

**FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY OCCUPATIONAL
HEALTH AND SAFETY INITIATIVES FOR
DIFFERENT ETHICAL CLIMATES**

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Degree of Master of Philosophy

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**University of Moratuwa
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July 2018

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the
degree of
Master of Philosophy**

Department of Building Economics

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July 2018

DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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Abstract

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) is of vital importance in apparel industry due to its labour intensity. Poorly managed OSH can negatively impact the organisational growth in numerous ways. According to past research, more than 80% of the OSH issues occur due to the employee behaviours related causes, and it is the ethical climate of an organisation that guides the employee to decide upon the right and wrong behaviours at work. Hence, it is essential to identify the ethical climates that may exist in apparel firms and formulate suitable OSH strategies accordingly to guide employee behaviours in managing OSH. Thus, this research was aimed on developing a framework to identify suitable health and safety initiatives for different ethical climates in apparel industry in Sri Lanka.

A mixed method approach was selected to carry out the study, considering the nature of this investigation. The OSH issues, their causes, and the ethical climate(s) that can exist in organisations were identified through a literature survey. A situational context analysis was conducted using case study strategy, to investigate OSH issues, their causes, and the ethical climate(s) related to the Sri Lankan apparel industry. Three (03) cases were selected from the medium and large-scale apparel manufacturing organisations in Sri Lanka. These case studies led to find twenty-seven causes of OSH issues, and most of those were worker behaviour related causes. The questionnaire survey conducted within the cases confirmed that different ethical climates exist in the Sri Lankan apparel industry, while principled-local climate is the most common. An expert survey was conducted with thirty (30) OSH experts in apparel industry to identify the suitable health and safety initiatives for different ethical climates

By integrating all the research findings, a framework was developed to assist the industry practitioners to identify the prevailing ethical climate in the organisation, based on which the best suited health and safety initiative(s) to the organisation can be selected. As the framework directs the firm towards the best fit, the investment on the health and safety initiatives will be secured. By using the framework in designing safety initiatives, the organisation can expect well behaved workforce in terms of OSH. Further, this study adds to the knowledge on the OSH issues, causes for such issues, prevailing ethical climates in the Sri Lankan apparel industry, and the health and safety initiatives suitable for different ethical climates.

Keywords: Apparel industry; Ethical climates; Health and safety initiatives; Occupational health and safety

To my family...

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

There are many people I would like to thank for without whom, the completion of this piece of work would not have been possible. Firstly, I would like to thank my research supervisors Dr. Yasangika Sandanayake and Dr. Gayani Karunasena for patiently providing me thoughtful guidance and encouragement along with constructive feedback, which were immeasurably helpful in completion of this study. I am also thankful to my research advisor, Dr. (Mrs.) Amila Jayarathne for her reviews and comments which were invaluable in directing this research towards success.

A special thanking thought is conveyed to the case study organisations and experts in occupational health and safety who gave me an immense support to successfully complete the empirical study of this research by kindly cooperating throughout the knowledge generating interviews and data collection process.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Chathuri Manjula for her invaluable support throughout my study period. Moreover, I appreciate the technical support received from Mr.A.A.D.W.V. Udayashantha. Further, I would like to thank all my colleagues at the staff who willingly gave me their utmost support, assistance and inspiration to carry out the work successfully.

I owe special thanks to my dear mother Mrs. Padmini Banneheka, and my father Mr. Tikiri Rathnayake who went through so many hardships to get me to where I am now. Without them, I would not be here. I also express my deepest gratitude to my sisters, mother in-law, father in-law, brother in-laws and sister in-law for their unconditional love, emotional sacrifices, and for their constant help and encouragement.

Finally, I am so grateful to my dear husband, Pethum Padukkage, for the constant encouragement and priceless support given to make this study a success. Your patience and support were immense throughout these years.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BL	Benevolence Local
ECQ	Ethical Climate Questionnaire
EL	Egoist Local
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Organisation
OHSAS	Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PCA	Principle Component analysis
PL	Principled Local
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RCD	Residual Current Devices
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation