

# Empathy and Public Service Delivery System in Bangladesh: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Service

Md. Istiaque Hossain Molla

School of General Education, BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1305000211>

Received: 25 May 2026; Accepted: 31 May 2026; Published: 10 June 2026

## ABSTRACT

Empathy is one of the important mechanisms in this new era to ensure better public service delivery towards their clients and the public. For these reasons, officials should receive proper training in empathy. The employees may realise the importance of empathy or may be familiar with the term empathy, but in terms of implementation, the result is not satisfactory. But it is a good sign that the situation is changing, and bureaucrats, government officials, and private bankers are now aware of this. Besides this, personal training in empathy for top and middle management is also important.

**Keywords:** Empathy, public, government officials, private bank officials, training

## INTRODUCTION

In the last few years, Bangladesh has achieved development in different sectors, though there were some criticisms regarding democracy and a rigged election system, corruption, politics-administration dichotomy, social stratification, religious oppression, degradation of social culture, etc. Now, slowly, Bangladesh is becoming an emerging power in South Asia. The leadership of the Prime Minister, HE Tarique Rahman, and his determination towards the development of every sector in Bangladesh by following the path of the late President Shahed Ziaur Rahman and the late Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, are the main focus among all. Besides this, Bangladesh is now a lower-middle-income country, which is also very significant. Another important goal of the government for the citizens' benefit is to ensure a better public service delivery system, and for ensuring this, the government takes the term 'empathy in service delivery by bureaucrats' very seriously. Nowadays, the word 'empathy' is very popular in all government and private organisations. We are all used to the word 'sympathy', but now the term 'empathy' is being used worldwide as one of the key indicators of serving people. Bangladesh is not exceptional in this. But it is not that popular in government organisations, especially in government service. Previously, the a2i program of the Bangladesh government has taken some initiatives. Empathy is the experience of understanding another person's thoughts, feelings, and condition from their point of view rather than from our own. Empathy ensures that a person is compassionate towards the condition of another person. In the civil service, empathy is very important, especially for the field-level staff. For this, the officer should have some quality that he/she need to adopt. Like: practice active listening, understand yourself, be patient, track your progress, step into their shoes, and use art. A2i's empathy methodology arranges for relatively senior government officers to act as *secret shoppers* and visit citizens' access points for services outside of their ministry or area of expertise. This exercise puts them in "citizens' shoes" since they are forced to navigate public systems without any official or intellectual privileges. This experience helps participants develop a critical eye that they use to scrutinise their own agency's delivery systems and improve the overall quality of services. In this research, in addition to government officials, I am trying to assess the services of private banks and determine whether the employees are empathetic toward their clients in the service delivery system. They are also trained like government officials or not, etc. The Bank is one of the institutions where people are suffering from getting services. So, the study aims to find out the impact of empathy on government officials and bank employees (private/autonomous) on the public. The assumption is that the public servants are empathetic in the public service delivery system, and the bankers are not empathetic in the service delivery to their clients. This article will try to find out the empathetic behaviour of public servants and private bankers towards the public in the service delivery system.

---

## Problem statement

In Bangladesh, bureaucratic delays in public service delivery are prevalent. The typical top-down management system within the government usually hinders an optimal service delivery process. Decisions tend to be made at the top level, and officers at mid- and field levels rarely have an opportunity to offer innovative ideas to improve services and their delivery systems. Civil servants who are in a position to overhaul processes and institutionalise improvements in service delivery are far removed from the grassroots level, where citizens come in contact with the system and are often unable to identify ‘pain points’ from the citizen’s perspective. The Government of Bangladesh has faced major challenges posed by the lack of an innovative culture and restrictions on experimental approaches to improve public services.” Empathy training” tackles institutionalised inefficiency to reduce time, cost, and visits (TCV) required by citizens to receive public services, while working to stimulate the culture of innovation within branches of the Government. To address the above challenge, the Government of Bangladesh introduced empathy training, an innovative intervention by the Access to Information program (a2i), inspired by Nesta’s design thinking model of innovation. The five-day training model was customised to align with the country’s socio-cultural and institutional identity, thereby ensuring that it can be a sustainable initiative with long-term impact. In the banks, people are also coming to get better treatment from the officials. We have a common thought that private banks are more serious about service delivery to their clients. But the question is, are they doing it as part of their job description or from a view of empathy? As a financial institution, does the bank authority or the government ensure training for the bank employees, like the government officials, or not?

## Rationale of the study

The civil service exists to help politicians get things done: our stated aim is to ‘help the government of the day develop and implement its policies’. There is recognition that when public services are not designed with empathy for the people who use them, they are useless or even potentially harmful. The A2i program has already trained several officials in developing empathy. In field-level administration, almost 33,450 officials were trained through 2,175 training courses, 1,589 innovation trainings initiated by ministries/ directorates/ district administration, and 951 officials trained at an advanced level (a2i.gov.bd). So, we can see the efforts that the Bangladesh government has made, but at the administrative or field level, what is the real situation? This training helps the civil servants to be empathetic towards the public and the service delivery system. Are they thinking that empathy is important in the service delivery system? On the other hand, in financial institutions like (private), empathy training is given or not; if given, then are the employees empathetic towards their clients? The study will try to find out the real situation of the administration in the banking sector.

## Research questions

From the literature review, I have found some gaps compared to other countries regarding the empathetic behaviour of public service holders in the public service delivery system. Also, in some local scholarly articles, it is very clear that the banks are not very much aware of empathy and empathy training for their staff. So, based on these, the research questions are:

1. Are the public service holders empathetic enough or not in the public service delivery system?
2. The bankers are feeling the importance of empathy in service delivery to their clients or not.

## Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. The public service holders are empathetic to the public service delivery system.
2. The bank employees’ perception regarding empathy in service delivery to their clients.
3. Is the training on empathy effective or not for the public servants and bankers?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The administrative establishment that Bangladesh inherited at independence exhibits all the cardinal features of colonial bureaucracies. It was elitist in composition, narrow in outlook, insulated from the people, and non-responsive to the political leadership as well as corrupt, antiquated, high-handed, and obsessed with the preservation of its status and privileges (Zafarullah and Khan, 2005). So, from the above quote, we can see that the psychological characteristics of public servants are not changing. Nowadays, psychological character is very important. In the book 'Personnel Management' by Shamsuzzaman, he mentioned three criteria of psychological character of public and private personnel are: sensory acuity, skills, and ability to deal with problems and traits of temperament and character, such as honesty, emotional stability, etc. If we consider the public servants as leaders, then we can say, 'the systemic leadership approach views leadership as fundamentally concerned with the process of change. The change process begins with why and what needs to change and continues right through to the execution and implementation of change (Beerel, 2009). To bring change, we need to ensure that the public servants are willing to adopt change. A theory of change is understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impacts. It can be developed for any level of intervention- an event, a project, a program, a policy, a strategy of an organisation (Rogers, 2014). So, adaptation is very important. But the question is, in Bangladesh, are the public service holders adaptive? Willing to accept change? 'To be good at responding to change refers to our capacity to adapt. As humans, we have innate adaptive capacity (Berrel, 2009). That task becomes a Herculean one in the case of a developing country like Bangladesh, whose civil service is afflicted with multifaceted and deep-rooted problems. According to MM Khan, the major problems are: over-concentration at the top, complex operating procedures, reliance on anachronistic relations between generalists and specialists, low salary, inadequate human resources, and resistance to change. Here we can see the author also emphasised one point, i.e., 'resistance to change', which is very important to consider for further development of public service. A World Bank study recommended threefold actions to transform a problem-ridden civil service into a better-managed one. The actions included the removal of structural barriers to efficient management; improvement in the quality and allocation of human, financial, informational, and physical resources; and reorientation of the systems and processes used for managing these resources towards achieving performance goals (Ozgedis, 1983). Here, it is noticeable that the writer talked about performance goals. In our civil service, are the public service holders' performance/goals oriented? In this millennium era, the terms governance and good governance are very familiar, which emphasise the performance-based activity of service holders (Boeinger 1992; Landell-Mills and Serageldin 1992; Osborne 1993a, 1993b; Leftwich 1993). To ensure good governance, it is also important to ensure a smooth public service delivery system. According to Collingwood, the civil service exists to help politicians get things done. But a policy is the government's approach to meeting a social need. Many policies became social services. The ability to understand people's motivations and feelings when they interact with the state should be considered a core skill in our sector. Kit Collingwood referred to three simple steps that will get the public servants on the right track. 1<sup>st</sup>, public servants need to talk directly and regularly to the people most affected by our work, particularly the volunteers who are least likely to respond to public attention. It showed to be an obligation for all civil servants to have direct contact with policy and service users as early and frequently as possible, and not just talk, they need to listen hard. To take their concerns seriously and have the humility to change our ideas and our advice to ministers based on what we learned. Secondly, public servants need to be sure that we are representatives of the people we serve; we're doing well with this diversity. Thirdly, we need to role model and reward empathetic behaviour. The reward structures cater for hard skills- financial savings, problem-solving, and the ability to motivate a team. These are great scenarios, but not sufficient. To get empathetic as a whole, we need people to recognise how important empathy is for all others to collect that. If we want to create an empathetic public servant, we also need to emphasise values and ethics. The value of the pad affects the decisions they make in carrying out the programs for which they are responsible. Values are conceptions 'explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristics of a group, or the desirable which interference the selection from available modes and ends' (Nigro & Nigro, 1989). Values and ethics are important for a public servant. Abraham Kaplan demonstrates very brilliantly that 'there is an unfortunate tendency to oversimplify value choices by posting general principles such as liberty, justice, and democracy. This approach ignores the fact that the solutions to many problems require compromise. Administrative ethics can help to develop responsibility towards the public by implementing public policy (Douglas, 1957). Besides all of these, if we consider the constitution of Bangladesh, we can see that in article 19(1) it is mentioned that 'the state shall endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens. This

means that the citizens will enjoy all the rights. But the question is, how will it be possible? Here, the role of public service holders comes into light. In Article 21(2) of the constitution, 'every person in the service of the republic must strive at all times to serve the people'. This is a clear indication from our constitution that the people who are in the service are bound to serve the citizens of Bangladesh (Constitution of Bangladesh, 2006). To ensure better service delivery to the public in an empathetic way, we should focus on district administration or at the field level. If we consider the local government, we can see that the service delivery system is not up to the mark or compared to the Upazila or Zilla level, it is very poor. The evaluation of these local governments in the Indian subcontinent did not follow any specific laws or rules. It experienced dramatic changes in its nature based on the defining characteristics of the ruling regime (Khan, 2011). The beginning of the present district-level administration in Bangladesh was in the Hastings plan of 1772. Hastings created 23 districts in the Bengal presidency and posted European collectors of revenue in each of the districts. There were also several service organisations functioning in the district. But presently these were controlled by central administration (Muhit, 1981).

Now, if we consider the situation of some other developed and developing countries, what will we see? In India, we can see that they have some basis for civil service ethics, like: 1. Impartiality, 2. Objectivity, 3. Reliability of administrative operations, 4. Openness, 5. The service principle, 6. Responsibility. The change in management and its operating environment has also shaped new values, such as efficiency and result orientation. The civil service is an essential part of the Indian government. It supports the government of the day in developing and implementing its policies and in delivering public services. The Indian civil service depends on morality as well. Halfon offers a moral life and their intellectual responsibility in seeking to understand the demands of such a life. In the Indian civil service, a public service officer must possess all three traits depending on the situation/the public servants they are meant to serve, and this requires developing a humanistic attitude. The Indian civil service emphasised empathy by giving 4 traits as well (Halfon, 1989). These are: Level, understands unspoken contents, Level:2, Has concerns for others, Level:3, Acts as a role model, Level:4, Creates and promotes an environment of respect (Civildserviceindia.com). If we consider China and Japan, they have recently introduced changes to the way in which their civil service systems and their public corporations are managed (Flynn, 1998). Flynn also mentioned in his article that the governments of both China and Japan have announced 'reforms' of their administrations to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. But after searching for literature related to their public service delivery system, empathy is rare in the archive. But it doesn't mean that the country is not accepting empathy in its public service. Japanese public administration is currently under new and unique pressure to transform its organisation, management, and governance into more elastic and resilient ones for sustainable service delivery (Kikuchi, 2018). Nowadays, the Japanese government emphasises public service motivation, which is becoming an important concept. It is generally believed that public employees are motivated by a sense of service not found among private employees. Civil servants are characterised by an ethic to serve the public, motivated by a concern for the community and a desire to serve the public interest (Perry, 1996-97). If we concentrate on Pakistan, we can see that being wedded to the colonial civil service, their mindset and attitude betrayed the tendency of guardianship and paternalism. They were not responsive to the needs of the population and lacked the compassion to come to the rescue of the poor, marginalised, and less well-to-do segments of society (Husain, 2011). So now, the current focus on civil servants within the context of 'service reforms' is understandable, given that it is seen as an instrument for mainstreaming second-generation macro-economic reforms. However, this is to translate into an improved social service delivery system, other cadre and ex-cadre categories of public servants must be brought within its ambit (Iqbal, 2006).

Banking is a customer-oriented service industry. A bank depends upon its customers for its survival in the market. The customer is the focus, and customer service is the differentiating factor (Guo *et al.*, 2008). A bank can differentiate itself from competitors by providing high-quality customer service (Naeem & Saif, 2009). The efficacy of customer service is related to progressive operation. In the competitive banking industry, customer satisfaction is considered the essence of success. Organisations operating in service industries should consider service quality a key strategic issue for business success (Spathis *et al.*, 2004). Those service providers who establish a high level of service quality retain a high level of customer satisfaction; they also obtain a sustainable competitive advantage. Research indicates that companies with an excellent customer service record reported a 72% increase in profit per employee, compared to similar organisations that have demonstrated poor customer service; it is also five times costlier to attract new customers than to retain existing customers (Duncan, 2004).

In some earlier studies, service quality has been referred to as the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations (Lewis & Mitchell, 1990). The bank should be aware of the expectations and perceptions of the customer. Measuring customers' expectations is the key to being able to serve the customer satisfactorily. On the other hand, with a better understanding of customers' perceptions, banks can determine the actions required to meet the customers' needs. In this way, they can easily satisfy the customer, which directly impacts the overall performance of the bank. Customer satisfaction is one of the important tools to run a business and to achieve the mission statement (Karim & Chowdhury, 2014). In another research conducted in five private banks, it was found that for providing customer service in the banking sector of Bangladesh, the 'Empathy' level is 'Not Satisfactory' (Afrin, 2012).

