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Engaging Social Media for Promoting Transparency in Bangladeshi Climate Change Projects: A Case Study of Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT)

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to identify the involvement of social media for accelerating the issue of transparency in Bangladeshi climate change projects. The study seeks to investigate the interaction of social media in civic engagement and citizen opinion for visualizing more transparent ways of implementing climate change projects authorized by Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) which has already executed 161 projects across the country. Using data from conducting surveys of local populations in eight divisional areas, this study finds a positive relationship between social media exploration in climate change projects and transparency promotion in the country. The interaction of social media, frequency of use of the media, formations of citizen opinion and convenient way of giving feedback in climate change projects have also discussed in the study to promote transparency.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Civic Engagement, Climate Change, Projects and Transparency

I. INTRODUCTION

Last decade was considered the milestone of global development such as gradual economic progress, technological development, microcredit, gender and good governance, but climate change is the central topic in present decade [1]. Surprisingly, Bangladesh is the new hotspot of climatic vulnerable part in the global map. It is the most natural hazard prone area in the Ganges- Brahmaputra delta [2].

Global warming is the concern issue to the world scientist's community. The 21st century had already made a record on global warming projection. It has already exceeded the past 100 years temperature's record [3]. It did not happen automatically. The burning of coal, oil, gas and the cutting of forest for last 100 years are the ways to meet the human needs. These have already threatened the global ecosystem [4].

Agriculture is the driving force of economy and development in Bangladesh. About 84% of almost 145 million populations of Bangladesh are directly or indirectly involved with agricultural activities [5]. Bangladesh is one of the environmental risks prone country in the world [6]. Flood is one of the natural disasters that affect various development sectors of the country. As we know, South Asia has regarded as the highest flood vulnerable area in the world [7]. Rising sea level is the concern issue due to Climate Change. Bangladesh has 711 kilometer long coastal zone consist of 19 districts [8]. As a result, Bangladesh is concerned to address the climate vulnerability and natural disasters. It is one of the pioneering countries to set necessary bodies for responding Climate Change [9].

Established in 2010, the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT), which has already executed 161 projects across the country, mostly deals climate change projects across the country. Recently, developing countries are struggling to secure funds on climate change projects. Transparency is one of the vital issues to monitor the outcomes of climate financing [10]. There is no unique definition of transparency in civic lexicon, but some are widely used by international organizations emphasizing on ensuring public access to information. Such as, the World Trade Organization (WTO) describes that ensuring "transparency" in international commercial treaties involve three main requirements: (i) to make information on relevant laws, regulations and other policies publicly available; (ii) to notify interested parties of relevant laws, regulations and changes to them; and (iii) to ensure that laws and regulations are administered in a uniform, impartial and responsible manner [11].

Furthermore, right to information empowers the public about the activities that are going on around their surroundings. Questions are now being raised from stakeholders and financing sources about project costs and outcomes that ultimately indicate transparency of climate projects which have already implemented by BCCT.

The scientists had noticed first the climate change issues and they started debates, and policy makers as well focused the issue in late 1980's. Then, the media, such as Journalists, editors, reporters, producers and publishers, brought this climate topic to the public arena [12]. New technologies are good enough to address the new challenges especially where people are involved massively. German scholar Ines Mergel has written the benefit of using new and innovative technologies in her glorious work of social media in the public sector. She has outlined as many as three major functions or purposes of social media: (1) to increase transparency, (2) to support inter-and intra-organizational collaboration, and (3) to enable innovative forms of public participation and engagement [13].

Therefore, this study examines the role of social media interactions in demonstrating transparency in climate change projects implemented by BCCT. The following are the research questions:

- 1.1 Research Questions:-
- a. What perception did the people of Bangladesh believe about the transparency of BCCT approved Climate Change Projects?
- b. How was the social media taking role for promoting transparency in Climate Change Projects?

II. METHOD AND DATA COLLECTION

In this study, we have used content analysis and close ended questionnaire for survey to examine social media interactions for advocating transparency in climate change projects in Bangladesh. We have considered these dual methods for three reasons. First, it was obvious that complex phenomena such as a Climate Change Project implementation in a developing country like Bangladesh and other unethical issues such as briber system for project approval. In this situation, it was easiest to generate quantitative results based on data [14]. The second reason was the involvement of mass-people, and third reason was cheap and easy to do.

A total of 520 questionnaires had been distributed among the sample groups of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Rangpur, Barisal and Mymensingh equally amounting 65 copies. We have received 500 duly filled up survey forms from Dhaka (64), Chittagong (61), Khulna (62), Rajshahi (63), Sylhet (60), Rangpur (64), Barisal (63) and Mymensingh (63) copies, and analyzed those copies to perceive whether the output of the survey supports the research questions and follows the theoretical framework or not.

A. Literature Review:-

Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable nations to global climate change. The UN-led initiatives, more-specifically international cooperation and technological support, are essential to face the challenge of world-wide climate change. To address this emerging issue, Bangladesh initiated a special unit called BCCT under the Ministry of Forestry and Environment. Initially it was known as Climate Change Unit (CCU). The unit is integrating national and international funds to implement climate change projects. Bangladesh is the only country who has declared the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP)-2009. Now, funds are coming from Government Revenue and the size of the fund is about 3200 crore BDT (approximately USD\$ 2.2 billion). According to the United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen in 2009, the developed world is committed to a goal of \$ 100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of poor countries on the front lines of climate change" [15]. Therefore, funds are not a problem to implement innovative or effective climate change projects. The question is about the transparency of implemented projects, and how to increase people's participation and their feedbacks.

BCCT has implemented climate change projects with its stakeholders through different ministries. Being a developing nation, Bangladesh has limitations to utilize domestic or international funds effectively. Environmental economic unit of Gothenburg University (2009) has clearly explained the weakness of Bangladesh government, specifically the role of BCCT as a government unit under Ministry of Forest and Environment. It has highlighted the weakness of the administration and as well as inadequate governance systems that bring risks and disadvantages in climate change projects. It is not only the government duty to design and step forward to address the global warming. Non-government organizations, private groups and civil societies should come together to find out smooth running of climate projects that keep transparency in a satisfactory level.

Scholars have emphasized on an effective collaboration and partnership between the government agencies and non-profit organizations to establish strong management teams for implementing climate change projects [16]. It is good to include civil society organizations and public and private sectors to strengthen climate finance responsibility and project transparency. Some scholars focused on informative, modern and updated database to establish an effective management and coordination body to ensure transparency in climate change projects. It is described as "better information supports better decision-making, both by recipient and funders" [17]. Researchers like Jane, Randy & Stephanie investigated effective policies or institutional pre-conditions that

facilitate transparent project phase out [10]. Only renewable or clean energy based projects are not enough to address climate change issues.

Society first ever noticed the climate change issues through media in late 1980s and 90s. Climate change issues are not a local or regional problem. Even, its outcome affects all societies around the world [18]. Western media has always been playing a role of pioneers to address new issues and put them on broadcasting contents. Local and regional media have come forward about climate change content after the Kyoto protocol. Simon Mainwaring scaled social media as the best people communicators to spread the ideas among the communities [19]. Moreover, he believed that social media enables beneficiaries to raise strong voice in how the project initiatives are taking place. It leads ultimately the overall transparency of the initiatives.

In recent years, we have seen the power of social media, and it is the most interactive communication wave to share boundless of information. Social media is not only a fun and entertain platform. Any topic can be placed here for promotion. This is a common laboratory of analyzing societal and scientific issues together by increasing more ideas and comments from the audience end. VTT Technical Centre of Finland suggested that social media has a potential to transform traditional way of citizen participation [20]. Actually, social media increases the ability of people and organizations to share and access information easily and instantaneously that are vital to transparency [21]. So, social media is vital to aware people, corresponding agenda and reforming new plan that focus on sustainable development with transparent way of implementation.

