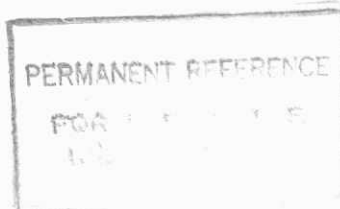


**Seasonal Migration of Women Workers in the Rice
Farming Sector of Sri Lanka**

By

Mallika Rani Pinnawala



This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts at the University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya.

Submitted July 1995

Abstract

This study attempts to explain the nature and patterns of seasonal migration of women workers from Wet Zone traditional villages to work in the Dry Zone rice farming sector. The study argues that neither the macro level structural factors nor rational economic decision making can explain the movement of women workers to the Dry Zone looking for work in the rice farming sector.

The women seasonal workers from the Wet Zone do not migrate to the Dry Zone entirely because they are unemployed and are in economic difficulties though economic considerations play a significant part in their decision to take up seasonal employment in Dry Zone rice farms. The Dry Zone farmers do not employ these women because there is a shortage of labour in the Dry Zone colonies. This makes the explanation of the migration of these women a complex issue because economic factors are not the only variables that decide the migration process. The study argues that the migration of these women is to be seen as an interaction between structural factors and behavioural factors where individual decision making play a very important role.