

Project Formulation and Implementation Process of Union Parishad: A Case Study of Bangala Union Parishad of Ullapara Upazila of Sirajganj District in Bangladesh

¹Dr. Md. Rajaul Karim, ²M.M. Iftekhairun Nisa Yusufi, ³ A.B.M. Moshiuddullah, ⁴Farha Atif, ⁵Sukriti Azmal

¹Designation: Assistant Professor

Department: Bangladesh Studies

Institution/University: Khwaja Yunus Ali University Bangladesh

²Designation: Assistant Professor

Department: English

Institution/University: Khwaja Yunus Ali University Bangladesh

³Designation : Assistant Professor

Department: Business Administration

Institution/University: Khwaja Yunus Ali University Bangladesh

⁴Designation: Assistant Professor

Department: English

Institution/University: Khwaja Yunus Ali University Bangladesh

⁵Designation: Lecturer

Department: English

Institution/University : Khwaja Yunus Ali University Bangladesh

Abstract

Local governments, particularly the Union Parishad in Bangladesh, are crucial for rural development, addressing the unique needs of marginalized communities. Initially known as the Gram Panchayat, it evolved post-1971 into the Union Parishad, as outlined in Bangladesh's Constitution. The Union Parishad oversees public services, development projects, and local economic growth. It is divided into three wards, promoting women's participation in governance. A study of 290 respondents revealed that most people felt their interests were not considered in project planning. Government intervention and financial constraints hinder the Union Parishad's autonomy in project decisions. These challenges undermine its ability to effectively execute development initiatives. The current study attempts to highlight the project adoption and implementation process of the Union Parishad as a local government in Bangladesh and its obstacles.

Keywords: Local government, Union Parishad, Development, Project, Financial, Management.

Introduction

Local government plays a crucial role in the development of modern states. Central governments often struggle to reach remote areas, making it difficult to address long-term issues. To bridge this gap, local governments were created to meet the unique needs of these communities. As a result, local governance has become a key part of many nations' systems. Centralized governments often face challenges in managing services at the grassroots level, leading to the establishment of local government bodies that focus on marginalized populations. Local governments are defined by a country's constitution or legislation, which

outlines their roles, authority, and scope. Their importance in socio-economic development, addressing basic needs, and solving localized issues is clear. In Bangladesh, the Union Parishad, the lowest tier of local government, plays a vital role in rural governance and development. Originally, the Gram Panchayat served as the local body during British colonial rule, which evolved into the Union Parishad after Bangladesh's independence in 1971. The Bangladesh Constitution emphasizes local governance. Articles 9, 11, 59, and 60 focus on democratic local institutions. They ensure that these bodies are elected and have authority over local matters, such as public service management and economic development. The Union Parishad is instrumental in executing government programs in rural areas and plays a key role in development projects. To strengthen the Union Parishad, each union is divided into three wards, and provisions are made to elect a female member from each ward. This helps ensure women's involvement in the development process. The Union Parishad Ordinance of 1983 assigns ten mandatory and thirty-eight optional functions to these bodies, including the adoption and execution of development projects. These projects must align with the needs of the local population, making it the Union Parishad's constitutional duty to plan and implement projects that address rural challenges. This study evaluates the effectiveness of the Union Parishad in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Study purposes

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the extent to which Union Parishad can play an effective role in accepting and implementing development projects. For this purpose an attempt will be made to search for the elements mentioned below-

- ❖ To inquire whether the Union Parishad is considering public interest in undertaking development projects;
- ❖ To see whether the Union Parishad is able to act independently in undertaking development projects;
- ❖ To verify whether the Union Parishad has the financial solvency and technical capacity to implement development projects;
- ❖ To highlight the steps to be taken to eliminate the problems caused in the implementation of the development project.

Primary objectives of the Study

To conduct this research effectively, the following objectives have been identified:

- ❖ Development projects undertaken by the Union Parishad are not always aligned with the public interest.
- ❖ Financial constraints faced by the Union Parishad during project approval and implementation lead to limitations in executing accepted projects. This lack of autonomy hinders the effectiveness of Union Parishads, fosters corruption, and results in improper implementation of development initiatives.

Rationale of the Study

The Union Parishad, the lowest tier of local government in Bangladesh, plays a critical role in the country's sustainable development. To achieve true progress, the Union Parishad must function with a certain degree of autonomy. Key issues include its level of independence, powers and limitations, relationship with the central government, financial management, role in maintaining law and order, rural infrastructure development, women's political participation, disaster management, political awareness creation, and rural justice. While there has been considerable research on the Union Parishad's role in project selection and implementation, significant gaps remain. With 70% of Bangladesh's population residing in rural areas, national development heavily relies on the technological advancement of rural infrastructure. The Union Parishad, being the most accessible institution, is central to achieving this progress. Thus, the effective implementation of its projects is of utmost importance. This study aims to address these gaps by exploring the scope and limitations of the Union Parishad's authority and examining the extent of central government control over it. By doing so, this research will contribute to enhancing the functionality of local self-governance, thereby accelerating the

material welfare of rural communities. The study is both timely and relevant, aiming to empower the Union Parishad as a driving force for rural development and sustainable national progress.

Literature review

Research on the role of Union Parishad in the adoption and implementation of development projects is limited in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, there are related studies that touch on this topic. A review of various books, articles, and research relevant to this area follows below:

Md. Maksudar Rahman, a notable researcher on local government in Bangladesh, has extensively explored the subject. In his book *Politics and Development of Local Self-Government in Bangladesh*, Rahman discusses the evolution of local self-government and its scope of work. The second chapter delves into the theoretical aspects of local autonomy, critically assessing the decentralization of power and the independent role of local governments as a means of decentralization. After the theoretical review, the focus shifts to the practical aspects of local planning. In the third chapter, Rahman compares local government structures and functions in England, France, the United States, and India to propose an effective model for developing countries, outlining the institutional foundation of local self-government. The author also offers guidelines for the independent role of local government within this model. Chapter five examines the role of Bangladesh's post-independence governments in promoting local autonomy. The sixth chapter identifies challenges to effective local governance and the decentralization of power. However, the book does not specifically address the role of the Union Parishad in adopting and implementing development projects.¹

Dr. Syed Javed Salehuddin, in his book *Development Union Parishad: Problems and Prospects - History of Evolution of Local Self-Government in Bangladesh, Nature of Economic Growth in Rural Bangladesh, and Development Strategy of Government, Role of Union Parishad in Union-Based Economic Development*, provides an in-depth discussion on the challenges and potential solutions. In the third chapter, the researcher examines the backward nature of Bangladesh's rural economy and the government's development strategies, highlighting issues in the rural agricultural sector and identifying obstacles to infrastructural progress. The author stresses the vital role of the Union Parishad, the government's representative body in rural areas, in managing and advancing this developmental sector. In the fourth chapter, the researcher addresses the problems of union-based development and explores various solutions. This chapter also discusses strategies to achieve rural economic self-reliance through rural infrastructure development, expansion of agriculture, and medium industries. While the researcher reviews various government initiatives for socio-economic development and their implementation, the role of the Union Parishad in adopting and executing these development projects is not explored.²

Abdun Noor is writing a book on social justice and human development. In it, he evaluates the role of Union Parishads in rural development, good governance, and social justice. The author emphasizes the importance of good governance and social justice in the opening of the book. In the second chapter, he examines how good governance contributes to rural development, focusing on whether the rent and tax money paid by rural residents is being utilized effectively. He also discusses the Union Parishad's role in work programs, infrastructure development, and food programs as part of social security. The third chapter addresses the financial sources under different governments, financial management, the authority and role of Union Parishads, the central government's influence on their development decisions, and challenges to decentralization. In the final chapter, the author identifies the indicators of human development and highlights the supervisory role of the Union Parishad in ensuring access to education and health services for rural communities. While the chapter discusses the Union Parishad's involvement in human development activities, it does not cover its role in accepting and implementing development projects.³

A.M.M. Shaukat Ali has authored books on field administration and rural development in Bangladesh. The book primarily aims to evaluate the role of administrative agencies at the field level in rural development. It covers the scope of field administration and rural development, the central government's multifaceted action

plan for rural development, and the rural support programs implemented by field administration. The author also explores in detail the functional relationship between field administration and local councils in adopting and executing rural development programs. While the researcher briefly touches on conflicts and disagreements between field administration in the adoption and implementation of rural development initiatives, the book does not address the role of the Union Parishad in initiating and executing development projects at the local level.⁴

A.H.M. Aminur Rahman has authored a book on the politics of rural local self-government in Bangladesh. The book is organized into seven chapters. In the first chapter, the author explores the scope of the local government system, development planning, and its execution in rural society. The second chapter focuses on the nature of rural socio-economic development, the challenges to underdevelopment, and the government's goals and plans to manage the rural economy and development strategy broadly. In the third chapter, the author delves into the history of the development of local rural society and the origins of its administration. Chapter four examines the socio-economic status of elected chairmen and members of union councils at the grassroots level of local government. Chapter five explains the reasons for the unbalanced relationship between local government, political parties, and local administration. In the sixth chapter, the author analyzes the relationship between the Union Parishad and the central government in the absence of power decentralization. Finally, the book presents the research findings. However, it does not address the adoption and implementation of Union Parishad projects as a local government.⁵

