



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## A STUDY ON LOCAL SELF GOVERNANCE AND ITS INTERACTION WITH STATE ASSEMBLY IN TAMIL NADU

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**ABSTRACT :** The relation between local self-government bodies and state assemblies forms the backbone of democratic governance. Local self government bodies are empowered to manage local affairs, allocate resources, and make decisions that directly impact their respective communities . They underscores the importance of community participation, decentralized governance, and addressing local needs tailored to the specific socio-economic and cultural context of the region. Effective functioning of these local government bodies marks the development of the state. In present days , State governments are not willing to devolve power to the local bodies , which affects or reduces the importance and the role of existing local self government bodies in the country. The objective of my research is to know whether local self government bodies effectively communicate the needs of your community to the state assembly and to find the major challenge that affects the interaction between local government and the State Assembly. Sample frame is 200. Major findings in this research is that local government bodies exist in Tamilnadu where they do not have an effective relation with the state assembly due to no strong bond between the members in local self government bodies and the members of legislative assembly in their constituency. And the major challenge which affects the relation between them are inadequate representation to voice for local issues and political instability. From this research , researcher have concluded that platforms established must be done in an effective manner in all territories within the state to address the local issues to the state assembly. Educating citizens about the role of local self government and their rights , responsibilities and coordination with members in local government can create an effective way to address the local issues to the state assembly .

**KEY WORDS:** Local Governance , State assembly, Representation , local government bodies, Development.

### INTRODUCTION:

Local self governance is the process in which local communities have the authority and autonomy to govern their own affairs. It involves empowering local entities such as villages, towns, or districts and emphasises citizen participation, allowing individuals within a community to actively engage in decision-making processes that impact their lives. Various dynasties and governments were ruled India but they all highly focused in local administration especially promoting country's regional development at grassroot levels :

**Ancient India** : In Vedic era ; Sabha , Samiti and Vidatha were the local authorities which were mentioned in Rig Veda . Council of tribal elders were called as Sabha and the general assembly of tribes were known as Samiti . They both have equal power to give advice to the king and the king's main duty to obey their orders . And later under Mauryan and Gupta empire, villages were headed by gramika and their duty was to govern the village. Absence of women in leadership roles after the early Vedic period reflects the patriarchal societies which are more prevalent in ancient India.

**Medieval India** : Under Delhi sultanate and Mughal empire, Villages had officials to deal on various responsibilities in local administration. Patwari - one who collects taxes , Muqaddam - one who deals in administration. Choudhrie - one who deals on local issues within his territory with the sarpanch's support. The responsibilities of local authorities: maintaining cleanliness, education, settling disputes among people in the locality.

**British India** : Lord rippon's resolution 1882 and Royal commission report 1909 express the importance of local self governance which be exists in democratic country. In British rule, village is a basic unit of local self governance and in local bodies it must exist a strong majority of elected members , which reflects people participation in electing their representatives. They also highly stated that state control over local bodies be indirect rather than direct . Adequate financial resources given to them to carry out their activities . They introduced municipalities which be the local council in both towns and cities .

**Modern India and its future:** Ambedkar was against the village panchayats by highlighting ancient Indian administration in which women were not allowed to express their leadership role due to gender discrimination. Due to caste based inequalities , A particular class of people were given more privileges and no others were allowed to express his views against him . He condemns the village as a den of ignorance and a place where no one is interested to listen to other people's views. But Gandhiji has highlighted villages as essential for achieving genuine freedom , He envisioned an idealized village in his imagination , he aimed to build a utopian village that symbolized the way forward for the nation's development.

Most of the members in the constituent assembly have highlighted Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts on local self governance . Santhanam , Krishnaswamy Ayyar and majority members have given importance to the need for organizing village panchayats and providing them essential necessary powers for self governance and they have highlights importance of decentralized governance at gross root level and empowers village panchayats as units of self governance . And it was inserted in the constitution: Dr. B.R Ambedkar highlighted the distinction between "State" and "the State." In the Directive Principles section, "the State" includes not only the central and state governments but also local authorities like village panchayats or district boards , which can be seen in article 12 of Indian constitution. The Constitution of India ensures to promote democracy through public participation at the most basic level and to oversee the country's regional development.

In present days , State governments are not willing to devolve power to the local bodies , which affects or reduces the importance and the role of existing local self government bodies in the country. Still issues faced by people in this locality remain for more than 1 year . Research completely focuses on how the interaction between local governance and state assembly is being effective at present to fulfill the needs of the community

and what's the major challenge which reduces the role of local governance and its interaction with state assembly.

## OBJECTIVES:

- To know whether local self government bodies effectively communicate the needs of your community to the State Assembly.
- To find the major challenge that affects the interaction between local government and the State Assembly.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

**Divakara K. (2021)** He has mentioned the different thoughts and opinions of Gandhiji and Dr. B.R Ambedkar on gram panchayats and Establishments of Village Panchayats in India . He concluded that maximum members in constituent assembly emphasizing the need for autonomous village panchayats, reflected the Gandhian idea of self-sufficient villages as units of governance and self-rule. Also the members highlighted India's ancient heritage and the enduring importance of villages in its history.

**Dr. Namita kumari (et al ) 2022,** She has mentioned that to analyze the relationship between state and local bodies relationship in India. She has concluded that States in the country are not so interested in devolving power to the local bodies, she highlights more that decentralization is an essential element which reflects democracy.

