

Track - Folk Life and Culture

A STUDY ON CULTURAL IMPACT ON CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION IN SRI LANKA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO “HUMAN TRAFFICKING”

K. G. N. U. Ranaweera¹ M. P. A. A. Buddhadasa², R. B. N. Sunil³
ranaweera@sjp.ac.lk, anuruddhika@sjp.ac.lk, sunilrathnayake@sjp.ac.lk

Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
University of Sri Jayewardanepura

Culture consists of the beliefs, behaviors, objects and other characteristics that are common to the members of a particular group or society. Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values, and contribute to society. As culture is a part of routine activities of people, multiple relationships between “culture” and “human activities” can be identified. Norms and values create relationships with positive results while specific beliefs generate negative outcomes. Crime and criminal victimization are certain negative consequences produced by culture. According to “Palermo” declaration, “human trafficking” is a transnational organized crime, which means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. This research addresses the question of how culture affects criminal victimization which focuses on impact of culture on its human trafficking victimization in Sri Lanka. The sample consisted 100 victims of external human trafficking. Based on reported crimes to the Crime Investigation Department (CID), sample was selected through random sampling method. Structured questionnaire method was used to gather data, and tabulated using quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Results revealed that the concept of *kamma*, social detraction, black magic, misfortune of the land (*bhoomi dōsha*), and catastrophes by planets and stars (*graha dōsha*), evil mouths and eyes were identified as cultural reasons for human trafficking victimization. Moreover this cluster of cultural believes has created a “trap of victimization”. Making people aware of law and human rights, simplifying the legal procedure, implementing counseling and awareness programmes and introducing a hot line contact number could be recognized as the recommendations to eliminate cultural impact on criminal victimization and control and prevent human trafficking by reducing the victimization.

Key words: *Black magic, Criminal victimization, Culture, Human trafficking*