

## POST-CONFLICT DEVELOPMENT AND BRAIN GAIN IN SRI LANKA

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Does development opportunity increase brain gain in post-conflict countries? After almost three decades of conflict and civil war, Sri Lanka is actively engaged in development to reverse brain drain. During the conflict, most Sri Lankans migrated due to political, economic, educational, social, cultural and environmental factors, in search of security, stability and opportunity. As a consequence of the war, Sri Lanka has scarce resources, growing population, and a developing economy. Talent shortage is a crisis for conflict driven countries and it is also a challenge to most post-conflict countries due to ineffective development strategies and practices. This research study targets key areas in post-conflict development to attract human capital to Sri Lanka. Thus, the greater the advancement of development, the greater the chances of increasing brain gain. Key development indicators such as labor force, trade, investment, and remittances in Sri Lanka are examined from 2010 to 2016. Using key informant interviews, a descriptive and statistical analysis of the development process concerning the government, economy, environment, and society are explored from the contributions obtained from the brain gain population. In order to thoroughly understand the development aspects that influence human capital, this research study evaluates the quality of the brain drain population as a means to increase brain gain. Besides addressing some of the key issues faced by skilled migrants living overseas as well as returnees in Sri Lanka, this study also makes recommendations to the government and the private sector to support and implement effective measures to attract human capital. The findings of this research also assist practitioners in implementing effective policies and measures suitable to meet current and future conditions in Sri Lanka. Finally, this research study is exceptionally valuable because it is a highly debated issue internationally but a contemporary idea for the local community. In addition to addressing some of the major issues concerning the knowledge gap, this study also serves as a valuable resource for future scholars and researchers to gain further insight into this topic. Furthermore, the purpose of this research study is also to encourage other post-conflict countries to regain its lost talent through development as a means to support sustainable peace.

*Keywords:* Brain Drain, Brain Gain, Post-conflict Development

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