Recent public administration literature highlights empathy as a fundamental element of citizen-centred governance. Mussagulova (2024) conducted a systematic review of 65 studies and found that empathy plays a significant role in how public servants understand citizens' needs, design policies, and deliver services. The study argues that empathy helps bridge the gap between bureaucratic procedures and citizens' lived experiences, thereby improving responsiveness and inclusiveness in public services. However, the review also notes the fragmented nature of existing research and the absence of a comprehensive theoretical framework for integrating empathy into public administration practices. The literature further suggests that empathetic public service delivery contributes to enhanced citizen satisfaction and trust in government institutions. Public servants who demonstrate active listening, emotional understanding, and compassionate communication are more likely to foster positive relationships with service recipients. Empathy is particularly important in sectors such as healthcare, social welfare, education, and local government services, where interactions often involve vulnerable populations and complex social issues. Contemporary public administration scholars also argue that empathy supports the broader shift toward collaborative governance and participatory policymaking. By understanding diverse citizen perspectives, public officials can design more equitable and effective policies. In the private sector, empathy has emerged as a strategic resource for enhancing customer experience and organisational competitiveness. Recent studies emphasise that empathetic service interactions positively influence customer satisfaction, trust, retention, and repurchase intentions. Organisations that encourage employees to practice active listening, emotional intelligence, and personalised communication often achieve higher levels of service quality. Empathy enables service providers to identify customer concerns more effectively and develop tailored solutions, thereby reducing dissatisfaction and enhancing customer loyalty. Although empathy serves similar functions across sectors, its objectives and implementation differ. In the public sector, empathy is primarily linked to democratic values, social equity, citizen trust, and public value creation. Public organisations focus on understanding citizens' diverse needs and ensuring fair access to services. Conversely, in the private sector, empathy is often associated with customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, brand reputation, and profitability. Despite these differences, both sectors recognise empathy as a critical component of effective service delivery. Common themes include active listening, emotional intelligence, personalised communication, and stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, both sectors increasingly invest in training programs aimed at enhancing employees' empathetic competencies and interpersonal skills. Now, if we consider Bangladesh from the perspective of public service delivery, the government officials are empathetic or not in their respective positions. Compared to the above-mentioned countries, there are also some rules and regulations for the public service holders. We don't have the Civil Service Act yet completely, but some rituals and norms should be followed by the officers in terms of their job and the service delivery system. I have mentioned previously that several government officials were trained under the A2I program on empathy and the implementation of empathy in their workplace. A2i's empathy methodology makes the senior government officials act as secret shoppers and visit citizens' access points for services outside of their ministries or area of expertise. This exercise puts them in 'citizens' shoes' since they are forced to navigate public systems without any official or intellectual privileges (lse.ac.uk). Besides these, the introduction of the citizen charter is one of the good initiatives by the government (Hassan, 2015). Besides these, the bankers (private) are also empathetic or not in their respective positions or not. The scholarly articles don't show that the result is satisfactory in terms of empathy in the service delivery system, which also ensures customer satisfaction.

## Limitations of the Research

It's not so easy to get information from the administration, as we have some restrictions. As there are not many scholarly works on this topic, it will be tough to get proper literature. Interviewing the government officials may

be hampered because of a strict authoritarian situation in the administration. And it will not be so easy to interview with all the government officials, both at the central and local levels. I had to depend on an online survey. Besides these, conducting interviews with bankers (private) is also challenging. Here, I also did an online survey by preparing questions. This may create a gap in the research outcome. From a Bangladeshi perspective, the lack of available literature on empathy is one of the barriers. In this research, no mathematical terms are used. The result will be given based on a qualitative method and shown in a chart. It is important to mention that, because of privacy issues, none of the officers' names, workplace, or work station, etc., are mentioned for both categories of respondents. Only their respective job titles/positions are mentioned here to make the analysis clearer. Despite growing scholarly attention, several research gaps remain. First, empirical studies comparing empathy practices across public and private sectors are limited. Second, existing research lacks comprehensive models explaining how empathy influences service outcomes under different organisational contexts. Third, the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence and digital service platforms raises questions regarding the future role of empathy in technology-mediated interactions.

## METHODOLOGY

The information will be gathered from the government offices, some statutory offices, and some field administration/ statutory offices. The following methods were used when primary information was collected.

1. Reviewed the available literature on empathy, civil service, bureaucracy, governance, and the public service delivery system in Bangladesh. Some documents included: project documents and monitoring reports. The review of the above-mentioned literature helped in understanding the various aspects of the topic.
2. Used survey questions. A total of 100 officers were chosen from government offices/secretariats and private banks. 50 respondents from each were randomly chosen who are involved in service delivery positions, both in government and private banks. Here, the term 'government officials/public service holders' means both BCS and Non-BCS officers.
3. This is qualitative research, and random sampling was also used.

## Results of the Research

Previously, it was mentioned that a set of structured questions was used for surveying online (through email via Google form). Several government officials and private bank service holders responded, who are directly or indirectly involved in the service delivery system in their respective positions. The lists of respondents from field-level officials are given below:

