Improving Public Service Delivery through Citizen's Charter in Bangladesh: Rhetoric or Reality?

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Abstract: The "Citizen's Charter (CC) initiative" is a response to the quest for solving the problems which a citizen encounters, day in and day out, while dealing with organizations providing public services. The impressive feat of the citizen's charter in the West has made this administrative tool popular across the globe and Bangladesh is no exception to this trend. But the success of CC hugely depends on its organizational environment and the quality of the CC. There are many environmental barriers in Bangladesh and CC will remain merely a paper exercise of limited value if the government does not make a timely and concerted effort to remove the barriers.

1.0 Introduction:

"A consumer is the most important visitor in our premises. He is not dependent on us, we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work; he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider to our business, he is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him; he is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so." Mahatma Gandhi

As public services are funded by citizens, either directly or indirectly through taxes, they have the right to expect a particular quality of service that is responsive to their needs and is provided efficiently at a reasonable cost. The "Citizen's Charters initiative" is a response to the quest for solving the problems which a citizen encounters, day in and day out, while dealing with organizations providing public services. The purpose of this paper is to explore the nature and extend of barriers that inhibit the effective implementation of the charter programme in Bangladesh.

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2.0 Some Important Aspects of Citizen's Charter

2.1 What is Citizen's Charter?

A Citizen's Charter is the expression of an understanding between citizens and the provider of a public service with respect to the quantity and quality of services the former receive in exchange for their taxes. It is essentially about the rights of the public and the obligations of the public servants.

As public services are funded by citizens, either directly or indirectly through taxes, they have the right to expect a particular quality of service that is responsive to their needs and is provided efficiently at a reasonable cost. Government of India (GoI) defines "The Citizen's Charter as a written, voluntary declaration by service providers about service standards, choice, accessibility, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability. It should be in accordance with the expectations of citizens".

2.2 Why Citizen's Charter?

The major objectives of the Citizen's Charter are to give priority to customers, make the public service transparent and accessible, reduce red-tape and delay, make the Government more accountable, provide all necessary information to customers and make service providers responsive to clients' needs (Osborne 2000; Torres 2003).

3.0 Citizen's Charter: General Theoretical Considerations

Charters are part of the much bigger new public management (NPM) agenda that, in the words of one leading academic commentator, has 'dominated the bureaucratic reform agenda in the OECD group of countries from the late 1970s' (Hood 1992: 3-4). But it must be recognized that charters come in many different guises, and with a variety of labels attached (Drewry, 2005).

The ideas of NPM basically come from two schools of thoughts. The first set of ideas comes from economic school, which includes theories like public choice, principal-agency relations and transaction cost economics. The second set of ideas comes from the managerialist school of thought which focuses on the need to re-establish the primacy of managerial principles in the bureaucracy.

For Public Choice theorists, the Citizen's Charter could be represented, at least retrospectively, as one of a sequence of steps in a revolutionary transfer of power - "downwards from government and its bureaucracy, and into the hands of ordinary citizens"(Pirie, 1992:5) - orchestrated by the Conservative Governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major. The first and probably most dramatic step had been the privatisation, between 1979 and 1982, of virtually all the country's state industries and utilities (Game and Vuong, 2003).

Politically constrained from a similarly full-scale privatisation of the 'human services', the Government's next step in the Public Choice revolution was the establishment of internal markets in education and health. The services remained free to users at the point of consumption, but the allocation of most government funding increasingly by-passed the local education and health authorities and followed parents' choices of schools and patients' choices of doctor.

The third key policy change was the creation of executive agencies (known as Next Steps agencies) in the civil service. The service's traditional departmental structure was divided into discrete units (agencies), "each with independent management, clearly delineated functions and responsibilities, and full accountability for its operations" (Gameand and Vuong, 2003).

The fourth policy initiative was the Citizen's Charter - essentially a contract between each state service and its public, replacing "a vague public duty to provide some undefined and unspecified level of performance ... [with] specific performance targets which each service is expected to achieve"(Pirie, 1992: 8), and containing mechanisms to make it enforceable. In addition, the Charter required each of these contracts to contain some mechanism under which members of the public would have access to some form of redress - ranging from a public apology to financial compensation - if the promised performance failed to materialise (Gameand and Vuong, 2003).

Free market economists claimed that they could see not merely a chronological order in these policies, but a common thread running through them: the thread of Public Choice Theory:

"the policies of privatization, internal markets, executive agencies and the Citizen's Charter are all horses from the same stable; they have arisen in the light of Public Choice analysis. They all attempt to engineer a society

which will be determined spontaneously by the interaction of its citizens, and to transform those elements of it which are planned and directed from the centre."(Pirie, 1992: 9 cited by Gameand and Vuong, 2003)

In its application, the Citizen's Charter initiative represents 'a systematic attempt to focus on four main themes across the public services: quality, choice, standards and value' (Wilson, 1995: 94). According to the original Charter document (Major, 1991: 4-5), these would be pursued through a range of reforms by which the public sector would operate more in line with its private sector counterpart: privatization, competition and contracting-out, performance measurement, clear complaints procedures and better forms of redress for citizens (see Falconer, 1996). All these attributes are in line with the principles of NPM.

4.0 Citizen's Charter: The Global Experiences

Citizen's charter initiatives (variously named) have been launched in many countries around the world. (Drewry, 2005). They have different names and different contents. The idea of the Citizen's Charter began in the UK in 1991 when the Conservative government introduced it as a national program with a view to improve the quality of public sector services based on the needs and expectations of service users (Sharma and Agnihotri 2001: 733). The six principles of the UK Citizen's Charter movement as originally framed were:

(i)   Quality: Improving the quality of services;

(ii) Choice: Wherever possible;

(iii) Standards: Specifying what to expect and how to act if standards are not met;

(iv) Value: For the taxpayers' money;

(v)   Accountability: Individuals and Organisations; and

(vi) Transparency: Rules/Procedures/Schemes/Grievances.

These were later elaborated by the Labour Government as the nine principles of Service Delivery (1998), which are as follows:- i. Set standards of service; ii. Be open and provide full information; iii. Consult and involve; iv. Encourage access and the promotion of choice; v. Treat all fairly; vi. Put things right when they go wrong; vii. Use resources effectively; viii. Innovate and improve; and ix. Work with other providers.

Subsequently, this British model of the Charter has been adopted in various developed and developing countries under diverse titles. Some of these initiatives are very similar to the UK model, whereas others break new ground by leaning on the service quality paradigm of the 'Total Quality Management' (TQM) movement. Some other initiatives are pitched somewhere in between.. Some of such initiatives include the Public Service Users' Charter in Belgium (1992), Service Charter in France (1992) and Australia (1997), Client's Charter in Malaysia (1993), Quality Charter in Public Services in Portugal (1993), Service Standards Initiative in Canada (1995), Citizen's Charter in India (1997) and so on (Sharma and Agnihotri 2001: 733).

Table 1: Citizen's Charter: Around the World

Country	Name	Principles/ Focuses	Inception Date
UK	Citizen Charter	Emphasis on the publication of service standards, openness and public scrutiny, non-discrimination in service provision, consumer's choice and priority, convenient access to various services, improvement in quality, mechanism for expressing grievances, review of performance standards and regular updating of the Charter (Bridge 2000)	1991
Italy	Service Charter (Carta dei Servizi)	Emphasizes the principles of equality and fairness with regard to customers' rights and choices, effective participation of users in the provision of services and public sector accountability for quality standards (Torres 2003).	Launched in 1993 and relaunched in 1995
France	The Public Service Charter (La Charte des Services Publics)	Emphasizes the principles such as service quality, responsibility, transparency, accessibility, reliability and accountability (Nikos 2000; Drewry 2003).	1992
Belgium	The Charter for Public Service Users (La Charte des Utilisateurs des Services Publics)	Aims to improve service quality, and sets the principles of flexibility, transparency and legal protection for the users of various public services (Torres 2003).	1992
Finland	Service Charter	Highlighted the rights of public service users, specification of service standards, customer-driven service delivery and customers' feedback for further improvement (Nikos 2000; Torres 2003).	1997
Canada	Service Standards Initiative	The Government launched the Service Standard Initiative in in response to people's expectations for friendly and courteous services, faster responses, longer office hours and so on (Sharma and Agnihotri 2001: 733).	1995

| Australia | Service Charter | To enhance the quality of public services, expand customers' access, treat customers with respect, specify service standards based on customers' choices, improve performance standards and so on (Sharma and Agnihotri 2001; Torres 2003). | 1997 |
| Malaysia | Client's Charter | Each state agency to deliver services in accordance with the quality standards based on customer expectations and to respond to customer feedback and complaints (Sharma and Agnihotri 2001; UNDP 2002a) | 1993 |

5.0 Citizen's Charter: Bangladesh Perspective

The impressive feat of the citizen's charter in the UK (Clark, 2000) has made this administrative tool popular across the globe and Bangladesh is no exception to this trend. On 8th May, 2007 Citizen Charter initiative was adopted by the Government of Bangladesh. It may be mentioned here that the Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) suggested the adoption of Citizen's Charter for a few ministries in 2000 (Jahan, 2006). Later on the importance of Citizen's Charter as a way of ensuring good governance was stressed in the PRSP (II).

The Citizen's Charter has been adopted as a device by the Government of Bangladesh to induce client in the bureaucracy. Its main agenda was to make administration more accountable, responsive, transparent and people-friendly. The charter programme initiatives in essence propose to make public service provision less bureaucratic-dominated and more citizen-led. It aims to empower citizens by mentioning their rights, privileges and duties. Further, the Citizen's Charter strives to develop partnership between citizens and officials in administration to promote joint decisions.

The Cabinet Division led the Citizen's Charter initiative and later on the Ministry of Establishment communicated the decision in terms of a circular to most of the Government Ministries/Divisions/Departments and subordinate offices. In Bangladesh, the policy decision to implement Citizen's Charter was adopted at the central level first and later was dispersed to different divisions and districts with their discretion in which specific areas to implement it. In other words, it depicts more top down approach in policy initiation (citizens' charter) rather than bottom up.

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│ Decision made│   │ Letter sent  │   │ Formulation  │   │ Posting of   │
│ in the meeting│  │ from the     │   │ of CC for a  │   │ the CC on    │
│ of the council│  │ Chief        │   │ Ministry by  │   │ the website  │
│ of Advisers  │   │ Adviser's    │   │ forming a    │   │ and a        │
│              │   │ office to    │   │ Committee    │   │ limited scale│
│              │   │ all Ministries│  │              │   │ of promotional│
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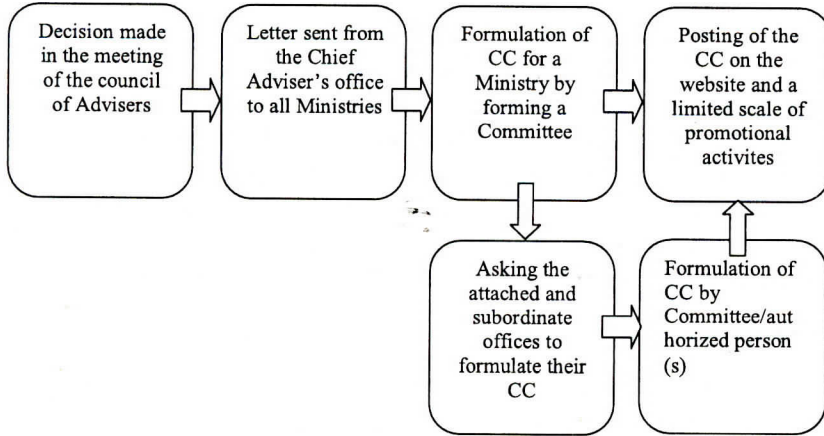
Figure 1: CC Formulation Process in Bangladesh

Now it is responsibility of the individual ministry to formulate and implement its own Citizen Charter. However, there is no internal mechanism within the ministries to monitor the formulation or implementation of the Citizen's Charter.

6.0 Objective of the Study

The aim of the study is to explore the barriers those are acting as the impediments of the effectiveness of CC and suggests enabling the government ministries/departments to successfully implement CC by overcoming the barriers. The major objectives of the study are:

- To examine why and how the Charters have been formulated in Bangladesh.

- To assess the global trends on Citizen's Charter.

- To explore the barriers to effective implementation of Citizen's Charter in the context of Bangladesh.

- Finally, to suggest measures as to how the Citizen's Charter can be made effective in the context of Bangladesh and analyses in this section would also offer some important lessons for other developing countries formulating or implementing their own Citizen's Charters.

7.0 Methodology Used for the Study

The research for this study was conducted by interviewing key informants who are involved with various service delivery processes in the three different departments in Bangladesh- police, passport and post office and FGD (Focus Group Discussions) with the groups of people who received services from aforementioned departments. The groups were targeted in order to explore the barriers of CC from the diverse cross-section of Bangladeshis. All available literatures were also reviewed on CC to get a thorough understanding and for further lessons.

8.0 Analytical Framework

From the preceding discussion we can understand that the Citizen's Charter is a tool devised to provide better public service with an aim to acquire more public satisfaction on government services and above all to establish a citizen-centric governance system. But the success of CC hugely depends on its organizational environment. Organizational Environment can be defined as "the set of forces surrounding an organization that have the potential to affect the way it operates and its access to resources" (Gareth, 2004). We examine three sets of environmental variables e.g. political, social and organizational variables which can influence the operation of CC in Bangladesh. These variables can be act both "Driving Forces" and "Restraining Forces". Through these variables, we only try to explore the barriers.
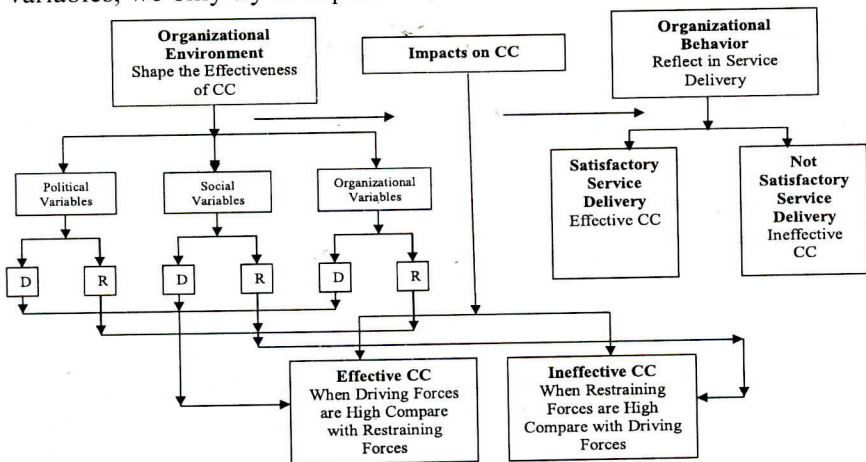
Note: Here "D" for Driving Forces and "R" for Restraining Forces
Figure 2: Relations among Organizational Environment, Citizen Charter and Service Delivery

When "Driving Forces" are high compare with "Restraining Forces" then the CC of an organization can be effective and when the opposite happen i.e. when "Restraining Forces" are High Compare with "Driving Forces" then the CC of that organization may become ineffective. This is illustrated in the above figure. We define these restraining forces as the barriers to the implementation of CC.

On the basis of the relation between "Quality of CC" (Excellent and Poor)[1] and "Organizational Environment" (Non Favorable and Favorable)[2] we can derive "Four" scenarios. These "Four" scenarios can be explained by the following figure:

Excellent		
	Scenario 3 **SD-** Not Satisfactory **RA-** Create Favorable Environment	**Scenario 4** **SD-**Satisfactory **RA-** Maintain Quality and R&D Works for Further Improvement
Quality of CC		
	Scenario 1 **SD-** Not Satisfactory **RA-** Create Favorable Environment and Prepare Good CC	**Scenario 2** **SD-** Satisfactory/ Not Satisfactory **RA-** Prepare Good CC
Poor		
	Non Favorable	Favorable

Organizational
Environment

Note: Here "SD" means "Service Delivery" and "RA" means "Required Actions"
Figure 3: Relations between Organizational Environment and Citizen Charter

Scenario 1: Here an organization has both "Non Favorable" environment and "Poor CC". So the "Service Delivery" is not satisfactory for the

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[1] "Excellent CC" means a quality CC mentioning all the requirements of CC for providing satisfactory services and "Poor CC" means the opposite i.e. lack of elements required for satisfactory services.

[2] "Favorable Environment" means the optimum supporting environment for the implementation of CC and "Non Favorable Environment" means the opposite.

consumers. To address the problems, both the creation of favorable environment and the creation of good CC are required.

Scenario 2: Here an organization has "Favorable" environment but "Poor CC". The organization can go either way- provide satisfactory services or unsatisfactory services. Because of the existence of the favorable environment, the organization may deliver satisfactory services. But this satisfaction may not endure. To make it long lasting the organization has to prepare an "Excellent CC". On the other hand, if the service is not satisfactory, then that organization also has to formulate an "Excellent CC".

Scenario 3: Here "Service Delivery" is not satisfactory. In spite of having an "Excellent CC", the organization fails to provide satisfactory services for the lack of favorable environment. To address this problem the creation of favorable environment are required.

Scenario 4: Here because of the existence of an "Excellent CC" and "Favorable Environment", the "Service Delivery" is satisfactory. But to maintain and for the further enhancement of satisfaction, the organization should enhance R&D (Research and Development) works.

9.0 Analysis of the Findings

This section is based on our research especially on the findings of the FGDs and in-depth personal interviews with the key informants. We organized the write-up in the line with our three variables- political, social and organizational variables. Further, these major variables are sub-divided into a number of factors.

9.1 Social Variables

9.1.1 Illiteracy

Citizen Charters are the declarations about the service standards and other associated issues by the service providers which are available in the written form in the service delivery points and official websites. So one must have the capacity to read to obtain benefits from the Charters. But in Bangladesh the adult literacy rate (population 15 years+) of Bangladesh is 53.68 percent (BBS: 2008). That means half of the population is illiterate who can't read. Under this scenario, such information sources are inaccessible to the majority of the citizens who are illiterate. Thus, Citizen Charters will fail to bring its expected outcome keeping almost half of the population excluded form its benefit.

9.1.2 Social Connections and Networks

The process of receiving public services in Bangladesh is largely influenced by personal connections and existing social networks[3] in which social identity plays a central role. A recommendations from an influential person acts like a magic wand. It creates a "demonstrative effect" on others and induces them to follow the same path. Thus this norm embeds in the psyche of the people. If we want to get any services-say for passport or any other services, we always try to find someone who is influential and can recommend for us. These connections promote favoritism which is not only unfair but also sometime impose negative externalities on the others. It creates the deprivation of other consumers' rights.

9.1.3 Interest Groups

Interest group can be defined as the groups who are organized and involved in a process with an interest to be benefited. Like other country, in Bangladesh, government machineries are sources of various types of benefits for the various sections of people in the society. This is also applicable for the various interest groups organized encircling government agencies. Some of which are legal and beneficial to the society and some of which are illegal and detrimental to the society. For example- an organization organized under the level CAB (Consumer Association of Bangladesh) to protect the interest of the consumers are beneficial to the society. On the other hand, in many offices like- in passport offices, Thanas (Police Stations), there are some interest groups known as "Dalal" (Broker). They are benefited from the existing setup by working as middlemen. A study conducted by Center for Administrative Research and Innovation, University of Dhaka revealed that 79.72% people believe that there is existence of Dalal in the Thanas (Monem and et.al, 2008: 37). Another report published in a local daily newspaper also reported that around 80% of work in BRTA (Bangladesh Road and Transport Authority) is performed through the Dalal (Prothom Alo,2009.

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[1] A social network is a social structure made of nodes (which are generally individuals or organizations) that are tied by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as values, visions, ideas, financial exchange, friendship, sexual relationships, kinship, dislike, conflict, trade etc. implementation of CC and "Non Favorable Environment" means the opposite.

Table 2: People's Perception on the Existence of Dalal in Thanas (Broker)

Existence of Dalal	No Existence of Dalal	Don't Know
79.72	6.02	14.26

These brokers try to create a felling in the mind of the service recipients that if he/she follows the due process then he/she will be in troubles and even may not get the expected services. So, it is better for service recipients to come in a contract with the brokers which will assure about the service in exchange of broker's benefits (usually financial). In many occasions corrupt officials also joined with them. This unholy nexus between officials-brokers make the system ineffective, leaving no room for the consumers for justice or remedy. Thus citizen become helpless and under this circumstances CC can play a little role to provide satisfactory services.

9.1.4 Poverty

CC can help the people as a "bargaining tool" who have the power to exercise. This is more or less applicable to the people belong to the upper strata. But in Bangladesh many people live below poverty line. According to Bangladesh Economic Review, 2008, 40.4 percent (based on Direct Calorie Intake) and 40 percent (based on Cost of Basic Needs-CBN) people live below poverty line. They are the marginalized people who have little power to raise their voices. Their voices hardly can penetrate the existing power structure. For example- if any poor people go to hospital for treatment, then it's very difficult for them to get proper treatment. Sometimes the poor also complain that they are even denied to admit in the hospital by the officials showing the reason of not having seats to admit whereas at the same time they notice that someone can admit in the hospital by paying bribe to the officials. The poor have little to do under this situation. They are so weak to protest against this injustice. And even if anybody tries to protest, it brings nothing but add some extra misery for him. CC does have little role to empower the poor to protest against these injustices and to claim their rights.

