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**Regional
patterns
of intercensal
and lifetime
migration
in Sri Lanka**

Dayalal Abeysekera



East-West Center
Honolulu, Hawaii

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PREFACE

I am most grateful to Professors Sidney Goldstein and Alden Speare, Jr., for having made many valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I also gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Ford Foundation in the form of a Traineeship in Demography, which enabled me to work toward completion of my doctoral degree in sociology at Brown University. This paper is dedicated to Ajith and Dilini, my brother and sister, who shouldered a disproportionate share of the household chores while I was away, reading for the degree.

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ABSTRACT This paper draws on published census data to examine regional patterns of intercensal migration in Sri Lanka between 1946 and 1971 and on a 10 percent national sample from the 1971 census to examine patterns of lifetime migration. Two dominant migration streams are observed, one to Colombo District containing the capital city, and the other to rural areas of several districts in the dry zone. The latter is a result of the government's investment in peasant agriculture, and the close relationship between the availability of new land and increased migration is demonstrated. Although Colombo is the most attractive destination for in-migrants, the rural dry zone as a unit retains the largest proportion of the gross migrant turnover. The other regions, consisting of the maritime districts, the kandyan (hill-country) districts, and Jaffna, have all lost parts of their populations to the two dominant destinations, with maritime district migrants going mainly to Colombo, and kandyan district and Jaffna migrants going mainly to the rural dry zone.

Slightly over one half of lifetime migrants have moved into rural locations outside the dry zone. Urban Colombo, the rural dry zone, and other urban areas of the country jointly account for the remaining migrants in equitable proportions. Over two thirds of the gross turnover of lifetime migrants reside in rural Sri Lanka.

This paper assesses the regional pattern of lifetime migration in Sri Lanka during the last three intercensal periods, from 1946 to 1971, by documenting the volume and direction of interdistrict migration in Sri Lanka; contrasting two dominant streams of migration, one to urban Colombo and the other to the rural dry zone; and identifying basic age-sex characteristics of four streams of lifetime migrants from the 1971 census data whose destinations were urban Colombo, the rural dry zone, "other urban" areas, and "other rural" areas. The purpose is to demonstrate that there was a very significant migration stream to the rural dry zone. Given the centrality of public policy considerations (Abeysekera, 1979), it is important to study the determinants and consequences of this migration in greater detail, using a survey approach.

Information on place of birth was collected in all censuses of Sri Lanka, but it was cross-classified by place of residence and published

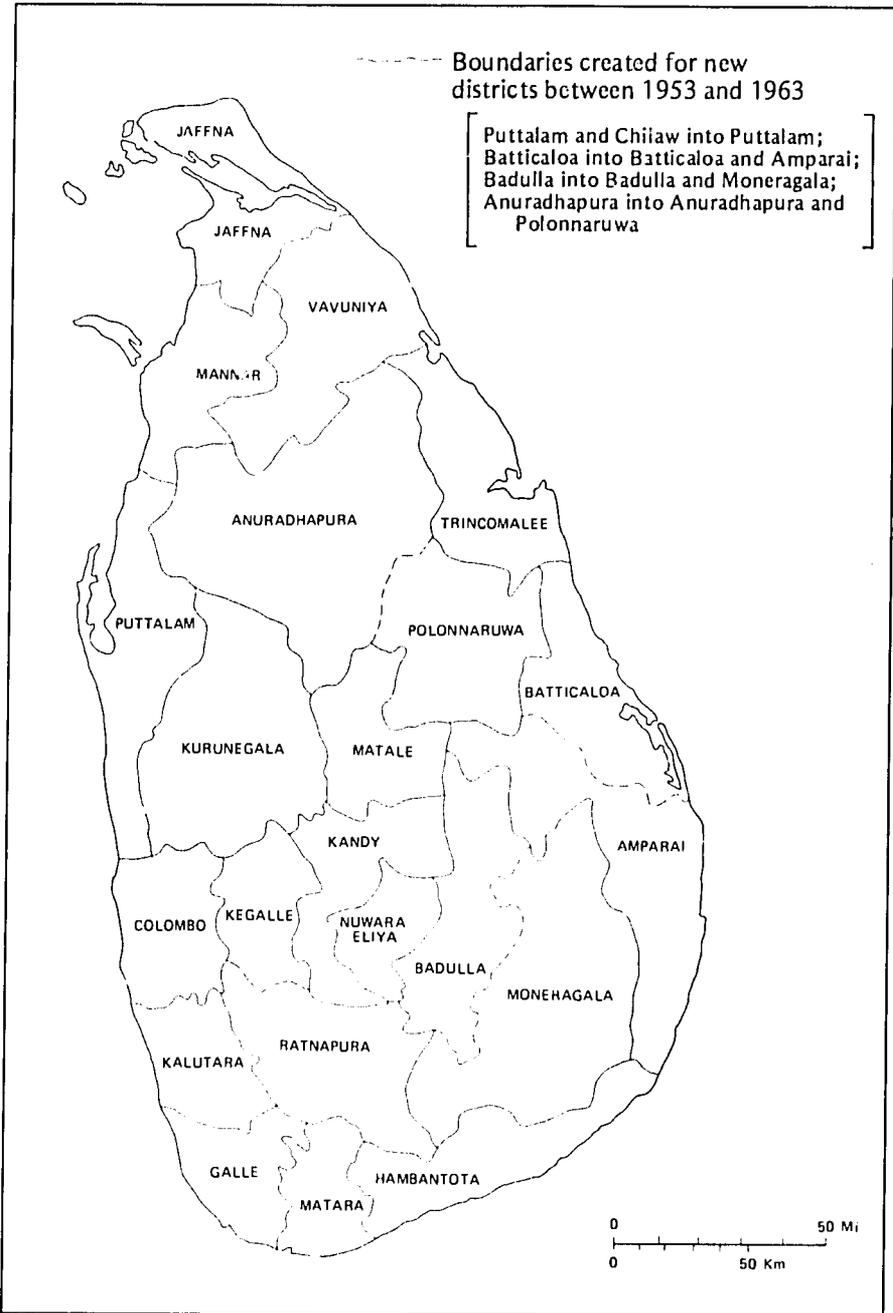
for the first time only in 1946. Since then there have been three intercensal periods providing data on internal migration.

Before turning to a detailed discussion of migration, one should note changes that have occurred in the number of districts of Sri Lanka (see Map 1). At the turn of the century, Sri Lanka's nine provinces had 20 districts. At the time of the 1971 census there were 22 districts. Comparability over time can easily be established. The changes took place between 1953 and 1963, when the districts of Puttalam and Chilaw were consolidated and another three districts (Batticaloa, Anuradhapura, and Badulla) were divided to form six districts. The newly created districts were Amparai, Polonnaruwa, and Monaragala. Thus the 19 districts that are comparable over time are Puttalam and Chilaw, Batticaloa and Amparai, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, Badulla and Monaragala, and the other 15 districts whose boundaries remained unchanged. Regional-level data presented in this paper are comparable over time because they reflect these boundary changes.

The districts of Sri Lanka have been classified into various regional groupings based on somewhat different criteria (see Department of Census and Statistics, 1973; ESCAP, 1975; World Fertility Survey, 1978). The regional classification I have adopted in this paper depicts the migrants' districts of destination and origin within the broader framework of agroclimatic topography (Map 2). Sri Lanka has two dominant internal migration streams, one to Colombo District, which contains the capital city (region A, Map 3), and the other to districts in the rural dry zone (region E), where the government has invested heavily in peasant agriculture (Abeysekera, 1979). Accordingly, these two areas are treated as two regions in this paper. Three other regions consist of the maritime districts of the wet zone (region B), the *kandyan* (hill-country) districts of the wet zone (region C), and Jaffna District (region D) in the extreme north of the dry zone.

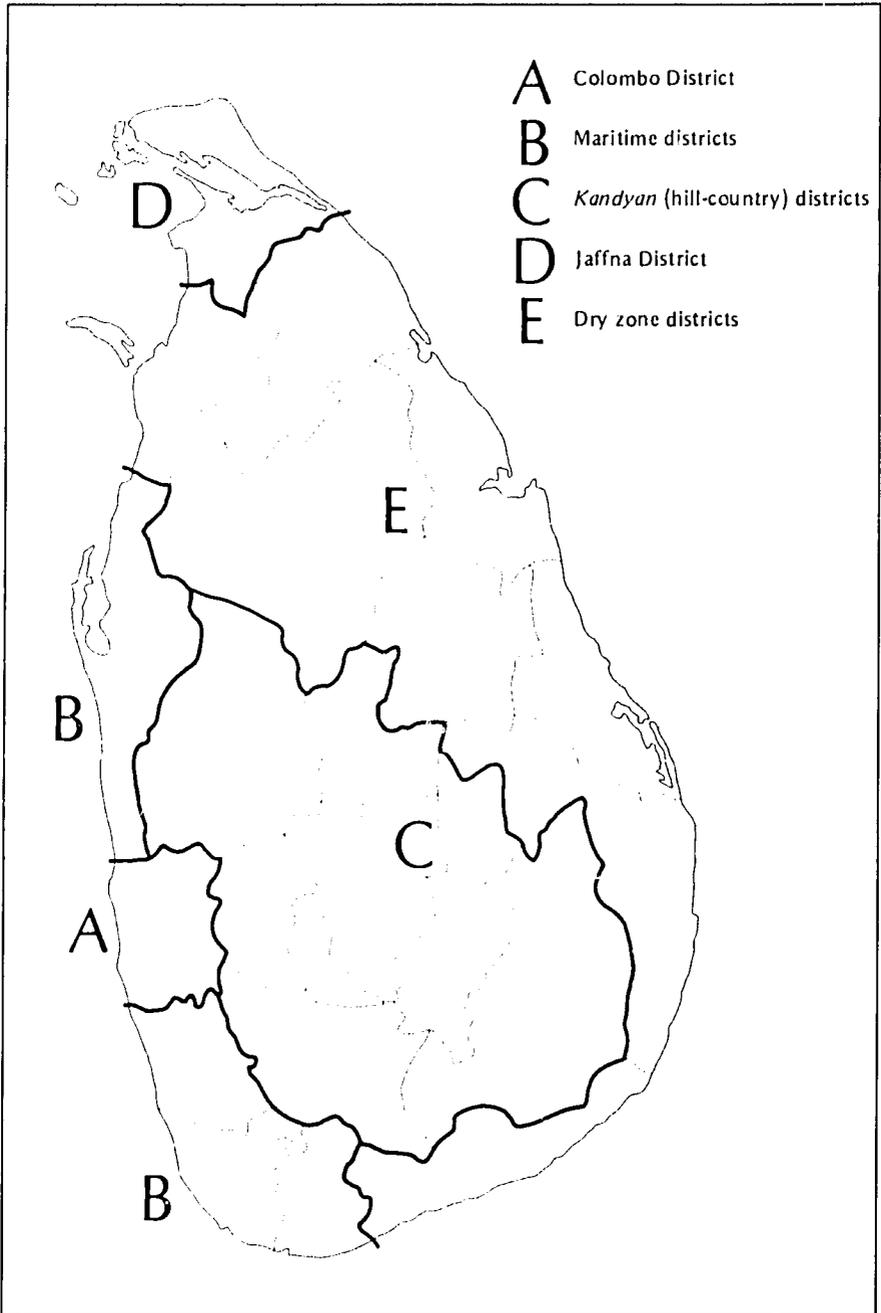
The maritime districts are the most developed areas of the country, having been exposed to Western influences since the early sixteenth century. They include Kalutara, Galle, Matara, and Puttalam/Chilaw (which is actually situated in the intermediate zone). The *kandyan* districts are less developed and have had less exposure to Western influence; they also contain the nation's tea plantations. Furthermore, the maritime districts are inhabited predominantly by the low-country Sinhalese, whereas the *kandyan* districts are the home of the *kandyan*

