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**THE SEPARATE IDENTITY OF BATTICALOA
TAMILS AND MUKKUVAR VALAMAI**

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Abstract

The present study is on “**The Separate Identity of Batticaloa Tamils and Mukkuvar Valamai**”. It focuses on the regional identity of the Tamils living in the Batticaloa region. This regional identity exhibits some distinctive characteristics.

The objective of this study is to examine the distinctive features of Tamil social formation in Batticaloa in relation the Mukkuvar Law and other contributory factors. The region of Batticaloa has a separate geographical identity of its own in comparison with the other parts of the island. Geography has exerted a vital influence in shaping the regional identity of the Tamils who have lived there for a long period of time.

The bulk of the source material for this study has been gathered from books, hand books, magazines, journals and personal interviews. The History, social structure, culture, social customs and the religious traditions of the region have been examined in connection with this study.

The first chapter, which is an introduction, gives a description of this research, and the second chapter describes the Sri Lankan Tamils with particular reference to the Batticaloa Tamils. The third chapter is devoted to a description of

the social structure, habits and customs of the Tamils living in Batticaloa. The fourth chapter is on the principles and provisions of the Mukkuvar Law. The fifth chapter examines the significance of Mukkuvar Law in shaping the regional identity of the Batticaloa Tamils and the final chapter is a summary of conclusions.

In Sri Lanka, geography has marked out Batticaloa as a separate region. The impact of geography and history has culminated in the development of a sense of regional identity among the Tamils of Batticaloa, Who form the second largest community among Sri Lankan Tamils. This is reflected by matrilineal social organization, the principles of Mukkuvar Law, social customs, the decisive influence of Vira Saivism and a rich folklore