

06

**A Study on the Social Infrastructure Development after
the Establishment of Ekala Industrial Zone**

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Abstract

This study aims to identify about the social infrastructure development of the industrial zone area. The industrial zone concept was introduced to Sri Lanka in the 1960s. The industrial zones were established with the objective of creating around 6500 direct and indirect employment opportunities and developing them with adequate social and infrastructure facilities in environmentally conducive areas for small and medium industries. The purpose of the study was to conduct a comparative study of the status of social development at the beginning of the industrial zone and the current status. The Ekala Industrial zone which is located inside Jaela urban council was selected as the study area. Ekala industrial zone spread over six Grama Niladhari Divisions which are Kurunduwatta, Gallawatta, Mahawatta, Ekala, Alexandrawatta, Visakawatta. Both primary and secondary data were used to analysis the data. Primary data was collected by distributing questionnaires among 60 people as the sample. In addition, a group

of 15 individuals; 12 employers and 3 elderly persons above 60 years old, was interviewed to gather information about several changes in the area. Secondary data were obtained through books, magazines, articles, statistical reports, websites and survey reports. The establishment of an industrial zone in a sub-urban area is expected to accelerate the development of the area and it has been analytically identified that the area's population, migration and infrastructure have improved. It was found that 93.4% of the workforce were employed, 25% of them were industrial, 18% were apparel, and 37.5% were based on service. The ability to access the banking facilities was enhanced and the school expansion in the area was seen to be more dynamic than before the opening of the industrial zone. In addition, through the establishment of private educational institutes, the quality of education of the students in the area could be identified. In the health sector, the hospital facilities were more positive than before. It was able to identify the characteristics of a society that was more modern than before. It was also found that the industrial sector of the area has a positive impact on the development of the area.

Key words: Social Development, Infrastructure, Industrial Zone