

Nature of Electoral Democracy and Democratic Governance of the Local Government Institutions in Sri Lanka (A Case Study)

K.B.G.S.K. Gamlath (PhD)

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

Abstract: The main purpose of this paper is to explore the existing nature of electoral democracy and governing system of the local government institutions (Pradeshiya Saba) which is the most rural-based political institution in Sri Lanka. Local government institution is the core stone of the country democracy and governance. Therefore, it is a mirror of the country's democracy as a whole. Therefore, it should be reflected the nature of democracy through equal political opportunities, for all segments of the society to participate in politics via electoral democracy, etc. Since, independence, Sri Lanka is one of the oldest democratic countries in South Asia has been followed by democratic applications in its local government system. After seventy years, since their independence, it has a well experienced democratic culture with regard to enjoying the democratic traditions at the grass-root electoral politics. People of the grass-root also have experience how to utilize their democratic choice in the electoral process regarding appoints the suitable people for the local government body and their governing process, Yet, Recent trends of the electoral democracy and governance of the local government institutions have not reflected such fair democratic participation and political and service accountability in their practices of the electoral and governing process Why? This research paper mainly focused on primary data to analyze in this regard, therefore qualitative method and analysis have been using for the analysis process. A field survey has been carrying out in selected local government institutions in the number of administrative districts. Data have been proved that women's participation in local government institutions was extremely weak. Freedom of the right to vote and rational choice of the people concerning an election have been faced complexities due to influence by the politicians on various actions such as giving charity, goods money, etc. Appointed members of the local institutions have not reflected accountable service for the rural society. Political representatives have been engaged in many undemocratic actions such as corruption, bribes, etc. They have manipulated rural society. Therefore, people of the local voiceless regarding better democracy or governance of the local institutions.

Key Words: Electoral Democracy, Women Participation, Voters and Representatives, Electoral freedom, Accountable governance.

I. INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE IN SRI LANKA

Local democracy and governance is the core stone of any given country. The shape and nature of the political culture of the country and society have been reflecting from

the local democracy and their governing process. In the Sri Lankan case study, Sri Lanka is one of the most pioneer and oldest democratic countries in South Asia. Laid down of the Foundation of the modern Local democracy and governance system is going back to the colonial period. The first foundation was laid down by the colonial administration. Basic democratic principles have been aggravated gradually under several dynamics and radical reforms in the historical timeline. Especially, since 1980 decades, there was a debate that has been erupted with regard to the local government system and their governing process. Simple meant of Democracy is a kind of governing process with maximum participation of the citizens without any differences in a governing system. In historically, after collapsing of the Development Councils and Gramodaya Mandala system which are older local institutional systems that topic of the local government and democracy was a warm discourse among the politicians, policymakers, and opinion-makers with regard local democracy and governance.

With parallel to global trends that local government and their democratic applications had to be changed at the bottom level. Especially, enhance the participatory approach of the general public in local government institutions was a prominent topic among the relevant authorities. With kept a remarkable point that local democracy and governance process has been undergone radical changed in 1987. There were major constitutional amendments to the constitution was happened. The main result of the Provincial Councils Act of 1987 brought huge decentralization and devolution package for the local democracy and governance. In term "People Participatory" approach was led to established modern local government Institutional systems under the newly established Provincial Councils. According to the provisions are given by the constitutions that Pradeshiya Sabha was established in the entire country as the most grass root local governance institution to sustain and maintain people's democracy at the local politics. There should be reflected diversity of the society through local institutions. Various groups such as youth, women, and minorities should have a space for participation in the governing process at the bottom level, Therefore, to achieve these objectives and goals that Pradeshiya Sabha was established under the modern democratic principles. One of the important objectives and

goals of the Pradeshiya Sabha is to enhance and accurately implement the democratic features behalf of the people democracy at the bottom politics. People could enjoy their voting rights to elect suitable people for their local institutions. Also, without any differences, ordinary people could contest or electoral process at the local level governing body. People's sovereign power concerning local government institutions has been having tightened by the constitutions. Appointed representatives through a free and fair election, independency for the voting rights, Inclusive rather than including concept also tightened in this constitutional amendment. Therefore Pradeshiya Sabha has a vital role with regard protect and sustain of the democracy and democratic practices of the people who live in the grass root. After thirty years period, there are no measures have been taken regarding the nature of the local democracy and practices. The ground reality is completely different from the principles of constitutional amendments in practices at the grass-root democracy and they're institutional. This research has conducted a qualitative fact-finding survey with regard to people's attitudes and opinions concerning how democracy practices by the people who are appointed in the Pradeshiya Sabha. In this context that this research has been investigated the nature of the locality concerning democracy and practices.

In this research, the main democratic implications such as freedom to votes, Freedom to participate in the electoral campaign, space for the minority groups for the participants into the democratic governing process, behavior of elected people, the nature of the electoral democracy and electoral system, duties and responsibilities candidates and elected representatives, nature of the civil society with regard democratic freedom, electoral violence, electoral manipulations by the candidate, Political accountability of elected people have been examined. This research has been selected by eight local government areas to carry out a field survey. According to the following statistical data has been analyzed.

1.1 Research Problem or Statement:

People of the grass-root also have experience how to utilize their democratic choice in the electoral process regarding appoints the suitable people for the local government body and their governing process, Yet, Recent trends of the electoral democracy and governance of the local government institutions have not reflected such fair democratic participation and political and service accountability in their practices of the electoral and governing process Why?

