

**PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT OF  
PUBLIC FACILITIES PROVIDED  
FOR COMMUNITIES THROUGH  
COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOs)**

**MASTER OF ARTS - LABOUR STUDIES**

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## ABSTRACT

Immediately after independence, Sri Lanka has made an attempt to improve the quality of life of people by way of implementing multi-sectoral development programmes adopting conventional type of " top down " strategy which has been similarly implemented during the colonial era.

The " top - down " development strategy is a bureaucratic method in which the decision making mechanism is in the hands of higher authorities comprising of personnel of the central agency. The significant feature of this strategy is that the beneficiary communities have been isolated from the implementation and the maintenance process of development activities.

With the lapse of time it has been identified that strategies of this nature have not helped to address the issues pertaining to the country's development as expected . This situation encouraged the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) to change the development scenarios and to introduce participatory management concept for its various development programmes , in which overall responsibility of managing development activities are to be under taken by the beneficiary community, as an alternative strategy.

During last decades, the GOSL has implemented several multi-sectoral development programmes adopting the new concept. The problem in this regard is that there is no proven evidence to show that such development programmes introduced under the new strategy have been able to reach the goals expected by development agencies. Furthermore no acceptable participatory management model has been developed to explore its strengths and weaknesses even in future implementation of development programmes in the country.

Hence, this study has been carried out to observe the effectiveness of participatory management approach in the implementation of development programmes in order to ensure the sustainability of management by Community Based Organizations with the assistance of development oriented Non Government Organizations (NGOs).

The overall objective of the research was to study the degree of Community Involvement in managing rural water supply schemes through Community Based Organizations assisted by NGOs in Community Water Supply and Sanitation Projects implemented under the Ministry of Housing and Plantation Infrastructure.

Alawathupitiya – Damaduraya water supply project in Gampaha District has been selected as a sample for the study by using random sampling method. Secondary data for the research has been collected from relevant literature, reports, policy papers and documents. In addition, structured interviews and discussions have been done with respective officials and beneficiaries of the water supply scheme.

The study revealed that the attempt made by the Water Supply and Sanitation Project to introduce participatory management concept for their programme has substantially achieved their goals. The remarkable achievement of the programme is that it has been able to establish a strong Community Based Organization to undertake the management of water scheme. It was also observed that the application of participatory strategies in the water supply programme has created an organized, skillful and committed leadership in the village. It was further found, as a result of mobilization process implemented in the village by the CWSSP, the communities were able to realize their capabilities and rights to join main stream of the development process.

However, during implementation of the programme, in some instances, the project was in the forefront while the community was behind, showing the traditional bureaucratic symptoms. In some instances, the project appeared to be a donor, and the community, a receiver.

On the basis of the results of the study Researcher is making the following recommendation to consider in the application of participatory management approach in similar development programmes.

- It is desirable to design for smaller targets and slow down the speed of the project implementation to enable the beneficiaries to involve effectively in management.
- The officials who are supposed to act as facilitators should be well aware of the Participatory Development approach.
- Legal recognition in confirming authority of the Community Based Organizations should be established and more linkages with external development agencies in the public sector as well as in the private sector to be provided.

This report is comprised of six chapters. Chapter one (01) discusses the methodology used to carry out the study. Chapter two (02) explains the participatory management and the private & public sector development programmes. Chapter three (03) describes the Roles of NGOs and CBOs in the participatory development process. Chapter four (04) discusses about the participatory management approach and Rural Water Supply (drinking) programmes. Chapter five (05) analyses the effectiveness of Participatory Management Strategy implemented in the Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project. Finally, the conclusions and the recommendations are described in chapter six (06) of the report.