

# Anthropology Study on the Present Situation of Matrilineal Unilineal Descent Kinship System in Coastal Village - Panama

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## I. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM/ HYPOTHESIS

Traditional kinship system in Sri Lanka is an interesting topic of study. There are several types of marriage that are associated with a number of kinship systems that are built around a system of customs unique to Sri Lankan society. Almost all of them are based on early kinship systems and kinship lineages. Cross-kinship, monogamy marriage, "Binna" marriage, and polygamy are some of the forms of marriage recognized in Sri Lankan kinship. (Marguerite S. R. 1968). A large body of research has been done on the Sinhalese kinship system. Through these studies I intend to identify the present status of the Sinhala kinship system through this research. One of unique features, the matrilineal unilineal kinship system in Sri Lanka has been demolished and this research was conducted to study about the current status of this kinship system. (Ganewatta, P. 2006). At the present time, social relations are being eroded by the gradual erosion of kinship, and the kinship systems are being destroyed by the loss of relationships and the forbidden marriage. This research is the study of this situation which has now become a social problem.

## II. METHODOLOGY

Panama, the only coastal village in Sri Lanka which is still having this kinship system, situated in Ampara district, Eastern province of Sri Lanka. Majority of the population were Sinhalese but immigrated Tamil and Muslim people too are living here.

Interview method was used for data collection and data collection was conducted using a questionnaire consisting of open and closed questions. Data were collected by participant observation at the homes of the contributors, and the questionnaire was modified to improve the quality of the data when necessary.

In the sample selection, the village's data contributors were randomly selected, while the other data contributors were selected based on their ability to collect valuable data through the first databases. The research design was descriptive cross sectional study. Total informers were 30 who were selected randomly for focus group discussions.

During data collection, one participant spent an hour or an hour and a half at the site. Data contributors, particularly aged (over 50 years), were selected for data selection, this helps to understand the different between past and present of the kinship system. These factors were important to maintain the quality of the data collected from the data contributors. Majority of the informers were more than 50 years old, having more than 2 generations in a family, running "MahaGedara" concept, more than 20 years lived in the same village.

## III. DISCUSSION, RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

### *Discussion:*

Data obtained from the study showed that in this system of kinship, a large number of them had built up extensive family corporations. All the relatives of the parent have become close relatives under the linear descending method of the matrilineal parent. In the case of marital relations, the village has had marital relations with men and women from outside the village. In the case of property demarcation and existing rules, the mother will divide the property from their daughters to their daughters, and the male husband will not be entitled to a split marriage for this property. Almost all the people living in Panama village are relatives of the mother party. Due to the "Binna" marriages, women continue to live with their relatives even after getting married. The value of this kinship system is due to the fact that it is only in this area that the marriage of Sinhalese kinship is successful.

### *Results:*

This region, where the parent line is unilateral, has gradually changed. There are six possible outcomes of this research as solutions to the research problem.

1. The nuclear family system is gradually shifting away from the extended family concept that was based on the linear descendant kinship system of the parent. In this situation, the family corporation has been disintegrated, and the nuclear family corporation has begun to strengthen.
2. The young women who lived in the village in the past have now gained the ability to look at their lives with an open and open mind based on the experiences they have gained from living outside the

village. Around 81% of the village's children and parents were identified as GCE A / Ls.

3. Depending on the attitudes and experiences of the younger generation, there may be a tendency to move beyond “Binna” marriages to monogamy marriage. At present the village is known by those who built the family corporation based on monogamy marriage.
4. In the case of monogamy marriage, the husband and wife have tended to share property equally and to keep the spouse together. At present, it is possible for young people in the family corporation to obtain a certain amount of parental property when they marry.
5. Polygamy and consensus have existed in the past, and it is now possible to recognize that the concept of polygamy has almost completely disappeared. Only one family in the village can follow this method.
6. In the past, only the families living in the village lived in uni-descended order. But nowadays few families who have settled outside the village have

been identified. This indicates the difficulty of retaining traditional forms of kinship in the village.

### *Conclusions*

Based on the results of the above research, it seems that the linear descending culture of the mother-to-be between us is gradually changing and diminishing from day to day.

*Keywords:* Kinship, Anthropology, Culture, Family

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