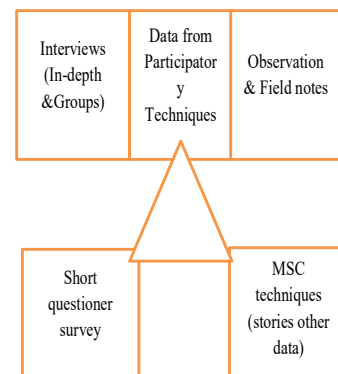
1.1 The Main Objective:

The main objective of this paper is to explore the existing nature of electoral democracy and the governing system of the local government institutions (Pradeshiya Saba) which is the most rural-based political institution in Sri Lanka.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is completely depending on the Sri Lankan case study related local government institutions of the grass root. Therefore, research had been selected eight (8) grass-root local governance institutions for the carry-out field activities. Hambantota, Pradeshiya Sabha, Gogakawela-Rakwana Pradeshiya Sabha, Ruwanwalla Pradeshiya Sabha, Dimbulagala Pradeshiya Sabha, Madawachchiya Pradeshiya Sabha, Thambalagamuwa Pradeshiya Sabha, Uhana Pradeshiya Saba, and Laggala Pallegama Pradeshiya were selected for the field activities. All those local government institutions are selected from 08 provinces of out of total 09 provinces. Also, it has covered 08 administrative districts of the country. The main theories of the inductive approach have been used as tools for analyzing data. The following theory is mainly focused on in this research, Specially, the main techniques of the empirical research such as in-depth interviews, field observations, questioners' fillings, and group discussions have been taken place in this research. As empirical research, this research has been used main qualitative techniques such as keep recording, coding, note-keeping, etc. In addition to that, field observation its input also used for the analysis of the data and information. Qualitative data analysis (QDA) is the process of turning written data such as interviews and field notes into findings. There are no formulas, recipes, or rules for this process, for which you will need skills, knowledge, experience, insight, and a willingness to keep learning and working at it. Taking notes from focus group discussions (FGDs) is quite 'messy' and unstructured. QDA does not happen linearly; it is not a neat and simple process. Rather, it involves a repeated process of critically reading, interpreting, and reaching shared understandings of data.

Triangulations of Different Source Data Analysis



III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term Democracy doesn't have a concrete definition but it's covering a vast area of the practical aspect of the political actions of the people and politicians. The term "governance" also an integral part of the concept of democracy in political theory cannot be separated from each other concepts. The term governance has been covered a vast area that Elisabeth

Powel and Sanam Naraghi Andrilini pointed out the term "Governance" refers to the process of decision-making and how decisions are implemented for (or not) in any given system the government is the major actor, but others can influence the process. Non-state actors, such as trade unions, financial institutions, the military, and community-based groups can play important roles (Elisabeth Powel and Sanam Naraghi - Democracy and Governance). However, democracy and governance are incorporated and interchangeable concepts. Democracy in general meaning goes back to ancient Greek political philosophy which has been the practice in the Athens City-states. Athenian democracy was completely deferent from today's conceptual and practical aspect of the term of democracy. There was a direct democracy system within a limited participatory approach in Athens city-state. If the government's actions, inactions, or omissions violate the people's basic values, they may conclude as St. Augustine did in his book title *The City of God* that: "a government without justice is a great robbery" (Kopstein and Lichbach 2000). Knowledge about citizen's perceptions crucially not only to inform government officials about what the citizenry thinks of their performance and policies but. It enables researchers and scholars to make continue assessing citizen's attitudes which constitute one of the structural conditions for democratic sustainability (Habib 2002). The conceptual meaning and practices of democracy and governance have been changed gradually. In today we are talking about modern democratic principles in term liberal Democracy. That also depends on the time occasion and context and understanding of the scholars or general mass. But, when we talk about modern democracy and practices in term governance the basic principle of the liberal democracy cannot be ignored.

Archon Fung and Eric Olin Wright say about Democracy, "Democracy" as a way of organizing the state has come to be narrowly identified with territorially based competitive elections of political leadership for legislative and executive offices. Yet, increasingly, this mechanism of political representations seems ineffective in accomplishing the central ideals of democratic politics: facilitative active political involvement of the citizenry, foreign political consensus through dialogue, devising and implementing public policies that ground a productive economy and healthy society, and, in more radical egalitarian versions of the democratic ideal, assuring that all benefit from the nations world (Archon Fung and Olin Wright – 2003). The term "Good Governance" is one of the arguable and debatable theoretical and practical concepts in the modern democratic enhancement of local democratic application of the third world countries. According to the world bank perspective that to help countries identify areas of weakness so that capacity building and assistance strategies are more effective those indicators are the voice of and accountability, political stability and lack of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory, rule of law, and control of corruptions are the key indicators that international actors consider "good governance" to be building sustainable peace and long term development ("What is Good governance?" -

Bangkok: UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific, September 2003). The participatory approach at the bottom level is doing a significant role regarding the strengthening of good governance. It is a broad meaning in the term concept of governance. Transparency and equal participatory approach will enhance trust between democratic institutions and their people at the bottom level democracy. Trust building matter has been attracted to a field of scholarly research. It depends on the behavior and actions of the politicians who are appointed by the people. Trust must be started by the person. Politics and governance or government behavior will impact on the individual personality of the bottom level. Eric M Ulsner pointed out; Democracy's benefits seem confined to long-standing democracies (Eric M Ulsner – April 2000). Putnam argues that why then some nations are more trusting than others, rich nations are trusting, poor nations countries more distrust Putnam – 1993). This argument is controversial because among the rich nations also some kind of un-trust nature can be shown in the richest countries. Because trust between people and democracy not only depends on social wellbeing but also on the quality of the behavior of politicians and political institutions. There should have the most transparency environment in the local government institutions on their activities regarding the enhancement of democracy and good governance. One of the key points is accurate auditing system will empower democratic governance at the bottom level.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