MAP 1 New district boundaries: Sri Lanka, 1953–63

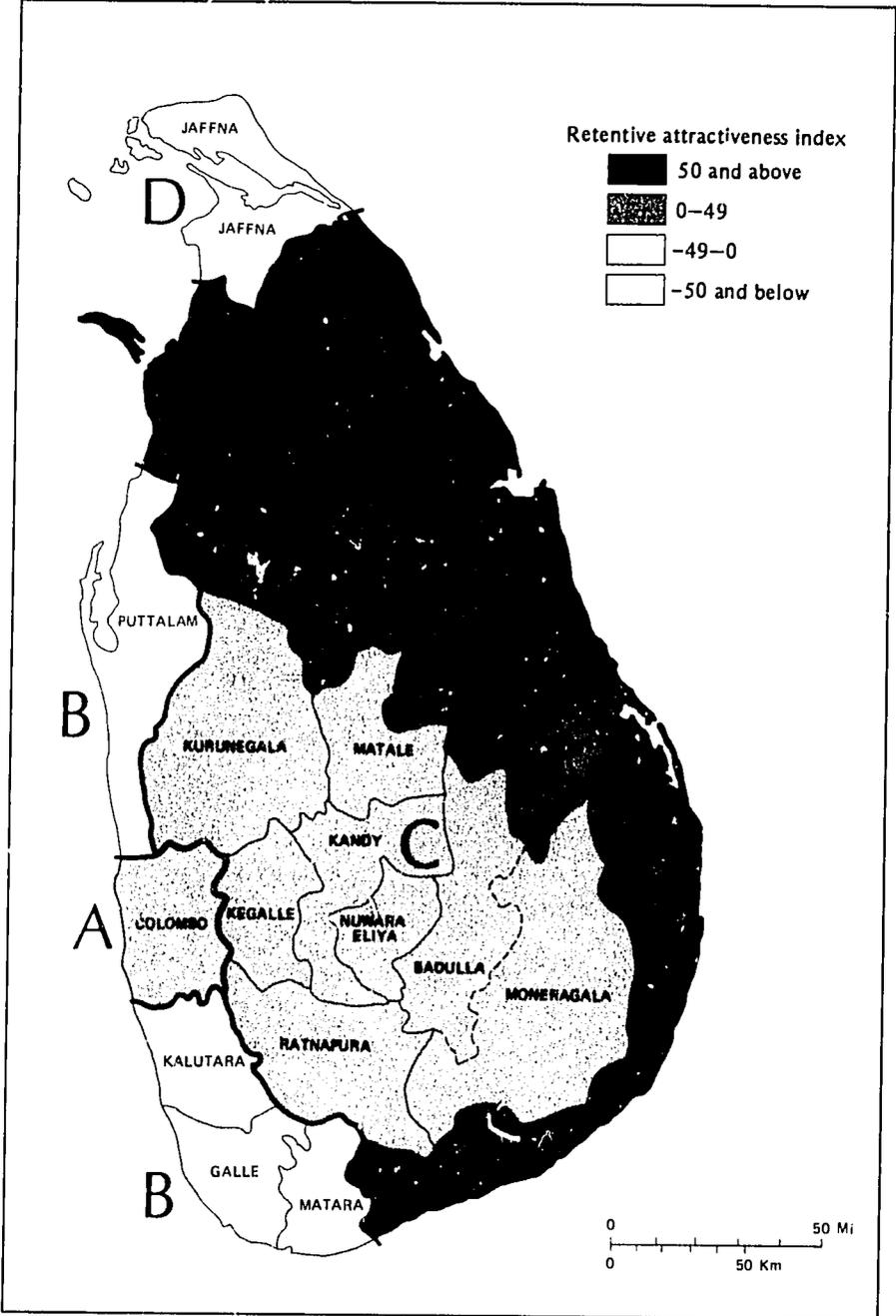


SOURCE: ESCAP (1975:17).

MAP 2 Regional groupings by district: Sri Lanka, 1971



MAP 3 Retentive attractiveness by region: Sri Lanka, 1971



SOURCE: Table 11.

Sinhalese along with the South Indian Tamil laborer population that was imported by the British to run the plantations. Following the reasoning of ESCAP (1975:16), I have classified Jaffna District separately because "historic, ethnic and other considerations have produced a special combination of demographic and agricultural factors that deserve to be treated separately." Unlike most of the districts in the rest of the dry zone, Jaffna has been a district of net out-migration since 1946.

MIGRANT POPULATION OF SRI LANKA, 1946-71

Relatively little information is available on the proportion of the immobile population in comparison with its migrating counterparts. Data presented in Table 1 reveal that in 1946, 12.4 percent of the Sri Lanka-born population were living outside their district of birth. This points to the overwhelming magnitude of the population that has never left its district of birth for residential purposes. Barring the incidence of heavy emigration from Sri Lanka, it would indicate a large immobile population when spatial mobility is synonymous with crossing district boundaries for residential purposes. More males migrated than females. Although male migration tends to be the norm within the Indian subcontinent (Visaria, 1969; Zachariah, 1966), other Asian countries have revealed female dominance in urban-bound migration (Hendershot, 1971; TURA, 1976).

By the census of 1953, the lifetime mobility of the population had slightly increased; 14 percent of the Sri Lanka-born population were living outside their district of birth. By 1963, the figure had reached 15.8 percent.

TABLE 1 Percentage distribution of Sri Lanka-born migrant population: Sri Lanka, 1946-63

Migrant population	1946	1953	1963
Total	12.4	14.0	15.8
Male	14.1	u	u
Female	10.6	u	u
Urban areas	u	u	23.4
Rural areas	u	u	14.0

u--unavailable.

SOURCES: Department of Census and Statistics (1951: table 42; 1958: table 10; 1967: table 12).

Computations from Table 18 of the Census of Population 1971, Preliminary Report, yield a figure of 15.2 percent for lifetime migrants, reflecting a 0.6 percent drop from the 1963 figure. Two explanations may be hazarded for this apparent reversal.

First, the instructions given to census enumerators for probing for place of birth and district of enumeration at the previous census may have been different in 1971 from those given to enumerators in 1963. Such an inconsistency could have affected the census results in districts that had undergone boundary changes between 1953 and 1963. If the enumeration was conducted somewhat mechanically in 1963 but greater caution was exercised in 1971, misclassification of actual nonmigrants as migrants may have occurred in 1963 in the three newly created districts of Amparai, Monaragala, and Polonnaruwa.

Some evidence is available to indicate that this actually happened. During the 1963-71 intercensal period, increases of from 6.5 to 14.0 percentage points were recorded in the nonmigrant population of these districts. These could have been due to the natural increase of the nonmigrant population of the districts. However, annual growth rates of 4.2 percent (Amparai), 6.3 percent (Monaragala), and 8.4 percent (Polonnaruwa) could not have possibly been achieved through natural increase, especially as the national annual growth rate during this period was 2.1 percent. Perhaps the "true" proportion of inter-district migrants in 1963 was between 14.0 and 15.2 percent.

A second possible explanation is that between 1963 and 1971 there was increased return migration (perhaps due to the government's welfare policies which focused on the rural peasantry) and more people were found in their place of birth, making them nonmigrants in a "place of birth by place of enumeration" classification. But as an analysis of the 1971 sample census tapes revealed that only 1 percent of the population consisted of return migrants, this possibility seems remote. Thus, misclassification of nonmigrants as migrants in 1963 is the plausible explanation for the apparent reversal.

Intercensal period of 1946-53

Two studies have been conducted on the volume and pattern of migration during the 1946-53 intercensal period. Vamathevan (1961) has done the most extensive work, using the vital statistics method, the forward survival ratio method, and place of birth data for the analysis of the census information. Abhayaratne and Jayewardene

(1965) have complemented the Vamathevan study by analyzing the census data with an index of attraction used as "a measure of the selective popularity of an area as the destination of a migratory move" (ESCAP, 1976:49).

Table 2 is derived from the data presented in Vamathevan's (1961) table 1, which provides net interdistrict migration estimates obtained from the three methods mentioned above. The data in Table 2 are collapsed into five "regions" based mainly on the wet and dry zone dichotomy so that the two dominant destinations are brought into sharper focus.

The fairly large variation in the magnitude of net migration estimates arrived at by the three methods, as well as some changes in direction, calls for caution in interpreting the data. The variability of results may not be due entirely to the methodologies used. The combination of several districts into one region has the effect of diluting or even distorting the net estimates. For the more detailed table containing the estimates on a district by district basis, see the original table 1 of Vamathevan (1961).

In spite of the variability, all three estimates point unmistakably to the net in-migration areas, which are the dry zone districts and Colombo District. In all three estimates, the dry zone has had a larger volume of migrants than Colombo. The maritime districts, the *kandyan*

TABLE 2 Net interregional migration estimates obtained by three methods: Sri Lanka, 1946--53

Region	Survival ratio (SR)	Vital statistics (VS)	Place of birth	Average of SR + VS
Colombo District (wet zone)	50,153	42,011	13,438	46,100
Maritime districts (wet zone) ^a	-38,384	-35,790	-29,959	-36,800
<i>Kandyan</i> districts (wet zone) ^b	-41,423	33	-33,005	-20,700
Jaffna District (dry zone) ^c	1,662	-7,089	-14,237	-2,700
Dry zone districts ^d	67,509	86,584	64,481	76,900

a Include Kalutara, Galle, Matara, and Puttalam/Chilaw Districts.

b Include Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle, Badulla/Monaragala, Ratnapura, and Kurunegala Districts.

c Jaffna "... has been classified separately as the historic, ethnic and other conditions have produced a special combination of demographic and agricultural factors that deserve to be treated separately" (ESCAP, 1975:16).

d Include Hambantota, Mannar, Vavuniya, Batticaloa/Amparai, Trincomalee, and Anuradhapura/Polonnaruwa Districts.

SOURCE: Based on Vamathevan (1961: table 1).

districts, and Jaffna District have been losing population to the two major destinations. The nonavailability of district of birth by district of residence data for this intercensal period does not allow an assessment of interregional flows of migrants. However, it is expected that the majority of migrants from the maritime districts would have gone to Colombo whereas the majority of out-migrants from the *kandyan* districts would have gone to the dry zone. This expectation is based on the fact that most of the maritime districts were exposed to Western influences (since the Portuguese conquest in the sixteenth century), and they were consequently the more developed areas of the country with better educational facilities. The *kandyan* districts, on the other hand, had minimal exposure to Western influence, and were increasingly marginalized by the enactment of the Crown Lands Encroachment Ordinance of 1840, which effectively deprived the *kandyan* peasantry of their traditional highlands (Abeysekera, 1979). Accordingly, the *kandyan* peasants were favored as colonists of the dry zone, as was recommended in the *Kandyan* Peasantry Commission Report.

Intercensal period of 1953–63

Estimates of net migration made by the Marga Institute (1975) using the vital statistics method and the place of birth method as shown in Table 3 differ in most regions. This is not surprising given the difference in data sets and the procedures involved in analyzing them. Once again the directions of net migration flows are consistent for both methods. The largest single discrepancy in the volume of migration is found in Colombo, where the vital statistics method indicates a gain of 21,123 migrants to the district whereas the place of birth method

TABLE 3 Estimates of net interregional migration obtained by two methods: Sri Lanka, 1953–63

Region	Vital statistics	Place of birth
Colombo District (wet zone)	21,123	59,643
Maritime districts (wet zone)	-86,859	-40,120
<i>Kandyan</i> districts (wet zone)	-148,408	-115,668
Jaffna District (dry zone)	-14,513	-6,941
Dry zone districts	97,492	100,798

SOURCE: Based on Marga Institute (1975); reproduced in ESCAP (1976: table 31).

more than doubles that number. The estimates obtained from the place of birth method may be preferable to the vital statistics estimates because the former method involves only census enumeration errors whereas the latter method may also encompass vital registration errors. Especially important here is that only the place of birth method is capable of identifying streams of interdistrict migrants.

A comparison of Tables 2 and 3 shows that the volume of migration to the dry zone increased during the intercensal decade of 1953–63. Both estimation methods reveal that at least twice as many migrants went to the dry zone as went to Colombo. The magnitudes of the estimates derived from the two methods vary greatly when both the 1946–53 and the 1953–63 intercensal periods are considered. The vital statistics method shows that Colombo's flow of migrants during 1953–63 was almost half of that of the preceding period, whereas there was a small increase in the stream bound for the dry zone. In contrast, the place of birth method indicates that the volume of migrants settling in Colombo increased over fourfold from 1946–53 to 1953–63 and that net migration to the dry zone had less than doubled.

Both methods are in agreement in revealing that the *kandyian* districts lost the largest population during 1953–63. Since this was the period when the alienation of new land under the colonization program peaked (ESCAP, 1975), the loss of a large proportion of the *kandyian* population coinciding with the peaking of the land alienation program discloses circumstantially that the recruitment of *kandyian* peasantry was favored for resettlement in the colonization program.

Using more or less the same regional classification, Richards (1971) has also estimated that of all the migrants originating from the three declining regions of the low-country (the districts of Kalutara, Galle, Matara, and Puttalam), the hill-country (Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle, Matale, Kurunegala, Ratnapura, and Badulla), and Jaffna, just over one-third moved into Colombo District whereas almost two-thirds settled in the dry zone districts (see Map 1). Thus there appear to have developed two dominant interregional migration streams, one toward Colombo and the other toward the dry zone. The latter was the more voluminous stream during the 1953–63 intercensal decade.

An index of attraction (I.A.) for the period has been calculated by the Marga Institute (1975) and is reproduced in Table 4. Colombo was by far the most attractive single district for migrants (I.A. = 23.3),

although two-thirds of the migrants moved to the dry zone, which is composed of six districts. Anuradhapura was able to retain its second ranking during this period (I.A. = 12.0); the third and fourth places were taken by Batticaloa and Kandy, respectively.

The largest relative bilateral stream during 1953-63 was recorded from Matale to Anuradhapura. It accounted for 47.8 percent of all migrants originating from Matale. The next two largest population transfers were between Ratnapura and Colombo (46.4 percent) and between contiguous Kalutara and Colombo (43.8 percent), Colombo being the beneficiary in both instances. Colombo District had two other major gains, attracting almost one-third of the migrants from the southern maritime districts of Galle (32.9 percent) and Matara (31.1 percent). The other notable transfers of population were between four sets of contiguous districts, viz., from Puttalam to Kurunegala (33.3 percent), from Hambantota to Ratnapura (32.4 percent), from Nuwara Eliya to Kandy (30.6 percent), and from Jaffna to Vavuniya (30.4 percent).

The largest proportion of out-migrants from Colombo to settle in another district during 1953-63, one-fifth, migrated to Anuradhapura; the second largest, 19.6 percent, moved to the adjacently situated Kalutara District. Conversely, just over one-eighth of all migrants from Anuradhapura went to Colombo; the population transfer resulted in Anuradhapura gaining 2,440 people.

In the population transfer between the two dominant destinations (Colombo and the dry zone) during 1953-63, 5,593 people, or 17.1 percent of the outmigrants from the dry zone districts (including Jaffna), moved into Colombo. Conversely, 6,417 people, or 36.4 percent of out-migrants from Colombo, settled in the dry zone. In absolute numbers the population transfer resulted in an insignificant net gain of fewer than one thousand inhabitants by the dry zone districts. In relative terms, however, these figures substantiate the dominant pattern from Colombo to the dry districts during the intercensal period.

This relative differential is somewhat colored by the presence of Jaffna District in the dry zone. Jaffna is atypical of the dry zone districts in migration pattern, although it does belong agroclimatically in the dry zone. In addition, the population of Jaffna is above average in education and is definitely above average in English education, which is perhaps the single most significant positive covariant with success in securing modern-sector employment. For these reasons, I eliminated

TABLE 4 Direction and intensity of interdistrict migration: Sri Lanka,

Origin	Destination (%)							
	Co-lombo	Kalutara	Kandy	Matale	Nuwara Eliya	Galle	Matara	Hambantota
Colombo	-	19.62	3.37	0.14	-	5.00	1.17	1.21
Kalutara	43.76	-	1.40	0.82	0.29	15.21	1.99	0.87
Kandy	19.26	1.34	-	6.56	14.32	0.77	1.28	0.36
Matale	8.45	0.61	19.01	-	5.10	0.85	0.41	-
Nuwara Eliya	11.16	0.19	30.64	0.31	-	0.82	0.71	0.09
Galle	32.94	15.27	-	-	0.87	-	13.09	2.77
Matara	31.06	1.43	2.20	0.01	0.43	14.75	-	17.98
Hambantota	9.50	0.86	0.35	0.35	1.69	3.32	20.66	-
Jaffna	24.77	-	3.47	0.21	0.75	0.25	-	-
Mannar	24.13	0.58	11.96	0.51	0.83	0.87	0.18	1.16
Vavuniya	10.81	0.57	2.74	9.66	0.17	0.54	0.37	0.09
Batticaloa	19.55	2.52	6.60	1.51	1.16	1.77	0.69	-
Trincomalee	22.34	1.45	7.68	1.52	1.23	1.32	1.46	0.25
Kurunegala	22.19	1.31	6.74	3.60	3.00	0.61	0.72	0.15
Puttalam	29.24	1.75	1.88	0.22	0.55	0.68	0.29	0.33
Anuradhapura	12.95	2.34	1.94	8.37	1.42	1.69	1.78	0.32
Badulla	23.71	2.02	13.83	1.00	6.74	2.25	2.35	2.01
Ratnapura	46.36	8.08	2.35	0.06	1.38	3.11	5.99	1.10
Kegalle	27.73	3.19	12.78	1.49	1.35	1.69	0.98	0.25
Total	419.91	63.13	128.94	26.99	41.37	55.50	54.12	28.94
Index of attraction ^d	23.32	3.51	7.17	1.50	2.30	3.08	3.01	1.61

a Index of attraction is the sum of proportions arriving in a district (vertical column) divided by the proportion of the population in that district.
SOURCE: Marga Institute, *A Comparative Study of Population and Agricultural Change in Sri Lanka*

Jaffna District from the dry zone districts and performed the same calculations as with the absolute and relative population transfers between Colombo and the dry zone. The result was a sharp drop in the total emigrating population from the dry zone, from 32,704 to 19,157, during the intercensal period, and a decline in the number of in-migrants to Colombo from 5,593 to 2,237, which is more than half. The percentage migrating into Colombo dropped 5.4 percentage points to 11.7 percent. Correspondingly, the emigrant population from Colombo to the dry zone did not change substantially when Jaffna was eliminated from the dry zone; the number declined by only

1953-63

Jaffna	Mannar	Vavu-niya	Batticaloa	Trincomalee	Kurunegala	Puttalam	Anuradhapura	Badulla	Ratnapura	Kegalle
1.55	0.84	2.23	5.58	7.21	--	13.49	19.99	3.06	5.31	10.14
0.28	0.12	1.49	7.45	1.56	3.13	0.88	7.00	3.03	10.30	0.44
2.13	0.61	2.30	6.38	3.59	6.76	1.36	23.13	4.10	0.22	5.53
1.99	0.34	2.36	1.23	1.69	7.08	0.59	47.82	0.65	0.69	1.04
2.30	0.37	1.39	2.05	12.99	0.49	0.42	3.51	27.04	3.88	1.63
0.96	0.20	1.03	10.04	1.21	2.05	1.90	10.91	2.92	3.51	0.34
--	0.07	0.33	7.76	3.60	1.29	0.67	4.74	6.21	7.33	0.10
0.48	--	0.23	9.59	5.71	0.70	0.23	1.55	12.55	32.41	0.34
--	10.33	30.42	12.86	11.31	--	2.72	--	2.82	0.08	--
13.80	--	18.80	8.66	3.88	4.28	2.68	4.24	2.14	0.83	0.47
15.58	13.84	--	3.54	5.39	2.94	3.54	29.92	1.83	6.71	0.77
12.56	2.08	6.79	--	8.32	3.78	2.69	3.45	22.91	1.57	2.07
9.61	3.02	5.18	18.41	--	8.54	2.14	13.34	1.39	0.25	0.89
0.34	0.40	1.17	3.34	4.15	--	18.40	21.32	1.74	1.09	9.71
6.38	0.29	8.53	3.49	1.52	33.27	--	7.24	3.08	0.64	0.68
9.65	3.20	18.86	3.47	11.44	12.81	3.25	--	1.80	1.40	3.32
8.40	0.41	0.99	20.65	1.10	1.08	0.85	3.96	--	8.07	1.30
0.97	0.42	1.14	5.41	1.16	1.68	1.12	2.49	3.46	--	1.37
0.44	0.26	0.85	11.80	1.28	9.59	1.46	12.26	4.86	7.76	--
87.42	36.10	104.09	141.71	87.11	99.47	58.33	216.88	105.59	92.05	40.24
4.86	2.04	5.78	7.87	4.84	5.53	3.24	12.02	5.87	5.11	2.24

by the number of potential districts of origin.

Lanka, Report prepared for the ESCAP Population Division. Reproduced in ESCAP (1976:53).

273 persons, indicating only minimal migration from Colombo to Jaffna. The relative proportions migrating from Colombo to the dry zone also remained comparatively stable at 35.4 percent, but the comparison of the relative transfer of population between Colombo and the dry zone showed a remarkable differential, 11.7 to 35.4 percent. When the two dominant destinations were compared for relative share of the gross interchange, the dry zone attracted about three-quarters of the transfer (73.3 percent), whereas Colombo attracted only about one-quarter (26.7 percent). When these figures are juxtaposed with Richards's (1971) observations, it becomes evident that Colombo was

relatively more successful in attracting migrants from the three losing locations (low-country, hill-country, and Jaffna) than in attracting them directly from its competing destination, the dry zone.

The migration figures may also be examined in the light of the government's activities relating to agricultural development. The intercensal decade of 1953-63 was the peak period for opening up new land for paddy cultivation. The total cultivated area in Sri Lanka rose from 423,637 to 632,088 hectares, an increase of 49.2 percent (ESCAP, 1975:49-51); the increase in the dry zone districts was 118.2 percent, whereas the combined increase in all other districts was only 21.4 percent. (The southwestern maritime group of districts, viz., Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, and Matara, actually sustained a slight decline in land cultivated.) During the same period, the areas used for cultivating the other major agricultural crops remained relatively unaltered; tea increased by 4.2 percent, rubber declined by 14.8 percent, and coconut increased by 4.6 percent. These relative performances indicate that during the period the only noteworthy expansion was in paddy cultivation, and it was concentrated mostly in the dry zone. This shows the efficacy of the government's effort to attract almost three-quarters of the out-migrants from the gross transfer of migrants between Colombo and the dry zone as well as two-thirds of all migrants from the rest of the country.

Set against the background of the pattern of urbanization sketched elsewhere (Abeysekera, 1980), the reason for the decline in urban growth after 1953 becomes more evident from the above migration figures.

Intercensal period of 1963-71

The same pattern of migration that was observed during the two earlier periods is observed for 1963-71. The two dominant streams were distinct and Colombo continued to be the only wet zone district to have net in-migration. The number of districts increased to 22 by this period and nine districts showed net in-migration according to the intercensal net migration estimates calculated by using the vital statistics method (ESCAP, 1976:55). In descending order they were Colombo, Anuradhapura, Moneragala, Polonnaruwa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Puttalam, Batticaloa, and Mannar. Matara District was displaced by Kandy as the largest single loser of population.

