

**An ethnological study on the traditional knowledge and belief systems of Sri Lanka which emerged when predicting the future through the indications of nature**

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**ABSTRACT**

One aspect of Sri Lankan identity is derived from traditional knowledge. It includes the knowledge which was gathered by people while they established in a certain geographical or environmental location. Experience gained through livelihood and interaction with the environment could produce knowledge distributed in many fields. The usage of this could ensure that it is inherited from one generation to another and continues till the present. These traditional knowledge systems could be described as possessing a certain ethnological value which needs to be studied.

It is understood that humans gain knowledge through their life experiences. Upcoming drought or rainy season is predicted by the changes occurring in the environment or by observing the behaviour of animals. However, some indicators which don't have a direct link with future events become societal perhaps due to such perspectives. These could be interpreted through ethnology as beliefs flourished from curiosity and fear. These will not be deeply analysed in this study as it does not aim at refuting the features of culture but highlighting them. The prime factor observed through the present study is the sensitivity and scrutiny of humans toward the earth and biosphere. The study takes an ethnological approach to explain the way Sri Lankan folk act on this matter and the way they predict the future by sensing the environment.

*Key words: Environmental Communication, Ethnology, Traditional knowledge*