2.1 Electoral Democracy and Freedom to Votes of the Local People

Table 2.1
Freedom of voting

Local Government Division		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Thambalagamawa	Valid	25	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Yes	23	92.0	92.0	92.0
	No	2	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Hambantota	Valid	22	88.0	88.0	88.0
	Yes	3	12.0	12.0	100.0
	No	3	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Ruwanwella	Valid	21	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Yes	23	95.8	95.8	95.8
	No	1	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	24	100.0	100.0	
Laggala Pallegama	Valid	23	92.0	92.0	92.0
	Yes	2	8.0	8.0	100.0
	No	2	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Godakawela	Valid	46	92.0	92.0	92.0
	Yes	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
	No	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

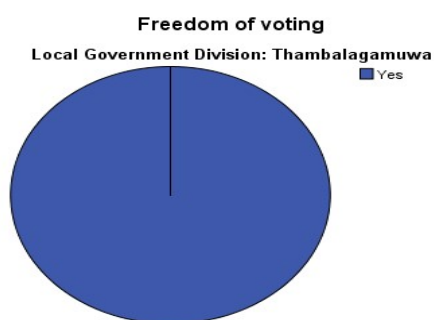
Source: Field Data 2016

With introduced of the Proportional Representative System (PRS) for the electoral process in 1978 that popular democracy has been emphasized at the election. Since 1987, with constitutional amendments, PRS introduced for the local government election. Under this system, freedom of the people with regard to voting for the preferred candidate has been manipulated by external factors such as wealth, money, and the prestigious and social status of the candidates. This electoral system brought the election campaign as a highly

cost one. Therefore, desirable people for contest elections who represent ordinary mass cannot contest without enough financial situations. Richest people could expend more fiancé to obtain votes from the poorest ordinary people. Under the PRS system, a person who needs to win a seat that wants to take the highest preferential votes at the election. Therefore, there are strong competition has erupted not only the opposition but also within members of the same political parties. Due to this competition, many illegal activities have been launching by the candidates in their electorate. Sometimes, people did not have a free environment to go for the vote to the polling booth due to threatening by the opposition as well as ruling members and their supporters. This trend has been speeded the entire country at the local election process in the last three decades. There are many barriers such as blocking the roads, taking ballot papers from the people, forcefully encroaching pooling booths, robbing ballot boxes, firing to voting centers, ext. There are threaten and electoral phobia has been created by both contest parties. This nature is not the reality of free and fair elections in a democratic society. Therefore, these trends have a crucial impact on clear people's opinions on the local electoral process. People should have to free and fair environment without any fear to go for a voting place and vote for their preferred candidate. The above statistical table shows, the general idea of the people in that selected local governance areas concerning freedom of the votes.

According to the chart, the overall situation has been changed regarding freedom of voting compare with the early situation. Overall, all the area by 75% of people has confirmed that they have enough freedom to votes in their local electoral process. According to the table on Ruwanwalla and Thambalagamawa has indicated by 100% which is the highest local area regarding freedom to votes has indicated. Chronologically, Laggala Pallegama 95%, Uhana, Gogakawela, Dimbulagala has been indicated by 92% and Hambantota shows by 88% which is the lowest rate but a considerably good trend. Especially, the Hambantota electorate is politically significant because it is the home town of the former president. It is compared with other areas indicating less freedom for the votes at the local electoral process. Its mean power and authority have been utilized at the electoral process that proved by the people's opinion.

Figure 2.1



But, a significant percentage has indicated less freedom at the local electoral process in following local areas. Uhana by 8%, Hambantota by 12%, Laggala Pallegama by 4.2%, Gogakawela by 8%, Dimbulagala by 8%. This trend is cannot avoid or neglect. This small percentage is appearing a considerable amount of people in those areas. Therefore, this trend emphasizing the declined of the freedom of vote's people who lives in those areas. In the General situation of the other areas in the countrywide as it is the same as these local government divisions. Therefore, the total indicator of the progress of the freedom of voting considerably positive but there should be concerned regarding the negative aspect of a minor percentage with regard freedom to vote of the grass root people.

2.2 Electoral Campaign, Corruptions and Bribes of the Local Elections

A recent trend of the local electoral process in local politics is highly manipulated by the candidates of the political parties. As said earlier, in this high-cost election campaign, candidates cannot win a seat without enough financial background. The whole process of the election is functioning in terms of popular democracy. Therefore, a person who needs to win a seat that he or she needs to build his or her image as most popular among the general public. It is caused to win a seat easily from the local government election. To get the popularity and attraction, they need to expend a large amount of money for their propaganda campaign. Various strategies have been used in election propaganda such as pocket meetings, posters, cutouts, banners, electronic media and print media, etc. These strategies are more expensive and cannot tolerate by the person who comes from the poorest ordinary social background. Therefore, this nature had created a new political culture of the election campaign at the grass root. This background has been encouraged by the richest people to enter politics. Otherwise, a person who contests the election needs to get financial support from the richest people or businessmen. Business people of supporters of the candidates are expending more money at the campaign on behalf of candidates. A candidate who comes from a wealthy background that he or she easily could cheat ordinary people by giving many mental bribes such as charities and sponsorship with violating the electoral law and regulations. For example, some politicians have been distributing many types of equipment, goods even money for ordinary people even the day before Election Day. Due to the poverty of the poorest people, they are easily attaching this kind of mentally and material bribes by the richest candidates. Therefore it has created a new political culture in local politics that is emphasizing the patron-client relationship between ruler and voter at the electoral process. One of the knowledgeable village persons expressed his ideas as follows. According to that opinions, there is a deal between a candidate and ordinary people has been developed. This situation can use re-interpret term democracy in a new perspective that is a kind of *broker politics* in the local democratic election process. According to

people's opinions, the following data table shows the reality of electoral corruption and bribes.