In *Local Self-Government and its Reorganization in Bangladesh* written by Lutful Haque Chowdhury, the author explores the topic across seven chapters. The book begins with a discussion of the purpose and research methodology. In Chapter 2, the author traces the historical development of local self-government, detailing the evolution of local autonomy from the Mughal period to independent Bangladesh. Chapter 3 focuses on the Union Parishad, the lowest level of local government, covering aspects such as its organizational structure, people's participation in decision-making and project implementation, the role of non-governmental development organizations, financial management, the dynamic nature of rural leadership, and the tension between national and local politics. In Chapter 4, the author delves into the functioning of field administration in relation to the Union Parishad. Chapter 5 presents the social status of local elite union representatives based on observations. In Chapters 6 and 7, the author offers several recommendations for strengthening the Union Parishad at the grassroots level of governance. However, the book does not discuss the role of the Union Parishad in accepting or implementing development projects.⁶

M. Shayrul Mashrek authored *Politics, Governance and Participation: An Empirical Profile of Rural Bangladesh*. In this work, he explores the political system of rural society, social organization, local public administration, public participation patterns, the presence of conflict in rural politics and its effects on society, the evolution of local government, and the role of democracy in the electoral process. He identifies Upazilas and Union Parishads as positive aspects of decentralization. However, while analyzing the impact of rural politics on the local government system, Mashrek elaborates on how political conflict, patronage relations, and the dominance of local elites negatively affect the functioning of local government. He emphasizes the benefits of decentralization and suggests that the central government should take appropriate actions. Yet, the book does not address the project adoption and implementation process in the Union Parishads of Bangladesh.⁷

In his book *The Politics of Community and Culture in Bangladesh*, Peter Bertocci examines rural social systems, leadership, power structures, rural politics, and informal justice systems, with a particular focus on the role of farmer society. He also explores the impact of rural politics on the marriage system and how the authoritarian political system in the 1980s contributed to rural socio-economic and infrastructural development. Bertosi discusses the influence of rural politics on ethnic conflict and its relationship with rural culture, using the Chittagong Hill Tracts as a case study. However, like Mashrek, Bertosi does not address the adoption and implementation of the Union Parishad project.⁸

In the book *Local Government in Crisis* (1977) by W.A. Robson, the author discusses the roles of urban-focused local governments, including managing roads, hospitals, and public resources, ensuring their optimal use, and fostering the development of local governments in rural areas. He also examines society and its power structure. Robson critiques the challenges faced by urban-centric local governments, particularly in terms of coordinating joint actions with various government agencies. He suggests enhancing the financial and decision-making capacities of local government bodies to improve the effectiveness of city-focused services. The author also explores the involvement of social organizations in the socio-economic development initiatives carried out by local governments. He identifies the limitations of the authorities' powers in managing local economic affairs and underscores the importance of strengthening the authority of the Union Parishad to improve service delivery in rural areas.⁹

The book *Issues of Governance in Bangladesh* by A.M.A. Muhith is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter discusses governance and good governance in the context of Bangladesh. The second chapter focuses on the structure of government, while the third examines the role of local government in the twenty-first century. The fourth chapter addresses the position of national administration in the same era. The fifth chapter highlights reform-oriented planning and budgeting aimed at accelerating local and national development. The sixth chapter explores land management and the rationale behind development-oriented planning. The seventh chapter delves into the electoral process involved in forming national and local governments. In the eighth and ninth chapters, the author offers recommendations for promoting good governance through local autonomy, aiming to integrate local and national development into cohesive action plans for the twenty-first century. Although good governance is a central theme of the book, it does not address the project approval and implementation processes of the Union Parishad.¹⁰

Research area

The research will focus on Bangala Union in the UllaparaUpazila of Sirajganj District, a rural area where every household has electricity. Most of the union's roads are paved, although some remain unpaved, leading to communication disruptions during the monsoon season. The union is home to 12 primary schools, 5 high schools, 4 madrasas, 1 degree college, and 1 technical college. Located 12 km west of the Ullaparaupazila headquarters, the union is inhabited by people from various professions, including traders, employees, professionals, and farmers. This union serves as a representative sample, and the research findings can be applied to other unions in the country. The researcher chose this area due to its proximity and personal familiarity, having lived near the Gabshena area. The population of Bangala Union is approximately one lakh, with around 80,000 individuals aged 18 and above. Hatbazar serves as the main economic hub of the union, and there are approximately seven major markets where residents meet their daily needs. Additionally, the union has one hospital and one sub-health center that provide healthcare to nearly all residents.

Data collection method

This study primarily relied on primary data collected from the field. However, secondary data sources were also used. These secondary sources included books, daily newspapers, published articles, and research papers. Additionally, information was gathered from Union Parishad members, both current and former chairpersons and members, as well as individuals involved with the development project.

Progress of the Union Parishad

In ancient times, the Panchayat system, based on caste or gotra, was widespread in this country. Historical analysis reveals that the Gram Panchayat system developed alongside rural society. The local government institutions at the union level are among the oldest and most traditional.¹¹ Throughout their long history of evolution and transformation, the name of these institutions has changed several times, along with their functions and responsibilities. Despite these changes, the representative democratic structure of these institutions has remained largely the same. To understand the history of the Union Parishad, the lowest level

of local government in Bangladesh, it is essential to explore the origins of this institution. This discussion will trace the evolution of the present-day Union Parishad.¹²

The concept of local self-government is not new to the Indian subcontinent. It is known that the Gram Panchayat system existed here in ancient times. Scholars generally agree that these "gram panchayats" were systematically established in various regions of ancient India. While there is no precise information about when or where the original Gram Panchayat system was founded, research indicates that it was active in different parts of India from the 6th to the mid-9th century AD. These panchayats were formed through informal elections of respected elders and individuals in the village.¹³

Charles McPherson, commenting on the advanced form of the village Panchayat system in ancient India, stated, "These village societies functioned as miniature republics. They were self-sufficient, meeting their daily needs independently, and enjoyed near-political autonomy without external assistance. These village Panchayats witnessed the rise and fall of dynasties and the cyclical nature of political power. Revolutions and uprisings were common, as anti-monarchy movements fueled ongoing revolutions. These rural communities often united to form small kingdoms, primarily to protect the common people from the constant upheaval caused by rulers and kingdoms. The primary goal was to safeguard the rights and freedoms of all individuals."¹⁴

The ancient village Panchayat was made up of five respected members who were expected to resolve minor disputes through arbitration, though no formalized structure for the Panchayat system had yet emerged. Bengal's socio-political structure during the pre-British period was unique, with most cultivable land in Bangladesh controlled by landlords. Some wealthy landlords, by virtue of their influence and prestige, began to assume the responsibilities of local governance.¹⁵

The modern Union Parishad system's structure primarily developed under British rule. Following the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, the British observed a worsening economic and law-and-order situation in India. Recognizing the importance of local institutions in governance, the British introduced the Gram Chowkidar Act in 1870 under Lord Mayo's administration.¹⁶ This Act marked the first legal framework for local government in rural areas, dividing the country into Unions, each consisting of several villages. A five-member Chowkidari Panchayat was created for each union, and its members were appointed by the District Magistrate for a three-year term. The Panchayat's main responsibility was to appoint watchmen, known as Chowkidars, and maintain peace and order in the villages.¹⁷ In 1880, the Famine Commission highlighted the lack of local institutions and stressed the need for local self-government to assist in relief efforts. The Local Self-Government Act of 1885 was a significant step in the development of rural autonomy. It introduced a three-tier local government system in rural areas: district boards, local boards at the sub-divisional level, and union committees at the village level. The Lieutenant Governor of the province had the authority to establish these institutions.¹⁸

Under the 1885 Act, Union Committees were responsible for the administration of a few villages, typically covering an area of 12 square miles. Each committee had at least five and no more than nine members elected from among the union residents.¹⁹ The original Act did not specify the Chairman's position in the Union Committee. However, the 1908 Amending Act introduced the role of Chairman in East Bengal, and since 1914, the Chairman was elected from among the committee members.²⁰ Despite this, the union committees formed under the 1885 Act lacked sufficient authority to drive improvements in rural areas. In response, Sir S. P. Sinha proposed a bill in the Bengal Legislative Assembly to reform the local government system.²¹ The bill passed in 1919 as the "Village Self-Government Act." This Act strengthened local self-government institutions in rural Bengal by replacing Chowkidar Panchayats and Union Committees with a new "Union Board" system.²² The Union Board was composed of 5-9 members, one-third of whom were appointed by the District Magistrate, and two-thirds elected by the residents. The members elected a President and Vice President, with a three-year term. On February 20, 1935, the Bengal Legislature passed an amendment to further develop this system.²³

The amendment divided each union into three wards, with three members elected from each ward for a term of four years. The primary functions of the Union Board included ensuring security for rural people, constructing roads and culverts, providing healthcare, managing chari Figure hospitals and schools, arranging water supply, and supplying essential information to the District Board.²⁴ The Union Board had the authority to impose union taxes and address minor criminal complaints. However, many of its responsibilities were neglected due to severe financial constraints.²⁵

Following the end of British rule, the partition of India, and the creation of Pakistan, the Union Boards continued to operate in the same way until 1956. In 1957, the East Pakistan Legislative Assembly amended the 1919 Autonomy Act, ending the system of nominated Union Board members and allowing elections by adult suffrage. In 1959, the Basic Democracy system introduced a four-tier local government structure, consisting of Union Councils, Thana Councils, District Councils, and Divisional Councils.²⁶ Each Union Council consisted of 10 to 15 members representing an average population of 10,000. Two-thirds of the members were elected by the people, and one-third were nominated by Sub-Divisional Administrators.²⁷ In 1962, the nomination system was abolished with the adoption of the new Constitution, and members elected a chairman and vice chairman from among themselves. The position of vice chairman was abolished in 1963. The Union Council's tenure was set at five years.²⁸

Apart from maintaining peace and order, the Union Council was responsible for 37 functions, including agricultural development, water supply, education, communication, and social welfare. Judicial powers were granted to the Union Council by establishing arbitration tribunals, and under the Muslim Family and Marriage Act of 1961, members had the authority to adjudicate family and marriage disputes.²⁹

The Union Council is empowered to levy taxes, including property tax, and establish a fund. Financial grants from the government are provided for project implementation and Union Council office buildings or other works under the Rural Works Programme. However, Union Councils are often dominated by government officials, with members acting as agents of the government. They face challenges due to financial limitations, corruption, and a lack of strong leadership, which often leads to a failure in fulfilling their responsibilities.³⁰

Union Parishad of Bangladesh: Constitution, Structure

After Bangladesh's independence, the Union Council and Municipal Committee were dissolved by Presidential Order No. 7 on January 1, 1972. This order renamed the Union Council to Union Panchayat and appointed an Administrator. On December 16, 1972, the new constitution of Bangladesh came into effect, which emphasized building strong local government institutions through decentralization. In 1973, Presidential Order No. 22 changed the name of Union Panchayat to Union Parishad. The Union Parishad consisted of 9 members, including a chairman and a vice chairman, all elected through direct voting.³¹

On November 20, 1976, the Local Self-Government Ordinance was promulgated, which abolished the vice chairman position and introduced the nomination of 2 women members to each Union Parishad by the High Commissioner to ensure female representation at the local level. In 1983, the Union Parishad Ordinance increased the number of nominated women members from 2 to 3, with nominations now made by the respective Upazila Parishads. According to this ordinance, the Union Parishad was to have 1 chairman and 9 members elected by direct vote.³²

In 1993, the Local Government Ordinance 1983 was amended to allow for the nomination of women representatives by the elected members of the Union Parishad. Then, in 1997, the Local Government (Union Council) Act divided the Union Parishad into 9 wards, where 1 member from each ward and 1 woman member from every 3 wards were elected by direct vote. The Local Government (Union Council) Second Amendment Act, 1997, confirmed that the Union Parishad would be composed of 9 wards, with 1 member elected from each ward, 3 reserved women seats, and 1 chairman, all elected by the people. This system remains in place today.³³

Despite the name change from Union Panchayat to Union Parishad under Presidential Order No. 22 in 1973, there was no change in its functions and financial management, which remained governed by the Local Government Ordinance of 1976. The Union Parishad is entrusted with 40 functions, including public law enforcement, revenue development, and judicial responsibilities. Additionally, it handles many other undefined tasks, such as issuing national certificates, character certificates, birth and death certificates, and assisting in census activities.³⁴ However, its financial management still follows the basic democratic laws. The current duties and responsibilities of the Union Parishad are outlined in the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance, 1983. The amendment in 1983 changed the Union Parishad's income sources, adding 10 mandatory duties and 38 optional duties, which include municipal revenue, administration, security, and developmental functions.³⁵

Mandatory Functions

- Maintaining law and order and assisting the administration in this regard.
- Taking various measures to curb crime, disorder, and smuggling.
- Promoting agriculture, tree planting, fisheries, animal husbandry, health, cottage industries, irrigation, and communication.
- Expanding family planning programs.
- Ensuring the development and utilization of local resources.
- Preserving public property, including roads, bridges, culverts, dams, canals, telephones, electricity, etc.
- Reviewing the development functions of other organizations at the Union level and, when necessary, making recommendations to the Upazila Executive Officer.
- Encouraging people to use sanitary latrines.
- Registering births, deaths, the blind, beggars, and the destitute.
- Conducting all types of censuses.³⁶

Optional Functions:

- Provision and maintenance of roads and highways.
- Provision and maintenance of public spaces, open areas, parks, and playgrounds.
- Lighting of streets, highways, and public spaces.
- Planting and conservation of trees in general, and specifically in public roads, highways, and public spaces.
- Maintenance and operation of cemeteries, cremation grounds, public meeting places, and other public properties.
- Provision and preservation of tourist accommodations.
- Controlling and preventing unauthorized access to public roads, highways, and public places.
- Supervision of rivers, forests, etc., improvement of the sanitation system, and implementation of other cleanliness measures within the Union.
- Ensuring the collection, removal, and management of waste and street litter.
- Regulation of criminal and dangerous businesses.
- Removal and disposal of dead animals.
- Regulation of animal slaughter.
- Regulation of the construction and reconstruction of buildings within the Union.
- Control of dangerous buildings and structures.
- Arrangement and maintenance of wells, waterworks, reservoirs, ponds, and other water supply systems.
- Implementing measures to prevent contamination of drinking water sources.
- Prohibition of water use from wells, ponds, or other water supplies suspected of being harmful to public health.

- Prohibition or regulation of bathing, washing, or the bathing of animals in or near wells, ponds, or other water supplies designated for drinking water.
- Prohibition of soaking hemp, jute, or other plants in or near ponds or other water sources.
- Prohibition or regulation of tanning within residential areas.
- Prohibition of stone quarrying or other extraction activities in residential areas.
- Prohibition or regulation of the construction of brick, clay, or other kilns in residential areas.
- Registration of the sale of domestic or other animals.
- Organization of fairs and exhibitions.
- Facilitation of public festivals.
- Preparation for natural disasters such as fires, floods, storms (including hail), earthquakes, or other calamities.
- Assistance for widows, orphans, and other needy individuals.
- Development of sports.
- Promotion and encouragement of industrial and social development, the cooperative movement, and rural industry growth.
- Implementation of measures to increase food production.
- Environmental management activities.
- Management of cattle rustling control and maintenance.
- Provision of first aid centers.
- Management of libraries.
- Collaboration with other organizations involved in similar work, such as the Union Parishad.
- Facilitation of educational development under the direction of the District Commissioner.
- Implementation of any other necessary measures for the safety, comfort, or convenience of the residents or visitors to the Union.³⁸

Powers and Functions of Union Parishad

According to the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance of 1983, the Union Parishad has the authority to levy taxes on the annual value of houses, businesses, and trade. However, approval from the District Commissioner is required before levying such taxes. In reality, the Union Parishad does not generate income from this source. It is financially dependent on the government for funding, meaning it is not financially self-sufficient. The amount provided by the government often does not meet the Union Parishad's needs. As a result, the Union Parishad is unable to spend money as required. Furthermore, the Union Parishad does not have the authority to appoint staff.³⁹ A Secretary, appointed by the government, oversees the administration, and the Union Parishad has no control over this position. Additionally, the Union Parishad lacks independence in undertaking development projects due to its limited financial capacity. It can only carry out projects within the budget allocated by the government. This shows that the Union Parishad cannot fund projects on its own. Furthermore, it lacks the technical expertise needed to implement such projects and must rely on government departments for technical support. In summary, the Union Parishad does not have the necessary technical capacity.⁴⁰

Development of Financial Management of Union Parishad

The central government establishes local governments to facilitate governance. Local governments play a key role in connecting the common people with the central government, working directly with the public. The relationship between local and central governments is crucial for both parties. In democratic systems, it is often assumed that local governments will be autonomous, economically independent, and self-sufficient. However, even in democratic governments, full control over local governments can be established. Local governments in the United States enjoy a significant degree of autonomy, while in the United Kingdom, local governments have less autonomy. In France, local governments operate under the central government's authority.⁴¹

Local government is vital for the development of democracy in a country. In Bangladesh, the Union Parishad is the only unelected rural government. It is governed by unelected public representatives. To align the Union Parishad's work with democratic values, it needs to be empowered with modern, fair, and practical policies, as well as an effective accountability system. These considerations are equally important for both the Union Parishad's operations and its economic policies. Understanding the financial management of the Union Parishad in a new democratic country like Bangladesh requires knowledge of the history and authority of its local government.⁴²

Local government in Bangladesh has a long history. According to Kautilya's *ArthaShastra*, in ancient times, the informal organization called the gram sabha managed all village affairs. During the Gupta period, the empire was divided into Bhukti, Sihe, Mandal, Bithi, and Grama. At each level, the king oversaw land transactions and tax collection. The lowest level of local government during the Mughal period was the Mahal, similar to today's Union. The primary function of the Mahal was revenue collection, not public service. Village panchayats were responsible for collecting taxes imposed by the government. These panchayats were essentially local representatives of the central government, collecting taxes from the people.⁴³

After the East India Company's conquest of India, local governance underwent significant changes. In 1793, they introduced the permanent settlement system to increase tax collection. Under this system, the British established a class of zamindars, granting them land in exchange for an annual sum of money. In return, zamindars gained the power to collect taxes from the people via the village panchayat. Although the zamindars collected rent, they were not focused on regional development, as their main interest was in profit. The rent collected from the people allowed the zamindars to generate a profit while paying the government. The common people were essentially subjects, and if they could not pay their rent, they were subjected to harsh treatment by the zamindars. This system allowed the British to secure revenue with minimal risk, while zamindars became increasingly exploitative.⁴⁴

According to the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1919, the Union Parishad was tasked with managing birth and death records, overseeing primary schools, repairing roads, and conducting local development activities. For these functions, the Union Parishad relied on grants from the central government through district boards. In 1908, the Union Committees were empowered to levy taxes to fund their activities, but they were not successful due to the control exerted by the district board. Consequently, the Union Committees lacked independence.⁴⁵

The Village Self-Government Act of 1919 introduced a two-tiered system of rural governance, consisting of Union Boards and District Boards. This Act established a distinct financial framework for the Union Boards. The main aspects of the economic functions of the Village Self-Government Act, 1919 were...

