

University of Jaffna



Dr. Arunasalam Somasundrampillai
Memorial Lecture-2015

on

Human Resource Development of
Northern Sri Lanka in the
Post – War Context

by

DR. T. Mangaleswaran
Rector

Vavuniya Campus

at

3.00p.m

on Tuesday 8th December 2015

at

Kailasapathy Auditorium
University of Jaffna.

UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA



**Dr. A. SOMASUNDRAMPILLAI
Memorial Lecture**

On

**HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN
SRI LANKA IN THE POST-WAR CONTEXT**

By

**DR. T. MANGALESWARAN
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Message from the Vice – Chancellor**

Dr.Arunasalam Somasundrampillai, a well known chartered accountant and former member of the Governing Council of the University of the Jaffna. He was also a patron of many social, religious and welfare Societies. As a tribute, University of Jaffna considering his achievements conferred on him the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Honoris Causa in 2004.

We are thankful to Dr.T.Mangaleswaran, Senior Lecturer, Vavuniya Campus for accepting to deliver the memorial lecture of Dr.A.Somasundtharampillai on the title "Human Resource Development of Northern Sri Lanka in the post-war context". I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the family members of Dr.Somasundrampillai for their assistance to make this event success.

I am very delighted to welcome all the participants to the valuable event.

Prof.(Ms).V.Arasaratnam
Vice-Chancellor
University of Jaffana

Memorial Lecture of Dr. A. Somasundrampillai-2015

Vice-Chancellor, Deans of the Faculties, Heads of the Departments, Distinguished Guests students and Friends.

I consider it an honour and a privilege to be invited to deliver the memorial lecture in honour of Dr. Arunasalam Somasundermpillai, Chartered Accountant and former member of the Governing Council of the University of Jaffna. He was born in Thunnalai where he married (nee) Leela Kulaveerasingham and in Jaffna town where he set up his own Audit Firm administered the Merchant Finance Company.

The late Dr Arunasalam Somasundermpillai had his primary education at Thattatheru Methodist Mission School and his secondary education at Puloly Velautham School (later Velautham Mathiya Maha Vidiyalaiyam) where his father was a teacher, and at Hartley College, Point Pedro. After his senior School certificate Examination in 1943 and too young to sit the University entrance examination he proceeded to India – St. Joseph's College at Thiruchirappalli. There he excelled in his studies and won the Gold Medal for his performance at the Rt. Hon.Sirinivasa Sastri Gold medal oratorical contest. He also secured the Subba Rao prize for Economics. Having successfully completed his collegiate studies he graduated from Madras University (1947).

After graduation from Madras University; Dr.Somasunderampillai joined Hartley College as a teacher (1948). Being a keen tennis player, he was often seen at the Hartley College Tennis Court. On many occasions, he addressed the College assembly.

He left Hartley College in (1954). He was destined for greater achievements and decided to follow a professional Accountancy Course in Colombo. After successfully passing out as a Chartered Accountant, he worked as Chief Accountant at Ceylon Printers (LTD). He did not work in Colombo long and was compelled to look for other avenues to practice his profession. He set up his own office in Jaffna and practiced as a Tax and Audit Consultant and managed the Merchant Finance Ltd, which was largely his creation, as Managing director. He also served as a visiting Lecturer in Auditing in the Department of Commerce and Management for many years in the University of Jaffna. It was during this time, he was appointed a member of the University of Jaffna Governing Council. He has had a unique record in this having served for almost 20 years. He served as a Council member during the time of the Vice Chancellors, Prof .S. Vithianathan, Prof. A. Thurairajah and Prof .P. Balasundrampillai. He did an excellent service as guide, mentor and critic as a Council member. Especially on matters relating to Finance and Accounts, his expert advice and guidance were valued very much. As a man of principles, which he adhered to rigidly he never compromised on what he thought was right. This applied to his work in the Council as well.

Dr. Somasunderampillai was the Charter President of the Lion Club of Point Pedro Zone Chairman of Lions Club International. He was also a patron of many social religions and welfare societies. He spent a good part of his earnings for such worthy causes.