Table: 2.2
Mental or material bribes in the election

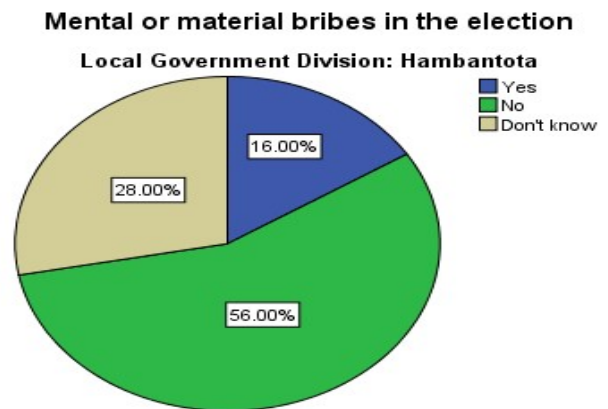
Local Government Division	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Thambalagamuwa Valid	Yes	3	12.0	12.0
	No	21	84.0	96.0
	Don't know	1	4.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0
Uhana Valid	Yes	3	12.0	12.0
	No	21	84.0	96.0
	Don't know	1	4.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0
Hambantota Valid	Yes	4	16.0	16.0
	No	14	56.0	72.0
	Don't know	7	28.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0
Ruwanwella Valid	No	14	66.7	66.7
	Don't know	7	33.3	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0
	Laggala Pallegama Valid	Yes	5	20.8
No		19	79.2	100.0
Total		24	100.0	100.0
Godakawela Valid		Yes	2	8.0
	No	20	80.0	88.0
	Don't know	3	12.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0
Dimbulagala Valid	Yes	21	42.0	42.0
	No	23	46.0	88.0
	Don't know	6	12.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Source: Field data 2016

The above table shows that mental, material corruption and bribes can be analyzed. The table shows, the overall population of the sample area have been responded that corruption and bribes at the electoral process are more than 50% which is the highest one. Concerning area-wise, the total percentage of Thambalagamuwa is indicating 84% from out of valid data on no corruption and bribes. In the same area, 12% of people are saying, they have faced the same problem at the election. In Uhana local government electorate also indicated the same percentage as NO by 84% and 12% of people had faced the same experience as YES at the election campaign. Other areas in chronologically, Gogakawela local electorate 80% of people say NO corruptions and bribes at the elections. 8% of people say they had faced such an experience in the election process. Laggala Pallegama by 79% of people say NO corruption and bribes but by 20% of people had said they have experienced such corruption and bribes. This trend is a significant growth in comparison with the previous three local government areas. Case indicating Dimbulagala Pradeshiya Sabha. That is 46 % of people say they are not faced with such corruption and bribes in the election. But, 42% out of valid data, people have confirmed they had enough experiences about corruption and bribes in the election campaign by the candidates. This is a special occasion concerning bribery and corruption in the local electoral process. As it is the same picture had shown by the data table on the Hambantota local electorate. 56% of out of valid data that people say they did not have faced and

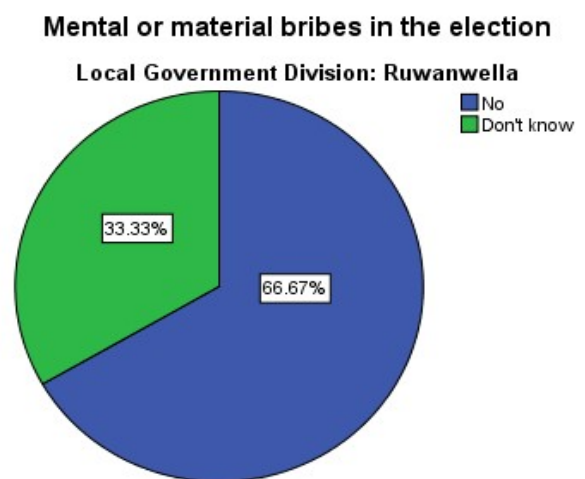
mentally or material corruptions or bribes by the politicians. But, by 16% of out of valid data that people have confirmed they have been faced such bribes and corruption in the electoral campaign by the candidates.

Figure 2.2



There is a special trend that has been accelerated in those areas that is a considerable amount of people had said they don't know such a thing. That factor also indicating one of the hidden and weak points of the democratic society. People are unaware of the ongoing electoral process and political process at the grass root. It meant that political ignorance is significant among the people who participate in local democracy and governance. Mostly, the majority of people of grass-root are less education, therefore, they cannot identify these hidden trends of the elections. They are making decisions irrationally rather than rational thinking. That also harmed local democracy and governance. On the other hand, some people are deliberately giving this answer. According to the table, 4% of the Thambalagamuwa, by 4% of the Uhana, by 33.33% of the Ruwanwella, by 28% of the Hambantota, Gogakawela, and Dimbulagala by 12 % out of valid data have been indicating that people say they don't know such things. This trend is comparably high in two local government areas such as Hambantota and Ruwanwella.

