The Influence of Quality of Work-life on Organizational Commitment: A Study of the Apparel Industry

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Abstract

The problem in focus in this study was, why despite the apparel industry being a major contributor to foreign exchange in Sri Lanka during the past years, it has not yet been able to build a committed workforce. The main objectives were to investigate the relationship between the Quality of Work Life (QWL) and organizational commitment as well as the Human Resource Development Climate (HRDC) prevailing in this industry. Based on the literature review, the conceptual framework was developed and two hypotheses were formulated. The first hypothesis was stated as QWL prevailing in the apparel industry of Sri Lanka positively influences the worker commitment. The second hypothesis was that the HRDC prevailing in the organization moderates the relationship between QWL and commitment. The empirical study included a sample of eighty seven workers from twenty five factories in Sri Lanka, selected through a convenient sampling technique. Both hypotheses were accepted and recommendations made based on the findings.

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1. Background

The apparel industry has experienced a distinctive growth during the past 25 years. However, it faces many problems, including those related to the work practices and the work environment. This has resulted in the industry being categorized as a "slave driven" industry.

Poor working conditions, low incentives for workers, high labour turnover, absenteeism, inadequate human resource development, restrictive labour regulations, repression of the right to organize, denial of legal entitlements, low investment in technology, long lead time, low productivity, poor "on time delivery", strained employee-employer relationship and a last minute rush for shipments are factors identified as weaknesses in the apparel industry. (Fonseka and Fonseka, 1998; Gunasekara, 1999; Jayaratne and Reade, 2002; Jayaweera and Shanmugam, 2001; Senanayake, 2007).

Further, through preliminary interviews with managers in the industry, it was gathered that the commitment demonstrated by the apparel workers is at an unsatisfactory level. This is supported by previous research (Kuruppu, 1995; Werasuriya, 1996; Senanayake, 2007). The operations are carried out under very close supervision and control targets are set for each operation and division and are reviewed on an hourly basis (Joshi, 2002; Dent, 2003; Kelegama, 2005).

2. Research Problem

Against the above explanation, the research problem is stated as follows:

Why is there a unsatisfactory level of commitment among workers in medium and large organizations in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka?
3. **Research Questions**

The following are the research questions:

i. What is the relationship between QWL and organizational commitment?

ii. How would HRDC influence organizational commitment?

4. **Objectives of The Study**

The objectives of the study are to:

i. investigate the relationship between QWL and organizational commitment prevailing in this industry

ii. investigate the relationship between HRDC organizational commitment prevailing in this industry

iii. make recommendations based on the empirical evidence for the future growth of this industry.

5. **Literature Review**

Due to the globalization of the apparel industry, the protection of the USA quota is no more an advantage for Sri Lanka. Now Sri Lanka has to compete with the world's most efficient garment-producing countries. China, with a well-developed accessories industry, a reservoir of easily trainable youth, and a highly devalued currency threatens the survival of this industry in Sri Lanka.

Lower productivity and poor manufacturing processes remain a weakness in this industry affecting competition with the other producers (Sri Lanka Garments, 2002). Improvements in QWL can increase the level of productivity by retaining a valuable
workforce (Sink and Rossler, 1990, cited in Phusavat, 2001). Providing a conducive environment where people are more productive is also essential. (Fernando and Goonewardene, 2002). HRDC as advocated by Rao (2004) fulfils such a need.

In this backdrop, it is worthwhile investigating the research findings in relation to Commitment, QWL and HRDC.

5.1 Commitment

Organizational commitment research draws a distinction between two schools of thought, namely, attitudinal and behavioral commitment. Early studies on organizational commitment explained commitment as a single dimension, based on an attitudinal perspective that covers identification, involvement, and loyalty.

Meyer and Allen (1991) describe the distinction between attitudinal and behavioral commitment as follows:

Attitudinal commitment focuses on the process by which people come to think about their relationship with the organization. In many ways, it can be thought of as a mindset in which individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals are congruent with those of the organization.

Behavioral commitment relates to the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization and how they deal with this problem. In the behavioral approach research is focused first and foremost on identifying circumstances under which a behavior once exhibited tends to be repeated.

Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) defined organizational commitment as a strong belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization.
The influence of QWL on Organisational Commitment

Buchanan (1974) holds the view that the concept of commitment consists of:

- Identification - Adopting as one's own the goals and values of the organization
- Involvement - Psychological absorption or immersion in the activities of one's work role.
- Loyalty - A feeling of affection and attachment to the organization

O'Reily and Chatman (1986) emphasize that the bond between an employee and an organization could take three forms: compliance, identification, and internalization. Compliance reflects behaviour involvement for specific extrinsic rewards. Identification is an attachment based on a desire for affiliation with the organization. Internalization reflects behaviour driven by internal values or goals that are consistent with those of the organization.

Subsequently, Meyer and Allen (1991) differentiated between three forms of commitment, viz. affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment of individuals to the organization. Continuance commitment is associated with the intention to remain with the organization. Normative commitment reflects a felt obligation to remain a member of an organization.

5.2 Quality of Work Life (QWL)

Today's organizations need to be more flexible so that they are equipped to develop their workers and enjoy their commitment. Therefore, organizations are required to adopt a strategy to improve the employees' Quality of Work Life (QWL) to satisfy both organizational objectives and employee needs. A win-win situation may result if QWL is positively linked to business performance (Johnson, 1999).

QWL is multi-faceted. It refers to the overall satisfaction with work life leading to developing work-life balance. It also involves a sense of belongingness to a working group, a sense of becoming oneself, and a sense of being worthy and respectable. In other words, it is the impact of the entire work situation on the individual (Morin and Morin, 2003).
Nedler and Lawler (1983) provide a working definition of QWL as a way of thinking about people, work and organizations. The elements bring together the impact of work on people, the impact on the organization and the idea of participation in organizational problem solving and decision-making. This specifically emphasizes the importance of the outcome for individuals in the quality of work life.

QWL is defined in terms of the degree to which the work environment of an organization motivates effective job performance or in some cases the degree to which it safeguards the physical and psychological well-being of employees, and in other cases in terms of the degree to which it limits stress-inducing factors. High quality of working life has been equated with high employee motivation and with a high level of employee satisfaction (Lawler, 1975).

Warr (2006) describes QWL as the absence of stress in the work environment. He further develops the fact that the environment can have different effects on different individuals. It embraces both positive and negative environments and experiences, rather than merely those that are unpleasant or stressful. The framework is based on the assumption that people are often cognitively active towards their well-being. Employees are thought to apply some or all of a set of judgments with a specific intention or through routine habit. In doing so they give personal meaning to work and influence the impact of a particular stimulus. The model has two components, one concerned with judgment processes themselves and the other factors that encourage or discourage the activation of each one. Work-life balance reflects concerns about QWL, job satisfaction, the home-work interface, and organizational stress, all of which impact on the bottom line through low productivity, increased sickness, absence and labour turnover, low morale and poor quality and customer service (Warr, 2006).

QWL is the resultant state of all aspects of life at work. This can be promoted by interventions that try to increase job satisfaction and reduce the ill effects of repetitive and meaningless jobs. In addition, QWL can be enhanced through the reduction of work stress. This can be achieved in several ways, the commonest of which is to change the source of the stress, that is, to redesign the job in order to remove the inherent stress. This also can be achieved through job enlargement or job rotation.
However, this is rarely done and most workplace interventions are aimed not at removing the causes of stress but at helping the employee to cope with it. Although organizations may find it costly to provide such support programmes and particularly to remove workplace stress at the source, it is even more costly not to maintain a high QWL (Morin and Morin, 2003). In order to count the costs, an employer would need to measure absenteeism, accident rates, costs of recruitment, training new staff and also such "invisible" costs as job satisfaction, staff morale, the effects these have on customer relations and the organization's overall image and status.

Carayon et al. (2003) describes QWL as "the quality of the relationship between employees and the total working environment, with human dimensions added to the usual technical and economic considerations". The QWL approach to work management has thus historically been that of replacing jobs based on single, repetitive tasks, often on assembly lines, with more 'humanized' forms of work having a less clear-cut separation of conception from execution. Such alternatives allow for greater job satisfaction, job enrichment, more meaningful work and greater worker influence on workplace decisions. In turn, such developments generate higher-level organizational performance, less absence due to illness and reduced employee turnover (Warr, 1987; Perera, 2002; Trist, 1989).