Bangladesh is not a corruption free country. It is one of the top ranking countries in global corruption index. Transparency in any projects is vital issue in Bangladesh. The government has been trying to take necessary actions for identifying the management and governance risks in climate financing projects. But it is not sufficient to draw attention of enhancing transparency level in any particular projects like climate change. Political influence in project planning is the root cause that creates project risk in Bangladesh [22]. BCCT has no absolute way to ensure a hundred percent transparency in climate projects by managing, coordinating or reforming policy due to the presence of poverty. Social reform is required in Bangladesh where "Ghoosh" (bribe) and "Tadbir" (illegal persuasion) and "Baksheesh" (tip) are common practice in business and transaction [23].

The essence of this part of the study is to provide contextual clarity of transparency in climate change projects and interacting role of social media. Related studies reviewed and checked to find out the spirit of research that have done by renowned expert and researchers. Global organizations and experts talked about social media interaction for people's participation that ultimately run the projects fairly. On the other hand, management, coordination and policy reforms that played a vital role in maintaining transparency in climate change project in Bangladesh. Though BCCT is implementing major climate change projects, it is beneficial for Bangladesh to incorporate transparency issues in BCCT projects. And this is main motto of current researcher to promote transparency in climate change projects rather than overall perspective.

B. Theoretical Framework:-

The researchers were influenced by the Information Systems (IS) success model that was first introduced by William DeLone from American University in Washington, DC and Professor Mclean from Villanova University in 1992. Ten years later, after receiving scholarly evaluation from many contributors, they proposed the upgrade version of IS model in 2003 [24]. They tried to observe the technological interaction to society and what are their impacts. The following graphical visualization of proposed theoretical framework is trying to describe in a wider perspective. (Graph-1)

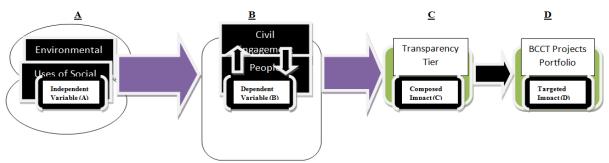


Figure 1Theoritical Framework

A. As an independent variable, it has discovered that downward transparency trend had been found in Climate Change projects without interacting social media, though overall transparency is a matter of experiment. Even, the civil engagement and people participation rates were also very low.

- **B.** Being a dependent variable, Civil Engagement is vital to boost up transparency scenario. Volume of stakeholders' participation purely depends on social media interaction. Climatic Projects aimed social media access, were highly chances of well transparency rates in financial transactions.
- **C.** Interaction of independent and dependent variable composed the promotional issue of the study. It is obviously the transparency status in the whole project life-cycle.
- **D.** The targeted impact highlighted in the framework mentioned as "Project Portfolio". Based on the transparency grade, it is clear to identify the project category whether participated, massively mass people engaged, people merely benefitted or less impactful. It remarked about the Project Completion Report (PCR) or To Be Continued (TBC).

C. A Case Study on One of the Projects under BCCT:-

Case studies always divulge a concrete idea in practical sense. This section illustrates the activities of a project that was implemented under Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT).

Name of the Project: Mitigation of Carbon Emission and Extension of Alternative Energy Usage through dissemination of Biogas Plant and Improved Cook Stove Project

Executing Ministry: Ministry of Science and Technology

Executing Agency: Institute of Fuel Research and Development (IFRD)

Project Activities: The main objective of this project was to reduce the emission of green house gases by changing human behaviors or activities. Under this project 2800 biogas plants and 28000 improved cook stoves were provided in seven districts of Bangladesh. Consequently, emission of carbon-di-oxide will be reduced by 1, 10,000 tons/year. Thus experience of natural disasters such as Sidor, Ayla, Nargis for Bangladesh will be reduced to some extent.

