From direct observation as well as an interview of the respondents, it is found that the level of expectation is low for several reasons. These are- 1. Limited or no education.
UP chairman and Female UP member UP Secretary	Beneficiaries are reasonable while representing any issues before them.	2. An extreme level of poverty 3. Unknown fear 4. Self-restrained attitudes 5. Few scopes of getting remedies
NGO representatives and Upazila Woman Affairs Officer (UWAO).	They are concerned about the expectation of the beneficiaries. But nobody dares to represent it formally or in written form in front of them.	6. Individualistic thinking 7. Uncertainty 8. Limited understandings, etc.
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	Beneficiaries do not want to be a 'problem creator' in front of others. For this reason, beneficiaries do not make any unusual expectation.	2. The relation between the level of expectation and satisfaction is ideologically significant rather than practical.

In the discussions above, factors influencing satisfaction have been analyzed to get a pen picture of the service delivery status of local government institutions for a specific program. Based on in-depth analysis of data and information gathered from two UPs, it is apparent that beneficiaries are not either highly satisfied or fully dissatisfied with the services of VGD program. Rather, they are selectively satisfied or dissatisfied based on the type of services given by UP. By compiling and analyzing the findings of two UPs, it can be inferred that VGD beneficiaries' level of satisfaction seems to have varied noticeably between the UPs.

Institutional factors such as time and cost issue, training, point of distribution adversely affect their satisfaction level but the intensity varies in both UPs, whereas issues like as responsiveness, clientelism, flexibility, and user-friendliness are common in their findings i.e. beneficiaries seem to be satisfied in both UPs. However, significant

variations have been found between the UPs in the cases of the transparency of the processes as well as the existence of micro-level corruptions.

4.8 Variation in findings of two unions.

Beneficiaries level of satisfaction seems to be high in Bailchhari union of Banskali Upazila than Kachuai union of Patiya Upazila based on some in-depth considerations. For the convenient of understanding, the major variations in findings between these two unions are shown in the following table-

Table 18 -Variation in findings of two UPs (at a glance)

Issues	Kachuai, Patiya Upazila	Bailchhari, Banskali Upazila
Politics in service delivery.	Public representatives are found to be politically involved and biased in the service delivery process.	Political involvement is similar but reasonable in their biases in service delivery.
Attitude of UP officials	Representatives seem to be reluctant towards the welfare of beneficiaries	The monitoring system is quite strong going in favor of the welfare of beneficiaries
Intensity of corruption	Beneficiaries need to pay more for getting services in different cases of this program.	Considering a few exceptions at the selection process, this program is pro-people to the beneficiaries.
Education and attendance of UP officials	UP officials are less educated and irregular in union council	UP officials are well-educated and regular in union council
Political interference	Political interference in selection process leads to corruption.	Comparatively low in numbers
Uncertainty and unknown fear	Uncertainty and unknown fear of the beneficiaries are very common.	Exist but the intensity is low.
Discretionary practices	Discretionary practices by the representatives are frequent without knowing the legal framework	UP officials are cautious in such kind of practices
Monitoring system	Monitoring system by the Upazila officials is poor.	Comparatively strong monitoring system.
Freedom of speech	Freedom of speech is less	To some extent, it exists.
Patron-client relationship	Patron-client relationship is opportunistic rather than trustworthy.	The relationship seems to be client-friendly rather than opportunistic.

Problems with the food given	Problems exist in the amount and type of food given.	This type of problems is not frequent like as Kachuai union.
Effectiveness of NGOs	NGOs are not functioning properly in terms of providing effective training as well as IG activities.	Beneficiaries are well informed about the IG activities but the number of successfully trained beneficiaries stills very few in numbers.
Officials records	Official records are not maintaining in right order properly.	Seems to be in good condition
Information gap	Both UP officials and beneficiaries are not updated about this program	Have a good idea about this program
Satisfaction level	The satisfaction level is less than Bailchhari, Banskali.	Beneficiaries are satisfied with the service delivery process.