**Chatterjee D et al (2022)** He has mentioned the role of local self government in India during Covid 19 pandemic . He concluded that village councils and district authorities are super important during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. They help gather essential information about how the virus is spreading in different areas. This data helps bigger government bodies, like state agencies, make the right decisions to fight the virus.

**Jha, S.N. (2001)** He has stated that Due to India's diversity, it's important to have decentralized planning and administration, decision-making should happen more locally rather than from a central authority which helps to the unique needs of different regions and preserves the diverse cultural aspects while ensuring better development suited to each area.

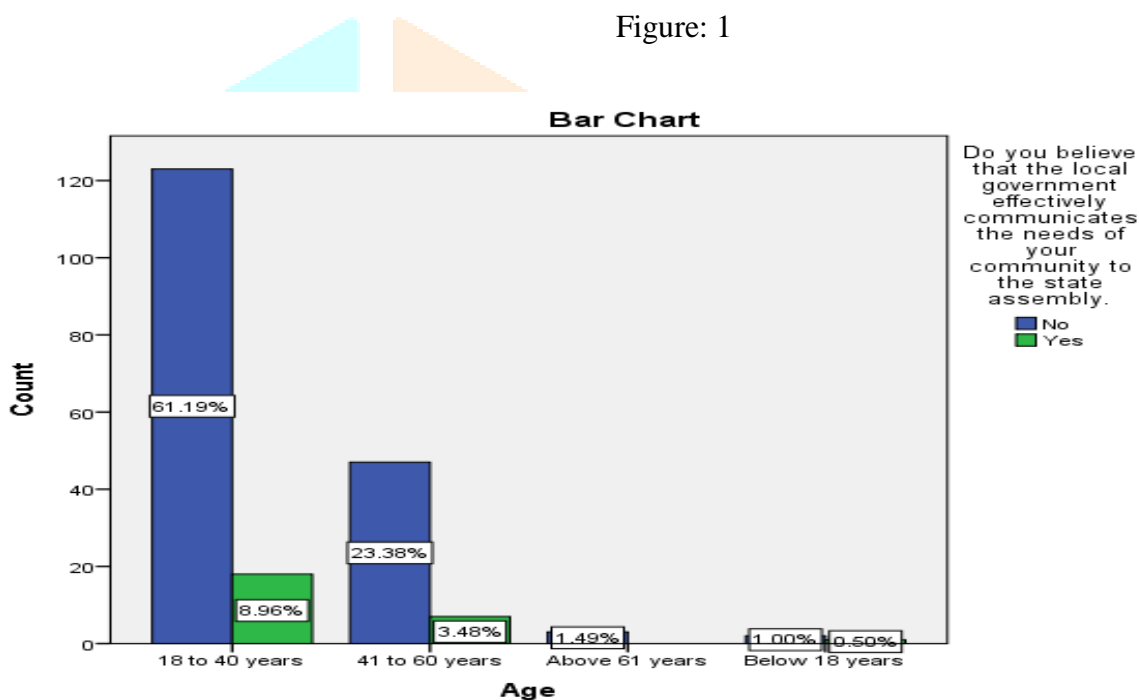
**Mukherjee Amitav (1999)** He has points out that conflict between local politicians and politicians at higher levels both state and national, Disagreements between local politicians and the administrative officials and Conflicts arising from the interests of certain groups versus the interests of local politicians are the major things which affects the relation between democratic governments .

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

The research method used here is Empirical research. The sampling method used here is convenient sampling. The total sample size is 200 . Samples were collected from various cities and villages within Tamil Nadu . Independent variables are gender, age, educational qualifications, place of residence, occupation. Dependent variables covers various aspects such as effective communication of local government, Main challenge affects interaction between state assembly and local governance , performance of local government, interaction between local government and state assembly in addressing issues, people participation, local governing bodies activities in development, equal opportunities to women, responsiveness on local issues in state assembly . Spss has been used here for the analysis part

