

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON SOCIO - CULTURAL CHALLENGES AFFECTING RURAL YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO OGASTAWATTA VILLAGE IN KANDY DISTRICT

RMVS. Rathnayake¹

Unemployment is one of the most harmful personal situations for people of working age. Among many countries, unemployment is a major problem in developing countries like Sri Lanka. Unemployment affects young people from all walks of life and at present, youth unemployment in Sri Lanka has increased mainly in rural areas. Accordingly, what are the socio-cultural challenges affecting rural youth unemployment? was the main problem of this research. The main objective of this research was to highlight the main socio-cultural challenges affecting rural youth unemployment. Moreover, the sub-objective was to identify measures that can be taken to overcome the socio-cultural challenges affecting rural youth unemployment. Mainly primary data and secondary data has been used to collect data for this research. For this research, data was collected through 35 (N = 35) unemployed youths representing Ogastawatta village in Kandy district using semi-structured interview method as primary data collection method. Moreover, secondary data was collected through books, journals, newspapers, internet and other published documents. According to these sources, education, salary, poverty, effects from the families and society, prestige in society and political effects are identified as social challenges that lead to unemployment for the youth in the village. Furthermore, cultural challenges such as caste, religion, marriage system and language were identified as affecting the choice of a suitable field of employment. Accordingly, governments and private sector organizations, educational institutions, and community organizations need to collaborate to address rural youth unemployment effectively. There should be more employment exchanges established, and youth should be informed about available career opportunities. In addition, to reduce rural youth unemployment, it is important to provide them with high quality communication and soft skills, skills training, leadership and interpersonal skills needed by rural youth. By following these measures, it will be possible to eradicate rural youth unemployment from the society.

Keywords: Hidden Resource, Rural Society, Socio-Cultural Challenges, Sustainable, Livelihood, Youth Unemployment

¹ *Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. vihansanda123@gmail.com*