Justification: Approximately 45 million tons/year of biomass energy such as wood, straw, cow dung, tree leaves, paddy husk and jute stick are using in Bangladesh. Major portion of total energy requirement comes from agriculture waste and cow dung. As a result agricultural land is going to deplete the biomaterials and nutrition rich soil ingredients. A country needs 25% of its area as forest to maintain ecological balance but Bangladesh has only 9% of its area as forest. Forest areas decrease continuously which creates imbalance in the nature and environment.

Possibility of women-employment opportunity: Under this project around 500 green jobs were created in which 40% participants were women.

Probable impact on Socio-Economic activity: The field findings on socio-economic indicators such as educational status, land holdings, income from agricultural production and other sources indicated that biogas plants and improved cooking stoves have been installed by well-off farmers. To penetrate into small and marginal farmers and to make biogas technology and improved cooking stoves more affordable, one of the major efforts would be to provide credit and to spread loan period over a longer period of time, thereby reducing the size of each payment. A massive awareness campaign to disseminate the usefulness of the technology will boost up the rural people to impart it in households.

Impact on Environment: Installing BG plants and improved cooking stoves would save burning of biomass (trees, shrubs & harvested crop residues) as fuel for cooking, and prevent release of greenhouse gases. This would create positive environmental impact at the micro level. Offsetting of carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane (CH4) emission from bovine dung, by recycling it through biogas plant and improved cooking stoves would provide substantial gain in terms of abating greenhouse gas. In addition, these biogas plants and improved cooking stoves would become instrumental in promoting ecological agriculture, using enriched organic manure contributing to overall positive environmental impact, promoting empowerment of rural people as well as facilitating people centered, sustainable development.

Sustainability of the project: Sustainability of the project depends on the functioning of the installed Biogas plant and improved cooking stoves which are directly associated with the quality of construction, besides some other variables such as quality of after-sale-services, operation and maintenance mechanisms. Recruited agencies are committed to provide the technical backup services. Average lifetime of biogas plant is minimum thirty years whereas for improve cooking stoves are minimum five years.

Contribution to poverty alleviation/ reduction: Increasing access to energy through dissemination of biogas plants and improved cooking stoves can save a lot of time and empowering the women. Wherever possible, the biogas and improved cooking stoves related services being delivered should allow either a manual drudgery task to be replaced, or provide an improvement in efficiency. This allows an increase in earned income or other quality if life benefits. This also maximizes local benefits from biogas and improved cooking stoves project in terms of education and health.

Monitoring and Auditing: (a) Ministry / Agency: Project progress and activities were monitored and evaluated by the Chairman, members and Directors of BCSIR several times. Deputy Technical Adviser (Deputy Chief) of Ministry of Science & Technology also visited and monitored project activities and gave his valuable suggestions for successful completion of the project.

- (b) Climate Change Unit: Secretary, Director (Monitoring & Development) and Assistant Director (Planning & Development) of Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT), Ministry of Environment & Forest monitored and evaluated this project. They advised necessary action for successful completion of the project within the stipulated period be taken.
- (c) Others: The project was regularly monitored by the project implementation committee (PIC) headed by the Chairman of Bangladesh Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (BCSIR).

The above case study shows that the project has every strong aspects like justification, socio-economical-environmental impact, creation of jobs, sustainability, contribution and monitoring unit of the organization own and concerned ministries; but there is a gap of the participation of people in the planning to execution and even monitoring. But in the time of formulation of the project it was possible to provide spaces for the engagement of people to make it more transparent and people participated.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mass people need a space to engage them or contribute to the climate change projects particularly selected projects within their jurisdiction. Social media are very quick these days to reach the mass populations for enhancing results- oriented financial processes. Reports on BCCT projects are not readily found in reports or website. Media reports interrogate the credibility of projects and public trust. Political involvement, civil society attachment and social pattern of the country are special areas that require attention in understanding BCCT projects in transparency view point.