Data on district of birth by district of usual residence are not

available for the 1963--71 period; consequently the type of analysis pursued for 1953--63 cannot be done. However, lifetime migration data as of 1971 are available on a 10 percent sample census tape which has been analyzed, and the data are presented later in this paper.

TRENDS IN RATES OF NATURAL INCREASE AND NET MIGRATION

Table 5 presents the rates of natural increase and rates of net migration for the last three intercensal periods. During 1946--53, before the effects of the precipitously declining crude death rate (due mainly to the arrest of malaria) were manifested, the rates of natural increase in all districts averaged about 2 percent per annum, except in Matara (2.7 percent). The maritime districts of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, and Jaffna all showed low rates of natural increase around 1.5 to 1.6 percent, while the dry zone districts as a group showed somewhat higher rates.

Net migration rates were well within 1 percent in all the districts other than those in the dry zone, which as a group had a rate of 1.2 percent. Anuradhapura District alone had a net migration rate of 2.8, which was in excess of its rate of natural increase, the single example of such an occurrence during all three intercensal periods.

The decade of 1953--63 revealed the manifestations of the second phase of the demographic transition in Sri Lanka, with stabilizing death rates and continued high rates of birth; the national rate of natural increase was 2.8 percent. The maritime districts once again were below the national average (except Matara), while the districts of the dry zone had an average rate of 3.6. The fact that the dry zone is the least developed area of the country, with its population mainly engaged in subsistence agriculture, partly accounts for this high rate of natural increase.

During the decade the net in-migration rates of the dry zone districts dropped below the 1 percent level, although those of Vavuniya (3.0), Anuradhapura (1.8), and Batticaloa (1.6) continued to be high. In contrast, Matara District experienced a net out-migration rate of 1 percent while all the other districts increased their rates of out-migration. Matale, Kurunegala, and Puttalam became out-migration districts during this period as against their in-migration status during 1946--53. The rate of in-migration in Colombo District dwindled to 1.3 during 1953--63 from 2.6 per 1,000 in 1946--53.

TABLE 5 Intercensal rates of natural increase and net migration per thousand: Sri Lanka, 1946-71

District	Natural increase			Net migration		
	1946-53	1953-63	1963-71	1946-53	1953-63	1963-71
Colombo	15.7	24.3	17.4	2.6	1.3	1.7
Kalutara	15.4	22.0	15.8	-1.7	-3.3	-1.1
Galle	16.3	23.5	16.4	-3.1	-3.3	-2.5
Matara	27.4	32.0	21.3	-5.6	-10.0	-8.0
Kandy	20.1	28.2	19.4	-3.4	-6.5	-6.5
Nuwara Eliya	20.4	25.7	17.6	-1.1	-4.7	-4.6
Kegalle	19.4	25.5	16.3	-3.3	-5.1	-4.3
Matale	21.5	32.3	22.6	4.1	-8.3	-1.4
Kurunegala	21.4	32.7	20.7	4.2	-1.7	-2.1
Ratnapura	20.5	27.0	19.3	-0.3	-1.1	-0.1
Puttalam	19.8	27.6	21.4	0.3	-0.4	1.2
Badulla	20.6	32.5	23.2	2.1	1.3	-2.2
Jaffna	16.4	24.3	19.9	-1.7	-2.3	-6.0
Hambantota	22.8	37.2	22.1	1.9	-1.1	-0.4
Mannar	17.2	31.2	22.9	15.5	0.9	2.8
Vavuniya	23.9	38.6	25.5	17.6	29.7	7.3
Batticaloa	17.7	35.1	25.8	11.0	6.2	0.4
Trincomalee	15.6	35.0	26.2	-5.6	15.7	6.1
Anuradhapura	22.1	37.1	24.9	28.1	17.6	8.8
Sri Lanka	18.6	28.0	19.7	-	-	-

SOURCE: Computed from ESCAP (1975: tables 30, 31, 32).

By the third intercensal period, the transition was on its way to its "final" phase of declining birth rates. The national rate of natural increase was 2 percent per annum and there was a general trend toward convergence of the rate of natural increase among the districts. The range was between 1.6 and 2.6, in contrast to the range of 2.2 to 3.9 during 1953-63. The dry zone districts still maintained a rate of natural increase above that of the nation; that of the maritime districts was generally below it.

Colombo District had increased its rate of net in-migration to 1.7 per 1,000. In all districts, the net migration rate had either declined or stabilized during 1963-71; the occasional extreme rate observed during the preceding period was not evidenced. Jaffna is perhaps the only

district that had a marked increase in its net out-migration rate, from 2.3 to 6.0 per 1,000.

The general stabilization of net migration rates was possibly due to the slowing down of the colonization program. In comparison with the 143,847 hectares of new land cultivated during 1953-63, only 35,640 additional hectares were cultivated during 1963-71 (ESCAP, 1975: 49). The slowing down of the colonization program may have also had some effect on the increase in the rate of in-migration to Colombo.

AGE AND SEX RATIOS OF MIGRANTS

In Table 6, the sex ratios of lifetime migrants, of natives residing in their districts of birth, and of the total Sri Lanka-born population for 1946, 1953, and 1963 are presented. The sex ratios of natives resident in their districts of birth were closest to "normalcy." Over the years there was a secular decline in the sex ratios of all three groups, possibly due to the relatively higher gain in life expectancy by females. Sri Lanka did exhibit the so-called South Asian pattern of life expectancy (in contrast to the more dominant pattern) wherein males on the average outlive females (El Badry, 1969). The Sri Lanka-born population, which included the lifetime migrants, had a slightly higher sex ratio than the natives and at each time the lifetime migrants were mostly male. However, the sex ratio of the migrants too had declined sharply, from 145 to 130, over the 17-year period; the decline reflected the increasing participation of females in the migratory process as well as, perhaps, the increasing dominance of the dry zone-ward movement that was mainly a familial type of migration. The latter becomes more

TABLE 6 Sex ratios of lifetime migrants, nonmigrants, and Sri Lanka-born population: Sri Lanka, 1946-63

Population	1946	1953	1963
All lifetime migrants	145	139	130
Lifetime migrants in urban areas	u	u	159
Lifetime migrants in rural areas	u	u	120
Nonmigrants	105	104	103
Sri Lanka-born population	109	108	107

u—unavailable.

SOURCES: Department of Census and Statistics (1951: table 42; 1958: table 10; 1967: table 12).

evident when the sex ratios of migrants destined for urban and rural locations are examined separately. In 1963, for which lifetime figures are available, urban-ward migrants had a sex ratio of 159 whereas migrants in the rural areas had a sex ratio of 120.

Table 7 presents the percentage of lifetime migrants in each age group and their sex ratios by rural and urban area in 1963. Lifetime migration peaked among the 25-29 age group and there was almost a monotonic decline among the older age groups. Nationally, 24 percent of the 25-29 age group were lifetime migrants, 35.9 percent in urban areas and 21 percent in rural areas. Since the data do not represent the age structure of the migrants at the time of migration but rather at the time of the 1963 census, they do not necessarily reaffirm the occurrence of high migration among the young adults. Conversely, if it is accepted that migrants were mostly young adults at the time of migration, the 1963 census data would tend to suggest that migration

TABLE 7 Percentage distribution and sex ratios of lifetime migrants by five-year age groups: Sri Lanka, 1963

Age group	Percentage			Sex ratios		
	Sri Lanka	Urban areas	Rural areas	Sri Lanka	Urban areas	Rural areas
0-4	7.8	8.9	7.5	104	103	104
5-9	9.0	11.8	8.5	102	97	104
10-14	11.6	16.3	10.5	119	126	117
15-19	15.1	23.2	13.1	132	173	117
20-24	21.4	32.9	18.3	128	198	105
25-29	24.0	35.9	21.0	127	186	108
30-34	23.5	34.5	20.7	137	183	122
35-39	22.4	32.3	20.2	133	168	122
40-44	22.1	31.2	19.8	147	181	135
45-49	21.6	30.0	19.5	158	165	155
50-54	20.1	28.4	18.0	162	173	159
55-59	19.6	28.3	17.4	169	172	168
60-64	17.7	26.9	16.2	166	152	173
65-69	16.9	24.9	14.9	157	126	173
70-74	15.6	23.8	13.8	115	111	117
75+	14.9	23.9	13.1	120	105	126
All ages	15.8	23.4	14.0	130	159	120

SOURCE: Computed from Department of Census and Statistics (1967: table 12).

in both urban and rural areas was a current phenomenon because there was a peaking of migrants in the 25--29 age group. This selectivity seems to have been accentuated in the urban areas.

Sex ratios of lifetime migrants also show a pattern of high male proportions among young adults and the middle aged. In general, the sex ratio of migrants was higher in urban areas than in rural areas within each age group. Sex ratios of urban and rural migrants were nearly identical at the youngest ages (0--9 years); from there onward, the difference increased, peaking in the 20--24 age group, and retained a substantial difference until the age group of 40--44. Then there was an unmistakable convergence between the migrants in the urban and rural areas in the older ages.

LIFETIME MIGRATION, 1946 AND 1953

Tables 8 and 9 provide information on lifetime migration by rural and urban districts of Sri Lanka in 1946 and 1953, respectively. At both national and district levels in both years, the rural-born population was less mobile than the urban-born (Department of Census and Statistics, 1951: tables 14, 15; 1958: tables 3, 8, 9, 10). Both the rural- and the urban-born populations increased their proportion of lifetime migrants during the seven-year intercensal period, from 10.0 to 12.3 percent in the case of the rural-born and from 34.0 to 37.9 percent among the urban-born. In absolute numbers, there were more than twice as many rural-born as urban-born migrants at both times; the increase was 35.9 percent among the rural-born and 32.8 percent among the urban-born.

It is not possible to determine the urban/rural nature of the destination of the rural-born migrants at both time points from the published census data; it is possible, however, to do so for the urban-born migrants (see Tables 8 and 9). In 1946, 39.2 percent of all urban-born migrants were residing (enumerated) in other urban districts, but 54.2 percent were living in rural districts (the latter possibly including those who had migrated to rural areas of the same district of birth). The deficit of 6.6 percent represented people who were residing in other urban localities of the same district. Except for Trincomalee District and the two southern maritime districts of Galle and Matara, which had experienced massive out-migration, the observed national pattern of migration is found in all districts including Colombo, containing the capital city. This pattern points to a dominant stream of urban-to-

TABLE 8 Percentage distribution of rural/urban destinations of urban-born lifetime migrants by district: Sri Lanka, 1946

District of birth	Urban-born in district	Destination	
		Urban district	Rural district
Colombo	29.5	30.3	59.8
Kalutara	26.3	38.3	58.4
Kandy	41.0	31.5	59.3
Matale	22.7	33.4	66.6
Nuwara Eliya	31.4	29.3	70.7
Galle	73.5	78.2	21.3
Matara	24.9	49.1	48.9
Hambantota	27.7	26.4	71.5
Jaffna	16.8	46.1	53.9
Mannar ^a	na	na	na
Vavuniya ^a	na	na	na
Batticaloa	25.7	46.9	53.1
Trincomalee	17.5	51.7	48.3
Kurunegala	67.1	8.2	91.6
Puttalam ^b	26.6	19.1	80.9
Anuradhapura	36.0	20.7	79.3
Badulla	43.5	22.2	76.6
Ratnapura	30.3	29.5	69.4
Kegalle	52.8	24.5	75.5
Sri Lanka	34.0	39.2	54.2

NOTE: The difference between 100 percent and the sum of those migrating to urban and rural districts represents those who migrated to other urban localities in the district of birth.

na--not applicable.

a Did not have an urban area within its boundaries.

b Includes Chilaw District.

SOURCE: Computed from Department of Census and Statistics (1951: tables 14, 15).

rural movement in Sri Lanka, even prior to the conquest of malaria and the consequent habitability of the dry zone. The difference between the sum of the proportions to the urban and rural destination and 100 percent constitutes those who migrated to other urban areas within the same district of birth.

