



A sociological study on generational crisis in relation to colonization system in Sri Lanka

Samarakoon M¹, Wijewardhana BVN², Wijethunga WTD³

¹ Professor in Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

² Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

³ Temporary Assistant Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Colonies: Wetlands for paddy production, were established in the dry zone of Sri Lanka as a solution to the lack of lands in rural areas. The history of colonies goes back to the arrival of King Vijaya. The first Aryans settled along *Mahaweli*, *Walawe* and *Malwathu Oya* rivers engaging in farming and animal husbandry as their livelihoods. But with the advent of the British in 1796 this agricultural economy converted into a plantation economy. As a result the production of paddy declined. In 1928, steps were taken to re-start development of these colonies and agricultural activities. This study ascertains a crisis compiled in the generational operating of the farming colonies. The objective of this study was to identify crisis and investigate the legality of land facilities, future conditions and changes in farming and agricultural use, for the coming generations. Five GN divisions in Anuradhapura district were selected and data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and formal/Informal interviews. The study show that 97% of the respondents earned income from other sources than their traditional agriculture. They were unable to reap the harvest and gain profit through cultivation due to severe problem of water scarcity. Within the current context, the land area used for agriculture was limited. Further, research findings shows that farmers expect future generations will work in other sectors than agriculture due to high competition within the educational system and high cost involved in the cultivation process.

Keywords: agriculture, colonies, crisis, economy, generation issues

1. Introduction

The story of colonies goes back to the era of King Vijaya. Colonies were officially established as a result of lack of land in the rural area. With the development of voyages, many invasions were made against Sri Lanka. In 1796 with the advent of British the agricultural economy turned into plantation economy. As a result of that, the country had to import rice. Therefore, during 1928, steps were taken to establish colonies. The Land Reform Commission which was presented in 1929 measured that lands should be totally utilized for the cultivation purpose. It was executed in several processes such as expanding village, corporate villages and importing villages. In 1948 Land Development Department was established and six years plan was implemented. It was focused on extending the cultivated land to 131,000 areas by transferring government lands and it is easier to make the colonization process more organized (The Hector *Kobbekaduwa* Agrarian Research and Training Institute, 1998).

Accordingly in first step eight areas of land was transfer to land and muddy land. The three areas and five acres were transferred to land and muddy land in second and third steps respectively. In 1934 reports have recorded that 50,000 acres of lands were distributed among farmers by 1953, 16032 households were settled in 118438 areas of 30 colonies (Lewis). During 1956-1957, problems occurred in land distribution. Even though the lands were given to people they refused to live in those houses. Then the government intervened and provided houses and 50% for them. In the

same time government provided 1200 Rupees to household to build permanent houses. Apart from that the government gave solution to the society of lands, employment opportunities, giving a solution to the public and suppressing the unsettle problems raised by the youth, the administrative activity were carried out.

As the result of established of colonies, *Mahaweli* multi-purpose development project was on the lime light nourished by many branches, *Mahaweli* river starts from the hill areas of the country and flows through the *Dumbara* valley and falls to sea in *Trincomalee*. This has affected largely for the economic development activities after the independence (The Hector *Kobbekaduwa* Agrarian Research and Training Institute, 1998) . This study was conducted at the *Rajanganaya* D.S. The colonnade has been established by the *Kala Oya* and *Rajanganaya* reservoirs. Two acres of paddy fields have been offered per household when start of *Rajanganaya* colonnade and it has addressed the scarcity of lands. The study has focused to study the effect, created as a result of the occurrence of generational issues while resolving the societal problematic conditions.

2. Research Problem

The problem of the study is to study what are the social issues built on generations and colonization in Sri Lanka.

3. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this sociological study is to understand the colonization and generational issues in colonies in

Anuradhapura District. Apart from this, study was focused to understand the legality of the lands in the colonies and attempted to verify the current condition and facilities in the lands given by the colonies projects. And also studied the trends of the new generation into the paddy cultivation and its current situation and the sufficiency of the income gained by the paddy cultivation. Finally through this study, recommended the prevailing issues and suggesting solutions.

4. Methodology

4.1 Field study and sample

As the sample 173 of households were selected randomly from the five Grama Niladari divisions namely Yaya1, Yaya2, Yaya3, Yaya4, and Hettiarachchigama in Rajanganaya Divisional Secretariat in Anuradhapura district. (Sample

compromised Male, Female, Youth, Elder people and age group is than 18 years)

4.2 Data Collections

Questionnaires, Formal/ Informal Interviews, Group Discussions, Chain of interviews and observations were used to gather data.

