



# The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Engagement: With Special Reference to Apparel Industry

N.G.T.D. Wijesiri, T.G.A.H.C. Amarawansa\*

Department of Management Sciences, Faculty of Management, Uva Wellassa University

## Article Information

© 2019 Faculty of Management, Uva Wellassa University. All rights reserved.

To Cite This Article:

Wijesiri N.G.T.D., Amarawansa T.G.A.H.C., (2019) The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Engagement: With Special Reference to Apparel Industry, *Journal of Management and Tourism Research*, Vol II Issue II, pp.39-54, [http://www.uwu.ac.lk/wp-content/uploads/2019/JMTR\\_V2I2\\_cH4.PDF](http://www.uwu.ac.lk/wp-content/uploads/2019/JMTR_V2I2_cH4.PDF)

Keywords:

Leadership Styles  
Employee Engagement  
Job Stress

Printed : ISSN 2630-788X

Online : ISSN 2714-1691

## Abstract

How to increase and maintain employee engagement is one of the critical problems in the apparel industry and it is a thesis which is under explored. Novel organizations have become aware that leadership styles are a determinant which can increase the employee engagement. Leadership styles create intercommunication between the leader and the subordinates in the organizations. Thus, this study empirically evaluates job stress as the mediator between leadership styles and employee engagement of middle and operational level employees in the apparel sector in Sri Lanka. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed by using convenient sampling method to secure responses from 100 middle and operational level employees working for top 05 apparel firms in Sri Lanka. The data were analysed using correlation coefficient, regression, Baron and Kenny mediator assessment method and Sobal test. The results of the study indicated that there is a positive relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement. Mediator assessment and Sobal test identified that job stress partially mediate the relationship between the leadership styles and employee engagement. The findings show the importance of managers to building a positive and naive relationship with their middle and operational level employees to maintain and enhance the employee engagement. Moreover, the study makes a number of recommendations to managers based on the findings of the study.

## Introduction

Rapidly changing economic environment characterized by phenomena such as globalization, changing customers and investor's demand and ever increasing service market. Competition has become a norm for most of the organizations. Therefore, organization should posse's competent workforce to compete in the dynamic business environment. Hence, the company's business is depend on its ability to attract, satisfy and retain skilled employees within the organization.

Employees are considered as a capital in a novel organization and most of the corporate annual reports state that the employees are assets of them. Organization cannot achieve competitive advantage and their objectives without having effective human resource (Tharsiny&Sareena, 2015). Therefore, organizations give a greater attention on human resources. Organizations must implement their strategies towards improving the human resources, since human resource is directly and indirectly affects every organization's ability to attain its goals and objectives.

Though employer knows about the value of the happy and fulfilled employee there is a challenge on attract and retain the happy and fulfilled employee within the organization. Engaging employee is one of the solutions for this (Iddagoda, et al., 2016). Simply the concept of employee engagement describes people who are committed to the work and the goals and values of their organization. If employees are deeply engaged with an organization, there will be heightened sense of positive and intense feelings among them to exert their best effort for the success of the organization (Othman, et al., 2017).

Employee engagement determine by various factors. (Othman, et al., 2017) states that leadership style is suggested to be the determinant of employee engagement. Simply leadership states that, the ability of an individual or organization to lead or guide other individuals, teams or entire organization to attain organizational goals and objectives. It directly impacts the success and the productivity of any organization. Researchers have proposed various leadership theories and approaches also developed various leadership styles base on that.

The relationship between leadership styles and its outcomes had been studied by many researches by the organizational behavior studies. There it seems contradictory ideas & arguments relevant to the relationship between leadership styles & employee engagement. Considering the facts by studying past literature this study is carry on to study the impact of leadership styles on employee engagement with the mediating effect of job stress. There is a significance role can identify from the job stress. The effect of job stress can be negative or positive. Therefore job stress is selected as the mediating variable for this study.

## Problem statement

Previous researchers had found that relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement with different perspectives. While states that transformational leadership leads to higher employee work engagement, (Brad, et al., 2011) states that transactional or transformational leadership does not suit changing employee engagement needs. There can be seen contradictory arguments in literature with respect to this scenario.

A considerable number of researchers have explained about the impact of leadership styles on employee engagement like research conducted by (Ndethiu, 2014) on the effects of leadership styles on employee engagement in an international bank with substantial operations in Kenya and research done by (Gigaba, n.d.) on the Impact of leadership styles on employee engagement in the platinum mining sector in South Africa. Moreover, when it comes to the

\* Collaborating Author- [hirusha.chathuri@yahoo.com](mailto:hirusha.chathuri@yahoo.com)

Submitted: November 02, 2019; Revised: December 09, 2019 ; Accepted: December 23, 2019

Sri Lankan context there can be seen plenty of researches relevant to this research area as example transformational leadership and employee engagement in hospitality sector in Sri Lanka. Therefore there are insufficient researches related to a particular research area. Moreover, with especially relevant to the apparel industry.

Job Stress means the psychological discomfort or tension of a person. (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908) states that stress is related to higher engagement but up to a point, after a certain point the relationship reverses and more stress does not result in higher engagement. A significance contribution can identify from the job stress. Therefore job stress is selected as the mediating variable for this study.

Hence, there are contradictory ideas between variables, and also there is no literature in Sri Lankan context to convince the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement considering the mediating effect of job stress it indulges knowledge and empirical gap for relevant research problem.

According to Export Development Board of Sri Lanka in 2017, Sri Lanka has since become a world class apparel manufacturer supplying to global super brands for over three decades. The high quality of Sri Lankan apparel creates this global brand. Although in the last decade there can be seen a decline of export performance of apparel industry.

According to the (Mohanty&Choudhury, 2018) productivity of an organization which includes products quality, organizational performance have depend on various factors like manpower, type of raw materials, available infrastructure. Hence apparel industry is highly depending on human resource, it is important to maintaining employee's engagement and commitment towards work where the product quality would mostly decide performance of the global market share.

Therefore, due to the gaps in the literature and the problem in the employee engagement level in the apparel industry this study is conducted to investigate the impact of leadership styles on employee engagement with special reference to apparel industry.

**Research Questions**

Primary question

How do leadership styles impact on employee engagement in the apparel industry?

Secondary questions

- 1) What is the existing level of leadership styles, job stress and employee engagement in apparel industry?
- 2) What is the relationship among leadership styles, job stress and employee engagement?
- 3) How do leadership styles impact on employee engagement?
- 4) What is the mediating role of job stress within the relationship of leadership styles and employee engagement?

**Objectives**

The objectives of the study are;

Primary objective

To identify how leadership styles impact on employee engagement in the apparel industry.

Secondary objectives

- 1) To identify the existing level of leadership styles, job stress and employee engagement in apparel industry.
- 2) To identify the relationship among leadership styles, job stress and employee engagement.
- 3) To identify how leadership styles impact on employee engagement.
- 4) To identify the mediating role of job stress within the relationship of leadership styles and employee engagement.

**Significance of the Study**

The research study significant could be traced out in many ways. It has significant to the managers, academics, future researchers in many perspectives. An engaged employee is not only increases his or her job performance and commitment within an organization, but also goes beyond the job requirements thus increasing the organization's performance and making it more profitable. It is imperative for managers and leaders within the apparel industry to recognize and acknowledge that leadership styles demonstrated to employees can positively and negatively affect the levels of employee engagement. The results of this study will help to understand the impact of leadership styles on employee engagement. Therefore this study will bolster management departments in apparel industry to make changes in their firm and human resource managers enable to maintain efficient and engaged work force in the industry

**Literature Review**

**Employee Engagement**

Employee Engagement is an important concept which most of the novel organizations embrace in current business world. According to (Hughes &Rog, 2008) employee engagement is a heightened emotional and intellectual connection that an employee has for his job, organization, manager, or co-workers that in turn influences him to apply additional discretionary effort to his work. (Shuck &Reio, 2013) define employee engagement as the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral energy an employee directs toward positive organizational outcomes. Apparently that an important thread runs through all the definitions described above, employee engagement is an extent of employee discretionary effort to his/her work.