By 1953, migrants born in urban areas were decisively migrating to rural rather than to urban destinations. Of all urban-born migrants

TABLE 9 Percentage distribution of rural/urban destinations of urban-born lifetime migrants by district: Sri Lanka, 1953

District of birth	Urban-born in district	Destination	
		Urban district	Rural district
Colombo	37.0	10.5	68.6
Kalutara	35.9	27.2	70.2
Kandy	53.9	17.8	77.7
Matale	28.7	25.3	74.7
Nuwara Eliya	60.5	10.8	88.5
Galle	37.4	41.3	57.8
Matara	31.6	35.6	60.2
Hambantota	36.2	21.8	76.9
Jaffna	17.0	39.6	60.4
Mannar ^a	na	na	na
Vavuniya ^a	na	na	na
Batticaloa	24.4	36.7	63.3
Trincomalee	16.1	35.7	64.3
Kurunegala	63.8	8.3	91.3
Puttalam ^b	36.0	9.0	91.0
Anuradhapura	40.7	8.6	91.4
Badulla	52.4	19.3	79.0
Ratnapura	37.5	18.7	83.7
Kegalle	75.1	10.2	89.8
Sri Lanka	37.9	17.3	71.6

NOTE: The difference between 100 percent and the sum of those migrating to urban and rural districts represents those who migrated to other urban localities in the district of birth.

na—not applicable.

a Did not have an urban area within its boundaries.

b Includes Chilaw District.

SOURCE: Computed from Department of Census and Statistics (1958: tables 3, 8, 9, 10).

only 17.3 percent had migrated to other urban districts, whereas 71.6 percent had migrated to rural districts, including rural areas of the same district of birth. The proportion of urban-born living in other urban areas of the district of birth had increased to 11.1 percent. Within each district, the pattern is more decisively in favor of rural destinations; and even Galle, Matara, and Trincomalee were now conforming to the pattern.

LIFETIME MIGRATION, 1971

A 10 percent sample census tape of the 1971 Census of Sri Lanka was obtained from the Department of Census and Statistics. The discussion in this section is based on the tables derived from these data.

Nadarajah (1976:174-81) provides a concise description of the sampling design as follows:

In order to reduce the work load of the enumerators and keep costs down, it was decided to limit some of the questions to a sample only. Two alternative designs were possible for sampling: (1) a sample of households in each census block, or (2) a sample of census blocks with complete coverage of all the households within the sample blocks.

The advantage of the latter design is that only the enumerators working in the census blocks included in the sample would be concerned with the additional topics covered in the sample; these enumerators could be trained more intensively. Furthermore, the selection of sample blocks could be done by the office with strict control, whereas a selection of a sample of households within a census block would have to have been done by the enumerators themselves. This procedure could have led to biases in selection. Therefore, even though the first design provided a less efficient sample, the second design was adopted. Each of the 22 districts was divided into three strata: urban, rural, and estate. In each stratum a 10 percent sample of census blocks was selected systematically.

It was in this 10 percent sample that the four items of information pertaining to migration and the questions on fertility (i.e., questions 20 through 23 of the F 11 census schedule appearing as Appendix 1) were included. The information on migration included district of birth, district of usual residence, duration of stay at usual residence, and district of previous residence for those who had not been living at their usual residence since birth. Using these four items of information, I divided the sample into lifetime categories of nonmigrants, "one-time" (primary) migrants, "two-or-more-times" (repeat) migrants, and return migrants by using a selection process (shown in Appendix 2). In addition to these migrant types, I evolved five more categories in the process of isolating the migrant types. They were the foreign-born, "illogical" cases, within-district migrants, "uncertain" migrants, and cases for whom data were missing so that they were not classifiable into any of the above categories. The categories are defined as follows:

Nonmigrants. Persons born in Sri Lanka in a particular district who lived in the district since birth and had not moved out of their village or town of birth.

Primary migrants. Sri Lanka-born persons who moved across

district boundaries only once; i.e., all persons whose district of birth was the same as their previous residence (as reported at the time of the census) but whose district of usual residence was neither their district of birth nor their district of previous residence.

Repeat migrants. Sri Lanka-born persons who moved at least twice across district boundaries for residential purposes; i.e., all persons whose district of previous residence differed from their district of birth and also whose district of usual residence in 1971 differed from both their district of birth and their district of previous residence.

Return migrants. Sri Lanka-born persons who came to reside in their district of birth after having moved out of it at an earlier date for residential purposes; in other words, all persons whose district of birth was the same as their district of usual residence but whose district of previous residence was neither their district of birth nor the district of usual residence.

Within-district migrants. Sri Lanka-born persons who did not live in any district other than the one in which they were born but did live in different villages or towns of the same district of birth.

Foreign-born. Persons who were not born in Sri Lanka but were living in Sri Lanka at the time of the 1971 Census.

"Uncertain" migrants. Persons born in Sri Lanka who qualified as migrants by having moved out of at least one district but for whom adequate information was lacking for classifying them into any of the five above categories.

"Illogical" cases. Sri Lanka-born persons whose data on the four items of information regarding migration status did not represent a logically acceptable and meaningful pattern of response. (Three such possible instances are represented in Appendix 2.)

Cases with missing data. Sri Lanka-born persons who could not be classified into any of the eight categories above owing to lack of data; the majority of these cases did not have even the district of birth which provided the point of departure for this classification.

Table 10 presents the number and percentage distribution of the 1,237,087 cases contained in the 10 percent sample of the 1971 national census, according to the nine categories defined above. Generalizations about migrant types are difficult because of a considerable number of missing cases and "illogical" ones. One in every 11 cases (9.05 percent) of the sample is an unidentifiable case. Of the population definitely born in Sri Lanka (i.e., excluding the foreign-born), the

TABLE 10 Number and percentage of migrant categories estimated from 10 percent sample census tape: Sri Lanka, 1971

Migrant category	Number	Percent
Repeat migrants	13,382	1.1
Return migrants	10,210	0.8
Primary migrants	125,320	10.1
Within-district migrants	121,494	9.8
"Uncertain" migrants	52,885	4.3
Cases for whom data were missing	96,551	7.8
Foreign born	15,667	1.3
"Illogical" cases	15,440	1.3
Nonmigrants	786,138	63.6
Total 10 percent sample	1,237,087	100.0

missing and "illogical" cases comprise 9.2 percent. If one assumes that the missing and "illogical" cases were distributed pro rata as per the existing distribution, then a total of 18,255 migrants (primary, repeat, return, and "uncertain") are missing from the analysis; similarly, 10,975 within-district migrants and 71,117 nonmigrants are missing from the sample. Although it is possible to allocate these missing cases randomly on a pro rata basis, I refrained from resorting to this procedure because I was more interested in ascertaining whether there were any substantial differences between the definitely identifiable migrant types, rather than making a case for generalization. Thus, in interpreting these results from the sample census tapes, one should avoid attaching too much weight to these results, in view of the data deficiencies.

Table 11 presents the relative strength and direction of interregional migration flows as estimated by district of birth by district of usual residence data. The totality of migrants in this table was obtained by pooling the primary, repeat, and "uncertain" migrants. Return migrants were not included because in a simple cross-classification of the place of birth by the place of usual residence, the return migrants would be counted as nonmigrants. As a safety measure, only cases in this pool whose district of birth was not the same as their district of usual residence were taken into the sample. Consequently, just under one-half of the "uncertain" migrants (22,749 or 43 percent) failed to enter the sampled pool of migrants. Either the district of birth or

TABLE 11 Direction and intensity of interregional lifetime migration in Sri Lanka: 1971

Region of birth	Region of residence (%)					Share of out-migrants
	Colombo District	Maritime districts	<i>Kandyan</i> districts	Jaffna District	Dry zone districts	
Colombo District (wet zone)	—	33.4	46.6	1.2	18.7	19.4
Maritime districts (wet zone)	47.2	—	31.4	0.4	21.0	31.7
<i>Kandyan</i> districts (wet zone)	38.2	18.2	—	1.6	42.0	36.1
Jaffna District (dry zone)	37.5	2.9	14.5	—	45.1	6.6
Dry zone districts	24.7	23.3	44.7	7.3	—	6.2
Share of in-migrants	32.8	14.7	22.7	1.4	28.5	100.0
Number ^a						114,213
Index of attraction	36.9	19.5	34.3	2.6	31.7	na
Net gain/loss of migrants	15,214	-19,446	-15,285	-5,944	25,461	na
“Retentive attractiveness” index ^b	.26	-.37	-.23	-.65	.64	na

na-- not applicable.

a Refers to 10 percent of the national population.

b Net gain/loss divided by sum of in- and out-migrants.

the district of usual residence data were missing for 5.6 percent of a total of 168,838 migrants.

The wet zone districts (i.e., Colombo, maritime districts, and *kandyan* districts) accounted for 87.2 percent of the gross pool of interregional migrants (last column of Table 11), while the dry zone (consisting of eight districts) in contrast contributed only 6.2 percent. Both the *kandyan* districts and the maritime districts were by far the major suppliers to the gross pool of migrants. However, when the more specific regional contributions are examined, it becomes evident that there was a marked difference in the proportionate share of each of these two streams to the two major areas of attraction, viz., Colombo and the dry zone. Whereas the maritime stream sent to Colombo more than twice the proportion it sent to the dry zone, the *kandyan* districts sent more migrants to the dry zone (42.0 percent) than to Colombo (38.2 percent). As mentioned earlier, the maritime districts, being more exposed to Western influences and the inhabitants being generally better educated, tended to oversupply the most developed region of the country, which is Colombo. The *kandyan* peasantry, being the least exposed to Western influence and subjected to extreme hardship through land expropriation originating in 1840 (see Sri Lanka, 1951; Abeysekera, 1979), were favored in the colonization schemes of the dry zone. This speculation is borne out by the data presented in Table 11.

Colombo was the most popular location, with 32.8 percent of the migrants settling there. The dry zone was the next most attractive region, comprising 28.8 percent of the migrants. The eight *kandyan* districts, though losing the most population, were nevertheless capable of attracting just over one-fifth (22.7 percent) of the migrants, possibly because they benefited to some degree through Village Expansion Schemes (see Abeysekera, 1979). The highest index of attraction, as might be expected, was still maintained by Colombo, but surprisingly the *kandyan* districts revealed the second highest magnitude even though they sustained a net deficit of -15,285 lifetime migrants. However, when a separate index of "retentive attractiveness" (i.e., net gain or loss divided by the gross migrant turnover which is the sum of in- and out-migrants) is computed, the dry zone is found to have been the most capable of retaining migrants (0.64), much more so than Colombo (0.26), the only other region to show positive retentive

capacities. Jaffna was the least capable of "retaining" migrants, followed by the maritime districts and the *kandyān* districts.

On a district-by-district basis, the sizeable population transfers in favor of Colombo show up unmistakably in the index of attraction computed and presented in Table 12. Colombo was once again, by far, the most attractive district of destination (I.A. = 22.9) for all migrants originating from other districts, maintaining almost the same attractiveness that it displayed during 1953-63. With Anuradhapura having been split into two, the index of attraction of the reduced Anuradhapura District dwindled to 6.9; but if both Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa are considered as one unit, it still ranked as the second most attractive destination, with an index of 10.6. The index of attraction indicates that one out of every five migrants in the country (21.9 percent) would be attracted to Colombo; one out of every ten migrants would reach the combined Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa Districts. Considering the dry zone now encompassing eight districts (though corresponding to the same geographic area covered by the six districts that existed during 1953-63), approximately three out of every ten migrants (29.5 percent) would be attracted to it.

