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# FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF OPERATIONAL LEVEL EMPLOYEES IN VOGUE TEX (PVT) LTD

Rebecca E, Gunasekara VM

## **ABSTRACT**

In contemporary business environment, apparel industry has been identified as a one of the most challenging and competitive industries among the other sort of industries. For endurance, apparel industry needs to have a mean of achieving competitive advantage. Basically this competitive advantage has been achieved by the apparel industry via human resources. Human resource has been identified as the only living resource among the other resources which has the capability to think, innovate and create etc. Consequently, human resource is viewed as a basic factor which pushes an organization towards the goal achievement. Hence, organizations are very sensitive on performance of the employee and on the factors that affect the performance of employees. This study was undertaken to identify the significance of the factors that affect performance of the operational level employees' in Vogue Tex (Pvt) Ltd. This study was a cross sectional study with the sample of 96 operational level employees of Vogue Tex (Pvt) Ltd. In order to select the sample, convenience sampling method was applied. Data were collected through standard questionnaire and to analyses the data, descriptive statistics, Simple ranking method and Factor analysis were performed using IBM SPSS 20. Based on the empirical findings, researchers have tested eight factors namely, Working Environment, Organizational Culture, Personal Factors and Problems, Compensation & Reward System, Job content, Leadership, Team Cohesiveness and Training. All of these eight factors

have been affected significantly in determining performance of the operational level employees. However, based on the findings, researchers have found that Training and Organizational Culture are the major and the most prominent determinants of the performance of the operational level employees. Hence, it has been concluded that Organizational culture and the Training are the most important factors when articulating the performance level of the operational level employees in the Vogue Tex (Pvt) Ltd.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Working Environment, Organizational Culture, Personal Factors and Problems, Compensation & Reward System, Job content, Leadership, Team Cohesiveness, Training

## **INTRODUCTION**

An organization is commonly identified as a formal group of two or more people who function in an official structure that was set up purposefully to accomplish a certain goal or goals. An organization is defined by White & Bednar (1991) as two or more people who work together in a structured way to achieve a specific goal or set of goals. Today business organizations have to deal with a competitive and rapidly changing environment and business organizations have changed from simple to complex business structures. Most of the organizations are operating internationally while operating within the national boundaries. Therefore, the market or the

industry expects much more standardized business activities and outputs from the organizations. Hence organizations should be able to fulfill the requirements from the industry. It's not an easy task. It is a very challenging task. Organization should overcome that pressure and the challenges. Thus it has added more responsibilities for the part of managers in managing employees of the organization. Opatha (2013) explained Human Resource Management (HRM) as effective and efficient utilization of human resources to achieve the goals and objectives of an organization.

HRM is significantly important because human resource is the one of the critical factors which determines the success or the failure of any organization. Therefore, employees' play an important role in an organization and human resource is significantly unique than any other resource because of it has unique characteristics (Opatha, 2013). Therefore, the ability of attract, hire, retain and get maximum from the employee is needed and key influence on an organization's success. Performance is defined as the attained outcome actions with the skills of employees who perform in some situation (Gruman & Saks, 2011). Organizational performance is a sign of the capacity of a company to efficiently achieve independent goals (Bol, 2011). Higher organizational performance need to elevate competitiveness and achieve success. Organizational performance totally depends on individual performance. That means employee performance is the major weapon that organizations can handle for their victory. Employee performance indicates the financial or non-financial outcome of the employee that has a direct link with the performance of the organization and its success (Anitha, 2014). Further, Hong, Yang, Wang, Chiou, Su & Huang (1995) explained employee performance as the successful completion of tasks by a

selected individual or individuals, as set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resources within a changing environment.

Performance of the employee is considered as what an employee does and what he does not do. Employee performance entails quality and quantity of output, presence at work, accommodative and supportive nature and timelines of output. According to the study conducted by Hong, Yang, Wang, Chiou, Su & Huang (1995) on individual performance, it showed that performance of the individuals cannot be verified. Similarly, he asserts that organizations can use direct bonuses and rewards based on individual performance if employee is noticeable (Kruse & Blasi, 1997). As per the above mentioned organization's success depends on its employee's performance, hence poor performance is detrimental to success of the company. And also higher employee performance is the main target of any organization. Thus human resources have been identified as one of the critical sections of the successful performance of an organization in order to survive. Therefore, it is very important to identify behavior of performance of employees in order to enhance the employee performance. According to that, behavior of the performance can see various ranges of each employee. Therefore, it is very important to identify how performance behaves. Hence, there should be some factors affecting employee performance. Throughout the current study, researchers attempt to identify what are the factors that determine an employee's performance of the organization. There may be several significant factors that affect employee performances. And also it is needed to compare each of the factors and develop suitable strategies to enhance performances. Many researchers

conducted studies to identify the factors affecting performance and their impact on the level of performance. According to the previous studies, researchers determined some factors for the study and assessed them to find out the impact of the factors.

In this research, researchers selected the apparel sector for the study. Today the apparel business environment is rapidly & constantly changing. Therefore, companies need to elevate competitiveness in order to survive in the business world. Hence, apparel industry organizations highly depend on their operational level employee's (Machine Operators) performance. This research will identify the factors affecting the performance of operational level employees in Vogue tex (pvt) ltd.

#### **Problem Background and Problem of the Study**

Apparel being a product oriented business. Hence the quality of the product is very important. It mostly depends on employee performance. Therefore, enhancing the employee performance is a key factor for apparel sector organizations. Being an apparel sector organization, Vogue Tex is also concerned about employee performance very well. Therefore, they use many competitive strategies. Even though these competitive strategies can be implemented, success will depend only when the workforce is managed effectively. Further, it has been recognized that the human factor is more critical than any other factors.

Company is manufacturing children's clothes and they mainly deal with huge market brands such as M&S, Adidas and George. Their requirements are highly standardized and the company should align with acceptable requirements. Therefore, they implement their production with high quality and technology. Mainly, all these things depend on the better production. Production department is the most important department and highly focused

department in the organization. Hence, the most important part is "sawing the garment". It is responsible of the machine operators. Hence, their performance is a most critical factor which can influence the success of the company.

Vogue Tex production department consists of 9 teams which are recognized as Lines. And also one team separated into two sections. Generally, the company works 6 days per week and normal working hours from 7.45 to 4.30. Hence, the company has identified that there is some variance of operational level employee's performance level. So it is very important to identify how these kinds of variances happen on performance and what factors determine the operational level employee's (machine operator's) performance. Therefore, this study will focus on the research problem of "Factors affecting the performance of operational level employees".

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

According to the Opatha, (2013) Performance Management (PM) is measuring and giving feedback on employee contribution towards the organization. PM is a series of activities designed to ensure that the organization gets the performance from their employees and performance appraisal is the process of determining how well employees do their job relative to a standard and communicating that information to the employee. Performance Appraisal means measuring employee performance to identify that how well and how far their performing the job within the period being considered for enhancing human performance (self and others) and business performance of the organization (Opatha, 2013). Performance management has a significant impact on organizational effectiveness and therefore, it has to be the immediate priority of managers. Job performance is a term used to depict how

well an employee performs his or her work-related duties. Performance is important to workers and employers since it is inevitably influences decisions regarding promotions, terminations, merit increases, and bonuses (Caillier, 2010).

### **Determinants of Employee Performance**

Most of the organizations have identified the importance of employee performance. There are lots of factors that affect the performance of employees. According to the explanations given by some researchers and practitioners, there are certain factors individually and collectively effect on the performance of employees in a positive or negative way and they implemented their researchers to identify the factors effect on employee performance or the determinants of employee performance. Anitha (2014) implemented study on “Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance”. Anitha (2014) emphasized that employee is the only one factor or resource which cannot duplicate and imitate by competitors and who gives competitive advantage to the company. Engaged employee is a need for every organization to be success. A study revealed that engaged employees go beyond the call of duty to perform their role in excellence. Employee engagement is defined in general as the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values. Anitha (2014) said that important way to enhance employee performance is to focus on fostering employee engagement. Hence, this study revealed that some factors which determined employee engagement and finally those impact on employee performance in significant way. Seven factors were identified based on the previous studies as the determinants of employee engagement by Anitha (2014) and empirically tested the impact of them

on employee performance as well. The factors are the work environment, leadership, team & coworker relationship, training & career development, compensation, organizational policies and workplace wellbeing. It also shows that there is a strong significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance.

According to the study conducted by Chen & Francesco (2003), it was identified certain factors affecting on employee performance. In this study says certain factors individually and collectively effect on employee performance. Factors are manager’s attitude, financial rewards, organization culture, job content and personal problem. It has also identified that, these factors are considered being critical in predicting employee job performance.

Considering all of these previous research findings, the researcher has identified certain significant factors for the current research to study as the determinants of performance of operational level employees.

- Organizational/Working Environment
- Organizational/Workplace Culture
- Job content
- Compensation and Reward System
- Personal Factors and Problems
- Leadership
- Team Cohesiveness
- Training

### **Organizational Culture**

According to Schein (1990), organizational culture comprises of common values and behaviors of the people which are considers as tools that lead to the successful achievement of organizational goals. Different organizations have their own organizational cultures which could



differently affect the performance of the employees in the organization. And also this study says that organization culture is the key of the organization and managers should make decision align with the culture.

### **Job Content**

Job content is challenging and innovative then the employees are willing to give positive output. If the job tasks are creative and attainment of goal is necessary, then the employees give more output than others and innovation and creativeness enhance the employees' performance (Chen and Francesco, 2003).

### **Compensation and Reward System**

According to Anith (2014), compensation or remuneration is an indispensable attribute to the employee engagement that motivates an employee to achieve more and this instigate the workers to focus more on work and personal development. According to expectancy theory, effort exertion depends on first, people's expectancy that their efforts will lead to the desired level of performance, second, their belief that their performance will lead to valued outcomes, referred to as instrumentality and finally, the value they assign to those outcomes. Theory of reinforcement described that the rewards should be exploited to strengthen the appropriate behaviors only and reinforces for undesirable performance should be removed.

### **Personal Factors and Problems**

Previous researchers have identified many personal related things which have impact on their performance such as family roles, personal values, social roles, personal problems etc. According to role theory, individuals occupy social roles in society and these roles impact employee behavior and performance (Roos & Eeden, 2008). Furthermore study considered employees who engage in their family role

as the financial provider, would be less likely to miss work because their role is to go to work and earn money for the family.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals (Bhattacharya, Gibson & Doty, 2005). Effective leadership is a higher-order, multi-dimensional construct comprising self-awareness, balanced processing of information, relational transparency, and internalized moral standards (Anitha, 2014). According to Chen, Silverthorne and Hung (2006, if leaders and employee relationship is positive, it leads to positive work outcome of an employee.

### **Team Cohesiveness**

Kahn (1990) found that supportive and trusting interpersonal relationships, with a supportive team, promote employee engagement. According to the Anitha (2014), organization should be able to facilitate and improve the team and co-worker relationship and (Locke and Taylor, 1990) focused on the relatedness needs that individuals possess, and argued that individuals who have positive interpersonal interactions with their co-workers also should experience greater meaning in their work.

### **Training**

Employee training is one of the most studied human resource practice, as it is considered critical for organizational success. According to the Winterton (2008), revealed training can make employees more satisfy and motivate regarding the feel of ability to perform their job. Further, Dermol & Cater, (2013), emphasized that there is a significant impact of training on job performance. His study examined the extent to which the training programs help to improve employee knowledge on their jobs, skills

and overall job performance of the organization. his study was mainly based on the widely accepted Kirkpatrick (1994) classical model and identified four level of training evaluation; Level One – Reaction, Level Two – Learning, Level three – Behavior and Level Four – Result. Further he found that there is an impact from training reactions, learning outcomes, behavioral changes on organizational job performance.

Most of the researchers studied about the factors and the impact of performance and some researchers have conducted researches on determinants of employee performance. Based on the previous studies, current research has selected eight factors for the current research.

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

According to the previous research identifications, factor analysis is the model which shows various factors' effect on one variable. However previous research has been conducted in different contexts and different employee categories. Therefore, current study was conducted to test those factors for Sri Lankan context and for machine operators. This factor analysis developed by the researchers using eight factors selected from existing literature. In the current study eight factors tested to identify which factors determine the performance of operational level employees and the impact of each factor. For that purpose, researchers have developed the below mentioned framework for the current study.

Figure 1: Factor Analysis



Source: Authors (2020)

## Method and Measures

The objective of the study was to delineate the factors affecting the performance of operational level employees in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the type of investigation of the study was cross-sectional. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample of 100 operational employees and data were gathered using a self-administered questionnaire. IBM SPSS 20 package was used for data analysis. The analysis allows researchers to further interpret the data and justify the determinants of employee performance. According to the questionnaire items were included in three sections. In first section consisted with demographic factors, second section consisted with determinants which respondents have to rank and third section consisted determinants which respondent had to scale the impact of the determinants on their performance.

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data collected from the survey were analyzed using the Computer Based

Statistical Data Analysis Package, IBM SPSS 20 for validity, reliability and relationship testing. The data analyzed included univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyzes.

Second section of the used questionnaire comprised 08 determinants of employee performance which has been identified by this study according to the previous studies. In this study, it has included 08 determinants in a table and allowed respondents to rank the determinants in order of importance to them. Simple ranking method was applied to prioritize the determinants of performance ranked by respondents. The given rank for each determinant by respondents was entered against each determinant separately and calculated the total of determinants. Determinant which has the minimum total is taken as the first key determinant and so on. Table 1 below exhibits the key determinants of employee performance according to the Simple Ranking method, with the total and the rank which they received.

Table 1: Determinants of Performance (Simple Ranking)

Determinants of Performance	Total	Rank
Training	317	1
Compensation & Reward System	392	2
Team Cohesiveness	408	3
Personal Factors & Problem	415	4
Leadership	420	5
Organizational Culture	498	6
Working Environment	501	7
Job Content	508	8

Source: Survey data, 2020

According to the simple ranking analysis, training is the major determinant which determines the performance of operational level employees. The second place goes to compensation & reward system and the third is the team cohesiveness.

Moreover, factor analysis was done to recognize the determinants of performance of operational level employees in a different angle. The below table 2 and Table 3 explain the factor loadings and extraction sums of squared loadings of each determinant respectively. Generally, it is better to have factor loading value more than 0.7 In this analysis factors loaded on a particular component with the factor loading value which is greater than 0.5 is taken as a significant factor of performance. Under the extraction method of principal component analysis, there are three components extracted. Job related factors (Job content, Compensation & reward system and Team cohesiveness) are extracted and loaded on the component one. Organizational related factors (Working environment, Organizational culture and Leadership) are loaded on the component two as the significant factors. Employee related factors (Personal factors & problem and Training) are extracted and loaded on the component three. In order to the findings each factor is loaded in one of the three components.

Table 2: Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
Working Environment	.336	<b>.666</b>	.377
organizational Culture	.231	<b>.697</b>	-.226
Job Content	<b>.563</b>	.340	.165
compensation & Reward System	<b>.693</b>	-.082	-.262
Personal Factors & Problem	.549	-.032	<b>-.643</b>
Leadership	.395	<b>-.574</b>	.060
Team Cohesiveness	<b>.651</b>	-.225	.056
Training	.521	-.246	<b>.588</b>

Source: Survey data, 2020



According to the factor analysis performed, Organization Culture (factor loading = 0.697), Compensation & Reward System (factor loading = 0.693) and Working Environment (factor loading = 0.666) are recognized as major three factors of operational level employees.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.117	26.462	26.462	2.117	26.462	26.462
2	1.494	18.672	45.134	1.494	18.672	45.134
3	1.056	13.197	58.331	1.056	13.197	58.331

Source: Survey data, 2020

The cumulative percentage shows that the total variance explained through the survey. According to this study, it has covered 58.331 % from the total determinants of employee performance. The standard rate of total variance explained should be above 50%, hence, this study is acceptable with the results though it is covered 58.331% from the area.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Current study has been conducted to identify which factors determine the performance of the operational level employees. Therefore, analysis has been done in order to the Simple Ranking Method and Likert Scale Method to accomplish the research objectives. This study identified and selected the eight determinants to test the impact on performance. In previous researchers tested one factor or several factors among them to identify the significance of each factor regarding employee performance in different contexts and different employee categories. However current study tested Working Environment, Organizational Culture, Personal Factors & Problems, Compensation & Reward System, Job

Content, Leadership, Team cohesiveness and Training to identify whether those factors are significant or not to determine the employee performance.

Result of the current study shows the eight factors are significantly contributing to determining performance of the operational level employees (Machine Operators)/ Therefore combine of all these factors, determines the employee performance as the ultimate result of their job. According to the results of the simple ranking method "Training" is the prominent factor which determines the employee performance. It revealed that training is needed for attain higher performance. According to the Awang, Ismail and Noor, (2010), it has been tested the impact of training on employee performance and found that training has moderate impact on employee's job performance, moreover Sanyal & Hisam, (2018) has identified training is significantly effect on job performance. However, align with those previous research current studies that says training is the key factor which affects employee performance.