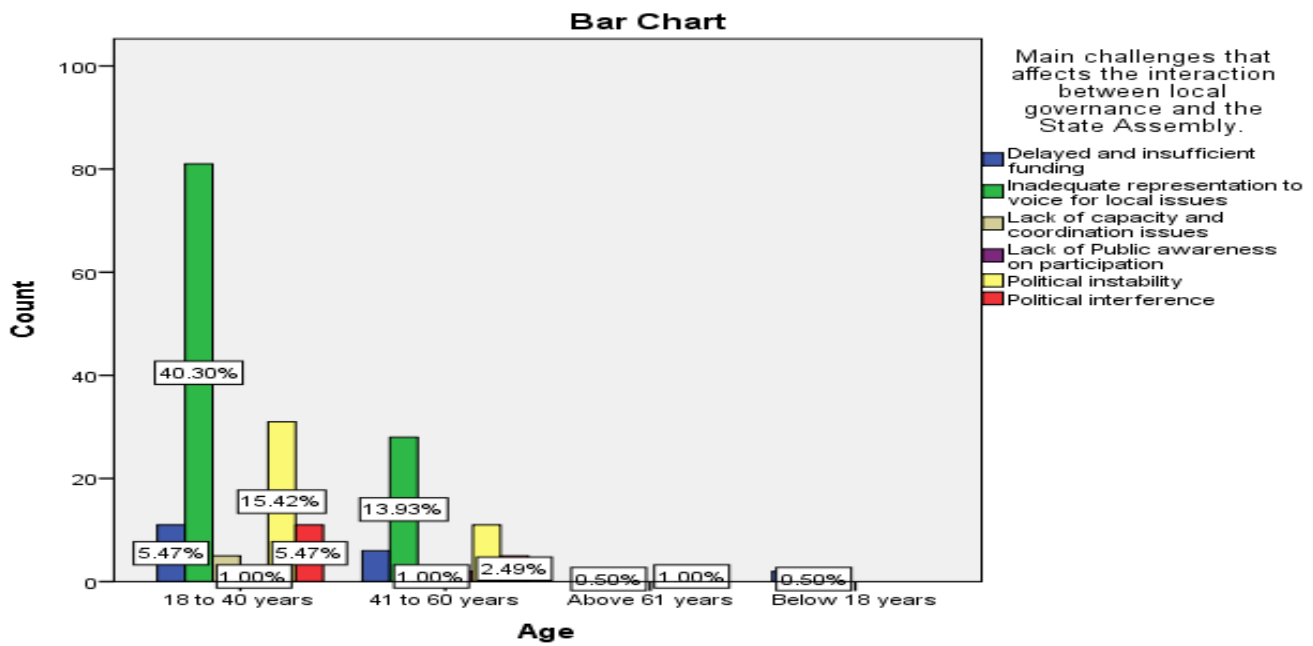
**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION :**

Figure: 1



Legend: Figure 1 shows the age of the respondents and their opinion on local government performance on communicating the needs of society to the state assembly in an effective manner.

Figure: 2



Legend: Figure 2 shows the age of the respondents and their views on major challenges which affects the interaction of local governance and the state assembly .

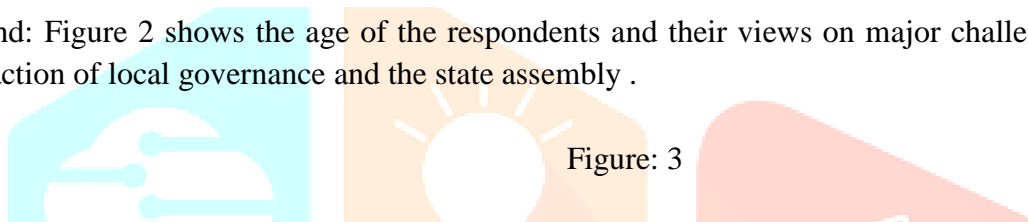
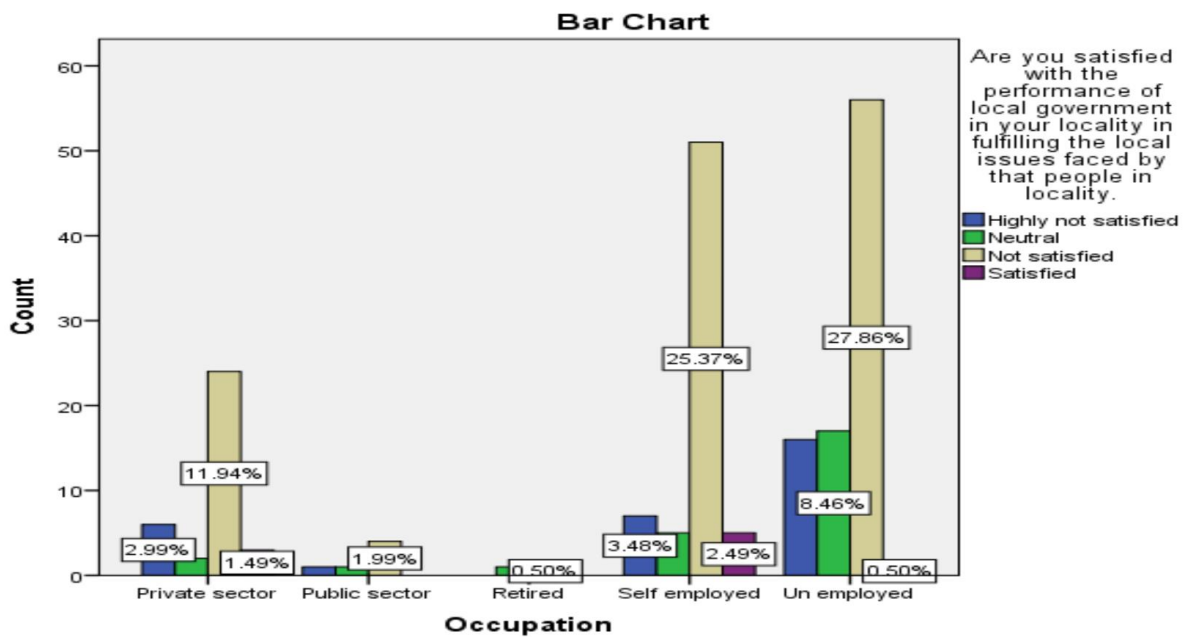
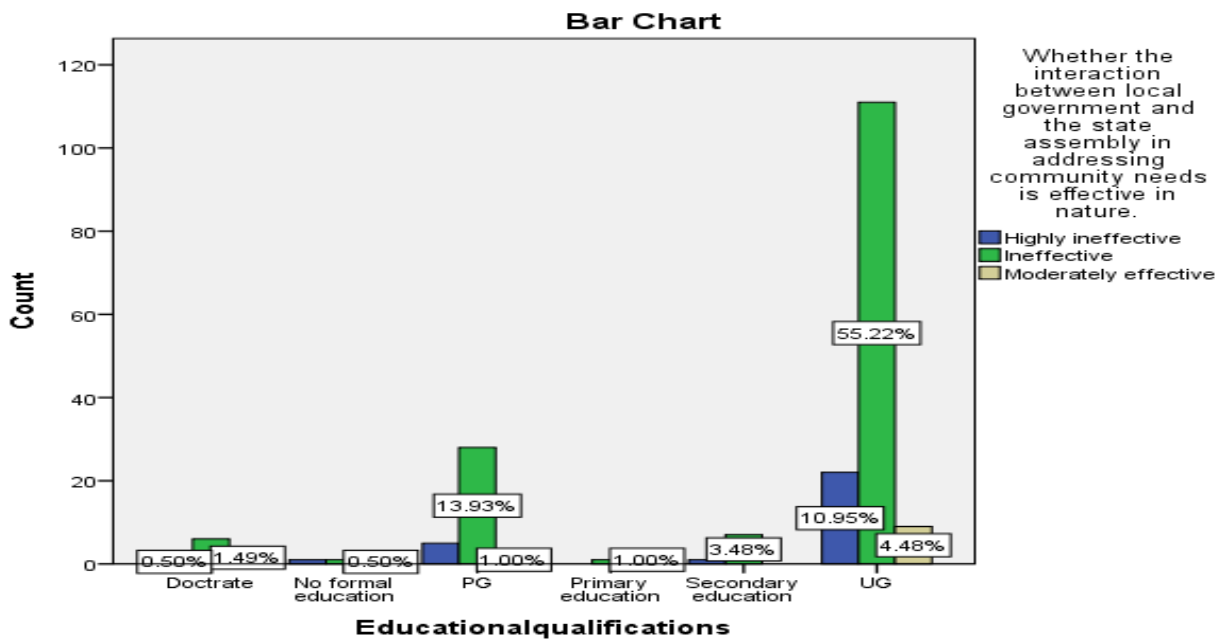