It is also illuminating to compare Colombo with the dry zone in attracting each other's migrants. The 1971 lifetime migration figures reveal that the dry zone exerted a slightly greater pull on the migrants originating from Colombo than vice versa; but the difference in the relative proportions was hardly noteworthy, 16.5 versus 18.7 percent. When these figures are compared with the figures for the intercensal decade of 1953-63, however, Colombo appears to have had a much better position than the dry zone over the longer time span. It attracted more from the dry zone (11.7 percent during 1953-63) and it lost just over half the proportionate share that it lost during 1953-63 (35.4 percent).

In identifying Colombo District and the dry zone districts as the two major destinations of migrants in Sri Lanka during the past four decades, I am not simply differentiating the two streams by geographic area. Colombo is the most urban district in Sri Lanka and this fact affects the nature of migrants who go there. In other words, it is the migrants to urban Colombo who typify this stream rather than migrants to both rural and urban Colombo. Similarly, in the case of the dry zone, it is the rural dry zone that typifies the migration stream.

TABLE 12 Direction and intensity of lifetime migration: Sri Lanka,

District of birth	District of usual residence (%)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1 Colombo	—	14.6	7.5	2.0	1.7	4.4	2.2	0.7
2 Kalutara	47.2	—	3.8	1.5	0.7	11.6	2.3	0.6
3 Kandy	20.7	2.1	—	14.6	11.7	1.2	1.3	0.3
4 Matale	11.8	1.0	27.6	—	3.7	1.2	0.4	0.1
5 Nuwara Eliya	14.0	0.9	33.7	3.3	—	1.0	1.3	0.3
6 Galle	42.9	11.7	5.3	1.2	1.3	—	9.7	2.3
7 Matara	32.0	3.5	4.4	0.8	1.0	10.6	—	18.9
8 Hambantota	16.1	1.9	1.8	0.2	0.4	4.2	28.0	—
9 Jaffna	37.5	0.6	5.2	0.9	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.5
10 Mannar	26.7	1.3	6.0	1.2	2.8	2.2	1.2	1.8
11 Vavuniya	8.4	2.0	1.7	0.8	0.3	1.4	0.6	0.0
12 Batticaloa	11.1	1.1	2.4	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.6
13 Amparai	13.5	4.4	3.3	0.6	0.6	2.5	2.1	2.9
14 Trincomalee	23.5	3.2	4.8	1.1	3.1	1.7	0.7	0.7
15 Kurunegala	23.9	1.6	6.8	6.7	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.3
16 Puttalam	32.5	3.1	1.3	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2
17 Anuradhapura	18.7	3.3	9.0	6.6	1.4	3.0	1.0	0.4
18 Polonnaruwa	13.5	2.7	10.2	7.6	2.1	1.3	1.0	2.0
19 Badulla	17.5	2.5	10.7	1.2	11.2	1.8	2.2	1.1
20 Monaragala	14.8	1.2	4.7	0.5	2.1	3.6	5.6	9.3
21 Ratnapura	31.1	10.5	5.8	1.0	1.9	3.4	11.3	2.6
22 Kegalle	24.3	2.6	13.8	2.2	1.4	1.3	1.2	0.7
Index of attraction	22.9	3.6	8.1	2.6	2.4	2.8	3.5	2.2

Each district in Sri Lanka has both an urban and a rural component. Assuming that migrants in the two migrant streams are resettling themselves in search of a life style distinguishably different from one another, this aspect can be captured in its most undiluted form if the analysis is pursued with the migrant destinations defined as urban Colombo and the rural dry zone, within the limitations of the information contained in the census tapes. To represent the whole country and not be concerned with only these two destinations, two other residual destinations have been created; they are the “other urban” (consisting of all the urban areas of the country that lie outside of Colombo District), and the “other rural” (consisting of all rural areas except those within the eight districts of the dry zone).

1971

(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)
1.2	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.6	2.5	18.6	12.2	8.3	3.4	2.5	0.9	5.7	7.8
0.4	0.2	1.3	0.3	1.2	0.6	3.8	2.2	2.7	1.5	1.2	1.3	12.5	3.2
1.4	0.6	2.1	0.4	2.9	2.1	7.0	0.8	8.0	6.5	5.6	0.8	2.5	7.5
1.6	0.3	2.1	0.4	1.0	2.2	8.0	0.8	15.4	17.3	1.2	0.6	0.9	2.4
0.9	0.4	1.6	0.4	3.4	8.0	1.6	0.4	1.7	7.6	14.3	0.7	2.1	2.4
0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	2.2	1.4	3.1	1.0	3.8	1.9	2.8	1.6	4.8	2.0
0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	4.3	1.9	1.8	0.6	3.5	1.2	1.7	3.1	8.7	1.0
0.3	0.0	0.2	0.2	2.9	1.2	0.8	0.5	1.5	0.6	0.7	13.7	24.3	0.4
--	8.1	17.8	3.9	1.8	10.5	2.3	1.1	2.4	0.3	2.3	0.2	1.5	0.8
12.8	--	16.4	1.7	2.9	3.6	5.3	0.9	7.3	0.8	1.8	0.4	2.1	1.0
23.2	17.9	--	1.1	0.6	10.1	2.8	2.0	24.0	0.0	0.6	0.3	2.2	0.3
8.5	4.0	5.4	--	15.5	29.3	1.3	0.7	3.2	8.0	2.1	2.5	0.9	0.3
1.2	1.4	1.5	26.3	--	8.5	2.3	0.6	0.8	10.1	1.9	5.8	6.0	3.7
9.6	2.3	4.6	12.9	5.9	--	2.7	0.8	15.2	2.7	1.5	0.2	1.7	0.9
0.5	0.5	0.8	0.2	1.4	1.8	--	21.4	14.8	6.3	0.8	0.6	1.1	8.8
0.5	0.7	1.3	1.2	0.7	1.3	46.7	--	5.0	1.6	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.6
2.8	2.3	10.3	0.8	1.6	6.8	15.3	3.9	--	6.7	0.7	1.2	1.2	2.8
1.3	0.8	5.8	6.8	2.4	3.5	8.0	1.3	18.2	--	0.7	3.5	1.1	6.2
0.8	0.5	0.6	1.5	6.9	1.2	2.0	0.3	1.4	1.2	--	27.7	5.7	2.0
0.8	0.8	0.0	0.6	21.9	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.6	2.1	24.0	--	4.3	1.2
0.6	0.3	1.1	0.2	3.0	0.4	2.2	0.8	1.5	0.9	4.8	2.6	--	13.8
0.4	0.2	1.2	0.2	5.9	0.9	15.3	0.9	6.6	10.1	1.3	1.5	12.8	--
3.3	2.0	3.6	2.9	4.3	4.7	7.2	2.5	6.9	4.3	3.5	3.3	4.9	3.3

In relative population concentration, three of these four spatial units have comparable strength; as of 1971, urban Colombo contained 11.6 percent of the national population, the rural dry zone possessed 11.7 percent, and the "other urban" areas accounted for 10.8 percent (ESCAP, 1976:69). The "other rural" areas contained almost two-thirds of the national population (65.9 percent). Within the subsector of urban Sri Lanka, urban Colombo had just over one-half of the population (51.7 percent), while the rural dry zone had only 15.1 percent of rural Sri Lanka within its boundaries; the "other rural" areas possessed an overwhelming 84.9 percent.

Table 13 provides a percentage analysis of district of birth by destination to these four mutually exclusive spatial units as obtained from

TABLE 13 Percentage distribution of lifetime migrant streams to selected destinations by district of origin: Sri Lanka, 1971

District of origin	Urban Colombo	Rural dry zone	Other urban	Other rural	Share of migrants
Colombo	0.0	13.6	23.4	63.0	14.0
Kalutara	29.9	5.8	10.4	53.8	6.8
Kandy	16.0	18.2	12.3	53.4	14.0
Matale	8.9	34.5	11.9	44.7	3.4
Nuwara Eliya	11.1	21.1	11.0	56.8	5.7
Galle	33.9	7.4	14.2	44.6	8.8
Matara	25.4	9.7	13.0	52.0	9.4
Hambantota	12.4	5.6	7.4	74.6	2.1
Jaffna	36.1	24.9	28.9	10.1	4.7
Mannar	16.7	18.7	25.5	39.1	0.5
Vavuniya	6.1	34.9	33.8	25.1	0.2
Batticaloa	10.2	45.4	30.7	13.7	1.2
Amparai	9.1	34.4	21.5	35.0	0.3
Trincomalee	19.5	30.5	25.5	24.5	0.5
Kurunegala	10.6	22.7	8.1	58.6	6.5
Puttalam	20.4	9.6	6.7	63.4	2.3
Anuradhapura	9.6	24.1	13.2	53.0	1.3
Polonnaruwa	7.1	32.6	10.7	49.6	0.4
Badulla	12.9	11.5	10.8	64.8	4.9
Monaragala	8.4	26.2	10.4	55.0	0.5
Ratnapura	19.3	6.1	9.0	65.5	4.5
Kegalle	12.9	22.6	7.9	56.6	7.9
All migrants	16.8	16.0	14.0	53.2	100.0
Number					159,069

the 1971 census tapes. If, for analytical purposes, one assumes that the capacity to attract migrants is a function of population size, then one discovers that urban Colombo, the rural dry zone, and other urban areas gained at the expense of other rural areas; in this model, urban Colombo revealed the highest relative gain (44.8 percent), followed by the rural dry zone (36.8 percent) and other urban areas (29.6 percent). The relative loss of the other rural areas was 19.3 percent.

The district contributions to the gross national pool of migrants present some interesting observations. The maritime districts situated in the southwestern quadrangle of Sri Lanka (Colombo, Kalutara,

Galle, and Matara) accounted for 39 percent of all lifetime migrants. The hill-country districts situated within the wet zone (Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, and Kegalle) contributed 27.6 percent; the districts lying in both the wet and dry zones (as depicted in Map 1) accounted for 20 percent, and Jaffna District's share was 6.5 percent. All 12 districts that experienced net in-migration, as indicated by 1971 lifetime migration data, accounted for 36.5 percent of all migrants; of this proportion, however, Colombo contributed 14 percent. In other words, 11 of the net in-migration districts, which consisted mainly of the dry zone districts, contributed less than one-quarter (22.5 percent) of the gross national pool of lifetime migrants. The ten net out-migration districts accounted for a voluminous 63.5 percent.

Because a district's contribution to the national pool of migrants is a function of its population size, I examined the relative contribution of the in- and out-migration districts to the migrant pool; whereas the relative contribution of all in-migration districts was 8.2 percent of the total population of 1971, the ten lifetime out-migration districts' share was considerably higher, 18.1 percent. This observation lends credence to the expected behavior of in- and out-migration districts, that the out-migration districts shoulder a disproportionately larger share of the gross national pool of migrants. Although the relative difference between the two contributions was great, one must be cautious in giving too much weight to these figures because of the large number of missing cases. The direction and not the exact proportions should form the basis of the generalizations to be drawn from this observation.

In examining the rural/urban nature of the destinations of the migrant streams originating from each district, I found that only one district, Jaffna, directed more than one-half (65 percent) of all its migrants to urban destinations (i.e., either to urban Colombo or to other urban areas); of these migrants, 36.1 percent went to urban Colombo and 28.9 percent went to other urban locations. Galle and Trincomalee came closest to Jaffna's performance with just under one-half of urbanward migrants, 48 and 45 percent, respectively. Colombo District, devoid of one major urban destination (urban Colombo) sent less than one-quarter of its migrants (23.4 percent) to other urban locations. Polonnaruwa, situated in the heart of the dry zone, sent the smallest proportion (17.8 percent) of its migrants to urban areas.

