

## **Traditional Management Systems in Temple village**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Temple villages or the Devala villages in the ancient Sri Lankan landscape play a major role in the society. There are hundreds of Viharas and Devalas throughout the country, which were built with the direct sponsorship of different kings and regional leaders during different eras. The Viharas are dedicated to Buddha while, Devalas are dedicated to different deities. The kings or the leaders who built those to fulfill their religious vows, but they wanted to ensure that the long term survival of these temples even after their lifetime. The Vihara and Devala had two different tasks in the Sri Lankan society. Buddhism, as a philosophy shows the path to a better lifestyle. But, through the tradition of worshiping gods, people wished good health, wealth and prosperity for them and on the other way the bad for their enemies. There were Buddhist priests in Viharas to conduct rituals and continue the Buddhist traditions while the rituals in the Devalas were conducted by lay custodians. Although, there was a clear difference within the two sectors, the management system was similar, as those were established by the same rulers. For the long term survival of the temple, they allocated hundreds of acres of lands in the name of the temple. According to the management system, people were permitted to live and cultivate those lands, but they had to offer different tasks towards the temple in return. The community believed that it gain benefits for them for a better life and so that they were dedicated to that duty. Those duties they performed towards the temple improved their skills and they were able to find additional income through that. Therefore, a well skilled people with tangible and intangible talents were formed and those skills were continued from generation to generation, while ensuring the long term survival of those temples.

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