

**A STUDY ON DETERMINANTS OF YOUTH
MIGRATION IN SRI LANKA
WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
UNDERGRADUATES AND FRESH GRADUATES**

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Master of Science in Business Statistics

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University of Moratuwa
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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
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DECLARATION OF THE CANDIDATE

I declare that this is my own work and this Dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or Institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text. I retain the right to use this content in whole or part in future works (such as articles or books).

Signature ***UOM Verified Signature*** Date : 15th June 2024

DECLARATION OF THE SUPERVISOR

The above candidate has carried out research for the Master of Science in Business Statistics Dissertation under my supervision. I confirm that the declaration made above by the student is true and correct.

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Signature of the supervisor ***UOM Verified Signature*** Date : 15th June 2024

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ABSTRACT

Migration is extensively explored due to its significant impact on a country's economy and development, especially during crisis situations. Sri Lanka has seen a surge in international migration among young adults, owing to recent adverse events like civil war, political instability, and economic crises, prompting them to seek better living conditions in developed countries. This study is designed to investigate the determinants of youth migration in Sri Lanka by preliminary employing regression analysis. Building upon empirical evidence, the study examined youth migration determinants under three levels, where micro and meso-level factors were analyzed using primary data and macro-level factors were analyzed using secondary data. Fresh graduates and final-year undergraduates were considered as a representative sub-segment of Sri Lankan youth for the primary data analysis. A questionnaire was developed using past literature and exploratory factor analysis to use as the primary data collection instrument in the study and accordingly researcher could collect data from 432 respondents. Extending the findings of primary data analysis, the study also employed secondary data to analyze the youth migration phenomenon, considering national youth departure count reported from 1992 to 2022 as the response variable.

Results showed that 67% of respondents had strong to very strong intentions to migrate, with family ties as the primary deterrent. Concerns about finances or skills were minimal among young adults, suggesting confidence in their ability to navigate a foreign landscape. The results showed that education, career, and psychical and psychological security (preservation) are key micro-level drivers of migration intentions. While social networks showed a low propensity to migrate, family was found to be a significant meso-level predictor. At the macro-level, an inverse relationship was found in between youth unemployment and youth migration whereas, the relationship was positive between per capita growth rate and youth migration. The research concludes that addressing youth migration in Sri Lanka requires a multifaceted approach involving young individuals and policy makers in order to create a desirable environment that will reverse brain drain and unlock Sri Lanka's full potential.

Key Words: Youth Migration, Determinants, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Regression Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration of the Candidate.....	iii
Declaration of the Supervisor.....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	x
List of Tables.....	xi
List of Abbreviations.....	xii
List of Appendices	xiii
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Research Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Design	5
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Research Objectives	6
1.5.1 Research objectives to cover micro-level factors.....	6
1.5.2 Research objectives to cover meso-level factors	7
1.5.3 Research objectives to cover macro-level factors	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Limitations of the Study	9
1.8 Structure of the Dissertation.....	9
2. Literature Review	11
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Migration and Determinants of Migration	11
2.3 Youth Migration	13
2.4 Evolution of Youth Migration.....	13
2.5 Empirical Studies on Determinants of Youth Migration.....	14
2.5.1 Cross Country Studies.....	14
2.5.2 Studies in Sri Lanka	16
2.5.3 Empirical Gap	17
2.6 Determinants of Youth Migration	18
2.6.1 Micro-level Factors	18
2.6.2 Meso-level Factors	20

2.6.3	Macro-level Factors	21
2.7	Theoretical background for Youth Migration	23
2.7.1	Theories under Micro-level.....	23
2.7.2	Theories under Meso-level.....	25
2.7.3	Theories under Macro-level	26
2.8	Summary of the Chapter.....	28
3.	Materials and Methods.....	30
3.1	Introduction	30
3.2	Conceptual Framework	30
3.3	Operationalization of Variables.....	32
3.4	Development of Hypotheses.....	33
3.4.1	Micro-level factors on Youth Migration Intentions.....	33
3.4.2	Meso-level factors on Youth Migration Intentions.....	34
3.4.3	Macro-level factors on Youth Migration Intentions	34
3.5	Population and Sample	35
3.5.1	Survey study.....	35
3.5.2	Census study	36
3.6	Data	36
3.6.1	Survey study.....	37
3.6.2	Census study	37
3.7	Data Collection.....	37
3.7.1	Survey study.....	37
3.7.2	Census study	38
3.8	Questionnaire Development.....	38
3.9	Model Specification	42
3.9.1	Binary Logistic Regression model.....	42
3.9.2	Ordinal Cumulative Logit model	43
3.9.3	Generalized Ordered Logit model.....	45
3.9.4	Multinomial Logit model	46
3.9.5	Multiple Linear Regression model.....	47
3.10	Analytical Tools	48
3.10.1	Descriptive statistics.....	48
3.10.2	Correlation analysis.....	48
3.10.3	Regression analysis	49
3.10.4	Validity and Reliability Measurement techniques	49

