

Feminization of the international migration in the era of contemporary globalization: Sri Lankan experience

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In the context of globalization, the world is described as a huge bazaar where employers can substitute foreign domestic workers by relocating production abroad or by hiring migrant workers as part of their cost-minimization strategies in order to respond to global competition. While the more rapid employment creation has been a positive impact of the economic reforms, questions are being raised about the forces contributing towards increased inequality in the society as well in the labor market and about the inherent instabilities built into economic aggregates by increased exposure to globalization.

In Sri Lanka, as many other Asian countries, economic liberalization has been planned and built largely on the cheap labor of poor women. The package of liberalization reforms in 1977 has supported and encouraged the process of international migration extensively. It is certain that these out-migrant female workers have been among highest foreign exchange earners in Sri Lanka, even though the exploitation of the women who export abroad is a controversial, unsettled political question and a source of vigorous debate.

This paper aims to explore the gendered dimensions of the international movement of human capital and of women in particular in the context of globalization by utilizing time series data analysis and available empirical evidence. Author concludes that feminization of international migration could be visible in the Sri Lankan labor market as the major impact of the contemporary globalization.

Key words: Feminization, Migration, Globalization, Liberalization Sri Lanka, Labor

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