

**YOUNG WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN SRI LANKA: THE ROLE OF MARRIAGE AND SOCIO
ECONOMIC STATUS: A STUDY OF KALUTARA DISTRICT.**

Deborah S. DeGraff and Anju Malhotra

Abstract: This paper contributes to the understanding of women's labor force behavior in developing countries through a household level analysis of young women in Kalutara District, Sri Lanka. We focus on young women both because of the difficult labor market conditions confronting young adult in Sri Lanka in recent years, and because of the potential importance of the early adult years of women in shaping their later life child bearing, child rearing and labor force experiences. We argue that in studying the labor market behavior of young women within social and economic context of Sri Lanka, it is important to 1) differentiate between labor force participation and employment and, thus, include a focus on unemployment, 2) consider familial and cultural factors in addition to standard determinants of labor supply and demand, and 3) examine the labor force activity of young single women as well as married women.