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Contents

	Page
1. Trend of Social Environmental Reporting Practices in Sri Lanka Bandara Rajapakse	1 - 22
2. Optimal Allocation of Government Funds for University Education: Unit Recurrent Cost per Undergraduate WASP Weeratunga PV Damayanthi	23 - 37
3. Incentives for Small Industries in Sri Lanka MGG Hemakumara	38 - 54
4. The Social Life Emerging from a Modern Suburban Housing Scheme (The case of the Mettegodra Housing Scheme in Sri Lanka) N Chandrasiri Niriella	55 - 75
5. Patterns, Determinants and Consequences of Internal Migration in Sri Lanka, 1981-2001 Sunethra Perera	76 - 101
6. Comparative Study of two Organizational Cultures; Evidence from the Service Sector of Sri Lanka KASP Kaluarachchi	102 - 114
7. Influence of Electronic Media on Reading: How Electronic Media can be Used to Enhance Reading RMSN Ratnayake	115 - 129
8. Impacts on Productivity by Changing environmental Factors: Study on Traditional Lagoon Fishery and Modern Shrimp Farming Industry in North-Western of Sri Lanka K Asoka Perera	130 - 149
9. රාජ්‍ය භාෂාවක කාර්යභාරය හා සිංහල භාෂාවේ නවීකරණය Sandagomi Coperahewa	150 - 163

Patterns, Determinants and Consequences of Internal Migration in Sri Lanka, 1981-2001

Sunethra Perera

Introduction

Migration is a movement that involves a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence from one administrative unit to another (Mangalam 1968, Lee 1969, Zelinsky 1971). Internal migration plays a major role in the population re-distribution by administrative units of a country. At any given period of time, the size, growth, distribution and composition of the total population is also determined by the volume and level of migration. Ravenstein's 'Laws of Migration' and Lee's theory of migration conceptualize the determinants, characteristics and development of migration patterns. The patterns of spatial distribution of population in Sri Lanka are directly linked to the inter-district migration patterns. Several researchers have done studies on inter-district migration using 1981 Census data. The main objective of this study is to investigate recent patterns, determinants and consequences of inter-district migration of Sri Lanka during 1981 and 2001 using Census data. Identification of recent patterns and determinants of migration would be more important in socio-economic and national physical planning and to overcome negative consequences of migration.

Theoretical Considerations

Ravenstein's (1885) 'Laws of migration' provides a theoretical background to understand the current patterns and streams of inter-district lifetime migration in Sri Lanka. Lee's 'Theory of migration' (1966) conceptualized that four attributes such as positive factors, negative factors, neutral factors and intervening obstacles at the place of origin and the place of destination will determine the migration

decision of people. Zelinsky (1971) theorized that many societies experienced a mobility transition parallel to the demographic transition. These three theories provide a theoretical base to identify recent patterns, characteristics and determinants of inter-district lifetime migration in Sri Lanka.

A brief review of literature

Vamathevan (1961) made the first study on internal migration in Sri Lanka, analyzing volume and patterns for the period 1946-1953. For the same period Aberathne and Jayawardena (1965) studied the Inter-censal migration to identify popular migration destinations. In 1965 Bose studied internal migration in India, Pakistan and Ceylon to examine some basic similarities and dis-similarities of streams of urban ward migration in three countries. The Lifetime-net migration for five regions (the low country, the hill country, the dry zone, Jaffna and Colombo) of Sri Lanka was studied by Richards (1971). In 1978, a study done by the department of census and statistics discussed the patterns of internal migration for the period 1963-1971. Inter-censal migration during 1966-1971 periods was analyzed by Wilson (1976). The United Nations (1976) made study on internal migration patterns for three inter-censal periods (1946-1953, 1953-1963, 1963-1971). De Silva (1985) analyzed the overall migration trends and patterns in Sri Lanka to identify the most popular migration destinations in the country by using data of the 1971 and 1981 censuses. Internal migration patterns in the western province in Sri Lanka studied by Perera (1998). No studies examined the patterns, determinants and consequences of internal migration for the period 1981-2001. Hence the present study will even in a small way help to fill the information gap in relation to recent patterns of internal migration in Sri Lanka.

Data and Limitations

The main source of data for this study is from the 5 per cent sample data, of the Population of Census and Housing 2001. In addition to that, the Population of Census and Housing 1981 and the Demographic survey 1994 data are used. Even though Population of Census and Housing 1981 data included all districts, since then there have been no Demographic Survey or Population Census that could cover all districts, due to the civil disturbances of Northern and Eastern part of Sri Lanka. Hence in/out migration from/to these districts cannot be identified.

Assumptions and Methodology

The study assumed that for the period 1981 and 2001 the districts where data are not available experienced only net out migration, because these districts are not attractive for people to live in and there is no significant in-migration to these districts during a period 1981-2001 from other districts of the country. Based on this assumption migration rates, lifetime migration streams and other estimates of migration are calculated. Place of birth method (POB) using data on place of birth district and place of usual residence district was applied to estimate lifetime migration. A lifetime migrant is identified as one whose usual residence is a district other than the place of birth.

