Three essays on public management capacity building in Bangladesh

Haque, Ariful

2018

Haque, A. (2018). Three essays on public management capacity building in Bangladesh. Doctoral thesis, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.; Haque, A. (2018). Three essays on public management capacity building in Bangladesh. Doctoral thesis, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

<https://hdl.handle.net/10356/87681>

<https://doi.org/10.32657/10220/46927>

**THREE ESSAYS
ON
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT CAPACITY
BUILDING IN BANGLADESH**

ARIFUL HAQUE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

2018

THREE ESSAYS
ON
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT CAPACITY
BUILDING IN BANGLADESH

ARIFUL HAQUE

School of Social Sciences

A thesis submitted to the Nanyang Technological University in
partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of

Philosophy

2018

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to NTU for selecting me as a PhD student and providing generous funding to enable me to pursue my research. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Yu Wenxuan, for his supervision. Professor Wenxuan had been very supportive throughout the entire journey of my PhD research. He always encouraged me to be confident and supported me in developing the skills needed to conduct my research. Due to his support, I have been able to present papers in top international conferences in Public Administration. I have been able to change my mind-set through his guidance.

I would also like to bid thanks to Professor. Wang Jue and Professor Li Hui who are my thesis advisors. They helped me greatly in my research. I am thankful to Professor He Baogang, Professor Wu Wei, Professor Chen Chung-An, Professor Zhang Zhibin and Professor Christopher Holman, for providing necessary training and guidance in my coursework.

Then, I would like to show my gratitude to my wife and daughter for their support to me. I also want to thank my parents, my mother-in-law, and other family members for their constant support. I am especially thankful to my colleagues from Civil Service in Bangladesh who greatly helped me in collecting data. I am also indebted to my two classmates, Gayathri and Chengwei for their support. I would like to thank my friends from the HSS graduate student office, for their encouragement and help over the past four years.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
List of Tables	5
List of Figures	6
Summary	7
Essay 1: Does Implementation of Right to Information Policies Increase Transparency? The Case of Bangladesh	12
Introduction	12
Implementation of right to information regimes	17
Theoretical framework	20
Right to information policies in Bangladesh.....	22
Methods.....	35
Analysis and Results.....	37
Discussions.....	49
Conclusion	52
References	53
Essay 2: Why Did Bangladesh Undertake Public Service Innovations?	58
Introduction	58
Public Service Innovations in Bangladesh: Contexts and Overview	62
Literature Review	71
Methods.....	78
Why Did Bangladesh Undertake Public Service Innovations?	80
To What Extent have PSI Improved Government Performances?.....	86
Conclusion.....	91
References	93
Essay 3: Does an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission Matter in Combatting Corruption? Evidence from Bangladesh.....	101
Introduction	101
Theoretical Discussions.....	105
The Anti-corruption Commission in Bangladesh	108
Methods.....	119
Analysis and Results.....	122
Conclusion.....	145
References	146
Appendices	155

List of Tables

Table 1.1 Analytical Frameworks	22
Table 1.2 Top Ten Ministries Which Received Most Number of Applications	28
Table 1.3 Questions & Responses in Likert Scale	36
Table 1.4 characteristics of the respondents	38
Table 1.5 Interviewees	38
Table 1.6 Record Management System Perceived by the Information Officials	45
Table 1.7 Challenges Perceived by the Information Officials	46
Table 1.8 Policy Recommendations by Information Officials	46
Table 1.9a Descriptive statistics	47
Table 1.9b Correlations	48
Table 3.1 Institutional Efforts to Combat Corruption in Bangladesh	110
Table 3.2 Performance of ACC (2007-2012)	117
Table 3.3 ACC's performance in completion of pending enquires in 2015	117
Table 3.4 ACC's investigative operations in 2015	118
Table 3.5 Statistics of trials of corruption related cases in the Courts, 2015	119
Table 3.6 Questions & Responses in Likert Scale	121
Table 3.7 Gender Group	122
Table 3.8 Descriptive Statistics	123
Table 3.9 Interviewees	123
Table 3.10 Correlations	139
Table 3.11 Problems faced by the ACC Officials	143
Table 3.12 How-to Make ACC More Effective	144

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Growth of Countries with RTI Laws.....	18
Figure 2. 1 Civil service structure in Bangladesh,.....	65
Figure 2.2 PSI Framework... ..	78
Figure 3.1 Structure of ACC.....	111
Figure 3.2 Operational Procedure of ACC.....	115

Three Essays on Public Management Capacity Building in Bangladesh

Summary

This thesis consists of three self-contained essays on public management capacity building in Bangladesh. In recent years, public management capacity building has been widely discussed and recognized as a necessity for sustainable development in the developing countries. It has taken on added importance by both international development partners and developing countries as a vital tool for growth and development. The lack of good governance in many developing countries has corrosive effects on the development process such as entrench corruption, lack of rule of law, lack of transparency etc. In this aspect, improving the governance environment, more particularly public management capacity building is necessary.

Public management capacity building is enhancement of competency of public sector organizations. In developing country, public management capacity building means enabling government's ability to deliver vital services. The public management capacity in Bangladesh has been under scrutiny for many years. The colonial legacy, politicization of bureaucracy, military intervention, and many other factors have had a worsening effect on overall public management systems in Bangladesh, which is perceived by its citizens as inefficient and ineffective, centralized, and unaccountable, corrupt and not transparent. Despite a number of reform efforts, traditional bureaucratic cultures are still in place. Moreover, globalization has placed immense challenges on this system. With the rapid flourishing of the private sector, there has been a widening gap between public

and private sectors in regard to economic status and efficiency. Over the years, media and civil society have reflected citizens' voices demanding an effective public management system. Hence, this dissertation attempts to study the selected issues related to public management capacity building in Bangladesh.

As a reform measure, public management capacity building addresses various issues. There are a number of issues related to the public management system in Bangladesh, which have gotten significant attention both nationally and internationally in recent times. Corruption is the most severe problem that has tarnished the image of the nation globally since Bangladesh became highest in corruption for five consecutive years starting in 2001. While there has been a slight improvement in recent years, this is not significant. Transparency within government is another issue considered by citizens as one of the most important issues, as citizens wish to be ensured of access to government information. Like many other developing nations, the government of Bangladesh is very often blamed for the lack of transparency and accountability to its citizens. There have been significant efforts to take and implement administrative reforms in order to improve government performance, which has been under scrutiny by its citizens. Administrative reform in various issues, as a development strategy of the government, is directly linked with government performance and effectiveness, which ultimately fall on public management capacity building. This study aims to focus on the three following issues, which are related to public management capacity building in Bangladesh. Public service innovation has become a compelling topic by both public managers and researchers. To address the problems of corruption and lacking of transparency, there have been significant efforts to promote innovation in order to improve government performance (e.g., corruption and transparency). This study aims to focus on these issues.

The first essay looks into Right to Information (RTI) policy in Bangladesh. Right to Information (RTI) is considered a key element in increasing transparency in government that ultimately enhances public management capacity through helping reduce corruption. Bangladesh enacted the Right to Information (RTI) Act in 2009 in an environment which is blamed for not being transparent, accountable, or proactive in information disclosure. Since enactment, what are the challenges and opportunities for implementation? Has the implementation of RTI policies increased transparency? This study conducted a survey of designated information officers of ministries/divisions of the government of Bangladesh. Based on the established framework of Right to Information implementation, this study concludes that Bangladesh faces similar challenges to other countries who are facing RTI implementations, though there are some unique features as well. Implementation of RTI in Bangladesh is constrained by a low level of public awareness, a bureaucratic mentality, and a lack of resources while on the other hand, it signals transformation of government from a culture of secrecy to openness as a whole. This concept is very new in Bangladesh as well as in many other nations. Hence, this study can significantly contribute to our understanding of implementation of right to information and also add to the existing RTI literature.

The second essay attempts to focus on public service innovation in Bangladesh. Public Service Innovation (PSI) is a key driver in making public organizations more effective in addressing social and developmental challenges. In recent decades, public service innovations have been adopted by many countries to address those challenges. However, the core objectives of carrying out innovations are different in developing countries as opposed to developed nations. Developing nations undertake innovative programs to spur social and economic

growth. Extant literature shows the narratives of PSI mostly from developed countries. Through mixed method approaches, this study attempts to explore, why did Bangladesh undertake public service innovations? The study interviewed key innovation officials from ministries/divisions and provides case analyses of innovative projects to explore to what extent PSI has improved government performances in Bangladesh. From the implementers' point of view, the study identifies some important factors such as national vision and Political commitment, economic growth, citizens' demand and role of civil society, globalizations and role of international organizations, which have pushed government to undertake PSI in Bangladesh. The study also identifies that despite innovative efforts, there have not been visible improvements in government performances. Policy suggestions have been provided to make PSI more effective. These are financial incentives, recognition for best performance, flexibility in carrying out innovations, capacity building through training, and change of mind-set. The study can significantly enrich our understanding of public service innovations in Bangladesh. Moreover, being a practitioner, I will be able to contribute to future reform programs. Public service innovations is a means and end in the ultimate goal of building public management capacity.

The third essay aims to focus on corruption, which is a serious disease and has affected all nations, but most severely developing countries. In regard to corruption control, the consistent pictures of success are mostly seen in developed countries and failures seen primarily in developing countries. Many scholars argue that the role of an independent anti-corruption agency, such as the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) of Singapore and The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) of Hong Kong, is most important in establishing corruption control. However, despite being designed

and structured on such successful agencies, anti-corruption agencies in many developing countries show dismal results. In Bangladesh, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has been under scrutiny for as long as Bangladesh has been considered one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Widespread corruption is a major impediment to the socio-economic development of the country. Despite different reforms and measures, visibly there are no significant changes in corruption control. This study conducted surveys and interviews of ACC officials. The findings of the study show that, though structurally independent, the ACC is not functionally independent due to other factors such as supporting agencies, judicial systems, political will, culture, rules and laws, etc. This study provides policy recommendations for effective anti-corruption strategies in Bangladesh and has significant theoretical and practical implications in enriching our understanding of the corruption phenomenon. This study can be helpful in devising appropriate policy formulas for developing countries.

All the three issues are interlinked under the broader umbrella of public management capacity building in Bangladesh. Right to information is to ensure openness of government and access to government information, which can significantly help reduce corruption. Eventually, control of corruption is positively linked with government effectiveness, which is ultimately related to public management capacity building. On the other hand, public service innovation is a means and end as well to improve government performances in various ways such as simplifying procedures, delivering services effectively etc.

Essay 1: Does Implementation of Right to Information (RTI) Policies Increase Transparency? The Case of Bangladesh

Introduction

Access to information is a key element that can empower people and contribute towards enhancing good governance. As a fundamental human right, it was first noticed in the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1946 though the journey of the Right to Information movement started back in 17th century when Sweden first introduced the “Freedom to the Press Act” in 1776. The true development of the concept was found in the last part of the 19th century when countries like the USA, Norway, Denmark, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand introduced laws on Freedom of Information. Followed by them, a large number of countries agreed to enact the Right to Information Act in the 1980s. During this phase, international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the European Council, the Commonwealth, and the World Bank started advocating for a Law on Freedom of Information towards accountable and corruption free governing systems. The UN Convention Against Corruption (2003), Article 13, recognizes the importance of information in facilitating public participation in the fight against corruption. Now over 100 countries have made, and many other countries are in the process of making laws in order to facilitate

the free flow of information. The term “Right to Information” (RTI) used in different countries might vary from “Freedom of Information” (FOI) to “Access to Information” (ATI) or even the “Right to Know” (RTK) or “Open Government Information” (OGI). However, all these terms have similar interpretations as they stand for the people’s right to access various kinds of information held by the government. So, it is evident that a trend of new transparency policies and practices has been sweeping the globe over the last decade and there is a huge demand from citizens to make governments proactive in releasing information and giving individuals the right to request information from the government. Bangladesh is no exception to this trend. The Right to Information (RTI) Act was enacted in 2009 in Bangladesh in order to ensure that citizens had the right to information and to guarantee the free flow of information. Since many of these types of policies and laws have been framed across the globe recently, it is important now to assess their implementations (Piotrowski, Zhang, Lin, & Yu, 2009).

The main objective of the right to information is to enhance transparency that can create a virtuous circle and democratic participation and can “be the breakthrough that eventually brings about a dynamic change in the government, politics, and even ‘shape’ of a nation” (Stiglitz 2003 cited in Worthy, 2010). It enables citizens to access other rights such as education and employment and is viewed

as a basic human right (Darch and Underwood 2010, 43). Transparency enables citizens to see what is going on inside the government; however, there is debate over the definition of transparency (Heald, 2006, 25; Piotrowski, 2007, 10).

Recent studies have attempted to explore the implementation picture of FOI in many countries that have adopted this type of law. Roberts (2006) studied trend of transparency across the world, Piotrowski (2007) studied the United States and elsewhere, and White (2007) worked on the implementation of the New Zealand Official Information Act. RaaG and NCPRI (2009) and Roberts (2010) studied the Right to Information Act in India. In the unique case of China, studies were conducted by Piotrowski et al. (2009), Xiao (2009), and Yu (2011) to assess the performance of its Open Government Information (OGI) Regulation. Considering the large number of countries currently implementing these types of laws and policies, very few studies are found. Implementation of right to information type laws in many cases and areas are still largely unattended by scholars, particularly on the supply sides even though they are at core of implementation.

This paper aims to address the challenges and opportunities in implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2009, in Bangladesh as perceived by information officials mandated to implement the RTI laws and policies in their organizations. Designated information officers from ministries and divisions

have been interviewed and surveyed to better understand RTI implementation in practice. In this paper, I explain the background of Right to Information in Bangladesh, discuss the current contexts within which the RTI acts as well as the laws are being implemented, and analyze my findings from the survey based on an accepted framework of Right to Information implementation.

Why Bangladesh

The right to information in Bangladesh is in many aspects different from other countries where similar kinds of policies and laws are being currently implemented. First, the 2009 Right to Information Act was promulgated in Bangladesh by a non-party Caretaker Government though finally it was passed in Parliament by the democratic government. Sometimes, implementation is related to the original motive for enacting the laws. Since the RTI Act in Bangladesh was enacted in a non-democratic environment, through pressure, triggered by mainly a few non-government organizations, it is interesting to study how effectively it is being implemented.

Secondly, Bangladesh has been part of the discussion for over a decade for not being pro-active in information disclosure. Moreover, the Right to Information Act came at a time when there have been numerous discussions about transparency and accountability because Bangladesh has been ranked as the most corrupt country for a consecutive number of years.

Thirdly, Bangladesh inherited its public management system from Pakistan which was also a legacy of the British colonial period. Due to the colonial mindset, the Civil Service could not fulfill citizens' expectations. The Civil Service as a whole, is portrayed as inefficient, corrupt, and unaccountable. In this context, the 2009 RTI Act is considered a landmark policy in Bangladesh, one which is being put into practice within a complex and arbitrary context. Previous studies have been conducted on the demand sides of RTI implementation, by Fattah (2015) and Baroi (2013), etc. Hence, we need to study the supply side to understand the perceived challenges and opportunities as well as to study policy suggestions and interventions for better implementations. Ministries/Divisions have been selected as a unit for the study where the designated information officials have been interviewed and surveyed. Note that Ministry/Division is the highest layer in the Civil Service structure in Bangladesh, which is headed by a Minister for policy decisions and a Secretary for operational activities. Large ministries have several divisions such as Finance and Education; each division is headed by a secretary.

Research Questions

Based on available research on the implementation of the right to information in general as well as in the Bangladesh context, this study tries to explore the

following questions:

1. What are the challenges to RTI implementation faced by the designated information officials in ministries/divisions in Bangladesh?
2. How can those challenges be overcome? [from the perspective of Information Officials]
3. Does the implementation of RTI in Bangladesh increase transparency in the Government?

Implementation of Right to Information Regimes

Of the countries that are currently implementing RTI policies, more than half were established during the last decade (Vleugels, 2008). More precisely, “by 1989, only 13 countries had right to information laws in place, by 2014, 99 countries had adopted RTI legislations” (Fattah, 2015). These laws, though initially established in western countries, are now expanding across the world (Roberts, 2006). Bangladesh, influenced by the international movement on the right to know which gained momentum after 2006, is a recent adaptor of RTI. Some countries, such as South Africa, Mexico and India, have shown remarkable performances in adopting progressive laws (Piotrowski et al., 2009). Figure 1 shows the growth of the number of countries with Right of Information laws from 1950 to 2010.

Figure 1.1: Growth of the number of countries with Right to Information

laws

Source: Prashant Sharma, 2014

Successful implementation of any policy depends on many factors and actors.

However, government officers mandated with processing right to information requests are the keystone of successful implementation (Piotrowski et al., 2009).

While many works have been conducted on right to information policies,

implementation of RTI laws, to a great extent, has been given little attention . This is due to the restrictive accessibility of data in government offices in many countries. In the case of the USA, some studies are found on the impact of management reform and use of contractors, in the implementation of right to information laws (Piotrowski 2007; Roberts 2010; Rosenbloom and Piotrowski, 2005).

In the case of Bangladesh, Ahmed (2012) says media in Bangladesh is practicing one kind of self-censorship. Hoq (2012) opines that there is a huge information focused activities in the rural and remote areas in Bangladesh. Baroi and Panday (2015) argue that access to information increases people's ability to make choices. In the case of India, Khan and Akhter (2015) highlights that RTI has close nexus with good governance and it minimizes nepotism and corruption. Agrawal (2012) shows RTI succeeded in reducing information asymmetry and exposing corruption. Liu (2016) argues that though OGR in China shows external value of transparency, Chinese government tailors information disclosure. Shepherd (2015) and Worthy, (2010) argue that FOI has increased transparency in national government with a greater open ness of culture and decision-making taken in public offices in UK.

In the case of Bangladesh, so far, no study has been conducted on the implementation of RTI policies in the ministries/divisions, which are the key

organizations of government of Bangladesh, for policy formulation and implementation.

Theoretical Framework

The literature includes a number of models and frameworks on the implementation of open government information. However, Newman and Calland's (2007) framework for systematically studying the challenges to implementation of right to information laws is quite significant since it is based on comparative knowledge of RTI laws and practices across the continents. This framework consists of several components, which are very important in examining the implementation of RTI policies.

According to Newman and Calland (2007), drafting of the laws is directly tied to implementation and outcome. This is also supported by public policy implementation literature in general (Ingram & Schneider, 1990). Drafting of the laws includes issues such as mandatory publication of certain information, time limits for completion of information requests, costs for requests, sanctions for failure to comply, reporting requirements and appeal procedures etc. It also includes principles of good record making and records management and the primacy of the law over other laws. All these practicalities will determine the value and usability of the law. The politics of implementation is identified as the

second key component which includes political will, choice of the individual or agency to implement the law, and the roles of the frontline employees. Effective implementation demands political commitment from the top. It can help change mind-shift of the bureaucracy and ensure resource allocations, which are necessary for RTI implementation. However, political will may vary from country to country. Government System Building is the third key component, which means internal systems and procedures to generate and provide information and training of civil servants to ensure understanding and compliance-to equip the supply side. It includes record keeping and archiving, record making, and automatic publication of records and internal systems. The internal system itself is a broad area, which covers guidelines for civil servants for implementing the job, identifying and providing training to information officers, planning for oversights and coordination, and enforcing incentives and punishments for civil servants.

The fourth and final component is the demand side for government information. This component is mainly based on right to information statutory regimes (Piotrowski et al., 2009). The purpose of this paper is to determine the RTI experiences in Bangladesh from the framework set forth by Newman and Calland as it is recognized as one of the first systematic frameworks of its kind, developed based on international comparative data (Piotrowski et al., 2009).

