

**SOCIO – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE SOTHERN EXSPRESSWAY
PROJECT FROM MATARA – BELIATTA**

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Development is the process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components. Sri Lanka is a developing country. Therefore, many development projects are being implemented in Sri Lanka. The study was conducted to examine of socio -environmental impact of the Southern expressway project from Matara-Beliatta. Globally, there have been many research papers on the development and sustainable development. However, this research is being conducted to study the socio and environmental impact of the Southern Expressway project from Matara-Beliatta. The main question of this research is, “What is the environmental impact of the Southern expressway project on the study area?” The main objective of this research is to identify the environmental impact of the Southern expressway project on the study area. The study used qualitative approach. Therefore, within the study area, three villages with high socio – environmental impact were selected. These are the area I have selected, Kapuduwa GND, Naymbala-1 GND, Walakanda West GND. Data were obtained through a questionnaire survey, interviews and direct observations. In particular, selected participants, 10% of the landowners whose land have been acquired for the expressway were considered for direct interviews. Accordingly, the number of sample was 24. All the steps were limited because of the covid -19 pandemic situation. The finding of this research can be thematically categorized on possible impact of drainage pattern of study area, impact of soil erosion, water pollution due to construction works, air pollution and noise pollution activities, high impact of aquatic ecological animals and plants, reduction of paddy lands, changes in the attitude and behaviors of the residents in the study area due to employee activities.

Keywords: Environmental, Expressway, Development, Attitude, Project