

Socio- Economic Issues of Ex-women Combatants in the Context of Post Conflict Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Sri Lanka went through an extensive and tragic civil war for nearly three decades from year 1983 to 2009 claiming thousands of lives and a large scale cultural and political disintegration, economical degradation and destruction of property. As men, women combatants were also actively participated in the civil war related activities. After the ends of war, the re-integration of ex-women combatants has become as one of the major challenges of the society. The present study was conducted to examine a broad research problem of what are the socio-economic issues faced by the ex-women combatants who were reintegrated in to the society. Specific research questions included (a) what were the reasons for them to join the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam? (b) how they suffered during wartime? (c) how is their physical and psychological situation in post conflict situation? (d) what extent women are suffering after reintegration into the society and what measures need to be taken to improve their situation?. The study used qualitative research method. The secondary information was reviewed in order to place the research in a conceptual framework of conflict and reintegration. Some past studies on the subject both from international and local scenarios were also reviewed. Primary data was collected through case studies of reintegrated ex women combatants from the war affected districts of Batticaloa and Vavunia in Northern and Eastern provinces in Sri Lanka. Data analysis was done through descriptive explanations. The study concluded that after reintegration of ex-women combatants they are vulnerable from both social and economic perspectives. The socio-economic status of ex-women combatants were degrading due to social and cultural believes remained in the society. They suffered due to their ex-combatant identity in the society with regard to social relations.

Keywords: *Civil war, Ex-women combatants, Reintegration*