This study reveals that transparency level would have been higher if it was possible to engage the people from the sectors of services, students and business and whose age ranges from 18 to 46 years old through social media like Facebook, YouTube, WeChat, LinkedIn, Skype in the implementing process. Almost half of the respondents of this study think that Government initiatives are not enough to address the climate change; but if social media were involved in the projects implementing process, the scenario would be changed due to the direct participations of the respondents. The study proves that the largest part of the respondents believes that social media are able to promote transparency if incorporated in the project life-cycle. But it is also evident that there was no difference between the male and female participants' view in engaging social media in transparency mechanisms.

This study also depicts that the most successful social media may be Facebook in transparency process, and then the preferable media instruments come Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram and WeChat in this order. It is also evident that the more the educational qualifications, the higher the rate of using social media. Half of the respondents did not get any offer to share the information related to the Bangladesh Climate Change Projects. And almost nine of the tenth portions of the respondents believe that people's participation through social media can ensure the transparent transactions in climate change projects.

Moreover, the most important significance of this study is the correlation between social media's ability to engage people and people's participation encourages transparency in Climate Change Projects. The unique correlation coefficient shows there is a positive correlation between social media's ability to engage people in Climate Change Projects and people's participation in Climate Change Projects. This positive correlation coefficient (.551) indicates that there is a statistically significant (p<.001) linear relationship between these two variables such that the more the social media enable people to engage in clearing issue including climate change, the more the people will be encouraged to transparency.

The case study, furthermore, mentioned above proves that projects activities, justification, different socio-economic-environmental impacts, sustainability – all can be the sheer loss; if the transparency is lost in the process. In the digital era earnestly demands the proper involvement of social media in the project formulation to execution process; because all agendas are thrived when they demand to be successful. The project of IFRD (Institute of Fuel Research and Development), a sister concern of BCSIR (Bangladesh Council of Scientific & Industrial Research) is an example of the absence of social media.

The objectives of the study are to only be fulfilled when social media affects and increases the people's participations for promoting transparency through the social media; and those are almost overall examined and stands proved. Engagement of people in Bangladeshi Climate Change Projects through social media promotes transparency which has been showcased in the theoretical framework.

Five hundred sets of questionnaires (each contains 27 questions), have provided different views on the role of Social Media for Promoting Transparency in Bangladesh Climate Change Projects: A Study of Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT). The survey reveals the following demographic information:

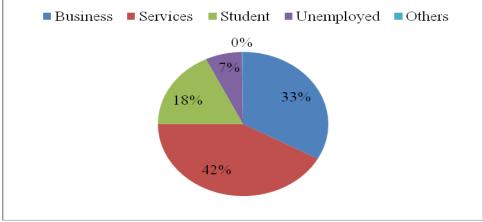


Figure 2 Professions of the Participants

The figure (no-1) professions affect personal perceptions and belief, and accordingly on the decisions they take. The chart (no. 1) reveals that most of the respondents (42%) were service holders. It also shows that the second largest portion of respondents were business people (33%) whereas the third largest were the students (18%).

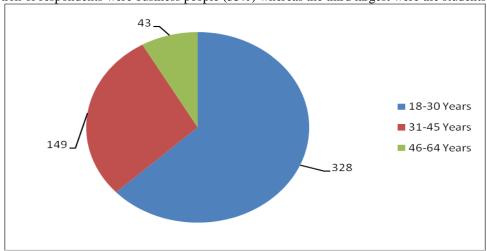


Figure 3 age of the Participants

The figure (no. 2) visualizes that among the respondents (328) were between 18-30 years old and the 31-45 years old group constitutes the second biggest (149). The lowest group was 46-64 years old.

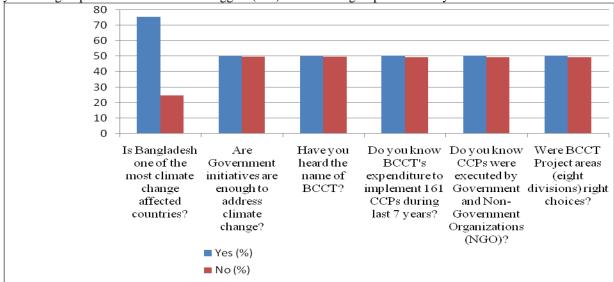


Figure 4 General Climate Change Projects Concern to the People

The figure (no.3) shows that three-fourth of the participants (75.4%) are aware of the climate change effect on Bangladesh whereas almost half of the participants (50.2%, 50.6%, 50.6% respectively) know the name, the cost and executive entities of Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT). According to them, the areas of project implementation are the right choices as well as Government initiatives are enough to address climate change to 50.2% respondents. That means that about half of the respondents do not believe or opine that Government efforts are not enough to address the issue up to the mark; let alone the transparency.

