

**SKILLED LABOR SHORTAGE IN THE  
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN  
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

H.M.U.I. Herath  
Department of Civil Engineering  
University of Moratuwa  
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# **SKILLED LABOR SHORTAGE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA**

By

H.M.U.I. Herath

Supervised by

Dr.L.L.Ekanayake

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Department of Civil Engineering

University of Moratuwa

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## Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university to the best of my knowledge and believe it does not contain any material previously published, written, or orally communicated by another person or myself except where due reference is made in the text. I also hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and interlibrary loans, and for the title and summary to be available to outside organizations.

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## **Abstract**

The Construction industry is one of the largest industries in Sri Lanka. The skilled labor shortage is one of the main challenges that the industry is suffering. Although this is an important area of study, only a few research studies have been conducted.

The research aimed to investigate the causes for the skilled labor shortage in the construction industry in Sri Lanka and to propose suitable measures to minimize it.

A literature survey was conducted by referring to the available research studies. Causal factors for the skilled labor shortage, the negative impact of skilled labor shortage, and possible measures to attract and retain skilled laborers were identified during the literature survey.

The questionnaire survey was the primary data collection method of the study. Preparation of the questionnaire was done using the factors identified from the literature survey. The questionnaire was distributed among skilled laborers at building construction sites in Colombo which were carried out by construction companies with the highest CIDA accreditations for building construction.

Relative Importance Index (RII) was used for analyzing and ranking the factors. Based on the questionnaire survey results, most important nine numbers of causal factors were identified for the dissatisfaction of skilled laborers. Uncertainty of employment, Low pay compared to the bitterness of the job, and no clear career path and career development are ranked in the first three positions respectively.

Further, the most important seven numbers of changes that are expected by skilled laborers were identified. The top three expected changes are to increase day salary and overtime rate, allow to work more overtime hours, and introduce new technological equipment for site works and provide training for the same.

The outcome of the study can be used as a guideline to reduce the skilled labor shortage in the Sri Lankan construction industry.

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