One of the major reasons of such variations is the **‘level of education and experience of local representatives’** in these two UPs. UP officials of Bailchhari union are educated and experienced enough than officials of Kachuai. Besides, UP chairman of Bailchhari **‘resides permanently’** in his locality having good command and control over UP functions such as monitoring the service delivery process, etc. Beneficiaries are also happy as they find their representatives at the union council any time helping to enhance their satisfaction level as well. Besides, UP chairman of Kachuai lives in Chattogram town usually for his business and does not visit UP regularly. Moreover, Member of Parliament (MP) and other local political figures of Banskali Upazila do not engage in the local administrative functions usually i.e. **‘less manipulation by MP’** in Bailchhari union of Banskali Upazila. It assists to make the administrative culture more transparent and free from undue interferences. This is the way by which UP officials of Bailchhari union ensures pro-people service delivery at limited level than Kachuai union.

4.9 Synoptic observations from the empirical data/information

From above discussions, the heterogeneous degree of satisfaction across different unions suggests the need for institutional and political reforms of the local government organizations. The results pointed to a very understandable account of satisfaction over local government institutions considering the relationship both from beneficiaries and government sides. From the beneficiaries’ side of the relationship, the

research found an important role for local government efficacy and attachment to the local community. And on the government's side, this research pointed out to what extent UP officials do for citizens. However, the synoptic observations of data or information can be illustrated as follows-

As regards to the **time issue**, beneficiaries are not satisfied in most of the cases as the delivery date of rice from UP is not fixed at all. From the point of their demand, this is significant because most of them live on that amount of rice.

Beneficiaries need to spend more (**cost issue**) at different stages of service delivery. This significantly affects their satisfaction level but they are reserved to express their dissatisfaction in front of the researcher.

Most of the officials are well-behaved (**user-friendliness**) towards the beneficiaries. This is common findings in both of the unions. From the beneficiaries' point of view, getting rice without raising any issue of discords is the ultimate satisfaction for them. It is also found from the data or information that UP officials tend to deal ultra-poor beneficiaries very cautiously.

According to the respondents, the service delivery process of UP is more or less transparent. But the research found that the issue of **transparency** significantly varies from union to union. Besides, beneficiaries are not conscious enough about transparency and largely depend on local leaders by getting influenced knowingly or unknowingly.

From the issue of **clientelism**, beneficiaries are found to be satisfied in general. But the word 'partiality' or 'nepotism' carries very little value to them found from the study. Beneficiaries are intended to be focused only on rice given by UP rather than considering other surrounding issues.

Flexibility in terms of getting services at exceptional cases from UP seems to be important for the beneficiaries but the extent of satisfaction varies remarkably. UP officials

tend to follow discretionary practices in such cases without taking formal approval from concerned authority.

Information gap has been found between service providers and service recipients leading the crisis of **transparency** in many cases. The level of transparency also varies from union to union depending on various factors.

In spite of having instructions from ministry, beneficiaries are not getting privileges of getting rice from ward levels. Due to their limited freedom of speech, this issue is still unsettled from both sides found in the research. For this reason, the **point of distribution** of rice is a matter of concerns for the beneficiaries.

Responsiveness towards the welfare of beneficiaries seems to be affected by various factors and it varies from service to service as well as union to union. Malpractices by UP officials as well as their limited level of knowledge about VGD policies are found to be threatening for this program in many cases. But, showing a positive attitude towards the demand of beneficiaries seems to be significant to attain their ultimate satisfaction.

The study found that distinct NGOs perform in both unions for the training of beneficiaries. Delayed appointment of NGOs by the ministry, the communication gap between UP and NGO, reluctances in the frequency of training, lack of proper monitoring by a higher authority, infrastructural crises, lack of planning for an effective **training** program, and absence of motivational steps such as inclusion of various allowances for the beneficiaries, etc. are the major challenges found by the researcher for this training program, ultimately affecting their satisfaction level. For this reason, the present scenario in terms of training is not satisfactory at all found in this study.