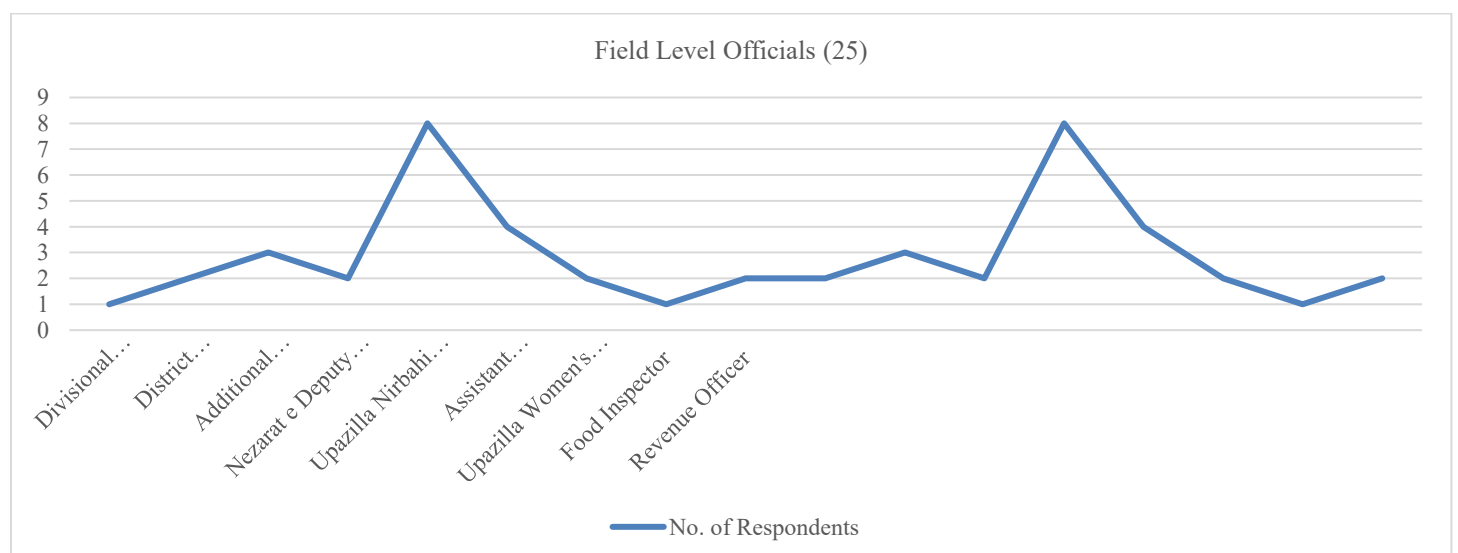
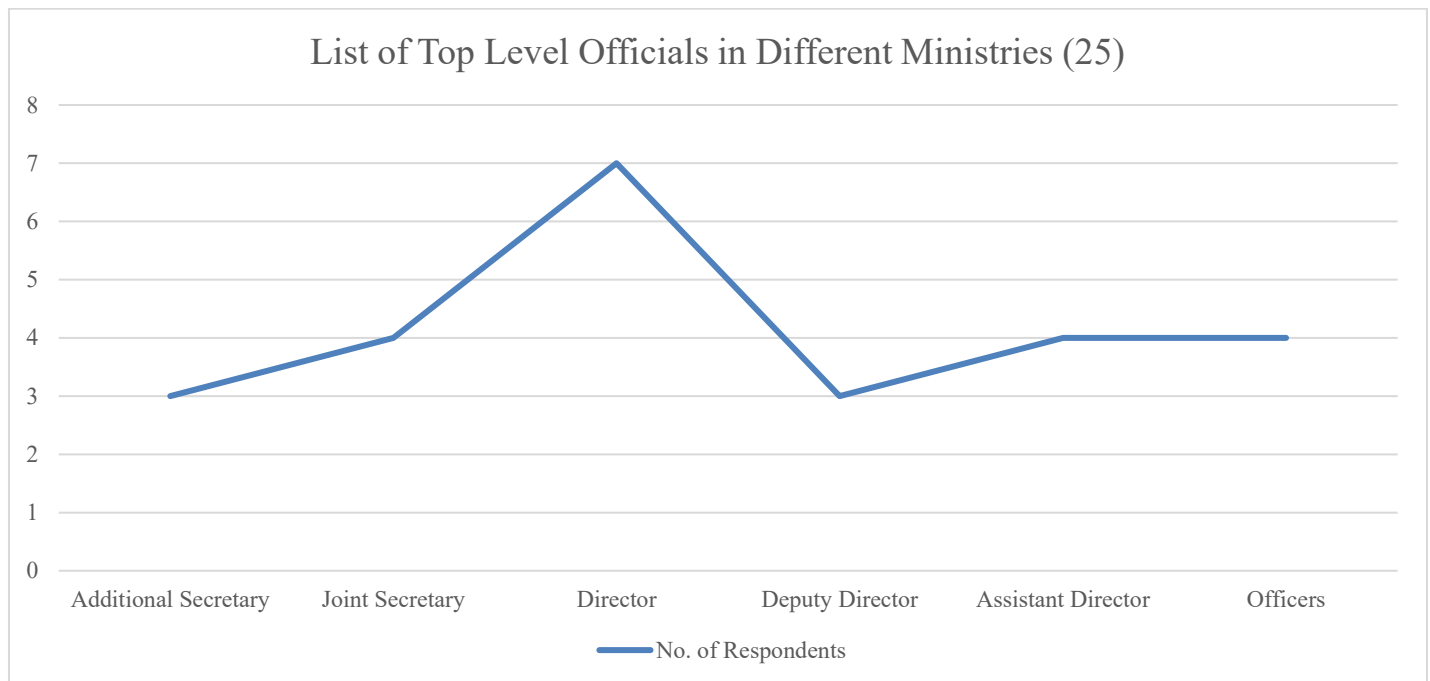


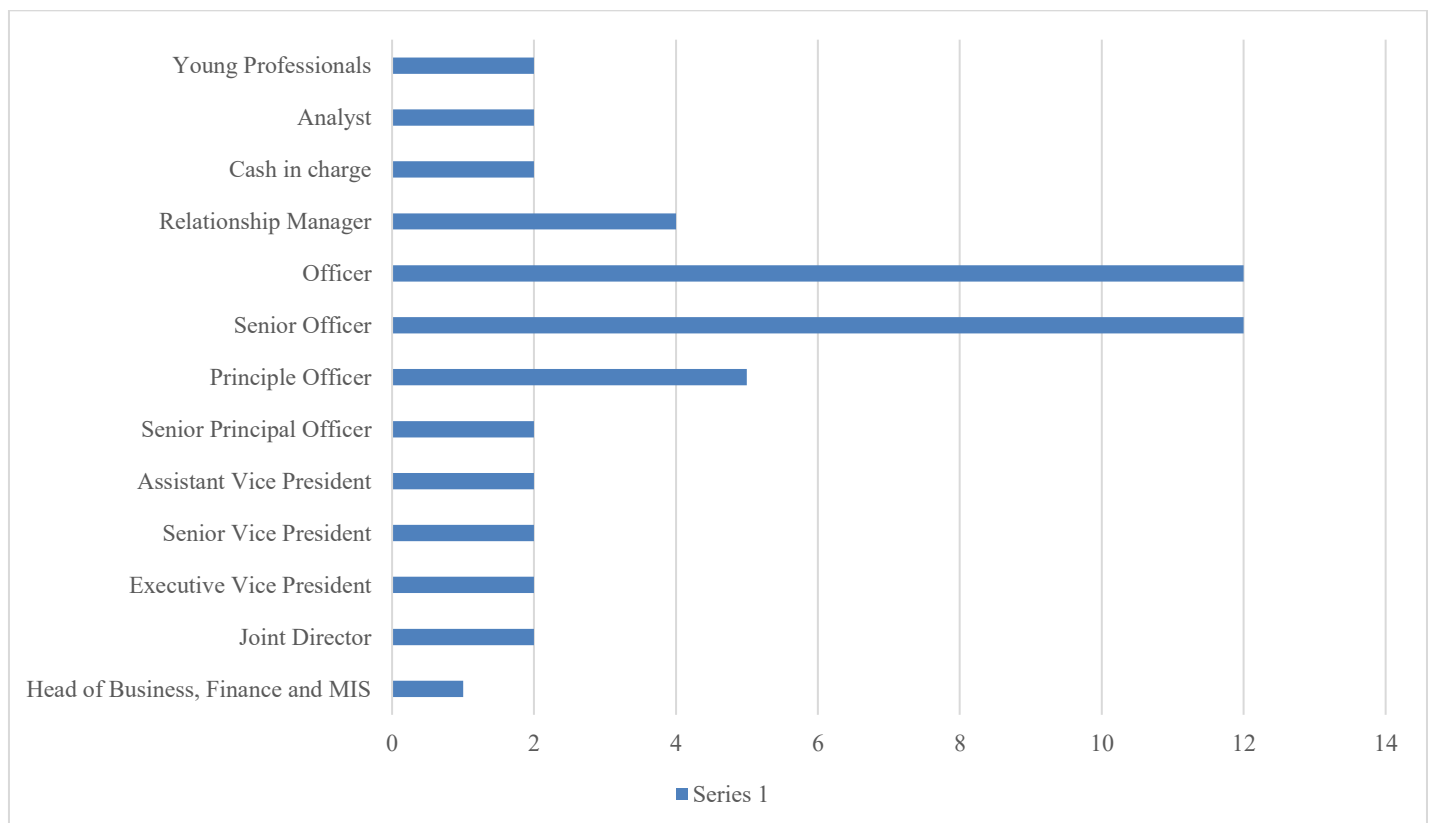
Table 01: List of Respondents from field level officers (Not according to the hierarchy of the post)

Besides these, some Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Directors, officers from different public, statutory, and autonomous institutions were also chosen.



