

Research

Impact of the women empowerment initiatives on socio-economic aspects of female RMG workers

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Abstract: There are more than ninety percent female factory employees at RMG plants. That more women than males work in Bangladesh's factories is a reflection of a societal trend there. In addition, over 70% of all women working in the manufacturing sector in the nation are engaged in this sector. Perhaps this is because of the widespread belief that women are better suited to jobs requiring manual dexterity. (Bhattacharya and Rahman 2000). Women from rural parts of Bangladesh often go to the cities in search of employment, and many of them end up working in the garment industry because of the better pay compared to other industries. This has helped the economy since the garment sector has provided employment for tens of thousands of women and produced substantial revenue for the nation via exports.

Independent migration among young women in Bangladesh increased throughout the 1980s, as RMG factories proliferated across the country's major cities. Women are generally the only breadwinners in their families, and with them they may start their own business and make their own money and powerful while also furthering their education and career prospects. This creates an opportunity for female to get employed and therefore they can contribute in Bangladesh economy. A large majority of garment factory employees are migrants from rural regions, and recent estimates have the percentage of women working in the lowest-paying roles in the sector at 90%. This shows that the garment industry is a significant provider of economic security and stability for women and migrant workers. (Afsar 2000).

Most of the business theory defines employee's empowerment as the strategy of the business success in terms of factory productivity. Empowerment is not necessary only delegating authority ship of the workers in the workplace especially for the female garment worker (Bhattacharya and Rahman 2000). That is why; this research paper has defined the definition of women's empowerment and its process at first and then to find out the similarity with the workforce empowerment.

The primary study's overarching goal is to determine whether or not women's economic and educational advancement leads to enhanced standard of living and overall happiness. In order to facilitate first-hand information gathering, the availability of movement, time constraint as well as the acceptance this research has been basically done in Mirpur 12 where there are many garments factory located and a huge number of female garment workers are also living. To collect primary data 150 interviews among female garment workers from Mirpur 12 have been conducted. The questionnaire includes both open-ended and closed-ended questions to ensure that survey participants can provide both quantitative and qualitative data. Primary data has been collected through questionnaire and interview. The responses from the respondents has been compared to secondary sources. To measure the hypotheses, Z test has been used.

The study showed that 42% of the female garment workers have no formal education while 37% of the female garment workers were found to get primary education during the survey. Low education is a big problem for female garment workers to improve their working life.

Average length of service of the female workers has been estimated at only 3.7 years. Findings show that 46 (31%) numbers of workers lengths of service is below 3, 59 (39%) workers of them in between 3-6 years and the 45 (30%) number of them are working in the garment factory over 6 years. 76% of participants reported that, this is the first job for them. Women from rural areas are being migrated and getting engaged in the garment factory. They do not have sufficient education, training, skill to do this type of job.

Long working hour is the primary issue facing the female clothing industry. Among the 150 workers 132 (88%) number of workers is facing a huge problem from the long working hour, 111 (74%) of them are facing problem for absence of leave facilities, 105 (70%) are feeling stressful due to bad behavior from the management, 150 (100%) do not get any facilities of day care, 142 (95%) has not any appointment letter, and 112 (74.5%) always fear for fire accident.

From this finding, it has been clear that, female garment workers are more interested on training. About 98 (65%) workers are interested on income generating training, 43 (29%) of them are interested in machine operating, and 9 (6%) of them are interested in cutting. Among the 150 interviewees 87 (58%) about the female employees in the clothing industry want to serve in the present factories above 5 years. 34 (27%) of them want to work from 3 to 4 years.

Among the 150 interviewees 12 (8%) of the female garment workers have very good relation with the management, 29 (19%) of them have a good relation, 55 (37%) are in moderate relationship, 27 (18%) of them have bad relationship and 27 (18%) of them have very bad relationship with the factory management.

The study shows that the female garment workers, who have got some kinds of training is getting high salary including overtime rather than the workers who did not get any types of training, due to the variation of production output.

A variety of concerns and topics that particularly affect and concern empowerment of female garment workers like education, awareness, training, information, communication skill, relationship with the management, health issues, personal protection equipment, violence in the workplace, labor law, salary, working hour, future aspiration of the female garment worker, labor rights, working condition, reason for job satisfaction along with the dissatisfaction are outlined and analyzed during the course of this investigation.

The preservation of employees' rights and standards, such as pay and Hours worked, Health and Safety on the Job, Right to Form Unions, Right to Bargain Collectively depends on addressing these concerns, which are in turn tied to social conformity. Human resources (HR) and industrial relations (IR) operations are often related with labor rights and labor standards concerns, with government systems regulating their protection and abuse in accordance with international law and policy. National laws and regulations, international laws and policies, labor standards based on ILO conventions, the Factory Act of 1965, and the Fair Labor Act based on the WTO Code, whether or not the RMG sector is involved, all contribute to the emancipation of women who have worked in the garment industry since the early 19th century and who have been historically undervalued. The research identifies ways to improve the worker's conditions of female garment workers which will increase their capacity so that the earning of foreign currency of Bangladesh will be high. It will play a great positive role in the overall GDP rate of the country. The empowerment of RMG Workers is increasing income and establishing control of female RMG worker to her own income.