9.1.5 Power Distance

Hofstede (2005: 46) termed power distance as "the extent to which the less powerful member(s) of the institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally".

In the societal perspective high power distance exists where citizens have a perception that the officials are quite powerful. This leads to an authoritarian culture which is reflected in the way the officials deal with the citizen in catering services and has an adverse effect on the implementation of CC. On the other hand, lower the power distance within and with outsiders, the greater the likelihood of a participatory culture which creates a favorable environment for the implementation of CC.

In Bangladesh, high power distance is embedded in the very fabric to its civil service system. It is a legacy from the days of the British Raj. This is reflected in how different services have been organized within the civil service system and how civil servants interact with citizens. For example- one has to go to DC (Deputy Commissioner) office to issue/renew the trade licenses. In many occasions one has to wait days after days for the licenses and suffer various kinds of harassments. If he wants to complain against these harassments to the higher officials then he has to face another difficulty- difficulty to access higher officials. Thus the power distance destroys the very principle of CC - a principle to serve the people.

9.1.6 Urban-Rural Disparity

Still Bangladesh is a village centric country. Most of the people live in the rural areas. Various important services like health, education, sanitation etc. are better in urban areas than rural areas. If we compare the health service facilities between urban and rural areas than we can see that there is a huge disparity between them. Urban hospitals are comparatively better in terms of number and quality of doctors, availability of necessary equipment and medicines or any other required facilities. So having the same CC, the authorities of the hospitals in the rural areas have little to do for the treatment of the patients.

9.1.7 Digital Divide

The ICT swung open the opportunities for many people. But at the same time it is creating "Digital Divide" among the people. The concept of the digital divide has been used to highlight difference in electronic access to information based on economic, race, ethnic or social group and/or geographical location. The term digital divide has been applied to the gap that exists between those people with ready access to the tools of ICTs, and those without such access or skills. It is a gap, which tends to deepen the disparity among the people.

In Bangladesh, most of the CCs are available in the websites. The people having internet access can easily get the respective CC at any time. But other people have to travel to the corresponding offices. This creates a hassle for them. Again the government provides most of the government forms by online. For example- forms for the issuance of passport is available in the web portal: www.forms.gov.bd. Anyone having access to internet can easily download the forms. All these electronic facilities are helpful for better service delivery. But in our country the internet penetration rate is very low. According to United Nations e-Government Survey, 2008, only 0.31 % people use internet and only 2.42% people have access to personal computers (UN, 2008: 195). So very few people can enjoy these facilities in Bangladesh.

9.1.8 Legal Protection

A country's legal environment must be conducive to protect the interest of the people. A government must be able to regulate itself via laws, regulations and policies, which encompass well-defined rights and duties, mechanisms for their enforcement and impartial settlement of disputes. One of the key features of every CC is the grievance redress mechanism. But in a country like Bangladesh where legal protections for the ordinary people are limited, this provision may not be effective. For example- if an ordinary citizen is intimidated by a police and he wants to complain against the police, then there is every possibilities for further intimidation on him, instead of getting any justice. So there is a tendency not to complain against anyone for his/her irregularities. Thus the corrupt and inefficient officials enjoy an unwritten immunity which effects adversely on the entire service delivery system.

9.1.9 Social Audits

The process of "Social Audit" helps to evaluate the activities of the government agencies. It helps to identify the anomalies of the agencies and create pressures to rectify the problems. For example- if Public Works Department goes to built any infrastructure or Water Development Board goes to built any embankment then through "Social Audit" we can identify the problems like- corruption or low quality of construction and can create pressure to the concerned authorities to take steps to solve the problems. Thus "Social Audit" can create a favorable environment for the implementation of CC. But in our country there is hardly any such culture.

9.2 Organizational Variables

9.2.1 Low Motivation

The remuneration and facilities for the civil servants are inadequate to lead a modest life in Bangladesh. Moreover the high inflation rate is continuously eroding the purchasing power and is worsening the scenario. This erosion of real pay and compression of cash compensation by government are creating dissatisfaction among the civil servants. But a rational and just pay policy can uphold the general quality, tone, efficiency and integrity of public servants. While payment of high salary will not by itself guarantee honesty, integrity and efficiency of public servants, it is also true that payment of salary, which does not satisfy minimum requirements for decent living of a public servant leads to corruption and inefficiency. Under this context, with too much stick and no carrot, CC may not be effective that much that we are expecting.

9.2.2 Participation

According to the Human Development Report (UNDP 2002b), "Participation is the process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over priority setting, policy-making, resource allocations, and access to public goods and services." So it can be said as a technique to identify and incorporate stakeholders' interests.

In the traditional system, citizens have been assigned a passive role in governance. Citizen participation is more symbolic than real. Citizen's Charter seeks to establish public control on decision making by allocating them an activist role through consultation, delegation, and partnership building. But in Bangladesh, citizens have been assigned a passive role in governance. The public at large are side tracked in the process of decision making, at the best, information is gathered from mass, and issues used to be solved unilaterally by officials without any substantial voices of the governed [public]. Under this situation formulation of a public friendly CC is very difficult. During the formulation of CC in Bangladesh, there was no involvement of the citizen. So it didn't accommodate the aspiration of the people. Such CC will certainly face difficulties during the implementation.