Figure 2.2



The ground reality is different from showing data. People are well aware of this corruption and bribery in the electoral process. Due to the influences and power of the powerful politicians, people do not answer with their open mind with regard to bribes and corruption of the candidates in their local government areas. It means political manipulation has been hegemonies the local society. It means freedom of democracy has been manipulating by the powerful politicians in such an area. Natures of most of the local government electorates in the entire country as it same. Therefore, It can be generalized. There is a new trend emphasizing in electoral democracy that is giving and buying relationships has been created a new political culture at the bottom level politics. This pattern can be called as Patron – Client Democracy.

People did not openly address their opinion due to fear of the undemocratic actions by the candidates in their electorate. Mostly, various kinds of Psychological and material bribes have been implementing by the contesting members of the major political parties. On the other hand, people have many personnel benefits from politicians. Therefore, they don't like to bring harmful statements or ideas against them. That is one of the barriers to the rational choice of the people with regard to electing representatives for the local councils. According to many statements of the people, there are many materials and Psychological promises had been given by the candidates. It could be proved by the live discussion with civil society leaders and people of the relevant area. The researcher had an in-depth interview with chief monk Wilgamvehera which is an Ancient temple in Hambantota local Government electorate. Mostly, these religious leaders are giving a more accurate picture of their neutral mindset. In my interview, I asked a couple of questions form the Most Rev. Priest as follow,

01. *Moderator:* Do you know any corruption or bribes regarding members of Hambantota Pradeshiya Sabha in the electoral campaign?

02. *Responder:* Of course, this is one of the main issues in our electoral campaign. Most candidates are trying to get peoples preferential by giving various charity or physiological bribes.

I had an interview with a member of opposition party Mr. Kamal Samarathunga opposition leader of Hambantota Pradeshiya Sabha. He is representing behalf of United National Party (UNP).

Moderator: Do you think that members of parties were engaged in mentally or material briberies with regards votes.

Responder: Definitely, Definitely. There was such things were happened in the election. There was a distribution of goods and charity by the ruling members for the ordinary people with regard their preferential votes. It should be changed

Moderator: Can you tell me your idea about this electoral system?

Responder: My opinion of this electoral system is very complicated and problematic. There are many unnecessary incidents are happening during the electoral period. It has been escalating to mega violence activities under this electoral system.

Moderator: Do you think that this electoral system should be changed?

Responder: Clearly, I don't have any pleasant feeling in this electoral system because this system has called us for a highly competition game. Due to this competition, even, we have lost our mutual relationship among ourselves. This system has created a "Broker Politics" system. In a broker politics, we don't have a freedom to do development activities on our own decisions. We have to follow up order and recommendations of upper level political authority with regard development activities but not on ourselves in our electorate.

2.3 Electoral Democracy and Violation Election Laws and Regulations by the Representatives in Local Electorate.

Free and fair election is one of the essential requirement's for the strengthen democracy at the grassroots. With introduced People Representative System (PRS) for the Pradeshiya Sabha in 1987, a formal legal back ground has been provided for the local electoral process by the constitutions. In Last thirty years period, local electoral process has been commenced in time to time with regard Pradeshiya Sabha (grass root institutions). The election must be hold under the elections laws and regulations which is monitoring under the electoral commission of the central government. Common experience of the local election was little bit different from the legal electoral process. Due to high level competition of the preferential votes, candidate's behavior are motivating to act beyond the existing electoral laws and regulations. Illegal election activities such as demonstrating mega cutouts, posters, giving charity, for the poorest people that have impact on free and fair space for the rational choice of the people with regard appointing representatives for the local institutions.

Mega rallies and pocket meetings and door to door campaigns have been carried out without concerning election law and regulations by the candidates with support of their supportive groups. Specially, ruling party has been utilizing ruling power when they contest elections. Utilizing government vehicles and using government properties for their electoral campaign are prominent violation of the electoral regulations. All those activities completely restricted by the election laws and regulations. According to election laws and regulations that candidates should have stop all the campaign activities one day before of the election. But, some time, candidates are doing their propaganda activities even day of the election as well. This is completely contradiction with free and fair election of the democratic environment.

Table: 2.3

Violations of election law by candidates

Local Government Division			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Thambalagamuwa	Valid	No	24	96.0	96.0	96.0
		No idea	1	4.0	4.0	100.0
		Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Uhana	Valid	Yes	3	12.0	12.0	12.0
		No	19	76.0	76.0	88.0
		No idea	3	12.0	12.0	100.0
		Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Hambantota	Valid	Yes	8	32.0	32.0	32.0
		No	11	44.0	44.0	76.0
		No idea	6	24.0	24.0	100.0
		Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Ruwanwella	Valid	Yes	1	4.8	4.8	4.8
		No	7	33.3	33.3	38.1
		No idea	13	61.9	61.9	100.0
		Total	21	100.0	100.0	
Laggala Pallegama	Valid	Yes	4	16.7	16.7	16.7
		No	18	75.0	75.0	91.7
		No idea	2	8.3	8.3	100.0
		Total	24	100.0	100.0	
Godakawela	Valid	Yes	6	24.0	24.0	24.0
		No	13	52.0	52.0	76.0
		No idea	6	24.0	24.0	100.0
		Total	25	100.0	100.0	
Dimbulagala	Valid	Yes	5	10.0	10.0	10.0
		No	41	82.0	82.0	92.0
		No idea	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
		Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2016

Above chart shows overall picture about violation of election law on given electorates. General idea of this table is public opinion is negative one regarding serious violation except minor violations by the candidates. As percentage, Thambalagamuwa has indicated 96% free of violence, Uhana 76%, Hambantota 44% out of valid data, Ruwanwella 33.3% out of valid data, Laggala Pallegama electorate indicated 75% free election, Gogakawela 52% , and Dimbulagala has shown 82% free election violation of the local elections. But, there is a special trend has been reflected from Hambantota and Gogakawela. Compare with other areas, these two areas has indicated high amount of electoral violence in the elections. It was 32% from Hambantota and 24% from Gogakawela.

