

Employment trends in post-independent Sri Lanka: a study of economic planning, changing economic policy and their impact

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For the last 54 years since gaining independence from British Colonial rule, Sri Lanka has been seeking solutions to underlying problems of its economy through implementation of various economic planning and strategies. Although the plantation sector that was started and fostered during the colonial period continued for a long time even after independence as the main source of income and the main employer of the country, during the period of consideration for the present study some alterations have been brought about in the structure of the economy. It is clear that these shifts in the overall structure of the economy were made possible by the variety of new economic policy and strategical measures undertaken by policy makers of that period. Changes in the economic policy due to political leadership of the country were also reflected in the strategies launched to generate more employment opportunities.

Main focus of this study was to understand the impact of post-independence macro-economic planning and economic policy changes on employment generation in the country. This study depends entirely on secondary data. Both quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (descriptive) methods have been used in analyzing data

The study revealed that the impact on employment by open economy is more positive than by closed economy, as the labour force has grown considerably after 1977, especially attracting more women in to salaried employment and expanding the labour force while creating many employment opportunities.

Key words: Employment trends, Economic planning, Economic policy, Sri Lanka

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