

Moonlighting Trends in the Labour Market of Sri Lanka

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Holding two or more jobs by one individual is called moonlighting in Labour Economics. Dual job holding, multiple job holding and secondary job holding provide similar meaning for the term of moonlighting. Moonlighting has both micro and macro implications on both individual and the economy. In micro economic aspects, it provides supplementary income to the family leading to uplift the living standards of people while it has some negative socio and health implications on the individual worker. In macroeconomic aspects, it has positive implication on economic growth and that is acting as a coping strategy for inflationary pressure and shrinking labour force due to population ageing. The aim of this study was to carry out an economic analysis of the trends of secondary job holding in Sri Lanka. The study has used secondary data from Annual Labour Force Surveys conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics from 1999-2010. The age group 15-64 was used as the working age in this study. Data pertaining to the Northern and Eastern Provinces were removed from the analysis due to the inconsistency of the data availability due to conflict. Descriptive statistics were used to present moonlighting trends in Sri Lanka. During recent years, moonlighting has demonstrated an increasing trend as an important labour market dynamic. Male, married, middle aged and rural sector workers moonlight more while the gender gap in moonlighting trend is reducing by birth and labour cohorts. Both highly and less educated workers are moonlighting more. Spatially, Anuradhapura and Monaragala Districts are leading with higher rates of moonlighting. Skilled agricultural and fishery workers and professionals are the two leading occupational categories who are moonlighting while agricultural workers, workers from mining and quarrying and from education sector are leading in relation to production sectors. Moonlighting rate among public sector employees has been increasing continuously in Sri Lanka while that rate has been a continuous decline for formal private sector employees indicating the inefficiencies and poor human resource management in the government sector. Most of the moonlighters select agricultural employment as their second job. Mean number of work hours in primary employment has been stable in recent years while mean hours of work in the secondary employment have been increasing. This suggests substitution of leisure hours for work hours in secondary employment.

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