Keywords: Women empowerment, RMG Workers, Women from rural parts of Bangladesh,

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Introduction

Women who find job in the RMG industry not only feel more empowered, but also get the economic rewards of their employment. At RMG plants, women make up more than 90% of the production workforce. To add, over 70% of all women working in the manufacturing sector in the nation are engaged in this area (Bhattacharya and Rahman 2000). Women in Bangladesh often go to cities in search of employment, and one of the main industries luring them is the garment industry. As the number of RMG factories sprang up in Bangladesh's cities in the '80s, young women had more freedom to go about on their own. Females in Bangladesh now have a better chance of finding work thanks to this, and their earnings will have a greater impact on the country's economy. According to the most up-to-date statistics, women make up an estimated 90% of the apparel sector, while rural migrants make up more than 90% of the workforce in garment factories (Afsar 2000). The same research shows that women in the workforce are worthy of recognition for their newfound status as major breadwinners, which is a significant departure from the traditional role of women as daughters, wives, and mothers. According to research by Majumder and Khatun (1997), only approximately 30% of

women are the principal breadwinners in their households. Female employees in the export-oriented garment sector, which contributes more than 10% to GDP, face discrimination, irregular earnings, and pay that is below the minimum wage. The fact that low-income, unskilled women have so few prospects for better work just plays into the hands of factory owners. They agree to the lenient work schedule without any objections (Khan 2001). In addition, women have more to lose if they lose their employment than men do since their families rely on their income and the alternatives (involuntary part-time labor or domestic service) are less desirable. However, there are still significant unknowns and unanswered issues about the economic and social situations of women in the clothing industry. In spite of their lack of formal training, women in this industry are making significant contributions to Bangladesh's economic growth.

Background of the Study

History of RMG and present status

In the 1990s, the government offered greater inducements for RMG investment, leading to the proliferation of more locally-owned businesses (Bhattacharya and Rahman 2000). When starting out, domestic entrepreneurs often relied on their existing customer base and local community. A paternalistic element existed, since the factory owner effectively took it upon herself to shield the women employees from such situations (Kabeer 2000). Since the primary the Lesson of State-Owned Enterprises businesses was that labor organization made it difficult to operate a successful firm, it seems early on that the policy of hiring females attempted to sidestep the potential of labor organization. Because of the extraordinarily low cost of female labor, and the widespread belief that women tend to be submissive, there has been a recent surge in the number of jobs available specifically to women (Kabeer 2000). The assumption that bespoke clothing fitting was at least somewhat

Perhaps the fact that tailoring was, in essence, the activity of women made it more acceptable to the middle classes. The role that government policy has played in facilitating women's entry into the manufacturing workforce is an important one to consider. Although businesses have always been wary of hiring male employees, the knitwear sector has seen remarkable growth thanks to the participation of a sizable male labor force. To yet, the consequences of the export labor force's shifting gender and skill set have not been given much attention. Nonetheless, it appears obvious that this shifting The need to build more fruitful worker-owner-state connections should have been far higher on the agenda than it actually has been because of the makeup of the workforce and the basis to prove this is finding out the relationship worker's contribution to profit maximization.

Female's economic contribution in the overall RMG industry

Women's economic engagement has seen rapid shifts in recent decades. Between 1984 and 2000, the percentage of women in the labor force increased at a greater pace than that of males (Rahman 2005), yet remained at a low (in comparative perspective) 22.8 per cent in 2000 (25.6 in urban areas). This trend persisted during the first half of the 2000s, as shown by the Household Income and Expenditure Survey of 2005, which found that although the labor force as a whole had expanded moderately over the five year period, female's wage employment rose dramatically. (World Bank 2008).

The RMG industry's current importance in Bangladesh's growth cannot be overstated. As of 2015, the industry employed 1.9 million people directly (Ahmed 2009), Though it accounts for more than a third of the 5.3 million people who work in manufacturing, it only employs roughly 4% of the entire workforce of 51.8 million (Rahman, Moazzem and Hossain 2009). Yet In 2008–9, clothing accounted for 76% of total export revenues (MoF 2009, chapter 6), while the RMG industry was estimated to contribute 10% to GDP in 2002 (Bhattacharya, Rahman and Raihan 2002). Given its crucial role in the economy, the government has made ensuring its success a top priority. The sector has had to adjust to a changing global market, but it has done so so far with remarkable success. Examples include the US Harkin Bill of the early 1990s, which sought to outlaw the exploitation of child labor, and the worldwide economic shock that impacted exports to the US (a significant market for Bangladeshi textiles) following September 11th (Siddique 2003; Ward et al 2004); After the ending of the preferential Multi-Fiber Arrangement in 2005, which opened the door to increased competition for Bangladesh's industry, notably from China (Ahmed 2009).