5.3 **Human Resource Development Climate (HRDC)**

Dynamic employees are essential for any organization that would like to be dynamic and growth-oriented. Employees who are competent, motivated, and pro-active and have a high activity level are considered as dynamic employees (Dessler, 2002). This fulfils an acute need in Sri Lanka, where unproductive managerial practices are prevalent (Nanayakkara, 1993). Providing an appropriate organizational climate is essential for better employee performance (Fink, 1983). Human resource development (HRD) aims at developing such dynamism in employees based on several qualities. The climate for the development of this dynamism should prevail in organizations.

The Human Resource Development Climate (HRDC) is a measure of the perceptions of "knowledge workers" about the prevailing HRD (Rodrigues & Chincholkar,
According to them, HRD is defined as essentially consisting of three 3Cs: Competencies, Commitment and Culture. These three factors are essential for an organization to function well. Any practice that deals with or enhances competencies, commitment and culture building is considered an HR practice. A practice can take the form of a system, a process, an activity, a norm, a rule, an accepted habit or a way of doing things. An organization which has a better HRDC and processes is likely to be more effective than an organization that does not have them (Rao, 1990).

HRDC helps employees to acquire the capabilities required to perform various functions associated with their present or future expected roles and developing their capabilities for organizational development. The organizational culture plays a significant role in enabling organizations get the best out of human resources. Pareek (1997) mention the existence of a clear linkage between HRDC and organizational performance.

A minimal positive development climate is essential for facilitating HRD. Such a development climate was described by Rao (1990) as consisting of the following tendencies on the part of the organization:

- A tendency at all levels starting from top management to the lowest level to treat people as the most important resource.
- A perception that developing the competencies in the employees is the job of every manager and supervisor.
- Faith in the capability of employees to change and acquire new competencies at any stage of life.
- A tendency to have open communication channels and discussion rather than being secretive.
- Encouraging risk-taking and experimentation.
- Making an effort to help employees recognize their strengths and weaknesses through feedback.
- A general climate of trust, supportive personnel policies and team formation.
- A tendency on the part of employees to be generally helpful to each other and collaborate with each other.
- Tendency to discourage favoritism and bias.
- Development oriented appraisals, training, reward management, potential development, job rotation, and career planning (Rao, 1990: 25).

An organization where people participate freely and not by coercion and accept the vision of the company and work towards achieving it and where the management considers the workers as assets or resources has a climate for HRD.

Perera (2002) opined that HRDC is an environment within the organization that sustains a culture in which values and traditions which build surplus value and quality of life for the employee are emphasized. Such an environment elevates service over self-interest resulting in competitive advantage for the organization.

Pillai (2004) describes HRDC as the overall climate prevailing in an organization, which facilitates learning and development of its human resources. A good HRDC is characterized by openness, a collaborative attitude, team spirit, trust, pro-action, and autonomy.

Rao (2006: 318) stated that HRDC is the tendency and environment where development of individuals and teams is given the highest priority and where human resources are considered the most important resources. The above definitions emphasize:

- A culture which build values and traditions and which, in turn, build surplus values and quality of life,
- A climate which facilitates learning and development,
- A climate where the development of individuals and teams is given priority and human resources are considered the most important resource.
Among the main components of HRDC, the general climate deals with the importance given to human resource development in general by the top management and line managers. OCTAPACE deals with the extent to which openness, confrontation, trust, autonomy, pro-activity, authenticity, collaboration and experimentation are valued and promoted in the organization. HRD mechanisms consist of all the sub systems and the practices prevailing in an organization (Rao, 1990).

Patterson et al. (2005) discussed a possible moderator action by HRDC in relation to employee competencies and organizational performance. These authors are of the view that an extension can be drawn from it, where HRDC moderates the relationship between QWL and Commitment. Such a standpoint is in line with that of Litwin & Stringer (1968) and Pareek (1997).

6. Conceptual Model

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model based on the literature review.

*Figure 1: Conceptual Model*
6.1 Hypotheses Developed

Based on the conceptual framework, the following hypotheses were developed:

H1: QWL prevailing in the apparel industry of Sri Lanka positively influences commitment.

