

**A Study on the Awareness of Scholars regarding the Components of the Stupa
with reference to University of Kelaniya**

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The Stupa could be identified as a supreme symbol representing the Lord Buddha the most revered and venerated religious leader of Buddhists throughout the world. The Stupa commands a prominent place in the field of Buddhist architecture. The Stupa is also known as Seya, Chaitya, Thupaya, Vehera and Dagaba of which the primary meaning is relic chamber. The Stupa consists of six main components. They are the ‘Pesa Valalu’ (berms or terraces), ‘Dhattu Garbhaya’ (relic chamber), ‘Sathares Kotuwa’ (tee cube), ‘Devatha Kotuwa’ (cylindrical neck), ‘Koth Kerella’ (conical spire) or the ‘Kotha’. There is an identical meaning for each of these components. It is essential to recollect the meanings of these components when worshiping the Stupa. It creates a religious sentiment and acts as a cathartic agent in the mind of the devotee. Ascertaining the degree of awareness and reverence of Stupas within the present day Buddhists is the research problem of this study. The objective of this study is to ascertain the extent of knowledge of the different components of the Stupa and their meanings by scholars and to ascertain as to whether they indulge in worshipping Stupas as a means of catharsis. A sample of fifteen Buddhist Scholars from each of the faculties namely Social Sciences, Humanities, Management and Science in the University of Kelaniya was selected for this study. The questionnaire method was adapted as the instrument to collect data. The data analysis indicated that university scholars who are a well informed group do not possess a considerable knowledge regarding the Stupa, and that they merely worship the Stupas as an instrument of catharsis. As the final conclusion, the significance of the awareness of people regarding Stupas could be identified as a means of permanence of Buddhism in the future.

Keywords – Lord Buddha, Stupa, Relics, Catharsis, University Scholars