

IMPACT OF EDUCATION AND MIGRATION ON POVERTY
EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION ON RURAL SUBSISTENCE
PADDY FARMING IN ANURADHAPURA
AND GALLE DISTRICTS OF SRI LANKA

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The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of education and rural-urban migration on the status of poverty in the rural subsistence paddy farming sector in Sri Lanka. It is conceptualized that there exists a significant interrelationship amongst these three factors and the impact on the involvement of future generation on paddy farming.

A series of "face-to-face" interviews, were conducted using a structured questionnaire, with a random sample of 150 respondents, from Anuradhapura (n=75) and Galle districts (n=75) which represent the Dry and Wet Zone agricultural systems in Sri Lanka during the period of October to December 2007. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques, including the regression and chi-square analysis were performed to analyze data using the SPSS (*Version 13*) econometric software.

The majority of respondents is in between 40 to 60 years of age and has completed their education up to primary level. More than 70% of paddy lands in both districts are owned by respondents and the average land size of paddy land is ranged 1 to 2 acres. The poverty levels were measured using an index ("*Poverty Index*") derived from the primary data. The outcome of the analysis suggests that there is no significant impact of the level of education of these households on their status of poverty in both districts. However, both districts there exists a positive and negative relationship between the

level of education and migration and the status of poverty and migration patterns of these households, respectively. About 48% of households do not like to see that their children would be engaged in agriculture as a major source of income. The majority of farmers perceive that migration to urban areas with a higher level of education would provide their future generation a better life and this reflects the greater uncertainty in paddy sector, mainly in terms of allocation of labour in Sri Lanka.

Key words: Education, Migration, Paddy farming sector in Sri Lanka, Poverty