

SOCIOLOGY OF MIDDLE EAST MIGRATION :
FROM DESCRIPTION TO ANALYSIS

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Migration of Sri Lankan workers to the Middle East on contract employment is a significant social phenomenon. The subject has attracted the attention of many researchers and academics. Yet, most of the writings that deal with the phenomenon are highly descriptive rather than analytical with the result that our understanding of the process of migration remains superficial and highly impressionistic.

This paper attempts to go beyond the level of mere description and analyse the process of migration in terms of a set of distinctive variables. The variables employed are; a.) structural, B.) normative, C.) social and D.) infrastructural. It is asserted that the process of migration to the Middle East is guided by these variables. While the latter do not operate in isolation, the influence of each is either reinforced or neutralized by the other.

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