There have only been a few significant works based on this framework such as that set forth by Piotrowski et al, 2009.

Based on Laura Newman and Richard Calland's framework, this study will try to seek information on the following issues;

Table 1.1 Analytical Frameworks

Selected Components	Identifiable Factors
Drafting of the laws	How the Procedures drafted
Politics of Implementations	Political will, choice of agency head, role of frontline employee
Attitude of the Officials	Whether Positive or Negative
Awareness	Whether citizens are aware?
Government System Building (Record Management, Training & Oversight)	Whether Record management is up-to-date?
	Whether DIOs Received training?
Resources	Whether DIOs have resources?

Right to Information Policies in Bangladesh

The journey of RTI in Bangladesh started in 1983, when the Bangladesh Press

Council first placed the demand for freedom to publish government information. There may be varying factors for providing right to information to citizens by the governments in different countries. However, when civil society plays a significant role in framing key provisions in the policy, it is likely to flourish, as evidenced in some countries such as South Africa, India, Bulgaria, Mexico, Peru, and Jamaica. If there is a strong civil society, government's weakness is noticed and challenged as "... Committed civil society organizations serve as counterbalance to faltering implementation effort" (Neuman et al., 2007). In Bangladesh, neither the masses demanded, nor the government itself felt it necessity to implement right to information laws. The Right to Information Ordinance was enacted in 2008 by the Caretaker Government¹(CTG) as an outcome of concerted efforts by some NGOs, civil society organizations and other stakeholders. The demand was made on the basis of the constitution of Bangladesh and related international laws. The RTI Act in neighboring countries such as India and Nepal also had some positive influence. It can be termed as supply-driven since international contexts and Bangladesh's obligation as a signatory country in many international laws and conventions were capitalized

¹. Caretaker Government: This is a non-party Government which is supposed to conduct a free fair Election for political parties; they cannot take any major policy decision. Bangladesh had four elections conducted by Caretaker Government. Currently this system has been abolished from the Constitution.

upon and triggered by the local NGOs, which were also funded by international donors. After the ordinance was passed by the CTG, it became an obligation to all major political parties to commit to it. The two major political parties committed to implement RTI in the election manifesto. The winning party kept its promise and remained faithful to the commitment. The Parliament finally passed “The Right to Information Act” in 2009. An interesting point is that such a law to promote democracy and transparency was pioneered by a non-party caretaker government. This means that democratic parties were not serious about people’s right to information.

Prior to the enactment of the 2009 Right to Information Act, the government of Bangladesh introduced the Citizen’s Charter in 2007, primarily in those public organizations which provided basic public services; this then became common practice in other public organizations. This was the first step to making citizens aware their right to know what types of services they were entitled to receive from which type of organizations. It also included the modality and timeframe of the services, as well as remedial steps for citizens if they did not get the proper services. The introduction of the Citizen’s Charter actually paved the foundational way for the right to information in Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, both domestic and international laws have created an obligation towards making RTI policies. The Preamble of the Bangladesh Constitution

pledges many rights to citizens. The rule of law and fundamental human rights and freedom conform to Article 39 of the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of thought, conscience, and speech to every citizen. However, these are subject to reasonable restrictions as set by law. This article also recognizes freedom of the press. The notion of freedom of expression, implicitly, recognizes the freedom of the right to information. However, there was no legal provision in Bangladesh regarding that right to Information. Moreover, there was no scope of using this provision as a fundamental human right as it did not directly recognize people's right to information.

International instruments on human rights affairs have recognized the Right to Information as a basic right. Article 19, UDHR, 1948, recognizes that "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless to frontiers" (UDHR 1948. Universal Declaration on Human Rights). Article 19, ICCPR, 1966, (International Covenant on Civil and Political rights) imposes "a positive obligation on States to ensure access to information particularly with regard to information held by Government in all types of storage and retrieval systems." (Article 19 ICCPR 1966). Bangladesh signed the ICCPR, 1966 on September 6, 2000. Thus, it became an obligation for the government to introduce legal provisions for

citizens claiming Information as their right.

The RTI act has been in enforcement in an environment where the government is often blamed for the culture of secrecy. People are not aware of what is happening around them. The public officials are thought to be inefficient, ill-disciplined, and unaccountable. Decision making in the public organization is not transparent as secrecy in both political and administrative sphere is jealously guarded by policies such as the Official Secrets Act, 1923 and the Government Service Conduct Rules, 1979, which deny citizens' access to relevant files and documents. (Khan 1998 cited in Khan, 2003 & Baroi, 2013) .

Implementing Organizations

There are around 30,000 information providing units on the government level, with roughly 30,000 NGOs operating in Bangladesh (Information Commission, 2014). So far, 16,387 designated officers have been appointed as Information Officer in government organizations, which constitute 55% of the total information providing units. On the other hand, 3,769 information officers have been appointed in NGOs. For sensitization of government officers, training programs are being implemented for entry-level officers.

The current Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, said in a program, "The enactment of the Right to Information Act is an epoch making incident in the history of Bangladesh...it will greatly help establish accountability and

transparency in every sphere of society and the administration...the government will continue to work to safeguard the people's right to information" (The Daily Star, 2009 cited in Iftekharuzzaman, 2010). Despite the Prime Minister making this statement, it is difficult to examine, as much depends on proper implementation of the law. Anam (2009) says that "In enactment of the RTI Law Bangladesh has made a strong statement to the world that it is committed to establishing transparency and accountability in public institutions. This commitment will be tested only with proper implementation of the law." According to the Information Commission Report, in 2014, a total of 8,442 applications were made, of which 8,315 applications were to obtain government information while 127 applications were made to NGOs. In the case of 7,870 of the applications (93.22%), information was provided, while no information was given to 6.42% and 0.36% of the applications processed. Although the number of applications is very low, disposal of applications is satisfactory. In Jessore, one of the large administrative districts, 4,450 information applications have been provided upon verbal request.

Literature on RTI implementation in Bangladesh reveals that there is enthusiasm about RTI, as evidenced in the study conducted by different NGOs on the awareness of the RTI among the general population. However, the users and the service providers themselves do not know much about the Act. Anam (2009) said,

“Unless people start to request information, we will not know whether the law is working or not”. For that to happen we need to have massive campaigns and mobilization. Civil society organizations and the Information Commission have already embarked on awareness raising campaigns and dissemination.” The majority of the people do not have a clear idea how to seek information. That is why in many cases they are more interested in receiving information verbally or informally. During the last five years, a total of 69,862 applications were made, which is very low compared to the huge population of the country. Table 1.2 shows the top ten ministries, which have received the most number of applications.

Table 1.2: Top Ten Ministries Which Received the Most Number of Applications

Sl	Name of Ministry	Applications Received	Information Provided	Information not Provided	Appeals against IO	Appeals Disposed	Fees Collected
1	Defence	192	192	-	-	-	5,81,100
2	Agriculture	132	132	-	06	06	346
3	Post & Telecommunication	110	110	-	-	-	04
4	Planning	107	106	01	01	01	1839

5	LGED	90	80	09	05	04	4017
6	Finance	72	44	28	14	10	2662
7	Home Affairs	66	64	02	01	01	-
8	Water Resources	54	48	03	03	03	6,88,308
9	Education	53	48	05	04	03	713
10	Environment & Forest	49	44	01	01	01	72
Tot al		925	868	49	35	29	12,79,06 11

Source: Annual Report of the Information Commission, Bangladesh, 2014

Information Commission

As proposed in the Act, a three-member information commission was set up as the first step in July 2009, immediately after the enactment of the Act. The Information Commission is designated to coordinate implementation of RTI in Bangladesh. “Specialized units and oversight bodies have proven critical to ensuring full implementation and compliance with the law” (Florini, 2007). Structurally, this commission is independent and capable of discharging its duty. The status of the law is fine, although the status of the Information Commissioners is lower compared to other constitutional organizations in Bangladesh. As is found in the case of Canada, “Nominating a lead implementer with sufficient seniority, respect and power will provide the foundational

message to the other parts of the administration, public service, and civil society that the government is serious in its effort” (Neuman et al., 2007). The Information Ministry has developed the rules as per the Act. The Information Commission implemented a road map in 2015 to facilitate effective implementation of the RTI Act. So far, 16,101 personnel from ministries/divisions, directorates, district level offices, and upazilla (sub-district) level offices have been provided training. A select part of this act has been introduced in college level textbooks for awareness building among future generations. According to the annual report of the Information Commission, in 2014, a total of 294 complaints were made to the Information Commission, 170 were considered for public hearings by the Information Commission, while the other 124 were given advisory notes for disposal. A total of 280 complaints have been disposed. However, one applicant has made 12 complaints while there are a number of applicants who have made more than one complaint. This indicates that there are some professional brokers who are acting on behalf of applicants. So far, only one penalty has been given of taka 2000 only.

The Science and ICT Ministry has been working to bring all departments, agencies, and associated organizations under e-governance. Web portals of different ministries, divisions, directorates and institutions, which include citizen charters, appointments, and procurement related notifications, have been

introduced in a single portal found in <http://bangladesh.gov.bd/>. Some organizations have started an E-government procurement (e-GP) system, while others are in the process. In this context, we see that government is shifting from a culture of secrecy to an open regime.

Right to Information Act 2009

According to the Right to Information Act, 2009, right to information means the right to get information from any public organization. Information includes notes and photocopies, certified copies of documents or records, certified samples of materials, obtaining information from digital devices such as diskettes, floppies, tapes, video cassettes or any other electronic mode or through print-outs. (RTI Act, 2009).

The act has acknowledged the right to information as an undeniable part of freedom of thought, conscience, and speech as mentioned in its introduction; the preamble states that “if the right to information of the people is ensured, transparency and accountability in all public, autonomous and statutory organizations, and in other private institutions run on government or foreign funding shall increase, corruption of the same shall decrease and good governance of the same shall be established” (RTI Act, 2009). There are 37 sections in 8 chapters which provide a clear guideline on how to collect, preserve,

maintain and provide information.

Scope of the RTI Act, 2009

According to the RTI Act, 2009, any citizen can seek information from any authority and the authority is bound to provide information to the applicant. The important feature of the RTI Act, 2009 is that the Act not only designates public organizations as an “authority.” Any private organization, using public or foreign funds, is also considered an authority under this Act. It is mandatory for such authorities to disclose information voluntarily as well as on demand except, if the information is related to state security.

Every authority is mandated to catalogue and index all information and preserve it in a proper manner within reasonable time-limits. Information disclosures in most of the cases are mandatory and pro-active except in a few areas which are concerned with national security and have been exempted from such provision (RTI Act, 2009). Moreover, each authority must publish information regarding decisions taken, as well as proceedings or activities accomplished or proposed, and must be indexed in a way that is easily accessible to citizens (RTI Act, 2009) Authorities must also publish a yearly report containing organizational structure, activities, duties of officials, operational procedure, lists of necessary laws, acts, ordinances, rules, regulations, notifications, directives, manuals etc. and a list of facilities and particulars of assigned officers.

Procedure of RTI Implementations

Citizens can apply for information either in written or electronic form or through email and need to pay a realistic fee as prescribed by the officer-in-charge. In addition, every authority shall make and publicize a information and supply it free of cost. If citizens do not receive the applied information within the time frame, they can appeal to the Appealing Officer. In the case that the citizens are not served by the appealing officials, they can go to the information commission.

Exemptions

The following organizations are exempted from the RTI Act on the grounds of being involved with national security and intelligence.

1. National Security Intelligence (NSI)
2. Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI)
3. Defence Intelligence Units
4. Special Security Force (SSF)
5. Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Bangladesh Police
6. Intelligence Cell of the National Board of Revenue
7. Special Branch of Bangladesh Police
8. Intelligence Cell of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB)

The Government can amend the schedule in consultation with the Information Commission and decrease or increase the number of institutions and notify

citizens through government gazettes.

Arbitrary Laws & Acts

There are some related laws and policies which may undermine the spirit of RTI in Bangladesh. These are the Evidence Act, 1872; Official Secrecy Act, 1923; The Penal Code, 1860; The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898; Government Servants (conduct) Rules, 1979; Rules of Business, 1996 etc. Certain sections of these laws restricted information disclosure from the colonial period to the present time. In 2014, the government instituted the National Broadcasting Policy which does not allow broadcasters to disseminate information that may hamper the image of public offices, particularly law enforcement agencies, armed forces, and judicial officials. Information that government thinks is against national security or public interest is prohibited. The government of Bangladesh enacted the ICT Act in 2006, and, then the ICT (Amendment) Act in 2013. Part of Article 57 of the Act is the subject of much debate since, “...any willful release on websites or any other electronic platform of any material which is false, vulgar, defamatory, liable to cause deterioration of law and order, or tarnishes the image of the state or individual, or hurts religious sentiments is treated as a cybercrime” (The ICT Amendment Act , 2013). There is a lot of criticism against the Act and its Amendment, which may hamper human rights, and freedom of expression, and exploit of political opposition. There are many concerns about the abuse of

the Act in the name of state security and harmony, such as in the case of cyber-crime which is a non-bailable offence. Law enforcing agencies can suspect and arrest any person.

Based on the theoretical framework mentioned earlier, the following section will discuss how the research questions will be explored. The study hypothesizes that Bangladesh is currently facing number of challenges as framed in Neuman and Calland's framework in implementing RTI policies. This is also hypothesized that implementations of RTI policies increases transparency in Government of Bangladesh.

Methods

This study combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a rich picture of RTI implementation in Bangladesh from the implementers' perspective. A purposive sample was employed. The sample includes designated Information Officers from all the ministries and divisions. There are 56 ministries/divisions in Bangladesh, which are the key organizations for policy formulations and implementation. Out of 56 officials, 43 officials have been interviewed (see interview questions in Appendix-I) The interviewees are solely responsible for implementation of RTI policies in their respective ministries/divisions. They are middle/senior level officials.

The interviews were conducted over a period of two months (March, and December) in 2016. The interviews were conducted in person and typically lasted around 30 minutes. Qualitative data analysis techniques were employed to organize as well as to analyze the collected data. The recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher and the transcripts were thematically analyzed to provide a unique perspective on the information officials. As the first step, open coding of the transcripts was completed which was followed with axial coding to create a smaller list of categories. Selective coding was finally done to interpret the data. The results reflect unique pictures in the narratives of public officials in Bangladesh and their perceived barriers to implementation of RTI in Bangladesh.

Survey Design, Sampling, Data Collection, Measures, and Variables

The survey has five sections in total with 9 questions that probe the views of researchers on implementation of RTI in Bangladesh. The survey asks respondents to rate their perceived barriers to RTI implementation in Bangladesh on a 5 Likert scale (Table 1.3). In total, 55 responses were received from 55 respondents.

Table 1.3 Questions & Responses in Likert Scale

Statement	Scale	Number of Respons
-----------	-------	-------------------

	1	2	3	4	5	e
Perceived Performances						
1. RTI act has enhanced transparency in my organization	0%	10%	0%	30%	60%	55
2. RTI act has enhanced clients'' satisfaction significantly	0	0	15	45	40	55
Attitude of the Official						
I am pro-active to provide information	0	0	0	56	44	55
Government System Building						
We have adequate training on RTI Act	0	10	0	30	60	55
Record management is up-to-date to provide information in my organization.	33	13	0	34	20	55
We get support from the top for RTI implementation	0	10	20	40	30	55
Resources & Facilities						
We have sufficient logistics support to provide information	19	13	0	57	11	55
Public Awareness						
Citizens are not aware of right to information	18	14	20	33	15	55
Citizens have perceptions that Government does not want to disclose information	23	9	33	11	24	55

(Strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, not sure=3, agree=4, strongly agree=5)

Analysis and Results

Characteristics of respondents

Table 1.4 shows the characteristics of the 55 respondents to the survey; 87.3%

were male and 12.7% were female.

Table 1.4 Gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	7	12.7	12.7	12.7
Male	48	87.3	87.3	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.5 shows that the age ranged from 32-58 and more than 67% of respondents are senior level officials, which means that government has given much importance to the implementation of right to information policies in Bangladesh by charging senior level officials with RTI implementation in various ministries and divisions.

Table 1.5 Interviewees

Age Range	No	Percentage	Remarks
32-37	3	5.45%	Entry Level Official
38-43	12	21.81%	Mid-level Official
44-49	15	27.27%	Senior Level Official
50-55	21	38.18%	Senior Level Official
56-58	4	7.27%	Senior Level Official
Total	55	100	

Perceived Performances

The main objectives of the implementation of RTI policies are to enhance

transparency. In regard to the transparency of the organizations, 90% of those who responded reported that RTI implementation has increased transparency and 85% reported that it has enhanced clients' satisfaction which indicates positive performance of public officials designated for RTI policy implementation.

Drafting of the law

In the Right to Information Act, 2009, everything is clearly defined such as how the citizens will apply for information, time frame, realistic fee as prescribed by the officer-in-charge, appeal procedure. In addition, every authority shall make and publicize a information and supply it free of cost. In the case that the citizens are not served by the appealing officials, they can go to the information commission.

Politics of Implementations

In Bangladesh, RTI movement was triggered by NGOs, which were also funded by international donors, and the non-party caretaker government passed the ordinance. However, it became an obligation to all major political parties to commit to it. The two major political parties committed to implement RTI in the election manifesto in 2008. The winning party kept its promise and remained faithful to the commitment. The Parliament finally passed "The Right to Information Act" in 2009. The government also set up information commission immediately, which shows political commitment from the top.

Attitude of the Official

The culture of secrecy and lack of openness have been a colonial legacy in the bureaucracy of Bangladesh. In the survey, the attitude of the officials toward implementation of RTI laws in Bangladesh was found to be very positive. 100% of the respondents said that they are proactive in providing information. However, in the interview, different faces of bureaucrats are revealed as are reflected in the following statements;

“Anyone can apply for any information, this is nonsense, and gives a lot of bother to us” (Respondent 43)

“I am fed up with applications. Applicants should justify why they need information. They complain to the Information Commission, I have received summonses to explain delays”(Respondent 21)

“Only the concerned persons should apply for information and his motive to collect information should be mentioned in the application form”(Respondent 11)

It is common that most governments work in a secretive fashion. Newman and Calland (2009) state that, “The notion of transparency is invariably far beyond the range of experience and mind-set of most public bureaucrats” and this is clearly evident in the statements mentioned above. It will take much time for a change of mind-set to transform the culture of secrecy into one of openness.

Government System Building

According to the regulations of the RTI Act, 2009, every organization is supposed to prepare guides and catalogues, compile information, and publish it in timely manner. In the survey, 54% of the respondents reported that record management in their organization is up-to-date. The websites of big and important ministries are found to be more updated than small ministries. However, in the interviews, a unique picture was found in the narrative of one official:

“Information we provide mostly are dead information which applicants don’t need; what they need, we deliberately don’t like to publish.”

(Respondent 29)

Various studies have identified that one clear benchmark for the performance of the implementation is whether information officials have been appointed and whether they have received training. Bureaucrat’s knowledge of laws, rules and process are essential for the implementation of the RTI Act. Training can facilitate this process. In the survey, 90% have said that they have adequate training for implementation. However, they lack some associated knowledge like IT knowledge. In the interview, respondents suggested training for officials of subordinate officers since they need to collect information from them.

“Training should be provided to all officials and staffs since we need to collect information from them, but they are not aware of RTI.”

(Respondent 43)

70% of the respondents reported that they get support from top management regarding RTI implementation in their organizations.

