



# **Effectiveness of Government Polices for Promoting Foreign Employment on the Perception of Main Stakeholders**

**(Study Based on Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment)**

by

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## ABSTRACT

Overseas employment is the largest source of foreign exchange in the Sri Lankan economy. Since 1976, when formal employment migration commenced, foreign employment has generated substantial inflows of remittance at the same time relieving pressure on unemployment of youth by providing employment abroad. During 2010 total remittances received amounted to US\$ 4.1 Billion (Rs.465.3 Billion).

The present government policy for the development of this sector is to lay greater emphasis to provide more employment abroad to skilled and professional categories which will have a higher earning capacity and less employment related problems. Another policy initiative is to seek new employment sources. Further, numerous government policies have been implemented for development foreign employment industry since 1976 upon introducing the open economic policy for the country. These policies basically focused on protection and welfare of migrant employees and their families, and regulation and the development of the industry.

Despite the high importance of the industry, there was no evidence of proper evaluation on effectiveness of government policies implemented so far. Accordingly, this study has made an effort to fill this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of related policies. Thereby, the study opted to evaluate the perceptions of main stakeholders (i.e. migrant employees, government officials who are engaged in the industry and the licensed recruiting agents) of the industry based on a research model prepared with the conceptual understanding acquired through review of various literature since there was no chance to evaluate the effectiveness by comparing the situations prevailed in pre-policy implementation and post-policy implementation stages due to unavailability of data pertaining to the 02 stages of particular policies. The evaluation was based on widely accepted methods of statistical analysis and conclusions were made based on the results of the findings.

The research revealed that the effectiveness of 03 categories of government policies viz; **policies on protection of migrant employee and family, policies on welfare of migrant employee and family, and policies on industry regulation and development** have higher levels (75%, 83% and 80% respectively) of effectiveness for promoting of foreign employment in Sri Lanka. The significance of all the 03 kinds of polices considered in this study was found highly significant for promoting foreign employment in Sri Lanka.

Overall, it has been revealed by the study that government policies aimed at promotion of foreign employment are yet to address many areas in order to achieve higher levels of effectiveness rather than existing levels of 75% - 83%. This situation is confirmed by careful evaluation of main stakeholder ratings given on the sub variables on which the questions had been prepared.