

F-19 Relationship between characteristics of initial settlers and the problems of second generation settlers in land settlement schemes

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The initial demographic characteristics of settlers and their contribution to second generation problems which are exclusively associated with inaccessibility to land and employment opportunities in many land settlement schemes have been neglected in models proposed to explain the stages of settlement growth. This paper postulates a simplified model of life cycles of settlers in land settlement schemes and attempts to verify the proposed model empirically.

An indepth study was carried out among a sample of first and second generation settlers from two settlement schemes in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka and a comparable group from a migrant source area in one of the Wet Zone districts. The study established the age selectivity associated with the population pressure in settlement resources in a sequence of stages. It showed that the age structure of the population in the initial stage of settlement had a greater concentration of the adult population in the young adult working ages, lack of older people and presence of a very large number of children in the dependent child age categories. A sudden influx of second generation men and women into the labour force has occurred within 10 to 20 years after the initial land settlement schemes. The demographic characteristics of these initial settlers have contributed to the symptoms of population pressure that were particularly manifested in the problems related to the land and employment among second generation members. As a general issue, the study proved that there was an inter-generational impact in a context when an area is settled by a group highly selected by age.