

**ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS INFLUENCING LABOUR TURNOVER IN SRI LANKA  
GIVING SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GARMENT MANUFACTURING COMPANIES**

**By**

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## ABSTRACT

High turnover rates of machine operators and difficulties in attracting prospects as machine operators had become a major problem in the Garment Industry of Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, despite high turnover being such a serious problem, there is dearth of studies investigating it; especially studies using a comprehensive set of causal variables are extremely rare. In this study, the researcher examined four sets of antecedents of turnover intention of the said category as demographic, job dissatisfaction, organizational commitment and perceived alternative employment opportunities.

Four organizational variables namely, pay, promotion, the level of supervision and the job itself and two occupational factors – job security and stress were considered influential to job satisfaction which in turn was considered as influential to turnover intention. Age, tenure, the level of education, interest for the job, family responsibilities and duties were considered as influential variables under demographic factors towards turnover intention.

The sample consisted with 405 machine operators, randomly selected from five garment factories employing over 500 employees. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire (with Likert – type scales) and was administered with the help of HR and Production Managers of the factories.

The results of the Multiple Regression Analysis indicated that organizational commitment was the most significant factor influencing turnover intention. A negative correlation was found indicating a moderate statistically significant linear relationship between the two variables.

Job satisfaction which was hypothesized to have a negative association with turnover intention too received good support. Employees who were satisfied with their pay level, level of supervision, job security and aspects for promotions were found less likely to leave. Satisfaction with nature of work was found positively associated with turnover intention which was in contrast to what was hypothesized. The impact of stress level was found marginally significant in the study of machine operator turnover

intention. Under Demographic factors only interest for the job and age were found significant.

The results supported the idea of machine operators getting involved in work withdrawal behaviour when they were confident in finding a job similar to that of present or even better. The results of the Multiple Regression Analysis predicted a 0.106 increase in turnover intention for every unit increase of perceived alternative job opportunities.

After categorizing job satisfaction and organizational commitment under controllable factors and perceived alternative job opportunities under uncontrollable factors, the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis proved that the extent of controllable turnover is much greater than that of uncontrollable turnover and that poor management practices are the major cause of machine operator turnover.

The machine operator turnover in Sri Lankan garment factories can be brought down by focusing on organizational commitment and through coherent and systematic HR policies and practices with respect to pay, operator-supervisor relationship, job security and promotions.

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