

CHANGING ROLES OF THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN SRI LANKA: A CASE STUDY OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FROM THE KANDY DISTRICT

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The parliamentary structure and the role of members of parliament (MPs) in Sri Lanka have gradually evolved over the years. The British Governors had unlimited powers in the early years of British rule. The constitutional changes in 1831 introduced accountability for the first time. The parliamentary system based on party politics was more developed in Ceylon than in other countries in Asia. In later years, Ceylon was often cited as the best example of the working of parliamentary government in the Third World.

The functions of the Members of Parliament in Sri Lanka derived from the tradition of the British Parliament. According to Ivor Jennings, formulation of national policies, financial controls, control of the executive and the enactment of laws are the main functions of Members of Parliament (Ivor Jennings. *Parliament* CUP 1957). However, the role of Members of Parliament in Sri Lanka has gradually changed as a result of new responsibilities like providing employment, school admissions, transfers and promotions and local development activities. The main objective of this study is to examine the constitutional (formal) and non-constitutional (informal) role of Members of Parliament in Sri Lanka based on the experience of the Kandy district. The study will also highlight the causes and consequences of the changing role of the M.P.

The study is based on primary and secondary data on the subject. It will be both analytical and descriptive. Primary data will be collected mainly through in-depth interviews by using an interview guide. Secondary data will be collected from the large body of published and unpublished sources and documents. The data and qualitative information gathered will be analyzed through a framework structured by the writer.

For the purpose of analysis this study will be divided into the following sections: Introduction; Social, economic and political background of Members of Parliament in the Kandy District; constitutional and non constitutional role of the MPs; causes and effects; conclusion.