4.3 Data analysis

Data analysis was managed through SPSS computer data analysis system.

5. Results and Discussions

Results

Table 1

	Nature of the sample	Number (n=)	Percentage (%)
01	Gender	(n= 173)	Percentage
	Female	77	(45)
	Male	96	(55)
02	Age Group	(n= 173)	Percentage
	18-25	7	(4)
	26-33	21	(12)
	34-41	33	(19)
	42-49	35	(20)
	50-57	42	(24)
	58-65	18	(10)
03	66<	17	(10)
	Civil States	(n= 173)	Percentage
	Married	158	(91)
	Unmarried	3	(2)
	Widower	12	(7)
04	Separated	00	00
	Education level	(n = 173)	Percentage
	From grade 1-5	31	(18)
	From grade 6-10	50	(29)
	Up to O/L	53	(31)
	Passed O/L	8	(5)
	Up to A/L	14	(8)
	Passed A/L	5	(3)
Graduate	7	(4)	
05	No schooling	5	(3)
	Employment	(n = 115)	Percentage
	Self-employment	11	(10)
	Government sector job	21	(18)
	Private sector job	12	(10)
	Labourer	8	(7)
	Retired	4	(3)
06	Unemployed	50	(44)
	Housewife	9	(8)
	Salary	(n= 56)	Percentage
	Less than Rs.5000	6	(11)
	5001-10000	9	(16)
	10001-15000	9	(16)
	15001-20000	3	(5)
	20001-25000	3	(5)
	25001-30000	8	(14)
	30001-35000	2	(4)
35001-40000	4	(7)	
40001-45000	2	(4)	
45001-50000	5	(9)	

	50000<	5	(9)
07	Other sources of income	(n = 123)	Percentage
	Paddy cultivation	75	(61)
	Additional crop cultivation	18	(15)
	Self-employment	11	(9)
	Labor	7	(6)
	Business	10	(8)
	Any other	2	(2)
08	Income received from the employment	(n = 123)	Percentage
	Less than Rs.5000	5	(4)
	5001-10000	24	(20)
	10001-15000	8	(7)
	15001-20000	15	(1)
	20001-25000	12	(10)
	25001-30000	8	(7)
	30001-35000	10	(8)
	35001-40000	5	(4)
	40001-45000	1	(1)
	45001-50000	15	(12)
	50001-60000	5	(4)
	60001-70000	1	(1)
	70001-100000	7	(6)
100000<	7	(6)	
09	Total income of family	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Less than Rs.5000	3	(2)
	5001-10000	15	(9)
	10001-15000	10	(6)
	15001-20000	16	(9)
	20001-25000	5	(3)
	25001-30000	15	(9)
	30001-35000	8	(5)
	35001-40000	19	(11)
	40001-45000	5	(3)
	45001-50000	22	(13)
	50001-60000	21	(12)
	60001-70000	7	(4)
	70001-100000	14	(8)
100000<	13	(8)	
10	Information regards of land	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Is the land legal?		
	Yes	160	(92)
No	13	(8)	
11	You own the lands,	(n = 173)	Percentage
	From generation	125	(70)
	Bought	43	(27)
	Illegal	2	(1)
	Government Permit	3	(2)
12	You own the land,	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Own	165	(95)
	Rent	8	(5)
13	Is the land a colonnade land given by the government	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Yes	126	(73)
	No	47	(27)
14	Your relationship with the 1 st person to receive the land	(n = 147)	Percentage
	Grand mother	15	(10)
	Grand father	47	(31)
	Mother	5	(3)
	Father	64	(42)
	Uncle	13	(9)
	Aunt	3	(2)
15	Total amount of land given to him	(n=173)	Percentage
	Land acres		
	Acres ¼ to ½	61	(35)