Garment exports fell sharply in the first half of 2009–10, however this was in contrast to the record-breaking increase seen the year before. In all likelihood, the Bangladeshi industry profited (in order volumes) from the decreased pressure on pricing brought about by the so-called "Wal-Mart effect," which is why it was hurt considerably less and later than export industries elsewhere. (Rahman, Bhattacharya et al 2009; CPD 2011). However, it is no longer plausible to assume

that the performance of the industry is predicated on a 'race to the bottom' and on Bangladesh's ability to remain competitive in the face of wage pressures. The contemporary segments of the business are already showing signs of restructuring, and there is evidence of improved compliance and management techniques that are leading to higher worker productivity. (Rahman et al 2007; MoF 2009; CPD 2011). Factories in Bangladesh are able to weather the fluctuations in export demand because to the increased management and compliance standards that are allowing for investments in worker efficiency.

Objective of the study

Broad Objective:

The major goal of this research is to learn whether or not women's empowerment has any effect on the high output in the RMG sector in Bangladesh and how this has altered the lives of women in the RMG industry.

Specific Objective:

- 1) To find out the contribution of women in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Bangladesh.
- 2) To have an insight about the policy implementation by the Government according to labor law within the factory.
- 3) To find out the capacity of worker's still have and further more support is needed for the high earning of foreign currency.

Research Question

The research questions are given below:

1. How the female garment workers contribute to achieve high productivity in factories and contribute in GDP and how empowerment process can increase the productivity?
2. What is the existing condition of female workforce's capacity and what initiative is needed to increase the capacity?
3. What are the existing policies to ensure the rights of female workforce and what policy has to be taken to ensure rights?

Hypothesis of the Research

The hypotheses of the research are

The gender base discrimination in the factory, abusive behavior from supervisors, male coworkers and community male neighbor also makes the female garment workers more stressful while they work in the factory production line.

Rural women are happy as working in the garment factory as they have now better financial access in their family, though Bangladesh labor wage rate is the lowest comparing with the other competitive countries.

Only strict implementation of labor law within the garments factory can reduce the vulnerability of female garment workers.

Expected outcome from the study

This study will enable us to:

1. Find out whether there is a good relationship between the garment factory management and the female worker exist or absent.
2. Determine whether the labor law of Bangladesh is implementing in the factory or not.
3. Draw the overall line about the present situation of female worker and what else is needed to capacities them more.

Research Methodology

Two types of research methodology have been used to conduct the research as well as the data analysis.

1. Qualitative Method
2. Quantitative Method

Area of the study

Dhaka and the suburbs of Savar, Ashulia, Tongi, Gazipur, and Narayanganj are where you'll find the vast majority of Bangladesh's garment industries. Some are located in Chittagong. In order to facilitate first-hand information gathering, the availability of movement, time constraint as well as the acceptance this research has been basically done in Mirpur 12 where there are many garments factory located and a huge number of female garment workers are also living. Workers, owners, managers, and officials of clothing companies are protected from Mirpur 12.

Research instrument

This investigation was carried out with the assistance of both primary sources, as well as secondary ones. In order to get primary data 150 interviews among female garment workers from Mirpur 12 have been conducted. The questionnaire contains both open-ended questions as well as questions with predetermined answers (close-ended questions). Questionnaire has been attached in the appendix-1. Also the researcher conducted a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with the factory owners, managers from the garments located at Mirpur 12. The researcher has used the secondary information such as journals, books, manuals, annual reports, bulletins and internet.

Sample and data collection

Before collecting the final data for the study the questionnaire has been pre-tested. After the finalization of the questionnaire a simple random sampling technique has been used to collect final data from the respondents. In filling in the questionnaire, hand-deliveries (drop-collect) have been used.

Data Analysis

Primary data has been collected through questionnaire and interview. The responses from the respondents have been compared with secondary data. The data have been analyzed with the use of manual computation. The data have been presented using graphs, charts, and tables that were developed on a computer and created using Microsoft Office software. Quantitative research method has been used to verify between the two hypotheses. To measure the hypotheses, Z test has been used.

