

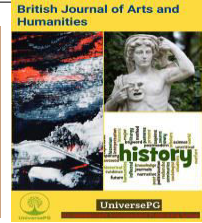


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Present Status of Information and Internet Services in Union Council of Madhukhali Upazila: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is the smallest country but has a huge population. Government of Bangladesh try to digital information and internet service to remote area by the Union Council Information Centres. This centre was established to bring the information like agriculture, education, government and non-government commercial services, community relation support services etc. The purpose of UCIIS is to supply the easiest internet - services and to create an interaction. In this research, both qualitative and quantitative research approach have been applied. Data were collected by using questionnaire from random sampling through the service receivers from the study area which was in Madhukhali Upazila under Faridpur District in Bangladesh. While internet-service providing Union Council Information and Internet Services (UCIIS) is an outlet to supply information and internet-service, facilities among the rural level people of Bangladesh. Equipments, power supply, internet speed, trained entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs' satisfaction income, financial Support, from Union Council have the positive relation with infrastructure and others support. The study result has shown that the effectiveness of UCIIS, in respect of citizen's satisfaction, is close to the successful level while the effectiveness of UCIIS, in respect of infrastructure and logistic support, is in between of successful and somehow successful level. The effectiveness of UCIIS about the Internet-service delivery largely depends upon the citizen's satisfaction and infrastructure & logistic support.

Keywords: Digital Information, Internet Services, UCIIS, Rural People, Madhukhali, and Internet Services.

INTRODUCTION:

Bangladesh is a developing country; the Govt of Bangladesh takes some initiative on ICT development. Major people of this country living in the village, before develop the country fist develop in rural area identified with information and communication technology. Information Technology (IT) is the new era and surely approaching a top priority for communicating globally easy and flexible way for all.

IT is comprised of satellite communication, internet, computers or any others devices. Union Council Information and Internet Services (UCIIS) is a way to provide digital services in rural area. In Bangladesh the common used word is "Digital Bangladesh" implies the broad use of computer, and expresses the modern philosophy of fruitful and effective use of technology in terms of implementing the promises in education, health, job placement and poverty reduction. Saleem *et al.*, (2013) described that the impact of ICT information access to professional and

non-professional students. Aim of the study is to measure the respondent ICT information needs and their seeking behaviour in collecting ICT resources.

Information is power and present age is the age of information. Free flow of information is pre-condition for empowering a person, an institute, a society and a country as a whole. A trustworthy information and services system is very essential to gain the competent management and setting up system for both public and private levels in Bangladesh (Ahamed *et al.*, 2019). Through trustworthy information and services system, it is possible to bear a constructive change in the society. For any reliable information and services system, it is needed to have an effective information system which can be easily accessible by the people. Quick information and services system are possible through using e-service providing equipment's. In order to ensure better service delivery to the people of Bangladesh, internet-services are very necessary.

Hossain and Islam (2012) delineated that most of information need for rural women on agriculture and animal husbandry. There are the maximum on primary level but concern on health, food and nutrition, family planning as well as child information. Through internet-service delivery, it is possible to ensure transparency, accountability, rapidness of work at every stage of both public and private sectors. Internet-service is making a change in the life style of people of Bangladesh and creating an interaction with the society and institutions. It is also dividing people into information-rich and information-poor group.

Wulystan Pius Mtega (2012), described information need vary among individual communities and professions. The majority needed information on health, political, civic and leisure information. Besides this agriculture and market information are searching. The group which is poor in information is more disadvantaged and deprived of information because of not having sufficient income, lack of literacy rate, lack of sufficient access to e-service proving. This deprivation of information is creating the information-poor group in the society and thus it is making information gap at a wider scale.

Considering the above mentioned situations, both private and public sectors have started to render the services through Community Information Centers to provide information among the rural community people and extend the benefits by using the e-service equipments. From the above discussion, it is clear that CICs are the centers for providing 'Shared ICT Access Facilities' using computers, internet and other ICT equipments. CICs have been able to provide different internet-services among the community level people at affordable prices among people of the developing countries of the world. The principle aim of shared-access model is to make easier the e-service related services among the common users with a lower cost than privately owned computer organizations which are more expensive to bear for the rural community poor people.

Literature Review:

Uddin and Hasan (2102) conducted a study on the use of information technology in Library service: A study on some selected libraries in northern part of Bangladesh. The application of information technology is on cataloguing, classification, circulation and information searching. The result revealed that, eight libraries were caring out of these service and three libraries (RU, RDA and BRAC) were using both manual and technological system for only cataloguing and classification.

Rahman and Akhtar (2017) conducted a research on ICT used in education sector considering primary and secondary levels school in rural areas: a study of Sylhet division in Bangladesh. He finds that more computers and ICT related materials should be supplied in rural areas. There are also problems of internet facilities and financial support of rural area is another factors.

Islam and Gausul (2010) examined community internet access in rural areas: A study on community information centers in Bangladesh. The result shows that 25% person are completely satisfied, 55% people mostly satisfied, 15% people are practical satisfied and 5% are not aware of the community information centers.

Islam & Uddin (2005) is a study on “Information support services of the rural development libraries in Bangladesh” where authors have shown the information and services system of rural development libraries of Dhaka, Comilla and Bogra districts in Bangladesh. In this study authors have pointed out the situation of rural development libraries due to revolution and advancement of information communication technology. The study identifies the tools and techniques which are used in different functional units of these libraries to fulfil the demand of growing information needs of the rural people of Bangladesh.

Hoque and Sorwar (2015) conducted study on ICT based e-government services for rural development: a study of Union Information of Service Center (UISC) in Bangladesh. This study bring into being that UISCs have explored a new window of chance for rural citizens in Bangladesh. It has the potential to empower rural communities to access information in different fields i.e. agriculture, education, healthcare, and law. He revised also found that most participated people held positive response about the usefulness and usability of different services available through the UISCs.

Bo Goranson and Doan Dai Ngoc (2016) in his research describe technology play important role in the rural areas. Scientific and technological information resources that help change the local people lives in this region.

Objectives of Research:

The basic objectives of my article as follows-

- To find out the satisfaction level of using internet by Union council.
- To know the Internet Services those are provided by Union council.
- To trust out opinion of people regarding the Union Council.
- To investigate the benefits of using internet services from Union Council.
- To make the people conscious about their right of getting services from the center.

Research Area:

As my research is “Present Status of Information and Internet Services in Union Council of Madhukhali Upazila: A Case Study.” My research area is on Madhukhali Upazila.

Madhukhali at a Glance

Area: Located	230.73km ² 23.28’-23.37 north latitudes 89.29 -89.44 East longitudes
Union :	10
Village :	241
Population:	204492 (2011)
Density:	816Km ²
Literacy:	55.2 (Urban) 42.4(Rural)
Mouza	129
No. of Primary School:	87
No. of High School:	25
No. of College:	10
No of Madrasha	24

Madhukhali Upazila:

Madhukhali Upazila (Faridpur) area 230.73sq. km located in between 23°28’and 23°37’ North latitudes and in between 89°29’ and 89°44’ East longitudes. The area bounded in the north on Baliakandi and Rajbari Sadar upazila, is on the south is Boalmari and Mohammadpur (Magura) upazila, on the east is Faridpur sadar upazila, Magura sadar and Sreepur (Magura) upazila on the West.

Madhukhali Thana was turned into an upazila in 1983. The total population of this Thana is 204492. Education literacy of this area is 52.5%.

Research Methodology:

The study based on a questionnaire based survey of the people of fives (5) union council (Megchami, Gajna, Korokdi, Kamarkhali and Bagat) under Madhukhali Upazila, Faridpur district in Bangladesh. A study on 102 people of above five union council of Madhukhali Upazila was taken into consideration for the study. A well structured questionnaire was used to collecting the data.



Questionnaire Method:

To find out the information report, at first we make some questions and all the necessary data for the study have been collected with the help the questionnaire.

Personal Interview Method:

Besides the questionnaire methods, the interview and the observation methods are used to gather basic

data from the operator, officer and service provider.

Data Analysis:

Data analysis is an important work for research. Research mostly depends on properly analyzing the collecting data. I used table to analyze the collecting data. **Table 1** show that, my research is five Union Council of Madhukhali upazila Faridpur District.

Table 1: Research Areas of Union Council of Madhukhali Upazila Faridpur District.

Research Area (Faridpur)	Megchami	Gajna	Korokdi	Kamarkhali	Bagat	Total user
Union	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	05



Fig 1: Research Areas of Union Council of Madhukhali Upazila Faridpur District.

Table 2: Users ratio of Male and Female.

Research Areas	Male	Female	Percentage (Male)	Percentage (Female)	Total
Megchami	12	6	66.67%	33.33%	100%
Gajna	15	7	68.18%	31.82%	100%
Korokdi	16	5	76.19%	23.81%	100%
Kamarkhali	19	5	79.17%	20.83%	100%
Bagat	11	6	64.71%	35.29%	100%
Total Ratio	73	29	70.98%	29.02%	

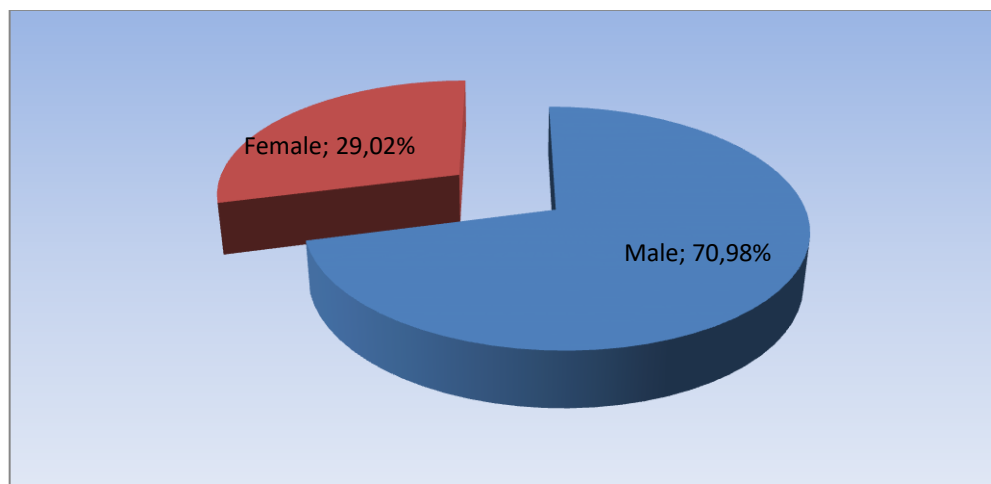


Fig 2: Ratio of Male and Female Users.

From the above table we understand that the user these centers are 70.98% male and 29.02% female union people.

Table 3: Age of the users who come mostly.

Research Areas	10-18 Age	19-30 Age	30- Above Age
Megchami	15%	55%	30%
Gajna	15%	50%	35%
Korokdi	10%	65%	25%
Kamarkhali	20%	60%	20%
Bagat	15%	60%	25%
Average Ratio	15%	58%	27%

Table 4: Educational background (Majority of users).

Union Council	Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Honours'	Higher Educate
Megchami	5%	27%	35%	24%	9%
Gajna	3%	19%	32%	30%	16%
Kamarkhali	5%	10%	20%	35%	30%
Bagat	00%	25%	25%	30%	20%
Korokdhi	5%	15%	25%	30%	25%
Average Ratio	3.6%	19.2%	27.4%	29.8%	20%

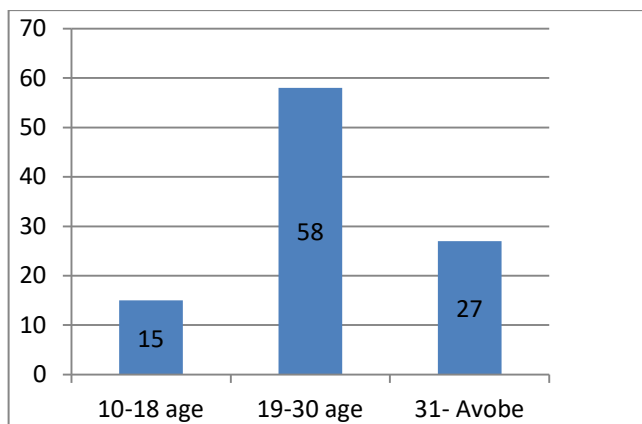


Fig 3: Ratio of user's age level.

From the **Table 3** we understand that the user these centers are 15% <10-18>aged, 58% <19-30> aged, 27 %< 30-Above> union people, Average ratio of users ages 15% <10-18>, 58% <19-30> and 27% <30-Above> (**Fig 3**).

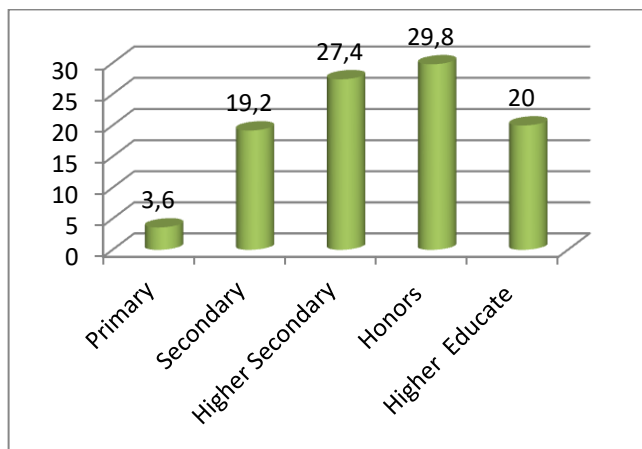


Fig 4: Ratio of Educational background of users.

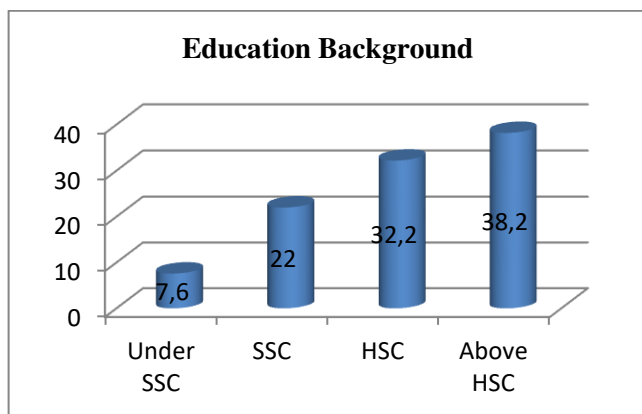


Fig 5: Ratio of Educational Background of Staffs.

From the above **Table 4** we understand that Average ratio of users education background is 3.6% Primary, 19.2% Secondary, and 27.4% Higher secondary, 29.8% Honours, 20% Higher Educate (**Fig 4**).

There are 23 Computer operators in research area (5 Union Council) From the **Table 5** we understand that 7.6% Under SSC, 22% SSC and 32.2% HSC and 38.2% Above HSC or Higher educate staffs of that Union Council (**Fig 5**).

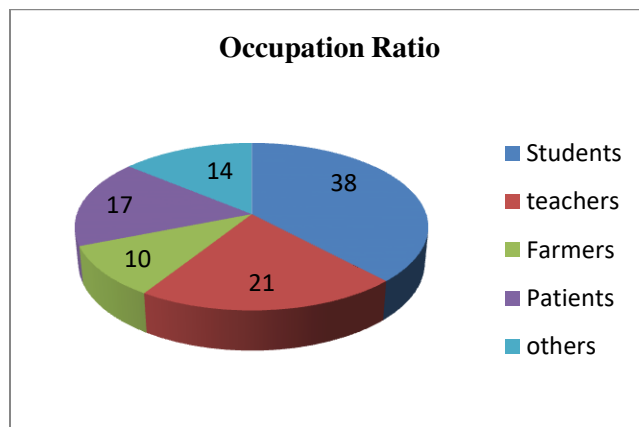


Fig 6: Ratio of Users Occupation.

From the above **Table 6** we understand that 38% Student, 21% Teachers, 10% Farmers, 17% Patients and 14% others of the user occupation (**Fig 6**).

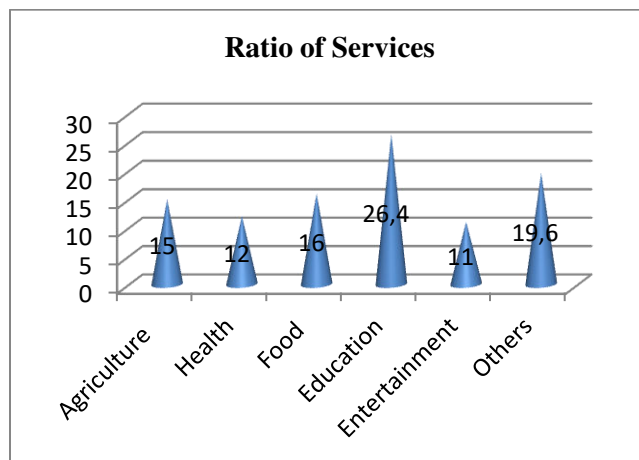


Fig 7: Ratio of Union Council Services.

From the above **Table 7** we understand that those Services from UCIIC 15% Agriculture, 12% Health, 16% Foods, 26.4% Education, 11% Entertainment, and 19.6% others of the user occupation (**Fig 7**).

Table 5: Educational background of Information & Internet Services Operator.

Research Area	Under SSC	SSC	HSC	Above HSC
Megchami	6%	31%	37%	26%
Gajna	11%	27%	29%	33%
Kamarkhali	9%	15%	31%	45%
Bagat	7%	11%	33%	49%
Korokdhi	5%	26%	31%	38%
Average Ratio	7.6%	22%	32.2%	38.2%

Table 6: Users occupations.

Research Area	Students	Teachers	Farmers	Patients	Others
Megchami	40%	15%	10%	20%	15%
Gajna	35%	20%	5%	25%	15%
Kamarkhali	40%	25%	10%	15%	10%
Bagat	35%	20%	15%	10%	20%
Korokdhi	40%	25%	10%	15%	10%
Average Ratio	38%	21%	10%	17%	14%

Table 7: Internet connection of UCIIS.

Research Area	By Modem	Broadband Connection	WI-FI	Others
Megchami	No		No	No
Gajna	No		No	No
Kamarkhali	Yes	Yes	No	No
Bagat	No		No	No
Korokdhi	No		No	No

From the above **Table 7** shows that, only one union council used broadband connection internet as well as modem but another four union council used modem to provide services. There is no WI-FI and other services.

Table 8: Type of information those are provide from Union Council.

Research Area	Agriculture	Health	Food	Education	Entertainment	Others
Megchami	15%	15%	10%	30%	15%	15%
Gajna	20%	10%	15%	25%	10%	20%
Kamarkhali	10%	15%	20%	30%	5%	20%
Bagat	15%	10%	20%	27%	10%	18%
Korokdhi	15%	10%	15%	20%	15%	25%
Average percentage	15%	12%	16%	26.4%	11%	19.6%

Table 9: Qualities of Staffs (Any course of internet or computer related).

	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Honours
Number	5	7	3	1
Percentage	31.25%	43.75%	18.75%	6.25%

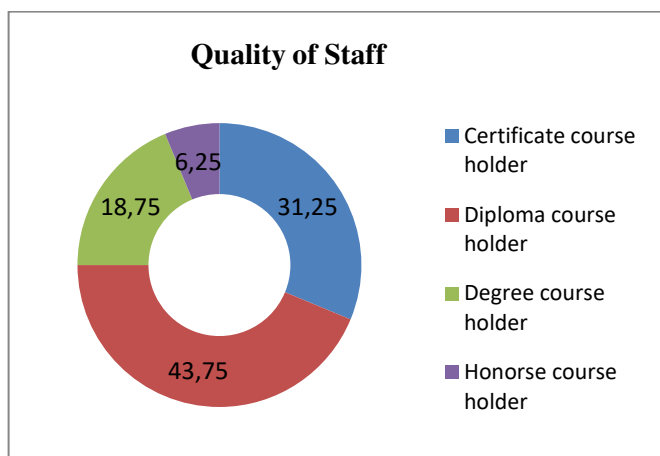


Fig 8: Ratio of Staff Qualification.