Figure 2.3

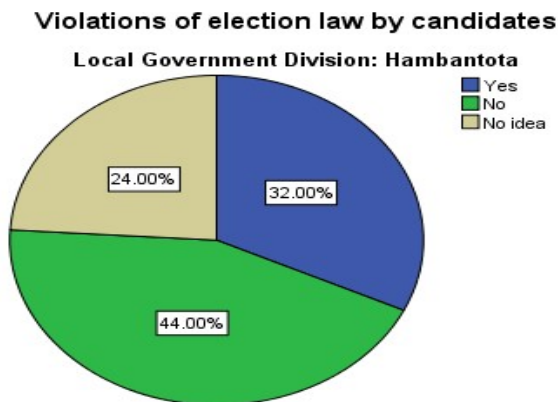
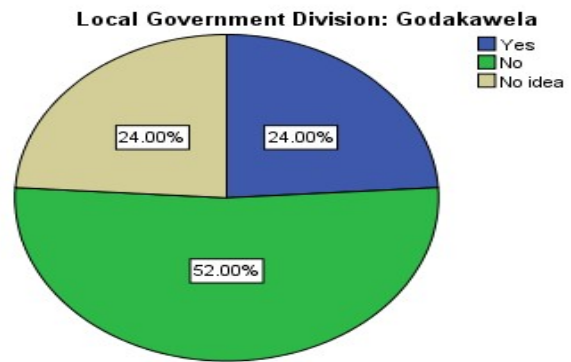


Figure 2.3

Violations of election law by candidates



This is the reality of the existing election environment. In general idea about whole local government Institutions in the countrywide as same like this picture. Even other electorate areas, in this examination has been indicating considerable amount of electoral violations by the candidates. Chronologically it has indicated as by 12. % of Uhana, by 4.8 from Ruwanwella, by 16.7 from Laggala Pallegama, by 5% Dimbulagala. There is a special trend have to be identified in this table that is considerable amount of people has responded as “NO IDEA”. This is very complicated because this statement partly true due to less education and political ignorance and weak awareness about election laws and regulations at the bottom level society but, in sub Urban areas like Ruwanwella and Uhana electorate are not too grass root. According to field observation and discussions had with people and personalities, it could prove that people don’t like openly say their ideas about violation of electoral laws and regulations of the local politics.

As said, due to fear and possibility of losing their support that people are not openly criticized or challenge politico’s actions in their local areas. This is a significant hidden trend of the local democracy in country side. Whole local government electorate situation is similar with this picture. Less education and poverty has been escalation of Patron – Client democracy. These relationship has been manipulated people rational choice political competency impact on escalation of election violations of the local electoral process. This new tendencies has created favorable environment for violating of the election laws and regulations by the supporters of the candidates. Also, politicians and their political parties were not taken considerable measures to prevent such electoral violence in this electoral process. Without support of the candidates and parties that election commissioner cannot keep free and fair election in term democracy. Therefore, it shows democratic accountability of the politicians with regard electoral process at the grass root should have increased.

2.4 Freedom to Women Participation in Electoral Process at Local government Election.

One of the important requirements of the better democracy is that the entire groups of the society should have a space to

participate in governing process. Diversity should be reflected from the better democratic applications. It is important factor for the democratic accountability. Women are significant segment of the amount of the local voting base. Therefore, women should have a right and duty to participate policy making and implementation process at the bottom level governing process. Women in the locality has been suffering many issues with regard their social wellbeing. But, nature of women participation in to local governance is has reflecting worst situation peripheral society in the country. Some time as a special group of the society, they have been neglected from the policy making and governing process. With compare with modern democratic debates and opinion that Sri Lankan local Government system still not adopted women as a significant segment of the democratic governance. Following data has been reflecting reality of the democratic space for the women at the grass root on their political and voting rights.

women participation in local governance. Electorate wise, Thambalagamuwa has indicated 88% out of valid data, Laggala Pallegama 79.2% out of total valid data; Dimbulagala 78% out of total valid data, Specially Hambantota has indicated 100% dissatisfied about women participation in to local governance process. Considerable amount of satisfaction has indicated from Gogakawela 12% and Ruwanwalla by 9.5 out of total valid data. This amount also indicated below even the 20% out of total valid data. Special case in Hambantota electorate,