Z test,

Where, \bar{X} = Mean

μ = Standard Deviation

σ = Standard Error

Justification and further use of the Study

Various researches and studies support that Bangladeshi rural women have got the chances to be involved themselves with the economic productive formal sector through working in Garment factories as workers. Significant percentages of garment workers are working in the factories to survive their families or for supporting to families to develop as for child educations, investing for enterprises development, or for families' savings. Among the total number of Bangladeshi garment workers about 80% of them are female. They are the mainstream workforce engine of the Bangladeshi RMG business and earning remittances, as well they also the contributor for Bangladeshi society to be economically stable, to be free from poverty and capability deprivations where the social class and economic wealth class hierarchy system and gender based priority is discriminating.

The research has been identified various challenges facing the female workers in the factory levels as well in her society, family and community and how their challenges affect directly and indirectly on their work performance in the factories. As a result low quality production and shipment missing is the major cause is occurring and identifying for the Bangladeshi readymade garment sub-contracting business. Earlier various business perspective researches evidenced that there is a linkage between worker's empowerment and lean production maximization in the factory. Most of the research has done for the reason to identify the solution for ensuring profit maximizing from investment perspective, but they have not taken the approach to look over the evidence, especially for the female workforce. As a whole from the holistic perspective on women's empowerment and to influence the business initiatives and policies to take actions to improve their human capital and working condition of the female garment workers and make them involve with the decision making process so that they feel their recognition in the high productivity and with supports from the factory management they can visualize the future prospects to take up their decision to stay with the occupation for further.

The research initiative has also been identified the existing skills resources the workers have and the resources needs to support them to sustain with the occupation for those who wants to stay in the profession in Garment factory. So that, the further initiative from the policy makers and relevant stakeholders will help to develop the RMG sector most economically successful and sustainable development.

Evidence shows that, the worker's socio-economic factors implication on the RMG sector business with the perspective of women's empowerment is the unique concept to exploring solutions for the broader perspective of country's economic and social development. The research finding will supports the development initiative working for the most marginalized poor women in urban areas of Bangladesh. Female garment workers are the major portion in number and also from the perspective country's foreign currency earning. So the research aimed to address evidences about women's contribution in the RMG sector and also with addressing the findings on empowered women's work productivity which is linked with factory's high quality production.

Literature Review

Existing business theories supports the relation between worker's empowerment and company's economic progress; in a sense the overall high productivity is highlighting here. Ettore (1997) defines employee's empowerment as the employee's having the ability to make independent decisions, participating actively as business partners, and keeping an eye on the bottom line while doing so. Companies use a variety of words, but the fundamental goal of encouraging employee engagement and involvement is same regardless of the phrase used. The empowered employee is able to make choices, although in the past, such decisions were traditionally kept for the management. Not only does empowerment include the delegation of decision-making authority, but it also involves setting objectives and enabling workers to participate in achieving those goals (Riggs, 1995, p-7). Experimentation with quality circles, quality of work life, and overall quality management programs dated back to the late 1970s and early 1980s and was the impetus for the conception of this idea. (Juravich, 1996). It is possible to describe empowerment in either a relational or a motivational meaning. Empowerment may be defined as the "giving of power, the delegating of authority." A activity is considered to be motivating if it boosts a person's feeling of power while simultaneously improving their self-efficacy. Active accomplishment, also known as the genuine mastery of the duties associated with a work, is one of the most efficient ways to bring about an increase in one's sense of self-efficacy. (Burpitt, 1997, pp-415-417).

The empowerment of workers is a complex subject, mainly because different managers have different conceptions of what the phrase "empowerment" really implies. The term, in the eyes of some managers, is the act of voluntarily transferring ownership of a work or problem to another person who has the capabilities and willingness suited to the given circumstance. On the other hand, the implementation of such empowerment within the framework of Bangladeshi RMG is quite uncommon. The power of members of the organization to make choices may at various times be increased or decreased due to the effects of these factors (Kabeer 2000).

Most of the business theory defines employee's empowerment as the strategy of the business success in terms of factory productivity. Empowerment is not necessary only delegating authority ship of the workers in the workplace especially for the female garment worker (Bhattacharya and Rahman 2000). That is why; this research paper has defined the definition of women's empowerment and its process at first and then to find out the similarity with the workforce empowerment.

Some major findings from the reviewed literatures are given below:

Professor Amartya Sen (1999) - Development as freedom

Noble prize winner economist Professor Amartya Sen (1999) in his research publication "Development as freedom" used the concept empowerment as the capability of an individual that's necessary for his dignified living standards. Sen used the concept while defined the concept of Development as a whole he used the term in his work as "Individual's capability".

He stated the development as a process, where individuals get the chance to have developed their own capabilities through which the individual have an opportunity to become competent to sustain in the world full of with poverty, scarcity and hunger. Professor Sen (1999), stated the capability of an individual give them the power to have the opportunity with so that he/she can be computable with others. He argued that individual's capabilities are the basic condition

for the overall development for human. He evidenced make visualization with addressing some variables with examining for human development analysis; he stated the empirical evidence that how human capabilities make the individual to earn income with skills and knowledge which are described as individual's capabilities. Like he has drawn links between variables death and income. High income may decrease early death of a person with getting proper food supplies, medicines, treatment, basic facilities for living conditions etc. Many more factors have been identified by Mr. Professor Sen in his research work which was commissioned for World Institute of Development economics research.