Figure: 3



Legend: Figure 3 represents the occupation of the respondents and their satisfaction with the performance of local government in their locality in fulfilling the issues faced by people in their locality.

Figure 4 :



Legend: Figure 4 represents the educational qualifications of the respondents and their opinion on interaction between local government and the state assembly in addressing community needs which is effective in nature.

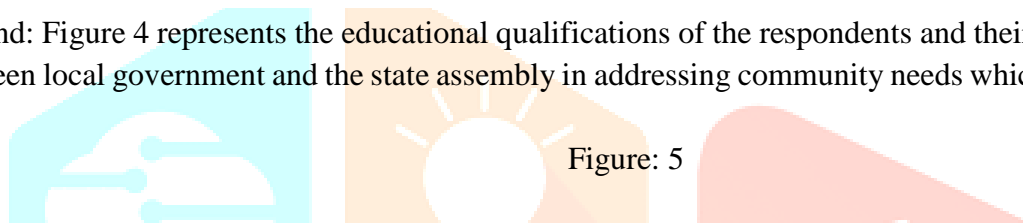
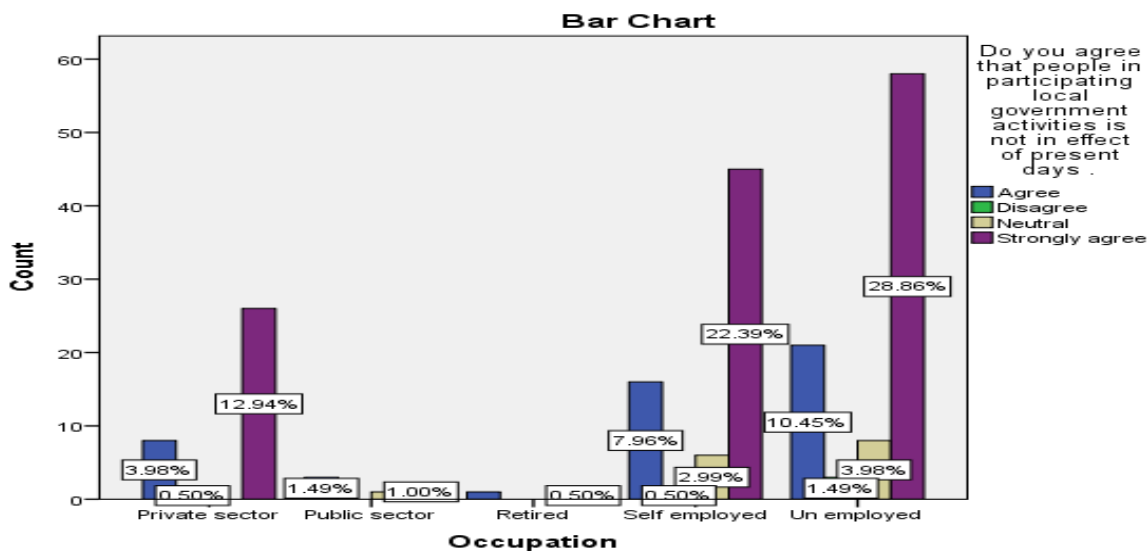
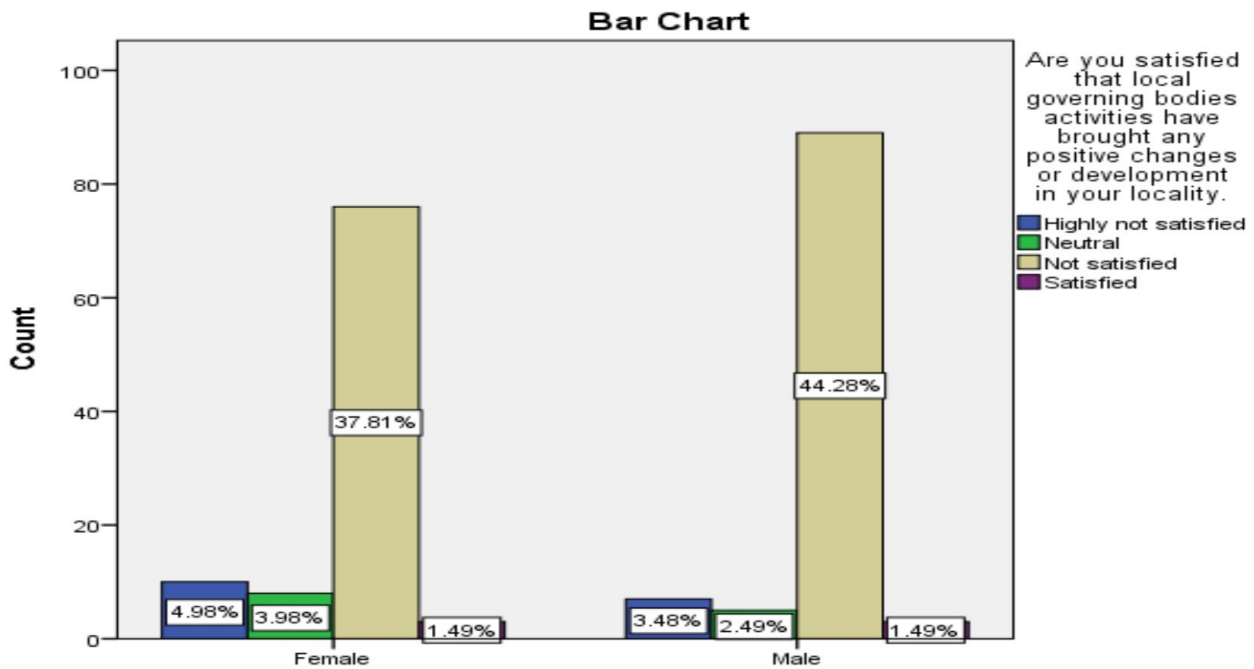


Figure: 5



Legend: Figure 5 represents the occupation of the respondents and their views on agreebially that people participating in local government activities is not effective in present days.

Figure: 6



Legend: Figure 6 represents the gender of the respondents and their satisfaction on local government activities in bringing up positive changes or development in their locality.

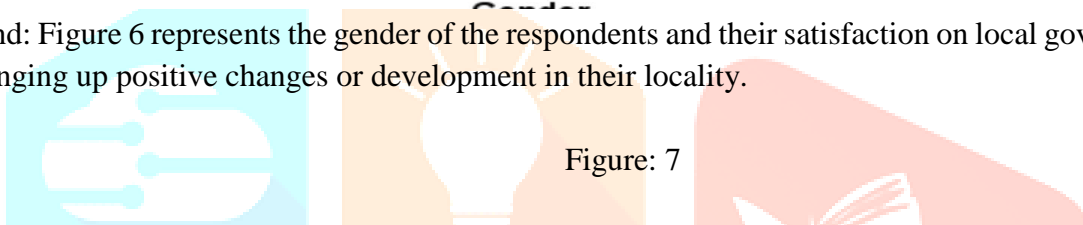
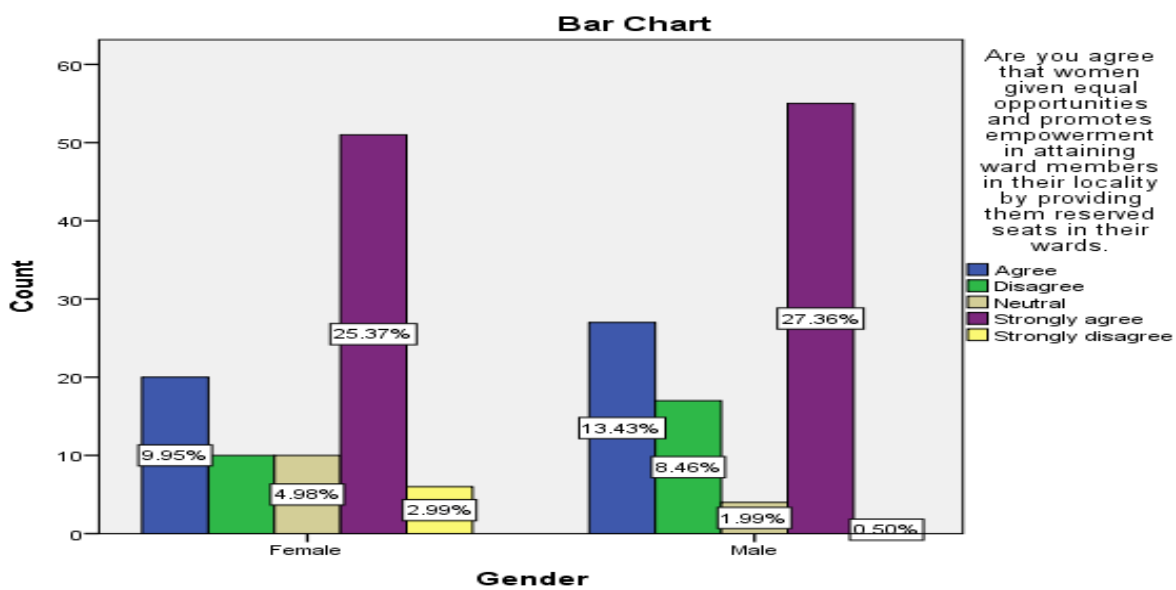


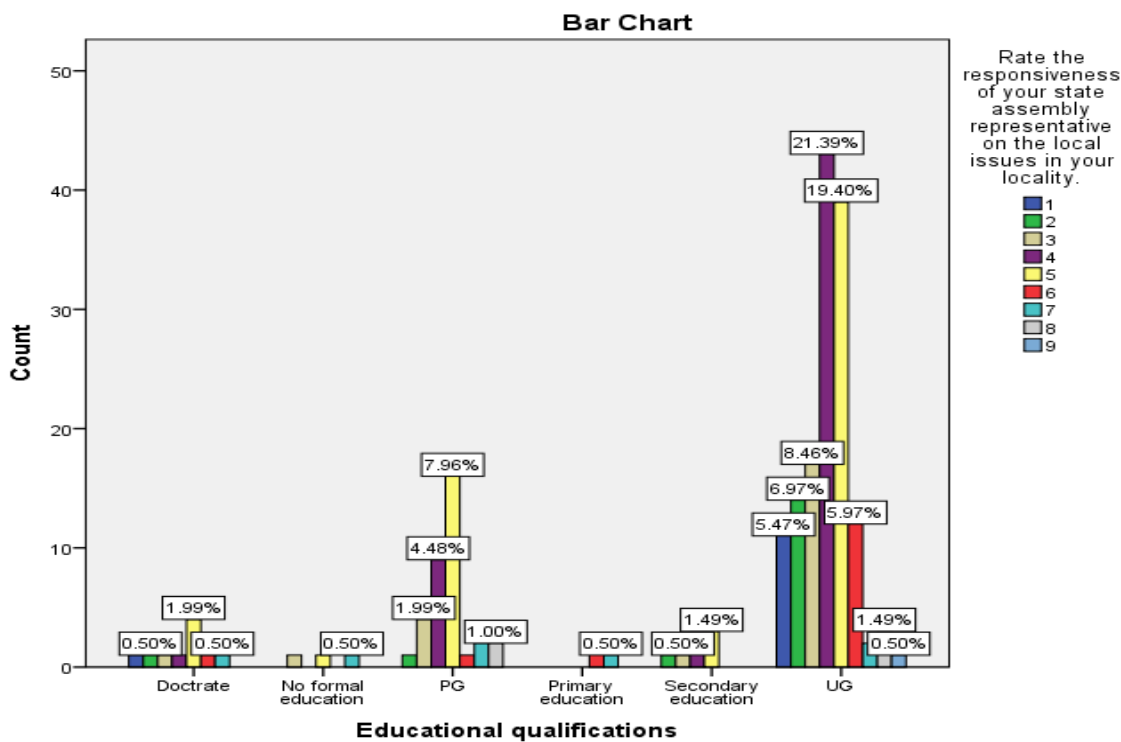
Figure: 7



Legend: Figure 7 represents the gender of the respondents and their agreeability that women are given equal opportunities and promotes empowerment in attaining ward members in their locality by providing them reserved seats in their wards.



Figure: 8



Legend: Figure 8 represents the educational qualifications of the respondents and their opinion on responsiveness of their state assembly representative from their constituency on the local issues in their locality.

## RESULT:

Figure:1 reveals that respondents from 18 to 40 years stated (8.96%) - Yes , (61.19%) - No that respondents from 41 to 60 years stated (23.38%) - No , (3.48%) - Yes on local government performance on communicating the needs of society to the state assembly in an effective manner.

Figure: 2 shows that most of the respondents from 18 to 40 years (40.30%) and 41 to 60 years (13.93%) highly stated that inadequate representation to voice for local issues is a major challenge which affects the interaction of local governance and the state assembly , respondents from 18 to 40 years (15.42%) and 41 to 60 years (2.49%) stated political instability as a major challenge which affects the interaction of local governance and the state assembly than other challenges.

Figure:3 shows that most of the respondents who were unemployed (27.86%) , self employed (25.37%) , private sector (11.94%) and public sector (1.99%) have stated that they are not satisfied with the performance of local government in their locality in fulfilling the issues faced by people in their locality. Respondents who were unemployed (8.46%) , self employed (3.48%) and private sector (2.99%) have stated that they are in neutral and the respondents who were unemployed (8.46%) , self employed (3.48%) and private sector (2.99%) have stated that they are highly not satisfied with the performance of local government in their locality in fulfilling the issues faced by people in their locality.

Figure:4 shows that most of the respondents who are undergraduates (55.22%) , postgraduates (13.93%) , doctorate (1.49%) have stated that interaction between local government and the state assembly in addressing community needs which is ineffective in nature. Respondents who are undergraduates (10.95%) , secondary education (3.48%) , postgraduates (0.50%) have stated that interaction between local government and the state assembly in addressing community needs which is highly ineffective in nature and respondents who are undergraduates (4.48%) , primary education (1%) , no formal education (0.50%) have stated that interaction



between local government and the state assembly in addressing community needs which is moderately effective in nature .

Figure:5 shows that most of the respondents who are unemployed (28.86%) , self-employed (22.39%) , and the private sector (12.94%) have strongly agreed that people participating in local government activities are not effective in the present days. Respondents who are unemployed (10.45%) , self employed (7.96%) , private sector (3.98%) , public sector (1%) have agreed that people participating in local government activities is not effective in present days , Respondents who are unemployed (3.98%) , self employed (2.99%) are in neutral and respondents who are unemployed (1.49%) , self employed (0.50%) , private sector (0.50%) have disagreed that people participating in local government activities is not effective in present days.

Figure:6 shows that most of the respondents who are (44.28%) male and (37.81%) female have stated that they were not satisfied with local government activities in bringing up positive changes or development in their locality. Respondents who are (3.48%) male and female (4.98%) have stated they were not highly satisfied with local government activities in bringing up positive changes or development in their locality than neutral and satisfied level.

Figure: 7 shows that most of the respondents (27.36%) male and (25.37%) female have strongly agreed and (13.43%) male, female (9.95%) have agreed that women are given equal opportunities and promotes empowerment in attaining ward members in their locality by providing them reserved seats in their wards. Respondents who are male (8.46%) and (1.99%) , female (4.98%) for both have disagreed and are neutral on the importance of women participation .

Figure: 8 shows that respondents mostly undergraduates on rating level from 2 to 5 level highly stating that state assembly representatives from their constituency are not responsive on the local issues in their locality. Also all the respondents from all educational qualifications have also accepted the same .

## DISCUSSION:

### Challenges:

#### 1. Inadequate representation to voices for local issues and Delayed insufficient funding :

The most important element in local self governance is people's representatives' role in addressing their issues which marks the vision of Gandhiji and most of the leaders in constituent assembly on development of democracy at the grass root level . In the present, the issue of inadequate representation for local issues often arises when the voices of local communities are not sufficiently heard or considered in decision-making processes. The emphasis on inadequate representation among younger respondents signals a desire for more inclusive, participatory, and representative governance structures that align with their values, experiences, and aspirations for positive change within their communities. But , today most of the local issues in a particular locality remain the same and no solution to that issue has not been found for more than one year . Problems like Damaged roads , not aware of schemes introduced by the government which helps in individual development, poor upkeep of street lights etc where some of the local issues exist in the territories of local self governing bodies for long lasting years is due to people elected representatives in local government have not raised his voice on these issues. Researchers have found that especially most of the roads in rural areas and in urban areas remain in damaged condition and often accidents take place due to no proper maintenance. Roads lasted for more than 5 years and no members of the local government have taken any step towards its reconstruction. More welfare associations and NGOs were assisted along with the people who reside in that particular locality to raise their voice for the issue which has been present for many years with no response on it . At the time of elections, Political parties came forward and promised to solve that problem but after

elections no actions were taken and no information given to the state governments about the issues faced in most of their territory. In Tamil Nadu , human wastes were mixed with the resources provided to people for drinking purposes but no voice was raised in those areas which questioned the role of local government representatives function. If once they came forward in solving the local issue in their locality , few people in that area practised corruption from the fund which was allocated for solving the issue and due to insufficient funds for expenses it would be a long lasting issue for more than years . Most of the roads , street lights etc..were still in damaged conditions due to corruption which acts as a basement for all challenges, Researchers findings says that Governments both central and state , allot some of funds in solving issues in gram panchayats and municipalities and representatives in local self government bodies also assists with them and starts to solve the problem but some of people belongs to political parties, working as a bureaucratic officer performs corruption from that fund which makes insufficient to complete the work and it be exists for long years .

## **2. Political instability and political interference:**

Political instability is also a major challenge to be placed before the effective interaction between local governance and state assembly. If a party or its alliance rules both state and union along with local level , it is a golden period which enables the representatives to voice for local issues and from them it gives awareness on individual development schemes introduced by the government to people that they can apply for it . Most of the schemes introduced by the central government be implemented in the state government in which they were act as a ruling party same this political party be governs the bodies under local government makes to benefit the schemes introduced by Government of both central and state. But if ruling party of either state or union is opposite to each other , awareness on policies implemented by government not gets aware to people in an effective manner and if representatives voice for their local issues to the elected representative of state assembly , if he belongs to opposite party it becomes challenge to accept his response . At the time of disasters or any hazard situations especially rural areas most of the areas were be still exists a huge impact in that area and it lasts for years and years. Due to cyclones and heavy rainfall,

especially most of the villages causes a huge impact in their locality and it be exists in a month it be difficult to be recovered from the cities and local governing bodies which had a good impact in speed recovery from the disasters . Those problems faced in most of the rural areas which be exists for a long time be lasting due to instability in politics and lack of interaction between the members who were representatives elected by people in all levels of government. Also members in governing bodies forget to remember that they were appointed to do service to the people and to solve the issues in their locality rather than it's not the platform to be self sufficient. Functions of local self government , acts as the first democratic platform to the citizens of that country to approach , and to solve that problems it's the aim in establishing panchayat raj system marks the development of democracy in grassroot levels but the role of members in state legislative assembly , members of parliament and bureaucrats actions over it lacks the importance and the role of local self governance which creates a negative impact on local self governance and its functions makes them to feel that it exists only as a system.

## **3. Lack of capacity and coordination issues and lack of public awareness on participation:**

Domercacy be in effective in a country when the corrdrination between people and Government have a strong relation between them. At the time of pandemic, most of the local self government bodies associated with both central and state have worked with them to stop the spread of the virus. Due to their effective coordination, makes India to be surprised other than most of the countries, in those days of pandemic , most of them were recovered and there is less death rate which is compared with most of the European nations which had huge death rate . This stunning achievement was done due to coordination between the local self governing bodies to governments of both central and state . But the same, coordination between people was not more effective which affects the development of the country. Gram Sabha the element which is made to

involve public participation in addressing the issues in their locality to the representatives which they raise those issues and pressurise them to solve the issue. But . Most of the areas Gram sabha's were not takes place in a effective manner and most of them were not aware of the importance of Gram Sabha and its functions in democracy. So most of them not involve them in Gram Sabha which not acts as a platform to address the issues which be lasts for lasting years . Lack of aware on local self governance and its role in importance of democracy at grass root level makes the citizens not knowing about their role in public participation and their involvement. So most of the issues were still be exists for long years . People in informal sectors also people who were below poverty line had most of schemes introduced by government but Gram Sabha acts as a platform to address the schemes and policies implemented for them were not implemented to them , this public participation promotes equality by granting them equal rights.

Representatives elected by people in that locality, people's participation in decision making and addressing issues to the representatives in local self governing bodies were the main elements in local self governance and above mentioned challenges affects the interaction between local self governance and state assembly .

( Figure 2) .

### **People participation in public activities:**

Most of the respondents have stated that due to existing local issues for a long time creates a bad impact on local government in their locality which makes them lose their interest in participating in Sabha meetings. Many of them highlighted that Gram Sabha meetings were not done in an effective manner in some localities which do not provide opportunities to citizens to voice their issues. And researchers have found that most of them were not aware of the importance of local governance. Grama Sabha acts as a check on local government and prevents it from misusing its power and platform to raise their issues before the elected member's council. Public participation reflects the importance of democratic governance gross root level . Through which lack of public participation acts as a challenge which affects the interaction between local self governance and state assembly. (Figure 5).

### **Local Governing bodies and development in locality:**

The research findings show that a significant number of both male and female respondents aren't happy with the efforts of local governments in improving their communities. They were dissatisfied about issues like damaged roads, drainage, tourist buildings and schools in their locality which were a lasting issue for years , which made them question the role of governing bodies in solving it . Complaints about those issues were addressed before them but no proper response and no action creates a negative impact on local government and affects the people participation. But some of them were neutral and satisfied that the local self government bodies actively with people's cooperation have taken effective measures from protecting and providing basic necessities to people during pandemic and during natural disasters . They have also highlighted that cleaning water resources which was affected due to pollution, cleaning streets and collecting wastes in their locality marks the role of local self government members which their role creates some of positive impact on people in that locality . ( Figure 6) .

### **Women empowerment in Local Self Governance:**

A considerable number of both male and female respondents strongly supported the idea that women are given equal opportunities and empowerment by providing reserved seats for them as ward members in their localities. They have stated that these measures eradicated the practice of treating women as a subordinate thing by patriarchal society , and brought a change in making way for women in participating democratic activities which developed their leadership roles , which was not seen in ancient local administration systems. They also express that in present days if a woman be a member in council her opinions and views are not considered by persons due to the reason that she is a woman . In history specifically in Vedic and ancient

dynasty ages women were treated just as property and their rights were taken off from them , but today granting women equal status to women and allowing them in public participation in decision making reflects the development in modern society by granting them special privileges in political and educational institutions marks the development towards modern society. **(Figure 7).**

### **SUGGESTION:**

People participation is essential thing which be done today . In present, education must be given to younger generation on local self governance and their role in effective construction of democracy at grassroots levels and giving aware on each individual's rights and duties makes them to participate actively in those platforms which promotes public participation and it makes them to identify the cause for those issues . Also , awareness laws must be known to the citizens on penalties granted if responsibilities were not fulfilled to each higher officials can be a tool to address their issues with a courage and gives pressure to the representatives to do their work in effective and proper way . Also this acts to create representatives who performs their role effectively and it leads to development of their locality by addressing those issues to higher officials in both union and state government members can be a drastic change which acts a effective democracy in our country.

### **CONCLUSION:**

From this , researcher have concluded that platforms established must be done in an effective manner in all territories within the state to address the local issues to the state assembly. People participation acts a check on local government and prevents misusing power; it makes elected representatives their issues and he be answerable to people. Educating citizens about the role of local self government and their rights , responsibilities and coordination with members in local government can create an effective way to address the local issues to the state assembly. It fulfils the vision of mahatma on development of democracy in grassroot level marks the development of entire nation.

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