It is difficult to address **micro-level corruption** visibly, as the unit of analyses is very small. But in-depth interview of respondents, as well as direct observation reveal that corruption may exist at different stages of this program. Such micro-level corruptions do not prevail only in monetary forms but also in several other invisible ways such

as silent threatening to beneficiaries in regards to snatch away their VGD cards, demanding rice and other goods, creating unlawful pressure for being the part of illegal activities, etc. All these issues are found to be the contributor of 'unknown fear' and 'uncertainty' of this ultra-poor group of people, though the intensity varies from place to place.

Perception of the beneficiaries seems to be insignificant to assess their **expectation level** properly. The assumed reasons for such findings would be the small sample size of this study as well as the limited or low level of education of beneficiaries leading to the limited freedom of choices.

In summary, the service quality of Union Parishads (UPs) broadly depends on various factors which are related with the satisfaction of beneficiaries. Besides institutional factors, this study has inquired some other issues that are required to be addressed properly. This is important for the better understandings of the whole mechanism aiming to detect the core points of this program. The next chapter will try to address those issues which are playing vital roles, as this study found some variations between the UPs.

Chapter 5

Findings and Conclusions

This chapter summarizes the overall study and analyses the research questions and findings in light of the analytical framework. It draws broad conclusions to research questions. Furthermore, based on the analysis and observations few issues have been raised for future research.

5.1 Factors which contribute to the beneficiary's satisfaction formation in the UP

This research focuses on the factors which are important for determining the extent of satisfaction in VGD program in the context of UP service delivery. Research finding reveals that VGD beneficiaries' level of satisfaction between the UPs seems to vary noticeably. Institutional factors such as time and cost issue, training, point of distribution adversely affect their satisfaction level but the intensity varies in both UPs, whereas issues like responsiveness, clientelism, flexibility, and user-friendliness are common in their findings i.e. beneficiaries seem to be satisfied in both UPs.

However, variations have been found between the UPs in the cases of transparency as well as the existence of micro-level corruption at different stages of this program. The service delivery process of Bailchhari UP of Banskhali Upazila seems to be more transparent and less corrupted than Kachuai UP of Patiya Upazila. Beneficiaries' level of expectation is non-functional in both UPs due to their low socio-political status as well as the limited level of participation in the local government functions.

5.2 Reexamining the Research Questions

As identified in chapter one, the foremost objective of this study was to assess the relationship between the beneficiary's level of satisfaction and institutional performance of UP. All these factors trigger to conduct this research focusing on the national targeted food aid social safety net program (SSNP) especially to know the extent of beneficiaries' satisfaction level in case of VGD service delivery and the interplaying mechanisms shaping the satisfaction level of beneficiaries.

Several institutional factors have been examined to measure their effects on the satisfaction of the UP. The study found the level of satisfaction over UP as an institution meets reasonably and varied from place to place. This is the way by which the study was intended to explore the institutional factors affecting the satisfaction of beneficiaries.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

Satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries has been studied from different perspectives developed in different countries especially in the South Asian context. Micro-performance theory and expectation-confirmation theory have been used in this study. From these theories, the originated keywords for measuring the quality of the services of this study are process, output and the expectation level of beneficiaries.

In the context of Bangladesh, the beneficiary's satisfaction is significantly reviewed and explained by these keywords. The aim and objectives of this research seems also to be fully covered with these used keywords. An analytical framework has been formulated by integrating such theory-generated keywords in the perspectives of service delivery of LGIs in Bangladesh. Validation of public service-oriented factors and their impact on the satisfaction of beneficiaries, in the context of VGD program of UP, are crucial points of consideration in this research. These factors are also attempted to rationalize in the perspectives of variables derived from chosen theories.

