

BRI & Geo-economics of the 21st Century: A Case Study of Sino Sri Lanka Relations

Bathila Methmal¹

Abstract

This research paper explores the geo-economics of the 21st century, focusing on the bilateral relationship between China and Sri Lanka within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The study investigates the major challenges faced by Sri Lanka during the post-civil conflict era and examines the nature of financial and development assistance provided by China. It also assesses whether Sri Lanka has effectively utilized Chinese financial assistance for its development. The research aims to identify the impact of Chinese investments on Sri Lanka's actual development, understand the key challenges hindering Sri Lanka's development progress, and explore the nature of financial and development assistance from China. Adopting a qualitative research approach, this study relies on secondary data to collect reliable information. Qualitative content analysis is utilized as the data analysis technique to analyze the collected data. The findings of this research reveal that Chinese investments alone are not the sole cause of Sri Lanka's current debt burden. Rather, the mismanagement of many Chinese investments by the Sri Lankan government has contributed to this situation. These findings highlight the complex dynamics of the Sino-Sri Lanka relationship and emphasize the importance of effective governance and management in maximizing the benefits of foreign investments for sustainable development. The research contributes to the existing knowledge on the BRI and its implications for developing countries, providing insights specific to the case of Sri Lanka. Policymakers and practitioners can use these findings to understand the challenges and risks associated with such partnerships and to inform future strategies for maximizing the positive impacts of Chinese investments while mitigating potential risks. Ultimately, the research aims to support evidence-based decision making and sustainable development in Sri Lanka and other countries engaged in the BRI.

Keywords: *BRI, Chinese Investments, Development, Sri Lanka*

¹ BA Honours in International Studies, University of Kelaniya
bathilamethmal67@gmail.com