**Table 1** Characteristics of Employee Engagement

<b>Vigour</b>	<b>High levels of energy and resilience, the willingness to invest efforts, not being easily fatigued, and persistence in the face of difficulties.</b>
<b>Dedication</b>	Deriving a sense of significance from one's work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about one's job, and feeling inspired and challenged by it.
<b>Absorption</b>	Being totally happily immersed in one's work and having difficulties detaching oneself from it so that time passes quickly and one forgets everything else that is around.

Engaged employee is always an advantage to an organization. An "engaged employee" describes one who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about his work. Engaged employee is always aware about business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job. By maintaining employee engagement within the organization it helps to have an engaged workforce within the organization and it directly impact to increase the overall organization effectiveness. (Right Management, 2009)reported that employee engagement influences customer satisfaction and overall organization effectiveness. Moreover, there are substantial previous empirical studies and published literatures on significance of employee engagement on organizational performance excellence and success in different industries.

**Leadership Styles**

Organizational leaders play an important role as they make followers awareness of work through distributing tasks, setting goals, appraising performance, or motivating them. According to (Bass & Avolio, 1997), a single specific definition of leadership is a very complex task as literature and studies on this topic are varied and there is no definition which is widely and universally accepted. According to (Rost, 1993) Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes.

According to the literature many leadership models differentiate two main types of leadership behaviors.

**Table 2:** Types of Leadership Behaviors

<b>Task Oriented Leadership Behavior (Directive Leadership)</b>	Strongly focus on targets, close supervision, and control of subordinate actions.
<b>Relationship Oriented Leadership Behavior (Supportive Leadership)</b>	Focuses on sensitivity to individual and group needs, care for group tensions and focus on harmonic working relations.

Source: (Euwma, et al., 2007)

**Table 3:** Leadership Styles in CPE Model

<b>Change Centered Leadership Style</b>	Leader is interested in innovation, creativity and new ways to accomplish tasks. By learning and adapting in order to change the status-quo, the leader is also a risk taker as well.
<b>Product Centered Leadership Style</b>	Leader concentrates effort on achieving goals, thus engaging subordinates work activities in task accomplishment roles.
<b>Employee Centered Leadership Style</b>	Leader is sensitive to subordinates' needs, thus the focus is on maintaining friendly and supportive relationships through friendship, mutual trust and respect.

Source: (Ekvall & Arvonen, 1991)

Leadership is the power to motivate the followers in the group. Effective leadership motivates the subordinates for higher productivity and achievements. The advice and guidance by the leaders create confidence in the group members and they are motivated. Good leadership increases the morale of the group members which leads to high productivity. Also the good leadership promotes team spirit which is quite essential for the success of the team or a group. A progressive and democratic minded leader always encourages on the part of the team.

**Job Stress**

Many employees will spend a quarter of their lives in the workplace. Stress has become common issue that always happens in every organization in current business world. It has become a serious problem for all different groups of people on all hierarchical levels from the top to bottom of an organization. The employees cannot be run without facing work stress in their work.

According to the (Cullen, et al., 1985) stress is the psychological discomfort or tension which results from exposure to stressors. Among that job stress is the interaction between working conditions and people involved in the workplace, where the work demand exceeds the skills of worker (Randall & Almaier, 1994).

**Job Stress and Employee Engagement**

According to the (Moura, et al., 2014) one's job demands and job resources influence to her/his employee engagement. Job demands which includes high work pressure, emotional demands, and role stress may lead to low job satisfaction, impaired health and at last to disengagement and job resources such as social support, performance feedback, and autonomy may instigate a motivational process, leading to job related learning, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and employee engagement. Therefore, a theoretical relationship between job stress and employee engagement can be established.

(Moura, et al., 2014)stated that higher levels of job stress experienced by an employee are likely to result in lower level of her/his subsequent work engagement. Literature suggests that moderate levels of stress can act as a motivator and therefore can results in a higher level of employee engagement (Hicks & McSherry, 2006). Furthermore existing literature suggests a negative relationship with Job stress and employee engagement. However, an acceptable level of stress can be identified to improve individual's performance.

