

Migration and Poverty in Sri Lanka: special reference to Polonnaruwa District

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Abstract

Sri Lanka has inherited a glorious and a proud history. Its' people have spent simple lifestyles mostly based on agriculture and nurtured many cultural and socio-economic values. With the introduction of the open economy in the 20th century, these attitudes changed dramatically and people became more money oriented in a capitalized society. As a result, they had to find new ways of earning money rather quickly. Migration of people for foreign employment started in such a background. This research mainly focuses on how foreign remittances help to mitigate poverty level in Polonnaruwa district as the main objective. Majority of people in Polonnaruwa district migrate to other countries seeking for employment to come out of the grip of poverty. Majority of them get less income per month. Poverty was increased during civil war period, but at the end of the war people were reasonably well off rather than in the past. There are many rural areas embedded in Polonnaruwa district and they are always fighting with life, because of the higher cost of living. Some people cannot even find their daily expense, and on such a situation people tend to go for overseas jobs. Therefore this research is valuable to study their past life and success of their present life due to migration. Examining the migration family status now and then, reasons of migration, economic background of the family have been taken as specific objectives of this study. Research use both primary and secondary data and also collect the data and utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods. To collect the primary data, questionnaire method will be utilized. Many sources are used to collect the secondary data such as publish and unpublished books, journals, research etc. The findings of this study are migration is taken place to reduce poverty in Polonnaruwa district, and majority of them have migrated due to poverty. The study concludes that as a result of the migration, their family status and the economic background has improved than the past. As the recommendation awareness programs should be implemented to maintain their income after come back to Sri Lanka.

Key words: Sri Lanka, Migration, Poverty, Foreign employment and foreign remittances

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