

The Role of Public Representatives in Providing Divisional Developmental Services and Public Awareness

I. Hettiarachchi^{1*}

In democratic states, local governance has been given much importance. The process of local governance paves the way for inter-relationships between the state and the public and the effectiveness of this inter-relationship depends upon the active contribution of local government officials in making citizens' lives better. So, the main objective of this study is to examine whether the local government institutions at present have been able to provide meaningful divisional developmental services to the general public. This study also aims at examining the role and contribution of local government officials/ people's representatives and the awareness of the general public with regard to divisional developmental services. In conducting this study, it is assumed that though people's representatives play a major role in providing developmental services, their duties in this regard have not been properly fulfilled and the general public does not possess a thorough knowledge about the public developmental services provided by local government institutions. This study is based on both primary and secondary data. Questionnaires were distributed and discussions were conducted to obtain primary data while relevant books, research reports, articles have been referred to get secondary data. Through multi-stage and random sampling methods, 60 registered respondents from Bisowela, Asideniya and Namberiyawa Grama Niladari divisions of Galigamuwa Divisional Council were selected for the study. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the chairman, 6 public representatives from both the government and the opposition and 5 officials in Galigamuwa Divisional Council. This study concludes that even though at divisional level, power has been delegated to sub-state entities, the necessities of citizens have not been adequately fulfilled by local government institutions. Also, a majority of public representatives are not fully aware of their role in providing divisional developmental services. Further, this study concludes that the lack of adequate funds and the unequal distribution of community development programmes are some of the reasons behind ineffective divisional developmental services. As recommendations, this study proposes that public representatives in every divisional council should be given proper training to educate them on their role in providing divisional developmental services and public awareness programmes on divisional developmental services should also be conducted. Also, it is recommended to allocate increased funds for community development programmes.

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¹ Department of Economics * chinthanihettiarachchi06@gmail.com