It is worthy of note that Dr. Somasunderampillai devoted part of his time to write two books one on Fisheries and other Animal Husbandry. Illankai Meen Valamum Payan padum, and "Sri Lanka Fisheries Exploitation and Development" were published in 2000 and 2001 respectively. His book on 'Animal Husbandry in Tamil areas in Sri Lanka' and Illankai Tamil Pirathesankalil Kalnadai Apiviruthi' were planned to be published in Tamil and English.

As a fitting tribute, Jaffna University, considering his many achievements in his profession; and outside this field as well as his contribution to University administration conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Honouris Causa (2004).

He contributed a lot for human resource development via as a Teacher, Chartered Accountant and Council Member of the University. He gave employment opportunities via his firm in North. He was very keen in training and development of people. Therefore, the subject of today's lecture would have, I believe, interested him very much. I am much pleased to

make the presentation honouring him.

Human Resource Development of Northern Sri Lanka in the Post-War Context

Introduction

Human resources development lies at the heart of economic, social and environmental development. It is also a vital component for achieving internationally agreed sustainable development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and for expanding opportunities to all people, particularly the most vulnerable groups and individuals in society. Human resource is an important factor for the economic development of a country. Development economics in recent years has become more people centric than before. It has rediscovered that human beings are both the means and the end of economic development process, and without Human Development that process becomes hollow rhetoric. This lecture tries to analyze the Human Resource Development in Sri Lanka and North of Sri Lanka on the basis of some selected economic and social indicators and at the same time strives to find out the causes of poor performance of North of Sri Lanka in the sphere of HRD. The lecture concludes with some suggestions for improvement of HRD in Northern Sri Lanka.

Human Resource Development (HRD) is a

multidimensional concept. In a broad sense HRD is the process of increasing knowledge, skill and capacities of all the people in a society. In the national context, HRD is a process by which the people in various groups are helped to acquire new competence continuously so as to make them self-reliant and simultaneously develop a sense of pride in their country. McLean and McLean (2001) defined Human Resource Development as any process or activity that, either initially or over the longer-term, has the potential to develop adults' work based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation, or, ultimately the whole humanity.

The history and origin of HRD is not very old. The term came into use only in the early seventies. According to Len Nadler (1968), "The term HRD was first applied in 1968 in the George Washington University. In 1969, it was used in Miami at the American Society for Training and Development Conference. By the middle of 1970s it was gaining more acceptances, but was being used by many as merely as more attractive term than Training and Development."

Human Development and Human Resource Development

Human Development is the study of how people develop on Physical, Intellectual and Social levels. It probes

the different stages of life to better understand how people work. This concept of a broader human development was first laid out by Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate in 1998. The work of Amartya Sen and others laid the foundations for a different approach and broader human development. The latter was defined as the process of enlarging people's choices and improving human capabilities (the range of things that they can do or be in life) and freedoms so they can live a long and healthy life, access to education and a decent standard of living, participate in their community and the decisions that affect their lives.

There is debate about the nexus between the concepts of Human development and Human Resource Development. The following argument will give the clear picture of the two terminologies. Some agencies and individual writers have made a distinction between human resource development and human development. For some, human development is a much broader and all-encompassing concept, while HRD is limited to the skill development and knowledge acquisitions often demanded by organizations for employment purposes.

They take a limited view of HRD and attribute it as relevant to personnel management practices of the organized sector. Such a distinction, however, is slowly disappearing with the realization that the broadness and all-inclusive nature of the concept of HRD depend on the context in which it is

used. For example, it may have somewhat restricted meaning when used in an organizational context, though even in an organizational context there is evidence of it being used in the same sense as human development (Pareek and Rao, 1981).