Sen has been analyzed about the human development but he has covered his interest area with economic point of view through examining social and political aspects of human living condition. He has established a link between market economy and individual's capability. He argued, individuals can sell up his/her capability with the reciprocal system in the economic market and can earn progressive living standards. He linked all the social aspect from the point of analysis with economic theoretical base.

Workplace Risk Management in the Information Age by David Goetsch (1996)

Earlier mentioned as the Existing business theories supports the relation between worker's empowerment and company's economic progress. Ettore (1997) defines employee's empowerment as the employee 'having the ability to make decisions independently and functioning as partners in the firm while keeping an eye on the bottom line are both desirable qualities. Companies use a variety of phrases to refer to employee engagement and involvement, but the core meaning behind all of these expressions is essentially the same. The empowered employee is able to make choices, although in the past, such decisions were traditionally kept for the management. Not only does empowerment include the delegation of decision-making authority, but it also involves setting objectives and enabling workers to participate in achieving those goals (Riggs, 1995, p-7). Experimentation with quality circles, quality of work life, and overall quality management programs were among the first steps taken in the development of this idea in the late 1970s and early 1980s. (Juravich, 1996). As business is a concept as the means of production that's working for the overall development for the human with supplying necessary goods and services for human's consumptions and accessing (Juravich, 1996). The concept of empowerment is also using in the business disciplinary study or in analysis as the development process of human being. As the study area of business school around the concept of development of business success and prospects, the school of thought have merged the concept with their disciplinary interest. May be for this reason, some time business thought consider in minor social aspects of employees working in the company.

Robert Chambers (1999) – Voice of the poor

Robert Chambers (1999) in his research paper "Voice of the poor" adopted the concept of empowerment as the indicator of development, where development is the standards of living condition and social position for an individual. He drew an domain of development with using 8 necessarily important factors for human development as he has described as factors of well being, these are : 1. Mental, 2. Material, 3. Spiritual, 5. Social, 6. Cultural, and 7. Physical well being. These 7 dimensions of wellbeing of human being enforce the human development, safe and participation. Earlier concept of Poverty was measures on the basis of income indicators. With evidencing cross cultural bottom level experimental aspect from the poor people he stated the concept of poverty as scarcity of these 7 factors which are necessary important for the development prospect.

Social science aspect of empowerment mostly influence by the theories of economics and philosophy. Michel Foucault (1989) stated the empowerment as the process of being powerful and he defined power in the concept of unequal relationship. He stated unequal relationship is the basis of power play practices in the society. Here, he used the concept of social power relation as the approach of depriving the people those who are powerlessness.

Social science defines empowerment as a process of interaction between Power full and Powerless people of the society. Social, political and economic deprivation is the root cause of powerlessness as social science identifies. Power relation studies in the social science discipline from the strong theoretical background of socialist school of thought (Arguing with the crocodiles, White C. Here, 1992).

Dr. Binayak Sen (2013) - Macro Review of RMG Sector of Bangladesh

The illustration of empowerment primarily means of overcoming from discrimination, achieving rights and improving own living standards (Worker's pay and worker's empowerment in Bangladesh, Sultan M., 2011).

Aysha Khan (2007) in her research work "Women and Paid work in Pakistan", she address the concept of empowerment with defining "Autonomy" of women. She stated the definition of women's autonomy with delegating demographic concept of social determinate on fertility as "Increased women's autonomy leads to low level of fertility of a country". Here she address the issue about the decision making process. Making decisions with the own choice is treating here as the concept of empowerment.

BGMEA (2012) – Report (Women's empowerment part)

According to (BGMEA, 2011), 78% of country's export earning is coming from RMG sector which is contributing more than 10% to GDP. There are 3.6 million individuals working directly, and women make up 80 percent of the total workforce. This sector of the economy has made it possible for 2.8 million more women to take on new, more useful roles in society, therefore enhancing their sense of independence. They are taking the lead in helping to relieve poverty among rural women by fostering the development of skills and generating work opportunities. There are over twenty million individuals worldwide whose immediate livelihoods are directly or indirectly connected to this industry. Exports are driving the fast acceleration of this industry's contribution to overall economic development and employment. It is clearly visualized that, garment industry are promoting women to workforce who is leading the high rate of GDP in Bangladesh through the empowerment process.