1. The Union Board could levy and collect Union rates from individuals residing in the area and owning certain assets. These funds were not used for public welfare; instead, they were allocated for the salaries of Chowkidar officers and the purchase of necessary equipment.
2. The Union Board could impose additional taxes on the local population with the support of two-thirds of its members and the approval of the District Magistrate.
3. The government would provide funds to the Union Board for the salaries of chowkidars, dafathers, and public welfare activities.
4. The Union Board was required to prepare its budget for the year and submit it to the District Magistrate for approval by the Circle Officer and High Court Administrator by January 25.
5. If an individual was unable to pay the tax rate, provisions were in place to seize their immovable property.⁴⁵

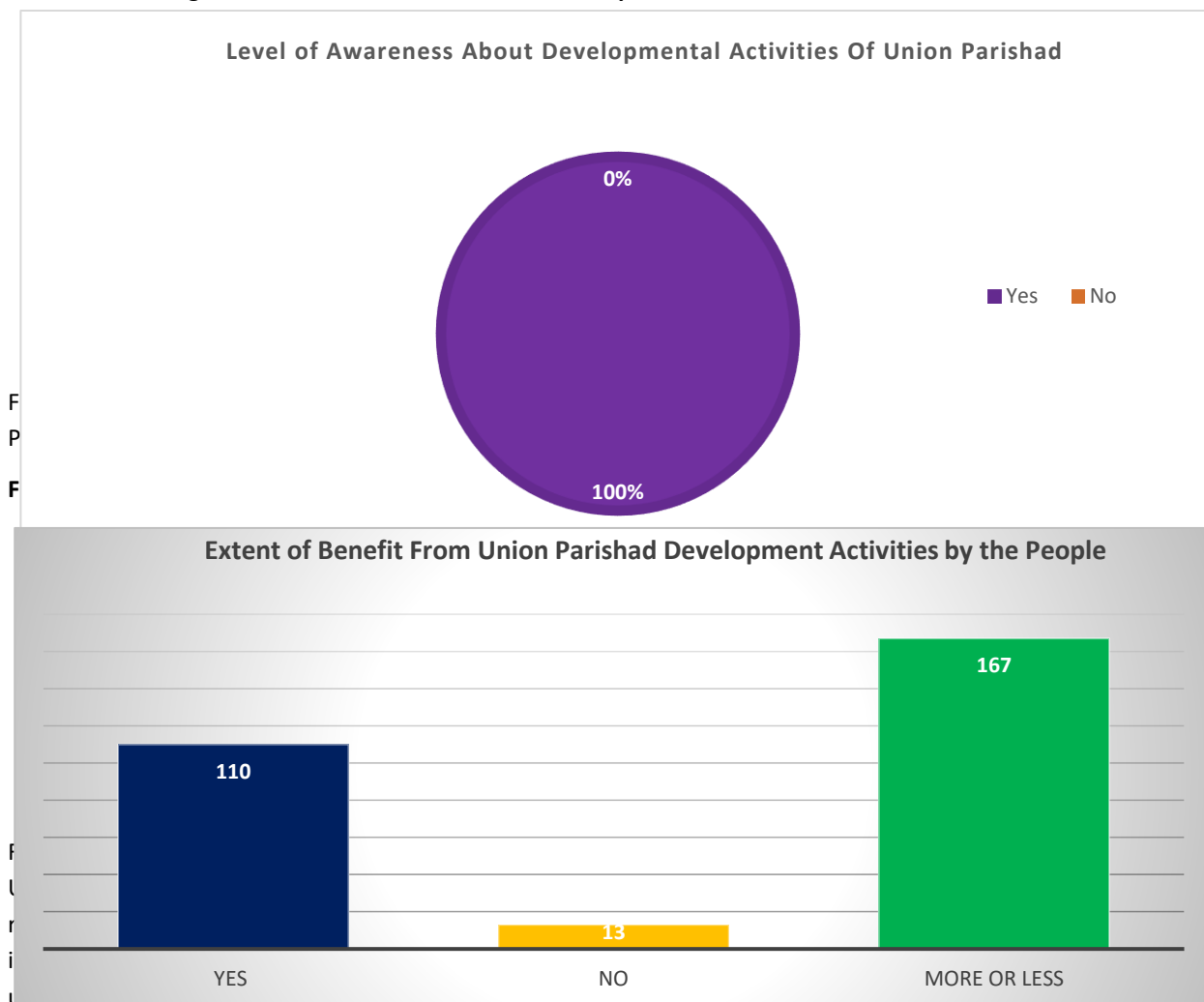
After the independence of Bangladesh, the Union Council, formed under the 1973 Act, did not alter the Union Council rules of basic democracy regarding economic management. The responsibility for relief and

rehabilitation was assigned to the Union Council for post-war recovery. In 1976, the Local Government Act was enacted during Zia’s regime, and the Union Council was replaced by the Union Parishad. This act outlined in detail the formation of funds for the Union Parishad, special funds, fund preservation, expenditure, budget preparation, accounting, auditing, revenue collection rules, and more. The Local Government Ordinance of 1983, which was later promulgated, was primarily based on the 1976 Ordinance.⁴⁶

Involvement of Local People in Undertaking Development Projects

The Union Parishad serves as the central hub for rural development in Bangladesh. To ensure effective local development, the Union Parishad should design development plans that align with the needs and aspirations of the people. It undertakes various initiatives in rural areas, including agriculture, education, communication, and other sectors, as well as providing financial assistance to the elderly and vulnerable during disasters. The participation of the people, who are the primary beneficiaries of these development plans, is crucial. Their opinions and contributions to the development process help ensure the projects are successful and meaningful. Assessing the role and influence of people in shaping development projects is essential for achieving sustainable development. This analysis focuses on the level of public awareness, inclusion, and the significance of their input in projects initiated by the Union Parishad. Responses from 290 participants will be used to evaluate these aspects. Participants were asked whether they were aware of the developmental activities carried out by the Union Parishad.⁴⁷

Figure1: Level of Awareness about Developmental Activities of Union Parishad



Role of the Union Parishad in Safeguarding Public Interest in Development Projects:

Development refers to actions undertaken based on the needs of the people. The Union Parishad and the Gram Pradhan play a vital role in implementing developmental projects aimed at improving the lives of the local population in Bangladesh. The success of the Union Parishad hinges on prioritizing the needs of the people and providing them with opportunities to voice their concerns. It is essential to examine the Union Parishad's role in identifying and evaluating the needs of individual communities, as this is crucial for effective development. This analysis will focus on the Union Parishad's involvement in initiating development projects after assessing the community's needs, based on responses from 290 participants.

Here the people were asked to know whether the Union Parishad considers the needs of the people in taking development projects at the local level.

Figure 3: Extent of Consideration of People's Needs by Union Parishads in Undertaking Development Projects at the Local Level

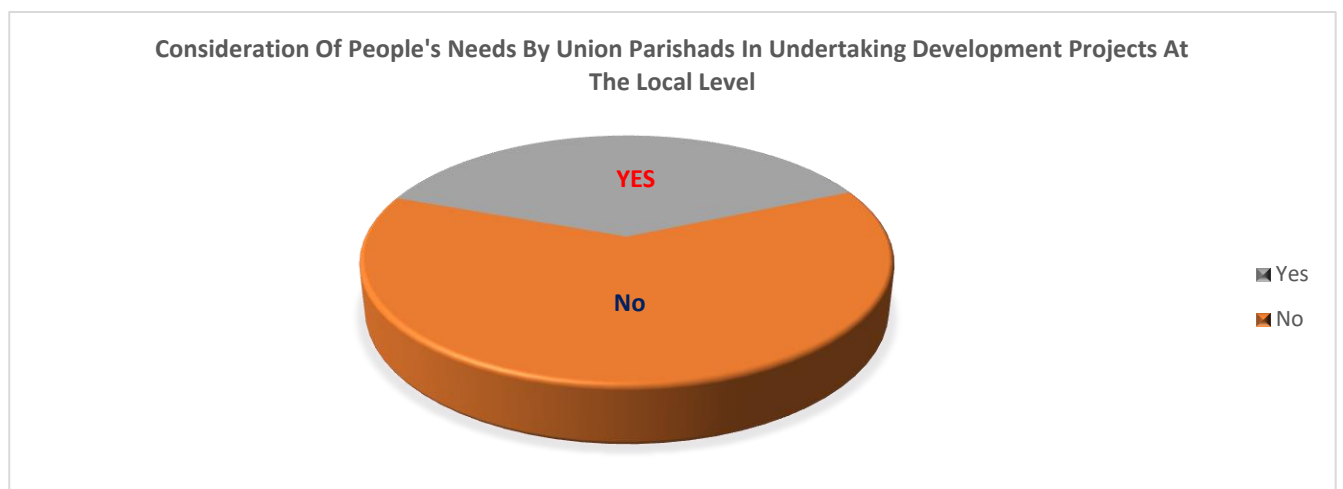


Figure 3: Assessing the role of Union Parishad Chairman and members in solving people's problems

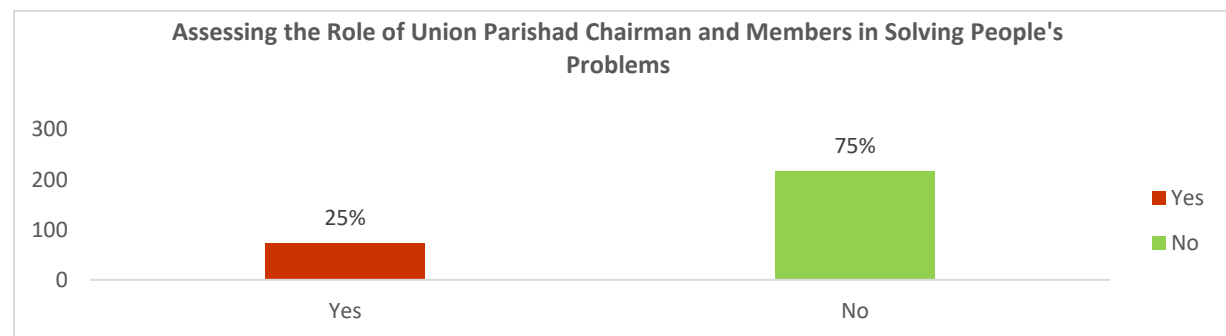


Figure 4 indicates that 73 respondents (25%) believe that the Union Parishad Chairman and members play an effective role in solving problems based on the needs of the people. In contrast, 217 respondents (75%) expressed the opinion that the Chairman and members are not fulfilling this role effectively.