Internal migration patterns in Sri Lanka

Internal migration patterns change the pattern of spatial distribution of population by district at any given period of time. It is responsible for the uneven distribution of population in the country too. The recent pattern of population concentration on land according to two broad climatic regions shows that wet zone districts have become further densely populated areas while districts of dry zone are still mostly sparsely populated during the inter-censal period 1981-2001 (Table 1).

Table1: Net migration rates for Sri Lanka 1981, 1994 & 2001

District	1981	2001
Colombo	5.0	13.3
Gampaha	8.8	21.6
Kalutara	-4.3	2.7
Kandy	-17.1	-14.2
Matale	-4.3	-3.5
Nuwara-Eliya	-4.0	-10.4
Galle	-14.8	-13.7
Matara	-20.8	-24.7
Hambantota	-0.2	-9.6
Kurunegala	-2.0	-5.1
Puttalam	8.3	12.0
Anuradhapura	20.4	12.5
Polonnaruwa	44.6	23.1
Badulla	-6.7	-9.6
Moneragala	25.8	13.1
Ratnapura	1.6	-4.8
Kegalle	-14.7	-14.1
Ampara	13.2	10.1
Jaffna	-6.4	n.a.
Mannar	16.6	n.a.
Vavunia	30.5	n.a.
Mullaitivu	37.7	n.a.
Batticaloa	-0.5	n.a.
Trincomalee	17.5	n.a.

Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 1986., 2003

Note: Data for 1981, obtained from General Report, Population & Housing 1981
Data for 2001, Estimated based on Population & Housing 2001, District Reports.

5% sample data, foreign born excluded)

n.a.: not available

Table 1 indicates the net migration rates for Sri Lanka by districts. It shows that all three districts of Western Province and Puttalam district show a significant increasing trend in net in-migration during the period 1981 to 2001. Colombo and Gampaha districts have been the most popular migration destinations in Sri Lanka during this period. The rate of net migration (5 per cent) reported for Colombo district had almost tripled (13.3 per cent) by 2001. The rate of net migration for Gampaha district was 8.8 per cent in 1981 and increased to 21.6 per cent by 2001. These two districts consisted of the largest resident population, comprising more than one fourth of the total population in Sri Lanka. The dry zone districts such as Polonnaruwa, Moneragala and Anuradhapura that indicated high in-migration rates (44.6, 25.8 & 20.4 per cent respectively) in 1981, but had decreased (23.1, 13.1 and 12.5 percent respectively) by 2001.

According to the table 1, in 1981 the highest rate of net out migration was reported for Matara district while Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya and Kegalle also recorded high net out migration rates. The districts of southern province, Rathnapura, Kurunegala, Badulla and Nuwara -Eliya districts show an increasing trend of net out migration during the period 1981 to 2001.

In- and Out- Migration Rates

Table 2 presents changing patterns of In- and Out-migration rates during 1981 and 2001. Districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Moneragala and Ratnapura showed a decreasing trend of in in-migration while all other districts recoded increasing trends of net in-migration during the inter-censal period. Kalutara district is the only one that reported a decreasing trend of net out migration for the inter-censal period.

The observed out-migration rates further highlight that except Kalutara district all other districts indicate increasing trends of net-out migration during 1981-2001.

Table 2: In- and out- migration rates for Sri Lanka 1981 & 2001

District	In-migration rate -1981	In-migration rate- 2001	Out-migration rate- 1981	Out-migration rate- 2001
Colombo	19.6	29.2	14.7	15.9
Gampaha	15.0	28.9	6.4	7.3
Kalutara	10.0	16.5	14.3	13.8
Kandy	7.9	13.6	24.7	27.8
Matale	15.7	20.5	20.0	24.0
Nuwara-Eliya	12.1	12.6	15.9	23.0
Galle	5.6	9.0	20.2	22.7
Matara	6.3	9.9	27.1	34.6
Hambantota	12.5	12.4	12.7	22.0
Jaffna	3.3	n.a.	9.7	n.a.
Mannar	21.0	n.a.	4.8	n.a.
Vavunia	36.7	n.a.	7.1	n.a.
Mullaitivu	39.9	n.a.	4.0	n.a.
Batticaloa	5.3	n.a.	5.8	n.a.
Ampara	15.9	16.6	2.9	6.5
Trincomalee	21.8	n.a.	4.7	n.a.
Kurunegala	9.4	12.2	11.4	17.3
Puttalam	16.4	21.5	8.3	9.5
Anuradhapura	25.4	24.2	5.5	11.7
Polonnaruwa	47.0	35.2	3.9	12.1
Badulla	7.4	10.2	13.8	19.8
Moneragala	29.3	24.4	4.1	11.3
Ratnapura	11.2	10.3	9.6	15.1
Kegalle	7.0	13.3	21.6	27.4

Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 1986 & 2003

Note: Data for 1981, obtained from General Report, Population & Housing 1981

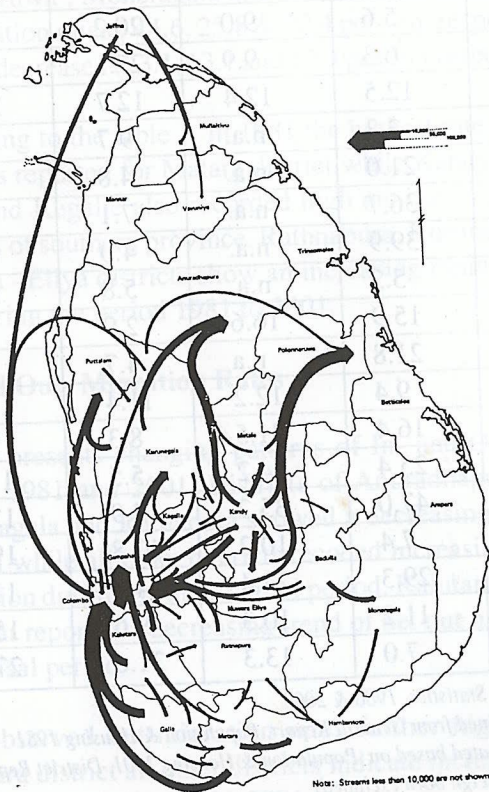
Data for 2001, Estimated based on Population & Housing 2001, District Reports, 5% sample data, foreign born excluded)

n.a.: not available

Lifetime migration streams

The basic patterns of lifetime migration streams in 1981 and 2001 are shown in figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 (population of less than 10,000 are not shown). Figure 1 presents lifetime migration streams in 1981. Four major flows of lifetime migration in 1981 can be observed from the figure. Namely, (1) migration streams to Colombo and Gampaha districts, (2) migration stream to the hill country districts, (3) migration streams to settlement areas of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa and (4) migration streams to Puttalam district.

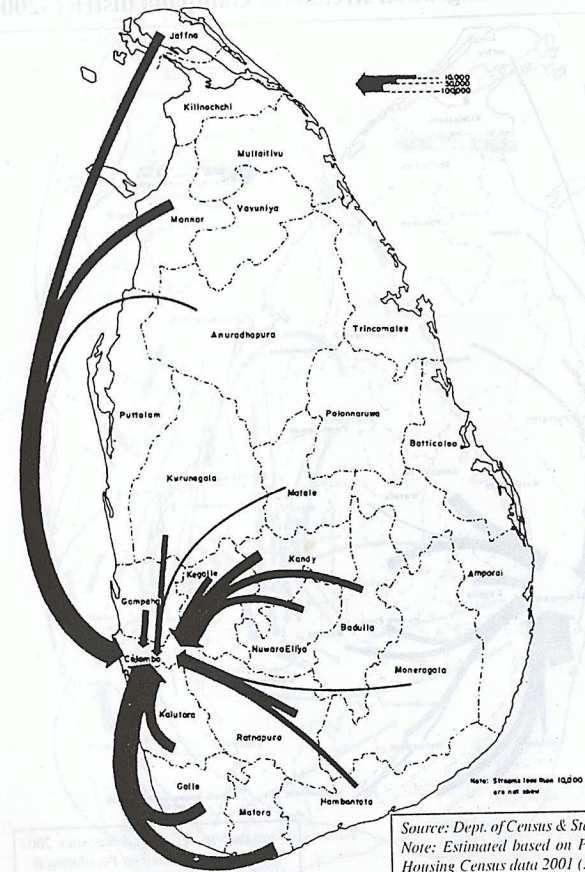
Fig.1: Lifetime migration streams of Sri Lanka, 1981



Source: Department of Census & Statistics, 1986

However the lifetime migration streams had been changed during the period 1981- 2001 as illustrated in figures 2,3 and 4. When compared to the lifetime migration streams in 1981 with 2001 certain changes can be observed with respect to volume and direction of migration. Figure 2 clearly shows that lifetime migration streams to the district of Colombo are dominated by, the movements from wet zone districts (Galle, Matara, Kandy, Nuwara-Eliya and Badulla) and dry zone districts (Jaffna and Mannar) in 2001.

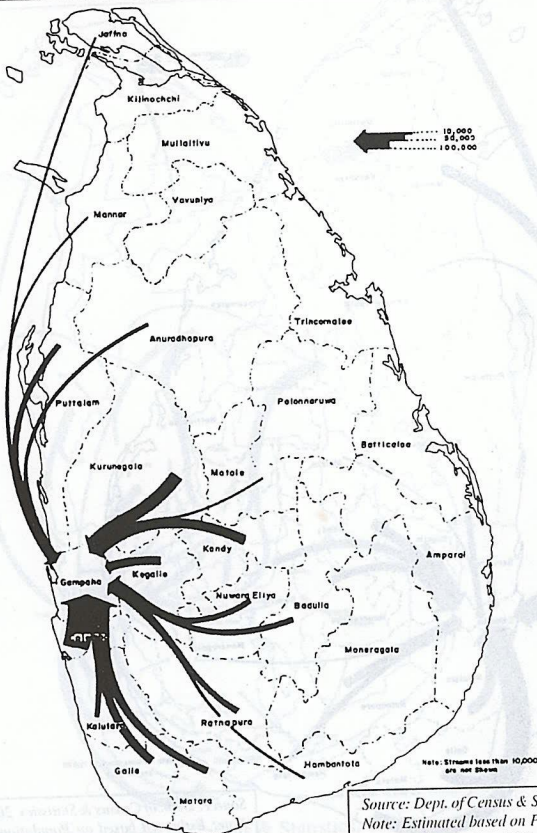
Fig.2: Lifetime migration streams of Colombo district -2001



Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 2003
Note: Estimated based on Population & Housing Census data 2001 (5% sample)

The lifetime migration streams to Gampaha district for 2001 are shown in figure 3. It shows that the large flow of lifetime migration to the district originated from districts of southern part of the country (Colombo, Matara, Galle and Kalutara district). The second highest stream was attracted from the districts of Kandy, Kurunegala and Kegale. The third stream was identified from Nuwara-Eliya, Badulla and Ratnapura and a long distance migration flow can be observed from districts of Jaffna, Mannar, Puttalam and Anuradhapura to Gampaha district.

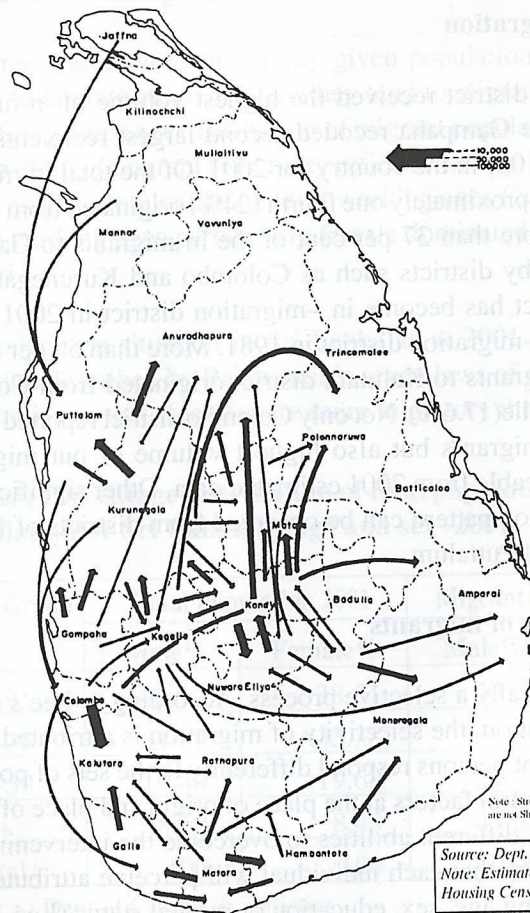
Fig.3: Lifetime migration streams of Gampaha district -2001



Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 2003
Note: Estimated based on Population & Housing Census data 2001 (5% sample)

Figure 4 shows lifetime migration streams of other districts (i.e., except Colombo and Gampaha) of Sri Lanka for 2001. The figure illustrates that movements across adjacent districts or between nearby districts are common rather than long distance migration. The recent increase in the net in-migration rate to certain districts can be explained by the short distance in-migration from the adjoining districts.

Fig.4: Lifetime migration streams of other districts -2001 (i.e., except Colombo and Gampaha)



Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 2003
Note: Estimated based on Population & Housing Census data 2001 (5% sample)

The lifetime migration streams from other districts to Polonnaruwa Anuradhapura and Moneragala districts are lesser in 2001 compared to those in 1981 (fig.1 & fig.4). In the past these districts were developed and people were settled, under various development programmes. However, at present several problems have arisen in the settlement areas of such districts due to lack of agricultural lands, high unemployment and poverty. Hence some of the second generation of settlers and their children tend to migrate especially to the Western Province to engage in industrial sector employment.

Volume of migration

The Colombo district received the highest volume of in-migrants (652412) while Gampaha recorded second largest recipients of in-migrants (597102) in the country for 2001. Of the total in-migrants to Colombo, approximately one fourth (24%) originated from Matara and Galle. More than 37 per cent of the in-migrants to Gampaha was from nearby districts such as Colombo and Kurunegala. The Kalutara district has become in-migration district in 2001 which reported as out-migration district in 1981. More than 50 per cent of the total in-migrants to Kalutara district originated from Colombo (34.5%) and Galle (17.6%). Not only Colombo district reported largest recipients of migrants but also highest volume of out migration (355411) noticeable from 2001 estimated data. Other significant in-volume migration pattern can be observed from districts of Kandy, Kurunegala and Puttalam.

Characteristics of migrants

Migration is usually a selective process. According to Lee's theory (1966) of migration, the selectivity of migration is attributed to the fact that different persons respond differently to the sets of positive, negative and neutral factors at the place of origin and place of destination and have different abilities to overcome the intervening obstacles. Lee states that each individual will perceive attributes differently according to age, sex, education or marital status (Lee 1966).

The study examines only age and sex selectivity of lifetime migrants for 2001. Data is lacking to explore other characteristics of migrants. The study investigated the age distribution of the total population and lifetime migrant population by four broad age groups (0-19, 20-39, 40-59 and 60+). Percentage distribution of total population and migrant population in Sri Lanka by age and sex for 2001 is shown in table 3. It is clear that there is a relatively small proportion of children and school going population who are less than 19 years, among the migrant population for both sexes when compared to the total population of that age group.

Children and adolescents in any given population tend to be less likely to migrate alone. Mostly they tend to migrate with their parents. Sri Lanka's age distribution of migrant population shows common pattern of migrant selectivity reflected by significant migration in the young, dominance of adult working ages (20-39, 40-59) and in the working ages particularly female dominated migration is observed.

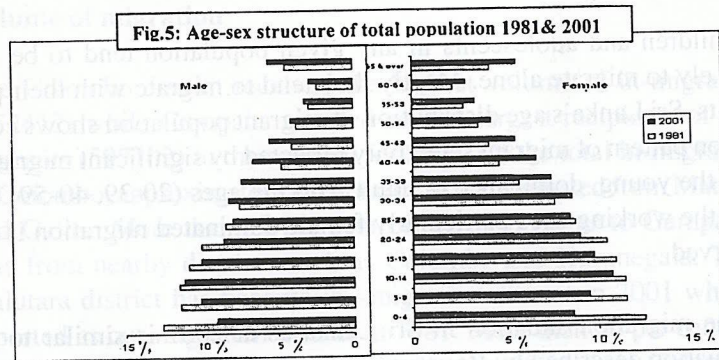
The migration situation in Sri Lanka as at 2001 is similar to the situation described by Ravenstein's seven laws of migration, which also indicates that 'females are more migratory than males'.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of total population and migrant population for Sri Lanka by age and sex -2001

Age Group	Total Population 2001		Migrant population 2001	
	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %
0-19	40.12	38.51	20.61	15.61
20-39	31.89	33.38	38.34	43.07
40-59	19.40	19.68	29.43	29.77
60+	8.59	8.43	11.62	11.54
Total	100	100	100.00	100.00

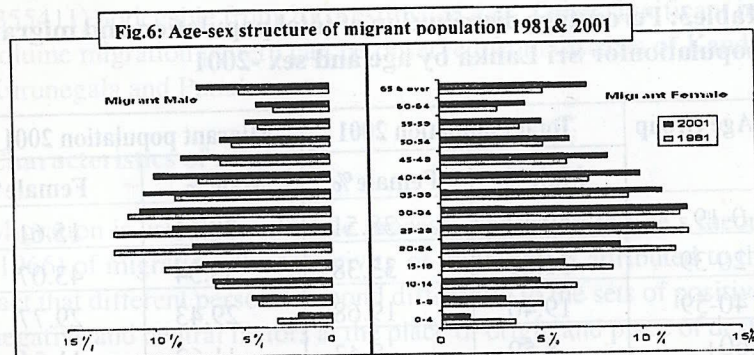
Source : Dept of Consus & statistics

Percentage distribution of age sex structure of the total population and migrant population for 1981 and 2001 is presented in figure 5 & figure 6. The prevailing demographic transition at its final stages has significantly affected the age structure to gradually move away from its broad base as at 1981 to a bulky middle as at 2001 (figure 5). Demographic determinants of male and female age structure have affected the current narrow base of the age structure of the migrant population (figure 6).



Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 2003

Note: Estimated based on Population & Housing 2001 (5% sample data)



Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics, 2003

Note: Estimated based on Population & Housing 2001 (5% sample data)

The sex ratio of lifetime migrants and total population by age groups are given in table 4. For both total population and migrant population the sex ratio in 1981 favoured males almost all age groups. By 2001 for almost all age groups a female favoured sex ratio is indicated. Sex ratio of migrant and non-migrant population of Sri Lanka by district is presented in figure 7.

Table 4: Sex ratio of total population and lifetime migrant population, 1981 & 2001

Age	Total population		Migrant population	
	1981	2001	1981	2001
0-4	104.5	102.9	104.8	105.0
5-9	103.2	103.8	101.4	105.7
10-14	104.6	101.8	119.6	100.6
15-19	102.8	100.7	134.5	87.9
20-24	99.3	93.5	128.6	64.9
25-29	100.0	91.7	121.3	61.1
30-34	102.7	93.7	117.5	65.1
35-39	101.3	96.6	114.7	70.4
40-44	106.6	97.9	122.8	73.7
45-49	102.2	97.8	119.6	74.7
50-54	109.3	96.0	131.2	71.1
55-59	109.8	93.6	124.7	69.2
60-64	115.7	95.6	134.5	72.0
65 & over	110.5	97.9	122.5	75.1
Total	103.7	97.9	121.6	73.5

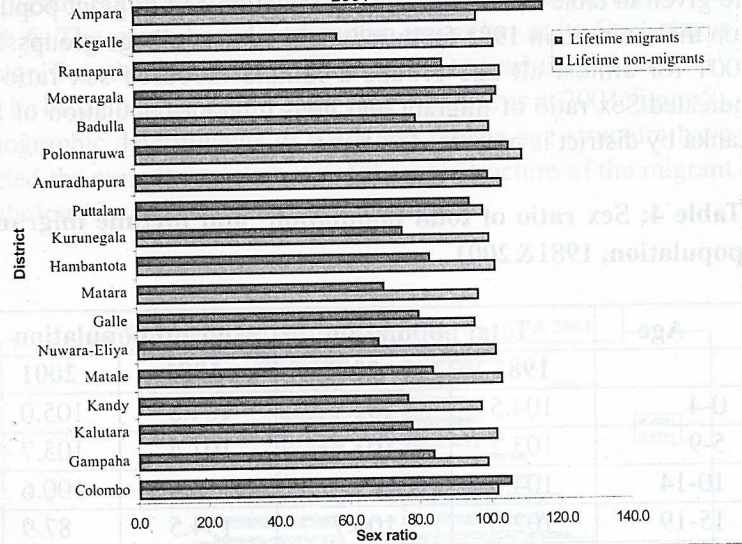
Source: Dept. of Census & Statistics 1981 & 2003

Note: Data for 1981, obtained from General Report, Population & Housing 1981

Data for 2001, Estimated based on Population & Housing 2001, District Reports, 5% sample data, (foreign born excluded)

Sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 100 females

Fig 7: Sex ratio of lifetime migrants and lifetime non-migrants in Sri Lanka - 2001



Source: Department of Census & Statistics, 2003

Estimated based on Population & Housing Census data 2001 (5% sample)

The figure shows that Ampara and Colombo districts record a male favoured sex ratio for the lifetime migrants and all other districts report a balanced sex ratio. Lifetime migrants have a female biased sex ratio for 2001. All these migrants by sex composition clearly highlights that there is a female dominance in internal migration in Sri Lanka.

Determinants of migration

The push-pull concept provides a simple base to identify determining factors of migration. The theory states population movements are determined by two forces such as pressures at the place of residence (push factors) and incentives from a number of potential destinations (pull factors). The study categorized determinants into two

broad categories namely economic factors and non-economic factors. The economic factors involve economic development, employment opportunities, unemployment and low wages etc. The non-economic factors are better infrastructure, education, health, marriage, government policies, displacement, natural disasters etc. It is difficult to study determinants of migration due to unavailability of Census data regarding the determinants. However the 1994 Demographic survey for the first time collected information on 'reasons for migration' and it will at least to some extent, understand the determinants of migration in Sri Lanka. Major limitation of the data is that only 3 reasons have been listed as reasons for migration, namely to live in house, employment and displaced. All other reasons are included in the 'other' category. Hence possible reasons for migration such as marriage, education and other non-economic determinants cannot be identified. Table 5 presents the given reasons for migration by district.

Table 5: Migrant population by district and reason for migration

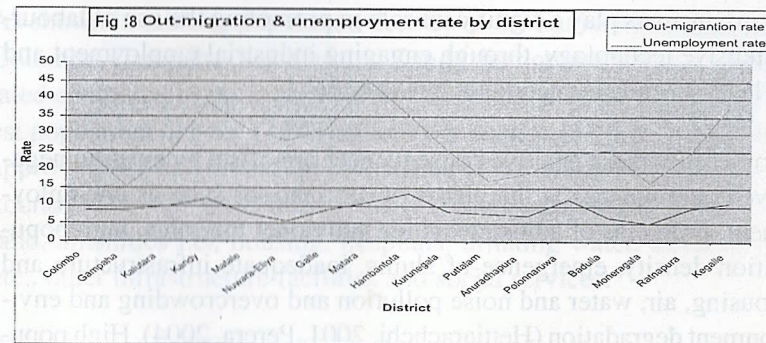
District	Reasons for migration to district (%)				Total
	Live in own house	Employment	Displaced	Other	
Colombo	12.9	13.5	1.6	72.0	100.0
Gampaha	14.3	11.1	1.0	73.6	100.0
Kalutara	17.2	6.2	0.8	75.2	100.0
Kandy	15.4	8.8	1.4	74.4	100.0
Matale	13.6	8.5	2.1	75.8	100.0
Nuwara-Eliya	9.4	17.4	2.0	71.2	100.0
Galle	16.6	7.9	0.8	75.3	100.0
Matara	15.0	4.7	0.8	79.5	100.0
Hambantota	17.0	6.6	0.8	75.6	100.0
Kurunegala	14.7	7.6	1.2	76.5	100.0
Puttalam	16.5	8.6	6.4	68.5	100.0
Anuradhapura	17.9	7.5	3.5	71.1	100.0
Polonnaruwa	18.0	5.6	1.9	74.5	100.0
Badulla	15.7	10.2	1.5	72.6	100.0
Moneragala	18.1	8.5	2.3	71.1	100.0
Ratnapura	18.9	8.4	1.0	71.7	100.0
Kegalle	12.6	5.2	1.0	81.2	100.0

Source: Department of Census & Statistics 1996

According to the above table it is clear that a significant migration due to 'economic reasons' can be observed from districts of Colombo, Gampaha, Nuwara-Eliya and Badulla. In the Colombo district, which includes the commercial capital and the primate city of Colombo and also as the capital of Sri Lanka, many economic activities such as industries, commercial centers and other service centers are located, and people are attracted to these destinations due to many reasons. The district of Gampaha had become a popular migration destination for females especially for employment reason with the establishment of Free Trade Zones since late 1970s. Migration to Nuwara-Eliya and Badulla districts were due to estate employment. A considerable proportion of displaced people due to civil disturbances moved to Puttalam district rather than other districts of the country. An another significant reason for migration to almost all districts was 'to live in one's own house.

Seeking employment can be identified as one of the major economic determinants of internal migration in Sri Lanka. On the one hand with the increase of level of education, training and skills of population and no employment opportunities generated to absorb such a population into the labour market at the places of origin districts, they tend to out-migrate to destinations where opportunities are available. On the other hand, not only the educated unemployed people but also the unskilled, less educated unemployed people too, are pushed from their place of origin districts due to rural poverty, low agricultural incomes and low productivity etc.

Figure 8 shows the recent unemployment rates and out-migration rates by districts provide some possible relationship between unemployment and out-migration. According to the figure 8, districts namely Kandy, Matara, Hambantota, Polonnaruwa and Kegalle indicated double-digit high unemployment rate and also recorded high rate of out-migration.



Sources: Department of Census & Statistics, 2003

Note: Out-migration rates estimated using Census of Population & Housing 2001 (5% per cent sample data)

There appears some positive relationship between out migration and unemployment i.e. higher the unemployment rate of a district the higher its out-migration rate. It is observed that the unemployment pattern and employment structure of the country further creates outward migration trend from high unemployment districts to fairly low unemployment districts of the Western Province especially where non-agricultural employment is available.

Consequences of Migration

It is important to examine the consequences of migration, as that would be more relevant to policy makers to formulate plans and policies in order to meet the demands generated through migration. Because data to identify consequences of migration is limited the paper highlights several possible demographic and economic consequences of internal migration. The consequences may be positive as well as negative for migrants. Positive consequences for migrants at individual level include improved level of income or earnings, improved working environment, improved housing conditions and better social services and opportunities for labour force participation etc. At national level, rural-urban migration helps to improve the overall efficiency of the economy in a country. Increased migrant labour

in urban areas play a significant role in promoting the use of labour-intensive technology, through engaging industrial employment and it leads to enhance economic growth too.

Sometimes these positive consequences are offset by existing negative consequences at the places of destinations such as unemployment, problems of adjustments for individual migrants, high population density, emergence of slums, inadequate infrastructure and housing, air, water and noise pollution and overcrowding and environment degradation (Hettiarachchi, 2001, Perera, 2004). High population density in a few districts can be identified as a major consequence of internal migration in Sri Lanka. Rural-urban migration creates imbalances in population distribution, which results increase population density in a few districts as indicated in table 6.

Table 6: Population density by districts 1981 & 2001

District	Persons per sq.K.m	
	1981	2001
Colombo	2605	3305
Gampaha	994	1541
Kalutara	516	673
Kandy	554	664
Matale	180	227
Nuwara-Eliya	354	410
Galle	487	613
Matara	516	599
Hambantota	164	210
Kurunegala	254	314
Puttalam	165	245
Anuradhapura	82	112
Polonnaruwa	77	117
Badulla	227	274
Moneragala	49	72
Ratnapura	246	312
Kegalle	412	463
Total	258	348

Source: Department of Census and Statistics, 2001

As shown in table 6, population density of Sri Lanka indicated that Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara and Kandy districts are densely populated compared to the other districts. Colombo district shows highest population density (3305 persons per sq. k.m in 2001), which is approximately ten times higher than that of the average figure of the country. The high population density creates increased demand for land, amenities i.e., housing, hospitals, drinking water, electricity, etc., other infrastructure facilities and social services.

Since the process of internal migration is determined by demographic, economic, social and politico-cultural factors, the consequences of migration have to be examined with respect to such factors. The effect of migration depend, on the in and out volume of migration, the flows of remittances, and the type of migrants that dominate the migration flows (i.e., rural-urban, rural-rural etc.) and it determines the population growth, distribution and composition, occupational structure, saving and capital formation, the structure and composition of industry and labour force, and income levels in both places of origin and destination.

Demographic consequences of migration are directly linked with its characteristics and determinants such as age sex structure, marital status, fertility and reproductive health and reproductive behaviour in both places of origin and destination. The volume of in-migration to a certain area, will determine the size of the total population while its age-sex composition will determine the structural changes of such population, especially the size and structure of the labourforce at the destination. Changes in the age and sex composition of the population can have important implications for fertility. Migration may influence fertility behaviour in both the sending and receiving areas. At the family Level, migration may influence fertility by separating husbands from wives, delaying marriage, and postponing childbearing (Oberai, 1987).

The great majority of the migrants (41%) in Sri Lanka, usually being in the 20-39 age range (table 3, fig. 5 & 6) this will affect to change the age-sex distribution of total population at the destination areas. One other main feature of recent internal migration in Sri Lanka is labour migration to export processing zones in the urban areas of Colombo and Gampaha district. Studies done in such areas identified that more than 95 per cent migrants are in the 15-39 age range, majority are single, females and they are the highest risk group (74% are in the age group of 17-24) for reproductive activity and they are passing risk and vulnerability (Perera, 2004, Hettiarachchi, 2001).

Economic consequences are linked with the labour force, labour productivity and labour market in both origin and destination. The studies shows labour migration to certain area may create unemployment and underemployment situations. Todaro emphasized that migration is a major cause of urban surplus labour, increasing unemployment and underemployment, a decrease in urban wages, and growth of the low productivity informal sectors (Todaro, 1976, 1985). According to Standing (1978), in-migration may in certain circumstances increase urban unemployment, leading to a withdrawal of non-migrants from the urban labour force as discouraged workers (Standing, 1978). Table 7 presents the labour force participation rate, employment and unemployment rates among the lifetime migrants and lifetime non-migrants investigated for Western Province of Sri Lanka.

Table 7: Employment rate, unemployment rate and labour force participation rate by status of migration within three districts of Western Province

Rate	Colombo		Gampaha		Kalutara	
	LTNM	LTM	LTNM	LTM	LTNM	LTM
Rate of employment	81.03	92.20	83.30	86.87	78.11	84.06
Rate of unemployment	18.97	7.80	16.70	13.13	21.89	15.94
Labour force participation rate	44.9	49.00	37.8	46.80	47.10	48.60

Source: Department of Census & Statistics, 1996

Note: Estimated based on special tabulation, 1994 Demographic Survey (Perera, 1998)

LTNM-Life-time non-migrants

LTM-Life-time migrants

According to the above table the labour force participation rates are high among lifetime non-migrants than lifetime migrants in all three districts. Colombo district reported the highest labour force participation rate (49 per cent). The rate of employment is high among the lifetime migrants than lifetime non-migrants. And also the rate of unemployment is low among the life-time migrants compared to the lifetime non-migrants. However the above findings proved that the rate of unemployment is considerably high among the lifetime migrants too, in popular migration destinations in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

The recent pattern of population concentration on land shows that wet zone districts have become further densely populated areas while districts of dry zone are still mostly sparsely populated during the inter-censal period 1981-2001. Population is unevenly distributed with a greater concentration of population in the Colombo and Gampaha districts. These two districts have been the most popular migration destinations in Sri Lanka during this period 1981-2001.

Reasons for popularity were the presence of many industrial activities; commercial centers and other developed infrastructures in the Colombo district, and the investment promotion zones in the Gampaha district. These generated a massive demand for employment opportunities, which operated as a strong 'pull factor' for migrants. Lifetime migration streams of other districts (except Colombo and Gampaha) showed movements largely between nearby districts rather than long distance migration. Districts of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa and Moneragala showed that a decreasing trends of in-migration.

Migrants are dominated in the young and, adult working ages, and within the working ages female dominated migration is observed. A significant migration due to 'economic reasons' can be observed in the districts of Colombo, Gampaha, Nuwara-Eliya and Badulla. State sponsored settlement schemes, i.e., Mahaweli Development Programme implemented in the dry zone of Sri Lanka led to reduce population pressure from wet zone district to dry zone districts by 1981. However since there is an inadequacy in the implementation of development programmes it may have contributed to a high level of unemployment and poverty situation in the dry zone districts and hence making them out-migration districts. Tsunami experience in the southern and eastern costal districts will further affect the out-migrating trend in them. As a result the volume, pattern and direction of internal migration in Sri Lanka will continue to change at the same pace in the near future.

Conclusion

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