Responsibility of Oversight

Monitoring and coordination units are important as Newman and Calland (2009) mentioned: “Specialized coordination units are necessary beyond the implementation phase, particularly for education, training, and monitoring.” However, the interesting fact is that in such units information officers have been given the assignment in addition to their other regular duties. This means that if there is a larger number of applications than usual, one or the other of their responsibilities will be hampered. On the other hand, at this stage, if an independent officer is given responsibility, he would not have much to do, since the applications are not abundant in number. Regarding coordination and reporting, there is a very clear system. However, in the interviews, respondents made suggestions for independent units in their ministry/division.

“There should be an independent cell/unit for Designated Information Officials.” (Respondent 41)

Government Capacity

Weak record management systems are major drawbacks in implementing RTI laws and policies in Bangladesh. There are many arguments regarding record management in relation to implementation of the right to information. A number

of scholars argue that government should ignore past documents and establish an archiving system for future gathering of information. Creation of a “road map” of existing documents is equally important for holders of information and potential requesters. Whether the archival laws are consistent with modern record keeping should also be taken into consideration. According to Newman and Calland (2009), “The best approach for dealing with vast amounts of information is simply to make as many records as possible automatically and unconditionally available.” When records are created, it is better to publish the information proactively as this reduces the number of information requests and delays in procedure. Government websites can be storehouses for providing such information. However, this may not work well in developing countries where the majority of the people don’t have internet access. In the survey, more than 70% reported that record management is not up-to-date for implementation of RTI in Bangladesh. Moreover, there are no incentives for officials who are assigned to provide information as designated information officers or support staff.

“We should be given exemption in case of failure in providing old information, due to unavailability of records.” (Respondent 39) “

Resources

Resources are extremely important for the implementation of RTI. Although in the survey, more than 70% said that they have adequate resources, they revealed

in the interviews that, in order to save money, they are given responsibilities as information officials in addition to their regular duties.

“We should get extra incentives since we are doing extra works.” (Respondent 7)

Public Awareness

RTI laws require proactive release of information as well as response to an applicant's request. However, if people are not very aware of their right to information, it will not be fruitful. As indicated by Hubbard (2008), a lack of public awareness is related to a low number of information requests, even in nations where freedom of information has been established long ago. In the survey, 90% of the respondents said that people are not aware of RTI in Bangladesh. Although people are interested in this act, they do not have a clear idea of how to seek information. However, it is anticipated that there will be huge demand in the future. In the interviews, respondents revealed a picture of brokers applying on behalf of applicants in regard to financial dealings.

“People are not aware of RTI, so there emerged broker or professional applicants and we are receiving a lot of applications by single applicant on different matters.” (Respondent 37).

Record Management System

Most of the respondents mentioned that office procedure is complicated and record management is not up to date. Processing information is not an easy task

since there is no central digital database in the organizations.

Table 1.6 Record Management System Perceived by Information

Officials

Statement	Frequency
Office procedure is complicated	35
Record management is not up-to-date	29
Digital record management should be implemented	26
No central database	24

Challenges to RTI Implementations in Bangladesh

In the open-ended questions in the interviews, respondents identified the perceived challenges to the implementation of RTI in Bangladesh as shown in Table 1.7. Lack of financial resources and logistic support are the most important challenges mentioned. All ministries and divisions are located inside the Bangladesh secretariat, which is a highly restricted area. It is difficult for ordinary citizens to get access there and apply for information, even though there is scope to apply through email. Respondents mentioned that citizens' perceptions are that government organizations are not open to providing information. This is a difficult task to process and provide very old information; in addition, sometimes there are applications for very sensitive information.

Table 1.7: Challenges Perceived by the Information Officials (N=55)

Perceived Challenges	Frequency
Financial Constraints	43
Manpower and Logistics Problems	39
There is no independent unit for providing information; Officials do it as an additional task.	39
Ministry is a restricted area	35
Perception of the people about government is somewhat negative	30
This is very difficult to process and provide very old information	28
Citizens are not eager to apply	26
Sometimes there are applications for sensitive information	19

Policy Recommendations by Information Officials for effective implementation of the law (N=55)

Respondents have provided policy recommendations based on the challenges they are facing in RTI implementation in their ministries/divisions. Since they are working in addition to their regular duties, they have suggested financial incentives and recognition for performance.

Table 1.8 Policy Recommendations by Information Officials

Statement	Frequency
There should be financial incentives to compensate shortage of manpower	49
Applications should be specific and objectives oriented	38
There should be independent unit	36
Mass awareness for RTI	35
Recognition for best performances	25

Correlation Analysis

Since the sample size is not large enough to run a regression analysis, a correlational analysis is run from the surveys in order to assess whether implementation components are related to the performance of organizations. From able 1.9b, the attitudes of the officials are positively related to client satisfaction. Government System Building (Record Management, Training & Oversight) is positively related to transparency in organizations. Resources are positively related to transparency and client satisfaction.

Table 1.9a: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance 1	55	2	5	4.32	.800
Performance 2	55	2	5	3.84	.939

Attitude	55	3	5	4.60	.623
GSB	55	2	5	3.81	.906
Resource	55	1	5	4.02	1.000
Awareness	55	1	5	3.43	1.246
Valid N (listwise)	55				

Independent Variables;

Attitude: Attitude of the Officials

Awareness: Awareness of Public

GSB: Government System Building (Record Management, Training & Oversight)

Resources: Resources in Organization

Dependent Variables;

Performance 1: Transparency in the organization perceived by the information officials

Performance 2: Clients' satisfaction perceived by the information officials

Table 1.9b: Correlations

		Performance 1	Performance 2	Attitude	GSB	Resource	Awareness
Performance 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.271*	.241	.358*	.456**	-.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.045	.076	.007	.000	.666
	N	55	55	55	55	55	55
Performance 2	Pearson Correlation	.271*	1	.285*	.195	.287*	-.057

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.045		.035	.154	.034	.680
	N	55	55	55	55	55	55
Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.241	.285*	1	.329*	.315*	.150
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.076	.035		.014	.019	.274
	N	55	55	55	55	55	55
GSB	Pearson Correlation	.358**	.195	.329*	1	.142	-.074
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.154	.014		.301	.592
	N	55	55	55	55	55	55
Resource	Pearson Correlation	.456**	.287*	.315*	.142	1	-.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.034	.019	.301		.859
	N	55	55	55	55	55	55
Awareness	Pearson Correlation	-.060	-.057	.150	-.074	-.024	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.666	.680	.274	.592	.859	
	N	55	55	55	55	55	55

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussions

Enactment of laws and policies is easier than implementation since implementation requires the government's capability of facing challenges. Despite having a number of laws, rules, and policies, we see poor governance

and lack of rule of law in many developing countries due to the failure of effective implementation of laws and policies. Scholars argue that the impact of RTI is ideographic and many things such as the social, political, and, historical context of different countries need to be taken into account (Darch and Underwood 2010, 7 cited in Worthy, 2010). Considering the time period since the RTI Act has been in effect in Bangladesh, the implementation progress so far is moderately satisfactory as mentioned in Anam (2009), “Though the RTI Act, 2009 has not fully incorporated all international best practices, yet compared to many countries it is a progressive law,” since, any policy needs a minimum time period to get its momentum for effective implementation. However, that momentum depends on the issues that need to be periodically identified and properly addressed. As Newman and Calland (2007), say “Even the best laws can be rendered meaningless when the myriad of implementation challenges are not addressed.” In the study, many of the officials clearly stressed the need for resources, logistics, and training. The findings from the descriptive statistics suggest that some matters should be addressed. While a number of respondents to the open ended questions specifically emphasized that implementation of RTI Act is a critical component in RTI working, they have identified the following areas as being very important for the RTI Act’s implementation in Bangladesh: financial constraints; manpower and logistics; inaccessibility of ministries and divisions since these

are in restricted areas; negative perception of the people about government; complicated office procedures; applications for old or sensitive information; brokers; and no independent units for providing information. In the open ended questions, officials proposed some recommendations in order to effectively implement RTI laws and policies in Bangladesh. The first three priorities from the open-ended responses reconfirm the findings from the close-ended survey questions.

Although the findings of the study are consistent with the model proposed by Neuman and Calland (2007) and the key issues surrounding RTI information in Bangladesh conform to the findings of some other countries, despite the contextual differences, there are some similarities in Bangladesh's experience to the experiences of other nations in implementation of right to information policies. However, there is some uniqueness in the findings as well. Lessons for other countries are that the government did not introduce RTI policies in Bangladesh willingly; it was triggered and pioneered by non-political government forces, but is being forwarded with commitment by the political government. However, the government has also enacted some new laws, which are against the spirit of RTI policies. This raises debate over whether the government is willing to implement RTI policies.

The RTI Act, 2009 is, to some extent, incompatible with existing administrative

practice and the culture of secrecy. Through content analysis of the websites of the ministries and divisions, it is clear that only large ministries provide proactive information. However, most of the information disclosed is positive, superficial, trivial, and static. The large ministries update their information regularly. There is no negative information that indicates failure of the organizations.

Conclusion

The study contributes to the understanding of RTI implementation in Bangladesh, and provides policy recommendations to address identified issues. The main contribution of the study is that it provides pictures from the implementers of RTI at the highest level of bureaucracy in Bangladesh, which is usually inaccessible for such research. Existing research has not paid attention to the implementers on the core level of civil service in Bangladesh. Future research can be made on the district level implementation of RTI in Bangladesh, as the district is an important administrative unit in Bangladesh. That can show the overall implementation of RTI in Bangladesh. The unique and unexpected features identified can be addressed for better implementation of RTI in Bangladesh.

References

- Agrawal, C (2012). Right to Information: A Tool for Combating Corruption in India. *Journal of Management and Public Policy*. Vol.3. No.2
- Ahmed, A. M (2012). Official Secrecy, Self-Censorship and Political Parallelism, A Study on the Bangladesh Press. *Media ASIA* Vol 39. No.1
- Anam, S. (2009). Ensuring Implementation of RTI following Pro Poor Approach: Role and Potential of Media. *Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)*.
- Baroi, H.S and Panday, P.K (2015). Does Access to Information Facilitate Empowerment of Citizens? Answer Lies within A Recent Example of Bangladesh. *South Asian Journal of Policy and Governance*. Vol 37. No.2
- Baroi, H.S. (2013). Implementation of Right to Information Act, 2009 in Bangladesh: A Study on Union Parishad. An Unpublished MPA Thesis, University of Bergen, Norway. Available online at: <https://bora.uib.no/handle/1956/6875>.
- Darch, C. and Peter, U. (2010). *Freedom of Information in the Developing World: Demand, Compliance and Democratic Behaviours*. Oxford: Chandos.
- Fattah, K.N.(2015). Right to Information (RTI) legislation: the role of infomediaries in enhancing citizens' access to information. *Development in Practice*
- Florini, A. (2007). *The right to know: transparency for an open world*: Columbia University Press.
- Heald, D. (2006). "Varieties of Transparency." In *Transparency: The Key to Better*

- Governance? ed. Christopher Hood and David Heald. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 25–41.
- Hoq, K.M.G (2012). Role of Information for rural development in Bangladesh: A sector wise review. *Information Development*, 28(1), 13-21.
- Hubbard, P. (2008). China's Regulations on Open Government Information: Challenges of Nationwide Policy Implementation. *Open Government: A Journal on Freedom of Information* 4(1). <http://www.opengovjournal.org/article/view/2651/2059> [accessed July 20, 2016].
- Iftekhharuzzaman (2010). Towards People's Right to Information in Bangladesh: High Expectations, Tentative Progress, the Way Forward. *Presented at the Roundtable Discussion organized by the RTI Forum Bangladesh to mark the International Right to Know Day, Dhaka, September 28, 2010.*
- Ingram, H, and Anne, S. (1990). Improving Implementation through Framing Smarter Statutes. *Journal of Public Policy* 10(1): 67–88.
- Khan, M.M .(2003). State of Governance in Bangladesh. *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 92, 391-405.
- Khan, N. U and Akhter, S (2015). Right to Information as an Instrumental Force of Good Governance in South Asia. *South Asian Studies*. Vol 32. No. 1
- Liu, A. C (2016). Two faces of Transparency. The Regulation of People's Republic Of China on Open Government Information. *International Journal of Public Administration*. Vol 39.

No 6

Neuman, L, and Richard C. (2007). Making the Law Work: The Challenges of Implementation.

In *The Right to Know: Transparency for an Open World*, edited by Ann Florini, 179–213.

New York: Columbia University Press.

Piotrowski, S. J., Zhang Y., Lin, W. and Yu, W. (2009). Key Issues for Implementation of

Chinese Open Government Information Regulations, *Public Administration Review*;

Dec 2009:69

Piotrowski, S. J. (2007). Transparency in the Path of Administrative Reform. New York: State

University of New York Press.

Roberts, A. (2006). Blacked Out: Government Secrecy in the Information Age. New York:

Cambridge Press.

----- 2010. A Great and Revolutionary Law? The First Four Years of India's Right to

Information Act, *Public Administration Review*, Nov/Dec 2010:70,6

Rosenbloom, H and Piotrowski, S. J. (2005). Outsourcing the Constitution and

Administrative Law Norms. *American Review of Public Administration*. 35(2): 103-21.

RTI Assessment & Analysis Group (RaaG) and National Campaign for People's Right to

Information (NCPRI). 2009. Safeguarding the Right to Information: Report of the

People's RTI Assessment 2008 (Executive Summary). <[http:// www.rti-](http://www.rti-assessment.org/)

[assessment.org/](http://www.rti-assessment.org/)>. (July 2010).

Sharma, P. (2014), Democracy and Transparency in the Indian State: The Making of the Right

to Information Act (Abingdon and New York: Routledge).

Shepherd, E (2015). Freedom of Information, Right to Access Information, Open Data; Who is at the Table? The Round Table, Vol 104. No 6

Stiglitz, J. (2003). Transparency of Government (Part 1)- Breakthrough for Reforming the Shape of a Nation." *Economics Review*. <https://www.rieti.go.jp/en/special/economics-review/013.html>>. (March, 2018).

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, adopted on 4 November 1972.

The Disclosure of Public Interest Information (Protection) Act, 2011.

The ICT (Amendment) Act, 2013. Dhaka: The Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

The Official Secrets Act, Act No. XIX of 1923.

The Power of Using the Right to Information Act in Bangladesh: Experiences from the Ground, World Bank Institute et al, 2011.

The Right to Information Ordinance, 2008 of Bangladesh. Salient Features, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, 4 December 2008.

The Right to Information Act, 2009. Dhaka: The Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

UDHR 1948. Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Vleugels, R. (2008). Overview of All 86 FOIA Countries. http://www.freedominfo.org/features/FOIA_overview_vleugels.pdf [accessed July 19,

2016].

White, N. (2007). Free and Frank: Making the Official Information Act Work Better.

Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies.

Worthy, B. (2010). More Open but Not More Trusted? The Effect of the Freedom of

Information Act 2000 on the United Kingdom Central Government. *Governance: An*

International of Policy, Administration and Institutions, volume 23, No 4.

Xiao, W. (2009). Freedom of Information Reform in China: An Information Flow Analysis.

Ph.D. thesis: University of Tasmania.

Yu, W. (2011). Open Government Information: Challenges Faced by Public Human Resource

Management in China, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 34 : 879-888,

2011

Essay 2: Why Did Bangladesh Undertake Public Service Innovations?

Introduction

There is a widespread and popular perception that governments are not working and they are ineffective in meeting citizens' demands. Governments need to reinvent themselves to meet citizens' expectations. With the free flow of information, the growth of informed citizens has increased pressure on governments to become more accountable and transparent. Although governments all over the world have been shifting from many of the responsibilities of operators to facilitators, any failure, anywhere in the state, ultimately falls on the government. In that sense, government is still central to any society. Therefore, public service needs to be more competent than before. Without innovation in government, the bureaucracy will not be able to play its role in an ever-changing environment. Innovation in public service is central to meeting the increasing challenges and this means to socio-economic development of the society. Public Service Innovation (PSI) is a key driver in making public organizations more effective in facing challenges, solving problems, and fulfilling citizens' demands.

PSI has gained new momentum since the wave of New Public Management

(NPM). By the 1990s, NPM became popular in many nations. Bangladesh was not an exception to this trend. After the post NPM era, over recent decades, many countries, both developed and developing countries have adopted public sector innovations with a fundamental objective of improving government performance. Of note is that the public sector accounts for a significant portion of GDP in most countries and public sectors play a vigorous role in socio-economic development (Evans et al. 1985; Adelman, 1999). However, public sector organizations and their activities are uncomfortable guests in innovation studies, which is why their presence is very scant in literature (Freeman, 1987; Lundvall, 1992; Nelson, 1993; Edquist, 1997, 2005., LSE Public Policy Group, 2008; Mulgan & Albury, 2003; Vigoda-Gadot et al 2008).

Empirical works devoted to public service innovation have long been scarce. It is important to note that most of the pioneering PSI studies are on the experiences of developed countries while developing countries are largely neglected. However, since the 1990s, literature on PSI in developing countries has been surging, though it is still limited. For example, in the case of China, Zhu (2014) focuses on innovation and its diffusion in public service in authoritarian China and finds that classic theoretical hypotheses on geographical proximity, competition, and vertical intervention concerning innovation diffusion need to be modified. Wu, Ma, and Yang (2011) identified types of innovation in the Chinese

public sector such as management, service, and collaborative innovation and found that city and county levels appear to be more innovative than their counterparts at other levels in central and western China. This is also important to note that the objectives of PSI in developed countries are different from those of developing countries, although the fundamental objective in each is to improve governance. Developed countries have been facing a number of challenges such as slow growth, budget constraints, shrinking population etc. However, they have administrative capacity to carry out PSI and they are adopting NPM style management. On the other hand, developing countries with growing economies and increasing public expenditures have more opportunities to face innumerable challenges and bring visible changes in governance. However, they have less capacity to undertake and carry out public service innovations.

Innovation in the public sector is relatively new in the developing countries such as in Bangladesh. Since achieving independence in 1971, there have been difficulties in political, social and economic conditions in Bangladesh. The changing political and economic contexts have always placed demands on bureaucracy to improve public service (Siddique, 2007). In the past, government has responded with such demands prescribed by donor agencies due to over-dependence on aid. As a result, many of the reforms were geared towards structural changes in line with the market economy. Although there are many

criticisms against the donor funded and guided reform initiatives, these have helped to some extents, improve administrative capacity.

This is interesting to point that Bangladesh shows a major departure from previous reform efforts since 2009 when the Government of Bangladesh set up permanent institutions in order to spur innovations in bureaucracy in order to make civil service more effective and efficient. With clear objectives, direction, vision, and mission, these initiatives show conspicuous features compared to past attempts in the sense that these are more target oriented and comprehensive in nature. A Governance Innovation Unit (GIU) has been set up and an Access to Information (a2i) program has been undertaken in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Moreover, a Reform and Coordination unit has been created in the Cabinet division, which is also headed by the Prime Minister. Being comprehensive in nature, these PSI initiatives affect a larger area of public service in Bangladesh. Being a developing country with lack of resources and capacities, why has Bangladesh undertaken such radical and comprehensive innovations in the public sector? Put in other words, which factors have pushed Bangladesh to undertake PSI? The answer is, in general sense, assumed to improve government performance. Then, to what extent has public service innovation improved government performance in Bangladesh? This paper aims to analyze public service innovations in Bangladesh focusing on these questions from the point of

view of the innovation officials of the ministry/division. This study interviewed and surveyed the designated innovation officers in the ministries and divisions to understand PSI in Bangladesh from their perspectives; it also discussed selected innovative projects. In this paper, I explain the background of public service innovations in Bangladesh, discuss the current contexts of PSI, and explore why Bangladesh has undertaken PSI and to what extent PSI has improved government performance. Finally policy recommendations have been provided.

Research Questions

Based on available research on public service innovations in general as well as in the context of Bangladesh, this study tries to explore the following questions;

1. Why did Bangladesh undertake public service innovations?
2. To what extent have public service innovations improved Government Performance in Bangladesh?

Public Service Innovations in Bangladesh: Contexts and Overview

Public service innovation has become a key driver in connecting citizens and solving their problems in Bangladesh. Since independence in 1971, a number of reform committee/commissions have been set up. However, there was no institutional set up for promoting reform. Because, all the committees/commissions were formed on an ad-hoc basis. Since 2009, the Government of Bangladesh has set up formal and regular institutions to carry out

innovations in Bangladesh Public Service. These are: Reform Wing under the Cabinet Division, the Governance Innovation Unit (GIU) under the Prime Minister's Office, Access to Information (a2i) program in collaboration with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) etc. Moreover, Government has introduced the Public Administration Award (PAA) for innovative ideas and solutions since 2016. This is a major tool for promoting innovation in public service and has had a transformative effect. A citizens' charter was introduced in 2007, while the second generation of the citizens' charter is under preparation. Like private sectors, public organizations are setting the goals and objectives with the introduction of an Annual Performances Agreement (APA). The Ministry of Finance has started performance based budgeting and gender budgeting. The government has hired a CEO in government organization from the private sector, i.e. the office of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC). The Cabinet Division has decided to create a "Research Wing" and a "Law Wing" to provide the government with "research input in policymaking, development activities, and legal affairs (The New Age, 2017). There will be a pool of officials who will be exclusively engaged in research throughout the year. The research wing is supposed to help with administrative reform in various sectors for better functioning of the civil bureaucracy.

In 2007, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Cabinet Division initiated whole-of-government service process simplification (SPS) work (Chowdhury and Zaman, 2014). The main objective is to reduce TCV: (a) time to receive a service; (b) cost (fees, travel cost, opportunity and other contingent liabilities) and (c) number of visits to government offices to complete and receive a service. This style of reform work spread across many public services. Under the e-Government category, this innovative program works with the motto "Services @ Citizens' Doorsteps" received the prestigious World Summit Information Society (WSIS) Award 2014. The Governance Innovation Unit (GIU) and Access to Information (a2I) under Prime Minister's Office, and the Civil Service Change Management Program (CSCMP) under the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) are playing key roles in designing and implementing public service innovations in Bangladesh. The cabinet division is doing overall coordination of public service innovation in Bangladesh civil service (see the Civil Service Structure in Bangladesh in Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Civil Service Structure in Bangladesh

The Reform Wing under the Cabinet Division

The Prime Minister heads the Cabinet Division and the Cabinet Secretary is the senior most secretary of the Government. This division is mandated to coordinate all ministries and divisions regarding public service innovation in Bangladesh. In 2013, the Cabinet Division formed Innovation Teams in all

ministries, divisions, departments, districts, and upazilla (sub-district) level organizations. Innovation teams carry out activities such as Innovation Circles on the division level, Student Innovation Camp, Service Innovation Fund Projects under A2I, Government Direction to use Social Media, Workshops and Trainings, Innovation Piloting and Replication of Successful projects.

Governance Innovation Unit (GIU)

In 2012, the Government of Bangladesh formed the Governance Innovation Unit (GIU) in the Prime Minister's Office to serve as a catalyst for innovation and good governance. The head of this unit is one of the Advisers of the Prime Minister with the status of a full Minister. The current head of the unit has a wide range of experience working as Director of the Ash Centre for democratic Governance and Innovation in the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. The main objective of this organization is to facilitate the generation and installation of innovative ideas and practices in the public service. It undertakes different initiatives to develop the capacity of the individuals as well as the organizations in public sectors. The GIU focuses on good governance and innovation through four strategies;

1. Research: It assists government organizations by identifying national and international best practices for replication and scaling up.

2. Liaison and Outreach: It partners with relevant private sector, academic, civil society and international organizations.
3. Capacity Development: It fosters an innovative culture among public servants to encourage qualitative changes through “Putting Citizens First.”
4. Implementation: The GIU has authority to ensure implementation of priority projects.

GIU identifies several Path Finder Ministries (PFM) that have more direct interaction with citizens. The PFM form Work Improvement Teams (WIT) to bring qualitative changes to their work culture. They are assigned to encourage and motivate peers, make suggestions for cutting red tape, improve service delivery, and identify success stories. The GIU formulated a training module in cooperation with the Civil Service Change Management Program (CSCMP) and trained 720 government employees until 2015. The seven path finder ministries were assigned to undertake and implement seven innovative cases (Monem, 2015).

Access to Information (a2i)

The primary goal of Access to Information (a2i) is to ensure easy, affordable, and reliable access to quality public services for all citizens of Bangladesh (a2i, 2017). It empowers civil servants with the tools, expertise, knowledge, and resources for undertaking innovative approaches for citizen-centric solutions in

collaboration with non-government actors, including small entrepreneurs, (a2i, 2017). A2i drives the creation of a public service innovation ecosystem and delivery infrastructure from the Prime Minister's Office, working closely with the Cabinet Division (a2i, 2017). It focuses on cultivating empathy; reducing time, cost and visits (TCV); service process simplification (SPS) supporting innovation through service innovation fund, etc. So far, a2i has empowered thousands of civil servants and launched "Innovation Projects" around the country. Over 100,000 civil servants and thousands of Digital Centre Entrepreneurs have been trained to implement e-services centrally created by many ministries with facilitation from a2i. 10,000 digital centers across the country and the National Portal, uniting 43,000+ government offices, now deliver over 100 services – both public and private – to an average 4.5 million underserved citizens. (a2i, 2017).

Some successful innovative projects are health services through community radio; a driver behavior monitoring system; a device for the speech disabled to help them communicate; a mobile based agricultural marketing information dissemination system; an E-learning platform for migrant workers, etc. The government has reformed the pre-migration departure process bringing together three ministries and subordinate offices. Countrywide online registration was done in Union Digital Centres (UDCs) which have played an important role in

reducing TCVs associated with migration (Chowdhry and Zaman 2013). It should be noted that Bangladesh is one of the top recipients of the foreign remittances among the least developed countries. With the success of UDCs, Bhutan, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal and few other developing countries are seeking the advice of the government of Bangladesh in setting up similar service delivery centers (Zaman, 2015).

Citizens' Charter

The concept of a citizens' charter came to the Bangladesh government in 2000 with the recommendation by the Public Administration Reform Committee (PARC). According to the direction of the Cabinet Division and the then Ministry of Establishment which is now called Ministry of Public Administration, all the ministries/divisions and subordinate offices implemented the citizens' charter. With the help of the Civil Service Change Management Program (CSCMP), the second-generation citizens' charter initiative was piloted and is now being implemented.

National Integrity System (NIS)

The National Integrity System (NIS) is the sum of all institutional structures (pillars), legal frameworks, and processes to address governance deficits. The NIS concept has been used for assessing the institutional effectiveness in addressing corruption. The stakeholders are the government, civil society

organizations, and other components of society. The NIS can facilitate bringing integrity into institutions, which will improve governance. Although the Government recently approved the NIS, its recommendations for different accountability institutions have been evolving and are in different stages of implementation.

Annual Performance Agreement (APA)

In order to ensure transparency, accountability, and proper utilization of resources, the Government has introduced a Performance Management System (PMS) in public sector organizations. Annual Performance Agreements (APAs) are made between the Cabinet Division as the 1st party and all other ministries/divisions as the 2nd parties. This will move public service organizations from process-orientation to result-orientation, and will provide an objective for evaluating overall performance of the ministry/division at the end of the year.

Public Administration Award

The government of Bangladesh introduced the annual Public Administration Award (PAA) in 2016 for successful innovative projects, which have a significant impact nationwide. The award is given to individuals, organizations, or groups. This has emerged as a major tool for promoting innovations in the public sector in Bangladesh. It should be noted that this type of program was first introduced

in the USA and was then replicated in a large number of countries such as Brazil, Chile, China, Kenya, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, and Singapore. In addition, there are the UN public administration award, and the Commonwealth public administration award, which are applicable to all member states of the UN and the Commonwealth respectively.

Literature Review

The concept of public service innovation has evolved with the idea of “thinking outside the box” with considerable imagination and the ability to think in a non-linear fashion. There is no set definition of public service innovation found in the PSI literature. This is because innovation research became popular in the study of business management and organization and most research on innovation and adoption of innovation still focuses on the private sector (Damanpour and Schneider 2009; Moore and Hartely 2010, Bessant, 2005; Michel, Brown, & Gallan, 2008 ; Oke, 2007 cited in Alves, 2013).

The Public Service Innovation came into the forefront in 1996 when the Ford Foundation, a New York based globally renowned private foundation working for human welfare, encouraged innovations in the State and Local Government Awards Programme. In addition, US President Bill Clinton promoted innovative ideas, programmes and approaches during 1990s as a major component in reinventing the government.

Despite efforts by many scholars to provide a common definition, valid in all contexts, this has been a difficult task (Koch & Hauknes, 2005; Windrum, 2008) as the understanding of innovation depends on the context from which it is undertaken (Koch & Hauknes, 2005). Public service innovation is a process of creating or developing projects, services, institutions or policies that are relatively new to the government regardless of whether the same program has been previously adopted in another place (Boehmke and Witmer 2004; Roger, 1983). It integrates new ideas and transforms them into social value (Mulgan, 2007; Bason, 2010), may be either incremental, reflecting small changes to already existing services and process, or radical, involving new services or solutions (Mulgan & Albury, 2003). PSI is significantly improved product or process, method in business practices (Bloch and Bugge, 2013; Monem, 2015; OECD, 2007; Innobarometer, 2010).

From the governance viewpoint, PSI relates to new forms of citizen engagement and democratic institutions. A service that reduces cost, time and hassle is innovative. Its ultimate goal is to create public value and social justice. PSI is a process that requires a shift in thinking, solving problems for people, delivering services more effectively and efficiently fulfilling citizens' expectations, improving existing things to better people's lives, replicating an idea to a new context, or developing a new service, process, policy or tool. Professor Stephen

Goldsmith from Harvard Kennedy School of Government defines innovation as “Better, faster, cheaper focus on innovative ideas for governments looking to provide real value to the public while lowering the cost of services.” The OECD Observatory has identified that public sector innovation must be implemented and make an impact that improves efficiency and effectiveness, and meets users’ satisfaction. All the definitions have some common characteristics such as new or significant changes in the process of accomplishing something.

The important question is why do countries undertake public service innovations? Public service problems are complex, and sometimes unsolvable through existing tools and approaches. When the legitimacy of the government is challenged, crisis in governance arises; the challenge for government is to provide better services with limited resources. Everywhere, there is a growing demand by the citizens, civil societies and media for improving the services. The capacity building of public management organizations is essential in arriving at solutions to challenging and complex problems through innovative approaches. The search for better governance is mainly driven by the concerns that government is ineffective, expensive and not responsive to citizens. The growing trend in the public sector across the world, especially in developed economies, is the budget deficit (Scott-Kemmis, 2009). Consequently, there is much pressure to reduce cost and maximize efficiency (Bason, 2010, IDEA, 2005; Mulgan &

Albury, 2003; Scott-Kemmis, 2009). In the case of the USA, the government is faced with budgetary constraints to many of their social services or devolved responsibilities to state or local governments. In the case of the UK in 2010, the formation of a Coalition Government prompted the public sector reform due to a huge budgetary deficit.

In developing countries, there are more dire circumstances. In many developing countries, the long military rule created clientele groups and accumulated resources for the elite classes. The basic state building activities were neglected. There has been a clear divide between urban and rural areas. Governments need to come up with innovative solutions to overcome societal challenges (Bason, 2010; Commonwealth of Australia, 2010; Cotton & Leadbeater, 2004). Many factors such as budgets, citizens' expectations, economic, social and environmental challenges, together push government to undertake innovation in public service (Bloch et al, 2009; Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, 2010; Kaul, 1997 ; Mulgan & Albury, 2003 ; Scott-Kemmis, 2009).

According to Stephen Goldsmith and William D. Eggers (2004), changes in governance styles in recent years were prompted by factors such as expansion in the role of "Third Party Government," joined-up government, digital revolutions and increased demands from citizens. Government effectiveness of countries ranked by the World Bank suggest that governance reforms or innovations are

needed in all countries. According to the level of effectiveness, developed countries need isolated or small reforms to fine-tune their governance. On the other hand, some countries with moderate effectiveness may need both large scale and small-scale reform. The third category of countries with a low level of government effectiveness need large-scale reforms or innovations, otherwise there will be no or little impact on governance. The ranking of government effectiveness provides impetus to low performing countries to undertake reforms or public service innovations. Through diffusion of innovations, countries are learning best practices from other countries by contextualizing innovations in the recipient country.

International organizations such as the World Bank, IMF, and ADB play key roles in pressuring governments in developing countries to undertake reforms or innovative programs on aid conditionalities. Kinder (2012) argues that expectations of public service users have changed dramatically from the old supply-driven model towards users expecting service quality comparable with good private services. A study on reinventing public service delivery in India by Punit, Arora (2006) identified factors such as citizen pressure, which generated political will, which in turn, generated an administrative necessity, media's role in mobilising and sustaining citizen pressure and political support to the administrative service for innovation in service delivery. Since public agencies

are missions-, needs- and mandates- driven, to attempt innovation and fail is not welcome and creativity and challenging the status quo is also difficult. Risk aversion is in the very characteristic of public organizations (Mulgan & Albury, 2003; Ross et al, 2004; Potts, 2009; Windrum and Koch, 2008) and is a barrier to innovation. Public organizations have less freedom to substitute resources (Knox Lovell, 2002; Dunleavy et al., 2006) than do private ones.

The dominant argument is that public services innovation is a top down process which is initiated by political decisions and implemented by senior management (Hartely, 2005). However, this has been challenged by many empirical works which show that innovations are derived from the bottom up process and initiated by middle management and front-line employees. Kinder (2012) has argued that expectations of public users have changed dramatically from the old supply driven model and the author has suggested a new theoretical framework of listening and learning. Saravanan and Sheedhar (2011) argue that for innovation, governments need to be frugal, participation of all stakeholders is required, and design of the organization is necessary so that it can promote innovation. Marin and Bermijo, (2015) explain that there is a significant relationship between the use of information, both external and internal, and implementation of innovations by public organizations.

The consequent issue is whether public service innovations do improve

government performance. In the last two decades, particularly in the developed countries, there have been numerous innovations in governance which has made government more effective and citizen-centric. Innovative public service is necessary for providing better and efficient service. Stewart-Weeks and Kastle (2015) argue that the public sector needs to be inspired to engage in innovations and new ideas. Blanco (2015) argues that innovation has become a sort of magic word and no one opposes innovative initiatives when they are associated with positive values such as efficiency, responsiveness, proactivity, and creativity. The empirical studies show that innovations generate cost savings, citizen satisfaction and better outcomes (Bason, 2010) and improve the image of the public sector (Bloch et al., 2009; Vigoda-Gadot, Shoham, Schwabsky, & Ruvio, 2008). It also boosts innovation in private sectors (Bloch et al., 2009; Lee, Lim & Pathak, 2011; Yang & Li, 2011). Through the co-creation of value, public organizations may generate innovative solutions and successfully deal with social issues (Bason, 2010; Cotton & Leadbeater, 2004). Contrary to this view, some scholars argue that PSI does not necessarily entail progress (Baumgarner and Jones, 2009). Kinder (2012) argues that performance resulting from innovation will become increasingly important to public service organizations. Hartley (2005) argues that innovative projects deliver more public value. According to CAPAM (2011), performance of the public sector is gauged by the effectiveness and efficiency of

the public services delivered by it.

Based on the literature review, the following framework in Figure 2.2 can be drawn which illustrates why countries, particularly developing countries, undertake public service innovations.

Figure 2.2: Public Service Innovations Framework

Methods

The study conducted an in depth interview of chief innovation officers and a survey of members of Innovation teams of all ministries and divisions in the

Government of Bangladesh. There are 56 ministries/divisions in the Government of Bangladesh, which are the key organizations for policy formulations and implementations. The innovation team in each ministry is responsible for taking, implementing, coordinating and disseminating innovative projects through departments and subordinate organizations under the ministry/division. The middle/senior level officials answered questionnaires. Interviews were conducted during the period of March/April, 2016 and December 2016. A total of 45 respondents were interviewed, while 53 respondents filled out survey questionnaires (see Appendix-II to IV). The interviews were conducted in person and typically lasted around 30 minutes. Qualitative data analysis techniques were employed to organize as well as to analyze the collected data. The recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The transcripts were thematically analyzed to obtain the unique perspectives of the key innovation officials. As the first step, open coding of the transcripts was done which was followed with axial coding to create a smaller list of categories. Selective coding was finally done to interpret the data. The results reflect unique pictures in the narratives of public officials in Bangladesh.

Analysis consists of reporting qualitative data and descriptive statistics. In addition, selected successful innovation cases have been analyzed.

The study also conducted field visits to the Governance Innovation Unit (GIU)

in the Prime Minister's office in December, 2015 for several days and interviewed key officials of the Habiganj district from January 10 through January 14, 2018 on the occasion of the National development fair where all the government departments showcased their innovative activities. I visited every stall and interviewed officials.

Why Did Bangladesh Undertake Public Service Innovations?

As discussed in the literature review section, there are many factors which pushes countries to undertake PSI; those factors differ from developed country to developing country as well as from country-to-country. Contextual reality in Bangladesh is different from developed nations and even from other developing countries. Globalization and technological advancement have brought changes in the socio-economic, political, cultural and organizational milieu in Bangladesh (GIU, 2015). That is why some factors are more important than others for public service innovations in Bangladesh.

National Vision called "Vision 2021"

The Government of Bangladesh has developed "Vision 2021" to make Bangladesh a middle- income country by 2021 when Bangladesh will celebrate 50 years of independence. The Vision consists of eight goals which are: to become a participatory democracy: to have an efficient, accountable, transparent and decentralized system of governance: to become a poverty-free

middle-income country; to have a nation of healthy citizens; to develop a skilled and creative human resource; to become a globally integrated regional economic and commercial hub; to be environmentally sustainable; and to be a more inclusive and equitable society. Bangladesh civil society arranged dialogues across the country, under the title of National Election 2007: Civil Society Initiative for Accountable Development, and handed over “Vision 2021” document to the leaders of major political parties at the time of critical political transition in the country. This is mentioned in goal two that government with strong capacity for policy-making, effective governance and managing the economy is required. The challenge for the government will be to keep pace with the rapid changes in the global economy, through adapting to a more professional culture. An effective, efficient, and innovative public management system is a must and Public service has been working as catalyst to fulfil “Vision 2021.”

In fulfilling National Vision, leadership role in bureaucracy is important. Respondents have said that they receive regular support from the highest levels such as the Cabinet division and the Prime Minister’s Office, which are mandated to conduct monthly meetings on the progress of PSI in their ministries and are required to provide reports to the cabinet division. The institutional arrangements keep them active in carrying out PSI. The following

statements by the respondents reflect the role of leadership and national vision;

“Prime Minister’s Office and Cabinet Division are working as driving forces”

(Respondent 13)

“Digital Bangladesh slogan itself is working as a motivation for public service

innovation” (Respondent 21)

“Government initiatives and resources are speeding up public service

innovations in Bangladesh” (Respondent 3)

“Secretary is self-motivated; it works as a driving force” (Respondent 28)

Economic Growth Demands Better Governance

As governments all over the world have been facing myriad challenges due to the complexities of globalization, they need to respond to a variety of challenges and demands by citizens through efficient, effective, convenient and quality service delivery. There is an increasing need and demand for more efficient public services. The quality of governance has been recognized as an important ingredient of economic growth (Mahmud, 2014). This is mostly visible that a low level of income and poor governance perpetuate each other. However, Bangladesh is an exception; the growth itself is creating demand for better governance. Although good governance facilitates economic growth, the case of Bangladesh, despite the non-existence of the majority of the elements of good governance, the country has shown remarkable economic and social

development that can be a model of development for other developing countries. This has been achieved despite many growth retarding factors such as lack of resources and land scarcity, natural disasters, widespread corruption, and governance failure (Asadullah et al, 2014, Mahmud, 2008, Mahmud et al 2008). Scholars, particularly economists from the World Bank have termed this “Paradox” or “Development Surprise.” They warn that this growth is not sustainable if the governance is not improved. Reforms or innovations in public service are a must in order to do this. It may not be possible to maintain steady economic growth in future if such governance deficit exists. The economic growth has created demands for changes in governance, which pushes government to undertake public service innovations.

Globalization and the Role of International Organizations

Globalization is a process, which is inevitable and irreversible. Globalization has posed challenges and opportunities for many developing countries as well as Bangladesh. However, developing countries are at disadvantageous position to reap the potential benefit from globalization due to incapacities in various arena. Bangladesh faces pressure from development partners to bring changes in governance in order to reap the advantages of globalization by attracting foreign direct investments. International organizations such as the UNDP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and USAID took active interest in reform

activities in Bangladesh. NPM style reforms advocated by IDAs such as WB and IMF got impetus in Bangladesh (Sarker, 2004; WB, 1996, Uddin, 2005 cited in Rabbi and As-Saber, 2012). In particular, the Administrative Reorganization Committee (ARC) and the Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) were established by the government to satisfy its development partners (Uddin, 2005; Sarker, 2004 cited in Rabbi and As-Saber, 2012). Thus, IDAs actively influenced the civil service reform process in Bangladesh by sponsoring reform studies and imposing reform conditionality with aid. However, their influences have decreased significantly in recent times because Bangladesh has gradually become less dependent on aid.

“There is a change in the role of international organizations compared to the past; they have less influence in prescribing regarding any reform”
(Respondent 5)

Citizen Pressure and the Role of Civil Society Organizations

The civil society of the country has become increasingly active in pursuing causes of governance and good governance. Civil society groups like Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Adhikar, and Shushashoner Jonney Nagorik (SUJON) are acting as pressure groups in advocating for good governance-based administrative reforms and ensuring transparency, accountability and efficiency in the public sector (WB, 2002). The government,

civil society, and citizens keenly felt the need for reform and innovation to improve governance. The following statements reflect the views of the respondents.

“Citizens are much more aware now. They post any problem in the social media and we need to respond immediately as we are monitored by the senior officials in Facebook Group page.” (Respondent 17)

“Civil Society Organizations or NGOs are very active nowadays. They frequently come to media on governance issues and speak on behalf of citizens.”(Respondent 11)

Lessons from other Countries

Innovations in the public sector create transnational opportunities for countries to learn from one another. The U.K. pursued innovation in government earlier than other countries. The government of Bangladesh has taken lessons from the United Kingdom, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia and some other developed countries in creating a Governance Innovation Unit (GIU) in 2012 in the Prime Minister’s office to ensure fast, efficient and cost effective services to citizens. In hiring CEOs from private sectors, lessons were taken from developed nations. This type of initiative was first taken in the UK during the period of the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, which was later followed by some other countries such as the USA, Japan, and New Zealand. The Introduction of

Public Administration Award (PAA) for innovative ideas and solutions was first implemented in the USA and then spread to many other countries. This is a major tool for promoting innovation in Public service and it has a transformative effect.

“We are regularly doing research how to take best practices from similar countries and try to contextualize.” (Respondent from GIU)

To what extent have public service innovations improved government performance?

The main objective of public service innovations is to improve performance. 77.34% of the respondents reported that innovation in their organizations has improved service quality, while 92.45% said that innovation has improved the image of the organization, and 84.89% reported that innovation has enhanced client satisfaction. However, in the interview, the respondents have pointed some issues, which show that there are some constraints prevailing in carrying out PSI affect government performances. These are fear of taking risks, civil service cultures, lack of understanding of concept of innovation, lack of incentives and lack of skilled manpower. The following statements reflect the respondents' views;

“Those, who work more, have more chance to make mistakes, ultimately may fall in problem, so, many of the officials do not dare to take risks, rather they maintain status quo.”(Respondent 11).

“Some senior officials do not have clear understanding of innovation; they do not accept or encourage new ideas, always sticks to the rules and regulation (Respondent 19)

“We do not have any financial incentives to carry out innovations; moreover, we do not have skilled manpower (Respondent 25)

“Bureaucracy has been politicized to some extents. Due to unfair practices in promotion and placements, many good officers are not motivated to take innovative initiatives” (Respondent 5)

Adoption of ICT has brought the government closer to the people and has cut cost and period of service delivery. It saves citizens multiple visits to government offices. ICT plays a key role in cutting the costs of the government and increasing access to the people. Many of the obsolete government procedures are being simplified. The government is incorporating some private sector innovative concepts such as performance-based budgeting. A study of 23 services over a period of 6 years revealed that simplification and digitization saved citizens over half a billion dollars. On average, time in which services are received has been reduced by 85%, the cost by 63% and the number of visits by 40%. Bangladesh's success in public service innovation is being recognized internationally. The governments of Maldives and Bhutan have established a learning partnership with a2i to facilitate their own Innovation.

Rural level digital centers are successful cases of PSI in Bangladesh. This is to note that, in Bangladesh, 91.19 million people out of 160 million of the population, roughly 55% of the total population have access to the internet, whereas the mobile penetration is 92% (BTRC, 2018). Millions of people, both urban and rural, still remain out of connectivity. The Existing digital divide is a great barrier to citizens gaining access to public service in Bangladesh. Rural level digital centers not only prevent the digital divide but also reduce the economic, social, and educational divide. The digital centers serve almost five million people every month. Rural level digital centers are helping to bridge the digital divides particularly to the vulnerable people living in remote areas of Bangladesh.

Another PSI initiative is to use Social media, particularly the use of Facebook to address citizens' issues. It has become instrumental in addressing citizens' problems as well as implementing and disseminating of small-scale innovations in the public sector in Bangladesh. "Public Service Innovation Bangladesh" – a Facebook group for civil servants -- has become a common platform for Bangladesh Civil Service's internal communications system as well as for networking with citizens. In addition, social media has facilitated small scale innovations in public service in Bangladesh to, its dissemination and networking of public servants and citizens. Small- scale public service innovations are

breaking century-old bureaucratic cultures in connecting citizens to the network of Public service. A significant number of public service innovation projects are focused on connecting citizens through providing e services.

Discussion

Bangladesh being a developing country, has undertaken institutional initiatives to carry out public service innovations propelled by the factors discussed earlier. The study shows some positive pictures of how public service innovation is improving government performance in Bangladesh through reducing time, costs and visits. The use of social media has increased transparency and contributed to breaking the traditional bureaucratic cultures. The active participation of senior level bureaucrats has made it compulsory for others to participate and respond regarding particular issues in their organizations. Innovations under e-government schemes have improved service delivery. Major government departments such as passports and immigration, and taxation have made the provisions of online services very convenient to the citizens and have cut paper work. The citizens find websites very useful since all the government forms have been brought into a single portal.

Though there are some positive pictures, some constraining factors identified by the respondents need to be taken into consideration such as the traditional mentality and attitudes of the senior bureaucrat, lack of flexibility, unethical and

corrupt practices etc. Moreover, unfair practices in providing promotion, placements, and training are diminishing the spirit of bureaucrats in the sense that they consider innovative activities to be like other routine work and they are not pro-actively engaged. Without addressing these vital issues, attempts at public service innovations will not bring significant results in the end.

Despite some improvements, public services in general suffer from a bad image. PSI is found to have an insignificant impact on public service. In the newspaper and online, the public severely criticizes the government, which indicates that public service has failed to meet citizens' expectations to a large extent. In a survey conducted by TIB, it has been found that most of the surveyed citizens have provided bribes in order to obtain services.

Limitations and future studies

The study of public sector innovations in Bangladesh has practical, theoretical, and methodological significance. Practically, understanding the perspectives of designated innovation officers of ministries/divisions is helpful for public sector organizations in implementing appropriate strategies in carrying out public service innovations. Moreover, it will help public managers and practitioners to promote innovations in government.

It has been only a few years since PSI has taken its journey through formal institutional set up in Bangladesh. There is not adequate literature on PSI in

Bangladesh to understand the implementation phenomenon of innovative practices and projects. This study will contribute to understanding current policies and practices in public sector innovations in Bangladesh. Policy recommendations from the implementers' point of view can help improve ongoing innovative practices, which is helpful for other developing countries and adds to the innovation literature.

Due to time and resource constraints, only ministries/ divisions have been considered for this study. To get a holistic picture of public service innovation in Bangladesh, future studies can be conducted on a district level administration and other public sector organizations. Moreover, innovative projects that have been awarded public administration awards can be included in future studies.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that a number of factors are significant in undertaking public service innovations in Bangladesh. It is too early to assess whether comprehensive institutional arrangements in carrying out public service innovations have improved government performance. To some extent, the impact of public service innovations is visible in many ways such as in reduction of time, costs, and steps in the process telecasting success stories in the media; replication of successful cases; innovation appreciation awards to citizens; citizen journalism etc. However, it can be said that so far, no

significant improvement in governance is visible as different rankings, such as the ranking of government effectiveness and Transparency International's corruption perception index show a dismal picture. Having some underlying problems, such as politicization of bureaucracy, corruption, and an ineffective system of performance appraisals, rewards and punishment, it is highly unlikely that there will be visible impact through public service innovations. Policy suggestions such as financial incentives, recognition for best performances, flexibility to carry out innovations, capacity building through training, and change of mind-sets need to be taken into consideration.

Bangladesh is one of the few developing countries that has achieved most of the millennium's development goals (MDGs) and taken out a plan to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The narratives on Bangladesh have been changed from "test case of development" to "development surprise" over the years. However, whether Bangladesh can prove or disprove the established theory of "growth-governance nexus," will depend on effective reforms or innovations in public service, which will catalyze socio-economic development in order to achieve Bangladesh's "Vision 2021," to become a middle -income country by 2021.

References

- Adelman, I. (1999): Fallacies in Development Theory and Their Implications for Policy. Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Policy Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources University of California At Berkeley. Working Paper No. 887
- Alves, H. (2013). Co-creation and innovation in public services. *The Service Industries Journal*.
- Asadullah, M. N., Savoia, A and Mahmud, W. (2014), “Paths to development: Is there a Bangladesh surprise?”, *World Development*, Vol. 62, pp. 138-54.
- Background paper for the conference, “Innovating the Public Sector: from Ideas to Impact” Paris, 12-13 November 2014
- Bason, C. (2010). *Leading public sector innovation: Co-creating for a better society*. Bristol. The Policy Process
- BBS (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics). (2016). *Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh, 2016*, Dhaka: Bangladesh
- Bessant, J. (2005). Enabling continuous and discontinuous innovation: Learning from the private sector. *Public Money & Management*, 25(1), 35–42.
- Boehmke, F.J and Witmer, R (2004). Disentangling Diffusion: The Effects of Social and Economic Competition on State Policy Innovation and Expansion. *Political Research Quarterly*. 57(1). pp39-51
- BRAC (2006). *The State of Governance in Bangladesh 2006*, Dhaka, BRAC CGS

Blanco, I (2015). Yes, You Can: The “Who,” the “Why,” the “What,” and the “How” of Innovation in American Government. *Public Administration Review*. May

Bloch, C and Bugge, M.M (2013). Public Sector Innovation-From theory to measurement. *Structural Change and Economics Dynamics*.

Bloch, C., Jørgensen, L.L., Norn, M.T., & Vad, T.B. (2009). Public Sector Innovation Index – A Diagnostic Tool for measuring innovative performance and capability in public sector organizations. Exploratory project commissioned by NESTA, Aarhus University. Retrieved from http://api.ning.com/files/jC-fU5zf06DSyBPjVIA9lJsGe3rY*skrYfNcrKhYgrI*Tfwcse2EHRM9tYCap*ovEmkAMdfeS6tNtNINLLO9QKzIgvdG1bFF/CFADAMVADPSIIDiagnosticTool.pdf

BTRC. (2018). <http://www.btrc.gov.bd/>

Chowdhury, A and Zaman, H (2013). Rethinking Migration: Role of Microenterprise in Bangladesh. *Economic and Political Weekly* 48(40): 23-25

Chowdhury, A and Zaman, H (2014). Embedding Innovation in Government’s DNA: Lessons from Bangladesh. *Information Technology in developing Countries*. 24(2) 9-12. Ahmedabad. Indian Institute of Management.

Commonwealth of Australia. (2010). Empowering change: Fostering innovation in the Australian Public Service. Barton, Australia. Retrieved from http://www.innovation.gov.au/Innovation/PublicSectorInnovation/Documents/Empowering_Change.pdf

- Cottam, H., & Leadbeater, C. (2004). *Health: Co-creating services*. Red Paper 01. London: Design Council.
- CAPAM (2011). *Service delivery, Government and the Citizen*. Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management. 17(2). 10-13.
- Devarajan, Shantayanam.(2008). “Two Comments on Governance Indicators: Where are We, Where Should We be Going.” Daniel Kaufman and Aart Kraay.” In *The World Bank Research Observer*. 23(1),31-34.
- Dunleavy, P., Margetts, H., Bastow, S., Tinkler, J.,(2006). *Digital Era Governance*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Edquist, C.,(2005). Systems of innovation: perspectives and challenges. In: Fagerberg, J., Mowery, D.C., Neldon, R.R. (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Innovation*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 181–208.
- Edquist, C. (Ed.), (1997). *Systems of Innovation: technologies. Institutions and Organizations*, Pinter.
- Evans, P. B. – Rueschemeyer, D. – Skocpol, T. (1985): *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge University Press
- Freeman, C., (1987). *Technology Policy and Economic Performance: Lessons from Japan*. Pinter, London.
- Goldsmith, S. and Eggers, W. D (2004). *Governing by Network*. Washington D.C. Brookings Institution Press.

Grindle, M. S.(2004). “Good Enough Governance: Poverty Reduction and Reform in Developing Countries.” *Governance* 17(4), 525-548.

Hartley, J., (2005). Innovation in governance and public services: past and present. *Public Money and Management* 25, 27–34.

<http://giupmo.gov.bd/>

<http://a2i.pmo.gov.bd/innovation-lab/public-service-innovation-ecosystem-psie/innovation-pilots/>

ICEG European Center, (2012). Policies Supporting Innovation in Public Service Provision

Khan, I. (2009). The Unheard Truth. New Delhi: Viva Books

Khan, A. A (2012). Friendly Fires, Humpty Dumpty Disorders, and Other Essays: Reflections on Economy and Governance in Bangladesh. The University Press Limited, Dhaka.

Khan, M.M . (2003). State of Governance in Bangladesh. *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 92, 391-405.

Kinder, T (2012). Learning, Innovating and performing in Post New Public Management of Locally Delivered Public Services. *Public Management review*. Vol 14. Issue 3.

Knox Lovell, C.A., (2002). Performance assessment in the public sector. In: Fox, K. (Ed.), Efficiency in the Public Sector. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, pp. 11–35.

Kuzma, J. (2010). Asian government usage of Web 2.0 social media. *European Journal of ePractice*, 9, 1-13.

LSE Public Policy Group. (2008). Innovation in government organizations, public sector

- agencies and public service NGOs. Working Paper. London. Retrieved from <http://api.ning.com/files/t3ZSopUVDgbrxgdKtSVTth4RYtQtOJ94sojoKkeCbAN1O3wHOkEuD8UIDKBBI1dOA3udXfL7AVvGII4yswQU31r0g4AQiOvL/41.InnovationinGovernmentOrganizationsPublicSectorAgenciesandPublicServiceNGOsDunleavyetal.pdf>.
- Lee, S.M., Lim, S.B., & Pathak, R.D. (2011). Culture and entrepreneurial orientation: A multicountry study. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 7(1), 1–15
- Lundvall, B-Å (Ed.), (1992). National Systems of Innovation. Towards a Theory of Innovation and Interactive Learning. Pinter, London.
- Vigoda-Gadot, E., Shoham, A., Schwabsky, N., & Ruvio, A. (2008). Public sector innovation for Europe: A multinational eight-country exploration of citizens' perspectives. *Public Administration*, 86(2), 307–329.
- Mahmud, W. (2014). Growth and Governance: Making the Transition. Bangladesh Economic Forum.
- Mahmud, W. (2008) “Social development: pathways, surprises and challenges” *Indian Journal of Human Development*, Jan-June 2008, Vol. 2, No.1 (can be accessed at http://ponpo.som.yale.edu/seminar_docs/09-10/wahid.pdf).
- Mahmud, W. (2008a), “Bangladesh: development outcomes and challenges in the context of globalization”, in Ernesto Zedillo (ed.), *The Future of Globalization: Explorations in Light of Recent Experience*, London and New York : Routledge (Taylor and Francis Group).
- Marin, H, J. L., and Bermijo, L. R. (2015). External sources for innovations in public

- organizations. *The Service Industries Journal*. Vol 35. No 3
- Michel, S., Brown, S.W., & Gallan, A.S. (2008). An expanded and strategic view of discontinuous innovations: Deploying a service-dominant logic. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 36(1), 54–66.
- Monem, M. (2015). Installing Innovation in the Public Service in Bangladesh. An Assessment of GIU’s Training on Innovation. Governance Innovation Unit, Dhaka.
- Mulgan, G., & Albury, D. (2003). Innovation in the public sector. London: Innovation in the Public Sector, Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office.
- Nelson, R. (Ed.), (1993). National Innovation Systems. Oxford, University Press.
- OECD. (2014). Building Organizational Capacity for Public Sector Innovation.
- OECD. (2012). OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, <http://www.oecd.org/governance/oecdobservatoryofpublicsectorinnovation.htm>.
- OECD, (2007). OECD Oslo Manual: Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Innovation Data, 3rd edition,; Nesta, ‘Ready or not? Taking innovation in the public sector seriously’.
- Oke, A. (2007). Innovation types and innovation management practices in service companies. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 27(6), 564–587.
- Potts, (2009). The innovation deficit in public services: the curious problem of too much efficiency and not enough waste and failure. *Innovation: Management, Policy and Practice* 11, 34–43.

