

## **Recent trends in traditional industries in Sri Lanka: a case study on rattan industry in Mirigama Divisional Secretariat Division**

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In Sri Lanka there are many natural resources that are suitable to promote traditional industries. The rattan industry occupies a major position in the field of handicrafts. This industry limited to certain areas in the country has benefits as well as adverse effects. This industry has a flourishing history to nearly 300 years in the Radawadunna village in the Divisional Secretariat of Mirigama seems to be not much of a lucrative industry when one considers the social and economic status of the people who have taken to this craft.

Rattan tree, which belongs to the palm family, is limited to the continents of Asia and Africa; therefore, it has become a traditional industry in these continents. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, this industry is centred on a few villages both in the dry and wet zone. The rattan industry, which makes use of local and foreign raw material, may have certain adverse effects, and the identification of disadvantages in the industry and the perseverance of remedies are the objectives of this case study. Several Grama Niladari Divisions of Radawadunna were selected and 56 families were identified to random sampling survey. Get data through elderly persons in the area and officers like Grama Niladhari's were taken as resource persons. To collected data by interviews, people engage in selling rattan products were selected at random. They were given a questionnaire to answer. This study reveals that a majority of residents in these areas have been engaged in traditional handicrafts for long time. But they are not financially well off.

Due to the scarcity of raw material, high prices of raw material and lack of training these people are unable to produce rattanware that is suitable to the modern market. Their products also face problems in quality as a result. The products cannot fetch satisfactory prices. The prices fluctuate constantly. The case study that was conducted helped to identify the setbacks of the rattan industry. Under the circumstance, the people engaged in the traditional rattan industry are moving themselves away from this wonderful industry. The Rattan industry is an environmental friendly handicraft. However, through this research we can identify that this industry is set to face many challenges in the future.

**Key words:** Traditional industries, Local investment, Palm family rattan industry, Environmental friendly