Siddiqi (2004) -The Readymade Garment Industry of Bangladesh

To put it simply, if this industry slows down, Bangladesh's economic growth would also stall. In light of the dynamic global clothing market, he assesses the current state of the Bangladeshi RMG sector and offers recommendations for its improvement. He elaborates on why the difficulties brought on by the end of MFA will remain a pressing issue. To back up his claims, he uses examples from a wide range of nations' actual situations.

When fundamental human needs are ignored for too long, as is frequently the case in the garment industry, employees in that industry can't help but resort to violence. According to him, the living conditions for RMG employees in Bangladesh are even less desirable than those of the country's jail inmates. Inmates in Bangladeshi prisons have their basic needs determined under the country's 1920 Jail Code. The current TCB pricing index for Dhaka city indicates that the daily minimum cost of jail rations is Tk. 52.39. Tk 1,571.70 (one thousand five hundred and seventy taka) a month is the market value of the prisoner's allotted food. An ordinary household in Bangladesh would need to spend Tk. 7,544.16 per month to afford the same food that is provided to every prisoner in Bangladesh who is currently awaiting trial. That means, according to Jakir's calculations, that the RMG industry's existing minimum pay structure is still lower than the cost of meals for inmates in various correctional facilities. He adds that the government has implemented new social security programs for rural employees in response to previous years' unprecedented price increases. The program estimates that a day laborer's monthly compensation is Tk. 4,500, based on the industry benchmark of Tk. The minimum wage of workers at a similar level in state-owned firms demonstrates a severe discrepancy between those performing the same type of job in the country, despite the fact that garment workers' productivity is greater than that of public-sector entry-level employees. What's more, not all factories will provide things like appointment confirmations, employee badges, or logs of previous work.

Overall Scenario of RMG Sector in Bangladesh

It is not an exaggeration to claim that the readymade garment sector has had a significant impact on the development of Bangladesh's economy. Bangladesh's tiny size and massive population of 160 million are both likely to be seen as major disadvantages. The birth and meteoric rise of the RMG industry, however, have transformed that potential risk into a priceless resource. Following the country's economic freedom, this industry has propelled development across the board in Bangladesh. The rise of this industry and the consistent inflow of remittances have kept Bangladesh's economy stable despite the current global economic slowdown. Bangladesh's RMG industry has developed thanks to a confluence of variables, including local demand, low manufacturing costs, minimal overhead, inexpensive labor, and

private enterprise. Major contributions of this sector include speeding up the country's industrialization process, drawing in FDI, reducing poverty by providing millions of people with jobs, galvanizing the business community, giving women more agency, and improving Bangladesh's reputation overseas. This chapter examines the evolution of the RMG industry in Bangladesh, including its origins, current state, its importance to the country's economy, and the challenges it faces.

History of how the RMG industry in Bangladesh has grown

The textile industry has played a pivotal part in the industrialization of both advanced and underdeveloped nations. In addition, throughout the better part of the past two centuries, the textile and garment industries in many nations have been the backbone of economic growth and progress (Ahmed, 1991). World-renowned textiles have a long and distinguished history of being made in Bangladesh. Moslin of Dhaka became famous all over the globe as a high-quality cloth during the Mughal era (17th and 18th centuries). In many Asian and European royal residences, it was a favorite. Before British colonial rule, Bengal's textile industry had a prosperous period of growth that lasted many centuries authority on the strength of the distinctive artistry of the craftsmen, the low cost of labor, and the locally produced technology. Andre Gunder Frank makes the relevant observation that "Bengal formerly supplied the life blood of commercial and industrial capitalist expansion in the city." This sector of the economy did not make it. In order to prevent British textile mills from losing business to Bengal's cheaper and superior fabric, the East India Company used harsh measures to stifle exports from the region. (Rashid, 1990). The British colonists' inhumane treatment of Moslin's artisans is documented history. However, they forced indigo planting onto the farmers of Bengal to secure a steady supply for British textile manufacturers. Pakistan's economic exploitation and discriminatory practices prevented Bangladesh, a region rich in jute and other raw resources, from becoming an industrial powerhouse (centered in West Pakistan). Western Pakistan, on the other hand, became an economic powerhouse thanks to access to Bangladesh's natural resources. The following table compares the textile mill populations of West Pakistan and East Pakistan between 1947 and 1971.

It was initiated in newly independent Bangladesh with aid from the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID). When the government of Bangladesh adopted the New Industrial Policy (NIP) in 1982, they put in place a number of policies to increase exports, especially of non-traditional goods like garments. It's important to recognize that in the early years of the garment industry, external influences had a greater impact than internally planned proactive measures.

