

An Exploration of Folk Culture in a rural community: Cultural Traditions, Practices and Beliefs of Rotawewa Village in Sri Lanka

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Rural sociology has been a study area of sociology for decades since most of the world population is estimated to be living in rural communities. In Sri Lanka too these agrarian communities comprise most of country's population. Understanding the structure of such communities provides better insights into rural development. The first step of this is to examine the characteristics of such communities and their cultures. This research is a study of the folk culture of a rural community living in Rotawewa village in Polonnaruwa. It examines their folk culture with the help of narrative interviews done with village elders and a participant observation method of the major village festival: "Dewala Mangalya" which they hold annually to offer tributes to the local deities and Gods. The research uncovers the unique traits of their folk culture including local polytheism which sets them apart from other communities surrounding them. Further, the research uncovers the important characteristics of this folk culture such as symbolic, dynamic and manifest nature of culture, socialization etc through content and thematic analysis. By conducting this preliminary study, the research aims to reveal the unique nature of this community which often goes unnoticed and proposes the need for future research into the nature of the village culture of this community.

Keywords: *Community life, cultural traditions, folk culture, rural society, village culture*