Of the 21 districts that could and have been sending migrants to urban Colombo and other urban locations, nine (Matale, Mannar,

Vavuniya, Batticaloa, Amparai, Trincomalee, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, and Monaragala) sent relatively more migrants to other urban places than to urban Colombo. Except for Matale and Monaragala, these districts are in the dry zone; Monaragala is an ambiguous case because it is situated on the borders of both zones and has had its topography and economy affected by the government's land development program. Only 9.7 percent of all migrants originating from these nine districts reached urban Colombo; 17.7 percent settled in other urban locations. When the base of computation is reduced to all urban-bound migrants from these districts, the proportion heading for urban Colombo was 35.4 percent, compared with 64.6 percent going to other urban places. Expressed as a "population at risk" of migrating to urban places in the country, only 55 migrants went to urban Colombo whereas 100 of them migrated to other urban locations. Thus, at least among these nine districts, the majority of which are situated in the dry zone, almost two-thirds of the urban-bound migrants moved to other urban localities outside Colombo District. Perhaps the rural nature of most of these districts of origin coupled with the relatively long distance to Colombo may have discouraged many migrants from undertaking a journey directly to Colombo.

Urban Colombo received the overwhelming majority of migrants from the remaining 12 districts, and these, as mentioned earlier, are the bulk suppliers to the national migrant pool. However, it is important to emphasize that this assessment of lifetime migration data of 1971 complements documentation of the growth of small towns in Sri Lanka (Abeysekera, 1980). Analysis of lifetime migration figures does add credence to the picture of decentralized urbanization that has developed nationally, especially in postindependent Sri Lanka: these data support the conclusion that the mushrooming of urban localities in the country was not a mere artifact resulting from ministerial decree, but rather the result of actual migration. This migration partly relieved the "misery" that urban Colombo would have suffered if the only alternative was to absorb all of the urban-bound migrants.

Table 14 reveals the age-sex structure of the four migration streams, all lifetime migrants, and nonmigrants in Sri Lanka. The highest proportions of males and females are found in the 20-24 age group, with two exceptions—among females in the "other rural" group and among nonmigrants, where the highest proportion was in the adjacent older age group of 25-29. Once again, the single most consistent behavior

pattern of migrants on a cross-cultural scale appears to be substantiated in Sri Lanka, irrespective of the place of destination of the migrant stream: Migrants tend to be young adults (Thomas, 1938; Brown-ing, 1971). However, the age data for Sri Lanka do not necessarily reflect age at migration. In practically every destination and for both sexes, there is an almost monotonic rise from the youngest age group to the modal age group of 20-24, and then an equally monotonic decline into the older ages.

Two measures of variability are presented in the last two rows of Table 14, the standard deviation and the index of dissimilarity. For each destination the greatest variability among male migrant groups was among the urban Colombo-destined migrants (s.d. = 4.4) and the least was among those who settled in other rural areas (s.d. = 1.7). The other urban-bound male migrants showed less variability than their rural dry zone-bound counterparts. In the case of female migrants, the range of variability was less than among the males, standard deviation ranging between 3.3 and 2.6; in contrast, the rural dry zone-bound females showed the greatest variability, closely followed by those reaching urban Colombo.

The index of dissimilarity, which indicates what proportion of sex-destination specific "cases" have to be redistributed to achieve the "standard" distribution, reveals that, among males, urban Colombo was least like the national pool (i.d. = 10.5) but the other urban were closest to it (i.d. = 3.9). The variability of the index was less among females (from 5.7 to 3.9), but females in other urban areas differed most from the national pool of female migrants.

The sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) was highest for the urban Colombo-bound migrant stream (152) and most "normal" for the migrants in other rural areas (99). Examining the sex ratios of the other two destinations, however, one discovers that a relative bias toward "normalcy" was not synonymous with a rural destination; migrants in other urban localities had a lower sex ratio (126) than did those in the rural dry zone (139).

Among urban Colombo migrants, the highest sex ratio was in the age group of 20-24, which had the largest proportion of migrants. Though there is minute irregularity in a monotonic rise and decline on either side of the 20-24 age group peak, migrants in urban Colombo show a much smoother distribution of the age-by-sex ratio curve than does any other group of migrants (Figure 1).

TABLE 14 Sex ratios and percentage distributions of selected lifetime

Age group	Lifetime migrants							
	Urban Colombo			Rural dry zone			Other urban	
	Male	Fe- male	Sex ratio	Male	Fe- male	Sex ratio	Male	Fe- male
0-4	1.9	2.7	107	3.2	4.6	97	4.1	4.9
5-9	3.0	4.7	97	4.8	6.9	97	6.6	7.9
10-14	6.0	7.8	117	6.9	8.0	120	9.4	10.2
15-19	10.3	9.5	165	9.3	9.9	131	11.2	11.0
20-24	16.8	12.6	203	13.9	13.9	139	12.4	11.5
25-29	14.2	11.9	181	12.4	13.0	133	10.6	11.1
30-34	10.6	9.5	170	9.6	9.5	141	8.5	9.2
35-39	8.8	9.7	138	9.2	9.3	138	8.7	8.5
40-44	7.6	7.4	156	7.5	6.5	161	7.0	6.2
45-49	6.2	6.2	152	6.9	6.3	152	6.2	5.7
50-54	4.7	4.9	146	4.8	3.7	181	4.6	4.2
55-59	3.4	4.0	129	4.1	3.5	163	3.8	3.1
60+	6.5	9.2	110	7.3	5.1	199	6.9	6.4
Standard deviation	4.4	3.1	31.5	3.2	3.3	29.5	2.7	2.8
Index of dissimilarity	10.5	4.7	--	4.6	3.9	--	3.9	5.7

These sex ratios reveal that in general male migration has been characteristic of lifetime migration streams in Sri Lanka, irrespective of destination. The level of masculinity was highest in 1971 for the most urban destination, Colombo, but it was not too different from that of the stream to the rural dry zone. It is possible that this male selectivity was stimulated by a demand for agricultural wage labor in the recently opened colonization areas. If relative dynamism of the destination has any effect on the degree of male migration in Sri Lanka, then the other urban areas do not appear to have been as active as the dry zone because they had lower sex ratios. Other rural areas seemed to attract mostly familial types of migrants or marriage migrants.

Because there are four major destinations of migrants in Sri Lanka, I have not attempted to go beyond making a generalized observation of the selectivity of young adults in migrant streams. The presence of a disproportionately high share of migrants at a particular destination

migrant streams and nonmigrants by age and sex: Sri Lanka, 1971

Sex ratio	Other rural			Sri Lanka			Nonmigrants		
	Male	Female	Sex ratio	Male	Female	Sex ratio	Male	Female	Sex ratio
105	5.3	5.2	101	4.2	4.7	104	13.1	13.4	103
105	7.4	6.7	109	6.0	6.6	105	13.1	13.4	102
116	8.7	7.7	112	8.0	8.1	114	12.8	12.8	105
128	8.9	11.3	78	9.6	8.9	125	10.6	10.9	101
136	9.8	8.4	115	12.2	12.1	117	9.4	10.1	98
120	9.2	12.4	73	10.9	12.2	104	7.1	7.6	98
116	8.4	9.8	85	9.0	9.6	109	5.6	5.7	104
129	8.6	9.7	88	8.8	9.5	107	5.5	5.8	101
142	7.4	7.0	104	7.4	6.9	124	4.8	4.4	113
137	7.0	6.3	110	6.7	6.2	125	4.4	4.2	111
138	5.1	4.4	114	4.9	4.4	129	3.5	3.2	114
154	4.6	3.7	123	4.2	3.6	135	3.0	2.6	113
136	9.5	7.2	130	8.2	7.1	134	6.9	5.9	121
14.7	1.7	2.6	17.6	2.5	2.7	11.5	3.7	4.0	7.2
--	5.5	4.1	--	--	--	--	22.0	22.2	--

does not necessarily warrant a statement of high selectivity for a particular category of a selected variable. It has to be examined after "standardization" for the "population at risk." For this purpose, I subtracted the national age-sex-specific proportion of population from the respective age-sex-specific destinations and divided the difference by the proportion of the national population, expressed as a percentage. These percentages appear in Table 15 and are represented in Figures 2 and 3. A minus sign denotes the deselection of a particular age-sex category. Although there is a legitimate question of the appropriateness of using the 1971 national population age proportions as the standard for lifetime migration data, I made the choice because the two distributions pertain to the same time and examination of the age distributions of the national population at the three preceding censuses shows that the average of the four censuses would not deviate appreciably from the relative age-sex distribution of 1971.

A variable selectivity prevails among the five age-sex-specific

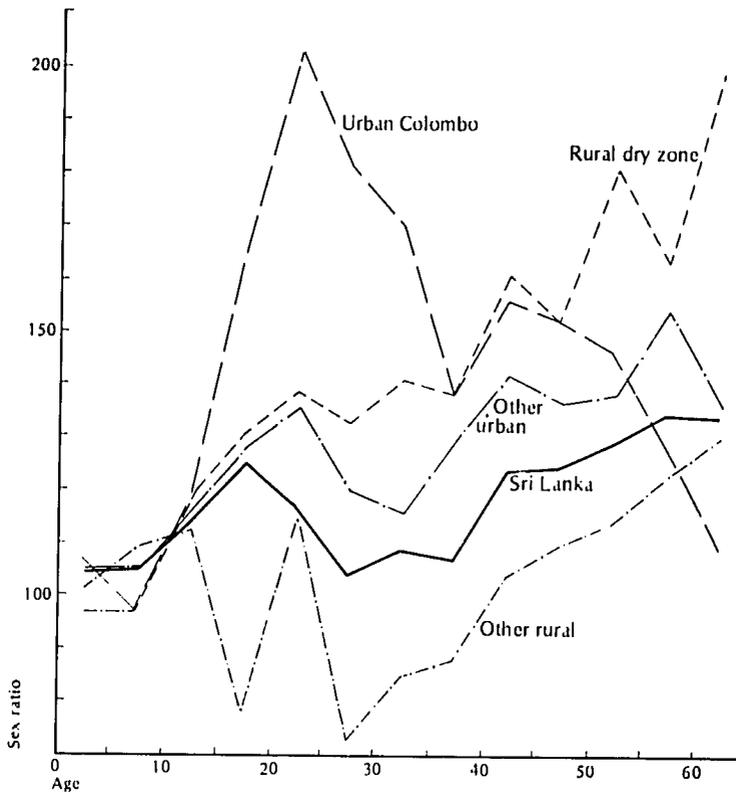


FIGURE 1 Age-specific sex ratios of lifetime migrants by selected destinations: Sri Lanka, 1971

migrant groups when this kind of elementary standardization is effected. Admittedly these lifetime data do not pertain to the situation at the time of migration. This fact, however, does not negate the repeated observation of high selectivity of young adults in migrant streams. Insofar as the lifetime data do pertain to the occurrence of migration and retention of migrants in the areas of destination, some idea of the resulting demographic structure of the destinations can be gained. If one adopts the hypothesis that dynamism is negatively

TABLE 15 "Standardized" age-sex-specific selectivity of lifetime migrants by selected destinations:
Sri Lanka, 1971

Age group	Urban Colombo		Rural dry zone		Other urban		Other rural		Sri Lanka	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	-85.4	-79.7	-75.4	-65.4	-68.5	-63.2	-59.2	-60.9	-67.7	-64.7
5-9	-76.9	-64.9	-63.1	-48.5	-49.2	-41.0	-43.1	-50.0	-53.8	-50.7
10-14	-52.4	-39.1	-45.2	-37.5	-25.4	-20.3	-31.0	-39.8	-36.5	-36.7
15-19	-1.9	-12.8	-11.4	-9.2	6.7	0.9	-15.2	3.7	-8.6	-18.3
20-24	71.4	23.5	41.8	36.3	26.5	12.7	00.0	17.6	24.5	18.6
25-29	94.5	54.5	69.9	68.8	45.2	44.2	26.0	61.0	49.3	58.4
30-34	82.8	66.7	65.5	66.7	46.6	61.4	44.8	71.9	55.2	68.4
35-39	57.1	67.2	64.3	60.3	55.4	46.6	53.6	67.2	57.1	63.8
40-44	58.3	68.2	56.3	47.7	45.8	40.9	54.2	59.1	54.2	56.8
45-49	40.9	51.2	56.8	53.7	40.9	39.0	59.1	53.7	52.3	51.2
50-54	34.3	58.1	37.1	19.4	31.4	35.5	45.7	41.9	40.0	41.9
55-59	17.2	53.8	41.4	34.6	31.0	19.2	58.6	42.3	44.8	38.5
60+	12.1	55.9	25.9	-13.6	19.0	8.5	63.8	22.0	41.4	20.3

SOURCE: Computed from ESCAP (1975: tables 30, 31, 32).