Table: 2.4

Satisfaction of women's representation in local authority

Local Government Division		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Thambalagamuwa	Valid					
	Very Satisfied	1	4.0	4.0	4.0	
	Somewhat Satisfied	1	4.0	4.0	8.0	
	Dissatisfied	22	88.0	88.0	96.0	
	Very Dissatisfied	1	4.0	4.0	100.0	
	Total	25	100.0	100.0		
Uhana	Valid					
	Dissatisfied	16	64.0	64.0	64.0	
	Very Dissatisfied	9	36.0	36.0	100.0	
	Total	25	100.0	100.0		
Hambantota	Valid	Dissatisfied	25	100.0	100.0	100.0
Ruwanwella	Valid					
	Satisfied	2	9.5	9.5	9.5	
	Somewhat Satisfied	4	19.0	19.0	28.6	
	Dissatisfied	4	19.0	19.0	47.6	
	Very Dissatisfied	11	52.4	52.4	100.0	
	Total	21	100.0	100.0		
Laggala Pallegama	Valid					
	Somewhat Satisfied	4	16.7	16.7	16.7	
	Dissatisfied	19	79.2	79.2	95.8	
	Very Dissatisfied	1	4.2	4.2	100.0	
	Total	24	100.0	100.0		
Godakawela	Valid					
	Satisfied	3	12.0	12.0	12.0	
	Somewhat Satisfied	8	32.0	32.0	44.0	
	Dissatisfied	13	52.0	52.0	96.0	
	Very Dissatisfied	1	4.0	4.0	100.0	
	Total	25	100.0	100.0		
Dimbulagala	Valid					
	Very Satisfied	1	2.0	2.0	2.0	
	Satisfied	1	2.0	2.0	4.0	
	Somewhat Satisfied	5	10.0	10.0	14.0	
	Dissatisfied	39	78.0	78.0	92.0	
	Very Dissatisfied	4	8.0	8.0	100.0	
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		

Source: Field data 2016

According ground data, above chart shows a very clear idea about nature of the women in democratic governance at the local democracy. Overall assessments of above electorates are more than 75% of people, s opinions were dissatisfied about

Figure 2.4

Satisfaction of women's representation in local authority

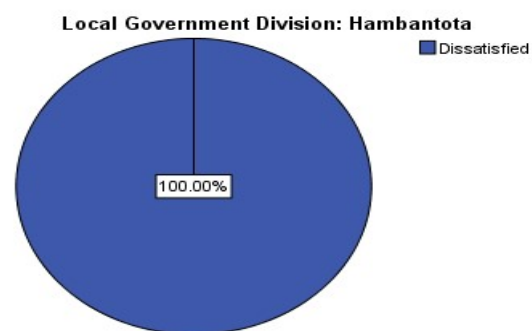
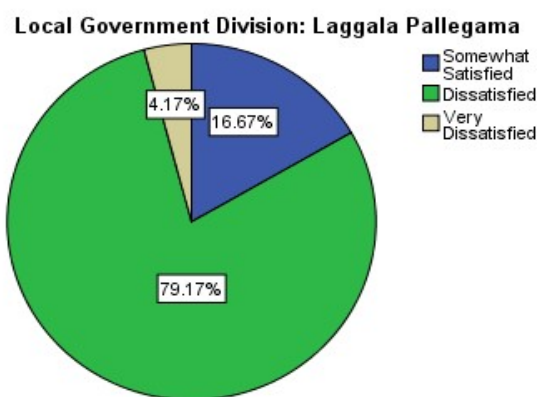


Figure 2

Satisfaction of women's representation in local authority



Rural women are main segment of the economy and politics at the grass root. Voting capacity of the women is crucially important at the electoral process. Rural women are suffering various kinds of issues in their day to life. Specially, there are suffering economic and social issues. Most of women of the grass root have been employed in as foreign domestic workers in foreign countries. Those women people have been contributing considerable amount of foreign income for the country economy. They have been engaged in rural agricultural activities. Therefore women are significant groups in local society. But some time they have been facing various issues related family, economic and social issues. Women unemployment percentage is high at the local society. Women

are manipulating by the politicians when the electoral process by giving many promises.

There are many cultural barriers also has caused creates to blockades against women on their forward mentality. However, entire local government system has been facing this exclusiveness of women from the practical political stream. This trend is directly violating equal treatment of the citizens which is one of the important principles of the democratic governance. Above data has been confirmed that local women did not have a chance to participate active politics in the existing the local government system. Cultural barriers also highly impact on women participation process. Less education, lack of women leadership has been negatively impact regarding trend of less women participation.

This data table shows, people of some local government area have addressed for this questioner as *somewhat satisfied*. There are considerable amount of people have gave this opinion. Meaning of this idea is still there is a cultural barrier has been strongly influenced to women to blocking come forward to politics. Some people in rural society have been tightly bounded with their deep rooted cultural limitations. Those people doesn't believe that women have such capacity. Thinking of Some people and their beliefs have not changed from the traditional thinking pattern. One of the main opinions of majority of rural people that women, specially must look after their families and children's within a house. Therefore, the process of social modernity did not reach to most rural area. Even women who live in some local areas has been rejected idea of women participation in politics. Mainly, what should be done that a policy with regard enhance of woman participation should be initiated by the central government and should be enforced. Also, awareness programme have to be conducted at the grass root regarding importance of the women participation in to local politics. Education should be expanded to the locality on focused to women. Large segment of women's are less education in the rural sector in Sri Lanka. She doesn't have enough social and cultural security. Also she doesn't have a space in political stage to raise their voice