**Leadership Styles and Employee Engagement**

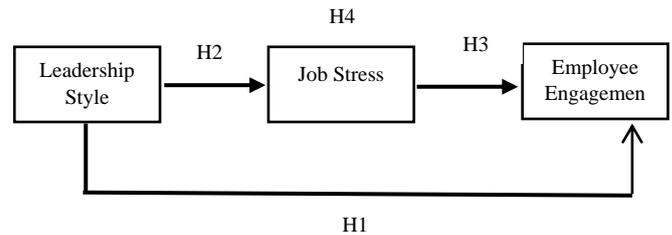
Leaders' impact organizational effectiveness through their followers and leadership can have a great impact on engaging employees within the organization. Furthermore, when investigate the past literature most scholars

have conducted researches examining the various factors that might contribute to the employee engagement. Among them leadership styles have been found to be significant predictors of employee engagement (Othman, et al., 2017).

Scholars use different leadership approaches and theories to measure the impact of leadership styles on employee engagement. However, the findings of these studies are not consistent as some studies have discovered various results. According to the study conducted by (Britt, et al., 2006) using four-item scale of the single factor engagement construct indicates that transformational leadership brings no significant impact towards employee engagement while another study (Schaufeli, et al., 2002) using scale with the same criterion indicates an significant relationship.

(Markos & Sridevi, 2010)underlined the dearth of research that link both leadership and employee engagement, especially in third world countries. Their argument made sense since much of the literature has been focusing on the western context, or more focusing within the nursing and teaching environment.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework

Source: Developed by the Researcher Based on Literature Review

**Research Hypotheses**

- H1: There is a significant relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between leadership styles and job stress.
- H3: There is a significant relationship between job stress and employee engagement.
- H4: There is a significant mediating effect of job stress between the leadership styles and employee engagement.

**Methodology**

The target population in the research is middle and operational level employees who are working in the key apparel players in Sri Lanka. According to (Export Development Board, 2017), There are around 300 – 350 manufacturers of apparel and among them there are 13 key apparel players in the industry. The sample of this study including first five key players in apparel industry including Brandix Apparel Ltd, Mas Intimates Pvt. Ltd, Hirdaramani International Exports Ltd, MAS Active Trading Pvt. Ltd and Bodyline Pvt. Ltd; according to the (Export Development Board, 2017). These manufacturers select as the sample because these are the ones, which can highly influence to the export performance of the country and these are the ones which had a highest employment within the industry.

The respondents consist of 100 middle and operational level employees of five apparel companies and select 20 employees from each with convenient sampling technique. Primary data will be collected through questionnaire and secondary data will be obtained from the works of other authors which have already been published.

**Data analysis, Presentation and Interpretation**

**Reliability Analysis of Leadership Styles, Job Stress and Employee Engagement**

Reliability test was performed to ensure the reliability of measures used in the research constructs and for this Cronbach's alpha value was utilized. As cited in the literature if the Cronbach's alpha value exceeds the alpha level of 0.70

there is an acceptable internal consistency. If the alpha value exceeds the level of 0.60, there is a questionable but acceptable internal consistency.

**Table 4:** Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
LS	0.738	21
JS	0.828	7
EE	0.907	12

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the table 4, Cronbach alpha value of all three variables are more than 0.7. This indicates that there is an acceptable internal consistency among the items used in the questionnaire.

**Descriptive analysis of variables**

**Table 5:** Descriptive Statistics Independent Variable

Variable	Mean	SD	Variance
Change-Orientation Leadership Style	3.67	0.488	0.238
Product-Orientation Leadership Style	3.78	0.466	0.217
Employee-Orientation Leadership Style	3.69	0.465	0.216

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the Table 5, the “mean” with respect to the Change-Orientation, Product-Orientation and Employee-Orientation leadership styles were 3.67,3.78and 3.69 respectively. It implies that employees are agreed with the exiting level of LS and it comprised that apparels are highly adopting the product-orientation leadership styles since it has high mean value and also through that, it depicts there is a positive level of adaptation of product orientation leadership styles within the apparel sector.

In addition to that standard deviation emphasizes that how data are scattered around the mean. On the other hand, it was measured that how far one value range away from the mean. Highest standard deviation is 0.488 belongs to change-orientation leadership style. Therefore it has a higher variance. Minimum standard deviation is 0.465 belongs to employee-orientation leadership style. Therefore it has minimum variance.

**Table 6:** Descriptive Statistics of Mediate Variable

Variable	Mean	SD	Variance
JS	3.86	0.533	0.284

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the table 6, mean value with Job Stress of middle and operational level employees was 3.86. It implies that employees are agreed with the exiting level of JS and it has dispersed by 0.533 of standard deviation of its mean.

**Table 7:** Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variable

Variable	Mean	SD	Variance
EE	3.83	0.532	0.283

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the table 7, mean value with EE of middle and operational level employees was 3.83. It implies that employees are agreed with the exiting level of EE and it has dispersed by 0.532 of standard deviation of its mean.

**Table 8:** The Correlation between Leadership Style and Job Stress

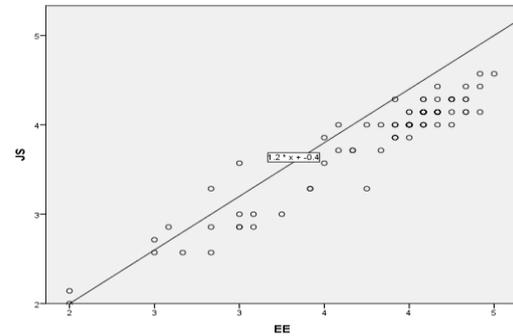
Variable	Pearson correlation	p value
LS	0.824	0.000

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the table 8, correlation between LS and JS was 0.824 which implied that there was a strong positive relationship. Furthermore p-value of 0.000 emphasizes that there was a significant relationship between independent

and dependent variables. This illustrate that job stress would increase when LS increase. Therefore, it rejects the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and accepts alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) at 95% confidence level.

**The relationship between Job Stress and Employee Engagement**



**Figure 2:** The Correlation between Leadership Style and Job Stress

Style and Job Stress

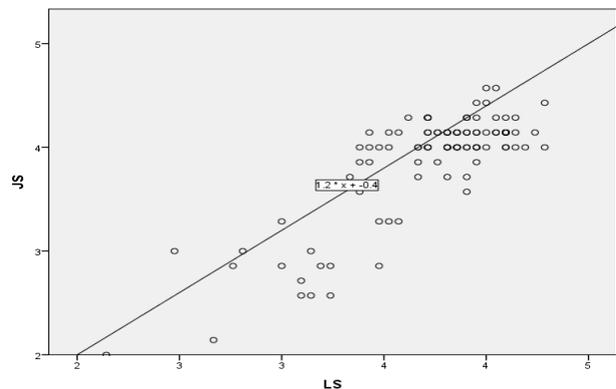
According to the table 9, correlation between JS and EE was 0.958 which implied that there was a strong positive relationship. Furthermore p-value of 0.000 emphasizes that there was a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. This illustrate that employee engagement would increase when JS increase. Therefore, it rejects the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and accepts alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) at 95% confidence level.

**Table 9:** The Correlation between Job Stress and Employee Engagement

Variable	Pearson correlation	p value
JS	0.958	0.000

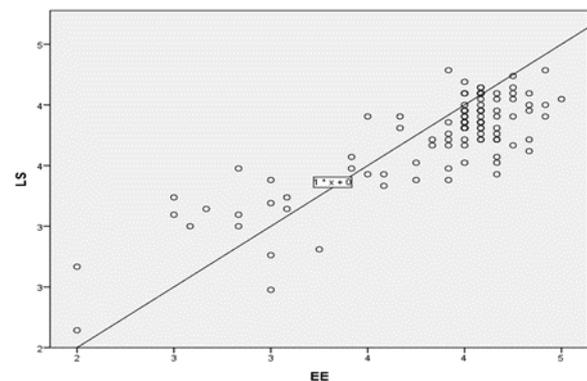
Source: Based on the analyzed data

**The relationship between Learning Style and Job Stress**



**Figure 3:** The Correlation between Job Stress and Employee Engagement

**The relationship between Leadership Style and Employee Engagement**



**Figure 4:** The Correlation of Leadership Style and Employee Engagement

**Table 10:** The Correlation of LS and EE

Variable	Pearson correlation	p value
<b>LS</b>	0.832	0.000

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the table 10, correlation between LS and EE was 0.832 which implied that there was a strong positive relationship. Furthermore p-value of 0.000 emphasizes that there was a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. This illustrate that employee engagement would increase when LS increase. Therefore, it rejects the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and accept alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) at 95% confidence level.

