

**LANGUAGE OF PEACE BUILDING IN
POST-WAR SRI LANKA:
REDEFINING TERMINOLOGIES FOR
MULTICULTURAL COEXISTENCE**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The collaborative research study on “Language of Peace building in Post-War Sri Lanka: Redefining Terminologies for Multicultural Coexistence” was conducted by the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka in collaboration with representatives from the academia in four state universities, namely, the University of Jaffna, the University of Ruhuna, the Eastern University and the University of Sabaragamuwa. The research study was conducted with the aim of assessing the way in which members of key groups in society perceive existing terminologies pertaining to conflict management and peace building. The need to conduct a research study of this sort originated following feedback received from academics who had participated in a series of online courses on Pluralism and Intercommunity Relations that was led by NPC’s Creative Youth Engagement for Pluralism project.

Whilst these terms and concepts were selected by NPC in collaboration with the academics involved in this study, these terms were selected based on their usage in community projects led by NPC. The questionnaire was designed in consultation with the research consultants – the final research questionnaire was finalised by NPC prior to being administered on field. The study aimed to identify the respondents’ level of familiarity towards the terms and concepts, so as to support multi-cultural co-existence in the long term. Furthermore, the study was also important to identify what these terms really meant for people at the grass roots level. It also explored alternative terms that they used in order to understand how they could be utilised to better convey the meaning of various concepts to persons at the grassroots.

The significance of this study is that it confirms the total inadequacy of education and advocacy with regard to the post-war reconciliation process. The terms that were selected for investigation were basic ones in the reconciliation process, yet they were not known for the most part by those who took part in the survey. An example would be misreading of the term “good governance” as being the name of the government that was in office during the period 2015-19 as it used to be called the Good Governance government due to its election time pledges. A second significant feature that emerges from the study is the different understanding of terms by members of the different ethnic and religious communities. An example would be term “militarization” which was broadly seen by the Sinhalese as efficiency in governance whereas the Tamils and Muslims saw it in terms of checkpoints and land grabs. The reader is invited to look at the statistics and quotations and work out their implications for the reconciliation process

2. METHODOLOGY

Field work for this study was carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire with 540 respondents from the four main ethnic communities, namely Sinhala, Tamil, Indian Tamil and Muslim communities across Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Killinochchi, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Batticaloa, Ampara, Trincomalee, Ratnapura and Kegalle. The areas for field research were selected based on the provinces in which the local universities that collaborated in this study were located in. A total of 60 field enumerators participated in this study - the enumerators were selected with the assistance of the academics. The field enumerators were given a comprehensive training on the research study, research instrument and field techniques prior to starting field work. The field trainings were conducted in the first language of the field enumerators. Field work for the entire study was done between the 15th of October to 01st November 2021. After every second interview conducted by the enumerator, a de-briefing session was conducted with them in order to ensure the quality of the data collected. Five focus group discussions were held with all field enumerators in order to gather information that was not restricted to the research tool but to also gather perceptions from field work, so as to enhance and understand a wider perspective from the field. The interviews were conducted in the first language of both the respondents and the field enumerators. Whilst all interviews were conducted via phone interviews due to the situation of Covid lockdown that prevailed during the time in which the survey had to be carried out, the field enumerators endeavored to build a rapport with the selected respondents prior to the interview in order to ensure a smooth flow for when interviews were conducted. As such the selected respondents were a convenient quota sample - the sample respondents consisted key personnel in society that ranged from government employees (DS, GN, Samurdhi officials, school principals, local level politicians, religious leaders, ex-combatants, businessman, trade union leaders, estate workers, military personnel, war affected persons (female headed households, persons disabled as a result of the conflict and family members of those disappeared as a result of the conflict. The quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study were coded separately, and quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

2.1. Provided minimum definition for each concept

No	Concepts	Minimum Definition		
		Sinhala	Tamil	English
1	වයස්පෝරාව புலம்பெயர்ந்தோர் Diaspora	විවිධ බලපෑම් මත සිය නිජභූමියෙන් පිටවීමට ලක්ව ලෝකයේ විවිධ ප්‍රදේශවල විසිර පිවිසිවන පුද්ගල කණ්ඩායම්	பல்வேறு காரணங்களுக்காக, தமது தாய்நாட்டை விட்டு கட்டாயத்தின் நிமித்தம் வெளியேறி உலகம் முழுவதும் சிதறி வாழும் மக்கள் குழு	Diaspora is a term used for people who are, for various reasons, forced to leave their homeland and are scattered around the world.
2	ජනවාර්ගික ගැටුම இனவாத மோதல் Ethnic conflict	එකිනෙකට වෙනස් ජනවාර්ගික හෝ ආගමික කණ්ඩායම් දෙකකට අයත් ජනතාව තමන්ගේ ආගම හෝ ජනවාර්ගිකව හේතු කොට ගෙන ගැටුම් ඇති කරගන්නා තත්ත්වය	ஒன்றுக்கொன்றுவேறுபட்ட இரண்டு / இரண்டிற்கும் மேற்பட்ட இன அல்லது மதக் குழுக்களைச் சேர்ந்த மக்கள் தங்களது மத அல்லது இனம் குறித்த காரணங்களின் அடிப்படையில் மோதல்களை ஏற்படுத்திக்கொள்ளும் நிலை	Ethnic Conflict is a situation where two ethno-religious groups clash with each other due to an issue pertaining to their respective ethno-religious identities.
3	ජනවාර්ගිකත්වය මත වෙනස් කොට සැලකීම இனரீதியான பாடுபாடு / பாரபட்சம் Ethnic discrimination	කිසියම් ජනවාර්ගික කණ්ඩායමක් ඔවුන්ගේ ජනවර්ගය හේතුවෙන් වෙන වෙනස්කම් කිරීමට ලක් කිරීම	ஏதேனும் ஒரு இனக் குழு அவர்களின் இன அடையாளம் காரணமாக பாடுபாடு / பாரபட்சத்திற்கு உள்ளாக்கப்படுதல்	Ethnic discrimination is differential treatment of certain ethnic groups as a result of their inherent ethnic identities.
4	ජනවාර්ගික බහුතරවාදය இனப்பெரும்பான்மைவாதம் Ethnic majoritarianism	කිසියම් රටක සිටින එක් ජනවර්ගයක් තමන් එම රටේ බහුතරය වන බැවින් සමස්ත සමාජයටම බලපාන තීරණ ගැනීමේදී වැඩි බලයක් ලබා ගැනීම	ஏதேனும் ஒரு நாட்டில் உள்ள ஒரு இனம் தாங்கள் அந்த நாட்டின் பெரும்பான்மையாக இருப்பதால் ஒட்டுமொத்த சமூகத்திற்கும் தாக்கம் ஏற்படுத்தக் கூடிய தீர்மானங்களை மேற்கொள்ளும் போது அதிகமான அதிகாரத்தை பெற்றுக்கொள்ளுதல்	Ethnic Majoritarianism is a practice whereby a certain ethnic group as a result of being the majority of the country has more power to make decisions that impact the society as a whole.
5	පහසුකම් සැලසීම வசதிப்படுத்தல் Facilitation	කණ්ඩායම් දෙකක් අතර සාකච්ඡාවකදී තුන්වෙනි පාර්ශවයක් /බාහිර පාර්ශවයක් විසින් ඊට අවශ්‍ය කරන පරිසරය සකස් කිරීම	மோதலில் ஈடுபட்ட குழுக்களுக்கிடையிலான ஒரு கலந்துரையாடலுக்காக ஒரு முன்றாம் தரப்பு / வெளித்தரப்பு அதற்குத் தேவையான சூழலை ஏற்பாடு செய்தல்	Facilitation is a third party or external party creating a suitable environment for a discussion between two parties.
6	යහපාලනය நல்லாட்சி Good governance	මානව හිමිකම් ආරක්ෂා කරන, පුද්ගලයන්ගේ නිදහස ආරක්ෂා කරන, යුක්තිය හා සාමාන්‍ය සලසන, දූෂණ වංචාවලින් තොර පාලනයකි	மனித உரிமைகளை பாதுகாக்கின்ற இ தனிநபர்களின் சுதந்திரத்தைப் பாதுகாக்கின்ற இ நீதி மற்றும் சமாதானத்தை ஏற்படுத்துகின்ற இ ஊழல் மற்றும் மோசடிகள் இல்லாத ஒரு ஆட்சியை ஏற்படுத்துகின்ற அரசாங்கத்தின் அர்ப்பணிப்பான செயல்முறை	A form of governance where human rights are upheld, individual freedom is protected, justice and peace are delivered, and governance is free from corruption and fraud.
7	දෙමුහුන් අධිකරණය கலப்பு நீதிமன்றம் Hybrid Court	ගැටුම් පැවැති රටවල් වල අධිකරණ බලය තුළම ක්‍රියාත්මක විය හැකි ජාත්‍යන්තර හා ජාතික නීතිවලින්, විනිසුරුවරුන්ගෙන්, හා අධිකරණ නිලධාරීන්ගෙන් සමන්විත සම්මිශ්‍රණයක් ලෙස සකස් කරන අධිකරණ විශේෂයි	பொதுவாகக் குற்றங்கள் எந்த நாட்டில் நடந்ததோ அந்த நாட்டின் அதிகார வரம்பிற்குள்ளே, தேசிய மற்றும் சர்வதேச அம்சங்களை உள்ளடக்கிய சட்டங்கள், நீதிபதிகள், நீதிமன்ற உத்தியோகத்தர்களின் போன்றவற்றின் கலப்பில் உருவான விசேட நீதிமன்றங்கள்	Hybrid courts are defined as courts of mixed composition and jurisdiction, encompassing both national and international aspects including judges, prosecutors, and investigators, usually operating within the jurisdiction where the conflict occurred.
8	ස්වාධීන කොමිෂන් සභා சுயாதீன ஆணைக்குழுக்கள் Independent commissions	තෝරාගත් රාජ්‍ය ආයතනවල ක්‍රියාකාරීත්වයට දේශපාලනමය වශයෙන් සිදුවිය හැකි අනවශ්‍ය ඇඟිලි ගැසීමෙන් තොරව එම ආයතනවල කටයුතු කරගෙන යාම සඳහා පිහිටුවා ඇති කොමිෂන් සභා විශේෂයකි	தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்ட சில அரச நிறுவனங்களின் செயற்பாட்டிற்கு அரசியல் ரீதியாக ஏற்படக்கூடிய தேவையற்ற தலையீடுகளை தவிர்த்து அந்நிறுவனங்களின் பணிகளை மேற்கொள்வதற்கு தாபிக்கப்பட்டுள்ள ஆணைக்குழுக்கள் ஆகும்	Supervisory authorities that have been established in order to mitigate unwarranted political influence over certain state institutions.

16	<p>පශ්චාත් යුධ / පශ්චාත් ගැටුම් සමාජය</p> <p>யுத்தத்திற்கு / மோதலுக்கு பின்னரான சமூகம்</p> <p>Post-war / post-conflict society</p>	<p>ගැටුමක් පැවැති සමාජයක සාම ගිවිසුමක් අත්සන් කිරීමෙන් පසු තත්ත්වය හෝ යුද්ධය අවසන් වීමෙන් පසු පවතින තත්ත්වය</p>	<p>யுத்தம் நிறைவடைந்த பின்னர் நிலவுகின்ற நிலை</p> <p>அல்லது மோதலொன்று நிலவிய சமூகத்தில் சமாதான ஒப்பந்தமொன்று கைச்சாத்திட்ட பின்னர் நிலவுகின்ற நிலை</p>	<p>Post war/ post conflict society is a society where a peace agreement has been arrived at following a conflict or a society that exists following a conflict</p>
17	<p>බලය බෙදීම</p> <p>அதிகாரப் பகிர்வு</p> <p>Power sharing</p>	<p>විවිධ සමාජ කණ්ඩායම් අතර සාධාරණ ලෙස පාලන බලය බෙදන ආකාරයි. එයට, ව්‍යවස්ථාව මගින් බලය මධ්‍යම ආණ්ඩුව හා පළාත් ආණ්ඩු අතර බෙදීම ද අයත් විය හැක</p>	<p>பல்வேறு சமூகக் குழுக்களுக்கு சமமாக நிர்வாக அதிகாரங்களை விநியோகித்தல் - ஆட்சி அதிகாரத்தை மத்திய அரசாங்கத்திற்கும் மாகாண அரசாங்கத்திற்கும் இடையில் நியாயமான முறையில் அரசியலமைப்பில், பகிர்வு செய்யும் செயல்முறையும் இதனுள் அடங்கும்</p>	<p>Power-sharing means the equitable distribution of powers of governance to different social groups - Power sharing could also mean the devolution of constitutional power from the central government to provincial councils.</p>
18	<p>සංහිඳියාව</p> <p>நல்லிணக்கம்</p> <p>Reconciliation</p>	<p>ගැටුමක් පැවැති සමාජයක ගැටුමේ පැවැති වෛරී සහගත අත්දැකීම් වර්තමානයට හා අනාගතයට බලපෑම් ඇති නොකරන ආකාරයට එකිනෙකා අතර හෝ විවිධ ජනකණ්ඩායම් අතර සබඳතා ඇති කිරීම</p>	<p>பல்வேறு சமூகக் குழுக்களுக்கு சமமாக நிர்வாக அதிகாரங்களை விநியோகித்தல் - ஆட்சி அதிகாரத்தை மத்திய அரசாங்கத்திற்கும் மாகாண அரசாங்கத்திற்கும் இடையில் நியாயமான முறையில் அரசியலமைப்பில், பகிர்வு செய்யும் செயல்முறையும் இதனுள் அடங்கும்</p>	<p>Reconciliation is creating a sense of inter-community and intra-community relations amongst conflicting ethnic communities/ groups so as to end the repetition of hate (either currently or in the future) derived from conflicts that happened in the past.</p>
19	<p>සංක්‍රාන්තික යුක්තිය</p> <p>நிலைமாறுகால நீதி</p> <p>Transitional justice</p>	<p>වින්දිතයන්ට සහ ඔවුන්ගේ ගෞරවයට මූලිකත්වය දෙමින් ණ සාමාන්‍ය පුරවැසියන්ව සිය පාලකයන් සහ අනෙක් පාර්ශවයන්ගෙන් සිය මවිරට තුළදී ම සිංසාවන්ට ලක්වීමෙන් ආරක්ෂා කරන බවට එදිරිවාදි ලෙස සහතික කරන නව වැයමකී එයට සාමාන්‍යයෙන් ඇතුළත් වන්නේ සත්‍ය සෙවීම ණවගවීමටහානි පුර්ණය හා ආයතනික ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ තුළින් මානව හිමිකම් උල්ලංඝනය වීම නැවත සිදු නොවන බවට වගබලා ගන්නා ක්‍රියාවලිය යනාදියයි</p>	<p>மோதலொன்று நிலவியதொரு சமூகத்தில் மோதலின் போது காணப்பட்ட வெறுப்புணர்வு கலந்த அனுபவங்கள் தற்காலத்திற்கும் எதிர்காலத்திற்கும் தாக்கத்தை விளைவிக்காத வகையில் ஒருவருக்கொருவர் அல்லது பல்வேறு இனக்குழுமங்களுக்கு இடையில் தொடர்புகளை கட்டியெழுப்புவதாகும்</p>	<p>A framework for action that prioritises the victims and their dignity, and guarantees the protection of citizens of a country against violations. As such, mechanisms are established that comprise seeking of truth, justice/ accountability, reparations and non-recurrence.</p>
20	<p>යුධ අපරාධ</p> <p>யுத்தக் குற்றங்கள்</p> <p>War crimes</p>	<p>යුද්ධයකදී යුධ නීතිය උල්ලංඝනය වන ආකාරයට සිදුවන අපරාධ</p>	<p>பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர்களையும் அவர்களின் கௌரவத்தையும் முதன்மைப்படுத்துவதன் மூலம், சாதாரண குடிமக்கள் தங்கள் சொந்த அதிகாரிகளின் துஸ்பிரயோகங்களிலிருந்தும் ஏனையவர்களின் அத்துமீறல்களிலிருந்தும் தங்கள் சொந்த நாடுகளில் பாதுகாப்பாக இருப்பதை உறுதி செய்வதற்காக புதுப்பிக்கப்பட்ட அர்ப்பணிப்பினை முன்னோக்கி எடுத்துச் செல்லும் செயல்முறை. இது உண்மையைக் கண்டறிதல், பொறுப்புக் கூறல், இழப்பீட்டு மற்றும் மனித உரிமை மீரல்கள் .'. வன்முறை மீளவும் தோன்றாதிருப்பதற்கான உத்தரவாதம் வழங்கக் கூடிய நிர்வாகச் சீர்திருத்தங்கள் ஆகியவற்றை உள்ளடக்குகின்றது</p>	<p>War crimes are crimes that have been committed in violation of the laws of war</p>

3. Analysis

3.1. The term ‘Diaspora’

In order to assess the level of awareness of the term ‘Diaspora’ – the respondents were initially asked as to whether they had heard of the term in question. Over a majority of respondents (98.5%) indicate that they have heard of the term ‘Diaspora’. (Please see Figure 1)

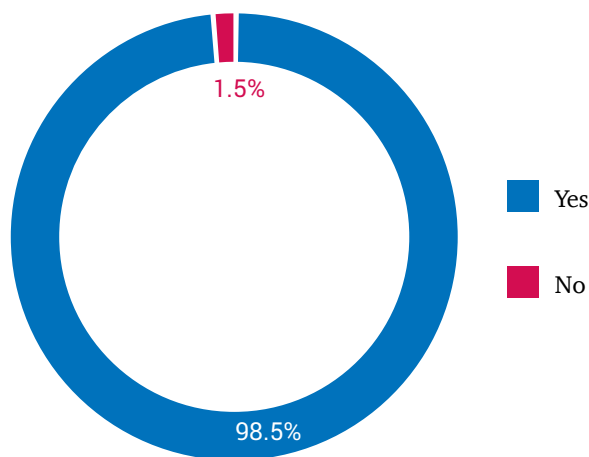


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Diaspora’?