Considering the analytical framework, research objectives, and research questions, it has been found that data collected from the field seems to be significant after in-depth analysis in the preceding chapters. Moreover, based on data analysis and findings, it has been remarkably observed that beneficiary's satisfaction on the VGD program in Bangladesh seems to have a higher degree of dependency on political, economic and institutional factors. Observations drawn from this study showed that major inferences are pertinent with the used theories as well as theory-generated analytical framework. From that perspective, the chosen theories are quite relevant and seem to have good connection with the major findings of this research. As the sample size is small as well as beneficiaries with limited level of understandings from the point of their expectation, the second theory cannot be properly justified with this

finding. However, social science theories are not always universal but in many cases region-specific. Therefore, studies related to region-specific variables on satisfaction should also be taken into consideration to examine and explain the institutional efficiency of Union Parishad.

5.4 Policy Implications

Satisfaction over public institutions seems to be important for their social identities and acceptances. Different researches show that people living in rural areas is comparatively satisfied more than inhabitants of the urban areas, though the satisfaction varies from place to place. The government of Bangladesh has introduced various approaches and operational modalities to enhance the quality of service delivery, participation and accountability system at LGIs of Bangladesh with particular focus on rural areas aiming to enhance their life standards. However, the findings of this study noted a nominal level of satisfaction over the UPs. To this context, the policy framework on LGIs need to be revisited and emphasized to enhance the quality of competence, accessibility, and transparency for ensuring good governance at the grass-root level.

5.5 Overall findings in the light of research questions

After analyzing field data, the overall findings in the light of research questions need to specify for understanding the significance of this research. As the research questions are focused on the measurement of satisfaction level of VGD beneficiaries and the factors affecting it, the findings of this study have also been embedded on those issues. These are as follows-

1. In spite of having some drawbacks, beneficiaries seem to be satisfied at anyhow with the service delivery process of VGD in both unions. It is significant and needs to be addressed properly in this research as such findings are a little bit confusing sometimes for the general readers. One possible explanation may be the existence of limited demands of the beneficiaries and such requirement is basically intermingled with getting rice given by the government with ignoring other considerations.

2. Beneficiaries' level of satisfaction varies noticeably between the unions based on the service delivery process of this program provided by UP having some limitations in their functions.

3. The selection process is found to be biased in two unions that indirectly affect their satisfaction level. So, the fair selection process is important for the successfulness of this program.

4. The expectation of the beneficiaries is found mostly to be unrevealed for several reasons and therefore insignificant with their satisfaction as well because it affects at the minimum level.

5. The used indicators of this qualitative study are found to be interlinked with the satisfaction of the beneficiaries. Some of those are positively affected, whereas others are adversely affected. The semi-structured questionnaire was helpful to gather feedback from the respondents keeping them in the right track while collecting field data.

6. Process, output, and expectation of the beneficiaries are the considering variables derived from the chosen theories in this study. These variables seem to be relevant having a good connection with research objectives, research questions and the findings of this research. So, this research seems to be a good piece of work in terms of its internal validity.

5.6 Implications for future research

The study observed that VGD beneficiaries have significant variations at their satisfaction level between two unions studied. More extensive studies may address whether beneficiaries satisfaction level varies from place to place or not. This study could be a pathfinder for the future researcher who has the intention to conduct intensive research on this issue. This study also measures whether the expectation of the beneficiaries or the institutional factors affects satisfaction. However, the ground reality suggests that there could be some other critical political economic factors or conditions for which institutional factors do not work properly. Sometimes, political factors are against the legal provisions existed. So, political-economic dimensions need

to be focused more for further intensive research. All these findings seem to be helpful for achieving vision 2021; SDGs, etc. essential for strengthening the LGIs in Bangladesh.

5.7 Conclusion

This research attempts to show how the service delivery process of VGD contributes to satisfying the beneficiaries of this program. As it is commonly hypothesized that experiencing negative issues lasts long in the human brain than positive experiences, so it is easy to judge their negative experiences to get an idea on their satisfaction level. Present research tries to analyze those experiences found from beneficiaries and key informants.