Figure 5: Determination of the reasons why UP Chairman/ Members are unable to play their roles according to the needs of the people

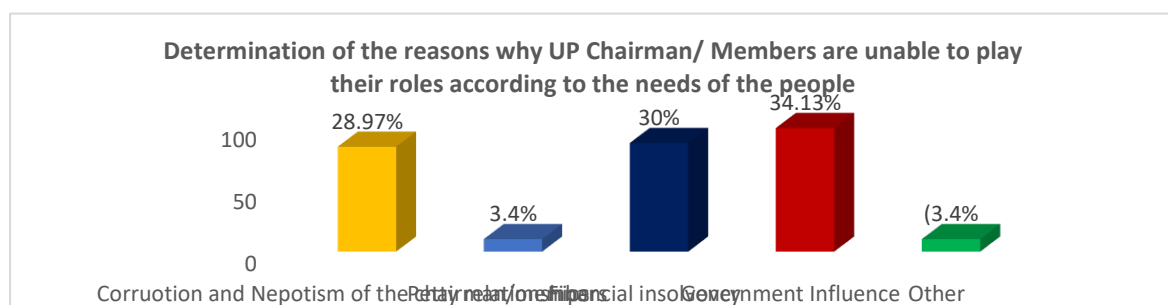


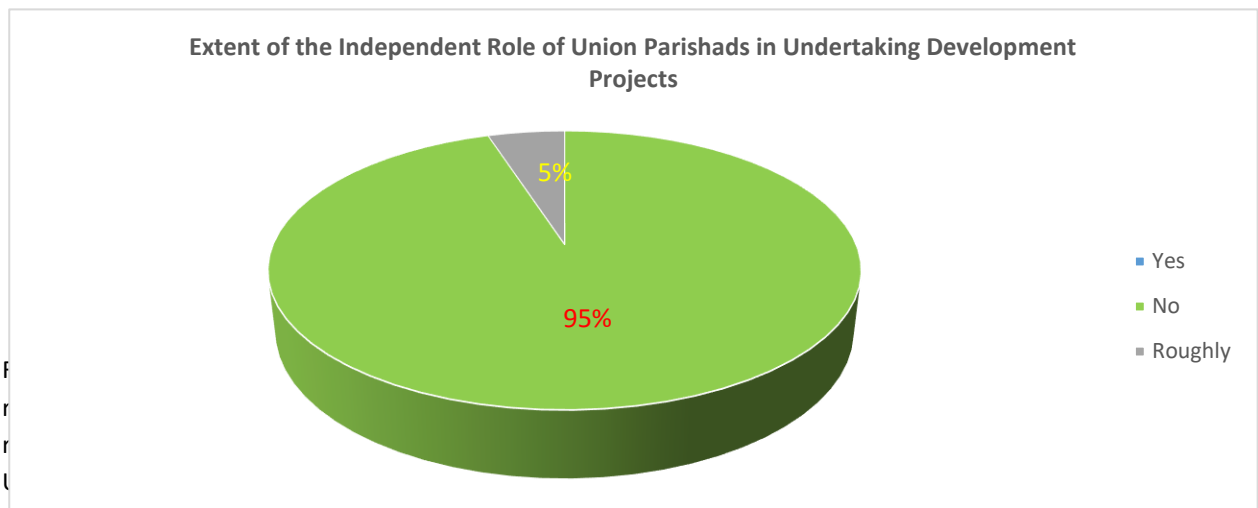
Figure 5 shows that 84 respondents (28%) attributed the inability of the chairman and members to fulfill their roles to corruption and nepotism. Ten respondents (3%) cited patronage relationships, 87 respondents (30%) pointed to financial inefficiency in the Union Parishad, 99 respondents (34%) mentioned government influence, and 10 respondents (3%) identified other factors.

Authority of Union Parishad to Accept Development Projects:

The level of independence of the Union Parishad’s authority in accepting development projects will be analyzed. Each Union Parishad plays a role in undertaking projects in economic, social, infrastructure, and other developmental sectors at the local level. In this context, the Union Parishad has the independent authority to undertake development projects at various levels, and the process reflects its own decisions. The Union Parishad determines the level of authority when making final decisions. To assess the extent of individual authority in the activities related to taking up development projects, the opinions gathered from the elected Union Parishad Chairman and members, based on their responses to questions, will be analyzed.⁴⁸

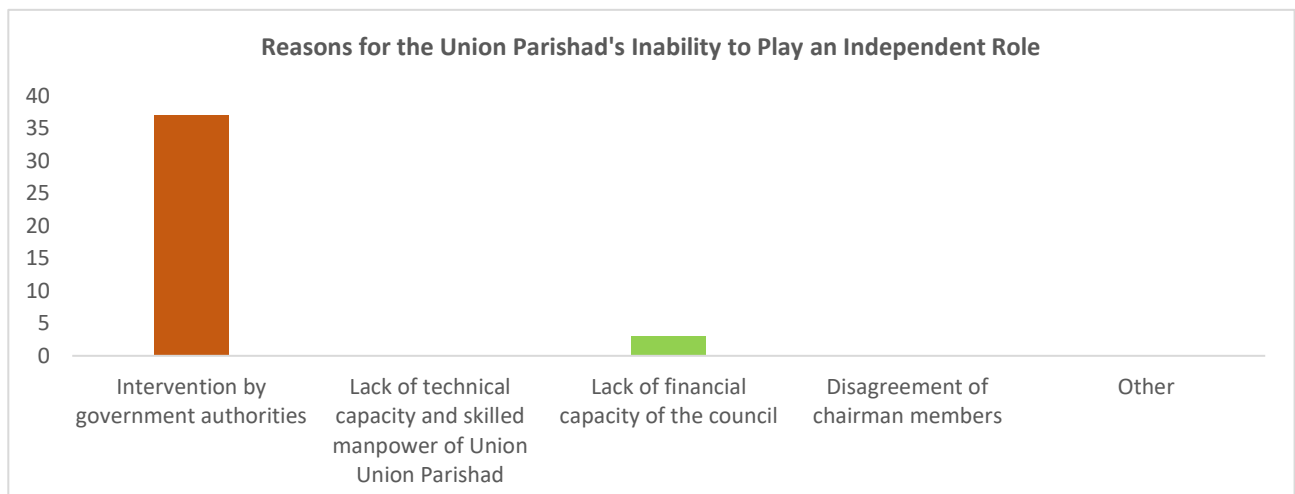
The chairman and members were asked whether the Union Parishad has an independent role in undertaking development projects.

Figure 3.6: Extent of the Independent Role of Union Parishads in Undertaking Development Projects



Additionally, the chairman and members were asked why they were unable to play an independent role.

Figure 3.7: Reasons for the Union Parishad's Inability to Play an Independent Role



projects. The remaining 3 (7%) respondents cited the lack of financial capacity as the reason for the Union Parishad's inability to act independently in these projects.

Government Influence in Undertaking Development Projects

The extent of government influence on the role and authority of the Union Parishad in undertaking development projects will be analyzed. Each Union Parishad initiates various development projects, with the influence of different government units being more or less noticeable in these initiatives aimed at local development. Government influence acts as a unified force in this context. This influence refers to the bureaucratic impact on local development projects undertaken by Union Parishads, particularly regarding their involvement in field administration reporting, monitoring, prioritizing development projects at the local level, and imposing development initiatives.⁴⁹

The chairman and members were asked whether the Union Parishad could play any role in projects imposed by the government or other donor organizations.