	Acres ½ to 1	51	(29)
	Acres 1 to 2	52	(30)
	Acres 2 to 3	5	(3)
	More than 3 acres	4	(2)
	Muddy land acres		
	Acres 2 to 3	146	(84)
	Unknown	27	(16)
17	Reasons for decreasing the amount of land of you	(n= 73)	Percentage
	Distribution among brethren	58	(79)
	Mortgages	2	(3)
	Sold out	3	(4)
	Distribution among children	10	(14)
18	Who cultivate your paddy lands	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Myself	134	(77)
	Rented	20	(11)
	'Anda' farmers	19	(11)
19	Those who engage in paddy cultivation	(n = 143)	Percentage
	Is the cultivation profitable in this area		
	Yes	61	(46)
	No	13	(54)
	If not what		
	Scarcity of water	29	(42)
	Losses	15	(15)
	Higher expedition	21	(21)
	Lack of labor	2	(2)
	Not having fertilizier at right time	2	(2)
20	For those who do not engage in paddy cultivation, yet having owned paddy field,	(n = 60)	Percentage
	Ageing	11	(18)
	Not well	2	(3)
	Getting on employment	9	(15)
	Scarcity of water	4	(6)
	Losses	6	(10)
	Moving to other cultivations	2	(3)
	Current Employment,		
	Self-employment	10	(16)
	Government sector	3	(5)
	Private sector	2	(3)
	Laborer	3	(5)
	Retired	1	(2)
	Unemployed	7	(11)
21	Who gets the ownership of lands after you	(n = 131)	Percentage
	To Children	119	(91)
	To brethren	12	(9)
22	Government institutes which assist you in cultivation	(n = 166)	Percentage
	Agrarian Services	71	(43)
	Department of Agriculture	56	(34)
	Department of Irrigation	12	(7)
	Corporative Bank	6	(4)
	None	21	(13)
23	Problems prevailing in relation to other areas	(n = 171)	Percentage
	Drinking water	56	(33)
	Employment issues	20	(12)
	Transportation	27	(16)
	Health	21	(12)
	Education	10	(6)
	Roads	30	(18)
	Communication	5	(3)
	For location of government institutes	2	(1)
24	Your opinion of the cultivation	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Good	69	(40)
	Free	14	(8)
	No satisfaction	33	(19)
	Not profitable	29	(17)

	Need government assistant	23	(13)
	No ceiling price for paddy	3	(2)
	Should use traditional methods	2	(1)
25	Which Political Party gave an assistant	(n = 173)	Percentage
	Government of United National Party	19	(11)
	Sri Lanka Freedom Party	9	(5)
	United People's Freedom Alliance	96	(55)
	United National Front for Good Governance	11	(6)
	None	38	(22)
26	Do you think your children will engage in farming activities after you?	(n=151)	Percentage
	Yes	74	(49)
	No	77	(51)
27	Reasons for the children to leave paddy farming	(n=74)	Percentage
	Getting government jobs	1318	(18)(24)
	Other incomes Education	32	(43)
	Migration	2	(3)
	Dislike	9	(12)

6. Discussion

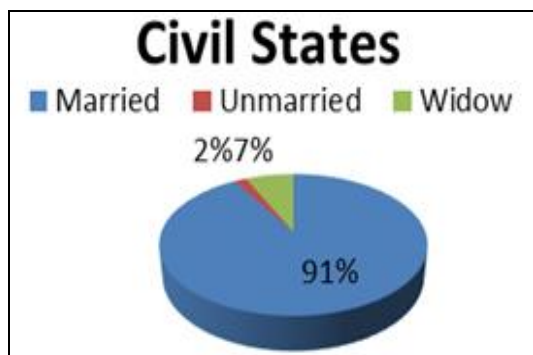
The study focuses on the generational issues regarding the colonization. When analyzing the above data, it is clear that at present, many have deviated from the paddy cultivation and have engaged in various other sources of income. The scarcity of water, inefficient road facilities and transportation facilities, not having a fixed price for paddy and the lack of attention from the government resulted in this situation. Only 6% of the sample is happy with the amount of intervention of the government also when comparing the past and present, less number of acres of lands are inherited by the households. 27% of the households own less than two acres of land. Under this condition, it is evident that in the colonies of Rajanganaya area, generations have faced problems.

Table 2: Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	77	45
Male	96	55
Total	173	100

Source: Field study - 2017

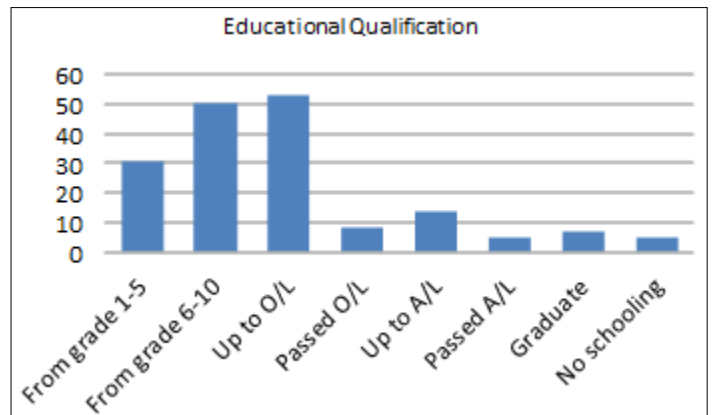
When analyzing the above data and due to sample of people lived in Rajanganaya 45% female and 55% male. According to selected Grama Niladhari Division most of the people who lived there were males. When consider marital status of sample, the marriage rate (91%) is higher than unmarried (2%)



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 1: Civil States

This is an important clarification for the people in Yaya 1, Yaya 2, Yaya 3, Yaya 4, and also Hettiarachchigama. Because considerable amount of people are just passed the GCE O/L examination (percentage is 31%) and also 29% of people were gained their education up to grade 10.



Source: Field study – 2017

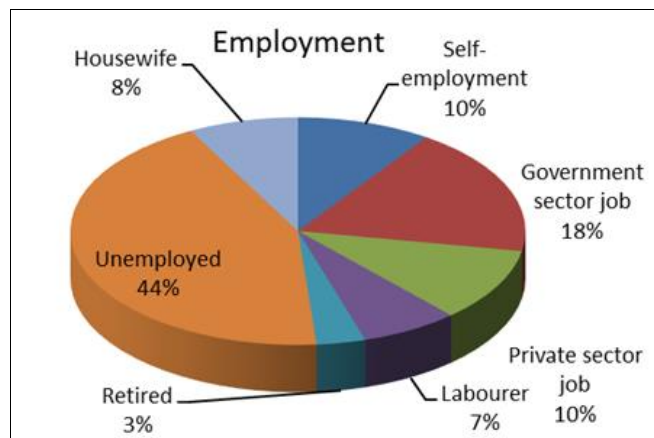
Fig 2: Educational Qualification

And other important fact is that there were seven undergraduates from Hettiarachchigama. Meanwhile five people were identified they never been to schooling and the reason was rural poverty. It is justify through following statement and it says interrelationship of poverty and education in rural agricultural areas.

“I am Gunapala. I never have been to school. Because my father was a farmer and we were belong to very poor family. I have four brothers and two sisters. I am the eldest in my family. When my parents went to paddy field I had to look after my younger brothers and sisters. So owing to poverty and been elder in my family I lost my chance to go to school. So I don't even know to write my name too..32 years farmer from Yaya 2”

People in this area, 10% of them are engaging in their own jobs. In Hettiarachchigama 18% of villagers are doing government jobs, instead of that the most jobless people are also represent Hettiarachchigama. 3% of few people are pensioners. Sample shows the higher percentage of jobless

people which means 44% than other jobs in the sample.



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 3: Employment

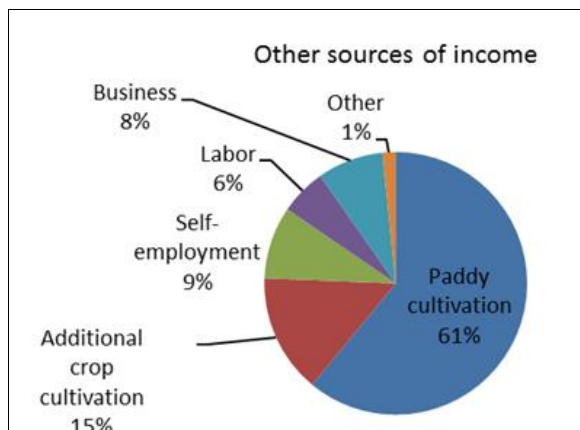
In here 16% of them are earning 5000/= - 100000/=. And again 16% of salary earning 10001/= - 15000/=. Others are taking lesser than that percentage.



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 4: Salary

In these areas can clearly see the other occupations are really limited. Because their knowledge is very unique and it is limited to specific parts. In here Yaya 3 and Hettiarachchigama people having more paddy than other areas. 61% of people are engaging in paddy farming activities, and 15% of people are cultivating crops in Chena. Some sort of vegetables and fruits resist for the dry climatic conditions.



