

A Study of Contemporary Gender Concepts Reflected in Indigenous Shanthikarma Context

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Dance does not exist in isolation as an art form and can be identified as a socio-political phenomenon. Dance exists within society, and the dancer also exists as a social being. Based on the biological differences between men and women, society has created long-term changed social conditions for these two parties. That social condition can be simply described as gender. This distinction can be found in every unit of society. Sinhalese *Shanthikarma* is a male-centred belief system. *Shanthikarma* is a social process where women are not fully represented. Various interpretations of women are presented in the local *Shanthikarma* contents of *Udarata*, *Pahatarata* and *Sabaragamu*, and thus, the social attitudes of contemporary society towards women can be identified. What is the nature of the social position given to men and women in *Shanthikarma* contents? This is the basic problem for this research. This is conducted as a descriptive study, and the qualitative research method is followed. Written and unwritten sources are studied for data collection and conclusions are expected to be drawn through data analysis and interpretation. The main objective of this research is to study gender concepts in depth, considering indigenous pacification as a social process. Thus, it is possible to identify the influence of the gender discourse in contemporary society on the content of *Shanthikarma*.

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