

**14****A Study of Role of Buddhist Monks in the Process of  
Conflict Resolution**

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**Abstract**

Conflict can be defined as a serious disagreement or argument between two people, group of people or among group of people. Prevention of conflicts in a sustainable way is essential to ensure the wellbeing of individual and society at large. Conflicts have spread rapidly in the modern society as a result of various social, economic and political factors. In this context, there is a critical role of religious preachers regarding reducing conflicts and promoting peace and harmony. Thus, the main objective of this study was to identify the roles of Buddhist monks in the process of conflict resolution in the modern society while investigating types of conflicts and nature of them. The empirical research study was conducted in nine provinces in Sri Lanka. Data were collected from a sample of 250 participants including 20 Buddhist monks, 5 Buddhist nuns, 50 government officers, 175 community members through purposive sampling method. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used as primary data collection techniques based on the functional method. The study revealed that

the majority (44%) had identified that the most critical conflict in the modern society of Sri Lanka was the ethnic issue. Most of the sample (60%) had indicated that the highest impacted issue at the individual level was the economic issue. Respondents' views of the need of intervention of Buddhist monks in the process of conflict resolution of family issues, intervention to the critical social issues such as violation of human rights, intervention to the politics and party politics were 77%, 60%, 40% respectively. A majority (75%) had indicated that the role of Buddhist monks is necessary in critical situations of the country such as constitutional amendments. But, most of respondents of the sample had indicated that, it is important to consider disciplinary rules (*Vinaya*), guidance of most venerable Thero (*Nayaka Thero*) regarding intervention of Buddhist monks in the process of conflict resolution. Finally, it has been suggested that providing guidance to the governance without party politics, providing support to the economic improvement of people and intervention to the social and community services and development are significant in the roles of Buddhist monks in addition to spiritual development.

**Keywords:** Conflict Resolution, Buddhist Monks, Role, Disciplinary Rules and Modern Society.