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 5: Other sources of income

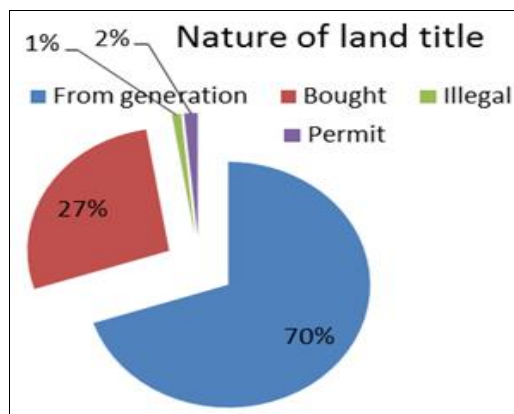
According to the sample 20% of villagers' income is 5000 /= - 10000/= .12% of peoples' income is 15001/= - 20000/= and also 12% peoples' income is 45001-50000. Most of the villagers earn very low income from their profession than their extra cultivation. There are 6 people who earned more than 10, 0000/= of money from their profession.

Table 3: Income received from the employment

Income received from the employment	Number = 123	Percentage
Less than Rs.5000	5	4
5001-10000	24	20
10001-15000	8	7
15001-20000	15	1
20001-25000	12	10
25001-30000	8	7
30001-35000	10	8
35001-40000	5	4
40001-45000	1	1
45001-50000	15	12
50001-60000	5	4
60001-70000	1	1
70001-100000	7	6
100000<	7	6
Total	123	91

Source: Field study - 2017

90% of villagers have mentioned that those lands are legal lands. 8% of them said that those are not legally belonging to them. 78% of villages took the lands from their last generations. 2% of people are living in permitted lands. 95% of them have taken their lands form their own. Some are hired their land for someone else, that percentage is 5%.



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 6: Nature of land title

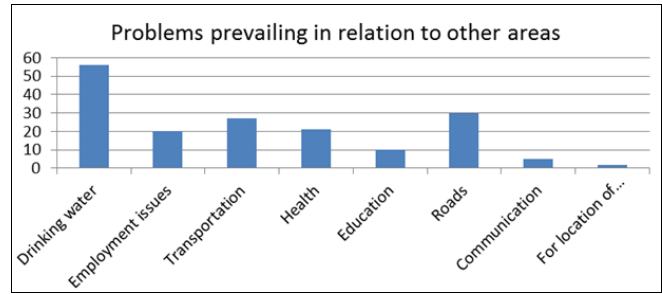
According to the data 25% of villagers do not have land than 1 acre. And especially 25% of them have 2 acres. 79% of them loose their lands because of the segregation of lands within brothers. 3% are mortgage lands and could not afford to buy it again. 77% of villagers cultivate paddies on their own. 64% of villagers rent the paddy, because they are aging people and they cannot do it alone. 23% of them are not in good health. 14% of people are doing some other jobs; they do not have much more time to engage in paddy cultivation. Most of villagers are really old and they got another job. 10% of them said that they are not profitable with that paddy

cultivation. Their current employment is self-employment which means 16%. 11% of them do not have specific occupations. According to sample there are 3% of people are working in government sector.

91% of them said totally all the lands belongs to their children. The people who are not married said all the lands are belongs to their brothers. 51% of villagers said that they never expect that their children also doing the same occupation that they are currently doing. 49% said they expect that their children will do the same occupation that they are engaging. 43% of are doing jobs. So they can survive with that occupation without engaging in paddy cultivation.

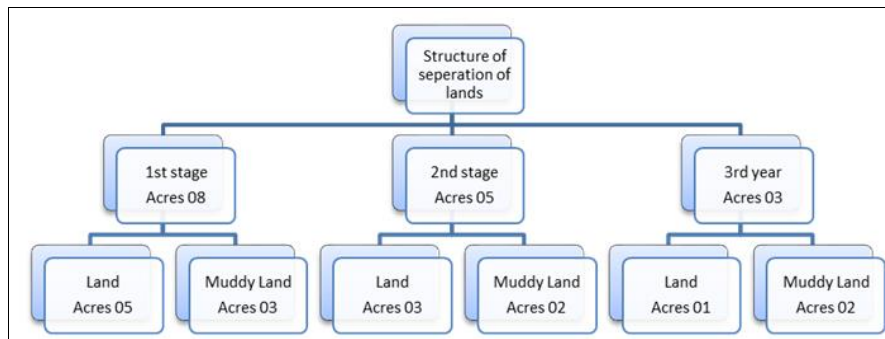
Water, Transport and road problems are the main issues in these areas. 33% people mentioned that the problem of water is it cannot consume, because the salty taste. And it's a very dry area therefore lack of rain falls can be seen in these areas.

