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**A STUDY OF MERCHANDISING ACTIVITIES
IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
IN THE APPAREL SECTOR**

Eng. T. Gnanavinthan

28772

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Abstract

This Research Project is about the study of merchandising activities in Supply Chain Management and subsequently finding the critical path activities, which have the direct impact on the garment deliveries in the Apparel Industry in Sri Lanka. However, the activities considered in this research study are limited between the activities of order confirmation and plan cut date (Pcd) of garment manufacturing organizations. This research is special because it identifies the critical merchandising activities and pays much attention on these activities. Hence, the total cycle time of order execution is reduced by crushing the individual cycle time of each activity as well as crushing the unwanted activities exist in the merchandising process in the Supply Chain Management. In addition, this research study shows the feasibility of using Critical Path Method (CPM) in real time situation.

Critical Path Method (CPM) is used to find the critical path of merchandising activities in this research study. In addition, Minitab, statistical software is used to analyze the sample data as well as to find the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This research restricted analyzing one customer in four manufacturing Plants. In addition, both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used to collect data. This research study revealed that the all three processes of fabric sourcing, trim sourcing and sample approval influences significantly on the total cycle time between order confirmation and Pcd in the Supply chain management. Namely, having the direct impact on meeting planned cut date.

Eventually, the critical paths have been identified and the total lead time reduced in a significant way by crushing the activities with analyzing the activity time/cost trade-off study in Supply chain management. This enables the organization to meet the customers' expectation efficiently as well as reducing the cost of production of the plants significantly, thus become cost competitive in the global market.