



University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Faculty of Graduate Studies

**Personal Security of Female Factory Workers
in the Environs of Free Trade Zones of Sri Lanka:
study in the *Eweriwatte Grama Niladhari* Division
in the Katunayake Free Trade Zone**

By

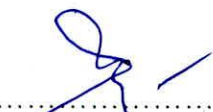
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in Human Security at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura Sri Lanka

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DECLARATION


The work reported in this thesis is the result of my own investigation carried out at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, except where otherwise stated. The other sources are acknowledged giving explicit references. The thesis has not been submitted concurrently in candidature for any other degree.

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ABSTRACT

The personal security hazards experienced by the female factory workers in the Katunayake FTZ have two facets: (1) harassment and violence perpetrated by direct means (2) harassment and violence perpetrated by indirect means. The directly perpetrated violence, either physical or psychological, has an immediate adverse impact on the affected female; whereas, the indirectly committed violence has far-reaching implications though not apparent at the initial stages. When the present status quo in relation to personal security in *Eweriwatte* is concerned, directly committed harassment and violence does not seem a major problem though a few incidents of harassment of minor nature occur every now and then. Occurrence of violence of grave nature such as rape or abduction is rare. Nevertheless, there is a conducive environment prevailing in *Eweriwatte* for a female to live without getting harmed, provided that she does not transgress the boundaries of decent behaviour.

The real insecurity issue is the violence perpetrated by indirect means wherein victimisation of females takes place in four ways (1) sexual exploitation (2) financial exploitation (3) emotional exploitation (4) social exploitation. Acts of exploitation are taking place at an unusual rate due to unlimited freedom enjoyed by the female factory workers and their overwhelming desire to have boyfriends. The *Eweriwatte* society has undergone a kind of a social change resulting in creation of a somewhat self-centred society where there is less degree of social cohesion. The sub-culture in *Eweriwatte* allows an individual to have one's own way of life. It is found that the change of behaviour of youth, both male and female, contributes to their personal insecurity a great deal. The change of behaviour is the youth's response to a free environment and, neither the naïve nature of the female nor the unscrupulousness of the male youth.

The root cause of the problem is found to be lying in the 'social setting' in *Eweriwatte* rather than with individuals. The change brought about in the natural balance of the sex ratio due to the influx of young females into *Eweriwatte* seems to be the root cause. The sex ratio in the area stands at 01 male to 06 females; hence the reason for this undesirable occurrences. These personal insecurity issues have implications at personal, family, community and national levels. The most alarming situation however is 'personal security issue' has shown signs of transforming itself into an 'economic insecurity issue' at every level and, has far-reaching implications particularly on the national economy.

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