

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

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Maintaining and increasing employee engagement is one of the critical problems in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Novel organizations have become aware that leadership styles are determinant that can increase employee engagement. Leadership styles create intercommunication between the leader and the subordinates in the organizations. Thus, the study empirically evaluated job stress as the mediator between leadership styles and employee engagement of the 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 analyzed 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 mediates the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement. The findings show the importance of managers in building a positive and naive relationship with their middle and operational level employees to enhance employee engagement. Moreover, the study makes several recommendations. Managers should improve a good and friendly relationship between supervisors and subordinator. Furthermore, they should allow employees to raise questions, complain, and give comments at any time.

**Keywords:** Leadership styles, Employee engagement, Job stress