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**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE
ETHNIC CONFLICT WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO MAJORITY AND
MINORITY NATIONALISM**

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GS/M Phil/ 94/394

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Abstract

One of the major problems faced by the Sri Lankan Society is ethnic conflict. The researcher tried to study the problem projecting on its majority and minority nationalism. The objective of this research is to study the influence of Sinhala and Tamil nationalism on the origin and development of ethnic conflict and on proposed political solutions.

For this study literature review covers the large number of works related to the problem. Relevant Hansard reports, documents, commission reports and unpublished materials etc. covers the major data sources of the study. Comparison was the major method of data analysis. Comparison of material and information from different sources was conducted. Simple statistical method and graphs were also used.

The major findings of this research are as follows; Sri Lanka was unable to build "an ideology of common nationalism" as Sri Lankans. And nationalism was formed based on separate ethnicity. The ethnic conflict was originated and developed as a result of the debates created within the national movement and interaction between two racial groups in the process of constitutional reforms. Mainly the debate was developed based on socio- economic policies introduced by politicians belonging to the majority. The Citizenship Act, the Official Language Act and the Constitutions implemented after independence also contributed in developing the minority nationalism. Minority and majority nationalism severely affected political proposals and implementation of some solutions.

The research produces following recommendations: To establish the status of official language in practice for Tamil language. Stable economic growth should be achieved to solve the unemployment problem. The provincial councils should implement the settlement projects. Within the nominal Executive Presidency framework, two Vice Presidents should be appointed for power sharing for each minority ethnic groups. In addition, an Executive committee system should be established in both provincial councils as well as in the central government and finally a federal system to be introduced.

The general conclusion of this study is that the political influence of nationalism of both majority and minority communities had strong impact on the origin and development of ethnic conflict and on failures of proposals.