- Pritchett, L. (.2003). "A Toy Collection of a Socialist Dud and a Democratic Dud? Growth Theory in Vietnam and Philippines." In D. Rodrik (ed.), *Search of Prosperity: Analytic Narratives on Economic Growth*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Rabbi, M. F and As-Saber, S. N (2012). From Ideology to the Consolidation of Regimes: What Drives Civil Service Reforms in Bangladesh? *JOAAG*, Vol. 7. No. 2
- Rahman, M. (2017, January 14). Govt to create research, law wings at Cabinet Div. *NewAge Bangladesh* Retrieved from <http://www.newagebd.net/article/6925/govt-to-create-research-law-wings-at-cabinet-div>
- Roger, E. M (1983). *Diffusion of Innovations*, New York. NY. Free Press.
- Ross, V.E., Kleingeld, A.W., Lorenzen, L.L.,(2004). A topographical map of the innovation landscape. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal* 9 (2), 1–19.
- Saravanan, M and Sheedhar, K. (2011). Impact of innovation in Public Service Delivery. *ASCI Journal of Management*. 41(1).
- Scott-Kemmis, D. (2009). Promoting innovation in the public sector: Case studies. Barton, Australia: Management Advisory Committee Report 9 – Annex 1.
- Siddiquee, N. A (2007). Public service innovations, policy transfer and governance in the Asia-Pacific region: The Malaysian experience. *JOAAG*. Vol 2. No. 1.
- Stewart-Weeks, M. and Kastle, T. (2015). Innovation in Public Sector. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*. Vol 74. No.1.
- Govt to create research, law wings at Cabinet Div , The New Age, 2017
- Vigoda-Gadot, E., Shoham, A., Schwabsky, N., & Ruvio, A. (2008). Public sector innovation

- for Europe: A multinational eight-country exploration of citizens' perspectives. *Public Administration*, 86(2), 307–329.
- Windrum, P., Koch, P. (Eds.) (2008). *Innovation in Public Sector Services: Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Management*. Edward Elgar Publishers, Cheltenham, UK.
- Wu, J. Ma, L. and Yang, Y. (2011). Innovation in the Chinese Public Sector: Typology and Distribution. *Public Administration*, Volume 91, Issue 2.
- Yang, T.T., & Li, C.R. (2011). Competence exploration and exploitation in new product development: The moderating effects of environmental dynamism and competitiveness. *Management Decision*, 49(9), 1444–470.
- Zaman, H. (2015). Service delivery process innovation: insights from Digital Bangladesh.
- Zhu, X. (2014). Mandate Versus Championship: Vertical government intervention and diffusion of innovation in public services in authoritarian China. *Public Management Review*. Vol 6. No 1
- UNDP (2017). Bangladesh Quarterly Development Update October-December, 2017.
- Retrieved from
file:///C:/Users/Arif/Downloads/Bangladesh%20Quarterly%20Development%20Update.pdf
- f

Essay 3: Does an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission Matter in Combating Corruption? Evidence from Bangladesh

Introduction

Corruption is a complex phenomenon commonly defined as “the misuse of public power for private gain” (World Bank, 1997). There is no universally accepted definition of corruption. Acknowledging the existence of corruption in both public and private sectors, this study accepts the definition of Transparency International (TI) as “the misuse of entrusted power for private gain.” Globally, corruption has become a large phenomena in recent times. Transparency International ranks the nations every year that show success and failure in corruption control. There are consistent pictures of success mostly by developed countries and failures by developing countries. However, many scholars think that the ranking lacks validity and the ability to differentiate among types and causes of corruption or to strengthen anti-corruption activities (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2008; Thompson & Shah, 2005). Based on the ranking, international organizations always prescribe developing nations to adopt experiences of successful countries. However, to what extent these suggestions are applicable is a question of debate since corruption is rooted in the socio-economic factors of any county. Despite having some common factors, every country has its unique features in history, politics, and society. Although international comparisons of

anti-corruption policies are available (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2008; Rose-Ackerman, 2001), it is debatable whether these policies are appropriate for adoption (Collier, 2002; E Warren, 2004).

To combat corruption, each country has a specialized agency. In Bangladesh, the former anti-corruption agency, the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC), was reformed based on the model of Hong Kong's anti-corruption agency, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in 2004 and renamed the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). As a constitutional body, the ACC is structurally and operationally independent. The responsibility of the Anti-Corruption Commission as the lead agency is crucial in fighting against corruption (Alauddin, 2008). All the efforts to combat corruption in Bangladesh are largely dependent on the role of the ACC. However, despite reform and changes in the ACC that came with independence, there has not been significant improvement in corruption control in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has always been among the lowest ranked in corruption control. Then the question arises, does an independent anti-corruption commission really matter in curbing corruption?

To answer this question, this article is sectioned as follows the first section introduces the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) of Bangladesh, the second section focuses on theoretical discussions, the third section discusses the findings of the study from a mixed method approach and the fourth section concludes with

policy suggestions.

Why Bangladesh?

Bangladesh is a lower middle-income country, which has been maintaining a stable economy for a number of decades. However, despite stable social and economic progress, corruption remains a serious problem in Bangladesh (The Daily Star, March 1, 2017). Ranking by Transparency International (TI) consistently shows that Bangladesh is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. TI has ranked Bangladesh as the most corrupt country in the world for five consecutive years from 2001 to 2005. It should be noted that Bangladesh was ranked at no 3, 7, 10, 13, and 12 respectively in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 while in 2011 and 2012 it was ranked 13th, in 2013 was ranked 16th, in 2014 14th, and in 2015, 13th (TIB, 2017). Bangladesh has become an important and interesting case for corruption research.

Things have slightly changed for the better and Bangladesh is no longer ranked as the most corrupt country; and in human development indexes, it has progressed, scoring higher than India and some other developing countries. However, in TI's perception index, 2016, Bangladesh became 15th most corrupt country in world (The Daily Star, January, 2017). Although Bangladesh improved marginally from the previous year, its position is only better than Afghanistan in South Asia.

According to the 2015 household survey conducted by Transparency International Bangladesh, 67.8% people were victims of corruption in the surveyed service sectors (The Daily Star, January, 2017). Bangladeshi citizens' deposits in Swiss banks have risen 20.18% in 2016 compared to the previous year, amounting to 661.96 million Swiss francs or Tk 5,575 crore (The Daily Star, June 30, 2017). However, aside from this dismal scenario of corruption, there are significant achievements. After experiencing many ups and downs over the last four decades, the economy of Bangladesh has transformed into a promising one on many counts (The Daily Star, February 1, 2016). More importantly, Bangladesh progressed more in social indicators compared to other developing countries whose per capita GDP is higher than that in Bangladesh. Although Bangladesh has been maintaining a steady economic growth average of 6% over the last decade, 2-3% of the GDP is lost every year due to corruption (The Daily Star, June 13, 2015), which means that Bangladesh's growth could have been 8-9% if corruption had been controlled. Bangladesh's vision to become a middle income country by 2021 significantly depends on the corruption control.

Research Questions

Based on available research on corruption in general as well as in the context of Bangladesh, this study attempts to explore the following questions;

1. Does an independent Anti-Corruption Commission matter in combating corruption?
2. What are the challenges faced by anti-corruption officials in fighting against corruption?

Theoretical Discussions

There are two prominent theories based on which anti-corruption policies are framed in different countries, Principal-Agent Theory and Collective Action Theory. In Principal-Agent Theory, the principal fixes tasks and gives authority to the agent who may create information asymmetry for their own private benefit. This framework is used to analyze corruption in bureaucracy as well as in politics. Politicians work as the principals and bureaucrats work as the agents, and in the second case, politicians work as the agents of the citizens. The agent is assumed to be corrupt, while the principal is honest and is to control corruption. In practice, if this assumption does not work, the anti-corruption policies tend to fail. The anti-corruption policies of the ICAC in Hong Kong and the CPB in Singapore are identified in the framework of the principal-agent model. The miraculous success of these agencies in curbing corruption has been prescribed for curbing corruption in developing countries by international organizations like the World Bank, the IMF, the ADB, and the UNDP. However, this common formula does not work in certain countries' specific conditions. Consequently, corruption

remains unchanged in those countries.

The Collective Action Theory disregards the assumption of the Principal-Agent Theory. It assumes that the act of anti-corruption depends on many actors instead of any specific actor and that “all actors – i.e. rulers, bureaucrats and citizens alike – are maximizers of their self-interest” (Persson et al, 2010). Although most of actors hate corruption and know that they collectively lose from it (Karklins, 2005), they do not resist. This happens because there is a high individual cost for being honest in a thoroughly corrupt setting (Della Porta & Vannucci, 1999). In addition, one cannot trust another and continues to choose corrupt alternatives. Swedish Nobel laureate Myrdal (1968) labeled this as a “soft state” problem in Asia where individuals think in this way: “If everybody seems corrupt, why shouldn’t I be corrupt.” Consequently, corruption becomes the expected behavior and culture, while monitoring and punishment become ineffective.

There are two types of approaches in anti-corruption agencies: the single agency approach and the multiple agency approach. Meagher (2005) compares these two types of agency paradigm. In the single agency approach, an agency has power over anti-corruption functions. Singapore’s CPIB and Hong Kong’s ICAC are examples of this kind. The single agency approach has the advantage of working independently since there is no problem with coordination. On the other hand, in the multiple agency approach, there are several institutions coordinated with one

another in handling anti-corruption functions, although there is no lead agency. In Bangladesh, the previous anti-corruption agency called the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) used this approach before it was transformed into the ACC. Heilbrunn (2004), has classified four types of anti-corruption agencies,: the universal model such as Hong Kong's ICAC; the investigative model, e.g. the CPIB; the parliamentary model, e.g. the New South Wales ICAC; and the multi-agency model, e.g. the United States Office Of Government Ethics. Yu (2015) has argued that corruption control does not depend on any single factor, but rather that the success of anti-corruption efforts is the result of interactions of interrelated components such as political will, administrative reform, meritocracy, anti-corruption agencies, a corruption-free culture, and zero tolerance laws and policies.

Villoria, Ryzin and Lavena (2012) found that the perception of corruption is associated with lower levels of satisfaction with democracy and government performance . Knox (2009) finds that the poorest countries are most penalized by corruption and committed political leaders are a must in tackling corruption. Persson, Rothstein and Teorell (2013) argue that anti-corruption efforts fail in most cases due to collective action problems.

Paul (2010) argues that Bangladesh possesses a positive relationship with corruption and growth. Ankamah and Khoda (2017) argue that political will is a

necessary condition to fight against corruption. Baniamin and Jamil (2017) argue that the ACA targets grand corruption but only selectively. It is working as an instrument for suppressing opposition politicians.

Gong and Wu (2012) find empirical evidence in China that cast doubt on the assumed connections between civil service pay and corruption. Yang (2009) says that in order to effectively curb corruption, governments need to balance virtue ethics, rule of law, democratic institutions, and cultural values. Different cultures have different environment that restricts anti-corruption efforts.

Based on these theories and approaches, corruption scholars have tried to explore the causes of corruption as well as the success and failure of anti-corruption policies in different countries and have provided solutions for fighting against corruption. International organizations such as the World Bank and the UNDP have provided technical and financial support to the developing nations in order to curb corruption. However, most of the developing countries fail in curbing corruption.

The Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh

Evolution of The Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh

By promulgating an Ordinance in 1944, the erstwhile British Government began taking official measures to curb corruption among public officials. Subsequently

the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947 was enacted. The Department of Police was empowered to enforce the law on combating corruption. As that enactment eventually did not yield a remarkable positive impact, as had been expected, a new law, the "Anti-Corruption Act, 1957" was enacted and on the strength of that legislation one separate department dubbed as the "Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC)" was also established in 1957 to carry out a rigorous anti-corruption drive. With a modest start in an untidy temporary office, the BAC came into full operation in 1967 with a permanent establishment. The BAC could not proceed to enquire into and investigate any allegations of corruption independently due to restrictive legal power. After Bangladesh was ranked by Transparency International (TI) for a consecutive number years as one of the most corrupt countries of the world, the "Bureau of Anti-Corruption" was abolished and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) instead was established on November 21, 2004, with an independent structure. As an independent statutory body, the ACC came into being under the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004. In keeping the vision of promoting a strong and sustainable anti-corruption culture, the prime mandate set for the ACC was to combat and prevent corruption in pursuing the means of legal enforcement, deterrent measures, and education. Against the backdrop of the BAC's failure, the establishment of an independent Anti-Corruption Commission in 2004 raised hope for citizens of

curbing corruption in Bangladesh. In practice, the ACC did not prove itself effective in fighting corruption. It initiated work only after being reconstituted in the period of the Caretaker Government in 2007-08. The Commission took bold steps to investigate and prosecute a number of cases against powerful political leaders and citizens during that period. The following table provides a chronological picture of institutional efforts to combat corruption in Bangladesh:

Table 3.1: Institutional Efforts to Combat Corruption in Bangladesh

Year	Effort	Feature
1943	Enforcement Branch	A small unit within an organization was established to fight corruption
1957	Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC)	The first formal institution, however, lacked functional independence due to government control
2004	Anti-Corruption Commission(ACC)	Independent Agency to fight corruption
2007	Accession to UN Convention Against Corruption	Compliance with international standard

Source: (Alauddin, 2008)

The ACC consists of the chairman and two commissioners appointed by the

president and a number of officials as set in the organogram of the ACC.

Figure 4: ACC Structure, Source: ACC Annual Report, 2015

Function/ Scope of the ACC

The Commission derives its mandate from the provisions of the ACC Act, 2004.

As per mandate, the functions of the Commission are:

1. Conducting enquiry and investigation into the scheduled offences of the ACC Act on any allegations of corruption either by own initiative or upon an application lodged by an aggrieved person;
2. Providing approval to institute cases (FIR) and sanction to submit Charge Sheets/ Final Report on the basis of enquiry and investigation;
3. Conducting enquiry/ investigation and lodging cases according to the Money Laundering Prevention Act (MLPA), 2012 and its amendments on money laundering issues;
4. Recommending to the Honourable President on the following issues:
Reviewing recognized systems under any Act for prevention of corruption;
preparing a research plan for effective implementation of corruption prevention;
determining a “to-do-list” on the basis of research findings; and identifying the sources of corruption present in Bangladesh in the context of socioeconomic conditions and taking pertinent measures accordingly.
5. Promoting integrity to prevent corruption; building mass awareness against corruption; and organizing seminars, symposium, workshops etc. on issues within the jurisdiction of the Commission's functions; and
6. Performing any other duties imposed upon the Commission under the Acts and laws to combat corruption.

Power

The Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004 sets out its functions, powers, and governance structure. Other relevant legislation includes:

1. The Penal Code, 1860
2. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898
3. The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947
4. The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958
5. The Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012 and its amendments

Procedure of Investigation

The ACC Rules, 2007 lay down the operational procedure of the ACC. According to Rule 3 (1), any person may lodge a complaint against corruption in the ACC or its subordinate offices. Complaints can be made over a 24 hour hotline as well that was introduced on July 27, 2017 (The Financial Express, August,1, 2017). Rule 3 and 5 provide for the formation of a three member committee for necessary scrutiny of further actions. The total operational procedure is shown in the following table:

Figure 3.2 Operational Procedure of ACC

Special Powers of the ACC in Enquiry and Investigation

1. Issue notices to witness, ensure their physical presence and interrogate them;
2. Search out and present the relevant document;
3. Examine the witness;
4. Call for public records and certified copies from any court;
5. Issue notices to witness for examination of documents; and
6. Require any other matter necessary to carry out the purpose of this Act.

According to Section 19 of the ACC Act, 2004, “Any person obstructing an official legally empowered by the Commission in the exercise of his powers under this sub-section (1) or any person deliberately violating any order given under that sub-section commits a punishable offence and is liable to a term of imprisonment of not more than three (3) years or a fine or both.”

Public Hearings

Public hearings are formal meetings in any area where citizens can express their grievances on matters related to local officials’ services and the officials are present to address or redress their grievances. Public hearings aim at enhancing the transparency and accountability of public officials to citizens. They are a social accountability tool visibly used by the common people to explicitly raise issues regarding public service delivery to concerned government officials and

service providers. They provide an open forum, where public service oriented authorities undertake or pronounce a clear commitment to taking necessary measures to resolve problems or issues.

The National Integrity Strategy (NIS) of the Government of Bangladesh underscores the need for providing corruption-free public services to citizens.

The objectives of the public hearings are as follows;

1. For concerned government offices to listen to the aggrieved persons and instantly resolve their complaints/grievances;
2. To improve the quality of public service and its delivery system to meet the citizens' democratic right to faster and higher quality of service delivery through a citizen charter in every government office.

Is the Anti-Corruption Commission Independent?

Legally, the ACC is an independent and impartial statutory body. The Chairman and Commissioners are protected by law from any forceful or undue removal. Other law enforcement agencies are bound to assist the ACC in order to arrest, search, and seize any accused. The ACC is accountable neither to the Parliament nor to any executive body. The ACC submits an annual report to the President who presents it in the Parliament. According to the law, the ACC is structured as an independent body and has enough power to function independently. However, independence is related to accountability, so the higher the independence i, the

higher the accountability should be (Alauddin, 2008). For example, in Hong Kong there is an oversight committee to monitor the activities of the ICAC, whereas Australia (New South Wales) has established several internal and external oversight committees to review and ensure the accountability of the anti-corruption agency (IGS, 2007:32).

How is the ACC performing?

The ACC's performance can be understood from Table 1. The data shows a dismal picture: charge sheet was given in only 3,074 out of 6702 cases in the inquiry stage during the period between 2007 and 2012.

Table 3.2: Performance of the ACC (2007-2012)

Subject	Number
Notice for Asset Disclosure	681
Enquiry	6702
FIR	2549
Charge Sheet	3074
Final Report	1505

Source: ACC, 2013 (Cited in Das, 2013)

Table3.3: The ACC's performance in completion of pending enquires in 2015

Description	Number
--------------------	---------------

Total no. of enquiries including the pending enquiries of the previous years	3362
No. of enquiries resolved	3108
No. of cases (FIR) lodged based on enquiries	56
No. of enquiries filed for record	3052

Source: ACC Annual Report, 2015

Table 3.4 : ACC's investigative operations in 2015

Description	Total
Total no. of investigations including the pending investigations of the previous years	3509
No. of investigations resolved	784
No. of charge-sheets submitted	389
No. of final reports submitted	395

Source: ACC Annual Report, 2015

The Commission disposed of 306 cases in the Courts of Special Judge by December 2015; of the 306 cases, 188 (61%) cases were lodged by the Commission and the remaining 118 (39%) were inherited from the defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC). Rates of convictions are 37% in cases lodged by the ACC and 25% in the cases of the defunct BAC. Table 13 provides statistics from the trials of corruption related cases in the Special

Judge Courts at the end of December, 2015.

Table-3.5: Statistics of trials of corruption related cases in the Courts of Special Judge at the end of December, 2015

Description	ACC	Defunct BAC	Total
No. of cases under trial	3097	1080	4177
No. of cases on-going trial	2660	697	3357
No. of cases stayed	437	389	826
No. of cases disposed	188	118	306
No. of cases convicted	69	30	99
No. of cases acquitted	119	88	207

Source: ACC Annual Report, 2015

The study hypothesizes that the independent anti-corruption agency does not matter much in combatting corruption in Bangladesh due to the contextual realities and complexities. The number of factors are interrelated. This is also hypothesized that ACC and its officials are facing number of challenges, which are explored through interviews, surveys and secondary sources.

Methods

This study combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a rich picture of the role of the ACC from its officials' perspective. A random sampling was employed. The sample includes officials from the Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh who are assigned to investigations and

enquiries of corruption cases. The interviews of 38 officials of the various ranks were conducted over a period of two months (March and December) in 2016. This includes 2 Director Generals, 4 Directors, 9 Deputy Directors and 23 Assistant Directors. The interviews were conducted in person and typically lasted around 30 minutes (see Appendix-V). Qualitative data analysis techniques were employed to organize as well as analyze the collected data. The recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher and the transcripts were thematically analyzed to get the unique perspectives of ACC officials. As the first step, open coding of the transcripts was completed which was followed by axial coding to create a smaller list of categories. Selective coding was finally implemented to interpret the data. The results reflect a unique view into the narratives of ACC officials in Bangladesh and their perceptions about corruption control. Based on the interviews, a survey was conducted to confirm the results.

Survey Design, Sampling, Data Collection, Measures, and Variables

The survey has 10 sections in total with 15 questions probing the views of ACC officials in Bangladesh. The questions ask the respondents to rate perceived effectiveness and factors related to corruption control in Bangladesh on a 5-point Likert scale (Figure 2). In total, 82 responses were received from 100 respondents.