Figure 2.4

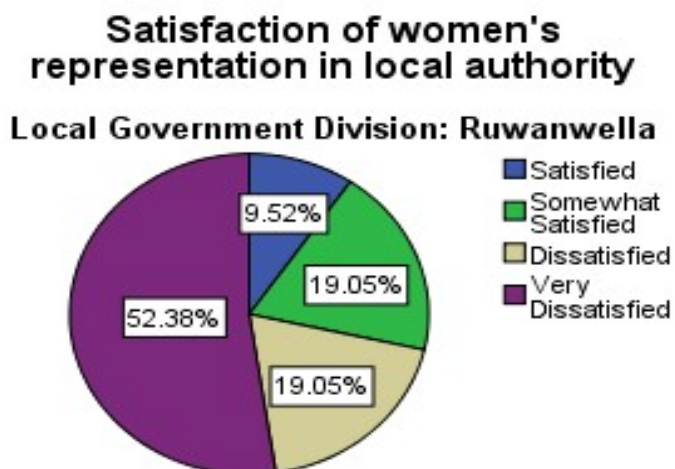


Figure 2.4

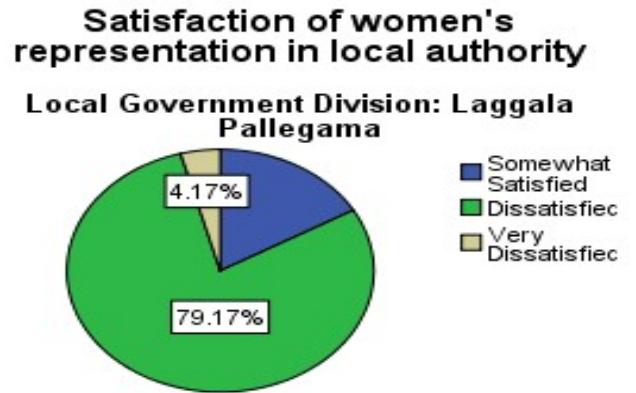
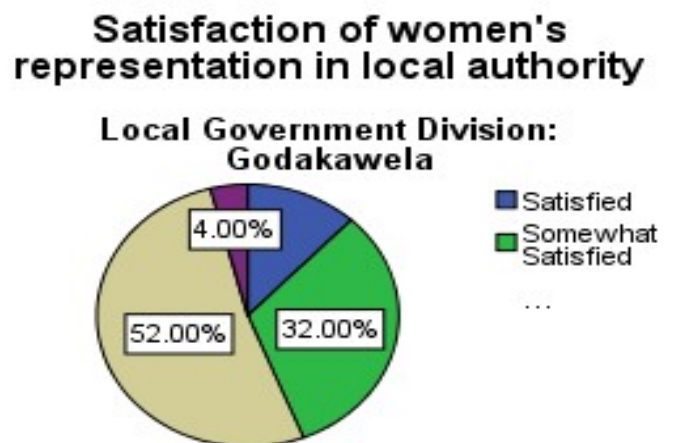


Figure 2.4



This trend has been dominated in grass root society with regard woman and politics. People ideology with regard women in politics is narrowly defined one. Even, some educated women also negatively talking about women and politics in the local society. If there is a women contesting for the local election that people are not giving preferential votes to here. These data table indicates and appearing that nature of people opinion based on narrowly defined ideology regarding women in the bottom society.

Central government policies also did not concerned with regard increased of women participation in local governance process. Recently, Central government has expressed that there will be allocate 25% quota for the women in next local government election. That is a one positive step with regard local democracy and governance. These data shows real picture of the ground level. In general, whole country situation is as it is same. These facts can be proved through some statements who given by the interviewers from the above local government area. There are no any active women representatives could found from those selected local government institutions. Male representatives has been dominated all the Pradeshiya Sabha. These numerical facts can be proved by the evidence with the selected people of those local government areas. I had an interview with

Chairman of Hambantota Pradeshiya Sabha Mr. Gamini Samarathunga,

01.

Moderator: What you think about women participation in local government system in the country and what is the nature of your institutions

Responder: I am appreciating about women participation because our former leaders Mrs. Bandaranayke also first women prime minister in the world. In my institutions we included women name in our contest list for the election but at the election people did not given their votes for the women so, that is fault with the people.

The nature of politics and women participation governance in local politics in Sri Lanka is not giving better picture. Due to, many traditional beliefs, rituals and cultural barriers that women cannot overcome these issues in grassroots politics. Religious, and traditional cultural beliefs and traditions have been a front line barriers regarding blocking of the women participation in local government process in Sri Lanka.

V. CONCLUSION

Local democracy and governance process in Sri Lankan context has become a little bit complicated in practical sense. Through these investigation that could be found many factors and have proved that local democracy and governance system has to be democratized further. Conceptual meaning and application of the democracy has indicated different pictures at the ground level politics in Sri Lanka. Equality, free and fair choice of the people with regard election has been weaken by the patron client relationship at the bottom level politics. Actions of the selected representatives were corrupted due to lack of education, poverty and organized civil society among the ordinary people. Therefore, there are no proper social auditing system with regard monitoring for activities of the politicians at the grass root. There're, couple of reasons behind the lack of participation of the women in local electoral and governance process. Mainly, cultural ideology of the grass root society with regard women still has not overcome existing traditional barriers. It should be modernized and changed. Therefore. General belief with regard the women and their role is still feudal oriented and backwardness. This ideology has been institutionalized. Political parties and their leadership also suffering on these

ideology, therefore, there are no proper and enough space for the women regarding actively participate in local governance process. Caused to Poverty and weak educational background of the bottom level citizens that politicians could manipulate people by using their economic and social capacities. Poverty is one of the crucial factors that misinterpret the rational thinking of the people with regard voting behavior at the electoral process. Politician could overcome rational choice of the people by giving mental and physical bribes for the poorest people of the grassroots. On the other hand, social power and thugs and violence political behavior of the politicians and their supporters groups has been made an undemocratic environment at the local electoral process. Therefore, there was a electoral phobia has been made by the politicians. Therefore, people cannot enjoyed their free choice or rationality with regard electoral events. Due to those reasons that enjoying voting right is converted as a deal in between voters and representatives.

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