H2: HRDC prevailing in the apparel industry of Sri Lanka moderates the relationship between QWL and commitment.

7. Methodology

A predominantly quantitative approach was adapted in this study. Data was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data refers to information obtained first hand by the researchers on the variables under study. Secondary data refers to information gathered from already existing sources (Sekaran, 2004).

7.1 Data Collection

A convenient sampling technique was adapted for the research. The sample size was limited to 87 workers. The details of the sample are given in Table 1.
Table 1: Details of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of Factories</th>
<th>Workforce between 500 - 1000</th>
<th>Workforce above 1000</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colombo district</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gampaha district (Excluding Katunayake Free Trade Zone)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katunayake</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kegalle district</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koggala Free Trade Zone</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey Data*
The influence of QWL on Organisational Commitment

7.2 The Survey Instrument

The survey instrument consisted of three main parts:

**Part 1: HRDC Questionnaire**

A 38-item HRD climate questionnaire was developed by Rao and Abraham (1991). These 38 items can be grouped into three categories: general climate, OCTAPAC culture and HRD mechanisms, as discussed earlier. The coefficient of correlation calculated between the 38 items of instruments revealed a high interim coefficient of correlation indicating high internal consistency among the items. The factor analysis indicated that there is one general factor running through all the items, explaining about 36% of the variance. The rest of the factors contributed to less than 5% variance each.

The score on the HRDC questionnaire range from 0-156 when the scores on all the 38 items were added to get a composite score. Scores above 114 indicate a good HRDC. Scores closer to 150 indicate an excellent climate. Scores below 76 indicate that there is considerable scope for improvement (Rao, 2006). The mean scores for each item could theoretically range from 1.0 to 5.0 where 1.0 indicates extremely poor HRDC and 5 indicates extraordinarily good HRDC.

**Part II: Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)**

OCQ developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) was selected as the measure of organizational commitment for this research. It consisted of 18 items (6 for each scale).

**Part III: QWL Questionnaire**

This was based on the questionnaire developed by Fourier (2004). The statements used by Fourie (2004) had a very high internal consistency, indicating a Cronbach alpha of 0.903.

A summary of the measuring instruments discussed above is shown in Table 2.
Table 2: Summary of Measuring Instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Concept</th>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HRDC</td>
<td>General Climate</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HRD Mechanism</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OCTAPAC culture</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>Affective Commitment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuance commitment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normative Commitment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Work Life</td>
<td>Extrinsic Aspects</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intrinsic aspects</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental aspects</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 2, there is consistency among different aspects in relation to the number of items.

7.3 Testing of Reliability and Validity

Table 3 contains the details pertaining to reliability.

Table 3: Reliability statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCQ</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QWL</td>
<td>0.971</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRDC</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey Data
The closer Cronbach alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. Accordingly, the above table depicts a satisfactory situation.

8. Analysis of Data

A data analysis was done by testing the two hypotheses as well as analyzing the qualitative responses given under further comments in each of the Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Questionnaire.

8.1 Testing of Hypotheses

SPSS ver. 13 gave the following results pertaining to $H_1$.

Table 4: Correlation Details Related to $H_1$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>QWL</th>
<th>COMM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QWL</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.721(***)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.721(***)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 - tailed).

Source: Survey data

According to Table 4, the relationship between QWL and commitment has a correlation of 0.679, which is statistically significant. Therefore $H_1$ can be accepted by rejecting the null hypothesis. Hence, it can be stated that:

QWL prevailing in the apparel industry of Sri Lanka positively influences commitment.
The regression details for QWL and commitment can be tabulated as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Regression for QWL vs. Commitment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.679(a)</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.454</td>
<td>.37978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey Data*

The coefficient of determination ($r^2$) is 0.461, which means that 46% of the variation in commitment (dependent variable) is considered as being associated with the variation in the QWL (independent variable). It also signifies that there are other factors, which contribute to commitment in addition to QWL. Social pressure of the apparel workers which influences the level of commitment could be one such factor.

