

**Extended Abstract**  
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**The Contribution of Weligepola Pradeshiya Sabha to the Development of Regional Common  
Facilities.**

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1. Abstract

Local government is defined as the administration of a particular county or district, with representatives elected by those who live there. The purpose of a local government is to manage the welfare needs of the inhabitants of a particular locality under the jurisdiction of the respective local government body. The legislation of the local government system of Sri Lanka is composed mainly of the Municipal Council Ordinance, the Urban Council Ordinance and the Pradeshiya Sabha Act which have been passed by the national state assembly at the parliament in consideration of the welfare of the entire population of the state. Yet when it comes to practical governance, the conditions laid down in the particular ordinances and acts do not have their impact on the activities concerned. As a result, the development projects and services implemented by the local government bodies are not evenly distributed within the geographical areas concerned. According to the survey made under this study, the function of the local government body of the Weligepola Pradeshiya Sabha is a classic example of this discrepancy. It was understood during the survey that the main reason for this situation is the politicisation of the local government administration that hinders equal treatment of all the Gramasewa Divisions under it. Therefore, this paper proposes that the governance of the local government bodies need to be streamlined in accordance with the relevant legislations in the state. The methodology for this research was based on both primary and secondary data. SPSS 17 was used to analyse the data. The sample was collected from the three villages in the Opanayake Divisional secretariat namely Lendara, Opanayake and Kahakoratuwa, in accordance with the

Snowball sampling method. Accordingly, 20 families were randomly selected from

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each village on the basis of the distance from the Pradeshiya Sabha office. This study discovered the inefficiency of the officers and the poor coordination as reasons for dissatisfaction. According to the survey, 60% of the total sample population were not satisfied with the services obtained from Pradeshiya Sabha; 83.33% stated that the

Pradeshiya Sabha overlooks the people's need to access a road network. Moreover, poor services and low maintenance of the road network, MOH Service office, free Ayurvedic medical centres, public toilets, library and sports grounds construction were some issues. In addition, there were no proper solid waste disposing methods and water supply methods. This study shows that the Pradeshiya Sabha must have a strong cash flow for regional development and should use the resources efficiently and effectively.

## **2. Introduction and research problem/issue**

Local government is an administrative institute which is built by the law. Other than the basic

laws such as Municipal Councils Ordinance, Urban Councils Ordinance, Pradeshiya Sabha Act, many other laws pertain to the local government field. These laws are aimed to provide public utility services, and it is important to identify how they accommodate public welfare. In Sri Lanka, the Pradeshiya Sabha were Established under the parliament act no 15 of 1987. The main object of this is to make people join the administrative activities in the regional level. Hence, the Pradeshiya Sabha can be identified as a kind of regional governing institute. At the beginning, it was merely a service facility providing institute. However later it was converted into a constitutional institute that operates within the representative democracy with the public agents. Now time has come to review whether it provides the common facilities for the public and contributes as partners of the national development. The Pradeshiya Sabha were established in 1987 and now it is almost 30 years since then. In this time period, Pradeshiya Sabha has used many strategies to develop common facilities in their areas. Nevertheless, in many areas, there are several issues in the development of common facilities. In this research, the present situation of the development of common facilities and institutional contribution to the common facilities have been considered. Here, the research problem is to analyse the contribution of Weligepola Pradeshiya Sabha to develop common facilities in the area and its present issues.

### **3. Research Methodology**

Questionnaires and Interview methods were used to collect primary data. Three villages namely Lendara, Kahakoratuwa and Opanayake were selected from the Opanayake Divisional secretariat by using snowball sampling method for the questionnaire. 20 families were selected per each village by using simple random sampling. The villages were selected considering the distance to the Pradeshiya Sabha as 'the nearest' (within 2 kms), 'medium distance' (Within 2-6 kms) and 'the longest distance' (within 6-8kms). SPSS 17 was used to analyse and present collected data. Chi square analysis was used to identify the relationship between the distance of the village and services of the Pradeshiya Saba. Informal discussions were carried out with officers in Pradeshiya Sabha and villagers to gather information regarding the services of Pradeshiya Sabha.

This study was also based on secondary data which were collected from Pradeshiya Sabha, books, journals and related websites.

#### 4. Results and findings

According to the survey, the families that obtained the services from the Pradeshiya Sabha were 31.7% while 68.3% families did not obtain services. The reason was the distance from the service area. Lendara was one of the selected villages, located near the Pradeshiya Sabha, and 45% of total families obtained services while 55% of total families did not obtain services. Opanayake is located at about 4-6 km away from the Pradeshiya Sabha and 30% of its total families obtained services while 70% of total families did not obtain services. Kahakoratuwa is located far away from other two villages and 25% of total families obtained services. It was clear that when the distance from the service area is increased, people are unwilling to obtain services from the Pradeshiya Sabha. This distance resulted in poor relationships between the Pradeshiya Sabha and the families. Approving building plans in the urban area, provision of water bowsers for relevant purposes, registering motorcycles, registering names of businesses and getting permission to cut valuable trees like jack were the services that are obtained from Pradeshiya Sabha. According to the respondents, most of the people were not satisfied about the services of the Pradeshiya Sabha. They were of the opinion that it was a time wasting process and the journey had to be done at least two or more times to get something done properly. In addition, the inefficiency of officers and poor coordination in the provision of common facilities have caused people to become unsatisfied. Accordingly, 60% of total sample population were not satisfied with the

services obtained from the Pradeshiya Sabha. 53.3% of total families were satisfied about the work of responsible officers while 46.66% of total families were not satisfied. The reasons were the absence of officers in office due to field work, the lack of covering services by other officers during such occasions and the careless and inefficient nature in providing services. When considering the structure of the Weligepola Pradeshiya Sabha, there were 7 vacancies, according to which the staff is not adequate to provide the required services to the people. In this study, the road systems of all three sample areas were studied. According to the feedback from the villages, newly constructed roads were not up to standard. During the rainy season, roads were submerged with water. There was no proper drainage system to floor the excess water. Furthermore, in the sample area, road maintenance was also not at an acceptable level. 55% from the sample were not satisfied regarding the conditions of the road. 83.33% of the sample stated the need of the proper maintenance of the road network in the area. The Pradeshiya Sabha had not even attended to maintain the road banks. In the Lendara and Kahakoratuwa area, there were no road lamps. In the Opanayake area many road lamps were not functioning properly. Moreover, there had been some issues with the services and the maintenance of the road network, MOH Service office, free Ayurvedic medical centres, public toilets, library and sports grounds construction. It is about the view of about 93.33% of the total sample. Further, there were no proper solid waste disposing methods and water supply methods. Constructions such as channels, bridges and culverts in these sample areas could not be identified as in 100% good construction, specially in the Lendara area.

#### 5. Conclusions, implications and significance

Approving building plans in the urban area, the provision of water bowsers for relevant purposes, registering motorcycles and the names of businesses, getting permission to cut valuable trees like jack and getting permission to granite beds were the services obtained from Pradeshiya Sabha. This survey

revealed that the distance had caused poor relationships between the Pradeshiya Sabha and the villagers. In addition, the inefficiency of officers and poor coordinations in the provision of common facilities were the reasons behind the dissatisfaction of people. Furthermore, newly constructed roads were not up to standards and in the rainy season the roads are submerged under the water. There was no proper drainage system to floor the excess water. Further, road maintenance was also not at an acceptable level in the study area. Finally, this study

shows that the Pradeshiya Sabha must have a strong coordination and a proper plan to carry out regional development and should use resources such as physical and human effort efficiently and effectively.

#### 6. References

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