However, there seems to be a convergence of the needs and priorities set out by various national governments, international agencies and experts in this area, whether they use the term human development or human resource development. The main objection raised by a few to the term human resource development is that it is a narrower concept and it connotes more of skill development. Another objection, rather a mild one, is that the word 'resource' somehow seems to imply that human beings are treated like material and other resources and as 'instruments' of development rather than the beneficiaries of development. The differences are more linguistic than conceptual and seem to depend more on the region or affiliation. Thus those associated with the UNESCAP, ILO, CIDA,

Commonwealth Secretariat and other agencies seem to prefer the term human resource development and the UNDP prefers human development. In the recent past, even UNDP has indicated a broad meaning it is giving to the term HRD within the context of human development. It defines HRD as referring to those Policies and programmes that support and sustain equitable opportunities for continuing acquisition and application of skills, knowledge and

competencies which promote individual autonomy and are mutually beneficial to individuals, the community and the larger environment of which they are a part (UNDP, BPPE, 1991).

This lecture will concentrate on Human Resource Development (HRD). Therefore this presentation will limit to the skill development and knowledge acquisitions often demanded by organizations for employment purposes.

Today's lecture will:

- elaborate the status of Human Resource Development in Sri Lanka
- describe the status of Human Resource development in Northern Sri Lanka
- compare Human Resource Development of Northern Province with other provinces of Sri Lanka.
- formulate some suggestions to improve HRD in the North.

Human Resource Development

Human Resource Development is the process of increasing, the skills, and the capacities of all the people in a society in economic and terms, it could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective investment in the development prepares people for adult participation in political processes, particularly as citizens in a democracy. From the social and cultural points of view, the development of human resources helps people to lead fuller and richer lives, less bound by tradition. In short, the processes of human

resource development unlock the door to modernization (Harbision and Mayers, 1964).

Human resources development can empower people by fostering the contributory capacities that they can bring to the improvement of their own quality of life and that of their families, communities, enterprises and societies. Over the years, the concept of human resources development has evolved from solely focusing on individual capacity to also building institutional capacity at the national level, through socio - economic policies and development plan and strategies. Human resources development is, therefore, regarded as facilitating the development of national human capacities to achieve sustainable, inclusive, equitable development and, at the same time, enhance well-being of individuals. As such, human resources development strategies are increasingly part of national development planning, and are crucial to enlighten policy (DESA). From an organizational perspective HRD is the process of increasing the capacity of the human resource through development. It is thus the process of adding value to individuals, teams or an organization as a human system (ASTD, 1968).

Human Resource Development, in short, means investment in human capital. Human capital means people can act as capital assets which yield a stream of economic benefits over their working life. An improvement in the mental capability, skill, and physical capacity of the people constitutes

an increase in the human capital because this enables the human factor to produce more. Expenditure on Human resources or cost of human resources can be called as investment in human capital. From 1995 to 2005, education spending was over 3 percent of GDP in Sri Lanka. Since then, although expenditure has been increasing, it has fallen to 1.72 percent of GDP (CBSL, 2014). It is low comparing other South Asian countries. However, Sri Lanka provides free education from primary to higher education. There are a number of educational, technical, professional institutions working for developing knowledge, skills and abilities of the people. Still there is gap in fulfilling the employment demand of the country because some of the courses are overlapping (by the higher educational institutions and some of the courses are) and not matching our context and present needs.

Status of Human Resource Development in Sri Lanka

HRD lies at the heart of economic, social and environmental development. It is also a vital component for achieving internationally agreed sustainable development goals, including the Millenium Development Goals and for expanding opportunities to all people particularly the most vulnerable groups and individuals in society. For optimum utilization of existing physical capital, investment in human resources or capital is essential, as because technical,

professional and administrative people are required to make effective use of material resources.

In Sri Lanka, there are organizations and systems for developing HRD, it is better to study how and what system available to improve the knowledge, skills and capacities of the people. The following system are available to develop people.

School Education:

In HRD the General education system is important organization to provide primary and secondary education. In Sri Lanka public and private schools are available. The general education system is an integral part of the national development process that impinges on the lives of all Sri Lankans. General education has an important role to play in providing relevant knowledge and generic skills such as initiative, decision making, problem solving, team work, responsibility, and leadership and communication skills in order to equip students to later function effectively as employees, employers and self employed members of the labour force. Sri Lanka has made huge progress in terms of increasing primary education, attendance rate and expanding literacy to approximately 95.6%.

