

**ABSTRACT****THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT:  
A CASE STUDY OF GUYANA****INDERA SAGEWAN**

This study seeks to analyse the socio-economic impact of structural adjustment in the Guyanese economy. It employs a historical perspective in studying the economic and political developments in Guyana, and a Basic Needs approach through which the social conditions post 1978 are reviewed.

The objectives of this thesis are: to ascertain whether the widely accepted notion that the Guyanese economy is in a socio-economic crisis, and if so, to identify the factors which have contributed to this situation. Finally, it seeks to develop a policy framework within which the problem identified can be addressed.

The historical socio-economic analysis of Guyana from the Colonial period to January 1990, confirms that the economy is indeed experiencing a socio-economic crisis of severe proportions, with structural adjustment policies employed having failed to put the economy along a path of self-sustained growth.

The socio-economic crisis in Guyana over the period under analysis is reflected in high unemployment, exorbitant inflation, large balance of payment deficits, a production crisis, deterioration in production infrastructure and massive declines in the social sector e.g., the health care system, education, housing and sanitation. Finally, this study found that the socio-economic crisis has facilitated the rapid growth of a parallel or underground economy on which almost all sectors of the economy depend, in face of the near collapse of the official economy.