

Reasons for youth migration in Sri Lanka with emphasis on regular and irregular youth migrants

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Many governmental and non-governmental institutions have taken steps in order to create a better future for youth. This includes provision of education, skill development, social inclusion, social equality and overall framework of development. But there is a significant segment of the youth population who are not happy about the available opportunities and choices within Sri Lanka and who are not convinced about a better and safer society for their future. In this research, the migration drivers and tendencies are examined and researched both from a theoretical and empirical point of view with special reference to perspectives and causes for migration of youths of Sri Lanka under the two broad categories of regular and irregular migration within contemporary economic, social, political and cultural backgrounds and its consequences on the country. Many migration theories have been proposed to assess the determinants or explain the underlying phenomenon of international migration. However, international migration is a complex issue with multiple facets. Patterns of international migration change in different communities or countries and continue changing with time and priorities. Therefore, none of the theories seem capable of addressing the issue completely. One single theory may only explain a particular aspect of international migration. It can be realized that different theories are playing a role in international migration. Sri Lankans are migrating to different developed countries because of wage differences (neo-classical theory), collective household decisions (the economics of migration), pull factors of developed countries (the dual market theory), push factors of home countries, social network of migrants (social capital theory), economic, social, and cultural changes brought by migrants (the cumulative causation theory), and recent globalization (Trans-nationalism). However, the study indicates that most of the youth migrate to different countries due to the uncertainty casted upon their future. This study makes major contributions to the existing practice and theory in International Migration of Youth Population of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: International migration, Youth, Decision making, Cultural drivers, Development