Again, satisfaction on public services largely depends on the administrative culture of the organization in developing countries. It is therefore important to know the status of internal governance in local organizations. Evidence from the study shows how institutional factors influence internal governance conditions in two UPs. Research reveals that satisfaction increases with improvements in the status of internal governance of the organization and this has been interpreted by taking the feedback from beneficiaries. The semi-structured questionnaire helps the respondents to put their opinion separately for each question so that the actual reflection of their opinion can be found. It is finally helpful to get and justify the overall satisfaction of UPs.

This study tries to make contributions in the existing literature by making research on social safety net programs, especially the VGD program of Bangladesh. It describes a wide range of objective measures of subject quality in explaining satisfaction. The developed framework to measure the satisfaction level of beneficiaries with the process and output of service delivery has been utilized to examine the performance level of UP in terms of their professionalism as well as innovations. This includes the perceived value and integrity of UP officials, expectation of the beneficiaries, and image of the organization, etc. that enhances the satisfaction level of beneficiaries. In this qualitative research, the intensive data collection shows how the government of Bangladesh intends to provide the services at doorsteps of the people to achieve their satisfaction in several ways.

For the development of Bangladesh, the contribution of social safety net programs is considered to be vital in rural areas. But this type of programs is becoming increasingly constrained by different reasons such as the lack of a coherent strategic framework, lack of integrated and harmonized system of social protection, assessing performance by poor monitoring system, absence of integrated programs for the setting in motion experiments, resource sharing and coordination problem, lack of institutional arrangements, non-rationalizing present portfolio etc. These are essential for expected level of potential outcomes of social protection in Bangladesh. For the government of Bangladesh, such challenges need to be addressed for its successful implementation of social safety net programs.

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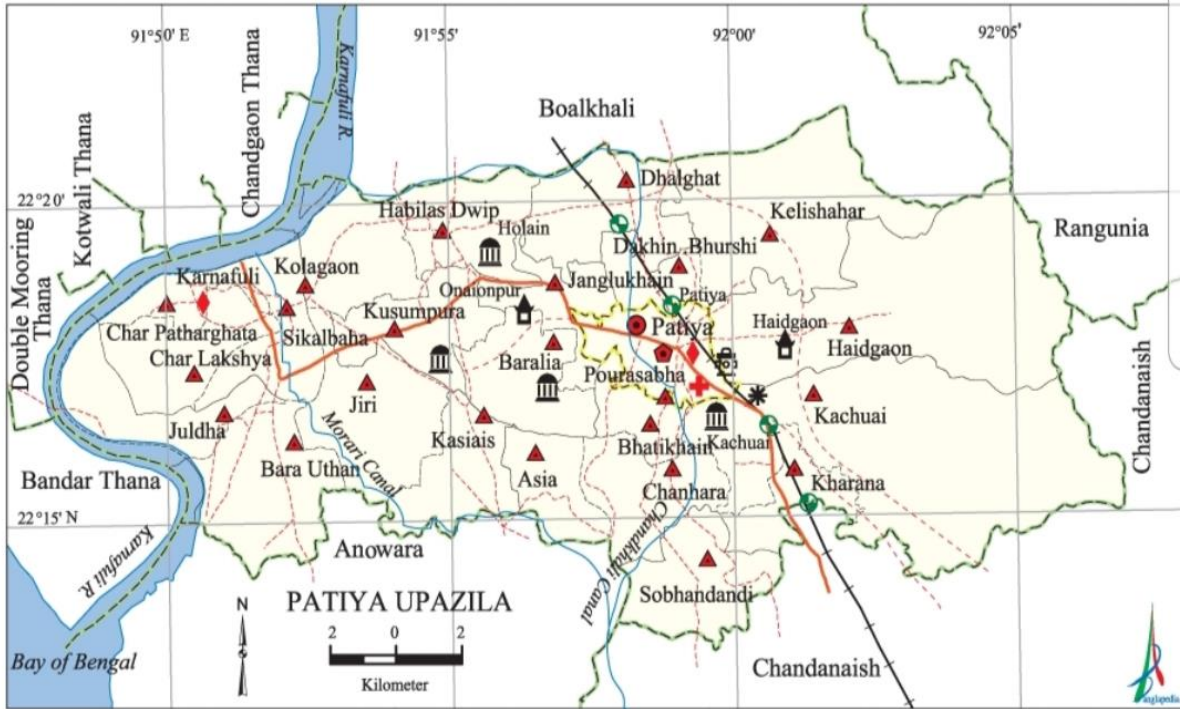
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Appendix-I