			Do you believe that social media enable you to engage in clearing any issue even Climate Change Projects?		
			yes	no	Total
What is your Gender?	male	Count	296	63	359
		% within What is your Gender?	82.5%	17.5%	100.0%
	female	Count	119	22	141
		% within What is your Gender?	84.4%	15.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	415	85	500
		% within What is your Gender?	83.0%	17.0%	100.0%

Table 1 Cross tabulation on Gender and social media's ability to engage in Clearing any issue even Climate Change Projects

The above table (no.1) shows that 82.5% of males and 84.4% of females believe that social media are able to engage in transparency mechanisms, even in climate change projects. In a whole, among 500 respondents, 415 (83.0%) believe that social media are the weapons to engage people to promote any issue including Climate Change. It reveals that 17.5% of males and 15.6% of females do not believe the social media's ability to engage in upholding transparency in the project. However, it is the question whether this apparent difference is statistically significant or not.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.272ª	1	.602

Table 2 Chi-Square Tests

The mentioned table (no.2) shows the value of p > .05 denotes that the difference between male and female in their beliefs that the ability of social media to engage people in clearing any issue even climate change projects is not statistically significant.

		What is your educational status?				
		Passed up to	HCC	Condon	Graduate and	Tr. 4 - 1
		class five	HSC passed	Graduate	above	Total
Which social media are	Facebook	1	30	141	131	303
you mostly prefer to use?	Twitter	0	4	31	29	64
	Instagram	0	1	12	4	17
	We Chat	0	2	3	10	15
	Whatsapp	0	4	62	35	101
Total		1	41	249	209	500

Table 3 Cross tabulation on Social Media Preference and Participants' Educational Status

The table (no. 3) shows that among the social media, Facebook is preferable media instrument to 303 respondents, whereas the second preferable social instrument to respondents is Whatsapp. The next preferable social media are Twitter, Instagram and WeChat.

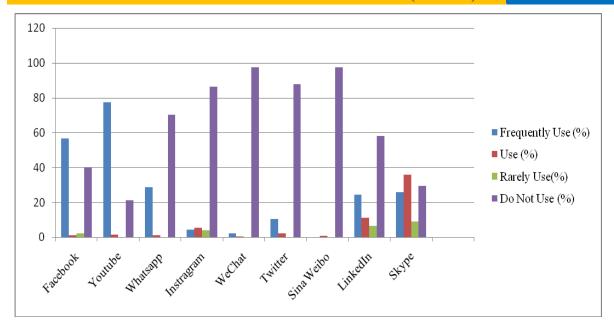


Figure 5 Using Social Media Tendency among the Respondents

The figure (no. 4) depicts the tendency of using Facebook and YouTube frequently among the respondents are higher whereas the tendency of using Whatsapp, WeChat, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Sina Weibo is significantly very low. Moderate users are found in case of LinkedIn and Skype is the only social media which have mostly been used by respondents of different categories. It is evident that social media like Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and Skype are used in Bangladesh.