**Table 02: List of Respondents from different ministries, autonomous institutions**

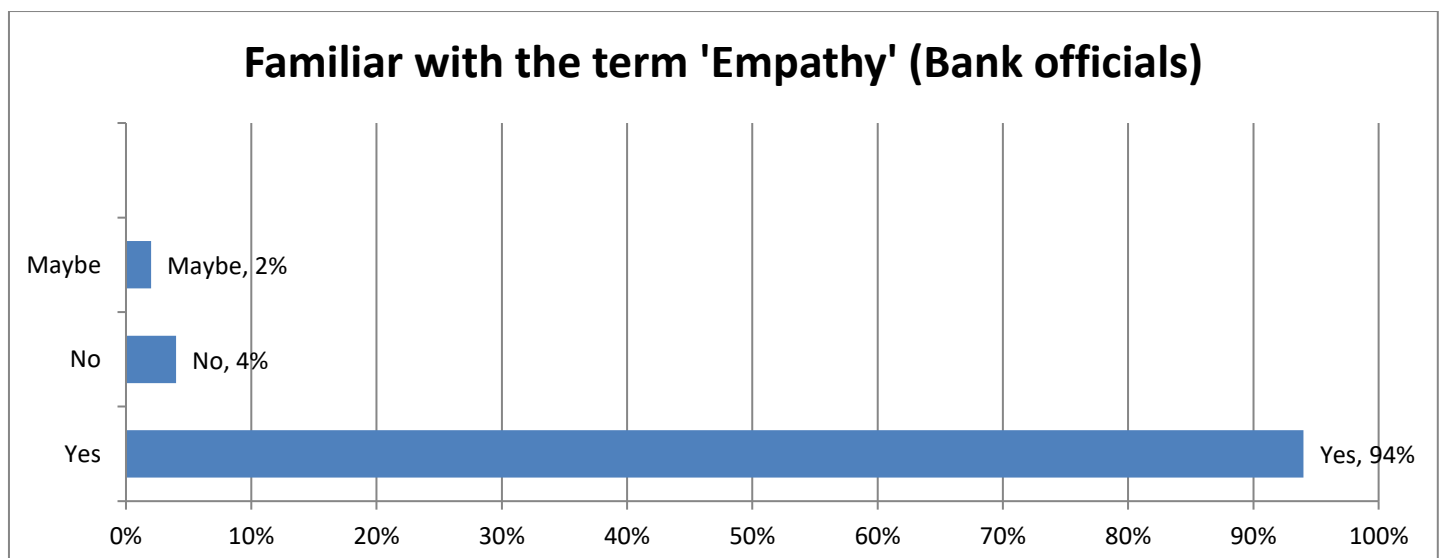
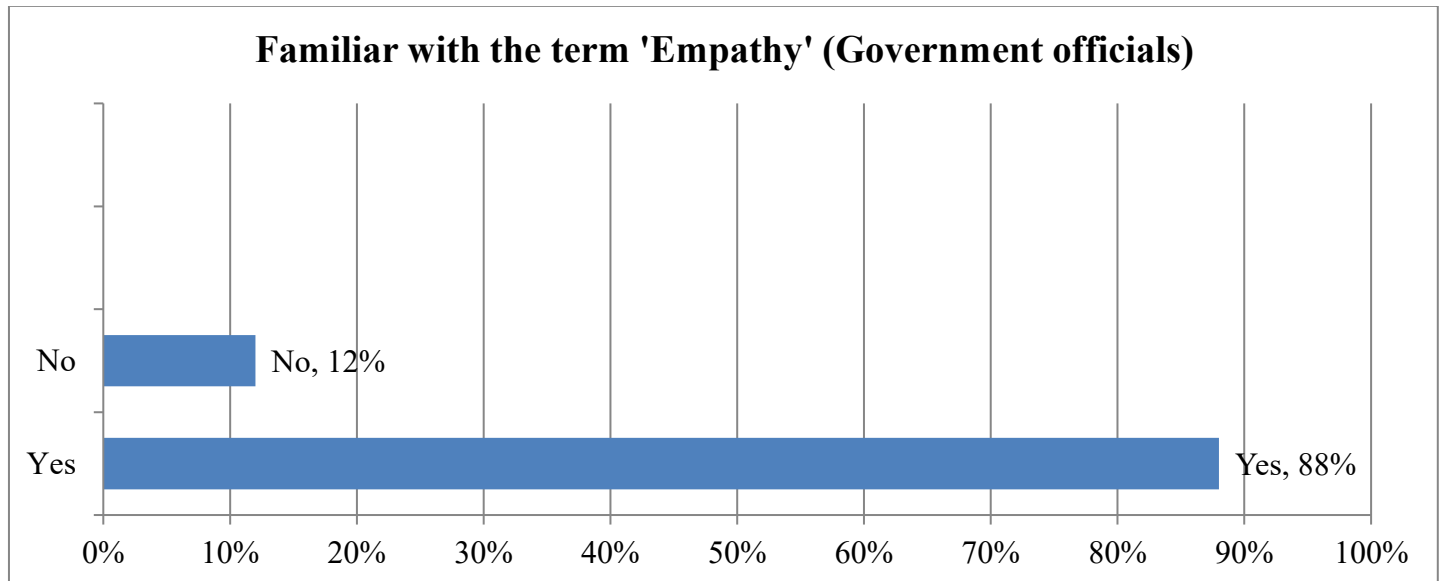
Different private banks and officers were randomly chosen for this survey. The list of bank officers is mentioned below:



**Table:03: List of posts of private bank officials (Not according to hierarchy)**

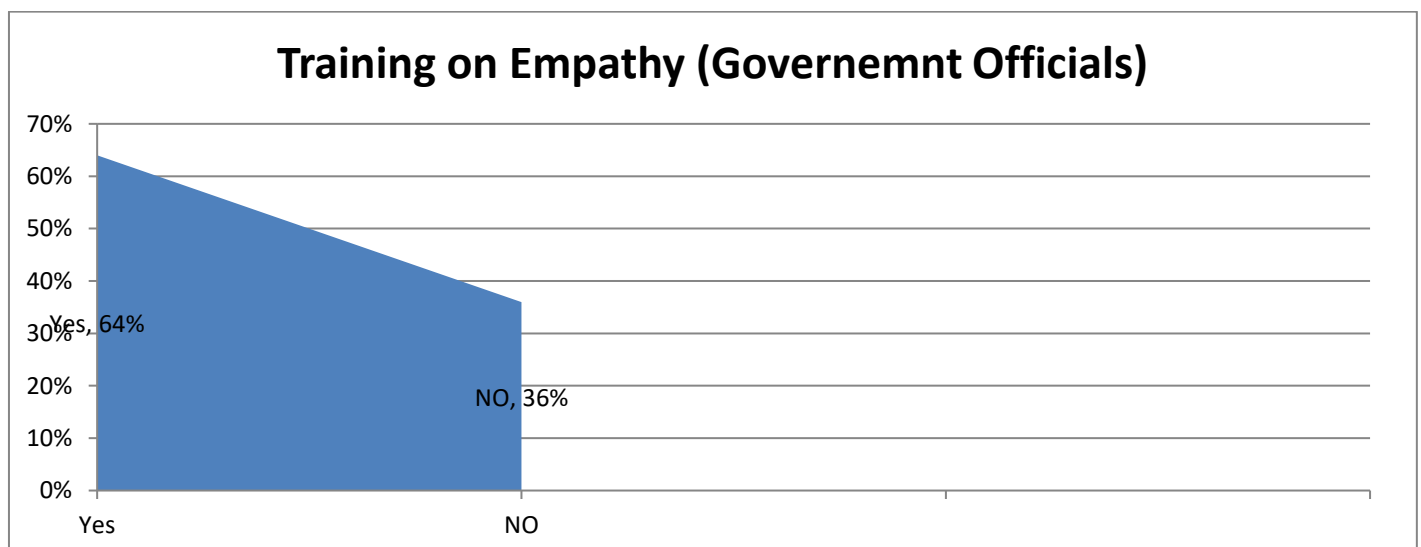
Now, if we see the analysis part, the number of officers (here, officers means both government and bank officers) are familiar with the term 'Empathy'. The graph shows the details:

