

## **Identifying Pattern of Worker Absenteeism in Tea Plantations**

R.M.P.S. Rathnayaka *and* R.P.D. Gunathilake  
*Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

### ***Abstract***

One of the key economic indicators of the Sri Lankan tea industry, namely the privatized large-scale plantation or estate is afflicted with low productivity and high cost of production which resulted for continuous low profit margins. Chronic absenteeism has major impact on labor productivity and cost, while workforce continuity and industry viability are threatened by out-migration for better conditions and a more fulfilling life outside the tea sector. Measuring the pattern of absenteeism is important for planning manpower requirements for production scheduling and to identify the productivity loss due to absenteeism, extent of absenteeism, frequency of absenteeism and concentration of absenteeism in Tea plantations. This has been based to conduct the research. Telbedde estate of Balangoda Plantations was selected to conduct the research. Primary data were collected through a questionnaire. Descriptive analysis was employed to determine the productivity loss due to absenteeism, extent of absenteeism, frequency of absenteeism and concentration of absenteeism. Productivity loss due to absenteeism per worker was calculated as 3.44. Participation index explains the extent of absenteeism and it was 0.3827 for the three months period of study. Frequency of absenteeism was 118.5 per 100 employees per year. Largest divisions with high number of workers recorded higher rates of absenteeism. Most of the workers in the estate were absent for more than seven working days per month.