

**SEWING MACHINE OPERATORS' PERCEIVED OCCUPATIONAL STRESS, JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT: EVIDENCE FROM A LEADING GARMENT MANUFACTURER IN SRI LANKA**

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Occupational stress is one the major issues in organisational life. Even though optimal levels of stress can be challenging and produce eustress (positive feelings and high involvement), stress at work is a well known factor for variety of negative work related outcomes. Lower job satisfaction and organisational commitment are the main consequences of occupational stress. Both of these work outcomes are, in general, negatively related with perceived stress and they have an effect on overall organisational efficiency and effectiveness. In Sri Lanka, since the garment industry has been remarkable in terms of its contribution to GDP, exports, foreign exchange earnings and employment generation, managing employee stress is much necessary for the long term success of this industry. Especially identifying the perceived stress, job satisfaction and organisational commitment relationship of the sewing machine operators is vital due to they are the major players in garment industry. Most of the research on occupational stress has focused on its relationship with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. However perceived stress and work related outcomes of sewing machine operators in Sri Lanka are under considered. Thus, the main objective of this paper is to identify the relationship between sewing machine operators' perceived occupational stress and two work related outcomes: job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Data were collected from 200 sewing machine operators of a leading garment manufacturer in Sri Lanka using a self-administered questionnaire. Correlation analysis reveals a significant negative relationship between the perceived occupational stress and the job satisfaction. Similar results were found between perceived stress and organisational commitment as well. The findings of the study would be important to the human resource managers of the garment industry to develop their stress management programs and utilize human resources in an effective way.

**Keywords:** Garment industry, Job satisfaction, Organisational commitment, Perceived occupational stress, Sewing machine operators