

## **AWARENESS OF SRI LANKAN WOMEN ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

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In 1948, United Nations through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared that the Human rights are inherited and inalienable to all the human beings in the world and this included both the men and women. Therefore the knowledge of human rights is important in order to enjoy the individual rights. Moreover it provides the human beings as well as citizens of a country a life with dignity as well as measures for survival while guarantying their civil liberties. The awareness is important in order to minimize the violations of human rights. Apart from this the awareness of women regarding human rights is important specially in a culturally bound country like Sri Lanka because of the cultural and social attitudes of the people regarding women which try to allocate an inferior position to women. Furthermore it provides them a way in which they can empower themselves as well as reach the gender equality without any cultural or racial barriers.

The main objective of the research is to identify whether Sri Lankan women have sufficient knowledge on human rights in order to act in a situation where their rights are violated. Moreover other objectives of the research are to identify whether the culture of Sri Lanka is a barrier for women of the country in order to enjoy the human rights, whether a gap exists between the notion of human rights and its practical applicability, to promote awareness, understanding and protection of human rights among the women and to encourage public authorities to comply with the human rights.

Investigation and the data analysis were used in order to carry out the research. For the investigation both the quantitative and the qualitative methods were used. The quantitative data were collected from a survey (questionnaire and structured questions) of 400 women. No distinction was made in selecting the women for the research as it was necessary to identify the awareness of the general percentage of women in the society. Other primary data were collected from the interviews, discussions and group discussions and the secondary data were collected from the books, journal and newspapers.

Conclusion of the research is that the knowledge and the awareness of women regarding the human rights are not sufficient so as to protect and promote the right and there exists a gap between the notion of fundamental rights and its practical applicability. The cultural limitations in the Sri Lankan society affects the mentality of the women in order to enjoy the human rights as the holders as well as the bearers of the rights and also it affects men not to identifying the importance of human rights for women. Therefore the public authorities should take necessary steps in order to improve the awareness of human rights among the women of the country as well as all the citizens of the country.