From those who heard of the term, were asked to provide a definition. From an ethnic perspective, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (90.3%) closely followed by respondents from the Muslim (54%) and Indian Tamil (48.5%) communities who appear to have not been able to provide a suitable and appropriate definition to the term ‘Diaspora’. On the contrary, respondents from the Tamil community appear to have a much better knowledge of the term in question. (Please see Figure 2)

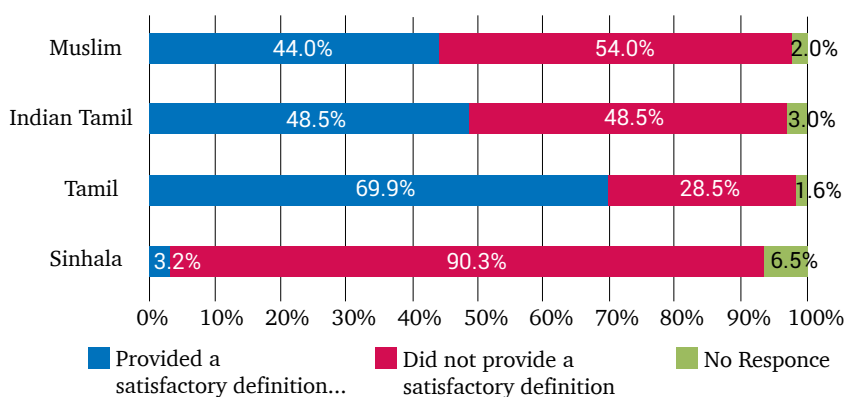


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

There appears to be multiple variations in the way in which the term ‘Diaspora’ is referred to by various ethnic communities. For a more constructive understanding of how the respondents perceive the term in question, a deeper analysis was done on those who did not provide a suitable definition or who did not know what the term really meant - and what they perceived it to be. As such, from an ethnic perspective, the respondents from the Sinhala community are of the view that the term ‘Diaspora’ refers to those who either ideologically or financially support the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). They relate the term ‘Diaspora’ with a negative connotation linking it to the Tamil community. They are of the opinion that it is a sort of disruptive organisation that is associated

with terrorism. This sense of negativity is predominantly seen amongst respondents who possess a higher level of education in comparison to the other sample respondents.

As for the respondents from the Indian Tamil community, they refer to those who either left the country for work or left their place of birth, as persons from the Diaspora. The respondents from the Muslim community are of the view that persons who left the country to live elsewhere are considered as Diaspora; with a very slight proportion of them referring to those from the Diaspora as being terrorists. In terms of the respondents from the Tamil community, they claim that those who are either displaced, have left the country or those who support the North and East of Sri Lanka are referred to as ‘Diaspora’.

It was mostly respondents who were ex-combatants who seem to have been aware of the term. What must be noted is that the respondents’ perception towards this term is swayed by factors such as their political party affiliations and their sources of information, either informal or print and mass media.

For those who did not know or had not heard of the term in question, were provided a definition and asked to provide a term that best suits the definition. As such, it must be noted that despite being provided with a description, a significant proportion of respondents among the Sinhala, Indian Tamil and Muslim communities failed to provide a suitable term to best describe the concept in question. (Please see figure 3)

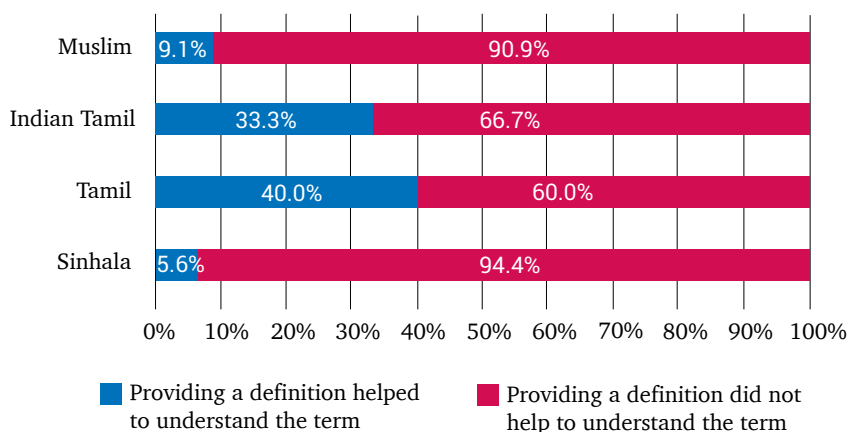


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

Overall, a term that was predominantly highlighted among the respondents was the term ‘Refugees’. From an ethnic perspective, respondents from the Sinhala community referred to Diaspora as refugees (‘Saranagathayan’) whilst respondents from the Indian Tamil and Muslim communities referred to them as ‘Agadhi’. Respondents from the Tamil community mostly referred to them as ‘Pulam Peyanrdhor’.

“The North of Sri Lanka predominantly consists of non-governmental organisations. These organisations work in line with agendas promoted by the Americans and Canadians, they are against the Sinhalese; they also tend to create issues that are nonexistent. These are also the same group of people who stamp their feet on the Sri Lankan national flag overseas.”

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A 60 year old Sinhalese male respondent, a local politician from Akuressa

“Diaspora are Sri Lankans living in Canada, who supported the terrorists during the time of the civil conflict.”

A female Muslim government officer from Galle

“The Diaspora are those (men and women) who left Sri Lanka to find employment and earn a living in Middle Eastern countries – their main reason for leaving Sri Lanka is poverty and low household income”

A 31year old Tamil ex-combatant from the Northern Province

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (69.9%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (3.2%).

3.2. The term ‘Ethnic Conflict’

An overwhelming majority (98.5%) claim to have heard of the term ‘Ethnic Conflict’. From those who claim that they had heard of the term were asked to provide a definition to the term in question. Overall, around one fifth of the respondents (21.3%) did not know the term in question. (Please see figure 1)

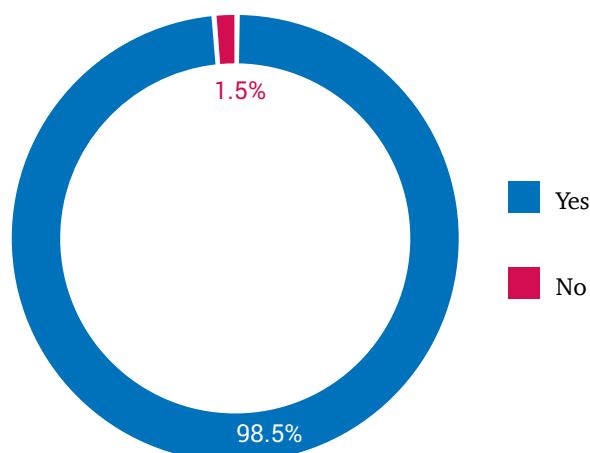


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Ethnic Conflict’?

From those who had heard of the term were asked to provide a definition of the term in question. It is clear that, in comparison to the respondents from the Sinhala community, it is mostly respondents from the ethnic minority communities who provided a satisfactory description to the term ‘Ethnic Conflict’. (Please see figure 2)

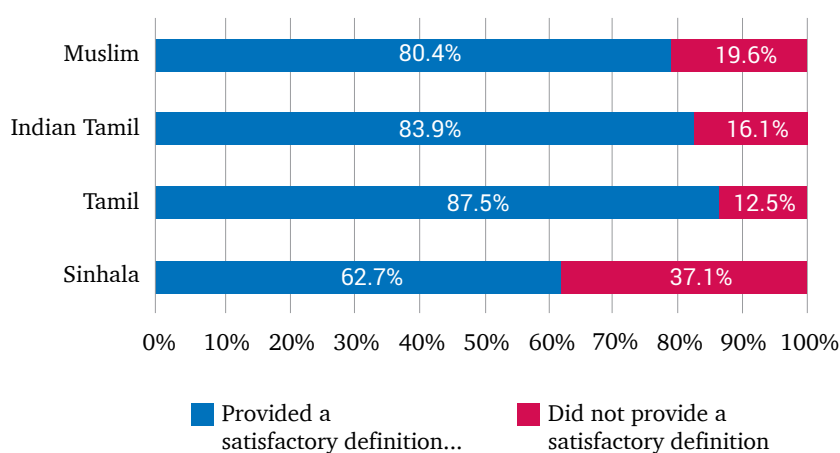


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

From those who had not heard of the term or did not initially provide a satisfactory definition to the term, were given a description about the concept and were asked to provide a term that they thought would best define the description provided.

It is important to note that a significant proportion of the respondents (nearly 68.1%) did not provide a suitable term, despite a definition being provided. Only around 27.7% provided a satisfactory term to the definition that was provided to them. From those who provided a satisfactory term to the definition provided, highlighted the fact that the term ‘Ethnic Conflict’ implies to issues that occur as a result of language and ethno-religious differences. They also claimed that it is a contradiction of ideological differences and identity issues - 4.3% of the respondents had no response. (Please see figure 3)

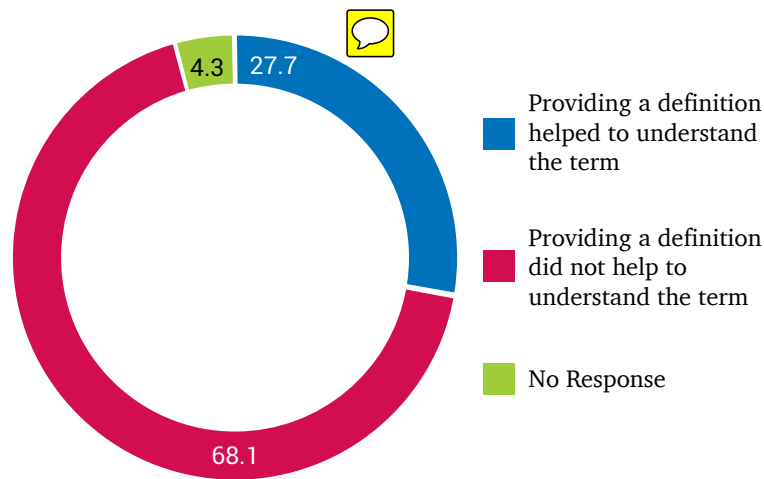


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term?

In relation to unsatisfactory terms provided by the respondents –respondents from the Sinhala community claimed that it was an issue contracted by politicians; it is a war, and a request for a separate state. As such the most common terms amongst the Sinhala respondents lead to the idea of ‘Jaathiwaadhaya’ and most often referred to the physical aspect of conflict (violence, destruction etc.)

“Ethnic conflict is a war between ethnicities”

A 29 year old female Tamil government employee from Ampara

However, what is interesting to note is that considering the manner in which the respondents from the Sinhala community responded to the term in question they tended to identify the term ‘Ethnic conflict’ in the lines of i) conflict between the Sinhalese and the LTTE, ii) conflicts between the Sinhalese and the Muslims. They were more inclined to relate the term ‘Ethnic conflict’ with issues between the Sinhalese and the Muslims in post war Sri Lanka. In terms of respondents from the North of Sri Lanka, they mostly highlighted issues between the Sinhalese and the Tamil communities, but respondents predominantly from the South mostly highlighted issues between the Sinhalese and the Muslim communities.

“Let’s think about two ethnic groups. Say the Muslim and Christians. Due to some reason, there was a conflict between the two. Even the Easter Sunday attacks, although we did not see it, it was a reflection of the conflict between those two ethnic groups”

A 42 year old Sinhala Buddhist clergy from Hambantota

As for the respondents from the Indian Tamil community, they related the term to the 1983 riots, whilst the respondents from the Muslim community related it to the expulsion of Muslims from the Northern Province in the 1990s by the LTTE.

While the sample of respondents who were from a higher level of education, seem to be politically correct in their responses, the community leaders and religious leaders’ used personal experiences when responding.

“The term Ethnic conflict referred to the conflict between the LTTE and the Army.”

A 55 year old Tamil female respondent from Vavuniya, whose family member had disappeared during the conflict

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (85.4%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (62.9%).

3.3. The term ‘Ethnic Discrimination’

The respondents were asked to indicate as to whether they had heard of the term ‘Ethnic Discrimination’ – a clear majority (94.8%) is of the view that they have heard of the term in question, only 5.2% of the respondents indicate that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

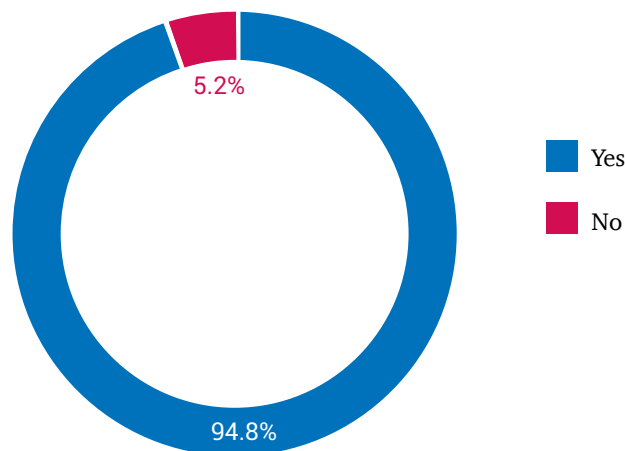


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Ethnic Discrimination’?

From those who claim that they have heard of the term were asked to provide a definition to the term in question. As such, it is clear that respondents from all ethnic communities provided a satisfactory description to the concept ‘Ethnic Discrimination’. From those who did not provide a satisfactory definition it was mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (Please see figure 2)

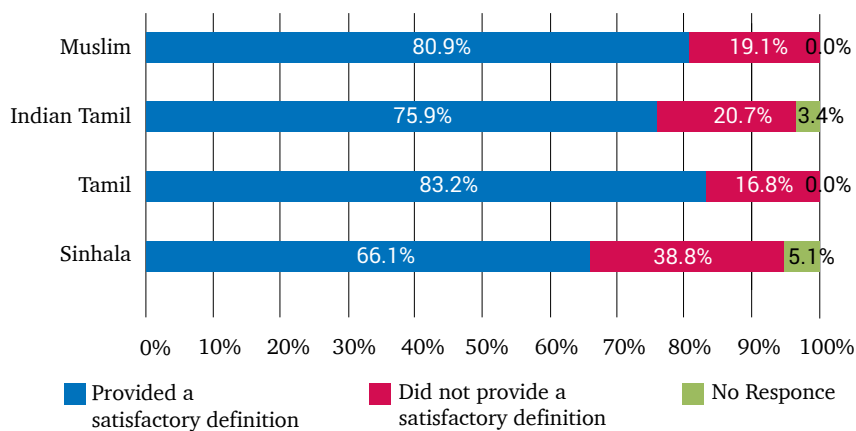


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who had not heard of the term or did not know what it meant, were provided a definition and were asked to provide a suitable term that best describes the concept. It is clear that a majority of respondents among the all ethnic communities could not provide a suitable term that best described the concept in question. (Please see figure 3)

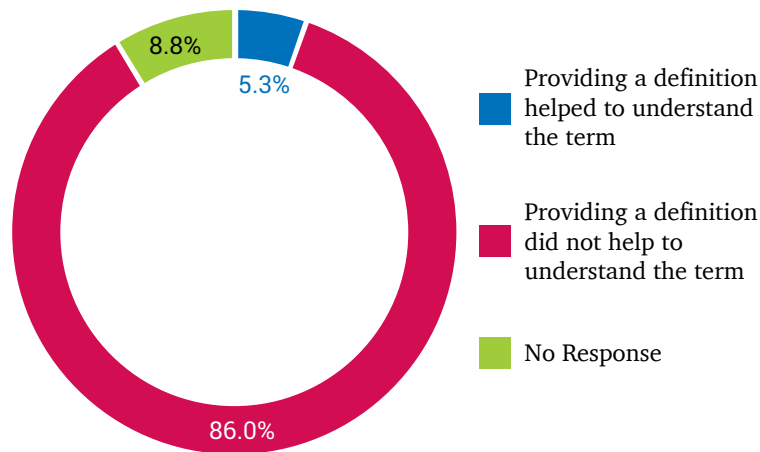


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term?

The respondents from the Sinhala community when asked about the concept seemed to have expressed offense indicating that the term implies that the Sinhalese are perpetrators and victimise other ethnic minorities in society.

“When one ethnic group is given a high status and other ethnic groups are given a lower status. In Sri Lanka from the status of where the Sinhalese are, the other ethnic groups are considered lower”

A 40 year old Sinhala Buddhist local politician from Kegalle

As for the Tamil and Muslim communities they indicated that the concept implies the notion of Buddhists discriminating the Muslims and Tamil communities. It is interesting to note that instead of implicating the ethnicity they highlight the religion or culture.

“Giving privilege to one race and religion and not giving the same to another race or religion.”

A 34 year old male local politician from Ratnapura

The respondents from the Tamil community also highlight the preference given to those who are Sinhalese when employment opportunities are being provided, the fact that the Tamils have a lesser quality of education

“Education, occupation and political wise people are not given equal rights for all three of these.”

A 31 year old Tamil Male from Killinochchi

When speaking about ethnic discrimination the respondents also highlighted the forms of discrimination faced by people due to the ethnic backgrounds that they belonged to.

“Normally, the majority in Sri Lanka is Sinhalese. But I have seen the Sinhalese when they travel in the bus, if they see a pregnant mother or an elderly person from the Tamil ethnicity – that means an elderly Tamil lady, they are reluctant to offer their seat to them; But they give their seat to a Sinhalese person. I think that is because those people are Tamil they are treated differently. This segregating form of treatment is also mostly seen in schools.”

A 43 year old Sinhala Buddhist community leader from Kegalle As for the respondents from the Sinhala community they highlighted the term ‘jaathiwadhaya and jaathi bedhaya’

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (80.5%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (63.9%).

3.4. The term ‘Ethnic Majoritarianism’

A majority of respondents (75.4%) indicate that they have heard of the term ‘Ethnic Majoritarianism’ whilst nearly one fourth of the respondents (24.6%) indicate that they have not heard of it. (Please see Figure 1)

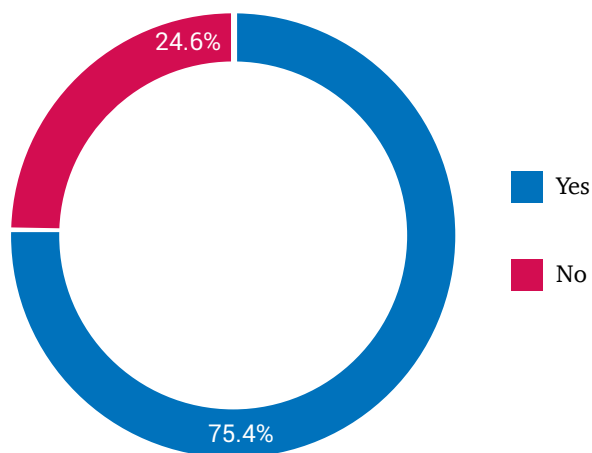


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Ethnic Majoritarianism’?

From those who have heard of the term, were asked to provide a definition that best suits the concept in question. It is clear that a majority of respondents across all ethnic communities did not provide a satisfactory definition.

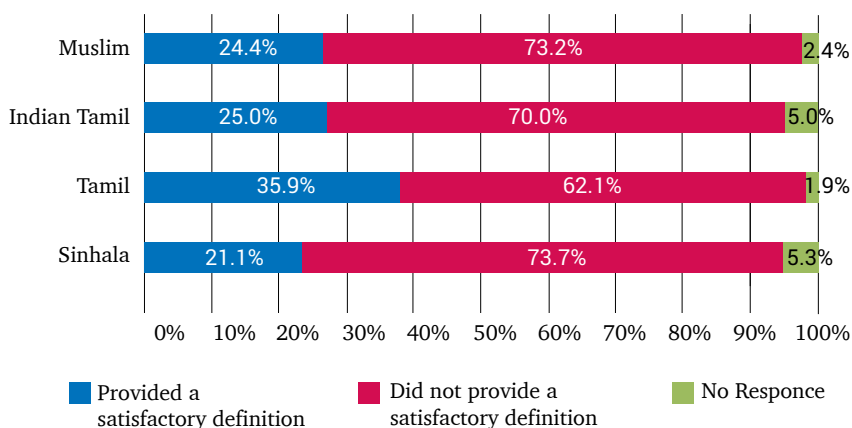


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition. by Ethnicity

From those who had not heard of the term and who were not aware of it were provided a description and asked to give a suitable term that best describes it. A majority among the Sinhala (85.2%), Tamil (75.4%), Indian Tamil (76%) and Muslim (82.1%) communities did not provide a suitable term. (Please see figure 3)

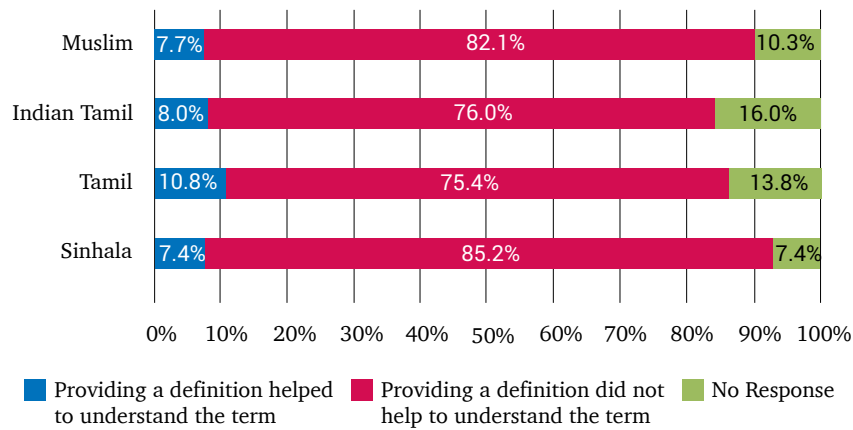


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

When analysing the responses provided, the Sinhala community are of the opinion that ethnic majoritarianism is something that is a reality and see no issues with it.

“Ethnic majoritarianism is giving more opportunities for people from the majority community. Why? because, for the Sinhalese Sri Lanka is the only country they have; because of that, giving special treatment is fine.”

A Sinhala Buddhist clergy from Hambantota

For example, they claim that as for Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese are the majority population and ethnic majoritarianism that tilts towards them should not be an issue. As for the minorities they seem resigned to accept the prevalence of this mindset in the country and state that they cannot do much to change it.

“In Sri Lanka, Buddhists are the majority, by population. Since they are the most, they can change chronicles and epics of the past to best suit them. For one example, now the majority say that Ravana is a Buddhist.”

47 year old Hindu religious leader from Jaffna

Whilst respondents from the Sinhala and Tamil communities referred to the term as being something in relation to dictatorship and majority rule, the Muslim community referred to it as majority power.

“Ethnic Majoritarianism is something that was not prevalent in the past; in the past, without the support of the two minority communities, one could not do anything substantial, politically. However, at present without the support of the Tamil votes someone could become president.”

A 26 year old female Tamil local politician

“The Sinhala Buddhists are the majority in Sri Lanka, and this means ethnic majoritarianism.”

A 58 year old Sinhala Buddhist male government employee from Hambantota

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (30.1%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (12.9%).

3.5. The term ‘Facilitation’

In order to assess the level of awareness the respondents had towards the term ‘Facilitation’ 84.7% indicate that they have heard of the term and 15.3% indicate that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

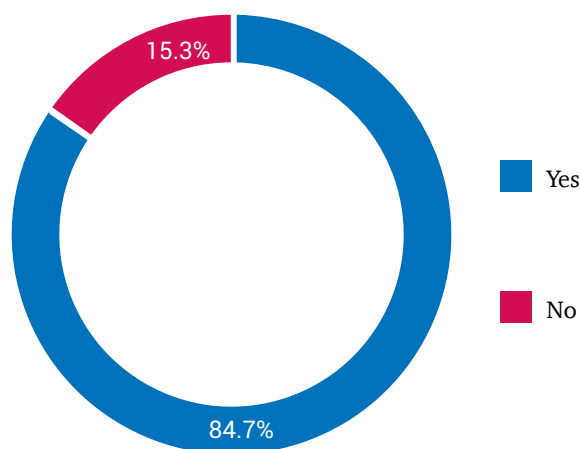


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Facilitation’?

Those who indicated that they had heard of the term, were asked to provide a definition to the concept in question. It is clear that a majority of respondents did not provide a satisfactory definition. (Please see figure 2)

What must be noted is that due to the nature of the term when translated into both Sinhala and Tamil languages, the respondents tended to connect the term to interventions to provide conflict related resettlements and rehabilitation measures that various international non-governmental organisation are involved in throughout the country.

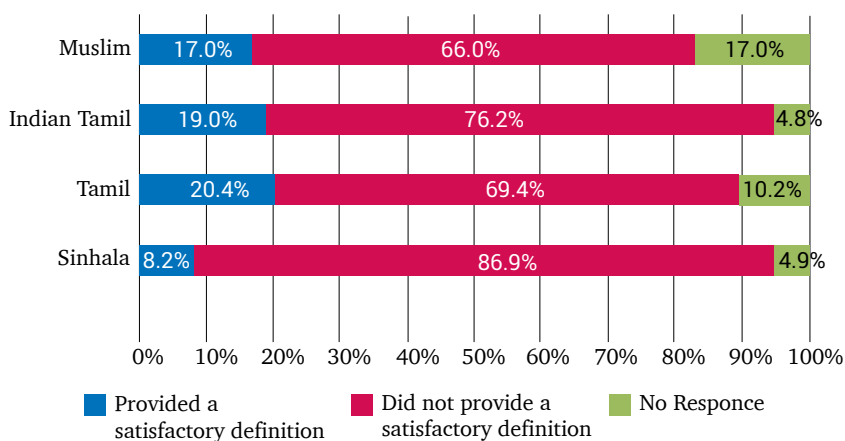


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who either have not heard of the term or did not know the term in question were provided a description and asked to give a suitable term that best suited the concept in question. It is clear that this was not helpful for the respondents to identify the term in question. (Please see figure 3)

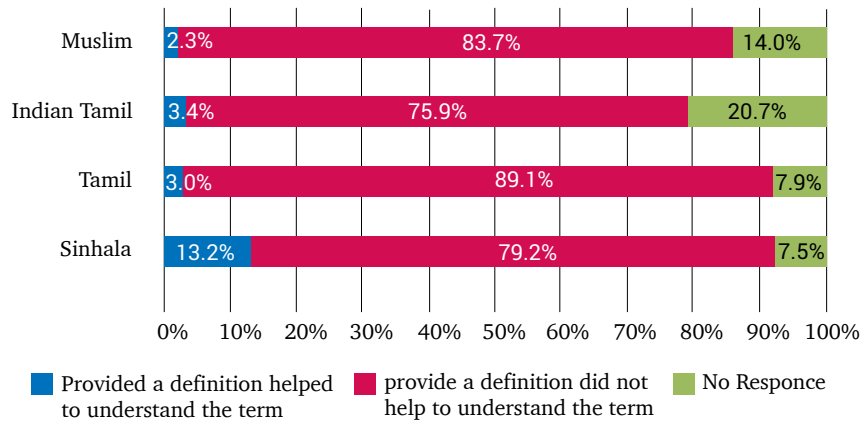


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term? by Ethnicity

From those who did provide a term that best suited the description what was clear was that the terms were similar to the concept but not the same.

“The daily needs that are provided to the public by the government, for an example: road development, drinking water facilities.”

A 37 year old Muslim religious leader

The terms provided highlighted the sense of third party involvement. In Sinhala the term ‘Madhithweema’ and ‘samuthiyakata elabeem’ were highlighted. As for terms that were highlighted by the Tamil speaking respondents it was more in the lines of peace agreement, peace talks and ceasefire agreement.

“Due to the war people who have lost their assets, land and possessions and the help the government or NGO’s given them.”

A 36 year old Tamil female ex-combatant from Vavuniya

“During times of devastation faced by civilians, NGO’s and INGO’s get together and intervene to provide facilities needed for the war and also provide facilities to displaced persons and people who have faced difficulties.”

A 36 year old Sinhala Buddhist male government employee from Matara

“During the times of war, the Red Cross provided facilities; people who faced difficulties were provided with relief isn’t? If we link this to the war and speak, the Red Cross mostly supported the LTTE but if they worked according to the agenda of their Organisation they won’t be working for one party only. But on the other hand, they also supplied arms to the LTTE during the time. Providing facilities means providing food? Providing clothing? Helping with medicating the wounded...”

A 60 year Sinhala Buddhist local community leader from Matara

“The Tamil homeland was completely destroyed. The houses were completely bulldozed. The facilities lost like this, providing it again, is what facilitation means.”

An 81 year old Sinhala Buddhist male trade union leader

“Facilitation is post war development work in war affected areas by those who won the civil war.”

-A 36-year-old Tamil female from the Northern Province.

As for the Sinhala respondents, they identified facilitation to be similar to the description given. However, the above respondent claimed that facilitation referred to post war development in war affected areas spearheaded by international humanitarian organisations such as the Red Cross.

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (16.3%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (8.1%).

3.6. The term ‘Good Governance’

An overwhelming majority of respondents (99.3%) claim that they have heard of the term ‘Good governance’. (Please see figure 1)

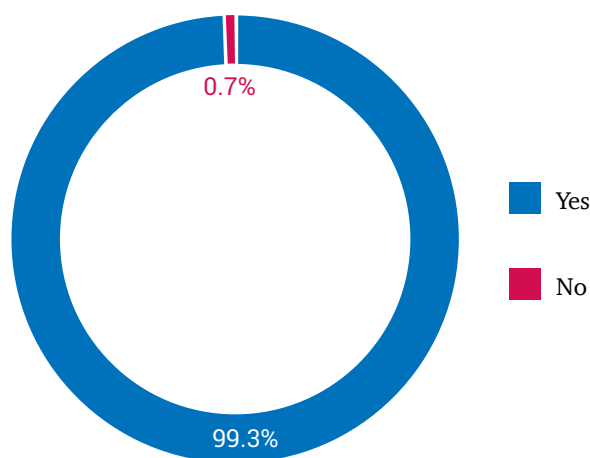


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Good Governance’?

From those who indicated that they had heard of the term were asked to provide a definition to the term in question. As such, it is clear that a majority among the Indian Tamil (62.5%) and Muslim (56.9%) did not provide a satisfactory definition - it was mostly respondents from the Sinhala (50%) and Tamil (55.4%) communities who did provide a satisfactory definition to the term in question. (Please see figure 2)

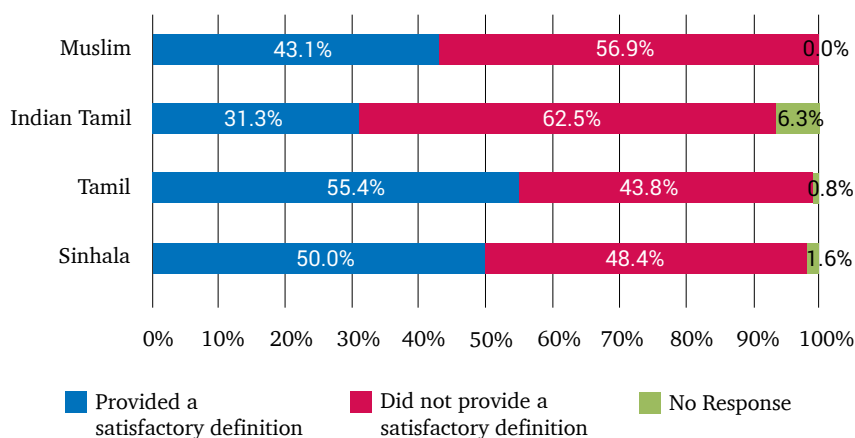


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who had not heard of the term or did not know the term in question, were provided a description of the concept and asked to provide a term that best suits the description in question. As such it is clear that it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala (77.8%) and Muslim (66.7%) communities who provided a suitable term whilst it mostly respondents from the Tamil (44.4%) and Indian Tamil (52.4%) communities who did not provide a suitable term to the description in question. (Please see figure 3)

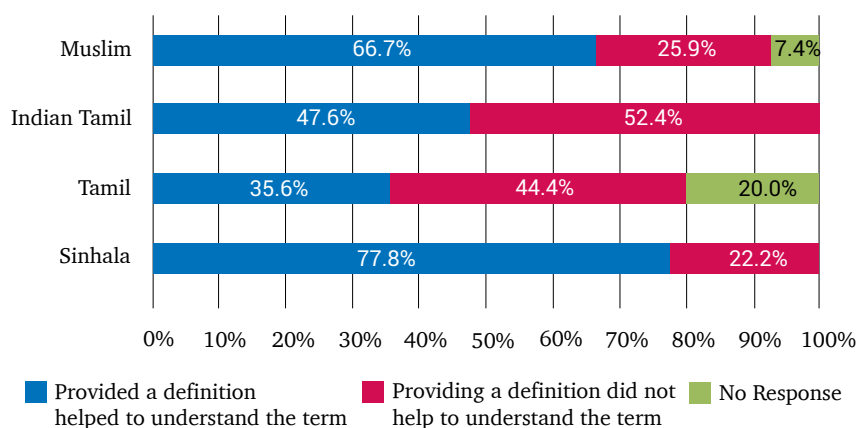


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

Most of the respondents identified the term as a product of the Sirisena-Wickramasinghe coalition that formed a government in 2015. In fact they identified it as the name of that government- ie. The “Good Governance” government.

“The government that was in power between 2015 -2019.The legal sector, the judicial sector and media functions without any bias.”

A 46 year old Muslim male government employer from Ampara

“A coalition of two political parties.”

A 52 year old Muslim businessman from Galle

There was a negative connotation to the term in question. Those who identified the term in its correct sense correlated it to media freedom, free from crime and corruption, upholding human rights. The positive connotation towards term that was expressed by the Sinhala and Tamil community was most likely due to the linguistic nature of the world involved – ‘Yahapalanaya’ and ‘Nallachchi’

“The government rules in a good way.”

A 26 year old Muslim religious leader from Mannar

“Isn’t this the Maithree rule? It is a Buddhist concept. Governance according to this is good governance.”

A Muslim from Galle

As for terms that the respondents highlighted the respondents from the Tamil community indicated the term ‘jananayaga aatchi’ and the respondents from the Sinhala community they highlighted the term ‘pragathanthrawaadhaya’

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (54.9%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (30.3%).

3.7. The term ‘Hybrid Court’

As for the term ‘Hybrid Court’ nearly half of the respondents (51.1%) claim to have heard of it with a significant proportion (48.9%) indicating that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

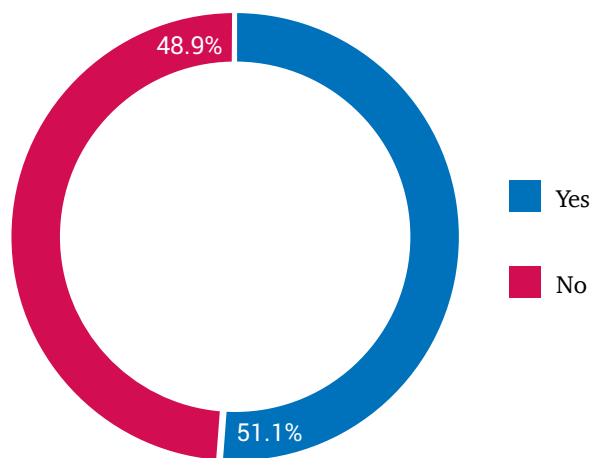


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Hybrid Court’?

From those who indicated that they had heard of the term in question were asked to provide a definition on what it exactly means. From those who did not provide a satisfactory definition it was mostly respondents from the Tamil community (51.6%) closely followed by respondents from the Muslim community (44%). (Please see figure 2)

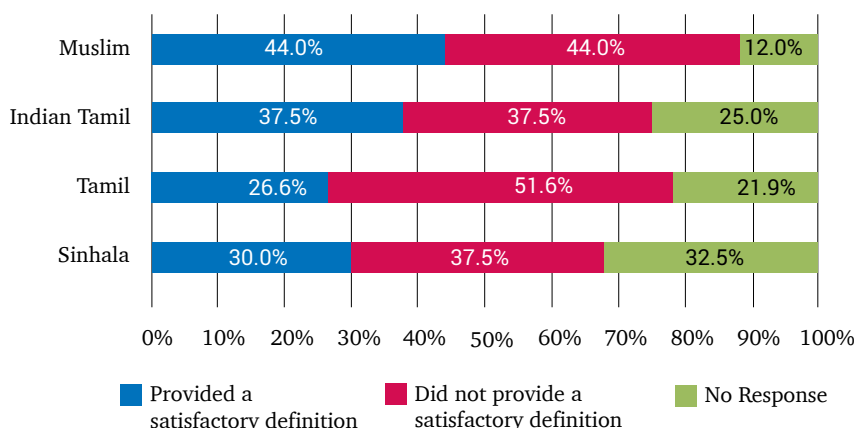


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who did not know or have not heard of the term in question were provided a definition to the concept and were asked to indicate a suitable term that best describes it. A majority among the Sinhala (52.1%) and Indian Tamil (62.1%) communities could not provide a suitable term that best described the concept in question. A significant proportion from the Muslim and Tamil communities gave no response. (Please see figure 3)

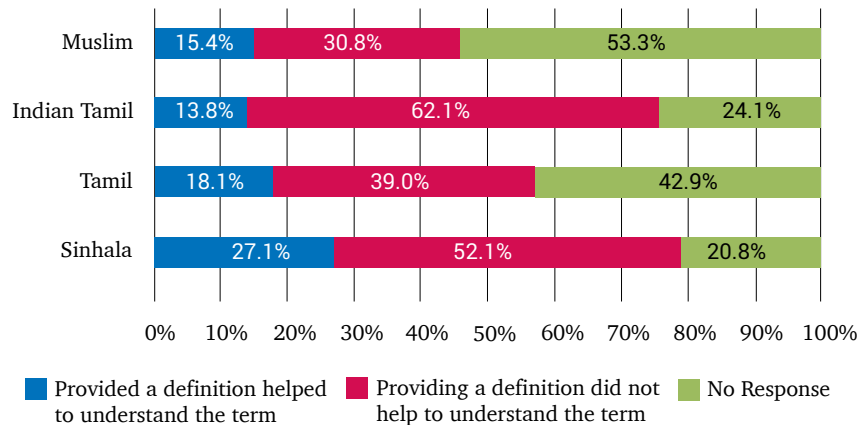


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term? by Ethnicity

In terms of the concept the respondents seem to have identified that it was something pertaining to a combination of two things, such as it is something that functions in two languages, Tamil and Sinhala but did not have a great deal of awareness about it, so as to explain it in detail.

“A court that was created during the previous yahapalanaya regime (Good Governance government) to punish those accused of war crimes”

A 58 year old male government employee from Hambantota

Respondents misinterpreted the term in a sense where they indicated that the country would have two judicial systems but failed to identify the idea of an international involvement.

“All the courts in the country are mixed. Only the Muslims have courts that are not mixed.”

A 32 year old male Hindu religious leader from Mannar

“Mixed courts are the courts that not only debates the country’s local issues but also debates international issues”v

A 53 year old Indian Tamil local politician from Ratnapura

“I think it is a type of court that has a mixed justice process.”

A 42 year old Sinhala Buddhist religious leader

“Something that works with two judicial units combined together”

A 43 year old female Sinhala Buddhist community leader from Kegalle

However, from those who did know the term, they perceived it in a negative sense, i.e. that it was a foreign conspiracy – Sinhala community

As for providing a term that best suited the description that was provided to them most among all the communities referred to the International criminal court and the International Court of Justice.

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Muslim community (21.6%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (9.4%).

3.8. The term ‘Independent commission’

As for the term independent commissions nearly 80% of the respondents’ state that they have heard the term in question, whilst one fifth of the respondents have not. (Please see figure 1)

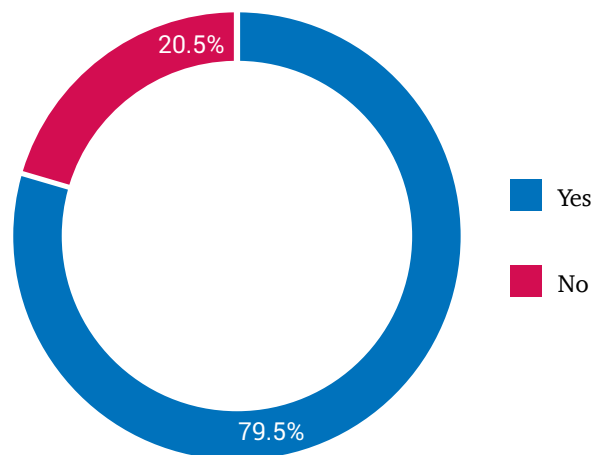


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Independent Commission’?

From those who had heard the term were asked to provide a description that best suits the term in question. A majority among the Sinhala – 65.6% and Muslim -51.2% communities provided a suitable description whilst a significant proportion among the Indian Tamil – 45% and Tamil communities – nearly 45% did not. (Please see figure 2)

From those who had heard of the term and provided a satisfactory definition, the Sinhala respondents tended correlated the concept with independent commissions in relation to the public sector whilst the Tamil respondents correlated it with the human rights commission.

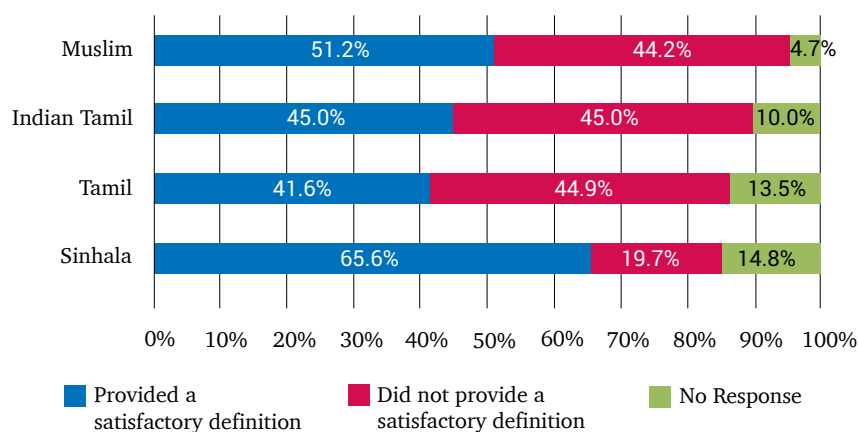


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who either have not heard the term or do not know the term in question, were provided with a definition and asked to provide a suitable term that best suits it. As such, while a significant proportion of respondents from the Sinhala community were able to provide a suitable term (81.8%), a significant proportion of respondents from the minority communities were either unable to or did not respond. (Please see figure 3)

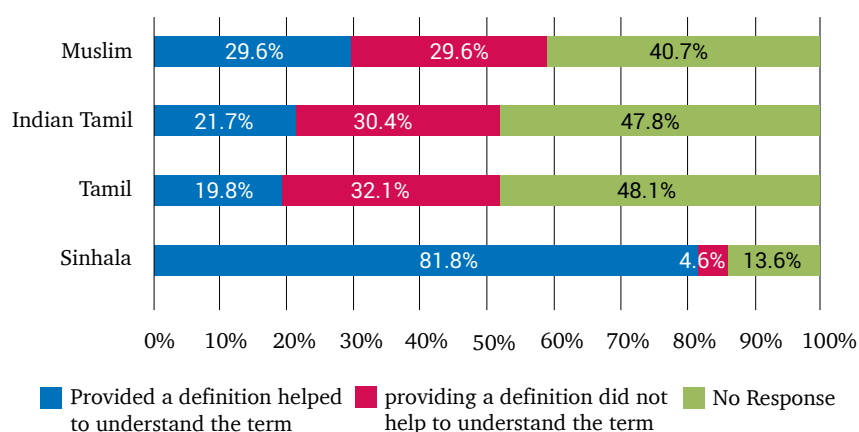


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

As for terms that were provided by the respondents who were provided a definition of the concept in question – the respondents from the Tamil community referred to a Peace committee. The respondents defined the concept as per the meaning provided to it when translated into Sinhala and Tamil languages.

“Institutions which operate by itself (self-sufficient)”

A 29 year old female government employee from Ampara

“I think an independent commission means that it does all the work by themselves”

A 52 year old female Indian Tamil from Ratnapura

“If there is some corruption within the country; to be exact financial corruption, and murders, conflicts between ethnic groups- when these things happen to investigate these independent commissions are created. They also did the same for the Easter Sunday attacks – but there was no impact. These are just words- it is nice, otherwise everything is politics. Our politicians interfere.”

A 60 year old Sinhala Buddhist local politician from Matara

“Before going to court, this is a council that is there to solve conflicts and provide a judgment”

A 33 year old Muslim religious leader from Galle

“Independent commission implies to a committee which has been constructed by all ethnic communities – this is being independent”

A 36 year old male ex-combatant from Vavuniya

It is clear from these comments that most of those surveyed had no clear idea of the independent commissions in terms of the constitutional provisions.

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (64.5%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (28.1%).

3.9. The term ‘Internally Displaced Persons’

An overwhelming majority (98.5%) indicate that they have heard of the term ‘internally displaced persons’. (Please see figure 1)

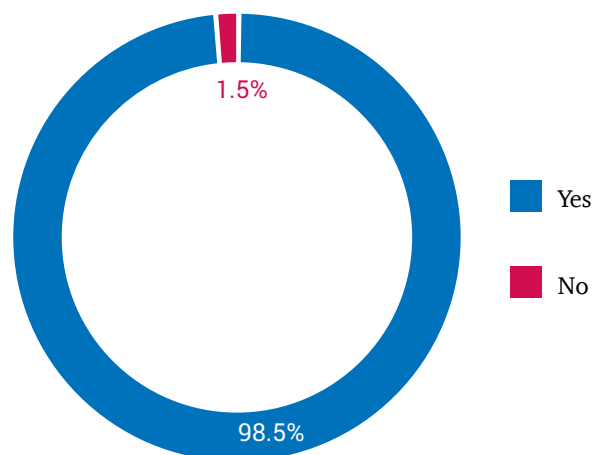


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Internally Displaced Persons’?

The respondents who claimed to have heard of the term in question were asked to provide a definition on what they perceived the term to be. As such it is clear that a majority across all ethnic communities provided a definition that best suited the term in question. From those who did not provide a suitable definition, it was mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil community who failed to do so. (Please see figure 2)

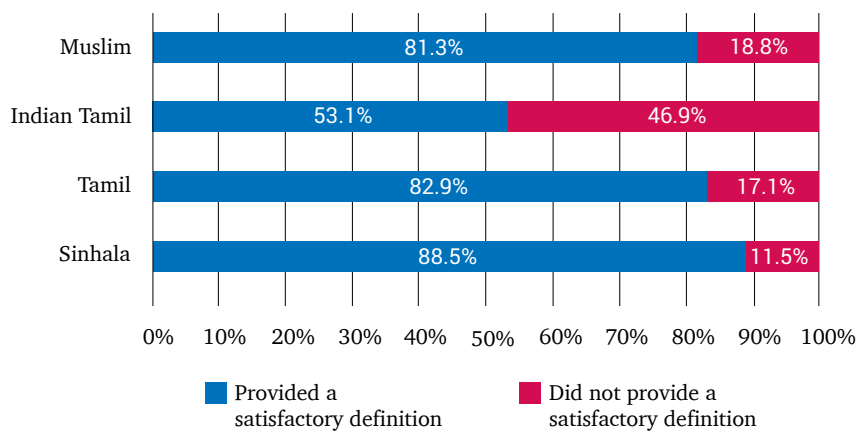


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who had not heard of the term or did not know the term were provided a description and asked to indicate a term that best suits the description in question. As such it is clear that a majority of respondents among the Sinhala community (71.4%) provided a term that best suited the description provided- while from those who did not provide a suitable term it was mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil community (72.7%) who failed to do so. (Please see figure 3)

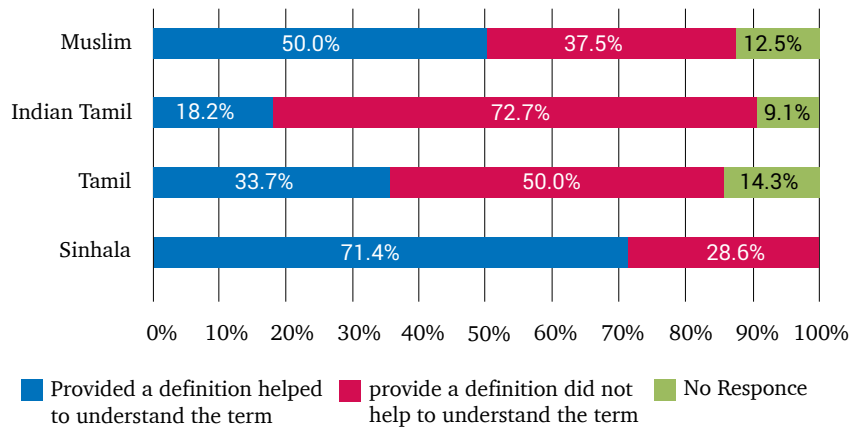


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

As for the manner in which the term was perceived – most among the respondents from the Sinhala community indicated that internally displaced persons are those who have been displaced as a result of natural disasters (tsunami etc.) As for conflict related displacement it was a term that they connected with displacement that occurs internationally as a result of conflict.

“People who were displaced within the country as a result of a plague or a natural disaster.”

A 30 year old Sinhala Buddhist clergy from Hambantota

They tend to link foreign aid and internally displaced persons in the same overtone. The Tamil and the Muslim respondents correlated the term in line with displacement that occurred as a result of the civil conflict in the country. Similar to the Sinhalese respondents the Indian Tamil respondents correlated the term to displacement that occurs as a result of natural disasters.

The Sinhala and Muslim respondents referred to the term ‘internally displaced persons’ as ‘saranaagathayo’, ‘awathan wuwan’ and the Tamil respondents referred to the term as ‘aghadi’

“People who have got displaced because of natural disasters or war – and they have had to leave their own place to live somewhere else within the country. They are also called refugees.”

A 30 year old Tamil GS officer from Jaffna

There were some instances where the respondents provided a completely irrelevant meaning to the concept in question.

“Someone who has no employment and no home, an orphaned person within the country”

A 33 year old Muslim religious leader from Galle

“Those who leave their place of residency and move their residential location elsewhere due to a conflict between two ethnicities.” Eg: In the 1990’s the Muslims were evacuated from the Jaffna district. In 1983 the Tamils were evacuated from Colombo.”

A 46 year old Muslim male government employee from Ampara

“A person who lives in a rented house – a person who doesn’t own a house”

A 26 year old female Tamil local politician from Mullaitivu

“Once you get married and leave your house to live with your spouse”

A 35 year old female Tamil government employee from Trincomalee

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (87.1%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (53.1%).

3.10. The term ‘Militarization’

When the respondents were asked to indicate as to whether they had heard of the term ‘militarization’ an overwhelming majority (97%) claimed that they have heard of it, with merely 3% indicating that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

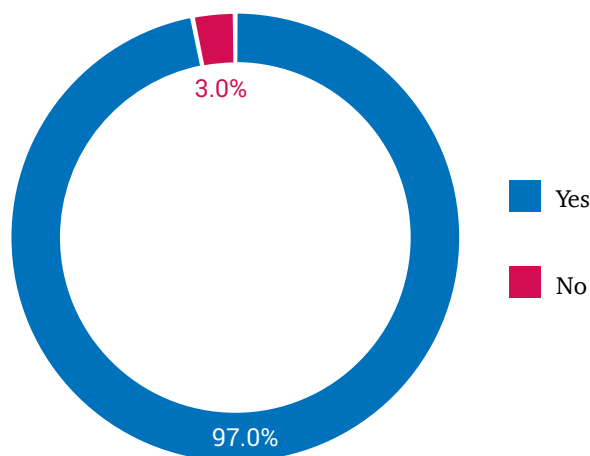


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Militarization’?

From those who indicate that they have heard of the term were asked to specify a definition that best describes the term in question. As such, it was clear that a majority across the Sinhala (74.2%), Indian Tamil (67.9%) and the Muslim (51%) communities failed to provide a suitable definition that best describes the term militarization. It was only the Tamil community (67.8%) who were able to provide a definition that best described the term in question. (Please see figure 2)

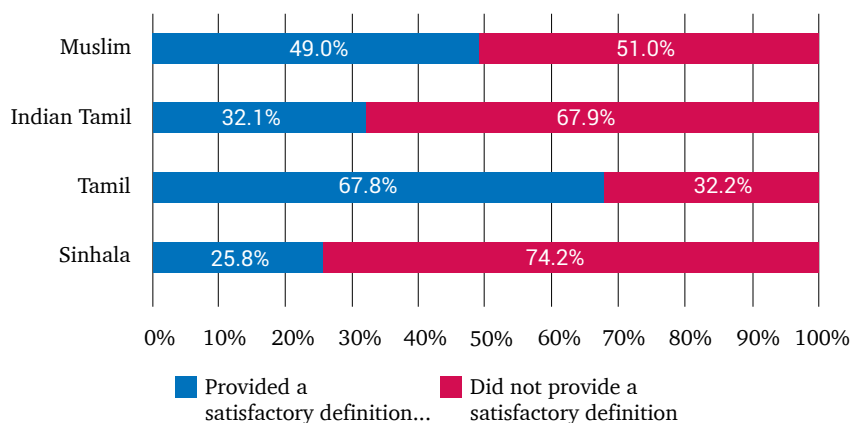


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who had not heard of the term or did not know the term in question, were provided with a definition to the concept and asked to provide a suitable term that best described the concept in question. Whilst a significant proportion among the Sinhala (68.8%) and Muslim (59.1%) communities were able to identify a term that best suits the concept in question, the Tamil (67.7%) and Indian Tamil (52.2%) community failed to do so. (Please see figure 3)

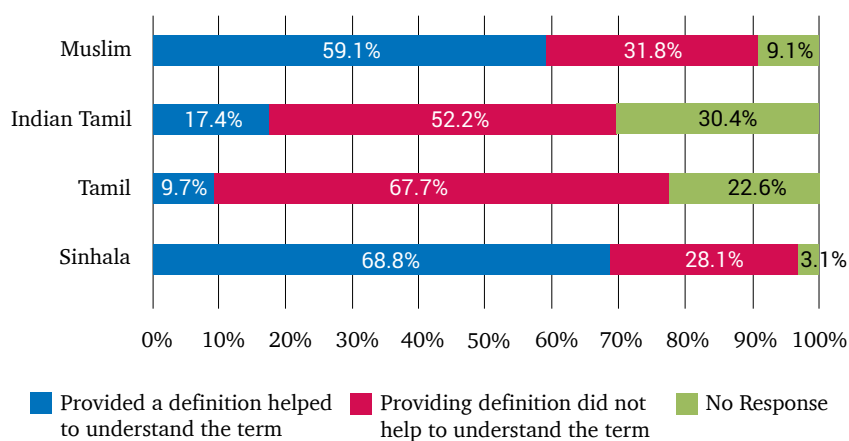


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

When analysing the responses provided to the term Militarization, the respondents from the Sinhala community identify it as rule by the Army, they also consider this term in a positive sense as they believe that it enforces discipline and efficiency.

“Army rule, like Myanmar. If Sri Lanka had army rule, we would be saved from loans. But army rule is not so good”

A 30 year old female Sinhala Buddhist government employee from Hambantota

“More than the education - like for things for the health like vaccination the army spearheading it is good., but administration work like education, the Army getting involved is not good”

A female Muslim government employee from Galle.

Respondents favourism towards this term was exacerbated with the efficiency and success highlighted in the COVID-19 vaccination drive that was spearheaded by the Military. However, they tend to oppose the Military involvement in education.¹ As for the Tamil and Muslim communities they relate the term to the presence of the Military and its impact such as, land grabs that take place within their respective regions.

“We can observe militarization from recent developments or events. This has increased after the conclusion of the war. Peoples’ freedom of movement is restricted by government check points, the Army in uniform who monitor civilians at public places, land grabbing, by large scale farming activities, the Army engaging in primary nursery educational management, building camps.”

A 46 year old Male Tamil local politician from Jaffna

Furthermore, they also highlight the ethno-religious aspect of the role of the Military in the North and East, where the Military spearhead a process of building Buddhist statues and work of the presidential task force to protect archeological sites in the north and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka.

“Spreading religion. For an example, kurunthur malai, Vavuniya issue. Apart from that, grabbing public lands.”

A 26 year old Tamil female local politician from Mullaitivu

As for terms that were highlighted by both Sinhala and Tamil respondents in relation to the description of the concept, most of the respondents indicated the term ‘Army rule’. Tamil respondents when referring to Militarization highlighted that the freedom of movement being restricted as a result of military presence.

¹ The General Sir John Kotelawala National Defence University (KNDU) Bill proposed a parallel institutional structure outside the University Grants Commission (UGC), and excludes its purview from the UGC and operates under the purview of a Board of Governors. As such, a military style of command and control existing within the establishment for a purely military academy will be extended in a manner in which it will govern the conduct of civilian students enrolling for degrees as well.

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (66.7%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (25.8%).

3.11. The term ‘Minority Rights’

In order to assess the level of awareness the respondents had towards the term ‘minority rights’ they were initially asked as to whether they have heard of the term in question. It is clear that a clear majority (95.2%) are of the view that they have heard of the term. A mere 4.8% indicate that they haven’t (Please see figure 1)

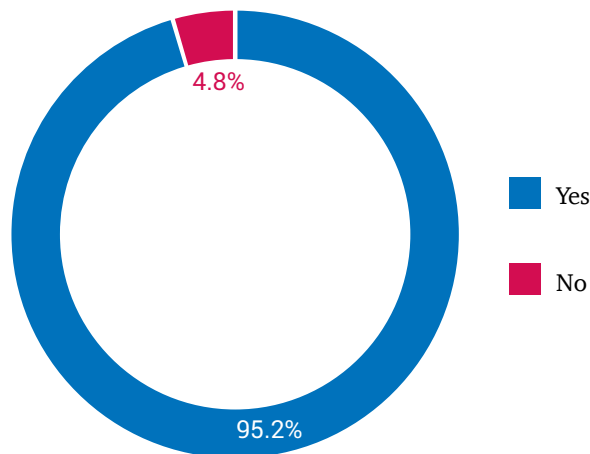


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Minority Rights’?

From those who indicated that they have heard the term, were asked to provide a definition as to what exactly it meant. As such, overall, it is clear that respondents mostly from the Sinhala community (72.1%) claim to have provided a satisfactory definition, whilst a majority of respondents from the minority communities who have not (Tamil 75%, Indian Tamil 83.3% and Muslim 59.2%). (Please see Figure 2)

As for the respondents from the minority ethnic communities who converse particularly in the Tamil language, they identified the term in line with the idea of having a right or “*Urimei*” The respondents claimed that it is something that the minorities are entitled to but in order to be entitled to it, it has to be demanded for. As for the Indian Tamils they only managed to identify the term minority but failed to identify the idea of entitlement of rights along with it.

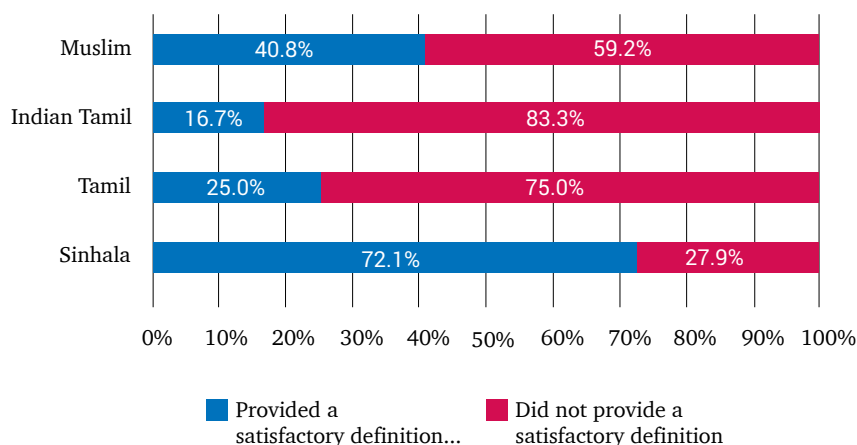


Figure 2: Those who provided the correct answer, by Ethnicity

From those who either have not entirely heard of the term or did not initially provide a satisfactory definition to the term ‘minority rights’ were given a description about the concept and were asked to provide a term that they thought would best define the description provided. However, what was

clear was that a significant proportion of respondents failed to provide a satisfactory term. From an ethnic perspective, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community who provided a suitable definition that best described the concept/ description provided. However, it is imperative to note that although comparatively, the respondents from the Sinhala community claim to have a higher level of awareness towards the term ‘minority rights ‘ - there appears to be a majority (57.9%) amongst the Sinhala respondents who failed to provide suitable definition to describe the term in question. (Please refer graph 3)

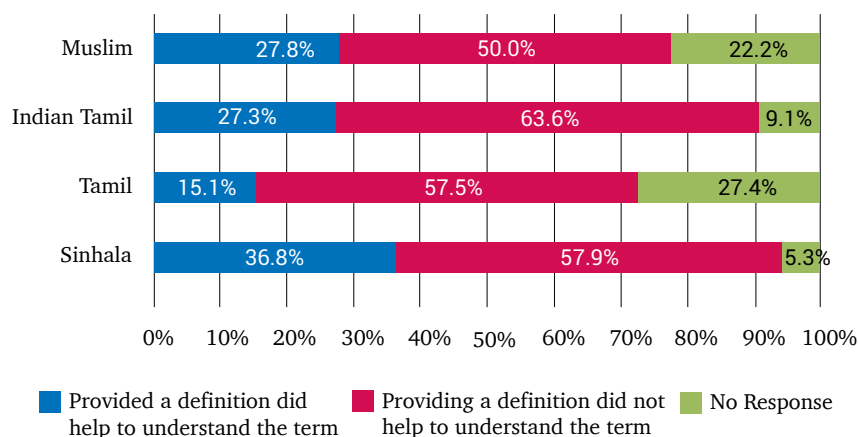


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term? by Ethnicity

It is noteworthy to point out that as for respondents from the Sinhalese community – the reason for a comparatively higher level of comprehension towards the term in question could be due to the fact that the term in itself, when translated into the Sinhala language, is self-explanatory. As such, it is easier for the respondents to identify the term.

Some of the respondents did not limit the idea of minority rights to merely ethnicity, but highlighted it in a broader sense; this gave a somewhat different meaning to the concept in question.

“Most people living in Sri Lanka are people who are suffering. What needs to be given to them from the government and the law is what you call minority rights.”

A 27 year old male Sinhala Buddhist Military officer from Hambantota

“Minority rights are the rights of Tamil women and children. Disabled people also have rights.”

A 25 year old war affected Tamil female from Vavuniya

There were some respondents who provided a description to the term in question relating it to an idea that was completely away from what the concept really means.

“Minority rights are related to people who cannot satisfy their economic needs; helping them economically like Samurdhi; that is a part of their minority rights.”

A 30 year old female government employee from Mannar

When asked to provide a term that best suits the concept in question most respondents mostly provided terms that referred to human rights and security of minorities.

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (68.8%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (16.1%).

3.12. The term ‘Missing People’

In order to assess the level of awareness towards the term ‘Missing People’ the respondents were asked to indicate if they had heard the term in question. An overwhelming majority indicates that they have heard of the term ‘Missing People’ (98.9%) (Please see figure 1)

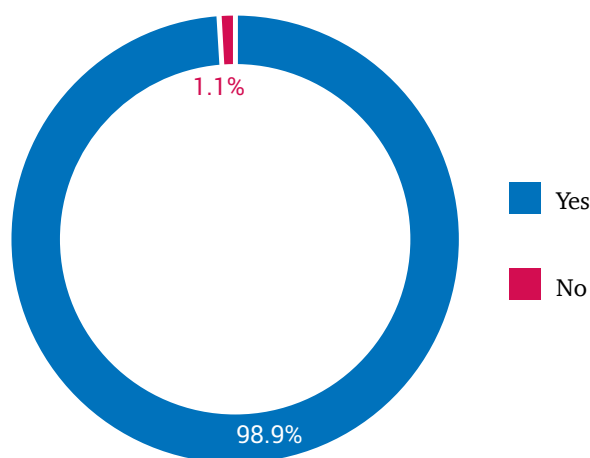


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Missing People’?

From those who claim that they have heard of the term, were asked to provide a definition. Whilst a majority across all ethnic communities provided a satisfactory definition to the term in question – from those who did not provide a satisfactory definition, it was mostly respondents from the Tamil community. (Please see figure 2)

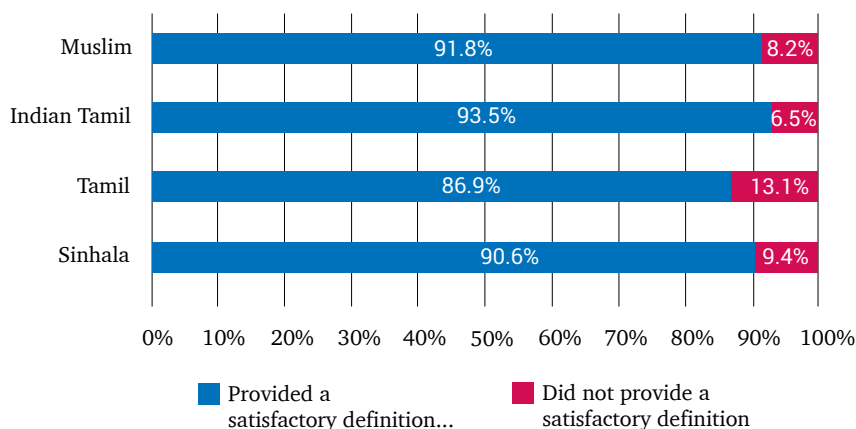


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

When analysing the satisfactory responses that were provided when a definition to the term was asked, it is clear that respondents from the Sinhala community largely focused on civilians and the military that went missing as a result of the civil conflict. Responses also highlighted a sense of enforced disappearance that involved political influence which occurred during the conflict period. As for the respondents from the Tamil community, they indicate enforced disappearances of persons taken into custody on suspicion and were thereafter lost in detention as a result of the civil conflict. Some also explicitly claim that missing persons are those who have been kidnapped by the army.

From those who did not provide a clear or accepted definition to the term in question, it was clear that respondents from the Sinhala community related the term in question in a more passive sense – i.e. the act of being missing/ disappeared, the respondents from the Tamil community focused more on the perpetrator of the action.

From those who had not heard of the term or did not know it when provided a description of the concept in question and were asked to provide a term that they thought best suits the concept in question. As such, nearly a majority of the respondents (48.4%) claim to have understood the term and were able to provide a term that best suits the concept in question, 35.5% were unable to provide a suitable term and 16.1% provided no response. (Please see figure 3)

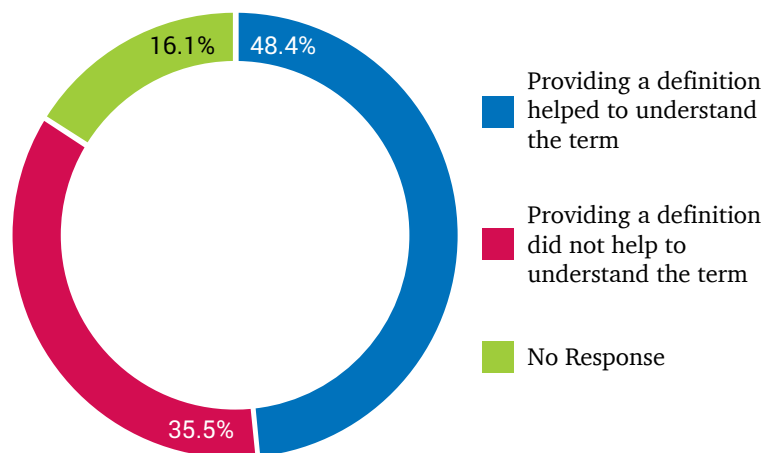


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term?

When further analysing the manner in which respondents perceived the concepts in question, it is noteworthy to point out that the respondents from the Sinhala community related missing persons to deceased persons as a result of the civil conflict, natural disasters or the JVP insurrections. Some also considered missing persons to be civil society activists, media professionals and state officials who either intentionally fled away or went missing or were abducted.¹ As for the respondents from the Muslim community they related the term missing persons to those who disappeared as a result of the civil war in 2009 and enforced disappearances of persons by the LTTE in 1995. As for the Indian Tamil community they related the term missing persons to white vans, the military and the LTTE.

“Missing people are those who have criticized state policies and concepts and so are taken by the state.”

A 38 year old Muslim female government employee from Ampara

“During the conflict people from different political parties went missing. In 1988 and 1989 periods members from the JVP political party went missing. They came in white vans and people went missing. This is what missing people mean.”

A 58 year old Sinhala Buddhist Male community leader from Hambantota

“Through political and private influence people went missing; these are missing people. Today there is news about them.”

A 62 year old Male Sinhala Buddhist religious leader from Kegalle

As for the respondents from the Tamil community, they related the term missing persons to those who either personally surrendered to the LTTE, those who were submitted to the military and did not return, and those who were taken into custody by the military by force and not returned since last stages of the war. It was predominantly ex-combatants and the Christian/ Catholic clergy in northern Sri Lanka who knew and understood this term.

“Missing people as those who were killed during the civil conflict – but cannot determine how they were killed.”

A 34 year old Sinhalese local politician from Matara

¹ The respondents from the Sinhala community highlighted the incidents of masked informants commonly known as “Goni Bil-las” literally translated as bogey men, prevalent during the JVP insurrections. Masked informants were used to identify suspected JVPers and other subversives whose presence intimidated and terrified the entire populace

“People who couldn’t be rescued during the war.”

A 40 year old local politician Indian Tamil Male from Ratnaputa

IMPORTANT FACTS

More than 85% of respondents from all ethnic communities have the least level of awareness about the concept.

3.13. The term ‘Nationalism’

A majority (80.1%) have heard of the term Nationalism while nearly 20% have not. (Please see figure 1)

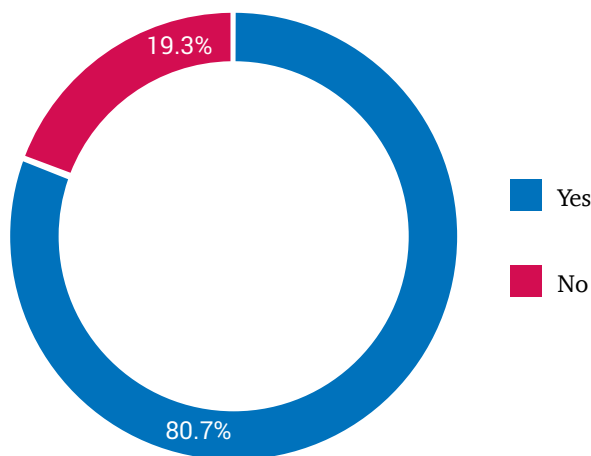


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Nationalism’?

Overall, a majority of respondents (65.4%) claim that they do not know the term, while 34.6% claim that they know the term. From those who knew the term they were asked to provide a definition that best suited the concept in question. What was clear was that a majority from the Sinhala – 62.5% and Muslim – 53.5% communities were not able to provide a satisfactory term while respondents from the Tamil – 44.8% and Indian Tamil – 59.1% communities provided a suitable term to the concept in question.

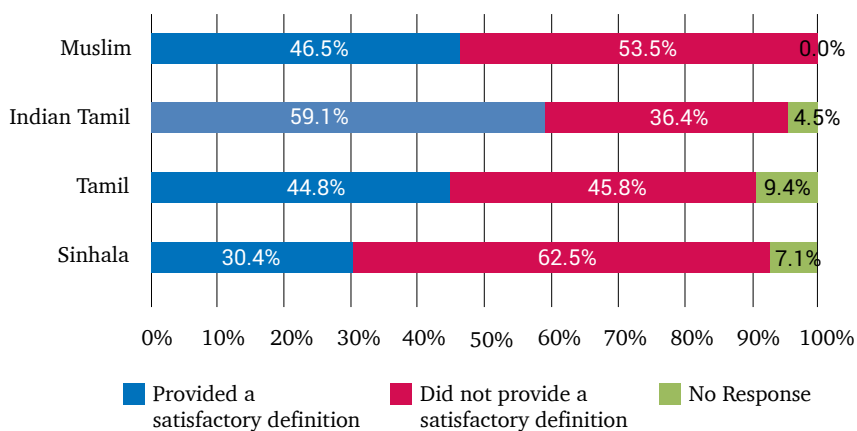


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition. by Ethnicity

For those who did not know the term or who had not heard of the term a definition was provided and they were asked to provide a suitable term that best describes the concept in question. A majority of respondents across all ethnic groups were not able to provide a suitable term even after a definition to the concept in question was provided. (Please see figure 3)

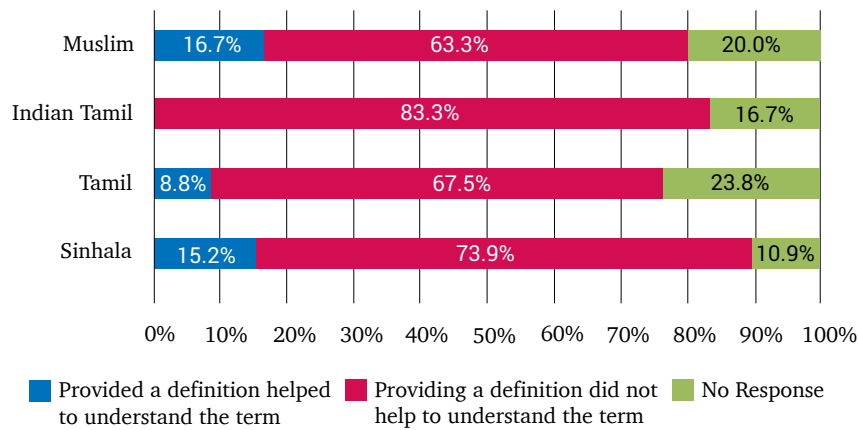


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

From those who were asked to provide a suitable term to the description of the concept that was provided to them – respondents the Sinhala community they intertwined the terms Jaathikawaadhaya and Jaathiwaadhaya identifying the term Nationalism.

“Nationalism is Jaathiwaadhaya (racism) which is the reason for conflicts, which is also a hindrance to development; but it is okay if it is there, as that protects the Sinhala Buddhists.”

A Sinhala Buddhist religious leader

It was interesting to note that some Tamil respondents intertwined the term with ethnicity.

“For the Sinhalese, Sinhala nationalism, for the Tamils, Tamil nationalism; that means someone focusing on and functioning according one’s own language and culture; the way one thinks about these together.”

A 42 year old Male local politician from Jaffna

As for the Muslim community they correlated the term nationalism to religiosity. The Indian Tamil community intertwined the term with national unity. There are some respondents from the Tamil community who intertwine this term to fundamentalism.

“Nationalism is authoritative thoughts of the majority, it comes from that; it favours the majority as they are the majority, it is biased to the Sinhalese.”

A 62 year old male ex-combatant from Vavuniya

“Nationalism is one religion against another religion, when there is a problem or an issue that arises they link it to religion.”

A 36 year old female Muslim government official from Galle

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil community (41.9%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Sinhala community (26.6%).

3.14. The Term ‘Provincial Council System’

On the term provincial council system, a majority (89.6%) indicate that they have heard of it while 10.4% indicate that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

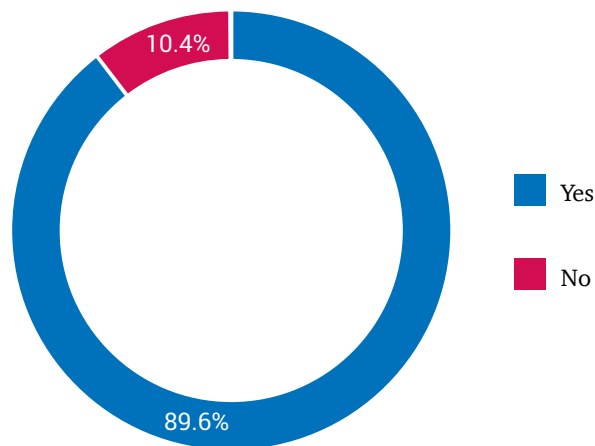


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Provincial Council System’?

The respondents who indicate that they have heard of the term were asked to provide a definition on what the term means. A significant proportion of the respondents were able to provide a definition to the term in question. From those who did not indicate a suitable definition to the term in question, it is mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil and Tamil communities who did not. (Please see figure 2)

As for the respondents from the Sinhala community there appears to be many who are aware of the term and this perhaps could be a result of the fact that the term in itself is self-explanatory. They also believe that the provincial council system is expensive and unnecessary. Respondents from the Indian Tamil community correlated the term with the 13th amendment whilst the respondents from the Tamil and Muslim communities correlated the term with it being a means of a political solution to the country.

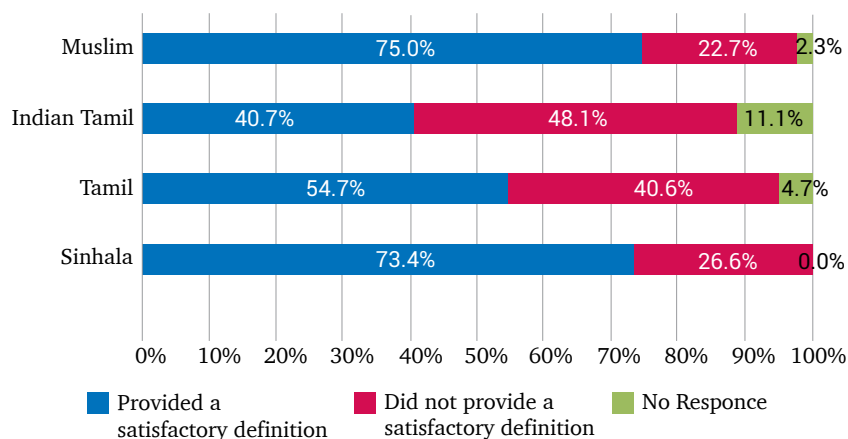


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who did not know the term or had not heard of the term in question, they were provided a definition to the concept in question and asked to provide a term that best suits the description. As such, it is clear that while a significant proportion of respondents among the Sinhala – 73.3% and Muslim – 43.8% communities did provide a suitable term to the concept in question, 45% of respondents from the Indian Tamil community did not provide a suitable term to the concept in question. Almost a majority (48.4%) of the respondents from the Tamil community failed to

respond. (Please see figure 3)

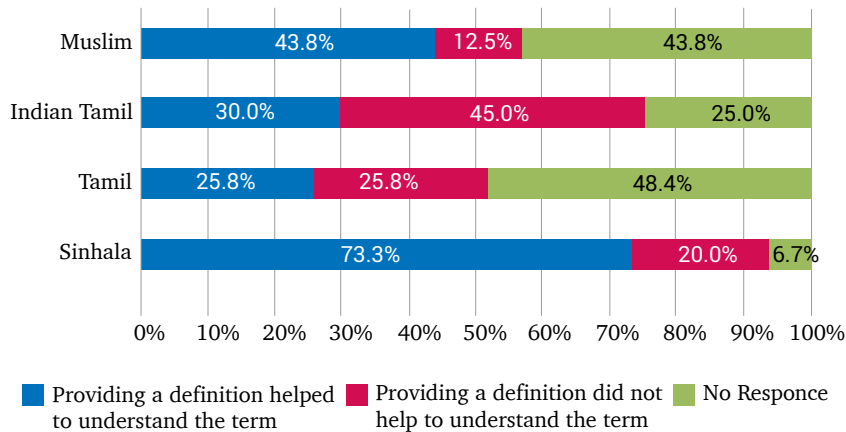


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

All communities tended to link the term authorities that function within the provincial council level. There were several respondents from both the Sinhala and the Tamil communities who identified the hierarchical nature of the Provincial Councils as opposed to the substance of the concept as a whole.

“The Palath Sabha (Provincial Councils) are above the Pradeshiya Sabha. The Provincial Councils form various provisions that relate to the Pradeshiya Sabha.”

A 43 year old female Sinhala Buddhist community leader from Matara

“Provincial Councils are the highest when compared to the Pradeshiya Sabha, Palaath Sabha and District Sabha. This is below the Parliament.”

A 70 year old Male local politician from Jaffna

Some respondents are aware of the concept but align it to the involvement of it with India.

“This is something that was forced to Sri Lanka. This originated in Sri Lanka because of India, but Sri Lanka is a small country; they (India) are the ones who created this; they wanted to create a different rule in the north and the east. This has created additional expenses; It does not suit our country’s expenses.”

A 63 year old Sinhala Buddhist trade union leader from Matara

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (73.4%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (35.5%).

3.15. The term ‘Pluralism’

In order to assess the level of awareness towards the term ‘Pluralism’ the respondents were asked to indicate as to whether they have heard of the term in question. As such, nearly 64% of the respondents are of the view that they have heard of the term, whilst around 36.1% of the respondents have not. (Please see Figure 1)

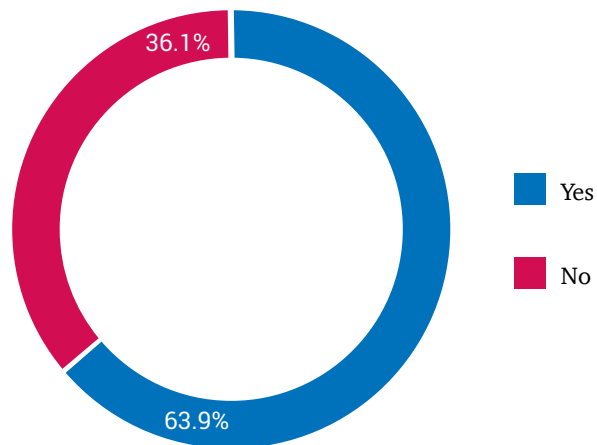


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Pluralism’?

From those who indicated that they have heard the term, were asked to provide a definition as to what the term exactly meant. As such, it is clear that it was mostly respondents from the Sinhala community followed by the Tamil, Muslim and Indian Tamil communities who did not provide a satisfactory definition to the term in question. (Please see figure 2)

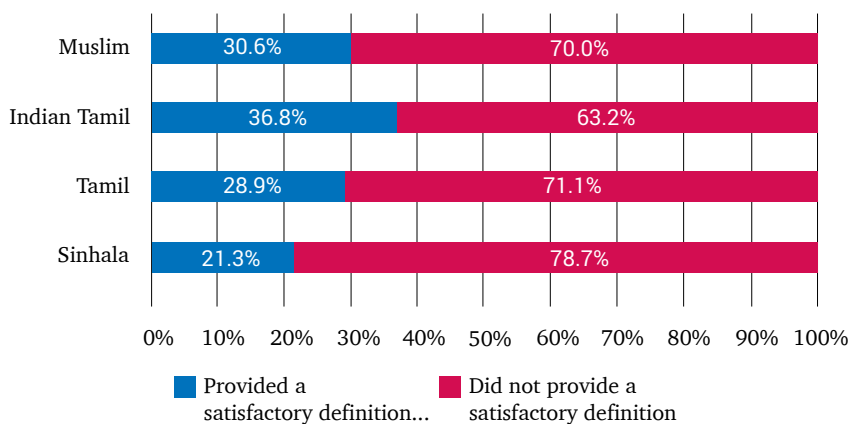


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

From those who have not heard of the term or did not initially provide a satisfactory definition to the term ‘Pluralism’ were given a description about the concept and were asked to provide a term that they thought would best define the description provided.

Overall, there appears to be a majority across all ethnic communalities that failed to provide a suitable term, and therefore highlighted the fact that although a definition was provided, it was not helpful for them to understand the term. (Please see Figure 3)

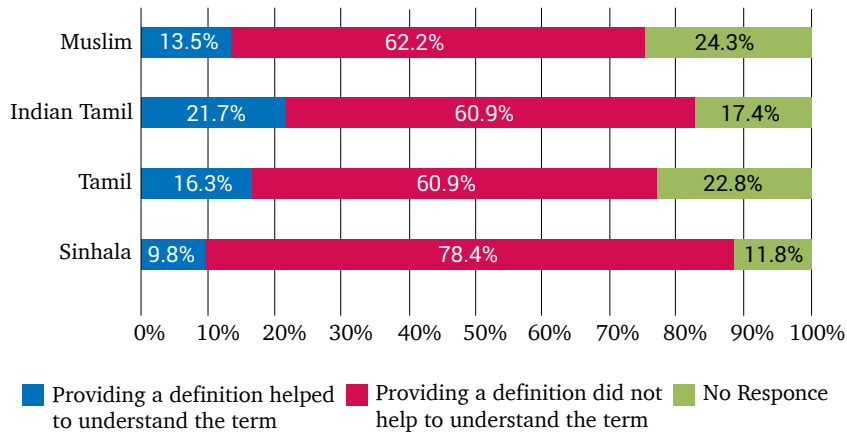


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

From an ethnic perspective, the respondents from the Sinhala community provided a term that indicated the presence of diversity/ cultural diversity - ‘Bahuvividhathwaya’ (in a more passive sense), whilst the ethnic minority communities, particularly respondents who converse in Tamil, provided a term that indicated unity – ‘Otrumei’

“There are a lot of races in Sri Lanka, Pluralism is the diversity that is there between each of these races (Jatheen).”

A 43 year old male Sinhala Biddhist businessman from Hambantota

“In one country there are diverse ethnicities, languages, places, cultures and religions. Having all of these is pluralism.”

A 44 year old war affected male from Mullaitivu

“There are different ethnic groups living together (united) this is pluralism.”

A 40 year old male Indian Tamil local politician from Ratnapura

“Pluralism is when they could visit a kovil and experience what happens there and if the other ethnic communities can visit a temple and see what happens there.”

A Buddhist monk in the Southern Province

IMPORTANT FACTS

Respondents from all ethnic communities have either 25% or a lesser amount of awareness about the concept.

3.16. The term ‘Post Conflict Societies’

An overwhelming majority (93.7%) indicate that they have heard of the term post conflict societies, while 6.3% indicate that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

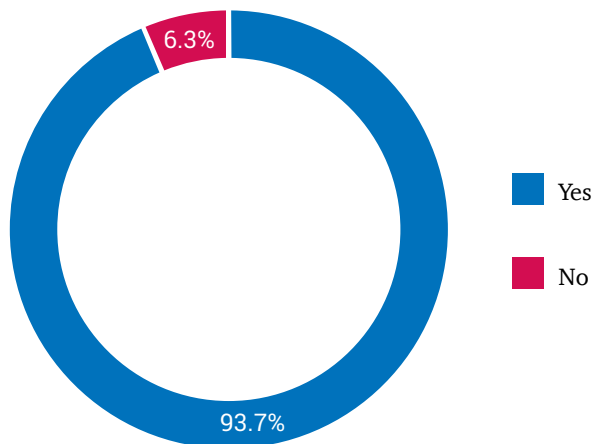


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term Post Conflict Society?

From those who stated that they knew the term, the respondents were asked to provide a definition as to what the terms really means. As such, it is evident that whilst a majority amongst the Sinhalese -83.3% and Muslim -57.4% communities provided a satisfactory definition, a majority amongst the Tamil 71.6% and Indian Tamil – 69% communities did not provide a satisfactory definition to the term in question. (Please see figure 2)

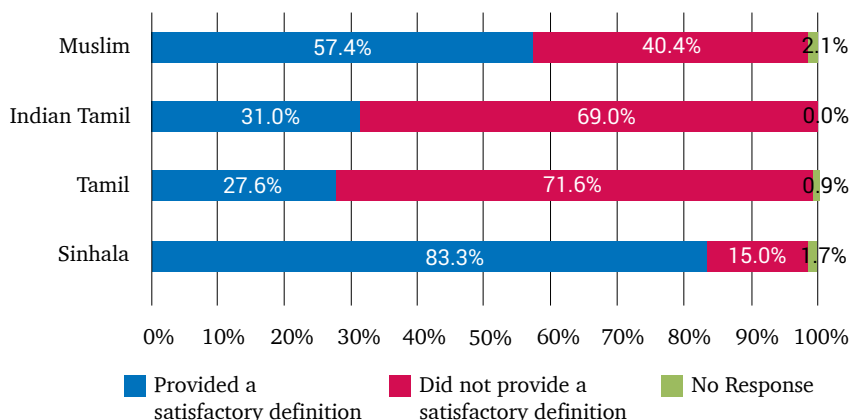


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who had not heard of the term or did not know the term in question, were provided a definition and asked to give a suitable term that best suited the concept in question. As such, it is evident that a significant proportion of respondents across all ethnic communities were not able to provide a suitable term to the concept in question. (Please see figure 3)

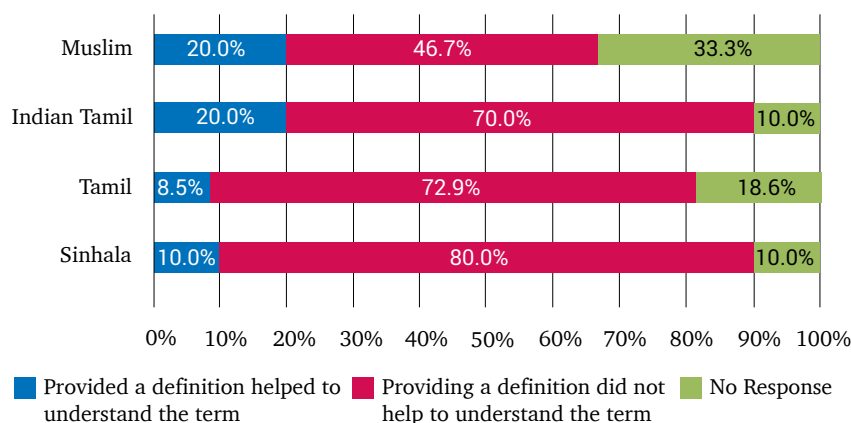


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

Whilst the respondents from the Sinhalese community correlated the term post conflict societies to societies that exist following the civil conflict but also referred to conflicts in post war Sri Lanka between predominantly the Sinhalese and Muslims.

“The type conflicting society that exists after the end of the war.”

A 55 year old male Muslim businessman from Galle

Respondents from the Indian Tamil community correlated the term to having no check points, freedom of movement and not having to carry one’s identity card along with them. The respondents from the Tamil community correlated in a negative connotation indicating a rise female headed household and poverty, negative impact on the lives of ex-combatants education and development as a whole.

“After the war the society gets destroyed; there is drug trafficking and Ava group, there is always tension and fear. The normal atmosphere before the war is not there after the end of the war.”

A 47 year old ex-combatant from Jaffna

Most respondents from the Tamil and Muslim communities referred to the term as ‘Peace’

“People who are living together peacefully, after being displaced because of the war; there is also development. This is post conflict societies.”

A 42 year old Male Tamil government employee from Jaffna

“People living united after the war.”

A 31 year old Male Tamil government employee from Batticaloa

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (78.1%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Tamil community (25.8%).

3.17. The term ‘Power Sharing’

A majority of respondents (92.9%) indicate that they have heard the term with 7.1% of the respondents indicating that they have not heard of the term in question. (Please see figure 1)

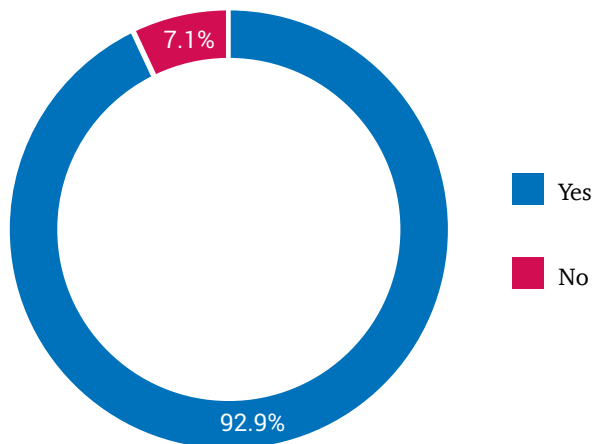


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Power sharing’?

From those who indicate that they have heard of the term were asked to provide a suitable definition that best reflects the concept in question. As such, it is evident that a majority across the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities provided a satisfactory definition whilst from those who did not; it was mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil community who failed to do so. (Please see figure 2)

The respondents from the minority community correlate the term federalism and the 13th amendment to the constitution whilst the respondents from the Sinhala community correlate the term to the separation of powers between the legislature, executive and judiciary.

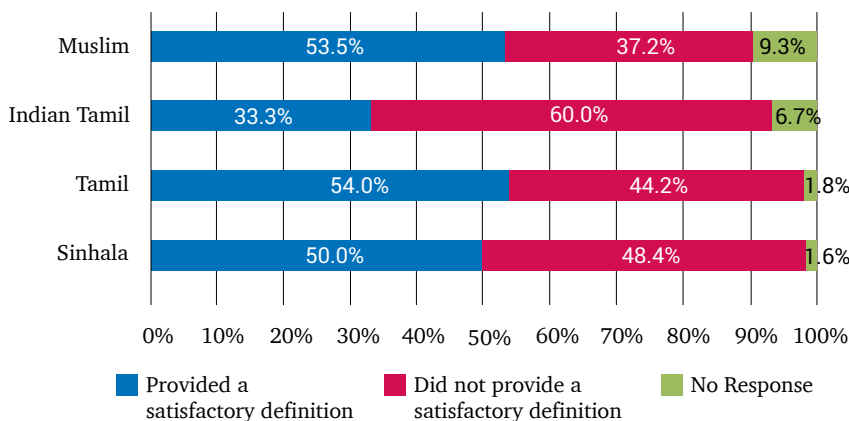


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who do not know the term or had not heard of the term in question were provided a definition and were asked to provide a suitable term to the concept in question. As such, it is clear that a significant proportion of respondents from the Indian Tamil and Muslim communities provided a suitable to the definition that was provided whilst a significant proportion of respondents from the Tamil communities did not. As for the respondents from the Sinhala community an almost equal proportion either provided or did not provide a suitable term to the concept in question. (Please see figure 3)

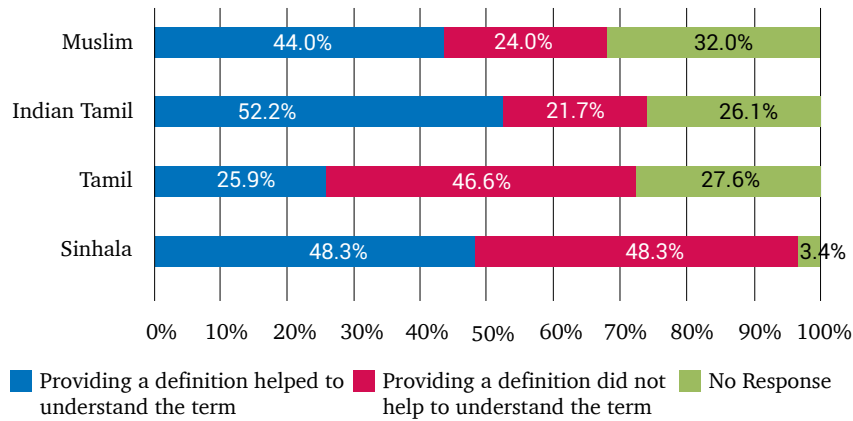


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

Whilst some respondents referred to the term in question as a separation of powers most terms that were highlighted were irrelevant to the concept in question.

“Power sharing is powers not concentrated around one person but giving powers to others as well.”

A 56 year old Male businessman from Galle

However, there were some respondents who provided a totally different description to the concept in question.

“Giving powers to the Police, Army and government institutions.”

A 27 years old Male Sinhala Buddhist in the Military from Hambantota

“Not focusing on power on one unit but spreading it to other units. The powers of the central government should be given to the Provincial councils and powers of the provincial councils should be given to the central government. The powers should be shared equally.”

A 37 year old Male Tamil government employee from Vavuniya

“In one country when the ruling party changes the transition of power to the next is power sharing.”

A 29 year old Tamil war affected Female from Batticaloa

“Using one’s power to overrule someone else. That means the government using their power helps people. The village people are governed by rural development societies.”

A 62 year old Tamil war affected Male from Tricomalee

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Sinhala community (50.0%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (30.3%).

3.18. The term ‘Reconciliation’

A majority of the respondents (95.2%) indicate that they have heard of the term ‘Reconciliation’ whilst only 4.8% of the respondents indicate that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

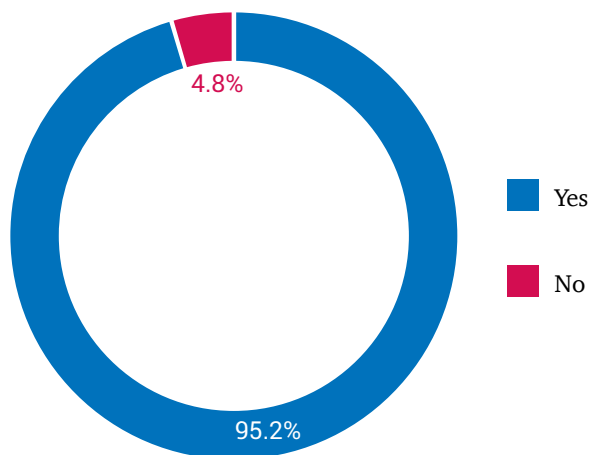


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Reconciliation’?

From those who indicate that they know the term were asked to provide a definition to what the term means. As such, a majority of the respondents from all ethnic communities provided a satisfactory definition to the term in question. (Please see figure 2)

Respondents from the Tamil community relate it to peace and unity whilst respondents from the Muslim community correlate the term to peace after Sinhala - Muslim clashes.

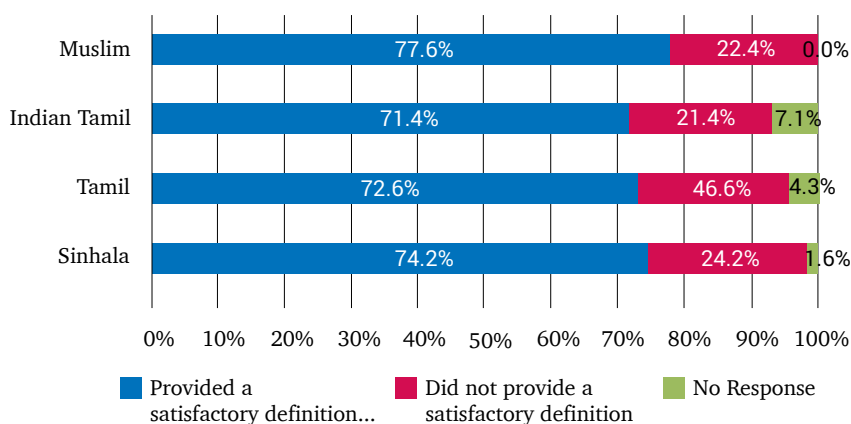


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who did not know the term or had not heard of the term in question, were provided with a definition to the concept and were asked to provide a suitable term to the concept in question. Whilst a majority among the Sinhala and Muslim communities did not provide a suitable term to definition that was provided – from those who did, it was mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil community.

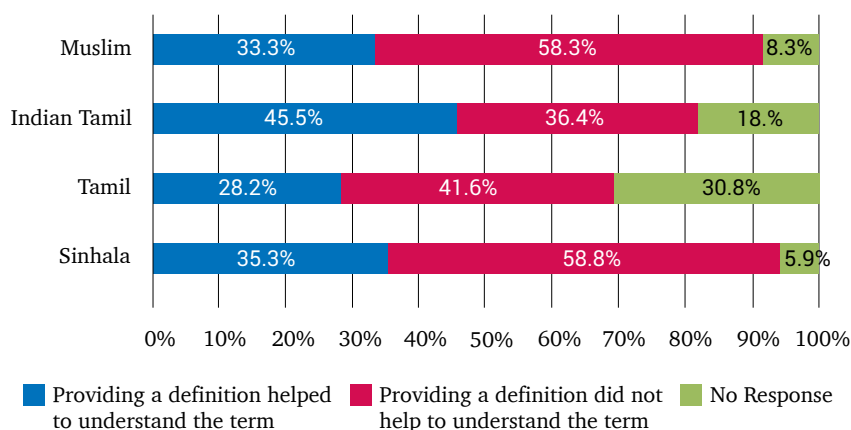


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

In terms of the term in general, the Sinhalese community correlate the term to be something that deals with freedom of mobility and there being no conflict – they also claim that it is something that has been introduced by NGO’s and was followed by government that came into power in January 2015.

“People are not fighting; they live peacefully together.”
A 43 year old Sinhala Buddhist religious leader

“This is something that was brought in by NGO’s to fool (mula kireema) to the Tamil community.”
A Sinhala Buddhist from the Central Province

“A country with no war, that is reconciliation. Tamil rights for Tamils, Sinhala rights for Sinhalese, Muslim rights for Muslims - these need to be given to them the right way; all races (jaatheen) that live together in unity.”
A 45year old Male Hindu religious leader from Killinochchi

There were some respondents who did not provide relevant descriptions to the concept in question.

“A group that works in accordance to the law is reconciliation. Their work is on disappearance issues and also study about it.”
A 28 year old Male Hindu religious leader from Vavuniya

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Muslim community (76.0%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (64.5%).

3.19. The term ‘Transitional Justice’

Whilst 56.5% of the respondents indicate that they have not heard of the term ‘transitional justice’, 43.5% of the respondents indicate that they have. (Please see figure 1)

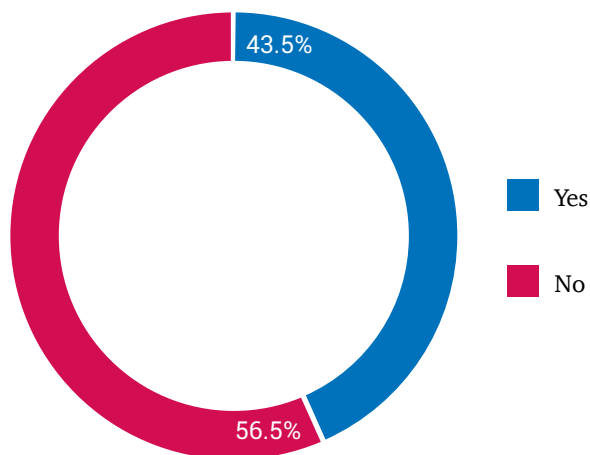


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term ‘Transitional Justice’?

From those who indicate that they have heard the term, the respondents were asked to provide a definition to what it really means. It was only respondents from the Tamil community who provided a satisfactory definition to the concept in question. It was mostly respondents from the Muslim community who did not provide a satisfactory definition. From those who did not respond, it was mostly respondents from the Sinhala and Indian Tamil communities. (Please see figure 2)

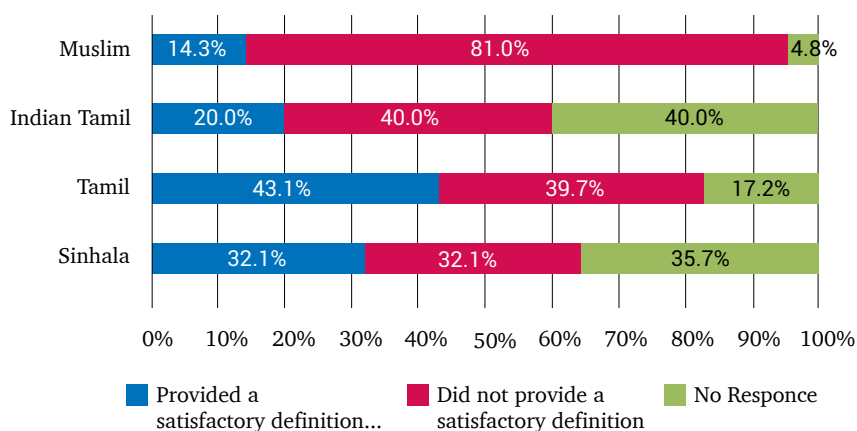


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition. by Ethnicity

For those who either did not know the term or had not heard of the term in question, were provided with a definition and asked to give a suitable term to the concept in question. A significant proportion of respondents from all ethnic communities either did not provide a suitable term or failed to provide a response. (Please see figure 3)

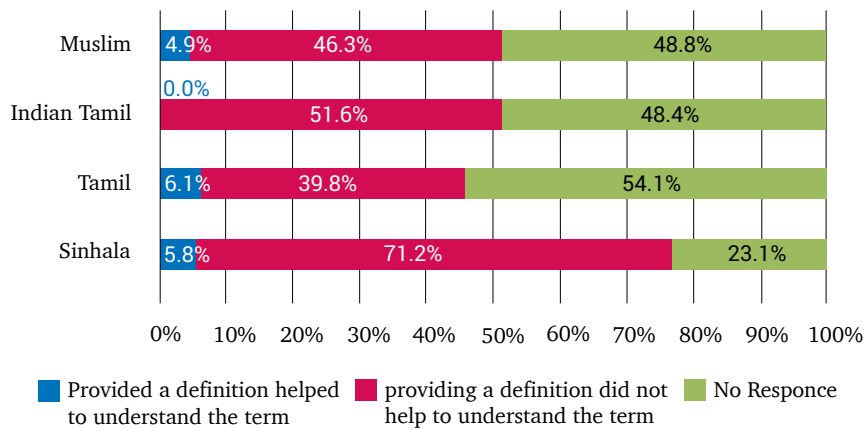


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

Overall, many were unaware of this term or misinterpreted the term. Most misinterpreted it and stated that the justice system should be static and not change. The respondents seem to have answered these only as a means of providing an answer without any proper knowledge of the term in question.

Some of the respondents claimed that this concept came from ‘The Geneva’ – they also correlated this term to be something that challenged justice.

“It is a new policy that was introduced by the Geneva.”

A 57 year old Male Muslim local politician from Galle

“In order to conceal the injustices that happened during the war; this is a process to fool people. There cannot be a proverb to justice, justice is one.”

A 55 year old Tamil female local politician from Killinochchi

“The killings that happened during the war; rights violations, this is something that is done to forget it from the heart.”

A 50 year old female Tamil local level politician from Ampara

However, there were some respondents that provided descriptions to the concept that seemed too implausible.

“This is something related to gender.”

A 43 year old Sinhala Buddhist businessman from Hamabantota

“Providing Justice to what happened during the war has not been given.”

A 35 year old male Indian Tamil local politician from Ratnapura

“Justice is defined by time, with time justice must change/ evolve; it needs to be updated.”

A 32 year old male Muslim government employee from Batticaloa

IMPORTANT FACTS

Respondents from all ethnic communities have either 25% or a lesser amount of awareness about the concept.

3.20. The term ‘War Crimes’

Around 96% of the respondents claimed that they have heard of the term ‘War Crimes’ with 4.5% indicating that they have not. (Please see figure 1)

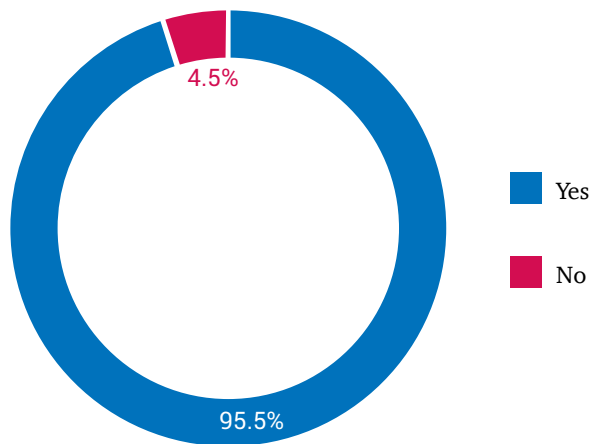


Figure 1: Have you heard of the term “War Crimes”?

From those who had heard about the concept in question were asked to provide a definition that best suited it. As such, it was evident that a majority of respondents provided a satisfactory definition to the concept. (Please see figure 2)

Most of the respondents correlated this term to United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

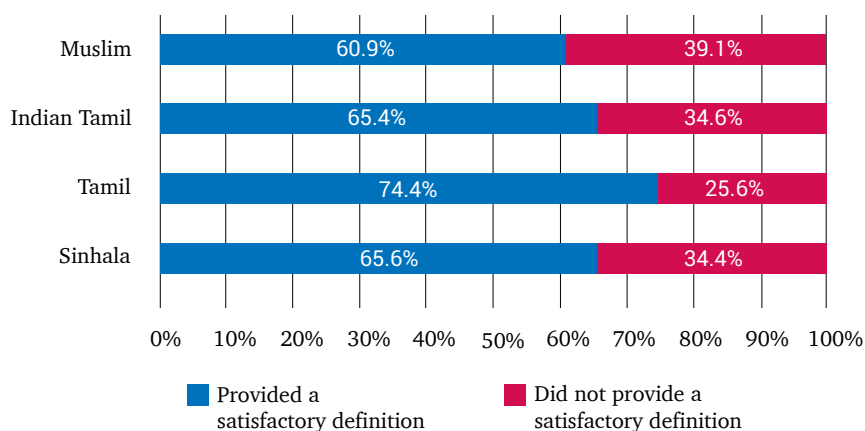


Figure 2: If you have heard of the term, please provide a definition by Ethnicity

For those who did not know the term or had not heard of the term in question were provided a definition and were asked to provide a suitable term that best described the concepts in question. Whilst it was mostly respondents from the Sinhala and Muslim communities who provided a suitable term to the definition in question, it was mostly respondents from the Tamil and Indian Tamil communities who did not provide a suitable term. (Please see figure 3)

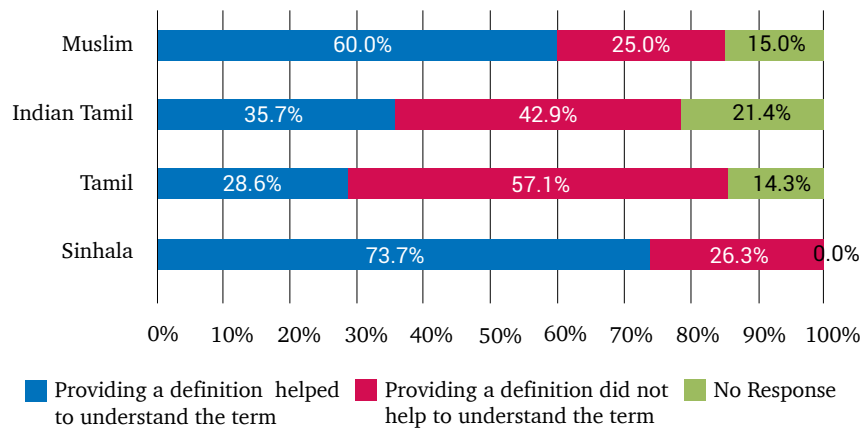


Figure 3: Providing a definition was helpful to understand the term by Ethnicity

Respondents related this term to white flags and the betrayal of war heroes.

“This is a situation where Sarath Fonseka was allegedly accused of committing war crimes. During a war violence (crimes) happen.”

A 58 year old Sinhala Buddhist male community leader

“War crimes are after the conflict with the LTTE, their human rights and freedom were violated. Their political economy, religious freedom were violated, this resulted in conflicts between races (Jaathiya). During the conflict between the majority and minority community there were various terrorist groups that were formed. The politicians too, did not ease this conflict on humanitarian grounds but went beyond that. When some of these rights are violated it is then that this situation (war crimes) is created.”

A 43 year old Sinhala Buddhist religious leader from Kegalle

“During the war abducting and kidnapping people who were not involved in the war is war crimes.”

A 46 year old war affected Male from Batticaloa

“During the war those who went to surrender were killed.”

A 58 year old Male religious leader from Vavuniya

IMPORTANT FACTS

When compared to the other ethnic communities, it is mostly respondents from the Tamil community (72.6%) who appear to be aware of the term.

When compared to the other ethnic communities, the least level of awareness is mostly among respondents from the Indian Tamil community (54.8%).

4. Conclusion

Whilst this study aimed to capture views on how key personnel in society perceived various terms and concepts associated to conflict management and peace in Sri Lanka; it also concurrently assessed the extent to which the respondents were aware of the terms and concepts in question. What was interesting to note was that the respondents' level of awareness ranged from high, moderate and low depending on the term and concept in question. Since this study was conducted with people who have considerable exposure, expertise and experience, and are also considered to be influential in decision making processors in society, it is important to understand and analyse the extent to which these respondents know these concepts and terms; and how they perceive it. Furthermore, when respondents claimed to have no knowledge of the terms and concepts in question – this is noteworthy as the selected sample respondents are considered to be those who have a considerable amount of power in decision making processes. As such the findings of this study helps to strengthen the impact and effectiveness of policy making and advocacy in conflict management and peace in post war Sri Lanka.

As was evident in the data analysis, the concepts that the respondents were least aware of were Hybrid Court, Facilitation, Pluralism and Transitional Justice. As for the term 'Facilitation' all ethnicities identify it as post war reconciliation. As for the term 'Hybrid Court' people indicate that it was a combination of two things but linked it to hybrid cars or hybrid seeds. Whilst most respondents did not know these terms in the manner it should be understood, the way they understood the term was less harmful to society. However, there were instances where people were aware of the term and concept, but knew it in a way that was detrimental and harmful to the wellbeing, as well as the value system of society. From an advocacy perspective, this is a challenge as a lot of effort is needed to change the mindset of those who identify the term in a negative sense, as opposed to someone who does know the term, or those who have heard of the term but know it incorrectly, in a way that does not affect the value system of society.

There were also some concepts that have a low level of awareness amongst certain ethnic groups. For example the term 'Diaspora'; the respondents from the minority community seem to be more aware of it than those from the majority ethnic community. The majority community on the other hand, from those who have heard of it or know it, correlates it to the LTTE or Tamil extremism which is an understanding that is harmful to the peaceful and democratic fabric of society. When compared to the previous terms, it is clear that the media has played an important role in disseminating this narrative. Whilst it appears that this has been a narrative that has been shared during a long period of time, from those who publicise this to the grassroots, it is mostly those among an established and influential group of people, and as such has helped with the wide reach.

There are some concepts that have reached the grassroots in a positive sense and have carried through to all four ethnic communities. For example, the term 'Missing Persons' was correctly identified by both those from the majority as well as the minority ethnic communities; the Sinhala community identify the term with abductions that took place during the JVP insurrections, the Tamil community relate the term to missing journalists and media personnel in post war Sri Lanka, the Muslim and Indian Tamil community relate it to those who went missing during the war. As such more intervention can be done considering that this term is not rejected in a significant way by the public in general.

The findings from this study also encourage future research and investigation on certain aspects. For example, it was mostly respondents from the Indian Tamil community who claim to be aware, and know of the term 'Nationalism'. This is interesting because it is this very community that has faced much discrimination based on this and received citizenship much later than when compared to the other ethnic communities. Similarly, it is mostly the respondents from the Muslim community who know the term 'Reconciliation' as opposed to the Sinhala and Tamil communities. The

Sinhalese and Tamil communities relate the term to the absence of war. The Muslim community on the other hand relate the term with their personal experiences with reconciling with other ethnic communities. Concepts such as Transitional Justice and Hybrid court were widely known or heard of among respondents in the Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka. It is interesting to note that respondents within the Tamil community have a negative narrative, similar to the respondents from the Sinhalese community, where they perceive transitional justice in a negative connotation, but for different reasons. They see the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms such as the Office on Missing Persons as being a governmental ploy to impress the international community to give the government more time to deal with the international community. As such it is interesting to probe further into how to make the Tamil community understand that this term is meant to underpin the quest for post-war justice, particularly considering that transitional justice mechanisms were mainly introduced to solve many problems faced by those in the Tamil community.

