

Geo-Sociological analysis of Sri Lankan Christian Fundamentalism: a case study of Kandy District

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At present religious studies have become one of the important titles of exploration within the context of social sciences. Religious fundamentalist is one of the widely discussed theme in this regard.

The objective of the present study is to examine the socio-economic factors that underline the propagating of Christian fundamentalist movements in Sri Lanka. It is reported that about 380 Christian fundamentalist associations can be found in various districts throughout the country. Also, it is reported that these organizations are funded by their parent bodies located mostly in western country. The research is based on case studies conducted in Mahanuwara Grama Niladari Division in Kandy district.

Primary data gathered through questionnaires, interviews and discussions were augmented by secondary data collected through literary survey. It was observed that these fundamentalist groups have been involved in education, health and sanitary activities in the area they work, in addition to the establishment of their churches. Researchers while attempting to identify causes for the rapid growth of the fundamentalist associations look deeply into reasons for the conversion of people belonging to established religions, through fundamentalism. About 59 Christian fundamentalist groups have started their activities in Kandy district, especially in the estate sector. Kalwary, Yohowas, Wittneses, Jesuses alive are some of such organizations.

The study found that the fundamentalist Christian organizations target poverty-ridden areas with marginalized people. Although the centers of established religions such as Buddhist temples, Roman Catholic churches are in this area. The marginalized people seem not to be receiving the support they want for the upliftment of the standards of their lives. This situation is being vigorously exploited by the fundamentalist in converting such people to their religion belief.

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