There are 10,012 schools in Sri Lanka with a total enrollment 342451 students in 2013 to grade one. Given, that a proportion of students are dropping out prematurely from school and high absenteeism in some of the provinces such as

Northern, Eastern and Central (Tamils) of Sri Lanka. The country has witnessed a steady increase in the qualifying for GCE (A/L) 56.83% in 2008 to 60.87 in 2012 on all candidates sat for G.C.E.O/L. Percentage of those qualifying to enter University decreased from 64.71% in 2008 to 58.25 in 2013. The following are some of the problem areas and issues affecting general education which are directly or indirectly responsible for some failures of the school system in the sphere of human resource development:

- a) Wide variation in the government- funded schools in terms of: i. teaching-learning facilities including those in co curricular studies (e.g. only 712 of the 10012 government schools having facilities to teach science stream subjects at the Advanced Level); ii. The number of teachers available for different Schools; iii. The quality of teaching in different schools; and iv. Financial and other support receivable from parents and past pupils

- b) Given the large size of the sector and the large and expensive quality-related demands faced by the educational system the funding allocations by the government for general education is not only inadequate but has also been declining over the

years.

- c) Although national statistics show that almost all eligible children enter grade 1, there is still some nonattendance in certain underdeveloped regions such as Moneragala, Ampara, Polanaruwa etc. There has been improvement in the rate of retention of school age children over the years but drop-out rates increase as children pass through secondary grades.

One of the most significant issues Sri Lanka faces is the uneven quality of and access to education, despite its commitment to universal provision. Well-resourced schools are concentrated in the western province, facilities are fewer and of poor quality in rural areas across the country, where close to 70 percent of Sri Lankans live (Department of Census and Statistics, 2013).

Higher Education:

The higher education sector has 15 universities under the supervision of University Grants Commission (UGC) and 2 universities under the supervision of Ministry of Higher Education (MHE). The sector has 7 postgraduate institutes and 9 other higher educational institutes all under UGC supervision. Universities conduct and award 11 major type of

academic stream to students who are admitted to universities. They are Arts, Management and Commerce, Agriculture, Medicine, Dental, Engineering, Law, Science, Veterinary Science, Architecture/quantity surveying, Computer Science.

The total no of students in University has increased from 66891 in 2008 to 78442 in 2013. New admission for basic degree also has increased from 20069 in 2008 to 24299 in 2013 (UGC, 2013). Universities and postgraduate institutes are the institutions entrusted with the development of high level human resources for various sectors of the Sri Lankan economy. Government's recurrent and capital expenditure on higher education today is low, by international standards and also by Sri Lanka's own historical standards. Correspondingly, there was inadequate and slow build-up of modern facilities within universities and training of human resources for employment therein has been unsatisfactory. The resulting quality deterioration has been aggravated by internal management weaknesses and student unrest. In terms of their contribution to human resource development, these higher educational institutions have been widely criticized by both private and public sector employers.

Unemployment among university graduates causes much public anger and irritation, and demands much policy effort to resolve. The problem arises to a large extent in respect of graduates of the faculties of arts, humanities, social sciences, and commerce. In respect of these graduates, the

labour market demand clearly falls significantly short of supply. While in some disciplines the universities may not be producing as many graduates as the labour market could productively absorb, in other disciplines the number of graduates produced far exceeds the number the markets are able to absorb.

In addition, there are 12 advanced technical institutes and 05 ATI sections under the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education under Ministry of Higher Education. They provide advance diploma level courses such as HNDA, HNDM, HNDE, HND Engineering (Civil and Electronic), HND in Tourism and Hospitality. There are tertiary level training institutions like National Institute of Education for the training of teachers, all of which operate under the Ministry of Education. In addition there are private sector training institutes operating at the tertiary level training students for awarding degrees by many foreign Universities. Some of these private training institutes have been awarded the "degree awarding status" by the UGC (NHREP, 2012).

Vocational Education:

Vocational education is also an important element in the process of human resource development. Following the general education the students do have opportunities for training through vocational and technical courses. However, these opportunities may be closed to many because of

financial constraints. Large numbers who leave school annually after 11 or 13 years of schooling and those who dropped out earlier, are equipped with very little preparation for the world of work in terms of hard or soft skills.

The Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) established under the TVE Act No. 20 of 1990 (as amended) has provisions to register vocational & technical training institutes and accredit their courses of study according to well defined criteria. These institutions provide non-university further education opportunities and avenues for those leaving the secondary schools. Several Ministries and private sector organizations also provide courses of study relevant to their employees as a part of their human resources development plans. Competency based training at certificate, diploma, and degree levels provided by agencies under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development are examples. Recently the Ministry of Youth Affairs established University Colleges (09) to provide vocational qualifications. In addition Vocational Training Authority (VTA) in each district and Technical Colleges and NITA are functioning to provide NVQ level courses to develop the skills of the youth.

Professional Education:

Professional Institutions like Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, Institute of Personnel Management, Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing, Sri Lanka Institute of Architects,

Chartered Institute of Management Accountant, Institute of Quantity Surveyors Sri Lanka, Chartered Institute of Marketing, Institute of Chemistry, Institute of Hospitality, and Certified Management Accountant etc. provide courses on professional development. However, Sri Lanka continues to face challenges for fulfilling the employment market demand at global level.

Sri Lanka's skills requirements of tomorrow are not the skills it had yesterday or it claims to have today. There has not been a proper identification of these requirements and directing resources to meet these ends. According to Arunathilake (2013) the school education in Sri Lanka is heavily oriented toward the study of arts subjects. The science stream is a totally neglected area without adequate lab facilities and qualified teachers. As a result, the university education too is oriented to producing a disproportionately higher number of arts graduates. So, Sri Lanka's much praised education system does not produce an adequate number of scientists and engineers.

This is totally in contrast to the achievements of Singapore which turns out engineers and scientists in several multiples of arts graduates. Thus, Sri Lanka produces graduates, but the skills base of those graduates is not what the Sri Lanka's economy demands. As a result, according to Arunathilake, there is a serious mismatch of available and required skills in Sri Lanka. Without correcting this mismatch,

it is unlikely that Sri Lanka could attain its ambitious development goals (Arunathilake, 2013).

Status of Human Resource Development in North

There are number of educational, technical, professional institutions working for developing knowledge, skills and abilities of the workforce. Still there is gap in fulfilling the employment demand of the country especially in north because the north of Sri Lanka was severely affected during the three decades of war. Emigration of the skilled people resulted in severe shortage of skilled workforce in the north. While there is great enthusiasm provided for education after the war, problems such as the lack of hope for future, inadequate employment opportunities, persisting preference for public sector jobs, intention to migrate abroad, lack of industries and the inability to overcome war effects are some of the reasons that retard growth of the education sector. According to the response to the WVL Survey (2014) the dropout rates in technical, vocational and technological institutes are high in North.

In north, there are 1040 schools. Of these 14 are national schools, 1020 are provincial school and 6 are private schools. There are 85 of 1040 schools classified as 1AB, 118 of 1040 schools classified as 1C, 325 of 1040 schools classified as II, 512 of 1040 schools classified as III (Minstry of Education/Northern Province, 2012), it is shown by table 1.1. The western province has the highest number of 1AB schools,

and within the Colombo district has the greatest concentration, with 68 of 402 schools classified as 1AB (Ministry of Education/Central, 2013). Certain districts, especially in the north, have very few 1AB schools, Killinochi, for instance, has only 7; Vavunniya and Mullativu have 6 each. The uneven distribution of 1AB schools with their wider subject offering means A/L opportunities are restricted for many students; more qualify for admission to universities in the arts and humanities than other disciplines, since this track is offered at both 1AB and 1C schools. In 2011, 41% of graduates of universities were in arts disciplines (UGC, 2013).

Category of School Type and status on 01-02-2012										
Functioning Schools					Temporarily Closed					
School Type	1AB	1C	II	III	Sub Total	1AB	1C	II	III	Sub Total
National	12	02	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	00
Provincial	67	113	309	433	922	01	03	15	79	98
Private	05	-	01	-	06	-	-	-	-	00
Total	84	115	310	433	942	01	03	15	79	98

Source: Ministry of Education, Northern Province (2012)

Still some of the districts of North, school education have challenge such as non-enrolment, dropping out prematurely from school and high absenteeism because of family poverty with other vulnerabilities. Poor health and disabilities also were found to prevent children from obtaining a full cycle of basic education. The inability of very low income families to spend on clothing, stationery, private coaching and books, and children kept back from school to look after younger siblings, to seek employment to support the family and to assist parents' activities such as farming, fishing and small businesses emerged as determinants of non-participation in education.

The absence of a conducive home environment and lack of study space and facilities are also barriers linked to poverty. Among other barriers which impact negatively on children's school attendance and performance are lack of parental encouragement for children to attend school regularly, migration of mothers for temporary employment overseas, fathers' alcoholism, negligence of children, and consequent emotional distress suffered by children. In the case of supply side barriers, lack of provision for education for children with disabilities, relatively lower level of facilities and services for institutionalised children (including a total lack of access for children in orphanage/detention), disparities in basic facilities, services, teacher availability and quality among provinces, districts and sectors have been highlighted.

Deprivation and marginalisation linked to factors such as residence in locations lacking transport and other basic facilities and lack of access to schools with good educational facilities were seen to result in non-enrolment and drop out (UNICEF, 2013).

In a study by WVLC (2014) conducted in Killinochi and Mullitivu, the survey result revealed that most of the head of the family educational qualification was below G.C.E. Ordinary Level in the Mullaitivu district. The focus group discussions further revealed that the young people in the project villages also have similar educational attainments. Poor educational attainment seems to be a key reason that determines access to formal employment of the young people, although their aspirations are high in terms of employment in public, private and other organization.

In Northern Province the students qualified for G.C.E A/L have increased from 43.36% in 2009 to 56.50% in 2012 CBSL (2014) but comparing the other provinces it was low in 2012. Education is potential in north. Prior war, north of Sri Lanka was well known in education and northern people gave high priority for education. The students qualified for university entrants on number of students sat the G.C.E. A/L examinations from 2010 to 2013 are 66.77%, 65.20%, 62.85% and 63.88 respectively. On average 65% of the students sat the examination qualified for university entrants. Compared to

certain provinces the Northern Province performance is higher. But in terms of university entrance, the province is weak. Of the 7582 students qualified for university entrants only 1526 students were admitted in 2010/2011 academic year (UGC, 2012). Only a small percentage of the remaining students join other educational institutions such as college of education and vocational training institutes. Most of the qualified (G.C.E O/L and G.C.E A/L) are idle because of the lack of higher educational institutions, lack of employment opportunities, lack of industrial development; preference to join public sector organization, financial constrains to follow professional courses and no permanent income to the families - especially Vanni region. Therefore young people have to go to work to look after their families, and they do not have hopes in the future especially in Vanni region which was heavily affected in the last war.

The youth in rural areas has less opportunity to follow the vocational courses because they do not have transport services neither have place to stay in the town (UNDP, 2014). A significant finding that emerged from the UNDP study is that many young people seemed to have dropped out of school before reaching 10 years of schooling. And, those who have completed advanced level have mostly studied Arts and Commerce streams due to the non-availability of 1AB schools.

WVL (2014) baseline survey results revealed that nearly 90% reported that they do not follow any vocational training. The field survey reveals that the respondents do not have much awareness of the vocational courses and vocational training organizations. The youth tend to believe that they can get employment with general education. There is a lack of awareness about the organization's requirements. The youth are not prepared to follow courses in different places because of financial barriers and family obligations (WVL, 2014).

While there are opportunities to join vocational training programmes, the youth do not seem to be interested in taking those courses as they do not see a clear link between vocational qualification and employment. Moreover, the youth also reported less awareness of the availability of these courses. Even in cases where there is awareness, cost was reported as a major barrier. The costs involved are course fees, transport costs and other associated expenses. Besides, this also involves opportunity costs as they have to forego labour work opportunities. Young women face additional challenges as they do not feel confident in travelling or staying outside areas for education purposes.