Table 3.6 Questions & Responses in Likert Scale

Statement	Scale					Number of Response
	1	2	3	4	5	
Perceived Effectiveness						
ACC has met or been meeting its objectives properly	2.43%	24.30%	21.95%	45.12%	7.31%	82
ACC is now more effective compared to the past	0	10.97	19.51	53.65	15.85	82
Current strategies of ACC are strong enough to fight against corruption in Bangladesh	4.87	37.80	28.04	25.60	5.76	82
ACC is independent enough to tackle corruption	10.97	29.26	29.26	26.82	3.65	82
ACC is strong enough to tackle corruption	17.7	32.92	20.73	25.60	3.65	82
Political will						
Political will is more important for functioning of ACC	3.65	2.43	2.43	42.68	48.78	82
Culture						
Citizens are tolerant about Corruption	6.09	24.39	36.58	30.48	2.43	82
Judicial System						
Judicial System is not supportive to fight against corruption	1.21	7.31	15.85	62.19	13.14	82
Resources & Facilities						
ACC has enough resources to fight against corruption	3.65	28.04	6.09	25.60	36.58	82

Citizen's Participations						
Citizens' participation is essential to fight against corruption	0	9.75	14.63	41.46	34.14	82
Leadership of ACC						
Strong Leadership in ACC is important to fight against corruption	2.43	0	3.65	31.70	62.19	82
Rules and laws						
The rules and laws are strong enough to fight against corruption in Bangladesh	3.65	25.60	23.17	39.02	8.53	82
Media						
Media is supportive to ACC's fight against corruption	1.21	0	4.87	75.60	18.29	82
Reform						
ACC needs reform to be more effective	3.65	1.21	1.21	53.65	40.24	82

(Strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, not sure=3, agree=4, strongly agree=5)

Analysis and Results

Characteristics of respondents

85.4% of the respondents are male and 14.6% are female. The mean age of the respondent are 37.24 and mean tenure is 10.11.

Table 3.7: Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	12	14.6	14.6	14.6
	1	70	85.4	85.4	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.8: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	82	26	58	37.24	8.723
Tenure	82	2	31	10.11	8.665
Valid N (listwise)	82				

Table 3.9 shows that the age ranged from 32-58 and more than 75.6% of them are within the age of 40.

Table 3.9: Interviewees

Age Range	No	Percentage
26-30	19	23.17%
31-35	27	32.92%
36-40	16	19.51%
41-45	2	2.43%
46-50	8	9.75%
51-55	5	6.09%
56-58	5	6.09%
Total	82	100

Perceived Effectiveness

Only 52.43% of the respondents reported that the ACC has met or has been meeting its objectives properly, while 69.5% reported that the ACC is more effective now than in the past. 31.35% of the respondents reported that the current strategies of the ACC are strong enough to fight against corruption. Only 30.47% agree that the ACC is independent enough to fight against corruption, while only 29.25% agree that the ACC is strong enough to tackle corruption.

Political will

In the survey, 91.46% of the respondents agreed that political will is important for the functioning of the ACC. According to Kpundeh (1998, p. 92), political will is “..credible intent of political actors (elected or appointed leaders, civil society watchdogs, stakeholder groups, etc) to attack perceived causes or effects of corruption at a systemic level.” Scholars argue that political commitment is the most important factor in fighting against corruption. Without real political will, anti-corruption efforts will fail and this is evident in many countries with widespread corruption (Brinkerhoff, 2000; Johnston & Kpundeh, 2004; Kpundeh, 1998; Riley, 1998; Williams & Doig, 2004). It is argued that only political commitment can ensure the success of any anti-corruption strategy (Quah, 1995, 1999) as in many cases, the anti-corruption efforts tend to be intertwined with the corrupt network (Ittner, 2009; Mungiu, 2006). Anti-corruption agencies

should be free of corruption through the supervision of honest political leaders. Political will is most important for an effective anti-corruption strategy and the political leaders must be committed to ensure an independent anti-corruption agency with resources, effective anti-corruption laws, and punishment for the guilty regardless of their position in society (Quah, 2004, p. 4). The existence of political will to fight against corruption must not be rhetoric only (Olowu, 1993). It is widely found in the corruption literature that without strong political will, anti-corruption reforms are bound to fail ((Brinkerhoff, 2000; Kpundeh, 1998). In Bangladesh no government has taken effective initiatives to eradicate corruption. Lack of political will has nipped anti-corruption efforts in the bud. Moreover, any organization with given authority and laws is not effective in reality. For example, the police department has many stringent laws and authorities, but the officials do not or cannot function independently due to political interference. Police are used as a political weapon to seize the opposition party. The parties in power and influential people always try to manipulate the system to for their own interests. They make formal organizations subordinate to them in order to acquire state resources (Parnini, 2006, p. 190). Although such practice is found in many nations, it is the main characteristic of politics in Bangladesh (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1997, p. 62). Lack of political will is evident in the case of the establishment and strengthening

of an independent anti-corruption commission. No elected government took steps willingly to strengthen the anti-corruption agency. The independent ACC was established under pressure of the donors. It was not strengthened until the military backed caretaker government took the initiative and launched anti-corruption measures in 2007-2008.

This lack of political commitment is also evident in the culture of democracy in Bangladesh. There is no internal democracy practiced within the political parties. The determinant factors in becoming a member of Parliament are the power of money and personal connections. As a result, politics has become a profitable business with a high investment return. A study reveals that the number of businessmen who are members of Parliament has been on the rise. The two big political parties have been practicing the same culture.

The level of political commitment can also be analyzed by looking at the performance of the previous anti-corruption agency compared to the present agency. The previous agency, BAC, was used as a political tool to harass the opposition by lodging corruption cases. Very few corruption charges were filed against members of the ruling party since prior sanctioning of their actions was required from the Prime Minister. Members of Parliament are free from prosecution as long as they are in power. The perceived effectiveness of the BAC can be well understood from the study conducted by TIB in 2004. Most of the

respondents argued that “The ruling party’s influence on BAC greatly hampered its performances of tackling corruption problem in Bangladesh..” 64.29% believe that the ruling party uses the Bureau as a weapon to suppress the opposition, while 55.36% of the respondents express their dissatisfaction and 46.43% feel that the Bureau is unable to maintain its neutrality. People’s perceptions were proved right since the TIB (2001) study revealed that “ruling parties have used the Bureau for political motives to investigate corruption cases against opposition.”

The two big political parties have shown that anti-corruption efforts are a priority but they have not demonstrated any real will to take effective measures. The ACC lacked both operational rules and a personnel recruiting “organogram” for a long time due to political and bureaucratic unwillingness. This was evident in the ACC chairman’s statement, “We are helpless; government is not providing necessary support in making rules and financial assistances” (Ahmed, 2006, p.31). Many observers pointed out that “from the very beginning of its inception, the government was trying to tarnish its effectiveness by appointing partisan commissioners” (Ahmed, 2006, p.31).

“If any minister is honest, public officials working under him must be honest. Everyone knows who honest ministers are, and political masters can keep public servants honest by being honest themselves.” (Respondent 13)

Culture

Some researchers argue that it is difficult to control corruption in many developing countries due to defective cultural norms and behaviours (Jabbara, 1976). Culture plays an important role in any country fighting against corruption. It is evident that some countries remain more corrupt due to public acceptance of corruption in various ways and across different cultures (Heidenheimer, 2002). In accordance with this argument, “bribe” in the Western context may be considered as a gift in corrupt countries (Bardhan 1997; de Sardan 1999; Hasty 2005; Rose-Ackerman 1999). On the other hand, Abrefa (2004) has argued that culture is not static, but rather an organic evolving phenomenon.

Corruption had been an integral part of politico-administrative systems in India for many centuries. Corruption prevailed to a great extent in India during and following medieval times (Padhay, 1986), especially in administration, the judiciary, and trade (Khan, 1999). This scenario continued until British colonial rulers, who maintained an extremely corrupt system, privileged their employees by allowing them immediate advantages stemming from corrupt practices (Mahmood, 2010). They considered their office as a tool of collecting revenue in cash and kind. Citizens had to pay speed money for services, but no one complained as long as the charge did not exceed acceptable rates. There was almost regular and systemic corruption in the political and administrative

hierarchy during the Pakistan era. This trend and practice went on in post-colonial Pakistan (Islam, 2004). Many corrupt politicians were debarred from politics and civil servants were dismissed from their services on corruption charges during martial law in Pakistan commencing in 1958.

The administrative culture and system of Bangladesh have been inherited from the colonial system. Bangladesh inherited a tradition of centralization, hierarchism, and nepotism, and corruption has become an integral part of administrative culture in Bangladesh.

“Giving bribe has become a voluntary issue; people are making officials corrupt by taking undue favor, and people are responsible to make officials corrupt.”(Respondent 4)

*“In the past, corrupt officials were ashamed of disclosing properties; nowadays, it has become a matter of pride to show off with illegally earned money.”
(Respondent 19)*

Judicial System

75.35% of the respondents agreed that the judicial system does not support the fight against corruption. Support of the judiciary is indispensable for the proper functioning of the ACC. However, the judicial process in Bangladesh is lengthy and full of procrastination. This is due to a scarcity of manpower, inefficient public prosecutors, a manual system, and a backlog of cases including a good

number of ACC cases. In addition, it is also alleged that a section of judges and staff of the court are corrupt.

“Even though we work hard to prepare a case, eventually corrupt officials can manage stay order or bail from higher court with influences or money” (Respondent 26)

“Judicial process is too lengthy to make a corrupt one punished, ACC does not have anything to do once the case goes to the court, but this lengthy procedure affects the performances of ACC.” (Respondent 9)

Resources

62.18% of the respondents agreed that the ACC has enough resources to fight against corruption. However, the ACC suffers from an inadequate workforce. A staff of 1264 is not enough to fight against corruption in a country with a population of 159 million (BBS, 2016). Even the existing staff cannot effectively fight against corruption since they lack honesty and competency. Unlike other constitutional organizations such as the Election Commission or the Public Service Commission, the ACC gets its budget as “other expenditure” that is not exempted from the vote of Parliament.

“We do not have enough resources to cope up with excessive workloads. Other law enforcing agencies have incentives like ration, risk allowances; we are doing

similar kind of jobs, we are demotivated to our works.” (Respondent 27)

Citizens' Participations

In the survey, 75.6% of the respondents agreed that citizens' participation is essential to fight against corruption. They believe that the role of citizens is most important in fighting against corruption and that ordinary citizens should be engaged in the process of the ACC's fight against corruption. Civil society organizations can play an important role by representing and advocating for ordinary citizens and ensuring that their voices are heard and respected.

“Citizens are ready to provide bribes in order to get services either quickly or unduly; this is aggravating corrupt practices particularly in the public service delivery organizations.” (Respondent 24)

Leadership of ACC

93.89% of the respondents agreed that strong leadership in the ACC is important for fighting against corruption. The independence of any organization also depends on how the officeholder is appointed or removed. The Chairman and two Commissioners are appointed by the government although this is always questionable in regards to allegations of partisan appointment. The Secretary is always appointed from administrative service officials; Director Generals, Directors, and Deputy Directors are appointed partially from civil service or

armed forces officers on deputation, while the rest of the positions are filled by officials of the ACC.

The ACC absorbed more than 80% of the defunct BAC personnel without any screening process and their honesty and integrity were questionable. The ACC is mandated solely with investigating and prosecuting corruption according to the ACC Act. However, there is no mechanism to ensure appropriate checks and balances or to check the abuse of the Commission's extensive powers. There are no clear criteria on which corruption cases are chosen from thousands of complaints. This has made the ACC's trustworthiness questionable to citizens.

"I have been working here for many years; have seen different sets of top leadership. When there were appointed corrupt commissioners and officials, they tarnished the image of ACC and operational system. Present leadership is strong enough compared to the past. That's why, some high ups are caught recently and others are in run." (Respondent 15)

Media

93.89% of the respondents agreed that the role of the media is important in fighting against corruption. In Bangladesh, the media has been enjoying freedom in publishing any news even though if it goes against the government, but obviously not against the state. However, the media has been practicing self-

censorship for the last few years in dealing with the powerful and the influential due to the fact that the government is becoming more authoritative and opposition political parties are becoming weaker day by day, causing political imbalances.

“There is a syndicate in media, few corrupt journalist find out corrupt practices to blackmail and earn money, that’s why many corruptions issues do not come to light.” (Respondent 33)

Reform

93.89% of the respondents agreed that the ACC needs reform to fight against corruption. Administrative reform is a significant factor in bringing about any kind of change in the society. International agencies have always prescribed policies from successful countries as a general formula for corruption control. However, the debate remains as to whether such general policies are applicable to every country or require country specific reform measures.

Bangladesh’s reform efforts in fighting corruption are not remarkable; rather they are disappointing. Aminuzzaman (1996) said that aspirations to create a sound governance system have suffered due to administrative corruption (Cited in Parnini, 2011). Since the 1990s, when democracy was reinstated, the government has launched and publicized anti-corruption campaigns. This was with a view toward gaining public support in the elections as well as to face the pressure of donor organizations. Khan (2001), has argued that reform has taken a backseat in

many democracies throughout the world.

Corruption in Bangladesh received global attention in the late 1990s by donors and donor-funded NGOs. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) provided a picture of corruption in different reports such as the Corruption Database, and the Diagnostic Studies and Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Bangladesh was recognized as the most corrupt country in the world since 2001, with this status continuing for four consecutive years. The donor organizations pressured the government into abolishing the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) which was an inefficient, ineffective, and corrupt institution under the Prime Minister's office and was used as a weapon to restrain any opposition. However, the BAC's partisan role was not unusual in a weak state like Bangladesh (Migdal, 1988).

Through research, the TIB recommended that the government establish an ICAC-modeled ACC. Development partners also compelled the government to do so. Since this was a condition for receiving foreign funds, the government agreed to the donors and formed the ACC in November 2004. The ICAC model was copied without any internal analysis. But it was necessary to ensure certain conditions before setting up an independent anti-corruption agency in any country (Robert Klitgaard, 1988):

Entrenched corruption everywhere should be existent that will persuade political leaders to set up a powerful anti-corruption agency. Formation of independent

and efficient anti-corruption body would build citizens' trust on it. Staff at all levels must have highest possible integrity. Laws and authorities of the agency must be welcoming to the greater citizens. A credible accountability grievance mechanism against the complaints of the new agency must be developed, and full funding support to achieve mandate. Functions and independence of the agency should be secured by the state.

Bangladesh's ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) on February 27, 2007 was another remarkable step. This was the first global instrument with institutional and legal settings designed to fight against corruption. The ratification covers prevention, international cooperation, and asset recovery. It provides scope to the government to address corruption both nationally and globally. With this ratification, Bangladesh is obligated to prevent corruption and engage in international cooperation against corruption.

“ACC had been very powerful during the non party caretaker government. We enjoyed and applied our strength since there were no political pressures and ACC had been reformed and strengthened that time.” (Respondent 14)

Rules & Laws

The success and failure of corruption control largely depends on the effectiveness and implementation of these rules and laws. Rule of law is important in fighting against corruption. A weak rule of law indicates a higher level of corruption and

this is empirically supported (Huntington, 1968; Leff, 1964). International organizations such as the World Bank consider rule of law to be a critical indicator of governance which contributes to corruption control. According to a high official of UNDOC, from "Strengthening the rule of law: the fight against corruption and its impact on sustainable growth," "Where corruption exists, the rule of law cannot flourish. Too many people fail to understand the impact of corruption on development and on prosperity. The victims exist in every developing and least developed country. Denied education, denied healthcare, denied opportunities" (UNODC, 2014).

The Penal Code 1860 prohibits offences by or relating to public servants, and the Prevention of Corruption Act of 1947 provides that the offenses under the Penal Code are "cognizable offenses"; the Money Laundering Act of 2009 criminalizes the "illegal transfer of assets earned through predicate offences from Bangladesh to any other country or from any other country to Bangladesh or conversion of such assets with the intent of nondisclosure of the source of the earnings."

The Representation of the People Order Act of 2009 sets the amount of individual and corporate donations to political parties as not exceeding USD 6,940 and USD 34,702 respectively. There is no independent auditing system and also no limitation of the donation amount. The Electoral Commission is mandated to monitor such financing and electoral spending (Global Integrity, 2010).

Bangladesh adopted the Disclosure of Public Interest Information (Protection) Act in 2011 to protect whistleblowers. The Right to Information Act in 2009 gives people the right to obtain documents and information from the government and ensure that the government discloses information voluntarily.

The punishment for corruption is also lenient compared to many other countries. Imprisonment ranges from 3 (three) to a maximum of 10 (ten) years. In contrast, there is a provision of punishment of lifetime imprisonment in Indonesia and even capital punishment in the People's Republic of China for committing particular forms of corruption (ADB, 2006). In Singapore, even if the accused dies before justice is served, the procedure continues and assets are seized in compliance with the verdict.

Supporting Law Enforcing Agencies

The complementary agencies, e.g. the police and the tax department, are among the most corrupt departments. Since the total system has been infected with corruption, influential people benefit from the system. According to the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004, illicit enrichment is a criminal offence, indicating that the "possession of (...) property in excess of the known sources of income" (UNODC, 2012). The investigation officers of the ACC cannot arrest, search, or seize any accused without the help of law-enforcement agencies such as the police.

“ACC cannot coordinate strongly with other organizations since these organizations do not voluntarily support ACC.” (Respondent 7)

“Police department is itself is one of the most corrupt, so we don’t get necessary support in fighting against corruption.” (Respondent 11)

Religion

In Bangladesh, 90.4% of the total population are followers of [Islam](#). On the other hand, the minorities are [Hindus](#), constituting 8.2% of the population, while [Buddhists](#), [Christians](#), and followers of other religions make up the remainder.

Religion is a strong part of the identity of Muslims in Bangladesh. The capital of the country, Dhaka, is called the “City of Mosques.” The issues surrounding religious practice are important in analyzing corruption in Muslim dominated society in Bangladesh. In principle, Islam teaches people not only to refrain from corruption but also to resist it. According to a Pew Research Survey, 2016, in most of the corrupt and poor countries, people are more religious; there is a correlation between poverty, corruption, and religion (PRC, 2016). This is clearly observed in Bangladesh where many corrupt officials are highly religious in the practice of daily rituals, believing that their offences will be forgiven in the life after death if they can perform religious duties properly.

