A pearl of great price, the free education system of Sri Lanka
Ranasinghe, A.

Citation for published version (APA): Ranasinghe, A. (1999). A pearl of great price, the free education system of Sri Lanka

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
Acknowledgements

This book is the result of five years of hard endeavour. Throughout this period, I was supported by many individuals and institutions, and without their support I would never have been able to finish this book in its present form. This acknowledgement is a small token of my heartfelt gratitude towards all those individuals and institutions.

First, I am indebted to my promoter, Prof. dr. Joop Hartog. Several years ago when I was preparing my thesis proposal, Joop generously helped me by writing comments on my preliminary ideas. He responded to my letters regularly and without delay. Plus, in the absence of the relevant literature at my home, I would not have been able to draft the plan for the present book without his suggestions. When I began my doctoral studies at the Tinbergen Institute Amsterdam in 1994, he read each of my draft chapters several times and gave very valuable comments, suggestions and constructive criticism. Joop was also very kind to allocate funds for my trip to Aarhus, Denmark for the European Meeting of Labour Economists in 1997. Apart from his supervision, I really appreciate his kindness and hospitality.

I am also indebted to Prof. dr. W.D. Lakshman and Mr. Sarath Vidanagama of the University of Colombo. Without their guidance I would never have been able to even start my doctoral studies. Prof. Lakshman has been behind the career success I have achieved thus far. I humbly thank Prof. Lakshman, Mr. Vidanagama and all the academic staff of the Department of Economics at the University of Colombo for everything they have done for me.

Dr. Howard Nicholas, Mr. J.P.C. Guimaraes, all the staff of the UC/ISS project office of the University of Colombo and the staff at the ISS, Den Haag, specially Ms. Els Mulder also assisted me in numerous ways. My studies at the Tinbergen Institute and the field survey and other data collections were sponsored by the UC/ISS project.

The Tinbergen Institute Amsterdam became my home for three years. I want to especially thank all the staff Tinbergen and my colleagues for giving me a wonderful time. I have special thanks for Elfie, Miep, Marian and Arianne. Jeroen and Marcel, the two computer managers during my stay were also extremely helpful. I also wish to express my gratitude to Prof. dr. Jan Van Ours, former director of the Tinbergen Institute, Prof. dr. Coen Teulings and Prof. dr. Maarten Lindeboom, the present directors. Courses organised by the Tinbergen Institute, NAKE, as well as the regular seminars at the Tinbergen Institute benefited me.

Apart from the attractive atmosphere in the institute, I had the pleasure of meeting good friends and brilliant colleagues. José Vieira, Edwin Van Gameren, Francesca Medda, and Sue Davis were wonderful friends and we spent a lot of time together talking about our research topics, our countries and many other things. Portuguese wine, Italian meals and long conversations during the cold winters always helped me forget the loneliness. José also read the manuscript of my thesis and Francesca’s constructive criticism has had much influence on my way of thinking. Sue made the English corrections of my thesis and other
papers I wrote during this period. Edwin was always prepared to help me. His help ranges from repairing my bicycle to organising the defense ceremony. In fact, his helpful deeds are so numerous that I haven’t the space to list them here.

Mr. Gamini de Silva, Deputy Director of the Department of Census and Statistics, Mr. A.G.W. Nanayakkara, the Director of the Department of Census and Statistics, and Mr. Yasasiri, former Director of the Department of Census of Statistics helped me design the sample frame and provided me with numerous data sets which were extremely useful for my studies. Mrs. S.V. Nanayakkara and her staff at the data Processing Division of the Department of Census and Statistics were very efficient in providing data sets. I am also indebted to the responsible offices at Isurupaya for providing me with two school census data tapes. Mr. P.M. Ilapperuma provided me with all the information regarding the data available in Isurupaya. I have a very special thanks for Mr. Cyril Herath, Statistician of the Department of Census and Statistics at the Kandy office and his staff for conducting my sample survey. I am also grateful to all the respondents in my sample survey who spent a lot of time with us answering all the boring questions in the survey schedule. Mr. B. Abeygunawardhana, Director of the Human Resource Development Division, Department of National Planning, Mr. Santha de Silva, Education Service Commission and Ms. Udayangani, Assistant Lecturer at the University of Sri Jayawardenepura also assisted me in finding relevant literature on the education system of Sri Lanka.

I am also grateful to René Van den Brink, Laura Hendrix, Jesse Levin, Sirimal Aberatne, Susantha Liyanaarachchi, Rev. Wimalaratane, Premaratne, Chandana, Moorthy and Surange. Hessel Oosterbeek always helped me by providing plenty of literature. He also read some of my draft chapters and gave me immensely useful suggestions. Mr. Juan Caceres gave me valuable books and very useful computer software.

Last but never least, my wife Swarna, my two daughters Kasuni and Kanitha, and my parents deserve a very special thanks for their dedication. They took over all the family responsibilities during these last five years thus enabling me to complete this thesis. It is to my wife and two daughters that I dedicate this work.

Athula Ranasinghe
University of Amsterdam
September 1999