Figure 8: Extent of Role of Union Parishads in Projects Imposed by the Government or Other Donor Agencies

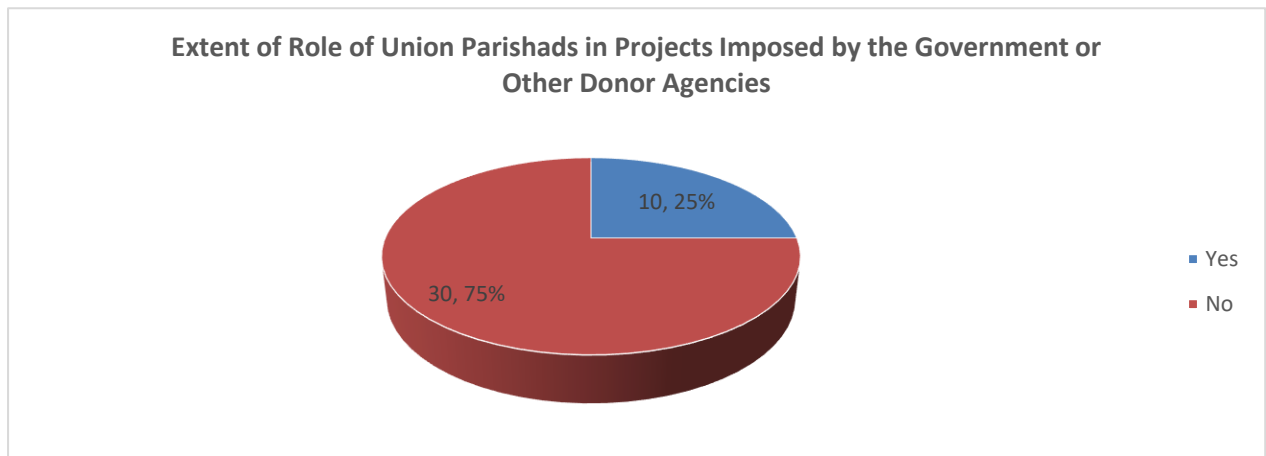


Figure 9: Acceptance of the Role of Union Parishad in Projects Imposed by the Government or Any Other Donor Agency

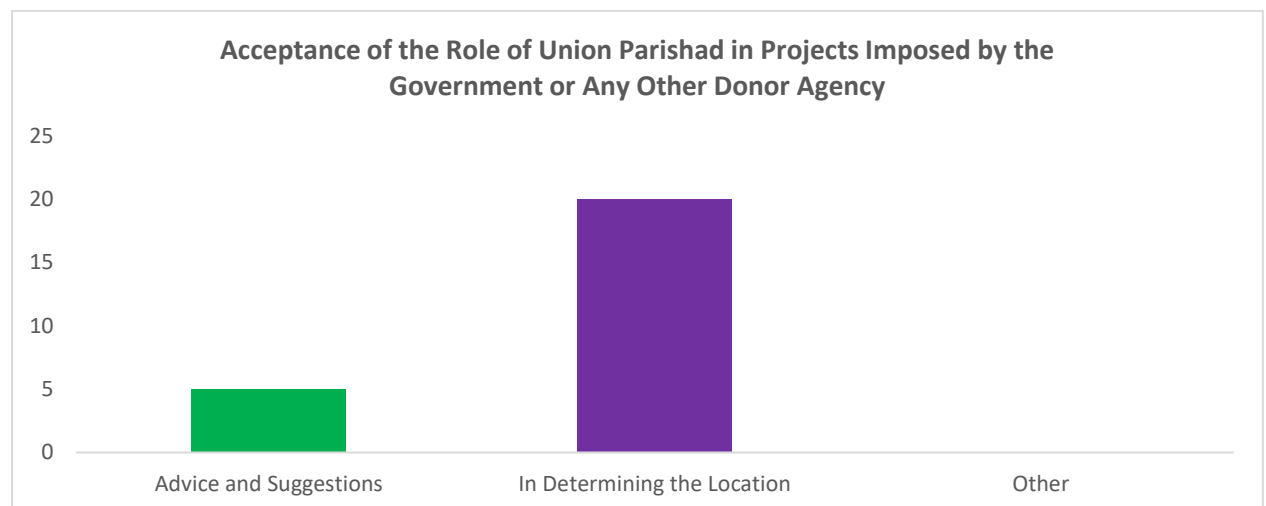


Figure 9 shows that 5 (20%) respondents indicated that the role of the Union Parishad is advisory and consultative in projects imposed by the government or any other donor agency, while 20 (80%) respondents stated that the Union Parishad plays a role in deciding the location. It is worth noting that, in response to the

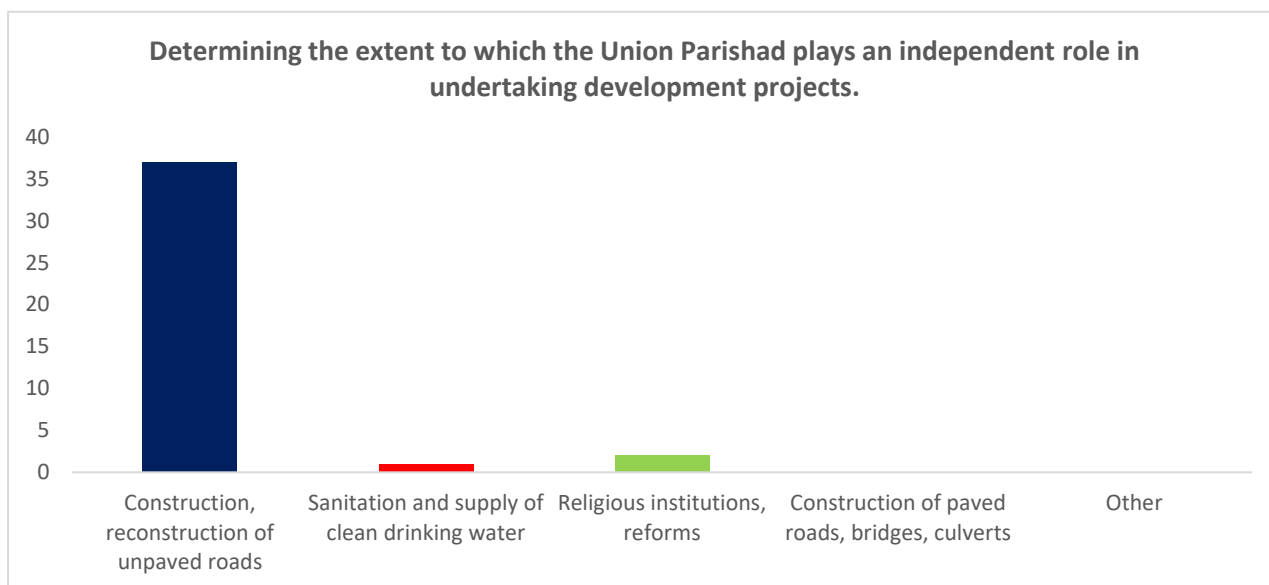
previous question (Figure8), 10 respondents answered "yes" regarding the role of the Union Parishad in projects imposed by the government or any other donor agency.

Independence of Union Parishads According to the Type of Development Project

This section examines the Union Parishads' involvement in local development projects, considering the challenges at the local level. It discusses the degree of independence of the councils in undertaking these projects. Every Union Parishad engages in multifaceted projects that contribute to local social, economic, and infrastructural development. However, the role of the Union Parishad varies in terms of authority and independence when it comes to implementing development projects. The type of development project undertaken by a Union Parishad often influences its degree of independence. In some cases, the council has more authority, while in others, it has less. The variation in the independence of Union Parishads can be attributed to the influence of various actors involved in the development process. The level of authority and independence in undertaking these projects will be analyzed based on the opinions of the elected Union Parishad chairman and members, considering the type of project.⁵⁰

The chairman and members were asked to identify the projects in which the Union Parishad plays an independent role.

Figure10: Determining the extent to which the Union Parishad plays an independent role in undertaking development projects.



Based on these results, it can be concluded that the Union Parishad plays a more independent role in projects related to the construction and reconstruction of unpaved roads.

Case Study 1

Bangala is an important union of UllaparaUpazila in the Sirajganj district. Located in the Chalanbil region, infrastructure development in this area is critical. To address these needs, the Union Parishad has undertaken and implemented various projects over time. One no Figure initiative was the construction of an unpaved road connecting Majhipara to Shyamaldah, spanning 10 kilometers. This project was carried out in the fiscal year 2021-2022, funded by the local government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

The project proposal was approved during a general meeting of the Union Parishad, based on the suggestion of the ward member. However, the decision was made without consulting the local residents. Most people in the area did not find the road necessary, as alternative routes already existed along the main road. Nevertheless, the project was prioritized primarily to benefit the Union Parishad member, as it facilitated

easier travel to their residence. Consequently, the public's interests were overlooked in this decision-making process

The Union Parishad managed the implementation of the project through a five-member committee. Anishur Rahman, the ward member in question, was appointed chairman of the Project Implementation Committee. Other committee members included a dignitary, a social worker, a teacher, and a village representative, with social worker Rafiqul Islam serving as the member secretary. The Upazila government office provided assistance throughout the project, although delays arose due to challenges in fund disbursement. According to the chairman, corruption and unofficial monetary transactions in government offices hindered the timely release of funds.

Although the Union Parishad oversaw the project, it lacked the skilled manpower and technical expertise required for its successful implementation. As a result, frequent collaboration with the Project Implementation Office (PIO) was necessary to obtain technical support and skilled labor. This dependency led to inefficiencies, including delays and increased costs. The Union Parishad described this process as cumbersome and time-consuming, highlighting their reliance on external assistance for project execution.

The project was completed within three months during the fiscal year 2021-2022. Local laborers were hired and compensated based on daily attendance. However, discrepancies were noted in the attendance records, which were inflated to benefit the chairman and other officials. While the Upazila project efficiency chairman supervised the work during implementation, final measurements and cost calculations were completed by the Project Implementation Committee with support from the Upazila office. Upon review and approval of the expenditure, the authorities officially declared the project completed.