The turning point came in 1984–1985, when there were 587 factories producing ready-made garments. Earnings from exports skyrocketed from \$31.57 million in 1983–84 to \$116.2 million in 1984–85, an increase of 268.07%. Growth in the industry was 40% each year on average between 1985 and 1990. In FY 91–92, the industry generated over \$1 billion in revenue, including \$1.18 billion in exports. Apparel exports accounted for 64% of overall exports and \$2.22 billion in revenue in FY 94–95. During the years 1990–1995, the business sector expanded at a compound annual growth rate of 29 percent. In the following five years, the industry's export earnings increased to \$4.35 billion, with garment exports accounting for 76% of all exports. Since then, exports from the clothing industry have consistently accounted for more than 75 percent of all exports.

Some of the driving forces for Bangladesh's RMG boom

There are two main types of factors that have contributed to the development of Bangladesh's RMG industry.

Domestic Factors are given below:

Cheap labor: This industry relies heavily on human labor. The unemployment rate in Bangladesh is high because of the country's high population density. The inexpensive labor available to private sector businesses in the late 1970s and early 1980s sparked an overnight boom in the industry. Approximately 4 million individuals are employed in this industry right now. Women make up around 80% of the total. The following table provides a comparison of the average hourly wages in the top RMG exporting nations.

Low production cost:

RMG facilities in Bangladesh have attracted global clients because to their ability to make high-quality garments at affordable prices due to the country's inexpensive labor force. Major retailers such as Walmart, Target, JC Penney, H&M, Zara, Tesco, Carrefour, Metro, Marks & Spencer, Kohl's, Gap, and Tommy Hilfiger all source from Bangladesh. Overall exports from the industry have more than quadrupled, from \$6.4 billion in FY 04-05 to \$12.5 billion in FY09-10. Low

manufacturing costs were another factor that drew FDI from other countries. Because of this, businesses in Bangladesh that rely on either backward or forward linkages have thrived. The expansion of the country's exports of clothing and knitwear is largely attributable to the fact that the traditional sector can now provide as much as 85% of the demand for the raw materials.

Local Demand:

Clothes are essential. The population density in Bangladesh is quite high. A massive amount of clothing is required annually to meet the domestic demand in Bangladesh. Tradition dictates that Bangladeshis don fresh threads on the eve of holidays like Eid, Puja, Pohela Baishakh, and others. The people of Bangladesh relied on local tailors to meet their basic clothing needs before the RMG industry emerged. Bangladesh has a thriving ready-made clothing industry, notwithstanding the persistence of tailoring.

Government Support:

The government provided aid to the apparel industry through a variety of measures, including duty drawback facilities, tax holidays, cash assistance, income tax rebates, and capital investments, the establishment of export processing zones, a zero percent tariff on machinery inputs, discounted freight and power rates, and the encouragement of the participation of large corporations and foreign direct investment, bonded warehouse facilities, imports under back-to-back letters of credit, loans at concession rates, and an electronic data interchange (EDI) system. As a result of these incentives, the garment manufacturing and exporting industries expanded, creating new jobs and increasing apparel exports.

Letters of Credit Issued Back-to-Back: One of the key elements in this industry's original and ongoing success is the use of back-to-back letters of credit. As a result, it makes access to capital for start-ups in the local clothing industry more simpler. The business owners are able to successfully manufacture and export products despite having little operating capital. Since most of the capital is borrowed, even a modest profit of 5% on sales of Tk. 50 million still yields respectable returns. So, a high rate of return is not required.

Innovation via private initiative: The RMG industry, which focuses on exports, was fully self-starting in its early stages. The ride wasn't comfortable by any means. The entrepreneurs had to deal with severe limitations on their access to energy sources like electricity and gas. Longer lead times made it harder to compete with other countries due to political unpredictability, a lack of port infrastructure, frequent strikes, and worker unrest. Despite severe obstacles, RMG business owners met or exceeded their customers' high demands for quality, compliance, and price reduction. Large amounts of money were also put on backwards integration.

External Factors are given below:

Quota facility: The growth is mostly attributable to the Multi-Fibre Arrangement's quota system (MFA). In a nutshell, MFA ensured that Bangladesh's market was safe, while GSP facilities allowed for preferential treatment and access to developed country markets.

Currently, Sri Lanka is experiencing a civil war.: Although the Sri Lankan civil war that broke out in the late 1970s was devastating for the country, it was a boon for Bangladesh's RMG business. Regarding RMG exports, Sri Lanka ranked first among Asian nations. However, as a result of the civil conflict, many Western customers abandoned Sri Lanka in search of alternatives. Due to its massive and inexpensive labor force, Bangladesh eventually succeeded Sri Lanka as the RMG industry's new center of operations.

Supply Side Factors: Multiple supply-side variables have aided Bangladesh's rise as a clothing exporter. Businesses from the Republic of Korea, led by Daewoo, entered Bangladesh in the latter half of the 1970s to introduce industrial technologies and establish distribution networks. While the actual volume of garments exported as a result of this agreement remained modest, there was increased awareness within the garment sector with respect to the potential. There were less than a dozen enterprises functioning in 1978. In only three years, that number doubled to 80. The sector's development since then has been remarkable. Without the boost from Korean investment, it would have taken considerably longer for the garment sector in Bangladesh to reach its current state.