9.2.3 Performance Appraisal Process

Performance appraisal is the process of reviewing an individual's performance and progress in a job and assessing his potential for future

promotion (Armstrong: 1984). Actually it is a process by which an employee's contribution to an organization during a specified period of time is assessed. In Bangladesh, a gazetted class 1 officer is evaluated by his superior officer confidentially once in a year through the traditional Annual Confidential Report (ACR) system. This is considered as a subjective system of evaluation. There remains a scope of arbitrary evaluation. Some times one competent officer may have an adverse remark and some less performed officer may be evaluated as excellent in this traditional method. Moreover, everyone those who are meeting the standards and not performing, getting the same treatment. Nonperformance hardly has any effect on the salaries, promotion and other benefits. Consequently, such kind of arrangement fails to motivate those who are working hard to meet the standards. They have no reason to put extra efforts. Under this milieu it is difficult to implement CC effectively.

9.2.4 Transfer/Job Rotation

One of the reasons for the poor performance of the public sector personnel is their frequent job rotation. This hampers the development of professionalism in civil servants. Without the development of professionalism, we can't expect quality services form them. They need certain time to understand pros and cons of their job descriptions and job environment. In Bangladesh many officials are transferred within a very short span of time after joining the post or transferred when they just began to understand their organizations. But CC demands a full understanding of the organization and its services from its officials to provide quality services.

9.2.5 Accountability

According to the United Nations Human Development Report (UNDP 2002b), accountability is about power. It is about people having not just a say in official decisions but also the right to hold their rulers to account." To put simply, accountability is a strategy to secure compliance with accepted standards. It is a tool to minimize the misuse/abuse of power and authority by public functionaries.

CC focuses to establish accountability through its grievance redress

procedure. The Citizens' Charter aspires to establish the bottom-up version of accountability where civil servants are placed directly under the citizens. Public service being accountable means that the officials' actions are continuously scrutinized and monitored; there may be mounting pressure on them to be result-oriented. In Bangladesh there is hardly any culture of bottom-up version of accountability whatever exists are all top-down. So without major changes in the government apparatus, just a declaration through CC may make little differences.

9.2.6 Responsiveness

Responsiveness is quite different from accountability. The former connotes sensitiveness of public officials to public preferences, needs and demands while the later emphasizes answerability of one's own action and use of resources. Ostrom (1975) defines responsiveness as, "the capacity to satisfy the preferences of the citizens", especially those "who are dependent upon the institution."

Under the existing system, bureaucrats are largely unaccountable and unresponsive. The traditional notion of responsibility underlines too much bureaucratic discretion, but new measures under the umbrella of NPM in general and CC in particular address the problem of bureaucratic responsiveness by putting them directly under the public domain. It puts premium on the public satisfaction as a criterion for their valid and legitimate actions. Bangladesh is yet to create this culture in the public sectors.

9.2.7 Transparency

Transparency refers to the availability of information to the general public and clarity about government rules, regulations, and decisions. It can be strengthened through the citizens' right to information with a degree of legal enforceability (ADB website, accessed: 2009). Transparency in government decision-making and public policy implementation reduces uncertainty and can help inhibit corruption among public officials

The CC attempts to allocate citizen an active role in governance. It, therefore, is about to establish a system in which information would be made easily available to all stakeholders. But in Bangladesh there is

culture of secrecy which is backed by various laws and regulations, such as, Official Secrets Act 1923, Evidence Act 1872 and Government Servants (Conduct) Rules1979. These laws should be emended to ensure transparency. Recently the government passed the Right to Information (RTI), 2009; but it is yet to operate effectively. It should be made effective as early as possible. Otherwise, under the culture of such secrecy, CC will not be effective to deliver services.

9.2.8 Decision Making

In Bangladesh, the organization structure is like a pyramid. This means that the organization configuration is hierarchic. Authority and power is mainly vested at the top echelons, and little is left to the lower rungs of the hierarchy. To a large extent, decision-making is based on the 'whims of the top'. The seniors usually do not consult and discuss different issues with their subordinates before making decisions; rather they make decisions unilaterally and single handedly. This leads to alienation among the subordinates and engender a sense of lack of ownership. Further, subordinates usually do not argue and debate with seniors but accept and follow whatever asked by the boss. Such practices impede effective implementation of the CC.

9.2.9 Rigidity

Rigidity means bureaucrats attached more importance to rules and regulations where they rarely prefer to break and or by pass specified rules of the game regardless of the urgency of the situation.

Through analyzing Bangladesh civil service we can reveal that bureaucrats have strong predilections to follow the rules. In other words, they are not flexible even in the case of urgency. To some extent, for them means are ends rather than means to realize goals and objectives. This in turn affects efficient and effective delivery of services. In other words, the officials are not flexible enough to deal cases on contextual basis. Such an attitude undermines flexibility and eventually stalls implementation of CC.

9.2.10 Orientation

There are two types of orientation in the public service delivery viz.

process orientation and result orientation. In the former, the issue is whether bureaucrats fulfills certain rituals and procedures or pursue predetermined goals and objectives.

There is a standardized and codified procedure to accomplish tasks in the civil service. Everyone in the hierarchy is supposed to pass all the levels irrespective of the importance of the matter. The citizens viewed this system as time consuming. To focus on process, make system less responsive to the needs of citizen. In way to serve citizen is less important than to complete formalities. This delays the outcome in many instances and users get services after quite late. Even some cases needful are delivered after it become immaterial to user. Hence, process orientation undermines the importance of goals and objectives and, therefore, affects the effective implementation of the CC.

9.2.11 Stability/Status Quo

The civil servants in Bangladesh maintain more traditional values which foster the status quo orientation. Though some officials have favor for change but to a large extent, they uphold old beliefs, norms and values. But CC needs switching to new values and norms, acceptance to new concepts, ideas and innovation to serve the people. The officials have least tendencies to venture in experiments, change, and innovation. Further, seniors hardly encourage both subordinates as well as citizens to bring new ideas, schemes, plans and suggestions. Therefore, the officials' resistance to change is a big hurdle for the implementation of CC.

For example, recently a lot of modernization, in the shape of computerization, was carried out in most organizations. The government invested a lot of funds to revamp its old system through introducing computers and e-governance initiatives. But ultimately little has been improved in both employees' expertise as well as working procedures. Rarely officials are using computers, but use these as typewriters to process officials' letters and documents. Many of the websites of the ministries/department are not even regularly updated, let alone establishing interactive website for better public services. All this illustrates that the officials are not keen to innovate and change the old system rather they enjoy it. Under such prevailing circumstances there are least chances that the CC will be implemented successfully.

9.2.12 Resources

In an organization, the managerial and technical resources are required for successful implementation of the citizen's charter. Resources may include manpower, funds, technology etc required in the particular program to facilitate effective implementation and vice-versa. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1989) mentioned that the need for adequate funding is critical in the implementation of any program. Rothstein (1998:69) observed that to ensure effective program implementation, available resources should be placed in the hands of skillful and motivated organizational actors. To him, "the basic idea is simple enough - that any program, however cleverly designed it may be, will fall if its implementation is entrusted to an organization unsuited to that purpose." Similarly, in every public organization of Bangladesh also requires specific resources like skilled and trained manpower, adequate funds, infrastructure etc. to implement citizen's charter successfully.

If the government does not posses the required resources for the implementation of the CC, then the charter program may be affected adversely. According to the CC of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), its cleaners have to clean garbage from the city everyday. But due to the shortage of cleaners and required vehicles DCC can't perform its duties regularly. Thus the lack of the resources is impeding the effective implementation of the citizen's charter in various organizations.

9.2.13 Training

To tune the administrative apparatus in the light of the changing gazes, training is perhaps the most useful device. Because it helps to enhance the knowledge, skills and capabilities of the administrators to accomplish their tasks efficiently. It is an important instrument which helps to inculcate right values and attitudes among civil servants and keep them abreast with changes taking place in various spheres. As Robbins states "competent employees don't remain competent forever. Skills deteriorate and can become obsolete. That's why organizations spend billions of dollars each year on formal training." (Robbins, 2001:480)

The training efforts in our public organizations specifically directed to the upper echelons i.e. Class 1 and to some extend Class 2. They all together constitute 14.77 percent of the civil service. The rest of the two classes

i.e. Class 3 and 4 which constitute 85.23 percent of the total workforce, receive almost no training (BBS, 2008: 162). Many of them are left to fate to learn while doing rather than providing any organized training. They mainly learn while doing. In other words, they lack coherent training packages for employees instead they learn largely through a trial and error process.

On the other hand the training system in Bangladesh still remains divorced from social realities. The main emphasis is on the understanding of administrative techniques rather than on the improvement of human relations skills and the broadening of the outlook of civil servants (Khan and Zafarullah, 2005:142). The course contents of the training includes excessive emphasis on subjects like culture, history, law and learning about rules- as opposed to developing quantitative and analytical skills (Ahmed, S. G. 2004:149). Thus, in the absence of required training, effective implementation of the citizen charter will be a challenging task.

9.2.14 Corruption

The term "Corruption" covers a wide range of human actions which may take many forms. It has been defined as misuse of public office for private gain. Public office is abused for private gains when an official accepts, solicits or extorts a bribe or an undue advantage. Continuance of corruption in a country leads to economic malaise and squandering of public resources, lowers governmental performance, adversely affects general morale in the public service, jeopardizes administrative reform efforts and accountability measures, and perpetuates social and economic inequalities (UN, 1990).

Corruption pervades public life and public administration in Bangladesh. The general perception of people is that almost all important institutions of public life - the law and order agency, the judiciary, the revenue collection departments, the service sector, the financial sector, to name a few, and majority of public servants of all categories working in them are involved in corruption (PARC, 2000: 83). This is reflected in TI's (Transparency International) Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Bangladesh was ranked as the most corrupt country for successive times. Still this country is ranked as highly corrupt. Under this milieu, we hardly can expect the proper implementation of CC without any major overhauling.

9.3 Political Variables

9.3.1 Commitment

Political executives are the highest authority in a country. They are liable for running the state apparatus. So the success of the implementation of any policy/reform initiative largely depends on them. But at times politicians pursue specific reforms or changes for symbolic value. The argument is that an implementation process is used to justify political action. Similarly the success of CC depends on whether this device is only a political symbol that is employed to legitimize the government's efforts to improve public services, or whether the government has required will to enforce.

In Bangladesh CC is formulated on the basis of the special interest of last Caretaker Government. Now it is the duty of the present political party to carry forward this system. If this present government does not give special attention and provide required support, CC will not be effective. Government has to prove that it is not a decorative piece rather it is a substantial tool for the mass empowerment and to curb down bureaucratic maladies.

