

Food behaviour as represented in folklore

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Food is a one of the basic needs of human beings. From a biological approach food can be defined as a combination of organic of inorganic elements which is necessary to nurture the human body; food is also a cause variable of hunger, or hunger is fulfilled by the intake of food. However, sociologists believe that people consume food not only to satisfy their hunger but also to fulfill various other needs. This presents an interesting area of research. Based on selecting, preparing, eating and sharing, food is a significant element of culture, often referred to as food culture. Food culture among the Sinhalese is based on customs and values established by the Sinhala community. However, due to the commercialization and urbanization of modern society some cultural factors linked with food behavior have undergone changes. However, in our folklore many attributes of food behavior have been defined and explained. Folklore can be defined as the orally transmitted traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices of a people. The principal aim of this paper was to study how food behavior is represented in traditional food behaviour as depicted in folktales. Other objectives of this study were firstly to identify key attributes of traditional food behavior, and to identify the relationship between folklore & food behavior. The methodology consisted of an analysis of secondary data through a literature review and ten unstructured interviews which were conducted with key informers in the Matale area.

Key Words: Food behavior, Folklore, Traditional. Culture, Attributes