

**STUDY ON CONSTRUCTION WORKERS’
BEHAVIOUR IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR FOR
EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT PROJECT DELIVERY**

Madde Ralalage Lalith Senarath Bandara Ratnayake

(09/9783)



University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
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Degree of Master of Science in Project Management

Department of Building Economics

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February 2013

DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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The above candidate has carried out research for the Masters dissertation under my supervision.

.....
Prof. (Mrs). Chitra Weddikkara

.....
Date

Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

Study on Construction Workers' Behaviour in the Informal Sector for Effective and Efficient Project Delivery

It is a cognitive belief that the vibrant construction industry is an indicator of positive economic development of a country. However, published knowledge suggests that the construction industry is both diffused and inadequately defined. Further, as a worker intensive industry, it employs a significant percentage of the workforce. In many parts of the world, workers are engaged informally. However, in the past, many expected fast demise of informal sector with the introduction of stern regulatory frameworks by international agencies and respective countries. On the contrary, informal sectors have grown into informal economies and emerged in new guises and forms. Hence, delivery of construction projects is generally accepted to be performed with the participation of large numbers of informal sector workers.

Current knowledge reveals that the informal worker behaviour is characterized by their survival based living strategy to earn a reasonable income while keeping adequate provisions for migrating to other industries as the opportunity arises for better prospective.. However, project managers attempt to deliver projects under formal construction contracts within agreed parameters. This conflict of interest is a route cause for many project delivery issues which should be understood in managing projects. Thus, there exists a research gap to study the behaviour of the informal sector workers for effective and efficient project delivery, which is covered by the current research in Sri Lankan perspective



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Data collected through questionnaire surveys from 242 construction workers. Results indicate that informal workers' motive is to earn a reasonable income, formal training, recognition and to continue in the sector until they possess both mental and physical capacity for hard work. Among the research findings, it is noteworthy that a very little percentage (15%) of workers remained in the construction industry after they reached 45 years of age and only 21% have more than ten years of experience. Hence, the industry is running the risk of large unskilled workforce. With shrinking youth population striving for better education in countries like Sri Lanka, short supply of labour youth for the industry also is possible, if the trend continues. In the analysis of data, it was also found that the level of annual absenteeism of an average worker is about one third of the year due to internal migration, health reasons, or cultural, social and family events, jeopardizing the planner's schedules. Therefore, construction project planning invariably need to consider the informal worker behaviour and manage them on merits.

Keywords: *Construction, Informal, Workers, Behaviour, Management.*

DEDICATION



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*To the Sri Lankan
Construction Industry*

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Ratnayake, M.R.L.S.B.


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ABBREVIATION

A/L	-	Advance Level
BSR	-	Building Schedule Rates of Buildings Department
CIDB	-	Construction Industry Development Board
CITI	-	Construction Industry Training Institute
EPF	-	Employees' Provident Fund
ETF	-	Employees' Trust Fund
GCE	-	General Certificate of Education
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
HSR	-	Highway Schedule of Rates
ICTAD	-	Institute for Construction Training and Development
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
O/L	-	Ordinary Level
WCI	-	Workmen's Compensation Insurance



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