In North, higher education institutions, vocational training authorities, technical colleges etc are available but the

dropout rates are very high in these organizations. For instance Open University has a study centre in Vavuinya and Killinochi where they conduct certificated, diploma and degree level programme but only 10 to 20 percent of the students' successfully complete the programme remaining students are leaving or dropping during the programme.

In North, the agriculture, livestock and fishing are the potential sub sectors but the courses provided by the higher educational institutions and vocational training institutions do not seem to reflect the skill needs of these sectors.

Agriculture:

Human Resource development is an important aspect of agriculture at present, and to maximize production capacity still there are lack of knowledge and skills on handling modern technologies in agriculture. The consequence of it, the farmers could not compete with agriculture product produced in other parts of Sri Lanka and the younger generation are not attracted to the agriculture sector which is now almost taboo to them. There is inadequate organized network between the Faculty of Agriculture of the universities and the farmers.

Fishing:

Though fishing is an essential industry, the greatest resources are in the continental shelf which cannot be reached by ordinary fishermen. There are gap in technical

knowledge of fishing especially deep sea fishing. Therefore the scope of our fishing industry is not developed. The fishing industry is still at infant level. Fishermen need lot of technical services such as boat engine repairing, boat repairing, netting etc but they face difficulties to get the services within the region. There are few institution focusing these areas and young people also do not seem to be interested in learning these skills. Youth wanted modern technology but some are not suitable or relevant to the regional context. On the job training for the workers in fishing is not developed.

Livestock:

It is also one of the potential resource or livelihood activity in northern region. Still livestock farmers practice traditional or conventional method in farming because most of the farmers do not have modern livestock knowledge and skills. There are huge demands for human resources in the sector but the relevant organization face difficulties to find qualified workforce. Knowledge of experts does not trickle down towards the rural sector work force

Industry:

In north, there were industries before war but during the war most of the big industries were malfunction. Even after the war there were no big industries developed or revitalize in the North. Some of the big industries located in south open their branches in North as sales outlet only; therefore there is

little demand for qualified people. That is one of the reason qualified people search employment in Public sector organization. Another reason why qualified people seek employment in government sector is because it gives social respect and job security. That can be a reason for poor demand for developing knowledge, skills to work in the corporate sector. It is also noticed that there is less demand for professional courses in relation to industrial sector. Further, industries in the north are still labour intensive; capital intensive and knowledge intensive industries are rarely found in the north.

North is still characterized as having a war torn community which suffered loss of lives, brain drain and destruction of education and economic infrastructure; the complete lack of agency within civil society organizations instigated by the fear of unabated violence for several decades; the effects of a foreign remittance dependent economy and the associated consumer culture. As a result of these factors, institutions in the war torn districts were mostly run by people ridden with apathy and indifference, and whose only motivation was fear. People with particular expertise were rare discoveries and lack of initiatives to widen their learning denied opportunities for renewing human potential. There was a desperate need for people who had the ingenuity to use existing resources to their fullest advantage for the development of the community. In government departments,

central government funds were being returned due to lack of capacity to spend them; a similar fate held for local NGOs due to whose inabilities the international donors have had to expand their operational base. In every institution, the managements were searching for writers, administrators, field animators, trainers and project managers with adequate skills to work in Tamil, but to no avail (Viluthu, 2003).

Human Resource Development and Employment in North

In north, public, private and nongovernmental organizations are functioning. There are large (few) and small private sector organizations. There were large organizations before war that ceased to operate during the war and have not yet re-established after the war such as Cement Corporation, Kankesanthurai, Paratntahn Chemical Factory etc. Most of the finance companies, insurance companies and banks have opened branches. A few Garments factory were established in Vavuniya, Killinochi, and Mannar but they provided employment for unskilled or low level employees only. Some of the cooperatives expanded their business activities after the war and provided few employment opportunities. The private sector organizations provide few employments for qualified people.

Public sector organizations contribute more employment than private sector based on the competitive

examinations and qualifications. A few employment opportunities are provided by the Non-Government organization (Local, National, and International) and UN agencies on fixed term. Unemployment rate is high especially in the Vanni region because there are few big industries, lack of knowledge and skill job seekers who have only qualifications G.C.E O/L or G.C.E A/L, with high aspirations. Private sector organization and cooperatives find difficulties in getting qualified people because lack of qualified and relevant human resources in the region and there is a problem of public sector preference of the job seekers in this region.

Infrastructure development is not adequate to generate production and employment in Vanni region. A survey of WVLC (2014) found that 88% reported no job opportunities, mainly referring to employment in formal institutions in Killinochi and Mullitivu districts. Access to gainful employment has been observed as a challenge in the post-war situation. The young people are also not interested in traditional livelihood activities mainly agriculture, livestock and fishing which are the predominant livelihood sectors in these areas. Loss of assets has already restricted the households from increasing investment in traditional activities, and young people do not see any hope of improving their lives by pursuing these activities. Also, access to modern ICT facilities such as mobile phones and computer, have increased their aspirations in seeking employment opportunities in formal

organizations despite having less educational qualifications. Also, there are no industrial activities emerging in the locality to generate new employment.

Women's labour force participation in the North prior to the conflict was low by national standards. Cultural norms kept Tamil and Muslim women engaged in household work and income generation within the home. Women contributed to the household economy by working in family farms. However, the changing economic environment, economic stress and conflict related poverty brought increased labour force participation rates for rural women mainly in the rural informal sector and for educated and skilled women in the formal sector. Although women in the North are 64 percent of the working age population, women's labour force participation rate is only 16 percent, significantly lower than the male's rate, 55 percent. The lowest labour force participation rates for females were in Mannar (13%) and Vavuniya (14%) (Department of Census and Statistics, 2004).

Half the employed women in the North had less education than the General Certificate of Education (GCE) O Level; of these, 17 percent were below Grade 5. A 70 percent of men did not study beyond the O Level, and 21 percent were below Grade 5. The proportion of employed females with an education above GCE A Level exceeded that of males; this was more pronounced in the North (Department of Census

and Statistics, 2004).

Eleven percent of women employed in the North were unpaid family workers. Of the employed males, 4 percent were unpaid family workers in North. Most female employment was in the agricultural sector where in North. More females than males were in manufacturing in North (Department of Census and Statistics, 2003).

Unemployment rates show wide disparities. The all island unemployment rate for females is double that of males, but it reaches 32 percent in the North, nearly five times that of males. Younger age groups suffer the highest unemployment in the North especially among ages 20-29. Unemployment rates are highest for holders of GCE A Level and above, of whom 45 percent in the North are unemployed (Department of Census and Statistics, 2004).

In the above situation, most of the youth are unemployed, idling with no hope for future. This could lead to youth frustration and social violence.

Suggestions and Conclusion

I have analysed the situation of Human Resource development in the North of Sri Lanka. There is a certainly a gap in human resources quality in north comparing other provinces. Therefore policy makers need to develop policies and programmes to address the above gaps. The workforce in the north needs to be developed in terms of knowledge, skills

and attitudes. Development of education sector is vital in this process. While ensuring higher enrolment and retention of students in the general education system, it is equally important to provide tertiary and higher educational opportunities for those leaving the school system. These higher educational opportunities also need to be futuristic in nature, reflecting the needs of the industries that this region might be attracting in the future.

These higher educational, technological and vocational institutions in developing new courses, they should focus to utilize the potential resources/sectors of north such as agriculture, livestock and fishing. There is also a need to revive the traditional industries so as to uplift the war affected families as they struggle to make a living because of the lack of finance, productive assets and skills. Human resource development should be given a high priority by the provincial government. Education is also to be considered as a devolved subject under the provincial government act. There is a need to mobilize material resources, nationally and internationally, to upgrade and promote human resources of this region. I hope this lecture will pave a way for further research and in depth analysis.

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