### Familiar with the term Empathy:

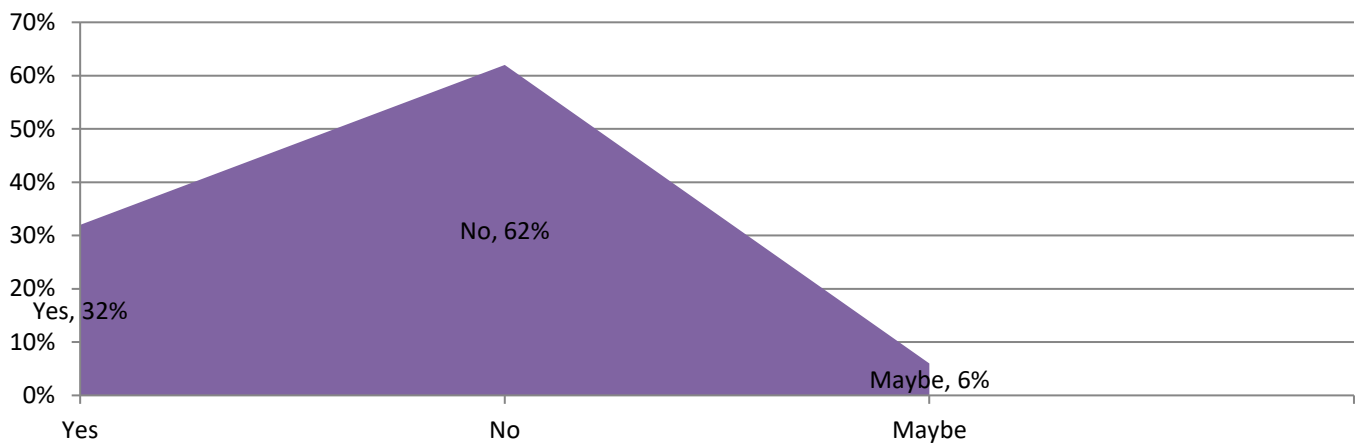


Here, we have found that 88% government officials and 94% of private bankers have an idea about empathy. In this challenging era, empathy is important to ensure public service delivery and client satisfaction.

### Training on Empathy:



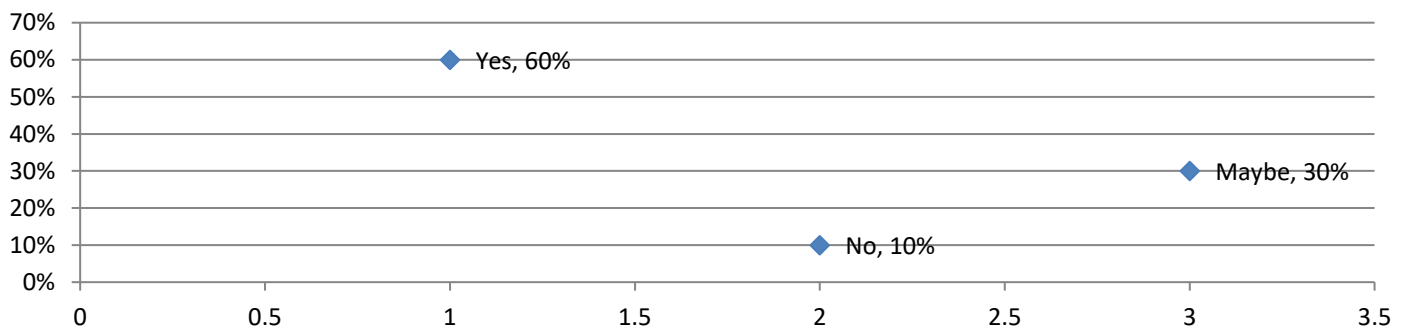
### Training on Empathy(Private Bankers)



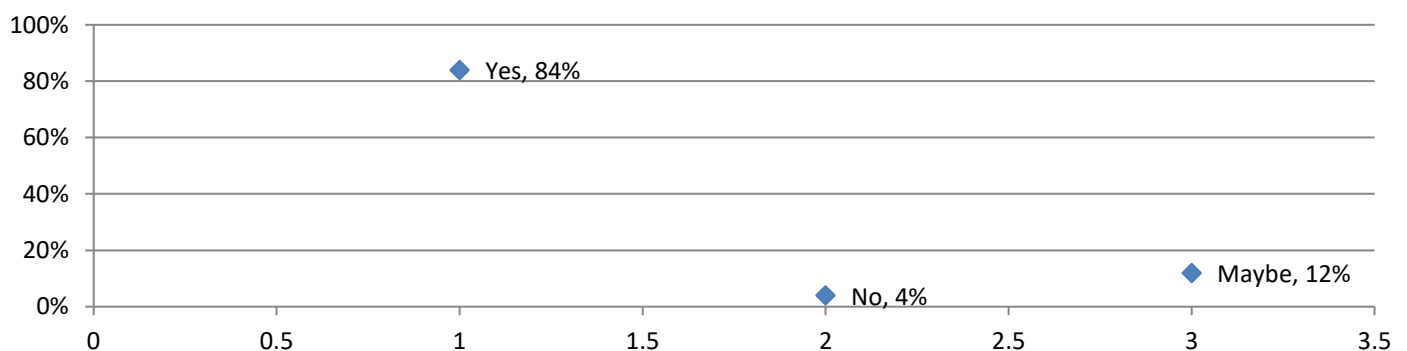
Here we can see that a good number of government officials have an idea about empathy training, and they were trained under an empathy training program. In the private bank sector, 62% officers don't receive any training on empathy, whereas in the government sector, the number is 36% only.