Impact of the RMG Sector on the National Economy

Bangladesh's economy would not be what it is now without the garment industry. Within the past three decades, this sector of the Bangladeshi economy has grown exponentially, becoming the country's primary export. As a major source of

both jobs and revenue for the underprivileged, the sector is vital. Four million people directly work in the sector, and another ten million are connected to it in some way. The industry has also contributed significantly to the country's economic and social growth. The contribution of RMG to GDP is noteworthy, rising to 13% in FY 2009-10 from 3% in FY 1990-91. This demonstrates the sector's importance to the economy as a whole. It is crucial to the growth of other important economic spheres including banking, insurance, shipping, hotel, housing, transportation, etc. As of right now, Bangladesh is mostly recognized for its agriculture industry. Other than the RMG industry, there is no noteworthy manufacturing presence in the country. The rapid growth of the RMG industry has been a key factor in the country's rapid industrialization. The population density in Bangladesh is quite high. Unemployment is becoming more of a problem as a result of the growing population's strain on the planet's few resources. More than three million people have found work thanks to the RMG industry, easing the strain of unemployment throughout the nation. The people of Bangladesh are notoriously impoverished, and the nation has a high population density that contributes to its many social and economic difficulties. With its "made in Bangladesh" mark, RMG is helping to improve Bangladesh's international reputation. Utilizing a sizable portion of the population as labor has also shown that an otherwise negative aspect may be converted into a positive one.

Difficulties in the RMG Sector

Poor working conditions in the factories and the lack of Social compliance are key problems that have, since 2006, led to labor unrest and destruction to institutions and buildings despite the RMG sector's amazing development. Conditions in the RMG industry fall short of International Labor Organization guidelines. When opposed to western practices, the hiring process in the East is quite casual, with no formal contracts or letters of appointment. Garment workers don't get paid every week, have any kind of job security or social security, and don't get any kind of leave for pregnancy or childbirth, or any kind of bonus or retirement benefit. In addition, discrimination based on gender and other forms of late or irregular payment are commonplace in this industry. Moreover, employees in the garment industry are not eligible for any ancillary benefits such as a housing subsidy, medical coverage, unemployment insurance, or a means of transportation (Muhammad, 2006). Young women make up the bulk of the workforce, and they often experience sexual and physical harassment from management (Rashid, 2006). The RMG industry has a widespread problem with disregard for health and safety standards. Constant tiredness, headaches, anemia, fever, chest, stomach, eye, and ear discomfort, coughs and colds, diarrhea, dysentery, urinary tract infections, and reproduction health issues are the results for employees. The majority of production facilities are below the criteria set out in the relevant building codes (Factory Rules 1979). Numerous fires and building collapses are responsible for serious injuries and deaths in the RMG industry (Begum, 2001). Child labor is a major and rising issue in many other fields of employment, but it is very unlikely to be one of them. (Muhammad, Rashid, 2006). In reality, there is almost no union representation in private clothing firms. The activities of labor unions are strictly prohibited in Export Processing Zones (EPZ). These prohibitions are an extreme example of the widespread violation of employees' rights that occurs every day in spite of international labor rules and codes of conduct (Qudus and Uddin, 1993; Dasgupta, 2002). Moreover, government and business leaders' poor judgment has contributed to worker unrest in the industry. As a result, foreign buyers are less likely to place garment import orders from Bangladeshi RMG factories since they need factories to adhere to their own Codes of Conduct. However, there are expenses that arise as a result of these compliance requirements, despite the fact that these concerns are central to the interests of the workforce (Rashid, 2006). Therefore, Social compliance has become an important topic of discussion in the RMG industry.

Findings and Data Analysis

Self development is one of the basic levers of women's empowerment. Garment workers' agency has been assessed taking into consideration a number of their socio-demographic and economic characteristics, their knowledge and awareness on labor rights and also their aspiration level with a view to find out to what extent the female garment workers can acquire to improve their individual for the betterment of their life as well as the increment of GDP rate in Bangladesh.

Results of the Qualitative Approach, Including Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Human Capital in Female Textile Workers' Current Condition

Condition of human capital among the garment workers are given below:

Age

Age is a powerful indicator of poverty status of the workers and workers' family since acquisition of human capital like education, experience, training etc., require time and older the workers higher is the possibility of acquiring these human qualities essential for betterment of job and getting gainful jobs. Findings of the present survey have shown that over the last two decades some characteristics of the garment workers have changed significantly while It seems like there was a little shift in a few of the features. Table 1 shows that 12 (7%) of the 150 female garment employees surveyed were under the age of 18. