



Faculty of Graduate Studies

General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University



**PRECARIOUS WORK INTO DECENT WORK: A
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master of Law

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary labour landscape, precarious employment has emerged as a significant global concern, challenging traditional notions of secure, long-term work. This comprehensive study investigates the multifaceted issue of precarious employment, with a special focus on its implications for achieving decent work in the context of Sri Lanka. Precarious employment encompasses various work arrangements, such as temporary positions, fixed-term contracts, and subcontracting, all characterized by instability and a lack of labour rights and protections. This leaves workers vulnerable to exploitation, low wages, and unsafe conditions. The research distinguishes between precarious employment and decent work and evaluates the alignment of Sri Lanka's labour laws with international labour standards. The study also explores the role of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Decent Work Agenda in addressing these challenges within the Sri Lankan context, considering economic policies, societal values, and fair compensation. By comparing best practices from the developed country Australia, the study highlights significant gaps in Sri Lanka's labour regulations and legal safeguards for precarious workers. The study offers a set of actionable recommendations, including legal reforms, the development of a Decent Work Action Plan, strengthened labour inspections, promotion of collective bargaining, awareness campaigns, social protection extensions, skill development, and better regulation of labour recruitment agencies. The implementation of these recommendations is expected to lead to substantial improvements in the working conditions and job security of precarious workers in Sri Lanka, contributing to the global dialogue on labour rights and the pursuit of equitable and secure employment for all, regardless of employment status.

Keywords: Precarious employment, international labour laws, Labour standards, Sri Lanka