

The Challenges of Recent Displacement of Labours from Sri Lankan Tea Industry: The Evidence from Estates of Sudhuwella GND in Kandy District

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ABSTRACT

The tea industry one of the major supportive sector in Sri Lankan economy. Within the industry, the plantation sector is considered as a highly labour intensive sector which requires a regular supply of labour throughout the year and the requirement is not only for the field operation but also for the manufacturing purpose. However, the registered labour are moving from the estates over one million upcountry Sri Lankans are employed in the tea industry. The industry of tea contributes 12.6% of Sri Lanka's GDP and 32% of the employments. Displacement of labours from the Sri Lankan tea sector to other sectors in search of new employment is a major challenge in the Sri Lankan context. Accordingly, present study the challenges of recent displacement of labours from the Sri Lankan tea industry is evidenced from Sudhuwella GND (Hythe Land Estate, Sudhuwella estate, Green land estate, and Littlevelly estate) in Kandy District. The study based on primary data collection method through the structured questionnaire survey and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were used to obtain qualitative and quantitative information. Based on the stratified random sampling technique, 100 questionnaires distributed within displaced labours families and FGD was held within the selected group (Management level) in Sudhuwella GND. The results clearly showed that 85 percentage of tea plantation labours from the sample of the study, were displaced due to the ownership changes, decline the interest from tea industry, low monthly income, the challenge of labour security, poverty, lack of education, expectations of high lifestyle. The evidence from the study area identified challenges that low daily wage system, Estate ownerships changes, Cost of living, Lack of facility, Poverty, Poor health care system, Increased demand for skilled labours, Personal & social factors, and Lack of labour security. Therefore, this study recommended some proper strategical suggestions for reducing the recent displacement and their challenges from the Sri Lankan tea industry and reconstruct the tea industry sustainably.

Keyword: Challenges, recent displacement, labors, Sri Lankan tea industry, reconstruct