

**An anthropological study of indigenous knowledge  
(with special reference to Vedda communities of Dambana and Henanigala)**

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For this study data were collected from the Veddas in Dambana and Hennigala in the period from 1994 to 1998. Basically researcher applied participant observation method for collecting data. The focal point of this study was the present nature of Vedda indigenous knowledge and examines how this knowledge has been affected by social change.

Minneriya, Minnippe, Mahaweli and other irrigation and colonization schemes in the Polonnaruwa and Mahiyangana regions during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1980s led to a shrinkage of the forest land and a steady influx of Sinhalese and Tamil colonists into the region. It led to the drastic changes in these societies. In fact a chaotic situation exists today due to the rapid changing phase of the Vedda society.

Here researcher has made an attempt to explore the nature and form of their indigenous knowledge under such circumstances.

**Key words:** Vedda, Indigenous knowledge, Social change, Tribal groups, Sri Lanka

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