



E-Governance for Good Governance: Experiences from Public Service Delivery

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ABSTRACT

E-governance is widely accepted as an effective tool of service delivery and equated with good governance by all developed countries in general and developing countries like Bangladesh in particular. The core purpose of this study is to validate the e-governance for good governance. The quantitative research approach was conducted. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaire from random samples drawn from the population of service providers and service receivers from four different DESCs of Bangladesh. The standard of service, choice & consultation, courtesy & consultation, entrance & information, and value for money variables were used to assess the quality of service while accountability, transparency, effectiveness, responsiveness, and rule of law were used to analysis the effective measures for good governance. The study results revealed that the DESC provides public services efficiently and e-governance is positively correlated to good governance promises impending to validation of hypothesis.

General Terms

DESC (District E-Service Centers), UISC (Union Information & Service Centers), ICT (Information & Communication Technology), IT (Internet Technology)

Keywords

e-governance, good governance, public service delivery

1. INTRODUCTION

Internet Technology (IT) is creating new desires and opportunities among people for quality service. The expression of e-government indicates the usage of IT by the agencies to provide better citizen services. Moreover, e-government is being considered as powerful tool to reducing cost, enhancing revenues, and improving public service delivery [1]. Harris (2000) stated, e-governance intends to ensure the efficiency, accountability and transparency in the functioning of government and show the way of good governance [2]. According to Heeks (2001), IT simplifies the administrative process, facilitates the performance more effectually, and transforms a relationship within society [3]. He also pointed out three main contributions of e-governance like improving government processes (e-administration), connecting citizens (e-services), and building external interactions (e-society).

Ghosh *et al.* (2004) conceptualizes e-service as interactive information service among the service providers, service recipients and agencies [4]. The e-service is very different from traditional service, which is based on interactive information flow between customers and service providers [5]. In this process, the information technology is critical for customer satisfaction. With the aspire to provide the public

services at the doorsteps of citizens and connecting the people, Bangladesh government has set-up e-service centers at Union, Upazila, and District level as part of e-governance scheme. The government has tried to deliver the public services through the e-service centers. The current study is tried to assess the District E-Service Centers¹ in Bangladesh in terms of the public service delivery. Moreover, the research is attempt to establish linkage between the e-governance and good governance

UNDP (2007) says that e-governance can provide basic tools and mechanisms for poor communities to hold both policy makers and service providers accountable for a sustained supply of services [6]. Thus, it becomes important to view the status of e-governance. Kasubiene and Vanagas (2007) believe that since e-governance is a new research area and e-governance service quality aspect is even more in need for research, despite its importance in the public sector with due regard to the customer's perceptions and expectations from a service delivery point of view [7]. The motivations for e-government and e-services have been well documented in contemporary literature. The two terms, e-government and e-services can be viewed from a supply and demand perspective. On the demand side, the desire for electronic services or the level of e-service use by people can be used to rationalize engaging in e-government, while on the supply side, e-government can also be a means to get citizens to access e-services.

The current study ranges from the dimensions and attributes of e-service quality, the level of citizen satisfaction as well as relationship between e-governance to good governance. The outcome of this research will help e-government administrators² to make substantial initiatives for obtaining the goal of good governance through various ways. The results obtained from this research study will be helpful for government officials to know the contribution of e-government towards good governance. The information obtained from the research will provide useful guidance for managers of e-government in improving the application of e-government. Consequently, the knowledge obtained from the outcome of this research can be used in future e-government initiatives by the government.

The research is attempts to identify the linkage between the factors responsible for creating conducive environment for effective implementation of e-governance and factors relating to good governance.