“Many practicing Muslims commit corruption since they believe they will be

forgiven by the God, if they apologize, on the other hand, minority community, especially Hindus commit corruption due to lack of security. They earn money and try to migrate to neighboring country or overseas.” (Respondent 43)

Correlation Analysis

Since the sample size is not large to run regression analysis from the survey, correlation analysis was run to assess which variables are related to the effectiveness of the Anti-Corruption Commission. It was found that rules and laws are positively correlated to ACC effectiveness. Citizens’ participation is positively correlated to the present effectiveness of the ACC. Reform is positively correlated to fulfillment of the ACC’s objectives, strength, and independence. The judicial system is positively correlated to attaining the ACC’s objectives. Culture is negatively correlated to the effectiveness of the ACC.

```
COMPUTE      ACCE=(ACCEffectiveness1      +      ACCEffectiveness2      +
ACCEffectiveness3 + ACCEffectiveness4 ) / 4.
EXECUTE.
```

Table 3.10 Correlations

		AC CE	ACC Effectiv eness 1	ACC Effectiv eness 2	ACC Effectiv eness 3	ACC Effectiv eness 4	Rul es &a mp ; La ws	Cult ure	Resou rces	Polit ical will	Citizens ' Particip ations	Me dia	Ref orm	Leade rship of ACC	Judi cial Sys tem
ACCE	Pears on Correl ation	1	.736**	.597**	.799**	.820**	.47 0**	-.21 3	-.029	-.00 6	.109	.02 5	.28 1*	.091	.19 7
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.00 0	.05 4	.793	.955	.330	.82 1	.01 0	.415	.07 6
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
ACC Effectiv eness 1	Pears on Correl ation	.73 6**	1	.188	.469**	.500**	.24 2*	-.18 4	-.191	.032	-.135	-.0 03	.24 3*	.060	.37 6**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.00 0		.092	.000	.000	.02 8	.09 8	.085	.778	.226	.97 7	.02 8	.591	.00 0
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
ACC Effectiv eness 2	Pears on Correl ation	.59 7**	.188	1	.336**	.330**	.31 5**	-.18 6	.101	-.00 9	.275*	.07 6	.12 4	-.023	-.10 7
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.00 0	.092		.002	.002	.00 4	.09 5	.367	.934	.012	.49 9	.26 8	.840	.34 0
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
ACC Effectiv eness 3	Pears on Correl ation	.79 9**	.469**	.336**	1	.543**	.33 4**	-.14 7	.072	.023	.067	.00 4	.26 5*	.161	.07 7
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.00 0	.000	.002		.000	.00 2	.18 6	.521	.841	.552	.97 4	.01 6	.147	.49 0
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82

ACC Effectiveness 4	Pearson Correlation	.820**	.500**	.330**	.543**	1	.491**	-.124	-.053	-.059	.135	.007	.197	.061	.205
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.002	.000		.000	.266	.633	.596	.225	.948	.076	.584	.064
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Rules & Laws	Pearson Correlation	.470**	.242*	.315**	.334**	.491**	1	.003	-.151	-.265*	-.025	.166	-.232*	-.280*	-.105
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.028	.004	.002	.000		.980	.174	.016	.823	.136	.036	.011	.346
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Culture	Pearson Correlation	-.213	-.184	-.186	-.147	-.124	.003	1	.192	.075	.097	.182	-.026	-.008	-.051
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.054	.098	.095	.186	.266	.980		.084	.506	.388	.102	.814	.943	.648
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Resources	Pearson Correlation	-.029	-.191	.101	.072	-.053	-.151	.192	1	.343**	.256*	.063	.213	.357**	-.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.793	.085	.367	.521	.633	.174	.084		.002	.020	.574	.055	.001	.462
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Political will	Pearson Correlation	-.006	.032	-.009	.023	-.059	-.265*	.075	.343**	1	.283**	.335**	.398**	.544**	.293**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.955	.778	.934	.841	.596	.016	.506	.002		.010	.002	.000	.000	.008
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82

Citizens' Participations	Pearson Correlation	.109	-.135	.275 [*]	.067	.135	-.025	.097	.256 [*]	.283 ^{**}	.1	.045	.244 [*]	.299 ^{**}	.143
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.330	.226	.012	.552	.225	.823	.388	.020	.010		.687	.027	.006	.200
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Media	Pearson Correlation	.025	-.003	.076	.004	.007	.166	.182	.063	.335 ^{**}	.045	.1	-.150	-.003	.257 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.821	.977	.499	.974	.948	.136	.102	.574	.002	.687		.178	.981	.020
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Reform	Pearson Correlation	.281 [*]	.243 [*]	.124	.265 [*]	.197	-.232 [*]	-.026	.213	.398 ^{**}	.244 [*]	-.150	.1	.478 ^{**}	.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.028	.268	.016	.076	.036	.814	.055	.000	.027	.178		.000	.113
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Leadership of ACC	Pearson Correlation	.091	.060	-.023	.161	.061	-.280 [*]	-.008	.357 ^{**}	.544 ^{**}	.299 ^{**}	-.003	.478 ^{**}	.1	.270 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.415	.591	.840	.147	.584	.011	.943	.001	.000	.006	.981	.000		.014
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
Judicial System	Pearson Correlation	.197	.376 ^{**}	-.107	.077	.205	-.105	-.051	-.082	.293 ^{**}	.143	.257 [*]	.177	.270 [*]	.1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.076	.000	.340	.490	.064	.346	.648	.462	.008	.200	.020	.113	.014	
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82

**.	Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*.	Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Problems faced by the ACC Officials

In the following table (3.11) ACC officials have identified the challenges they are facing in fighting against corruption. These include pressure by a higher authority, political pressure, lack of security for investigating officers, yellow journalism, non-cooperation from other agencies, lack of incentives, difficulties in calling witnesses, and excessive workload.

Table 3.11: Problems faced by the ACC Officials

Statement	Frequency
Pressure by Higher authority	47
Political Pressure	39
Lack of security for IOs	39
Yellow Journalism	35
Non-cooperation from other agencies	34
Lack of Incentives	33
Difficulties in calling witness	29
Excessive workload	26

Policy suggestions by ACC Officials

ACC officials have provided suggestions for making the ACC more effective.

These are: honesty from political leaders and top bureaucrats; making investigating officers more independent; decentralizing decision making power to district level officials; providing risk allowances to ACC officials; providing arms, walkie-talkies and uniforms to investigating officers; increasing public awareness; and running the ACC by its own officials rather than through deputation from other services, etc.

Table 3.12: How-to Make ACC More Effective

Statement	Frequency
Political Leaders and Top Bureaucrats to be Clean First	47
Making IO s more Independent	39
Decentralized decision making power to district office	39
Ensure risk allowances/ration to the officers	35
Providing arms, walkie-talkie and uniform for Investigating Officers	34
ACC should be run by own officials, no deputation from outsides	33
Increasing public awareness	29
Providing Logistics	26

Conclusion

In the context of pervasive corruption in Bangladesh, the establishment of an independent anti-corruption agency is a commendable effort. This study finds that structurally and legally, an independent commission depends on many supporting factors such as culture, political will, resources, a judicial system, citizen participation, ACC leadership, the role of the media, rules and laws, religion etc. to become functionally effective. Without ensuring these prerequisites, Bangladesh has established an ICAC-modeled ACC. This inappropriate transfer worked as an underlying factor of policy failure (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). Consequently, transition to a single agency approach from a multiple agency paradigm failed to make a significant difference in attaining outcomes. Improving particular factors may not work to make the ACC effective until there is a holistic approach to addressing identified factors. This may be the reason that the corruption scenario has not been improving in Bangladesh despite the fact that many reform measures have been taken.

References

- Ahmed, B. (2006). "Combating Corruption The Role of the Bureau of Anti -Corruption (BAC) in Bangladesh", Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies, Lund University (Unpublished Master's Thesis).
- Ahmed, N. (2017, March 11). Public hearings can fight corruption. *The Daily Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailystar.net/>
- Alauddin, M. (2009). Combatting Corruption in Bangladesh: Role of the Anti-Corruption Commission. Dissertation Unpublished.
- Ankamah, S.S and Khoda, S.M (2017). Political Will and Government Anti-Corruption Efforts: What Does the Evidence Say? *Public Admiration Review*.
- Asian Development Bank (2006). Anti-Corruption Policies in Asia and the Pacific: Progress in Legal and Institutional Reform in 25 Countries, ADB.
- Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) (2015). *Annual report of Anti Corruption Commission, Bangladesh*, Dhaka: ACC
- Bangladesh improves graft ranking (2017, January 25). The Daily Star. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailystar.net/city/bangladesh-improves-graft-ranking-1350631>
- Banimin, H.M and Jamil, I (2017). Dynamics of Corruption and Citizens' Trust in Anti-Corruption Agencies in three South Asian Countries. *Public Organization Review*.
- Bardhan, P. (1997). Corruption and Development: A Review of Issues. *Journal of Economic Literature* 35 (3): 1320-1346.

- BBS. (2016). Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Division, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh.*
- Bratton, M., & Van de Walle, N. (1997). *Democratic experiments in Africa: Regime transitions in comparative perspective*: Cambridge University Press.
- Brinkerhoff, D. W. (2000). Assessing political will for anti-corruption efforts: an analytic framework. *Public Administration and Development*, 20(3), 239-252.
- Byron, R.K and Rahman, F. M.(2017, June, 30). Bangladeshis' Money in Swiss bank, Deposits jump 20pc in a year.The Daily Star. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/deposits-jump-20pc-year-1426171>
- Collier, M. W. (2002). Explaining Corruption: An Institutional Choice Approach. *Crime, Law and Social Change* 38(1): 1–32.
- Das, S.K. (2013). Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh: Diagnosis of a Fading Hope. Research Paper.Hague.ISS.
- Donatella, D.P., , and Vannucci, A. (1999). *Corrupt Exchanges: Actors, Resources, and Mechanisms of Political Corruption*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Dolowitz, D. P., & Marsh, D. (2000). Learning from abroad: The role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making. *Governance*, 13(1), 5-23.
- GIR(2010). Global Integrity Report: 2010 – Key Findings

. Retrieved from <https://www.globalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/GIR2010->

Key-Findings.pdf

Gong, T and Wu, A.M (2012). Does Increased Civil Service pay Deter Corruption? Evidence from China. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*. 32(2), 192-204

Hasty, J. (2005). The Pleasures of Corruption: Desire and Discipline in Ghanaian Political Culture. *Cultural Anthropology*, 20 (2): 271-301.

Heidenheimer, A. J. (2002). Parties, Campaign Finance and Political Corruption: Tracing Long-Term Comparative Dynamics. *Political Corruption*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 761-776.

Heilbrunn.JR. (2004). Anti-Corruption Agencies: Panacea or Real Medicine to Fight Corruption. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Washington.

Huntington, S. (1968). Political order in developing societies: Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

IGS. (2007). 'Institutions of Accountability: Anti-Corruption Commission' Background Paper. Dhaka: Brac University.

Islam, N. (2004). Sifarish, sycophants, power and collectivism: Administrative culture in Pakistan. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 70(2), 311-330.

- Ittner, S. (2009). Fighting Corruption in Africa – A Comparative Study of Uganda and Botswana. Unpublished manuscript, der Deutschen Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften, Speyer, Germany.
- Jabbara, J. G. (1976). Bureaucratic Corruption in the Third World: Causes and Remedy. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, 22(4), 673-691.
- Johnston, M., & Kpundeh, S. J. (2004). *Building a clean machine: anti-corruption coalitions and sustainable reform* (Vol. 3466): World Bank Publications.
- Karklins, R. (2005). The System Made Me Do It: Corruption in Post-communist Societies. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Kaufmann, D. and Kraay, A.(2008). Governance Indicators.Where Are We and Where Should We Be Going? World Bank Research Observer 23(1): 1-30
- Khatun, F. (2016, February 01). Corruption Hurts. The Daily Star. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailystar.net/op-ed/economics/corruption-hurts-210226>
- Khatun, F. (2015, July 13). Cost of Corruption .The Daily Star. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailystar.net/op-ed/cost-corruption-111523>
- Khan, M. M. (1999). Political and administrative corruption: Concepts, comparative experiences and Bangladesh case. *A Paper Prepared for Transparency International: Bangladesh Chapter, Dhaka*.
- Khan, M. M. (2001). Problems Of Democracy: Administrative Reform And Corruption. *BISS Journal*, 22(1), 34-54.

- Klitgaard, R. (1988), *Controlling Corruption*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.
- Knox, C (2009). Dealing with sectoral Corruption in Bangladesh: Developing Citizen Involvement. *Public Administration and Development*. 29, 117-132.
- Kpundeh, S. J. (1998). Political will in fighting corruption. *Corruption and integrity improvement initiatives in developing countries*, 91-110.
- Kpundeh, S. J.. (2004). *Building State Capacity in Africa*. Washington: World Bank Publications.
- Leff, N. H. (1964). Economic development through bureaucratic corruption. *American behavioral scientist*, 8(3), 8-14.
- Mahmood, S. A. I. (2010). Public procurement and corruption in Bangladesh confronting the challenges and opportunities. *Journal of public administration and policy research*, 2(6), 103-111.
- Meagher, P. (2005). Anti-corruption Agencies: Rhetoric versus Reality. *The Journal of Policy Reform* 8 (1): 69–103.
- Migdal, J. S. (1988). *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*: Princeton University Press.
- Mungiu-Pippidi, A. (2006). Corruption: Diagnosis and Treatment. *Journal of Democracy* 17 (3): 86-99.

- Myrdal, G.. (1968). *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*. London: Allen Lane the Penguin press.
- Olowu, D. (1993). "Corruption in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and Remedies." In *Ethics and Accountability in African Public Services*, ed. S. Rasheed and Dele Olowu. Nairobi: African Association for Public Administration and Management.
- Padhay, K. S. (1986). *Corruption in politics: A case study*. Delhi.
- Parnini, S.N., (2006). Civil society and good governance in Bangladesh. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 14(2), 189-211.
- Paul, B.P (2010) Does Corruption Foster Growth in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Development*. Vol9, No3
- Persson, A., Rothstein, B. & Teorell, J. (2010) *The Failure of Anti-Corruption Policies: A Theoretical Mischaracterization of the Problem*, Working Paper 19, Quality of Government Institute, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- (2013). Why Anti-corruption reforms Fail-Systematic Corruption as a Collective Action Problem. *Governance*. Vol 26, No-3
- PRC(2016). Religion and Education Around the World. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/12/13/religion-and-education-around-the-world/>
- Quah, J.S.T. (2004). Best Practices for Cubing Corruption in Asia. *In The Governance Brief, Issue 11, (pp. 1-4) See*

- Quah, J. S. (1999). *Comparing anti-corruption measures in Asian countries: Lessons to be learnt*: Pagesetters Services PTE Limited.
- Quah, J. S. (1995). Sustaining quality in the Singapore civil service. *Public Administration and Development*, 15(3), 335-343.
- [http://www.adb.org/Documents/Periodicals/GB/Government Brief11.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Periodicals/GB/Government%20Brief11.pdf) .
- Riley, S. P. (1998). The political economy of anti-corruption strategies in Africa. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 10(1), 129-159.
- Rose-Ackerman, S. (1999). *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
-(2001). Political Corruption and Democratic Structure. In *The Political Economy of Corruption*, edited by Arvind K. Jain, 35–62. New York: Routledge.
- Salman, S. (2017, August 2). ACC hotline gets huge response. *The Daily Sun*. Retrieved from <http://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/244989/ACC-hotline-gets-huge-response->
- Sardan, D., and Olivier, J.P. (1999). A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 37 (1): 25-52.
- Transparency International, (2017). Bangladesh's score slightly improves on Corruption Perception Index 2017 TIB calls on Government to be more stringent against corruption. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/beta3/index.php/en/media-release/5504-bangladesh-s-score->

slightly-improves-on-corruption-perception-index-2017-tib-calls-on-government-to-be-more-stringent-against-corruption

Transparency International-Bangladesh (TIB). (2001), Fact Finding Report on Bureau of AntiCorruption (BAC), Dhaka.

Theresa. T. , and Shah. A. (2005). Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index: Whose Perceptions Are Th ey Anyway?
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWBIGOVANTCOR/Resources/TransparencyInternationalCorruptionIndex.pdf> [accessed August 24, 2009].

UNODC(2014). UNODC ANNUAL REPORT .Retrieved from
https://www.unodc.org/documents/AnnualReport2014/Annual_Report_2014_WEB.pdf

UNODC(2012). <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2012/September/where-corruption-flourishes-development-and-the-rule-of-law-fail-says-unodc-chief.html>

Villoria, M., Ryzin, G.G and Lavena, C.F (2012). Social and Political Consequences of ADMINISTRATIVE Corruption: A Study of Public Perception in Spain. *Public Administration Review*. Vol 134, Issue1, page 85-94

Warren, M. E. (2004). What Does Corruption Mean in a Democracy? *American Journal of Political Science* 48(2): 328–43.

Williams, R., & Doig, A. (2004). A good idea gone wrong? Anti-corruption commissions in the twenty-first century. *Bergen: The Christian Michelsen Institute.*

World Bank. (1997). *Helping countries combat corruption: The role of the World Bank.*

Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network. . World Bank,

Washington, D.C.

Yang, K. (2009). Institutional Congruence, Ideas and Anti-Corruption Policy: The Case of

China and United States. *Public Administration Review*, December 2009.

Yu, W. (2015). Anti-Corruption Strategies in Singapore: Demystifying the Singapore Model.

In *Government Anti-Corruption Strategies: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* Edited by

Yahong Zhang and Cecilia Lavena CRC Press 2015 Pages 123–138

Appendix-I

Interview Questionnaires on Right to Information

Questions for Face to Face Interview

(Information Officer)

1. How many applications do you receive in every month?
2. How many applications can you respond within time frame?
3. How do you make people informed about their application status ?
4. Have you received any training on RTI?
 1. Yes 2. No
5. Do you have sufficient logistics support to provide information?
 1. Yes 2. No , If No,
6. What logistics do you need to provide information?
7. Do you face problems in providing information?
 1. Yes 2. No
8. If Yes, what are those problems
9. How are you handling those problems? What are your suggestions to improve implementation of RTI Act?
10. How often do you publish news/update website?

Appendix-II

Interview Questionnaires on Public Service Innovations

1. Does your organization have innovation program?

1. Yes 2. No If Yes,
2. What types of Innovations are being carried out?
3. What challenges are you facing in carrying out Innovations?
4. How do you tackle the Challenges?
5. What factors, do you think influence public service innovations in

Bangladesh?

Appendix-III

Survey Questions & Responses on PSI

Questions & Responses in Likert Scale

Statement	Scale					Number of Response
	1	2	3	4	5	
Perceived Innovation Effectiveness						
Innovations have improved service quality in my organization	0%	1.88%	20.75%	47.16%	30.18 %	53
Innovations have enhanced image of my organization	0	0	7.54	39.62	52.83	53
Innovations has enhanced clients” satisfaction significantly	0	0	15.09	54.71	30.18	53

Knowledge						
My Organization has openness for innovative practices	0	9.43	9.43	49.05	32.07	53
Cultural Dimension						
Innovations in Government are welcomed by officials in my organization	0	3.77	28.30	49.05	18.86	53
Innovative cultures are prevailing in my organizations	0	3.77	5.66	35.84	58.49	53
Traditional civil service culture is a barrier to innovations	0	0	5.66	35.84	58.49	53
Leadership is important for innovation	0	0	5.77	22.64	73.58	53
Rules and Processes						
Rules and processes are cumbersome	0	26	0	34	40	53
My organization has enough resources to carry out innovations	0	0	0	20.75	79.25	53
Organizational Design						
My organization is capable to carry on innovations	0	5.77	9.43	35.84	49.05	53

(Strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, not sure=3, agree=4, strongly agree=5)

Appendix-IV

Characteristics of Respondents

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	5	9.4	9.4	9.4
	1	48	90.6	90.6	100.0
	Total	53	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	53	30	58	46.75	7.771
Tenure	53	3	33	19.04	8.925
Knowledge	53	2	5	4.04	.898
Culture	53	2	5	3.83	.778
Rules	53	2	5	3.62	1.197
Organizational Design	53	2	5	4.28	.863
Performance	53	2	5	4.06	.770
Valid N (listwise)	53				

Interviewees

Age Range	No	Percentage	Remarks
32-37	3	5.45%	Entry Level Official
38-43	12	21.81%	Mid-level Official
44-49	15	27.27%	Senior Level Official
50-55	21	38.18%	Senior Level Official
56-58	4	7.27%	Senior Level Official
Total	55	100	

Appendix-V

Interview Questionnaires on Anti-Corruption

1. Do you face obstacles in discharging your works?
 - a. Yes 2. No , If Yes,
3. What are those obstacles?
4. Do you think ACC is independent enough to fight against corruption?
5. What factors are related to ACC's performance?
6. How ACC can be more effective?