Case Study 2

Islampur village is located a short distance from Bangala Union Parishad. Rural infrastructure development is one of the key responsibilities of Union Parishads, with road construction and repair being a primary focus. During the fiscal year 2020–2021, Bangala Union Parishad initiated a 1-kilometer road construction project connecting Dharail Bazar to Islampur Cemetery. Funding for this project was allocated by the Ministry of Rural Development and Cooperatives of the Government of Bangladesh.

However, the project was approved during a general meeting of the Union Parishad without consulting the residents of the affected area. Although the project did not significantly benefit the majority of the region, it was approved due to the demands of certain Union Parishad members.

The Union Parishad took full responsibility for implementing the project and formed a five-member Project Implementation Committee (PIC). Amena Begum, a female member representing the concerned ward, was appointed chairperson of the PIC. Other members included a local dignitary, a teacher, a social worker, and an Ansar member. Abdus Salam Sarkar joined the committee as the distinguished individual representative.

During the land-cutting phase of the project, conflicts arose but were later resolved through discussions with the villagers. Despite this, irregularities and instances of fund misappropriation were reported. The committee frequently needed to contact the upazila project officer for technical support, which caused delays and increased expenses.

The project's funding, allocated by the Ministry of Local Government, faced delays due to bureaucratic inefficiencies. According to the Union Parishad chairman, illegal financial transactions were necessary to facilitate the release of funds. Additionally, the chairman emphasized the importance of prioritizing the opinions of the Union Parishad and upazila government offices during project implementation, as ignoring these opinions was not feasible.

Although the Union Parishad managed the project, it lacked the technical expertise and skilled manpower required for successful execution. Consequently, the PIC repeatedly sought assistance from the Project

Implementation Officer (PIO), leading to further time and resource wastage. This dependence on external support highlighted the Union Parishad's limitations in managing such infrastructure projects.

The project, initially scheduled to be completed within one month, ultimately took three months to finish. Local workers were hired and paid based on daily attendance records. However, discrepancies were discovered as attendance was falsely inflated to benefit the chairman and other officials involved.

Despite ongoing supervision by the upazila project officer, the final measurements were taken by the PIC with the PIO's assistance. After submitting the cost accounts, officials formally announced the project's completion. Nonetheless, allegations of corruption and illegal financial transactions persist, casting doubts on the transparency and efficiency of the project implementation process.

Case Study 3

Bangala Union is a prominent union in UllaparaUpazila, situated approximately 10 kilometers west of the upazila town. Among the various development initiatives undertaken by the Union Council, the road development project from Dharil Bazar to Pratap Bazar stands out. This 5-kilometer project was executed during the 2000–2001 financial year, with the Ministry of Food, Disaster Management, and Relief of the Government of Bangladesh providing 100 metric tons of rice as financial assistance under the food-for-work program.

The exact reasons, processes, and demands leading to the adoption of the project remain unclear. However, the project proposal originated from ward members who prioritized their own interests while preparing project lists for their respective wards. These proposals were then submitted to the Union Parishad, which forwarded them to the UpazilaNirbahi Officer for approval. The Union Parishad considered only the members' opinions, overlooking public input, while evaluating the project's location and conditions.

The Upazila Development Coordination Committee (UDCC), the legal authority overseeing such projects, processed the proposal. According to committee formation rules, the chairman of the Union Parishad at the time of project approval was elected as the committee chair. Other Union Parishad chairmen and UpazilaParishad officials became members, with the Upazila Executive Officer serving as the ex-officio member secretary. Once the UDCC approved the project from a pool of proposals, the District Commissioner of Sirajganj gave final approval, allowing the implementation phase to commence.

To execute the project, a five-member Project Implementation Committee (PIC) was formed. Mr. Anisur Rahman, a ward member, was appointed as chairman of the committee, joined by a teacher, a social worker, an Ansar representative, and another distinguished individual. Social worker Abul Hossain served as the member secretary, following the regulation that any member could hold this position.

Although the project was scheduled for completion within six months, it took ten months to finish. Laborers, including poor men and women, were hired for the work, but records showed inflated numbers of workers compared to the actual workforce. Allegations arose of the PIC engaging in corruption and benefiting from illegal financial transactions under various pretexts. Supervision by the Upazila Chairman and the PIC Chairman was also marred by accusations of bribery.

Due to the Union Parishad's lack of skilled manpower and technical expertise, the PIC frequently sought support from the Upazila Project Implementation Office. However, delays in assistance resulted in significant wastage of both time and resources. Despite these challenges, the project was eventually completed with the manpower and technical aid provided by the Upazila Project Implementation Agency.

After the project's completion, the PIC, in collaboration with the upazila project team, prepared and submitted the expenditure report for approval. The project was officially concluded once the authorities reviewed and accepted the financial accounts.

Case Study 4

The Bangala Union in Sirajganj District, situated in the ChalonarBil area, lies at a lower elevation compared to other unions in the Upazila. Acceptance and implementation of development projects are routine tasks for the Union Parishad. One notable initiative was the construction of a 2-kilometer road connecting Rahimpur to Binodpur Bazar during the 2000-2001 financial year. This project was prioritized by the local UP member to enhance transportation facilities for his village, prioritizing personal interests over public welfare. Unfortunately, nearby areas still lack basic infrastructure. In those regions, roads blend with surrounding fields, becoming indistinguishable during rainfall when waterlogging occurs.

To support this project, the Ministry of Food, Disaster Management, and Relief of the Government of Bangladesh allocated seven metric tons of rice under the Food for Work Program as financial assistance. However, the implementation process reflected personal biases. Ward members submitted a list of projects based on their own interests, which were then reviewed in a general meeting of the Union Parishad. The selected proposals were forwarded to the Upazila Administrative Officer for further consideration. The Upazila Development Coordination Committee, the authorized body for such projects, played a pivotal role in the approval process.

According to government regulations, the committee comprised all union parishad chairpersons in the Upazila, excluding the chairman of the union in question. The Upazila Administrative Officer served as the member secretary. After approval by the Upazila Coordination Committee, the proposal was sent to the District Commissioner for final authorization. Only upon receiving this approval did the Union Parishad initiate the project's implementation.

The project faced significant challenges, starting with difficulties in acquiring land. Local residents were reluctant to provide soil for construction due to a lack of public support and transparency. The chairman of the Project Implementation Committee resolved this issue through financial transactions. However, this led to some project funds being misappropriated before the work even began.

A five-member Project Implementation Committee was formed to oversee the project. Hafizur Rahman, the ward member, served as chairman of the committee, along with four other members: a teacher, a social worker, an Ansar representative, and Abul Hossain, a community leader who acted as the member secretary. Although the project was planned for six months, it took 10 months to complete due to various delays.

The project employed poor men and women as laborers under the Food for Work Program. However, discrepancies were noted: the number of laborers reported was significantly higher than those who actually worked. Additionally, the Project Implementation Committee exploited the project through illegal financial dealings under various pretexts. Despite supervision by the Upazila chairman and the Project Implementation Committee chairman, allegations of corruption persisted.

Due to the lack of skilled manpower and technical expertise within the Union Parishad, the committee frequently sought assistance from the Upazila Project Implementation Office. However, delays in receiving support led to inefficiencies, wasting both time and resources.

Despite numerous challenges, the project was eventually completed with the technical and logistical support of the Upazila Project Implementation Organization. Upon completion, the Project Implementation Committee prepared a detailed expenditure report with assistance from the Upazila authorities. The authorities reviewed and approved the cost accounts, formally closing the project.

Case Study 5

The Union Parishad (UP) is tasked with implementing various development initiatives to improve rural infrastructure. As part of these efforts, the construction of an unpaved road from Mahonpur to Pratab in the Bangala Union was undertaken during the fiscal year 2022–2023. The 1-kilometer-long road was implemented following approval from the members of the concerned ward. The need for the project was underscored by

the poor transportation conditions in the union, particularly for residents of the first and second wards. During the rainy season, known as *BarshaMaumum*, some areas require boats for travel between houses, as the roads and adjacent land are frequently submerged.

The Ministry of Food, Supply Management, and Relief of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh allocated 13 metric tons of rice for the project under the "Food for Work" agenda. Ward members prepared a list of proposed projects based on their priorities, which was submitted to the Union Parishad chairman and presented at the general meeting of the PurbakParishad. The proposal was approved based on members' opinions and forwarded to the Upazila Administrative Officer for further action.

The Upazila Development Coordination Committee (UDCC) served as the legal authority to approve the project. According to government regulations, the UDCC president was the UpazilaParishad chairman, with all Union Parishad chairmen (excluding the chairman of the union submitting the proposal) as members. The Upazila Administrative Officer served as the ex-officio member secretary. Following deliberations, the project proposal was approved at the UDCC meeting and forwarded to the District Commissioner (DC) for final approval. Implementation began after the DC's formal consent, with the Union Parishad responsible for executing the project.

To oversee implementation, a five-member Project Implementation Committee (PIC) was formed. Mr. ShajahanBhuiya, the concerned ward member, was appointed chairman of the PIC, while the remaining members included a teacher, a social worker, an Ansar representative, and Abul Hossain, a social worker who served as the member secretary. Despite being initiated for the fiscal year 2000–2001 with an estimated completion time of six months, the project took 10 months to finish.

The delay and additional expenses stemmed from various challenges. Bureaucratic complications, especially related to rice clearance, caused significant delays. There were allegations of illegal financial transactions during this process. Local workers were employed for the project and compensated with six kilograms of rice per day based on attendance. However, discrepancies were reported in attendance records, suggesting embezzlement, as inflated numbers were used to account for project expenses. Allegations of bribery were also raised against the Union Parishad chairman and the PIC chairman.