¹ DESC inaugurated by the GoB in 2010 to better service delivery of the citizens

² Policy makers who take decision and policy implementers' who are close to the citizens

2. METHODOLOGY

With the aim to determine the relationship between dependent and independent variables the quantitative research was apprehended. The relationship was expressed between variables using effect statistics such as correlations, relative frequencies or means and percentage differences [8]. In this research, out of 64 DESC of Bangladesh four has been selected to study named as Mymensingh, Shariatpur, Madaripur and Dhaka as category A, B, C and special category respectively. The service centers has been selected through the cluster sampling method.

2.1 Sampling Design

The quota sampling method was followed in this study. In this step, 16 from each and total 64 respondents from four service centers were selected. Purposive sampling method followed for respondent selection. The identical response categories were used for several items intended to measure a given variable and each item has scored in a uniform manner. The level of good governance was graded by using five point Likert scales [9]. The scale has five level of grading from 5 to 1, where 5 denoted the highest grading score while 1 referred the lowest.

2.2 Data Analysis

Different types of data collection procedure for this research were conducted to collect data. The primary data were collected by using structured questionnaire from key respondents and asking set of questions from experts' interview. The secondary data was gathered through content analysis from the research articles, textbooks and dailies while documents survey scheme from various webpage. The data was analyzed by using simple statistical tools like tabulation, frequency, percentage, arithmetic means and standard deviations. A relationship between the dependent and independent variables were analyzed through Regression Analysis.

2.3 Performance Measures

Good governance performance is measured by using six indicators like accountability, transparency, effectiveness, responsiveness, rule of law and participation. Under the heading of each indicator, two questions are framed in the questionnaire for grading the level of each indicator and comparison with the traditional system. The quantification process is introduced for good governance performance measures. The good governance performance (GG_{PM}) is calculated by the subsequent equation.

$$GG_{PM} = \log(AC_h - AC_m) + \log(TR_h - TR_m) + \log(EF_h - EF_m) + \log(RE_h - RE_m) + \log(RL_h - RL_m) + \log(PA_h - PA_m)$$

GG_{PM} = E-governance performance measures
 AC_h = highest value of accountability
 AC_m = mean value of accountability
 TR_h = highest value of transparency
 TR_m = mean value of transparency
 EF_h = highest value of effectiveness
 EF_m = mean value of effectiveness
 RE_h = highest value of responsiveness
 RE_m = mean value of responsiveness
 RL_h = highest value of rule of law
 RL_m = mean value of rule of law
 PA_h = highest value of participation
 PA_m = mean value of participation
 The value of $GG_{PM} > 1$ (Performance is good) or $GG_{PM} < 1$ (Performance is not good).

Further, the good governance was analyzed by overall performance of government in enhancing good governance capability by adding up the score for each feature was verified for selected service centers and the study assessed the effectiveness e-government in enhancing the good governance in relation with the traditional government in addition to analyzed the level of good governance effectiveness.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The effectiveness of good governance is measured on accountability, transparency, effectiveness, responsiveness, rule of law, and participation indicators. The assessment was done through the enhancement level, Gap analysis, and Regression co-efficient.

3.1 Enhancement Level

In this research the effectiveness of good governance is analyzed for e-government. In this pace of data analysis, the total grading scores of all indicators of good governance was determined. In every aspects of good governance, the level of effectiveness was raised in e-government era compare to traditional government. The enhancement level illustrated in Table-1, the effectiveness has enhanced 50.00%, which demonstrated a fair level of enhancement towards good governance where can do much better. Moreover, the accountability has enhanced 40.16%, transparency has enhanced 39.38%, responsiveness has enhanced 37.81%, and rule of law has enhanced 39.53%, which demonstrated a poor level of enhancement. However, the participation enhanced only 29.22%, which demonstrated very poor level of enhancement.

Table 1. Level of enhancement of good governance

| Governance Indicators | Enhancement Level | Level of Effectiveness |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Accountability | 40.16% | Poor |
| Transparency | 39.38% | Poor |
| Effectiveness | 50.00% | Fair |
| Responsiveness | 37.81% | Poor |
| Rule of Law | 39.53% | Poor |
| Participation | 29.22% | Very poor |

Heeks (2001) studied the effect of new information and communication technologies and how it can make a significant contribution to the achievement of good governance goals [3]. Pitman (2006) claimed that e-government is the way for governments to realized improved efficiency and function [10]. The current findings of the research also pointed out that e-government initiative like DESC had an insignificant improvement towards good governance in the case of service delivery required more commitment. However, there is a room for development in participation.

3.2 Gap Analysis

The contour (see Figure-1) showed the efficacy of each indicator of good governance and its perception among the service providers and receivers. The figure demonstrated a remarkable gap between the service provider and receiver perception in the case of transparency and effectiveness. The perception of receivers and providers was almost same for

accountability, responsiveness, rule of law, and participation. Citizen perception about the transparency of good governance through e-service was 73.13% less than service provider view, 76.25%. Case of effectiveness also showed a gap between the perceptions of citizens (80.63%) and the service providers (82.81%). The result indicated that there are necessities of gap minimizing.

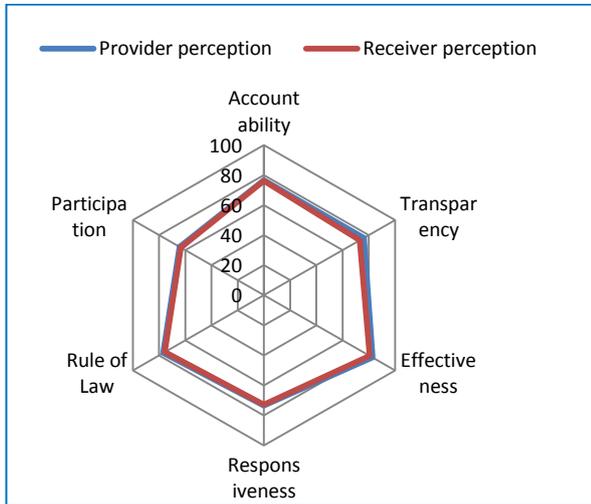


Figure 1. Service providers and receivers perception on good governance efficacy

3.3 Regression Coefficients

The Figure-2 represented the regression line which drawn by the variables and proved e-governance positively correlated with good governance. The good governance is ensuring with the development of e-governance performance.

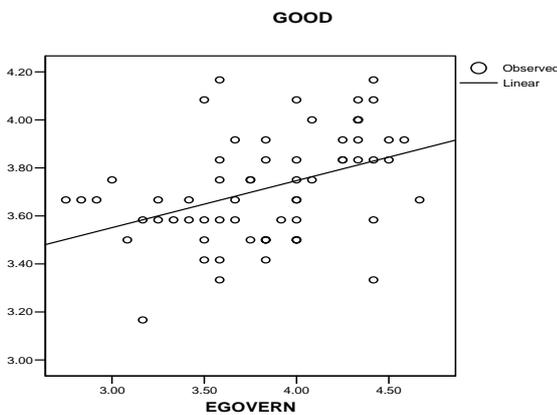


Figure 2. Regression line for e-governance and good governance

4. ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION

The key findings were found after the data analysis of e-governance, citizen satisfaction and good governance that presented under correlation analysis and performance measure sub-heads. The discussion was done on the basis of research objectives.

4.1 Correlation Analysis

The Pearson Correlation was conducted to find out the relationship among all variables like e-governance, citizen satisfaction and good governance and to determine the degree of their correlation. The results of Pearson Correlation endow

with an understanding the direct relationship among the key variables like e-governance, citizen satisfaction and good governance. The correlation values were 0.645, 0.567 and 0.410 (see Table-2) where all showed the moderately positive correlation among the key variables. According to the Pallant (2001), the correlation among the electronic governance, satisfaction level and good governance were significant (less than 0.70) that validate the current study [11].

Table 2. Correlation matrix among independent and dependent variable

| Major Variables | EG | SL | GG |
|--------------------|--------|--------|----|
| E-Governance | 1 | | |
| Satisfaction Level | .567** | 1 | |
| Good Governance | .410** | .645** | 1 |

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

E-government was regarded as powerful tool in hands of government for reducing cost, enhancing revenues, improving delivery of public services [1]. Field *et al.* (2004) argued that e-service can play a critical role in improving the services quality delivered to its customers as it can achieve survival, increase satisfaction and trust and then generate the competitive success for organizations [12]. Harris (2000) purported to ensure the efficiency, accountability and transparency in the functioning of government and show the way of good governance [2]. The current research appropriated the above research findings.

4.2 Performance Measures

In this section, the performance of DESC was measured regarding the e-governance service, level of citizen satisfaction and the good governance premises.

The good governance premises performance calculated through the following equation where the highest standard value and the mean value of each indicator were considered:

$$\begin{aligned}
 GG_{PM} &= \log(AC_h - AC_m) + \log(TR_h - TR_m) + \log(EF_h - EF_m) + \log(RE_h - RE_m) + \log(RL_h - RL_m) + \log(PA_h - PA_m) \\
 &= \log(5 - 3.81) + \log(5 - 3.70) + \log(5 - 4.05) + \log(5 - 3.65) + \log(5 - 3.80) + \log(5 - 3.27) \\
 &= \log 1.19 + \log 1.30 + \log 0.95 + \log 1.35 + \log 1.20 + \log 1.73 \\
 &= 0.08 + 0.11 - 0.02 + 0.13 + 0.08 + 0.24 \\
 &= 0.62 \text{ (less than 1)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Analysis showed that the DESC performance value regarding e-governance service was 0.33, level of citizen satisfaction was 0.49 and the good governance premise was 0.62. All values of DESC performance were less than 1 (targeted value) that indicated meager performance that indicates there is a scope for further development.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The e-governance is to support and simplify governance for both the service providers and service receivers. The key objective of this study was to explore the relation between e-governance and good governance. The study has revealed that the DESC provides public services efficiently, the e-service delivery has positive impacts on citizen satisfaction and the e-governance initiative leads to good governance promises. But, the performance measures of DESC regarding the e-



governance services, level of citizen satisfaction and the good governance promises revealed its scanty accomplishment. Thus for effective e-governance service delivery needs further improvement as desire of the citizens.

The study proved that e-government is facts for the way to good governance through the validation of hypothesis like e-service centers are positively related with effective e-governance service, e-governance services have a positive impact on enhancing citizen satisfaction and e-governance is positively correlated to good governance promises.

The role of e-governance in improving service delivery and quality and the impact that has on customer satisfaction in the context of a small developing country like Bangladesh. It is seen in this research that e-governance has the potential to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction. It is to minimize corruption, provide efficient service, ensure accountability and intensify the transparency through the easy accessibility, greater convenience and altitude of interaction. There is a gap between the perception of e-service delivery by service providers and expectation of service quality by service receivers. There is an urgent need in Bangladesh to apply e-governance for minimizing the gaps, improve the service quality and also to build-up citizen-centric service delivery.

5.2 Policy Implications

It may conclude that proper implementation of e-government tools may have the positive role to ensure good governance in service delivery if we follow some rules;

- a. A central coordinating body must be institutionalized that can coordinate and execute the necessary reforms to make achievement of the citizen-centric e-service or e-governance.
- b. The competitive pricing is essential along with raising awareness among the people. In this case, electronic and print media can play their roles.
- c. Institutional restructuring, reforms and capacity building also required providing government services.
- d. Establishing the adequate data privacy and security provisions that ensure the confidentiality and to prevent unauthorized access.

5.3 Limitations

The study has clear limitations that could provide openings for further study. The methodology could look to expand by conducting focus groups involving citizens or users, apart from administrative personnel and IT managers. However, the views of service receivers could be accrue for further study.

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