The roads are not properly constructed. The transport service is very slow and very limited buses and it shows 16% of sample.



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 7: Problem prevailing in relation to other areas

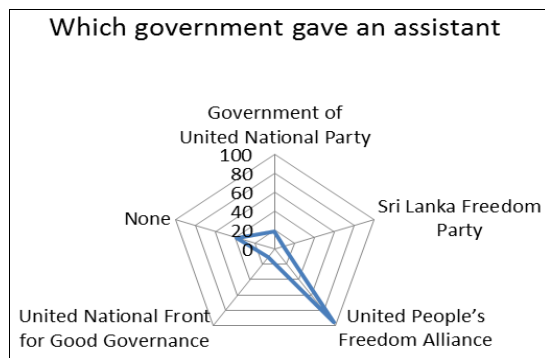


Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 8: Structure of separation of lands

Increasing and decreasing the number of lands (both lands and muddy lands) indicated as a main factor that has affected to create generation crisis in Rajanganaya colonization scheme. Accordingly, both lands and muddy lands have been distributed to the public by the government. Under the first stage, as a whole 8 acres have been offered by the government. These lands have been divided in to 5 acres for lands and 3 acres for muddy lands. Under the second stage, totality of 5 acres has been offered to the people among those 5 acres, 2 acres of lands and 3 acres of muddy lands have been given. Under the third stage, total number of 3 acres of muddy lands has been offered by the government.

given by the government to the people who live in the colonization scheme to engage in their activities. It is very important to note that a remarkable assistance has been given to them under then government of United People's Freedom Alliance. Its percentage is 55%. Even though they are happy about the previous governments (government of Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the government of president United National Party) they do not have such positive attitude about the United National Front for Good Governance government 22% of the respondents have been indicated that they did not receive any kind of assistance from and government.



Source: Field study - 2017

Fig 9: Government support

As a whole, it is very important to understand the assistance

7. Conclusions

In general, as a result of poor water facilities in this area has to face difficulties in paddy farming. Therefore civilians in this area tend to work in other farming activities and different occupations. As well as lack of lands and muddy lands is a challenge for the next generation. Moreover according to the contemporary economic pattern, younger generations of paddy farmers are showing less interest in paddy farming. As a result of that future generations of these families, isolated from paddy farming. When concluding the topic, above factors can be seen as the factors which affected the ancestral issues related to colonization in Sri Lanka.

8. Recommendations

It is very much needed to pay attention to the decreasing lands of the colonnade farmers. Efficient steps should be taken to give solutions to the scarcity of water and travel and

transportation facilities. It is needed to have the government intervention and introduce a fixed price for the paddy and make them feel safe in the competitive economical world.

When the necessary steps are to be taken to solve the burning concerns of the farmers of this region, for the next few generations, these colonnades will exist.

9. References

1. Crusz H. Nature conservation in Sri Lanka (Ceylon)', *Biological Conservation*. 1973; 5(3):199-208.
2. De Silva KM, *A History of Sri Lanka*. Sri Lanka: Vijitha Yapa Publications
3. De Silva N, *Tradition, Art and Identity: The Link Explored*. *The Architect: The Journal of the Sri Lankan Institute of Architects*, [e-journal] 109(3). Sri Lankan Institute of Architects, 2008.
4. Gunasekara B. *The Rajavaliya*. AES reprint. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1995.
5. Gunawardena Charles A. *Encyclopedia of Sri Lanka*. Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2005.
6. Hodge JM. 'Science, development and empire: The colonial advisory council on agriculture and animal health, 1929-43', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*. 2002; 30(1):1-26.
7. Kobbekaduwa H. *Traditional Agriculture of Sri Lanka: Agrarian Research and Training Institute*, 1998.
8. Lewis RE. *The Rural Economy of the Sinhalese in Ceylon*, *As. soc. Journ.* No.4, 1848 (reprint), pp.31-52.
9. Sabry T. *Cultural Encounters in the Arab World: On Media, the Modern and the Everyday*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2010.
10. Senadhira A. 'The development of scientific journalism in Sri Lanka' in *Libraries and People*, Colombo Public Library, Colombo, 1975, 261-270.
11. Siapera E. *Cultural Diversity and Global Media: The Mediation of Difference*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
12. *Spolia Zeylanica*. *The Periodic Literature of Ceylon*, (1849) *Calcutta Review*, 1904; 11:1-30.