**Summary of Correlation**

**Table 11:** Summary of Correlation Analysis

	Results	p Value Significant level	< Null Hypothesis	Alternative Hypothesis
<b>LS and JS</b>	0.824	0.000 < 0.05	Rejected	Accepted
<b>JS and EE</b>	0.958	0.000 < 0.05	Rejected	Accepted
<b>LS and EE</b>	0.832	0.000 < 0.05	Rejected	Accepted

Source: Based on the analyzed data

**Simple Linear Regression Analysis**

**Table 12:** Model Summary of Linear Regression Analysis

Figure	Value
<b>R</b>	0.832
<b>R Square</b>	0.692
<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	0.689
<b>Std. Error of the Estimates</b>	0.297

Source: Based on the analyzed data

According to the model summary multiple correlation is 0.832, this interpret that join association between independent variable and the dependent variable as the coefficient value is more than 0.8. There is a strong association jointly with independent variable and the dependent variable. Coefficient of determination is 0.692. Proportion of the dependent variable covered by regression model is expanding by r<sup>2</sup>. If the value is 0.7 or more is nicely fitted.

Even though this value is less, model can be used as r<sup>2</sup> belongs to sum. R<sup>2</sup> is 69%. It means that 69% of engagement has been covered by the model.

**Table 13:** ANOVA

Model	DF	Mean Square	F value	p value
<b>Regression</b>	1	19.383	220.108	0.000
<b>Residual</b>	98	0.088		
<b>Total</b>	99			

Source: Based on the analyzed data

The table shows that sum of square is 28.014 and besides 19.383 percent variance was explained by regression and 8.630 percent was explained by residual. Further it can be identified that calculated F value is 220.108. The table F value was at 0.05 significant levels. Model is appropriate, because it is significant. Therefore, LS is influence on EE. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It illustrates that the regression is meaningful and overall model applied can statistically predict the dependent variable.

**Table 14:** Regression analysis of LS versus EE

Model	B	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
<b>Constant</b>	-0.274	0.279	-0.984	0.328
<b>LS</b>	1.108	0.075	14.836	0.000

Source: Based on the analyzed data

Table explained that, the intercept equals -0.274, and the slope, equals 1.108. The standard error of LS is estimated at 0.075. The p-value of t test for LS was less than 0.05. Therefore, it could be concluded that there is a positive relationship between LS and EE was accepted at a significance level of 0.05.

Therefore the regression equation can be expressed as follows.

**Table 15:** Relationship between LS and EE

$$EE = -0.274 + 1.108 (LS) + \epsilon$$

Source: Based on the analyzed data

**Mediator Assessment**

Researcher applies the Baron Kenny mediation analysis (1986) to accomplish the fourth objective of the research as follows.

**Model Summary**

**Table 16:** Summary of the Model

Path	B (unstandardized coefficient)	Standard error	B (standardized coefficient)	p value
<b>C</b>	1.108	0.075	0.832	0.000
<b>A</b>	1.099	0.076	0.824	0.000
<b>B</b>	0.957	0.029	0.958	0.000
<b>C'</b>	0.175	0.066	0.131	0.000

Source: Based on the analyzed data

The above table of 16 revealed that the all four paths are significant with the coefficients of 1.108, 1.099, 0.967, and 0.175 at the 0.05 significant levels. In accordance with the unstandardized coefficient between LS and EE it can be clearly identified that there is a positive relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore of it implied value as 1.108. In addition to that p value denotes 0.000. Therefore, it is significance at 0.05 levels. Hence it can be concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between independent and dependent variable without having any mediator. Additionally, according to the Baron and Kenny mediation model c path is significant.