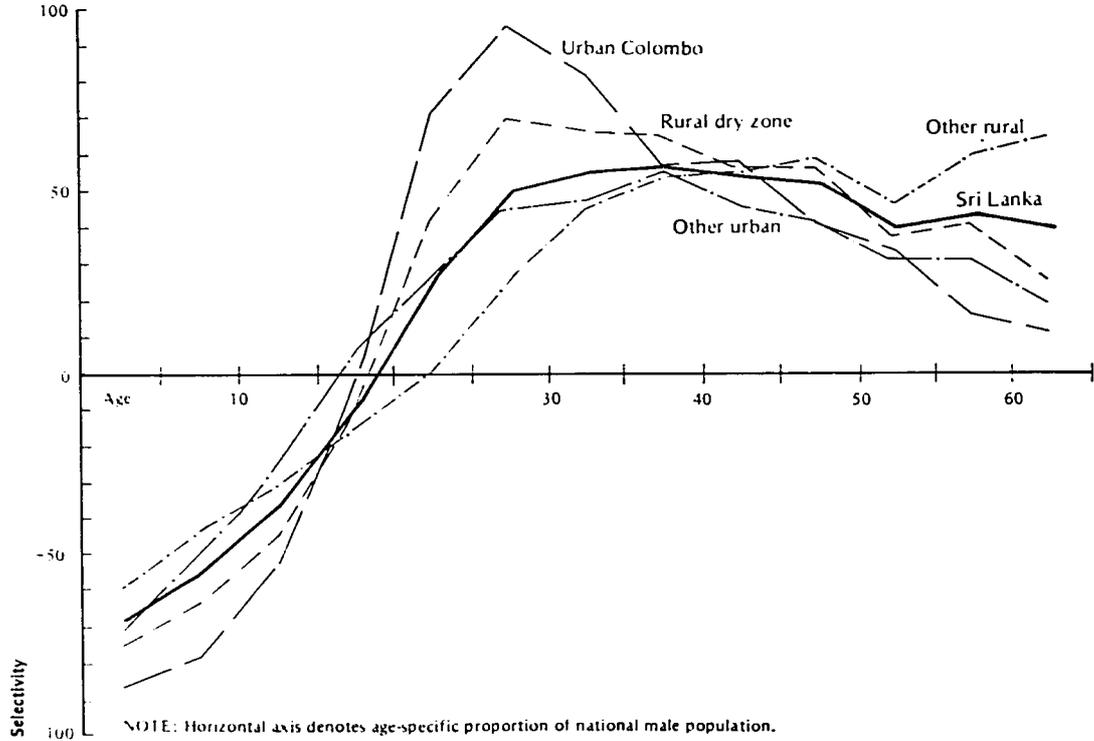


FIGURE 2 "Standardized" age-specific selectivity pattern of male lifetime migrants by selected destinations: Sri Lanka, 1971

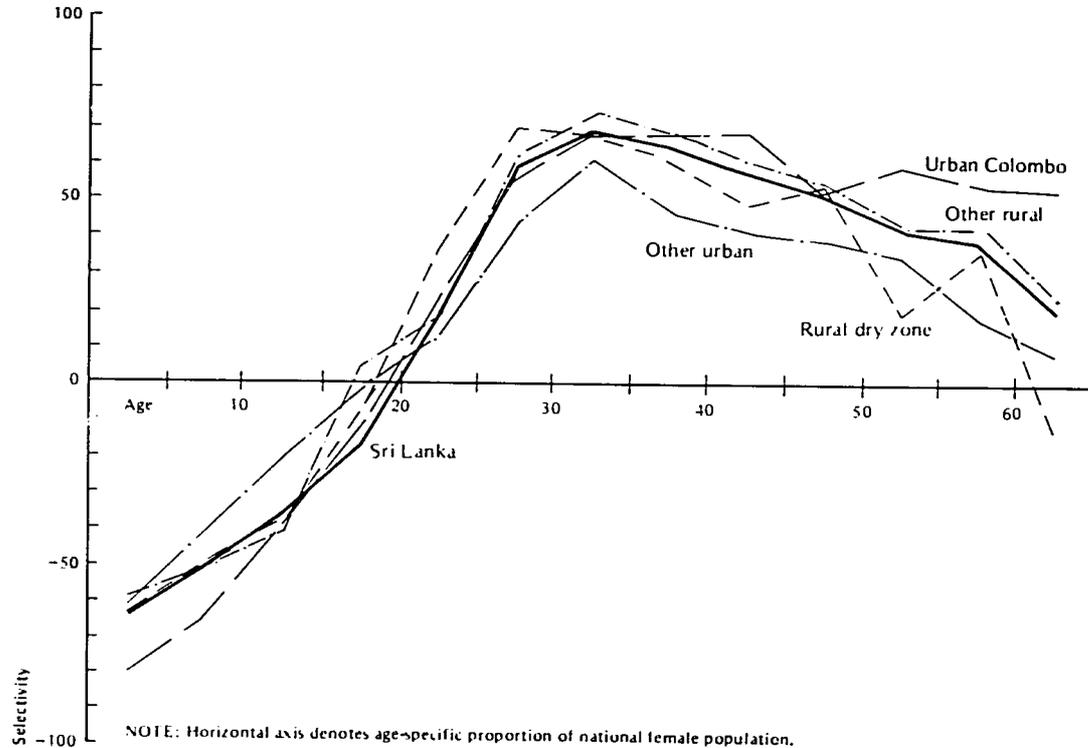


FIGURE 3 “Standardized” age-specific selectivity pattern of female lifetime migrants by selected destinations: Sri Lanka, 1971

associated with the age structure of migrants, then urban Colombo emerges as the most dynamic destination, followed by the rural dry zone, as the following evidence reveals.

Among the male migrants, there is formidable deselectivity of all age groups from zero through 19, except for ages 15–19 in other urban areas. Although there is very high selectivity among the 20–24 year-olds in urban Colombo (71.4), there is no selectivity of the same age group of male migrants settling in other rural areas (0.0). Strongest selectivity is exerted upon the 20–34 age group of males in urban Colombo, on the 25–39 age group in the rural dry zone, on the 25–49 group in other urban areas, and on the 30–60 and over group in other rural areas. The modal strength of selectivity is found among the 35–39 age group of male migrants (57.1), a definite deviant from the ideal “young adult.” When male migrants 50 years old and older are considered, both rural destinations have greater selectivity than either of the urban destinations for each category, a finding that suggests a kind of preferential retirement migration to the hinterland.

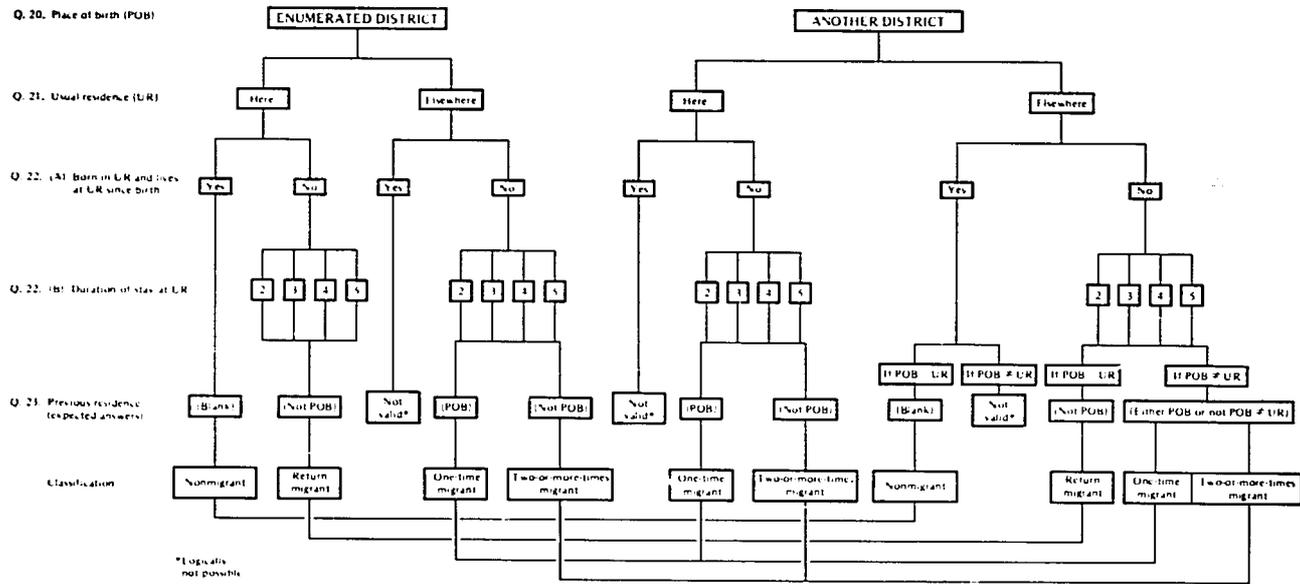
A similar pattern of deselectivity is found among most young female groups zero through age 19; other urban and other rural destinations have almost negligible selectivity on the 15–19 age group. A comparable pattern of age selectivity among male migrants is not found among females. Strong selectivity appears to be exerted upon the age groups 25–44 at least, in all destinations. In contrast to the male migrants of urban Colombo, who exhibit an inverse relationship between strength of selectivity and age among the adult groups, the females depict a negligible relationship (ranging between 51.2 and 68.2). Is the attraction of urban Colombo for female migrants explained by a disproportionate share of marriage migration, or is urban Colombo the only locale that has developed a demand for modern-sector employment outside the home for married women? These questions require study based on data other than those derived from national censuses.

Among the four other groups of adult female migrants, the age groups over 50 years show perceptible declines in strength of selectivity in comparison to the middle range of the age continuum. The rural dry zone, in fact, records an actual deselectivity of the oldest females, due perhaps to the persistence of the South Asian pattern of life expectancy alluded to by El Badry (1969) in the least developed region of the country. High rates of fertility, comparatively deficient medical care, and systematic undernourishment of adult females (a

consequence of the cultural pattern prevalent in the countryside, which idealizes the wife feeding her husband and family before herself) perhaps jointly account for this phenomenon.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Migration data on Sri Lanka reveal two dominant streams of resettlement, one to urban Colombo and the other to the rural dry zone; the massive in-migration to the rural dry zone, especially during the peak period of the opening up of new paddy land during the decade of 1953-63; and a formidable stream of urban-born migrants heading toward the hinterland as early as 1946. The relatively slow rate of urbanization, the growth of small towns, and the emergent pattern of decentralized urbanization have been documented elsewhere (Abeysekera, 1980). This pattern of migration and urbanization must be placed within the context of the history and the political economy of the country. The hydraulic past, the colonial heritage with its all-too-familiar dependence upon a monoculture, the operant democratic framework of the polity, adverse balance of trade, food subsidies and other welfare measures, all are linked to the current realities of migration (and urbanization) in Sri Lanka. The future pattern of these two processes will undoubtedly be affected by the efficacy of whatever national policy is pursued. The study of past patterns of migration is thus invaluable if the policy makers are to have some control over the long-term effects produced by the implementation of national policy.



APPENDIX 2 Tree diagram indicating the method of selecting different types of lifetime migrants from 1971 census data

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