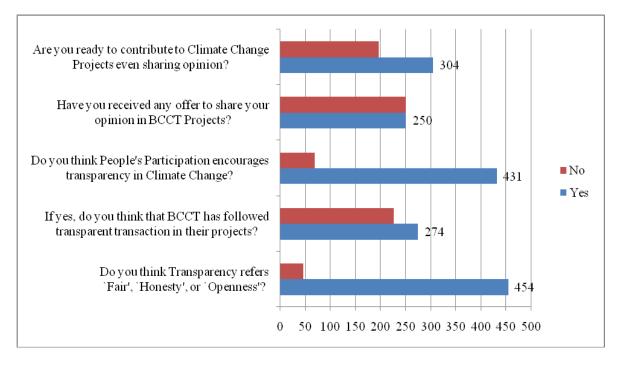


Figure 6 People's opinions about Transparency on Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) Project

This figure (no. 5) shows most of the respondents (454 or 90.8%) think that transparency means fair, honesty or openness, and more than half of the respondents (274 or 54.8%) think that BCCT has followed transparent transactions in the projects. Half of the respondents (250 or 50%) have received opportunities to share their opinions on BCCT's Projects, and about five-third of the total respondents (304 or 60.8%) are ready to contribute to Climate Change Projects even sharing their opinions. Almost ninth-tenth of the total respondents (431 or 86.2%) thought that people's participation encourages transparency in climate change.

		Do you believe that social media enable you to engage in clearing any issue even Climate Change Projects?	Do you think People's Participation encourages transparency in Climate Change?
Do you believe that social		1	027
media enable you to engage	Sig. (2-tailed)		.551
in clearing any issue even Climate Change Projects?	N	500	500
Do you think People's	Pearson Correlation	027	1
Participation encourages	Sig. (2-tailed)	.551	
transparency in Climate Change?	N	500	500

Table 4 : Correlations between social media's ability to engage people and People's participation encourages transparency in Climate Change Projects

The above output table (no-4) gives us a correlation matrix for the two questions requested in the above dialogue box. It is noted that despite there being four cells in the above matrix, there are only one correlation coefficients of interest: the correlation between social media's ability to engage people and people's participation encourages transparency in Climate Change Projects. The reason only one of the four correlations are of interest because the diagonal consists of each variable with itself, always resulting in a value of 1.00 and the values on each side of the diagonal replicate the values on the opposite side of the diagonal. The unique correlation coefficient shows there is a positive correlation between social media's ability to engage people in Climate Change Projects and people's participation in Climate Change Projects. This positive correlation coefficient (.551) indicates that there is a statistically significant (p<.001) linear relationship between these two variables such that the more the social media enable people to engage in clearing issue including climate change, the more the people will be encouraged to transparency. It is also observed that the negative correlation coefficient (-.027) also indicates a negative association between the two variables, although this correlation is fairly weak.

IV. CONCLUSION

This critical narration of BCCT is not enough to finalize transparency level of climate change projects. Being one of the vulnerable states to climatic impacts, Bangladesh has special responsibility to re-design BCCT's structure for ensuring transparent and optimum return oriented organization that can be part of apex icon for other developing countries. In order to avoid several questions from UNFCC and other donor agencies even the domestic fundings, BCCT needs to work on capacity building, especially monitoring and evaluation on implemented climate change projects. Consequently, the country needs to adapt new policy by taking enormous support from related international organization like Transparency International (TI), the World Bank and UNFCC. Our study shows that Bangladesh should consider fair and modern BCCT where people participation through social media like Facebook, YouTube, Whatsapp, and Skype will be a key role to ensure transparent activities throughout the year. The aim of projects implemented by BCCT should follow the realities of the proliferation of digital era rather than political interaction in the decision making process. People participation will increase the transparency level of climate change projects. Additionally, Bangladeshi people have a real experience of climate change affects. BBC Media Action research conducted a baseline survey "Climate Asia" in 2012 and found key changes in how people in Bangladesh are coping and responding to extreme weather and other environmental issues they face, including notable changes people are making to their livelihoods and lifestyles and the impact of climatic effect (http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/climateasiadataportal). Finally, BCCT should shows highest transparency level in their projects so that more climate finance flows throughout the country. Otherwise, it would be a cause to pay higher price as Bangladesh known climate vulnerable nations to the globe. And social media can play a vital role in engaging people for promoting transparency in the said project panorama, if integrated.

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