DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACT OF LABOUR MIGRATION TOWARDS EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES A STUDY ON KATUNAYAKE AND BIYAGAMA EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES, SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Location of an industry attracts employees from other parts of the country, sometimes even from overseas, changing the usual demographic pattern of that particular region. The Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), Sri Lanka (2012) has identified the location of the first and the two largest Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in Katunayake and Biyagama in Gampaha district as one of the causes for population increase in the district. Young male and female workers from different parts of the country temporally migrate to such regions seeking employment opportunities in EPZs. Thus, location of these EPZs would have probably influenced the demography of the particular regions by changing the size, distribution, growth and composition of the population. This study attempts to explore how the labour migration towards selected EPZs has affected the demography of the particular region. The 2012 census data relates to Katana (Katunayake EPZ) and Biyagama (Biyagama EPZ) Divisional Secretariat Divisions and statistics of Board of Investments (BOI) were used. The demographic impact was analysed at Grama Niladhari division level using formulas, graphs and maps. Relatively unusual patterns of population were found in the immediate neighbourhood of both EPZs in terms of total population (higher), distribution (more dense), growth (higher but minus growth) and more youths in both EPZs. More females were in Katunayake (Katana) and more males in Biyagama. Unusual growth, age structure and sex composition compared to the national and regional pattern were very significant in the immediate neighbourhood where the migrated EPZ workers live temporarily.

Keywords: Export processing zones, labour migration, demographic impact, immediate neighbourhood