

Female Migration and its Practice among the Muslim Community: With Special Reference to the Trincomalee District

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Introduction: The term 'migration' has come into the usage of social discourses mainly to refer to the movement or mobilization of certain people within a social system. Female migration can play a key role in rural areas due to their mobility at household level in rural areas in Sri Lanka. The end of the three decade long civil war in Sri Lanka was declared in May 2009. The war and its related processes resulted in significant levels of male and female migration and impacted the rural community significantly. Nevertheless, at present, female migration from rural areas to outside of the country is an issue of Muslim communities in rural areas in Sri Lanka.

Materials and Methods: Given this social context, this study especially focuses on two major components such as female migration and rural families among the Muslim community. Under these components, this research attempts to understand how various forms of female migration and their impact on families in a rural community by particularly focusing on the rural spaces. In this research, primary data was collected from a sample of 82 rural family respondents in the selected rural area of Pulmoddai, Trincomalee district in Sri Lanka. The selected respondents were used in- depth interviews, case studies and non participation observation as the ways of collecting primary data. The data was analyzed using grounded theory model.

Results and Discussions: The results of the study confirm a significant difference in the perceptions on female migration among rural families. As a result, in recent years, the rate of occurrence of female migration in Pulmoddai among the Muslims is increasing dramatically. There are several factors, responsible for female migration, influence the rural communities. The most influential socio-economic factors affecting the female migration in rural are; age, marital status, pattern of marriage, levels of education, numbers of the family members and gender role in rural area. The results of the study further reveal that the demand of female migration varies with levels of consumptions, income and socio- cultural activities. But *family size* is the most important variable.

Conclusion: Furthermore, this study has found that reasons for female migration from their community to outside of the country were not only economic reason but it was related to some cultural reasons as well. On the other hand, female migration is identified as a *subculture* of the Muslims communities in rural Trincomalee. Thus, the female migrations give a social and economic mobility of the rural families in different scales.

Keywords: Female Migration, Muslim Community, Rural Family, Mobility

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