

Patterns of Employment Participation among Elderly Population in Sri Lanka

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Literature makes it evident that many developed countries have undergone its ageing population with a high level of economic development and as a result, in those countries, elderly persons experience better socio- economic status in their post-retirement life. Sri Lanka is one of the countries in South Asia which has been experiencing rapid ageing population under a relatively low economic development. The life expectancy at birth in Sri Lanka was about 72 years and 78 years for male and female respectively in 2011- 2012. In the absence of universal social pension schemes, a significant proportion of elderly population has become an economically dependent during their old-age. Therefore, employment participation among elderly would be useful when assessing their post-retirement socio-economic issues among elderly in Sri Lanka. The main objective of this paper is to examine the patterns of employment participation among elderly population in Sri Lanka. The study was based on the secondary data obtained from the Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, conducted in 2014 by the Department of Census and Statistics. Results revealed that, more elderly men were employed (44.1 %) than that of their counterpart women (14.5 %). Out of total elderly females, about 87.6 % were currently widowed. Employment participation of elderly was significantly associated with the age, gender, current marital status, residence sector, level of education and the current health status. Therefore, considerable attention should be given to improve the skills of the current labour force aged population to improve their choices and also, to enhance their health status in order to ensure better socio- economic well-being when these cohorts become old-age in the future.

Key words: *Elderly population, Population ageing and patterns of employment participation*