### Importance of Empathy in Public Service Delivery:

#### Importance of Empathy(Government Officials)



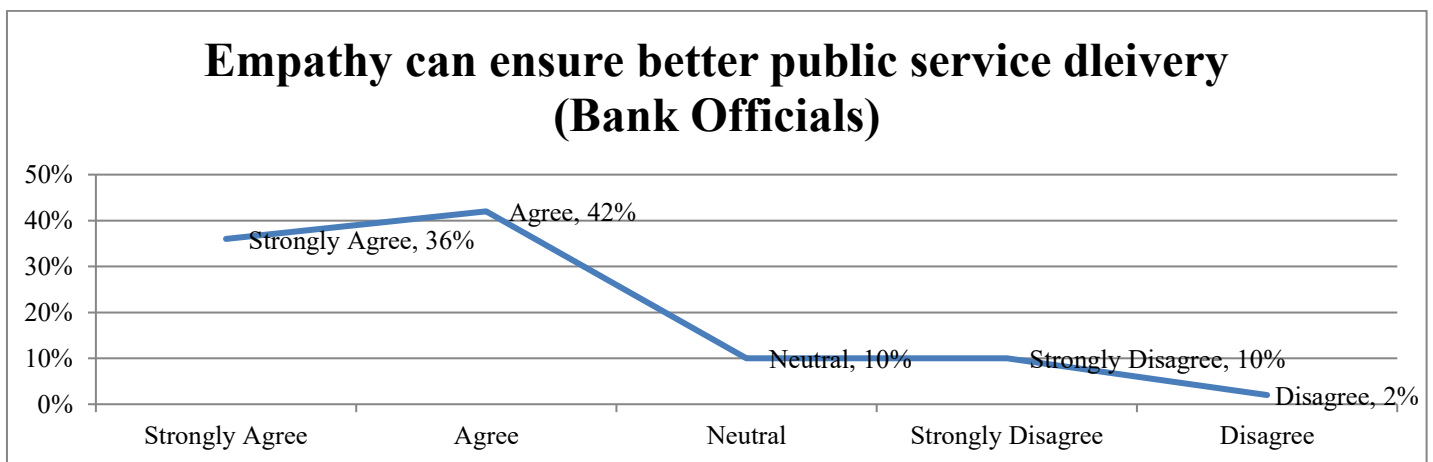
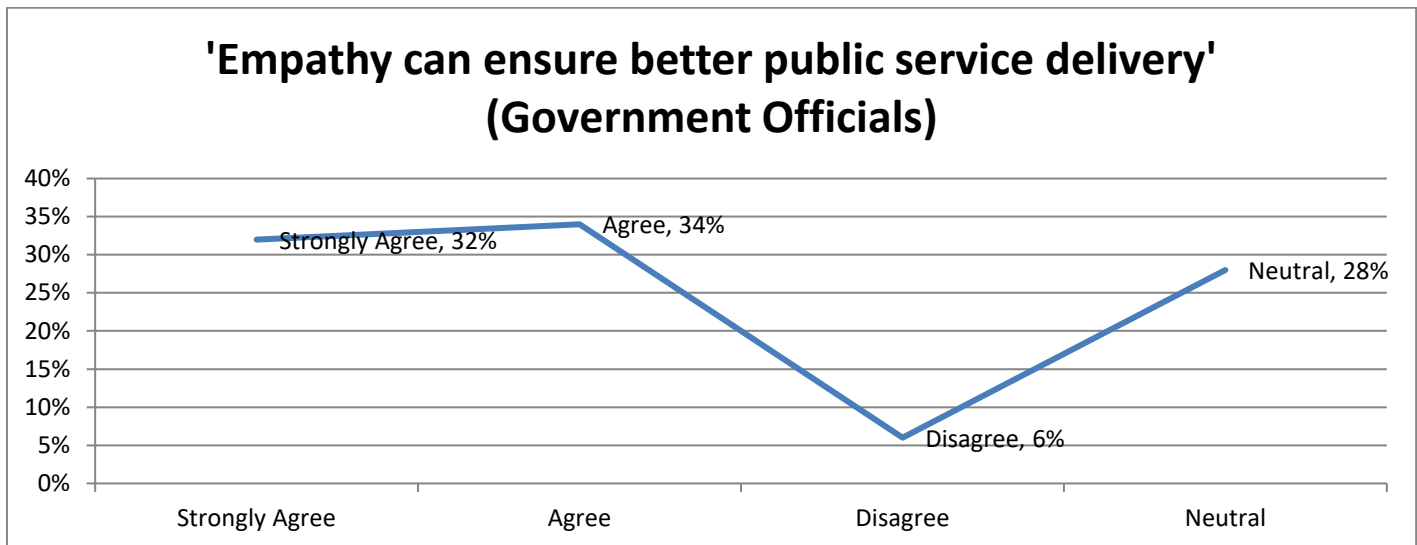
#### Importance of Empathy(Bank Officials)



In the research, we have found that 60% public officials and 84% private bankers think that empathy is important in the public service delivery system, while 30% and 12% are not sure about the importance of empathy in public service delivery, respectively. Which shows the lack of awareness among the officials? They can't realise the importance of empathy in the public service delivery system. Previously mentioned that a good number of people don't receive any empathy training in both sectors, which is the reason for this lack of awareness.

## 'Empathy can ensure better public service delivery to the people/clients':

In this statement, the researcher tries to find out the agreement or disagreement of the respondents.



If we see the draft, we can see that, with the statement, 32% government and 36% private bank officials strongly agree, and 34% and 42% agree, while 6% and 2% showed their disagreement, respectively. But interestingly, we can see that 10% bank officials were

Strongly disagree with the statement, whereas no government officials showed their disagreement with this statement. This is something surprising. As the 'parenting authority', the government officials are trying to come out of a rigid tendency. Though I said this does not present the whole scenario, this is something noticeable. On the other hand, the private bank officials are shifting towards a 'rigid mentality'? If so, then it is alarming, especially for the banking sector. As we all know, the clients are the main source of any bank if they want to establish one of the best. So here it is also showing that the training on empathy is important, and the authority should ensure the best empathy training for the employees of their bank.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Empathy is not merely an individual trait but a systemic quality shaped by institutional design, organisational incentives, and accountability mechanisms. The comparative perspective shows that private service providers in Bangladesh generally demonstrate higher levels of perceived empathy due to stronger client orientation, performance-based incentives, and competitive pressure. In contrast, public sector service delivery, while more extensive in reach and equity-oriented, often faces structural constraints such as bureaucratic rigidity, limited performance monitoring, and weak feedback loops, which reduce consistent empathetic engagement with citizens. The findings suggest that improving empathy in public service delivery requires institutional reforms rather than isolated training interventions. First, public administration reforms should integrate *citizen-centric*