With regard to H2, partial correlation coefficient was calculated in order to investigate the moderator effect of HRDC on the relationship between QWL and Commitment. Table 6 contains the details as given by SPSS ver.13.

**Table 6: Correlation Details Related to H2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Variable</th>
<th>QWL</th>
<th>COMM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HRDC C1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.659(***)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.659 (**)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 - tailed)**

*Source: Survey Data*
According to the above table, partial correlation coefficient is statistically significant but comparatively less than the correlation coefficient between QWL and Commitment obtained earlier. This signifies the moderator effect of HRDC on the relationship between QWL and Commitment.

Therefore, H₂ can be accepted by rejecting the null hypothesis. Hence, it can be stated that: HRDC prevailing in the apparel industry of Sri Lanka moderates the relationship between the QWL and commitment.

8.2 Analysis of Qualitative Responses

Table 7 gives a summary of the responses to the open-ended questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment by the workers</th>
<th>Nos</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy about the industry</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to find a job in this industry; not much skill needed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary not sufficient</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monotonous work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied with this industry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer exploits employee freedom</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low image for the workers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low morale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey Data
According to the above Table in regard to the negative factors, 8.64 % are not happy with the salary. Apparel workers are governed by the minimum wages specified by the Wages Board. The wages are fixed at a lower rate to enable small-scale enterprises also to survive, while the expectations are for a higher wage.

9. Recommendations

The recommendations based on the research findings are categorized under macro and micro levels. The macro level essentially deals with policy-related aspects at national and industrial levels, whereas macro level relates more to the organizational level.

9.1 Macro Level

If a living wage is proposed higher than the minimum wage this can accommodate the cost of living factors and workers could live a decent life. Workers sub-contracting units earn 40 per cent less, without benefits, than those in formal factories. Home workers often get far less (Oxfam International, 2004). This needs the attention of decision makers.

Another factor identified in the open-ended question was the constraint imposed on freedom of association. Due to the work pressure the garment employer tries to provide all benefits and avoid or discourage unionization. This is in line with findings of Dent and Marcus (2002). In this context, adherence to core International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions by both the Government of Sri Lanka and private sector employers appears important. These can be stated specifically as:

- Freedom of Association and the Right to Organize (Convention No 87)
- Right to Collectively Bargain (Convention No. 98)
The ultimate goal of the authorities who have control over policy making in these industries is to promote opportunities for productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. It implies that rights are protected, adequate income is generated, and social protection is available (ILO, 2003).

9.2 Micro Level

The means of QWL and HRDC were found to be 3.66 and 3.47 respectively, of the total score of 5. These point to a wider scope for improvement. Hence, more effort in building a better HRDC and focusing on QWL programmes can bring sustainable gains and growth in this industry.

Workers have commented on the monotonous nature of their work. The whole apparel factory is organized in a manner that standardizes the process, ensuring economies of scale. Variety should be provided and smaller lines with multiple tasks will improve worker satisfaction.

10. Limitations of the Study

There are more than 800 garment factories in Sri Lanka (Joshi, 2002). The research followed a convenient sampling method mainly through known contacts, limited to less than 30 factories. If a larger sample had been taken better results could have been obtained.

Also, more than 50% of the factories chosen were from the Free Trade Zone. A wider representative sample can overcome this limitation.

11. Directions for Further Research

QWL alone does not explain all the factors associated with commitment. The impact created by QWL is 45%, which means that other factors influence commitment as much as 55%. Social pressure is one factor, which can be explored, and studies can
result in identifying factors which will lower employee turnover. An exploratory study to identify the retention factors for commitment in the apparel industry would provide more factors related to the workers. More qualitative inputs from respondents can provide a better understanding of the perceptions of the workers.

A longitudinal study conducted over a period of time would provide better results and also identify more factors. In addition to the questionnaire, other survey methods could be used which can give an insight into this industry. An exploratory research is also recommended linking HRDC, QWL and commitment with organizational performance.

12. Conclusion

Based on the discussion so far, it can be concluded that QWL and HRDC play an important role in enhancing organizational commitment of workers in the apparel industry of Sri Lanka. Appropriated strategies should be adopted with a view to ensuring the sustainability of the economic contribution of the apparel industry, while maintaining a committed workforce.
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References


