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***Navagraha Shanthikarma* (Nine planet ritual) in Southern Province, Sri Lanka**

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Shanthikarma rituals are based upon culture and beliefs of the people. They are usually performed when a person is having problems such as ill health, difficulties in day to day life etc. The purpose of a *shanthikarma* is to get relief from such problems. One of such *shanthikarmas* practiced in Sri Lanka is *Navagraha shanthikarma*, the ritual that makes offerings to nine planets.

In this study attention has been paid to *Navagraha shanthikarma* practiced in Southern Province in Sri Lanka. Three villages, namely Maramba, Poramba, and Lenama were selected as the area of research.

Main objective of the research was to identify the effects of *Navagraha shanthikarma* on lives of people in these rural areas. The secondary objectives were to identify the different *shanthikarma* practices found in the three main dancing traditions in Sri Lanka (Up country, Low country and Sabaragamuwa) and to examine the concepts of nine planets among the rural folks. Also it was attempted to identify the nature of disturbances, troubles and ill fates etc. which were believed to be the bad effects of the planets.

Historical observation and comparative methods were used in the study. Data gathering was done through informal interviews and observation of *shanthikarma*.

It was concluded that people irrespective of their social status are in the belief that nine planets influence their lives and day to day activity. They firmly believe that bad influence of planets can be avoided by performing *Navagraha shanthikarma*.

Key words: *Shanthikarma, Faith, Believes, Offerings*