



**AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION INTO  
ABSENTEEISM AND LABOUR TURNOVER  
IN THE SRI LANKAN EXPORT APPAREL  
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY**

By

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## Abstract

Absenteeism and labour turn over are major problems that the export apparel industry is facing today when they try to meet their targets. This highly labour intensive major employer is facing big challenges since after quota abolishment took place from 2005 and even now margins are shrinking. Reduction of absenteeism and turnover play a vital role in the industry in order to survive in the highly competitive world apparel market under quota free situation. Therefore, absenteeism and turnover are serious threats to productivity and consistent quality, and they must be maintained at reasonable level.

The key objectives of this study are to identify/ investigate the most influential causes for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism and turnover of sewing machine operators and supervisors, to identify the mediation effect of job satisfaction and commitment on causes and absenteeism and turnover, to identify causes, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism and turnover levels and how they vary by the ownership of the organization and to identify strategies used to address absenteeism and turnover.

This study was scientific and exploratory using survey method. Using SPSS, data analysis was carried out to identify the relationships among variables, test the hypotheses.

An examination of samples of 418 machine operators and 196 supervisory level employees revealed that there are influences on absenteeism and turnover from the most of causes considered in this study such as work setting variables, policy variables, supportive climate and environmental variables. Further, study was identified the mediation effect of job satisfaction and the organizational commitment on 'sewing machine operators' and supervisors' turnover. There was no significant difference between job satisfaction! organizational commitment, absenteeism! turnover and causes of different ownership organizations.