Map of Patiya and Banshkhali Upazila, Chattogram



Appendix II

Questionnaire for the VGD beneficiaries

[The purpose of this research is to measure beneficiaries' satisfaction on VGD service delivery of two UPs in Bangladesh. This research is going to be conducted for partial fulfillment of Master in Public Policy and Governance from North South University, Dhaka. The data collected through this study will be only used for research purpose. The identity of the respondents will never be disclosed.]

Part A. Profile of the Respondents

(Please put a tick mark in the appropriate number.)

1. Name (optional)-

2. Age-

3. Educational Qualification-

Illiterate	Can sign name only	Primary level	Secondary level	Higher Secondary level	Others

4. Monthly Income (Approx.)-

5. Sources of income-
 - a. Daily laborer
 - b. Agriculture
 - c. Business
 - d. Job
 - e. others.....

- 6a. Current residence (Ward No):

- 6b. Cycle- Previous Current (----- months).

Part B. Beneficiaries' Satisfaction on VGD program

(Please put a tick mark in the appropriate number)

7. Do you get VGD assistance at definite date and time in every month?
 - a. Yes, I get at a definite date and time
 - b. Yes, I get at a definite date but not at a definite time.
 - c. Yes, I get at a definite time but not at a definite date
 - d. No, I don't get at a definite date and time
 - e. Others.....

8. How long does it require to get the services from UP?
9. Does it require any additional cost for getting the service?
10. How much do you spend as transport or other additional costs every month?
 - a. Less than 100 BDT
 - b. 100-200 BDT.
 - c. More than 200 BDT
 - d. No, I don't spend any money on transport or other costs
 - e. Others.....
11. How does UP officials behave with beneficiaries in case of getting VGD assistances?
 - a. All of them are well behaved
 - b. Few of them are well behaved
 - c. Sometimes they are well behaved
 - d. None of them
 - e. Others.....
12. Do you get the information timely related to VGD program such as date of distribution etc.?
13. How do UP officials convey VGD related information to the beneficiaries every month?
 - a. By their display board or notice board
 - b. By Miking
 - c. By our relatives or local representatives
 - d. We don't get information timely.
 - e. Others.....
14. Have you experienced any partiality or nepotism by the UP officials while getting the services?
 - a. Yes, we experience it frequently
 - b. Sometimes we experience it.
 - c. No, we did not experience any partiality.

- d. We didn't experience but we heard about it.
- e. Others.....

15. To what extent, UP officials are flexible or sympathetic enough towards beneficiaries if they-

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. forget to bring the VGD card | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Flexible |
| b. unable to put signature as a receiver | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Flexible |
| c. absent due to illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Flexible |
| d. need to break the serial due to the urgency | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Flexible |
| e. Others..... | | |

16. Do the UP officials consider such incidents frequently?

- a. Yes, they consider
- b. Consider sometimes
- c. No, they don't consider
- d. Others.....

17. Where do you visit every month to receive assistance?

- a. at UP complex
- b. at local food silo
- c. at nearby places
- d. others.....

18. Do the UP officials responses promptly in giving decisions to the following cases?

- a. Shifting point of distribution based on beneficiaries' demand

Yes No Do not know

- b. Selecting another member of the family instead of beneficiaries due to serious illness or during pregnancy

Yes No Do not know

- c. Sanctioning loan timely

Ye No Do not know

d. Withdrawing 50% of the deposit at any time Ye No Do not know

e. Withdrawing total deposited money by the nominee after the death

Ye No Do not know

19a. Do the NGOs give sufficient training on income generating programs to the beneficiaries? (e.g. poultry, vegetation in the homestead yard, livestock and small scale business, etc.) Ye No

19b. Do the NGOs give sufficient training on awareness building programs to the beneficiaries? (e.g. food and nutrition, HIV/AIDS, health and hygiene; and women empowerment) Ye No

19c. Do the NGO personnel's give priority to your wish list? Ye No

19d. To what extent, beneficiaries of your locality has got credit after finishing successful training?

19e. Do you think receiving such kind of training or credit is effective for the beneficiaries to be self-employed? Ye No

20. Have you or anybody experienced paying any extra money or gifts for the UP officials or NGOs at any stage of service delivery? Ye No Don't know

21. Do you think government should provide more facilities to the beneficiaries?

22. How do you judge the overall quality of service delivery based on your given feedback?

Extremely dissatisfied	Quite low level of satisfaction	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Quite high level of satisfaction	Highly satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Appendix-III

a) KI Questions-Government Officials

1. How do you evaluate the competency of UP officials relating to the VGD program?
2. To what extent, you consider UP officials have sufficient knowledge on their responsibility?
3. How many beneficiaries visit your office every month for complaining against UP?
4. What type of complaints they usually represent before you?
5. As government officials, what should be your suggestions to make this existing program more satisfactory to the beneficiaries?

b) KI Questions-Local Elites

1. Have you ever been met with VGD beneficiary to know about their experience on VGD service delivery?
2. Do you think VGD beneficiaries have easy access to the UP officials at any time?
3. Does UP follow the provision of RTI according to UP Act, 2009 through displaying information regarding VGD in notice board, or displaying in citizen charter?
4. In your opinion, to what extent UP elected officials to fulfill their commitments that they generally make to VGD beneficiaries?
5. What is your overall evaluation of the VGD service delivery program by UP officials?

c) KI Questions-Local Representatives

1. From your point of view, what are the existing problems lies in the VGD program related to satisfaction of beneficiaries?
2. What should be the role of different stakeholders (NGO, UP or higher authority, etc.) that contribute more to satisfy beneficiaries?
3. What should be the approaches you would suggest to make VGD more effective?

Appendix IV

Circular related to point of distribution

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Woman and Child related Affairs

Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.

Circular

(Applicable for all upazilas of Bangladesh)

(Original version in Bangla)

No.-32.00.0000.057.30.017.12.169

Dated-09/07/2015

To: **Upazila Nirbahi Officer**

Upazila-----

District-----

Subject: Circular related to time determination at ward level for the distribution of rice among VGD beneficiaries for the fiscal year 2015-2016.

Under the VGD cycle 2015-2016, the following terms and conditions should be followed by the VGD beneficiaries-

- a) Rice should be distributed among the concerned beneficiaries in the 30 KG sacks at a definite schedule of time (12th - 16th day of each month) in each ward of each union of 488 upazilas of all over the country.
- b) The ward based deadline of distribution of rice in each union is as follows-

Ward Number	Deadline
1,2,3	8.30A.M.- 11.00 A.M.
4,5,6	11.00A.M.-1.00 P.M.
7,8,9	2.30P.M.-5.00P.M.

- c) Rice distribution process should be completed in the above-mentioned date and time.
- d) Rice distribution time can be more/less based on the variations in card numbers in each ward.
- e) UP chairman will sign in the VGD card. But, if chairman is absent for valid reasons, UP secretary will sign in the card.
- f) For the fair implementation as well as the transparent management of this program, this circular has been issued.

Signature with date

Raina Ahmed

Deputy Secretary (Dev. 2)

Phone-9570657