3.11	Summary of the Chapter.....	49
4.	Data Analysis and Results	51
4.1	Introduction	51
4.2	Analysis of survey data	51
4.2.1	Data cleaning process.....	51
4.2.2	Demographic Profile	53
4.3	Binary Logistic Regression analysis	56
4.3.1	General model	56
4.3.2	Testing for Model assumptions.....	57
4.3.3	Model selection and Validation	58
4.3.4	Model Diagnostics	59
4.3.5	Hypothesis Testing of micro and meso-level using binary logit model 62	
4.4	Ordinal Logistic Regression analysis	63
4.4.1	General model	63
4.4.2	Testing for Model assumptions.....	64
4.4.3	Implication of the assumption violation and alternative models	65
4.4.4	Model selection and Validation	66
4.4.5	Model Diagnostics	67
4.4.6	Hypothesis Testing of micro and meso-level using multinomial logit model 75	
4.5	Analysis of secondary data.....	76
4.5.1	Data cleaning process.....	76
4.5.2	Descriptive Statistics.....	78
4.6	Multiple Linear Regression analysis	79
4.6.1	General model	79
4.6.2	Testing for Model assumptions.....	79
4.6.3	Model selection and Validation	81
4.6.4	Model Diagnostics	82
4.6.5	Hypothesis Testing of macro-level using linear regression model	83
4.7	Summary of the Chapter.....	84
5.	Discussion of Findings.....	85
5.1	Introduction	85
5.2	Migration Intentions of young adults	85
5.3	The role of micro-level factors on youth migration intention	87
5.3.1	Education and Career	87

5.3.2	Preservation factors	88
5.4	The role of meso -level factors on youth migration intention	88
5.4.1	Family	88
5.4.2	Social Network and Security.....	89
5.5	The role of macro -level factors on youth migration intention	89
5.5.1	Economic factors.....	90
5.5.2	Political factors.....	91
5.6	Summary of the Chapter.....	91
6.	CONCLUSION.....	92
6.1	Introduction	92
6.2	Summary of the Findings	92
6.3	Recommendations	93
6.4	Implications	95
6.4.1	Theoretical Implications.....	95
6.4.2	Practical Implications.....	95
6.5	Suggestions for Future Work	96
References	.....	98
Appendix A	.....	104
Appendix B	.....	105
Appendix C	.....	106
Appendix D	.....	108
Appendix E	.....	109
Appendix F	.....	110
Appendix G	.....	112
Appendix H	.....	114
Appendix I	.....	115
Appendix J	.....	116
Appendix K	.....	117

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Sri Lanka Net Migration Rate per 1000 population	2
Figure 1.2	Research Design	5
Figure 3.1	Conceptual framework of the study	31
Figure 5.1	Reason for the disturbed migration intention	86

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Scholarly evidence of determinants of migration	11
Table 3.1	Operationalization of variables used in the study	32
Table 3.2	Factor loadings of Exploratory Factor Analysis	40
Table 3.3	Reliability test results of dimensions using Cronbach's alpha	40
Table 4.1	Demographic profile of the questionnaire data	54
Table 4.2	Scaled migration intention of respondents	56
Table 4.3	Correlation matrix of binary model predictors	57
Table 4.4	Binary logistic regression model results	60
Table 4.5	Decision on hypothesis under binary logistic regression model	63
Table 4.6	Test results of PO assumption	65
Table 4.7	Generalized Ordered Logistic regression model results	69
Table 4.8	Multinomial Logistic Regression Model results	71
Table 4.9	Comparison of model diagnostics	74
Table 4.10	Decision on hypothesis under multinomial logit models	76
Table 4.11	Descriptive statistics of secondary data	78
Table 4.12	Multiple linear regression model results	83
Table 4.13	Decision on hypothesis under multiple linear regression model	84

LIST OF ABBEREVIATIONS

YM	Youth Migration
MI	Migration Intention
YD	Youth Departure
YUR	Youth Unemployment Rate
PCAPG	Per Capita Growth Rate
PSV	Political Stability and Absence of Violence
RQ	Regulatory Quality
CCORR	Control of Corruption
CI	Change in Inflation Rate
EGR	Economic Growth Rate
LEXP	Life Expectancy
EC	Education and Career
PR	Preservation
FM	Family
SN	Social Network and Security
UG	Undergraduate or Graduate
GOLM	Generalized Ordered Linear Regression Model
PO	Proportional Odds
PPO	Partial Proportional Odds

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	104
Appendix B	105
Appendix C	106
Appendix D	108
Appendix E	109
Appendix F	110
Appendix G	112
Appendix H	114
Appendix I	115
Appendix J	116
Appendix K	117