9.3.2 Efficiency

The success of government is largely influenced by the efficiency of its political executives. They should have sufficient knowledge and experience to run the state machineries. Unfortunately many of our ministers and MPs (Member of Parliament) do not have sufficient knowledge and experience. Many of their education level are very low. Even many of them do not complete the school education. This pathetic picture also affects the performance of their works. CC which try to ensure quality service- requires efficient and dynamic leadership from the political executives. So the lack of sufficient knowledge and experience of our political executives acts as an impediment for the proper implementation of CC.

9.3.3 Coordination

The coordination- both vertical and horizontal is important for the successful implementation of any policy/reform initiatives. When the top executive take decisions then it should be passed through all the arteries

of the government- all the ministries/departments should work in line with the directives. If there is any missing link then there will be difficulty-specially to provide quality services. For example- for the installation of a new company, an investor has to take a series of permissions and services from the government. Failure of a single agency-say failure to give gas connection in time can make the entire initiative in vain. Though other agencies work properly and provide necessary services in due time but without gas connection the company may fail to go for production. Thus with out coordination CC fail to achieve its main objective-satisfactory service delivery.

9.3.4 Public Support

Politician are wind of change, harder the wind blow the more they change. So Public support is very crucial for new changes and reforms to be implemented successfully. Implementation may be affected by conditions within the implementation environment: the behavior of the group affected by policy, socio-economic conditions and public opinion (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1989). Without public involvement and their support, there are low chances to put into effect policies especially the CC that need wider public participation.

Without information about the CC, the citizens may not form their opinions, and hence may not lend their support for it. Further, the extent of public support to proposed change(s) depends on the costs and benefits offered by the particular reform. The more the benefits to public, the greater may be the public participation, and eventually the higher may be the support for the reform. It is evident that the CC offers more benefits and least costs to the public. Therefore, the citizens may have high participation and support for it. It is evident that the CC offers more benefits and least costs to the public. Therefore, the citizens may have high participation and support for it. But in our country we don't see any such participation which is not favorable for the implementation of CC.

10.0 Concluding Remarks

Citizen's Charter aims to ensure the delivery of services based on quality, promptness, transparency and customer choice realized through the display of information related to services expected, their quality standards, feedback options and complaint and redress mechanisms

(Haque, 2005:391). But the Charters of Bangladesh will remain merely a paper exercise of limited value if we can't remove the aforementioned barriers. Now the question what can be done to address the concerns related to the Citizen's Charter? In this regard, the problems and barriers explored here should themselves determine the remedial options.

The most important factor for successful implementation of the citizen's charter is political commitment. A strong political commitment established through proper mechanism viz. rewards and sanctions, will make public service more performance oriented which ultimately will enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the public services. Further, political determination can also dismantle the strong bureaucratic cartel and make the system more transparent, open and responsive.

Any new change requires resources and overhauling processes to tune the existing system with the changing gaze. In the words of Howlett and Ramesh (2003: 185), for effective policy implementation, "funding must be allocated, personnel assigned, and rules and procedures developed." If sufficient resources are not available for different activities then implementation may suffer adversely. Government should provide resources for increasing administrative capacity to meet the demand, for organizing training especially for the frontline staff to revamp and update them, for marketing the CC to inform about it and for such other related activities. Government should remove the rules and regulations which stifle the implementation of CC and amend them in line with the spirit of CC and. In this regard, government should take steps to ensure effective implementation of Right To Information (RTI) act immediately.

In Bangladesh, there is no monitoring authority of CC. In India, there is an authority "Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)" who oversight the over all implementation process of CC and provide necessary instructions to the corresponding organizations. We should develop such monitoring body to oversight all the activities. Immediate formation of a monitoring Cell within the Ministry of Establishment can be a good option.

Though under this study we don't examine the details of the contents of the various CC in Bangladesh which is mentioned in our analytical framework, but on the basis of cursory view we can remarks that there are many weaknesses in the contents of various CC. The contents of the CC

should be enriched in line with the people's aspirations. It should be formulated taking the opinions of the people.

In addition to these measures, for effective implementation of the Citizen's Charter, it should be supplemented by addressing some other issues. The citizens' voice can be sought through various mechanisms such as citizens' survey, citizen panels, customer feedback cells or cards, consultations, focus groups etc. For effective charter program, it is not only important to build rapport and harmonious relationships with the citizens, but to involve street level bureaucrats in the charter program. It is also crucial to publicize the Charter through most publicly accessible means (radio, television, poster, etc.) to disseminate the basic messages of the Charter; and provide adequate training to public officials in the Charter's objectives and strategies, the principles of citizen-centered governance and the rights of citizens as service recipients. These initiatives related to the Citizen's Charter, however, would remain futile if the people continue to suffer from severe corruption committed by public officials. It is essential to eradicate opportunities and incentives for corruption from all spheres of the public sector - including the political realm (political parties, prime minister, ministers, MPs) and the administrative system (from top-most secretaries to manual workers at the bottom) in all sectors - by building effective and clean anti-corruption agencies, creating a non-corrupt social culture through public education and grassroots campaigns and so on. Last not the least, there is a need of an active, vigilant and regular oversight by various stakeholders and watchdogs agencies like - media, NGOs, citizens, researchers, potential users and staff to make charter program successful.

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