We know from the **Table 9** there are 23 Staff who serve of information and internet service in Union council. From the above table understand that 31.25% Certificate Course Complete, 43.75% Diploma Course Complete, 18.75% Degree Course Complete and 6.25% Honours Course Complete Staffs service in that Union Council (**Fig 8**).

From the **Table 10** we understand that, highly satisfied and satisfied percentage rate of users are more than less satisfied or not satisfied. Most of the users are happy to get this service (**Fig 9**).



Fig 9: Satisfaction Levels of the users.

Table 10: Satisfaction Levels of the users.

Research Area	Highly Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Less Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Percentage
Megchami	5%	27%	55%	11%	2%	100%
Gajna	7%	23%	41%	22%	7%	100%
Kamarkhali	11%	19%	47%	19%	4%	100%
Bagat	9%	29%	39%	17%	6%	100%
Korokdhi	6%	41%	29%	11%	13%	100%
	7.6%	27.8%	42.2	16	6.4	100%

Findings:

To provide specific information to a person at a right time as required' is the prime aim of any kinds of Union Council Information and Internet Services (UCIIS).

- Internet Connection: Every center uses "Modem". There is only one council used

Broadband connection as result Internet connection is slow, sometimes can't run on the Internet.

- Lack of conscious of the people: From the above data analysis we see, Most of User 19-30 aged people come to the center. Centers did not get popularity among the people.

- Lack of trained personnel: most of the personnel can't run the program properly as result users don't get right services at the right time.
- Though there are not enough facilities but users are satisfied. Because they are living in a remote area without own internet connection.
- Lack of Skilled Staff: Most of the staffs are not proper training.
- Most of the staff is not qualified because they are only diploma on computer technology.
- Arrangement of training program: Most of the personnel can't run the program properly as result users don't get right services at the right time. For getting good services skill development program should be arranged.
- Improvement of proper technological facilities: The ever increasing communication media, technologies those uses these centers are not enough and technologies are updating day by day. Keep pace with the world version technologies; we have to up-date ours.
- Improvement of Administrative activities: The personnel of these centers don't attend at right time, don't provide sufficient information, don't follow services hours. For the good services administrative activities have to be developed.

Problems:

The main problems are faced as follows-

- Insufficient number of training program for both staffs and users.
- Psychological barriers of the staff that hinder to accept new users and technologies for the center development and popularity.
- Lack of proper supervision.
- Negligence of higher authority and users.
- Lack of necessary fund for purchasing center materials and equipment.
- Insufficient space and arrangement.
- Proper utilization of budget.
- Lack of realization the importance of the center.

Recommendations:

By analyzing all of the problems of these Union Council information and internet centers, the recommendations are framed in accordance with the present situation of the systems and services of these Digital Centers. These are as follows-

- Broadband Connection: Every center uses "Modem". There is only one Broadband connection, as result Internet connection is slow, so as soon as possible broadband connection should be connected.
- Make the people conscious: From the above data analysis we see, Most of them 19-30 aged people come to the center. Centers did not get popularity among the people. So the rest of the population have to get them know about the services of the center.

CONCLUSION:

In this modern world, all the public and private activities are done by modern technologies and the public and private institutions become online based. Madhukhali Upazila union information centers service providers are less qualified as we deserved. Mainly there is broadband internet connection problem almost all UCIS provide service by modem. Peoples are satisfied because of less education. From the centers education, health, agriculture and others service is provided. Bangladesh IT market is expected to continue overcoming challenges to post healthy market growth. Bangladesh is one of the most populous nations in the world and recent economic indicators showing positive outlook (Zeaul Karim, 2014). So, keep pace with the modern world, Government took a step to make Bangladesh Digital. To fulfil this dream Government established Grass-root UCIS or Digital Center name Union Council Information and Internet Services or Digital Centre. The activities of these centers are automated and online based. This step of Government really praise worthy. Just Government has to maintain systematically. Only these kinds of centers can change the rural people and make the Bangladesh Digitalized.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The authors declared no potential conflicts of the interest with respect to the research.

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