The lack of skilled manpower and technical capacity within the Union Parishad further hampered progress. The PIC frequently sought assistance from the Upazila Project Implementation Office, but timely support was not always available, leading to additional delays and costs.

Despite these challenges, the project was ultimately completed with manpower and technical support from the Upazila Project Implementation Agency. Upon completion, the PIC prepared and submitted detailed expenditure accounts to the relevant authorities. After review and acceptance of these accounts, the project was formally concluded.

Conclusion:

The Union Parishad, the lowest level of local government in Bangladesh, is the only body representing rural communities. It undertakes development projects to address a range of local problems. Ensuring the interests of the people who are beneficiaries of these development projects is essential. To assess how well the interests of the people are considered in the development process, particularly in the planning and execution of these projects, the views of 290 respondents from Ward No. 1 (Islampur, Shyamaldah) were gathered. The opinions collected reflect how people perceive the role of the Union Parishad in development initiatives.

People's interest in development projects is defined by the extent to which their opinions are considered and their needs are prioritized in the projects undertaken by the Union Parishad. Analyzing the data from Bangala Union Parishad in light of the respondents' views reveals the degree to which the people's opinions and demands influence the decision-making process. The Union Parishad has authority over these projects, yet many of the beneficiaries of its developmental activities expressed differing opinions on their impact. Among

the respondents, 40% stated they were direct beneficiaries of the Union Parishad's development activities, while 55.5% felt they were somewhat beneficiaries.

However, 75% of the respondents indicated that the Union Parishad does not take their views and needs into account when planning development projects, while 25% believed that the Union Parishad does prioritize public opinion. A striking 96% of the chairman and members of Bangala Union Parishad commented that the Union Parishad lacks an independent role in project acceptance. Additionally, 83% of them cited government intervention as a major reason for the absence of independent authority in project decisions.

The results clearly show that the government's influence in the decision-making process undermines the Union Parishad's autonomy in undertaking development projects. Furthermore, 68% of the chairman and members of the selected Union Parishad stated that they have no role in decisions related to projects imposed by the government or other donor organizations. Among the 8 respondents (32%), 62.5% agreed that the Union Parishad plays a role in project placement, while 37.5% considered its role to be primarily advisory and consultative.

The analysis indicates that the Union Parishad does not adequately consider the interests of the people when selecting development projects, and it lacks independent authority. While the Union Parishad does retain some authority in road rehabilitation and reconstruction, government influence is strongly felt in most development initiatives. In summary, government intervention has significantly weakened the Union Parishad's decision-making autonomy. The biggest challenge faced by the Union Parishad in executing development projects is its limited financial capacity. Dependence on government funding further hinders its ability to operate independently.

References

1. Rahman, Moksuder Md., *Politics and Development of Rural Local Self-Government in Bangladesh*, (Delhi: Devika Publications, 2000).
2. Salehuddin, Dr. Syed Javed, *Union Parishad Development: Problems and Prospects*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Law Book Centre, 2007).
3. Noor, Abdun, *Social Justice and Human Development*, (Dhaka: Adorn Publication, 2007).
4. Ali, A.M.M. Shawkat, *Field Administration and Rural Development in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: CSS, 1982).
5. Rahaman, A.H.M. Aminur, *Politics of Rural Local Self- Government in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University of Dhaka, 1990).
6. Choudhury, Lutful Hoq, *Local Self-Government and its Reorganization in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: National Institute of Local Government, 1987).
7. Mashreque, Md. Shairul, *Politics, Administration and Participation: An Empirical Profile of Rural Bangladesh*, (Chittagong: Centre for Bangladesh Studies, 2002).
8. Bertocci, Peter J., *The Politics of Community and Social Studies*, (Dhaka: Dhaka University, 1996).
9. Robson, W.A., *Local Government in Crisis*, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966).
10. Muhith, A.M.A., *Issues of Governance in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: Mowla Brothers, 2001).
11. Rahman, Dr. Md. Maqsur, *Local Autonomy of Bangladesh*, (Rajshahi: Aligarh Library, 2005), p.46.
12. *National Institute of Local Government, Union Parishad Training Manual*, (Dhaka: National Institute of Local Government, 2003), p.19.
13. Ahmad, Professor Emajuddin, *Bangladesh Public Administration*, (Dhaka: Anyanya, 2000), pp.387-388.

14. Rahman, Dr. Mohammad Shamsur, *Theory of Public Administration and Bangladesh Public Administration*, (Dhaka: Khan Brothers and Company, 2003), pp.730, 735-736.
15. "The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Local Government Ordinance-2008", *The Bangladesh Gazette*, (Dhaka: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2008), pp.78, 91, 107.
16. Ahmed, Ali, *Administration of Local Self-Government for Rural Areas in Bangladesh*, (Dacca: Local Government Institute, 1979), pp.11-12.
17. Jather, R.V., *Evolution of Panchayati Raj in India*, (Dharwar: Institute of Economic Research, 1964), p.11.
18. Mathi, John, *Village Government in British India*, (London: T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1915), pp.39-110.
19. Rahman, Md. Moksuder, *Politics and Development of Rural Local Self-Government in Bangladesh*, (Delhi: Devika Publications, 2000), pp.84-112.
20. Choudhuri, Muzaffar Ahmed, *Rural Government in East Pakistan*, (Dacca: Puthigar Ltd., 1969), pp.4-12.
21. "The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Local Government Act-1976", *The Bangladesh Gazette*, (Dacca: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2021), pp.103-113.
22. "The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Local Government Amendment Act-1983", *The Bangladesh Gazette*, (Dhaka: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2001), p.89.
23. "The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Local Government Amendment Act-1993", *The Bangladesh Gazette*, (Dhaka: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1997), p.90.
24. "The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Local Government Amendment Act-1997," *The Bangladesh Gazette*, (Dhaka: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2021), pp.45-78.
25. Quader, Muhammad Abdul, "Union Council: Problems and Prospects", *Journal of Public Administration*, Vol.11, No.6, March 1998, pp.99-101.
26. Siddiqui, Dr. Kamal, ed, *Local Government in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: National Institute of Local Government, 1994), p.394.
27. Ud-Doula, Md. Shah Nazim and Ahmed, Jehrina Mursheda, "The project formulation and Implementation Process," *The Journal of Local Government*, vol.30, No.1, January, 2001, p.169.
28. Humes, Samuel and Marteen, M. Eileen, *The Structure of Local Government Throughout the World*, (Hague: Martinus Nihof, 1961), pp.1-8.
29. Islam, Shamsul, "Local Government and National Development-Bangladesh Experience", *The Journal of Local Government*, Vol.6, No.3, 1977, p.11.
30. *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*, Article 59 & 60.
31. "The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, The Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance-1983," *The Bangladesh Gazette*, (Dhaka: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2001), p.67.
32. Mrs. Dr. Moshammam Najmanara and Ahmad, Moinuddin, *Modern Union Parishad Management*, (Dhaka: Book Syndicate, 2003), pp.301-305.
33. Ud-Doula, Md. Shah Nazim and Ahmed, Jehrine Murshesa, "The project formulation and Implementation Process," *The Journal of Local Government*, vol.30, No.1, 2001, pp.173-176.

34. Chaaki, Md. Afsar Hossain Kazi, "Financing Local Government of Bangladesh," *The Journal of Local Government*, Vol.27, No.1, 1974, p.5.
35. Abedin, Nazmul, *Local Administration and Politics in Modernizing Societies: Bangladesh and Pakistan*, (Dacca: The National Institute of Public Administration, 1973), p.89.
36. Ahmed, Ali, *Administration of Local Self-Government for Rural Areas in Bangladesh*, (Dacca: Institute of Local Government, 1979), p.90.
37. Alderfer, Harold F., *Local Government in Developing Countries*, (New York: Mc Graw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p.87.
38. Ali, A.M.M. Shawkat, *Field Administration and Rural Development in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: CSS, 1982), p.90.
39. Alderfer, H.F., *American Local Government and Administration*, (New York: Free Press, 1956), pp.67-71.
40. Bertocci, Peter J., *The Politics of Community and Social Studies*, Dhaka: Dhaka University, 1996, p.53.
41. Cross, C.A., *Principles of Local Government Law*, (London: Sweet and Maxwell, 1996), p.73.
42. Cole, G.D.H., *Local and Regional Government*, (Melbourne: Cassells and Company Ltd., 1947), p.13.
43. Bhogle, K., *Local Government and Administration in India*, (Aurangabad: Parimal Prakashan, 1977), p.34.
44. Mallick, Bishawjit, Compiled., *Local Government: Local People's Institution*, (Dhaka: A.H. Development Publishing House, 2004), p.89.
45. Mashreque, Md. Shairul, *Politics, Administration and Participation: An Empirical Profile of Rural Bangladesh*, (Chittagong: Centre for Bangladesh Studies, 2002), p.34.
46. Muhith, A.M.A., *Issues of Government in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: Mowla Brothers, 2001), p.12.
47. Noor, Abdun, *Social Justice and Human Development*, (Dhaka: Adorn Publication, 2007), p.76.
48. Pramanik, Provas Chandra, *Financial Management of Local Government in Bangladesh*, (Bogra: Rural Development Academy, 2004), pp.45-53.
49. Rahman, Hossain Zillar & Islam, S.Aminul, *Local Governance and Community Capacities*, (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2002), p.70.
50. Rahman, A.H.M. Aminur, *Politics of Local Self-government in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University of Dhaka, 1990), p.31.