Moreover, the unstandardized coefficient between LS and JS was 1.099. It suggested that strong positive relationship between independent and the mediating variable. With reference to the Baron and Kenny a path also significant at 0.05 levels because the calculated p value is 0.000.

Similarly, the unstandardized coefficient between JS and EE was 0.957. It illustrates that there is a strong positive relationship between the mediating variable and the dependent variable. According to the Baron and Kenny mediation b path also significant at 0.05 level. Since, calculated p value is 0.000.

As per the table, the data support for a statistically significant relationship (P < 0.05) between the variables when analyze the independent variable and mediating variable in predicting dependent variable. It implied unstandardized coefficient value as 0.175. Hence there is positive relationship between variables when mediator is in the model. Therefore, the c' path also significant and when compare the c path and c' path there is a significant difference between the unstandardized coefficients of the two paths.

Further, the strength of c' has reduced drastically (unstandardized beta value difference between c and c' is 0.933) Therefore, JS is a partial mediator of the relationship between LS and EE. Moreover, the indirect effect of LS on EE. Through JS is significant as examined by Sobel test in next topic.

**Sobel Test-Calculating the indirect effect**

Sobel test was used to calculate the indirect effect of the variables between LS, JS and EE in the apparel industry.

Where,

S<sub>b</sub> = Standard error of path b

S<sub>a</sub> = Standard error of path a

a = coefficient of path a

b = coefficient of path b

$$S_{ab} = \frac{1.099 \times (0.957)}{\sqrt{(0.957^2 \times 0.076^2) + (1.099^2 \times 0.029^2)}} \\ = 0.730$$

If the Z value falls outside that range, the pattern exhibited is probably too unusual to be just another version of random chance and the p-value will be small to reflect this ( $p < 0.05$ ). Hence the findings illustrate that the other effects than the mediator effect can influence on the relationship between independent and dependent variable.

Standardized indirect effect = (standardized coefficient of path a  $\times$  standardized coefficient of path b)

$$= \beta_a \times \beta_b \\ = 1.099 \times 0.957 \\ = 1.051743$$

Portion of independent variable on dependent variable due to mediator =  $(c - c')/c$

$$\frac{1.108 - (-0.175)}{1.108} \\ = 0.842058 \\ = 84\%$$

Based on the above calculation, it illustrates that the LS on EE due to the JS. It is 84% at the 0.05 significant levels.

#### Summary of Mediation

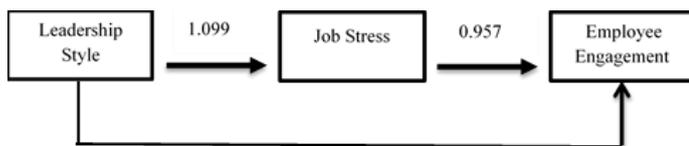


Figure 5: Conceptual Model

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The study disclosed that how leadership styles of apparel industry impact on employee engagement. Further, the researcher has used the job stress as the mediating variable to identify the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement. When it comes to the summary of the research findings, if the leadership styles are using in Apparel companies, they can increase the employee engagement within the organization. This study found that leadership styles important to increase employee engagement of middle and operational level employees in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Among the selected leadership styles, product orientation leadership style takes an important place. Another finding is there is a positive relationship between independent variable and mediator, and two positive relationships are having between mediator and dependent variable and independent variable and dependent variable. Further, the researcher has identified that there is a mediating effect of job stress in the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement in apparel industry in Sri Lanka.

#### Recommendations

Study findings are helpful for the managers to make decisions regarding the issues in their field. Hence, based on the study findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- The majority of employees are female in apparel firms. Female employees have high tendency to interrupt their careers. Therefore, managers should consider high support, interaction or trust from a supervisor and perceived fairness of organizational systems with the decision making process.
- This study focused on LS and JS which have a positive relationship. Therefore, managers should improve the good and friendly relationship between supervisor and subordinator. Furthermore, they should allow employees to raise questions, concerns, complain and give comments at any time.

- Concerning decisions about the job, the general manager should discuss the implications of the decisions with middle and operational level employees and respect and protect the rights of employees.

- Existing managers in apparel firms in Sri Lanka need to be made aware that LS and JS and increase the EE. They need to be told of the study findings. They must also be given training on how to improve LS with their middle and operational level staff. Also when recruiting new managers, the organization should recruit managers who can build good LS with middle and operational level staff.

- Managers in the apparel industry need to build positive relationships with their middle and operational level staff. This is ensuring that employees will not leave the organization and they are engage with the organization.

- According to study, there is a mediation effect of JS between LS and EE within the apparel industry. Therefore, managers should take fair and just actions regarding the rules and regulations and organization conditions that apply to employees.

## References

- Baron, R. & Kenny, D., 1986. The moderator – mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, Volume 51(6), p. 1173.
- Brad, M. S., Rocco, T. & Alborno, C., 2011. Exploring employee engagement from the employee perspective: Implications for HRD. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Volume 35(4), pp. 300-325.
- Britt, T., Thomas, J. & Dawson, C., 2006. Self-engagement magnifies the relationship between qualitative overload and performance in a training setting. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Volume 36(9), pp. 2100-2114.
- Cullen, F., Link, B., Wolfe, N. & Frank, J., 1985. The social dimensions of correctional officer stress. *Justice Quarterly*, Volume 2(4), pp. 505-533.
- Ekvall, G. & Arvonen, J., 1991. Change-centered leadership: An extension of the two-dimensional model. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Volume 7(1), pp. 17-26.
- Euwma, M., Wendt, H. & Van, H. E., 2007. Leadership styles and group organizational citizenship behavior across cultures. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behaviour*, Volume 28(8), pp. 1035-1057.
- Export Development Board, 2017. *Industry Capability Report- Sri Lankan Apparel Sector*, Sri Lanka: s.n.
- Export Development Board, 2019. [Online] Available at: [www.srilankabusiness.com>apparel](http://www.srilankabusiness.com>apparel)
- Gigaba, M., n.d. *The impact of leadership styles on employee engagement in the platinum mining sector in South Africa*. University of Pretoria: s.n.
- Hicks, T. & McSherry, C., 2006. *A guide to managing workplace stress*. [Online].
- Hughes, J. & Rog, E., 2008. Talent Management: A strategy for improving employee recruitment, retention and engagement within hospitality organizations. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Volume 20(7), pp. 743-757.
- Iddagoda, A., Opatha, H. & Gunawardana, K., 2016. Towards a Conceptualization and an Operationalization of the Construct of Employee Engagement.
- Markos, S. & Sridevi, M., 2010. Employee engagement: The key to improving performance. *International Journal of Business and Management*, Volume 5(12), pp. 89-96.
- Mohanty, M. & Choudhury, S., 2018. Employee Engagement and Productivity-Linking connectivity from manufacturing industry perspective.
- Moura, D., Orgambidez, A. R. & Goncalves, G., 2014. Role stress and work engagement as antecedents of job satisfaction.
- Ndethiu, E., 2014. *The Effects of Leadership Styles on Employee Engagement in an International Bank with Substantial Operations in Kenya*. United States International University-Africa: s.n.
- Othman, A., Hamzah, M., Abas, M. & Zakuan, N., 2017. The influence of leadership styles on employee engagement; The moderating effect of

communication styles. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, Volume 4(3), pp. 107-116.

Randall, R. & Almaier, E., 1994. *Intervention in occupational stress*. Sage Publications.

Right Management, 2009. *Employee Engagement: Maximizing Organizational Performance*. s.l.:s.n.

Schaufeli, W., Salanova, M., Gonzalez- Roma, V. & Bakker, A., 2002. . The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness studies*, Volume 3(1), pp. 71-92.

Shuck, B. & Reio, G., 2013. Employee Engagement and well-being: A moderation model and implications for practice. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, Volume 21(1), pp. 43-58

Tharsiny, M. & Sareena, U. M., 2015. The impact of work life balance on employee's work performance: Special reference to insurance companies operating in the Kilinochchi District.

Yerkes, R. & Dodson, J., 1908. The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit-formation. *Journal of Comparative Neurology and Psychology*, Volume 18, pp. 459- 482.