According to the results of the simple ranking method, Compensation & Reward System is the second significant factor determining performance of operational level employees. Compensation and reward systems are essential determinants of performance since human beings are contributing to jobs by expecting sufficient benefit for that. Further compensation and reward systems are motivating employees. Third significant factor is Team Cohesiveness. Sawing a garment is not an individual task because they follow division of labor. It is a combination of several machine operators. Hence they work as a team, and team cohesiveness is needed to achieve a higher level of performance.

The KMO & Bartlett's test plays an important role for accepting the sample adequacy. According to the current study,

KMO value is 0.624, which falls in the standard range. Hence, this study was confident that factor analysis was appropriate for this data. Bartlett's test is significant, as the result is 0.000 which falls below 0.05. Therefore, those results confirmed the appropriateness and importance of the current study.

Even though a simple ranking method revealed training as the prominent factor which determines the level of performance of the employees, the result of analysis on SPSS shows a different perspective. It also shows different kinds of results regarding determinants according to the extraction method. According to the total variance explained in principle component analysis, current study has covered 58.331% (cumulated percentage) from the total determinants of operational level employees. Under the extraction method of principal component analysis, there are three components extracted. 1st component covered 26.46%, 2nd component covered 18.67% and 3rd component covered 13.20% out of the total contribution. Moreover, eight determinants which current study has been tested are loaded in three components, in order to the findings each factor are loaded in one of the three components in different factor loading values. Generally, Standard factor loading value is greater than 0.7. However, greater than 0.5 is also acceptable. If factor loading value is less than 0.5, it is not at the acceptable level and should reject. According to the finding of the current study, factor loading values of each factor are greater than 0.5. Hence, study has accepted all the determinants which have been tested. Component one included Job content, Compensation & reward system and Team cohesiveness. Working environment, Organizational culture and Leadership are loaded on component two as the significant factors. Personal factors & problems and Training are loaded on component three.

Further three components are named according to the way of factor loading such as Job related factors, Organizational related factors and Employee related factors respectively. According to the factor analysis performed, Organization Culture (factor loading = 0.697), Compensation & Reward System (factor loading = 0.693) and Working Environment (factor loading = 0.666) are recognized as major three factors of operational level employees. It means, mainly organizational related factors and job related factors are highly effective on determining the employee performance. According to findings of the Fein (1976), emphasizing the same results that which is a strong culture within the organization raises the employees' commitment toward achieving the goals of the organization within a common path and very helpful to increase the performance of the employees.

Same as the ranking method, Compensation & reward system is the second significant determinant. According to the findings of Lawler (1971), mentioned that the degree to which monetary compensation is contingent upon employees' level of performance determines which type of support will impact on their performance more. Anitha (2014), stated the organizational environment is a significant factor to create an engaged employee, who performs well. Moreover, several researchers have identified those are the significant factors.

When considering both Simple ranking method and Likert scale method, this study has found that there are two prominent determinants such as 'Training' and 'Organizational Culture' respectively. In addition to that, the findings revealed that all the determinants which have been tested by the authors are significant on determining the performance of operational level employees.

## CONCLUSION

Current study was based on the Factor Analysis which was done for the purpose of identifying the determinants of performance level of the operational level employees. Hence, this study has tested eight determinants such as Working Environment, Organizational Culture, Personal Factors & Problems, Compensation & Reward System, Job Content, Leadership, Team cohesiveness and Training. The findings of this study revealed that all these determinants are significant when determining the level of performance of operational level employees.

According to the simple ranking method, the first three key determinants were Training, Compensation & Reward system and Team Cohesiveness. Moreover, Organizational Culture, Compensation & Reward System and working Environment, found as the first three key determinants under the Likert scale technique. However, when analyzing both results together, it has been discovered that "Training" and "Organizational Culture" are the major prominent determinants of the performance of the operational level employees of this organization. Hence, a key point of the study is learning culture is the most powerful factor of employee performance. According to the findings of this study, this study recommends that it is important to consider all the tested determinants and cultivating a learning culture within the organization will cause to achieve organizational goals and expected organizational performance.

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