*service standards* that explicitly include empathy indicators in performance evaluation systems. Second, digital governance platforms such as e-service portals should be strengthened to reduce bureaucratic delays while simultaneously incorporating feedback mechanisms that capture citizen satisfaction and emotional experience, not only service efficiency. Third, decentralisation of service authority at the local government level in Bangladesh can enhance responsiveness by bringing decision-making closer to citizens' lived realities. Finally, recruitment and promotion policies in the civil service should incorporate behavioural competencies such as communication skills, emotional intelligence, and service orientation alongside traditional merit criteria. The Bangladesh government has taken this system very seriously and eagerly wants to introduce it at all levels of the country, especially at the local level or field level administration. According to the empathy evaluation report, the main objectives are: to fulfil the promise of digital Bangladesh, to improve citizens' experience in the public service delivery system, to reduce time, cost and visit (TCV) in public service delivery, to shift from a governing to an entrepreneurial value in the public sector. In 2005, the initiative was taken under the UNDP program, and the success of this training program totally depends on the inclination of the public officials. According to the evaluation report, 82.80% respondents' minds were changed after getting training. But this research has found that 38% have no idea about the empathy training initiatives conducted by A2I under the Bangladesh government. Under the training program, from the evaluation report, we can see 42.70% respondents agreed, and 53.50% strongly agreed about the importance of empathy, and in this research, we also found that 60% government officials are realising the importance of empathy. After the training, 54.10% and 39.50% said they strongly agree and agree, respectively, that they can realise the sufferings of the citizens in terms of public service delivery. 52.20% and 42% strongly agree and agree that their perception has changed and developed deep empathy for citizens. And this research also found 32% and 34% strong agreement and agreement regarding the statement that 'empathy can ensure the best public service to the public'. But what about the banking sector? In the literature review section, it was mentioned that available scholarly articles are not found, which makes it difficult to find or measure the initiatives of the national and international banks in Bangladesh. As we see, 62% private bank employees have no training on empathy. Some scholars tried to measure empathy with other indicators in their research, where we see the empathy rate is very low, which is not satisfactory in the banking sector, especially because the public is their main client to whom they have to deal with every moment, and if they cannot achieve the public's satisfaction, it will not be good for their development in this competitive era. In the research, *Quality of Customer Service in Banking Sector of Bangladesh: An Explorative Study* by Tasneema Afrin, we can see that the empathy measurement is not 'significant' where she researched five established banks of Bangladesh. In this research, in the opinion section, some bankers wrote about their opinion regarding the importance of empathy, and most of them mentioned that banks should ensure empathy training for them, and some respondents specifically mentioned some departments like the 'service department'. Interestingly, one comment draws the fact that 'empathy is not important only for client satisfaction but also for the employees among themselves to feel the crisis moment of one another, including the management'! This is very significant, and it is high time to think about this. That is not only for client satisfaction, but also for the employees and management authorities. It is also important for the top and middle management authorities to hear the views of the other employees, especially for the juniors or entry-level officers. This can be implemented for the government officials so that they should be trained not only for public satisfaction but also for their development to be empathetic towards their colleagues. The professional jealousy or corruption can be minimised by introducing personal counselling and empathy training at all stages of employees, both in government and banks, to develop personal qualities towards others and citizens. Aligning public service logic with user-oriented governance—similar to private sector service delivery models—can enhance responsiveness without compromising equity or legality (Osborne et al., 2013). Overall, enhancing empathy in service delivery is essential for building trust, legitimacy, and citizen satisfaction in Bangladesh's governance system. A shift from rule-based administration to citizen-centred governance requires sustained institutional commitment, policy innovation, and continuous empirical assessment.

## REFERENCES

1. Afrin, T. (2012). Quality of customer service in the banking sector of Bangladesh: An explorative study. *East West Journal of Business and Social Studies*, 3(1), 68–94.
2. Access to Information (a2i). (n.d.). a2i – Access to Information Programme. <https://www.a2i.gov.b>
3. Beerel, A. (2009). *Leadership and change management*. SAGE Publications.

4. Boeninger, E. (1991). Governance and development: Issues and constraints. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 5(Suppl. 1), 267–288. [https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/5.suppl\\_1.267](https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/5.suppl_1.267)
5. Barker, R. L. (2003). *The social work dictionary* (5th ed.). NASW Press.
6. Civil Service India. (n.d.). Civil Services | Civil service eligibility | Indian Civil Service exam tips. <https://www.civilserviceindia.com>
7. Douglas, P. H. (1957). *Ethics in government*. Harvard University Press.
8. Duncan, E., & Elliott, G. (2004). Efficiency, customer service and financial performance among Australian financial institutions. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 22(5), 319–342. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02652320410549647>
9. Flynn, N. (1998). Public management changes in Japan and the People's Republic of China. *Public Administration and Policy: An Asia-Pacific Journal*. Hong Kong Public Administration Association and Department of Public and Social Administration, City University of Hong Kong.
10. Guo, X., Duff, A., & Hair, M. (2008). Service quality measurement in the Chinese corporate banking market. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 26(5), 305–327. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02652320810894389>
11. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. (2006, August 1). *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*. Government of Bangladesh.
12. Husain, I. (2011). Civil service reform in Pakistan: Capacity, competence, courage, and compassion. *International Conference on Economic Growth in Pakistan*, Planning Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad, Pakistan, 305–327.
13. Hassan, M. S. (2015). Ensuring effective public service delivery in the field administration of Bangladesh to boost good governance: The perspective of the deputy commissioner's office. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(4). Canadian Centre of Science and Education. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v10n4p92>
14. Halfon, M. S. (1989). *Integrity: A philosophical inquiry*. Temple University Press.
15. Iqbal, M. (2006). Is good governance an approach to civil service reforms? *Pakistan Development Reforms*.
16. Kollingwood, K. (2017). *Why civil servants should become experts in empathy*.
17. Kaplan, A. (1963). *American ethics and public policy*. Oxford University Press.
18. Kikuchi, M. (2018). Bringing the civil servant back into public service: motivation and performance in the Japanese public sector. Paper presented at the EROPA Conference on Public Administration in Managing Global Megatrends, Bali, Indonesia.
19. Khan, M. M. (2011). *Local government in Bangladesh: Some contemporary issues and practices*. A. H. Development Publishing House.
20. Karim, R. A., & Chowdhury, T. (2014). Customer satisfaction with service quality in the private commercial banking sector in Bangladesh. *British Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2(2), 1–11.
21. Landell-Mills, P., & Serageldin, I. (1992). Governance and the external factor. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 5(Suppl\_1), 303–320. [https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/5.suppl\\_1.303](https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/5.suppl_1.303)
22. Leftwich, A. (1993). Governance, democracy, and development in the Third World. *Third World Quarterly*.
23. Lewis, B. R., & Mitchell, V. W. (1990). Defining and measuring the quality of customer service. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 8(6), 11–17.
24. London School of Economics and Political Science. (n.d.). London School of Economics and Political Science. <https://www.lse.ac.uk>
25. Muhit, A. M. A. (1981). *Thoughts on development administration*. Dhaka, Bangladesh.
26. Martin, D. C. (1992). The cultural dimension of governance. *World Bank Economic Review*, Supplement.
27. Mussagulova, A. (2024). How is empathy used in public service? A systematic literature review. *Public Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2024.2438891>
28. Nigro, F. A. (1989). *Modern public administration*. HarperCollins Publishers.
29. Naeem, H., & Saif, I. (2009). Service quality and its impact on customer satisfaction: An empirical evidence from the Pakistani banking sector. *The International Business & Economics Research Journal*, 8(12), 85–99. <https://doi.org/10.19030/iber.v8i12.3201>

30. Ozgediz, S. (1983). Managing the public service in developing countries: Issues and prospects. World Bank.
31. Osborne, D. (1993). Action for better government: A role for donors. IDS Bulletin, 24(1), 67–73. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.1993.mp24001008.x>
32. Osborne, D. (1993a). Good governance initiatives in the global context. Hong Kong Public Administration, 2(1), 107–116.
33. Osborne, S. P., Radnor, Z., & Nasi, G. (2013). A new theory for public service management? Toward a (public) service-dominant approach. American Review of Public Administration, 43(2), 135–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074012466935>
34. Perry, J. L. (1996). Measuring public service motivation: An assessment of construct reliability and validity. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 6(1), 5–22.
35. Perry, J. L. (1997). Antecedents of public service motivation. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 7(2), 181–197. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a024345>
36. Rogers, P. (2014). Theory of change. In Methodological briefs: Impact evaluation (No. 2). UNICEF Office of Research.
37. Spathis, C., Petridou, E., & Glaveli, N. (2004). Managing service quality in banks: Customers' gender effects. Managing Service Quality, 14(1), 90–102. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09604520410513695>
38. Zafarullah, H., & Khan, M. M. (2005). The bureaucratic ascendancy: Public administration in Bangladesh—the first three decades. South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd.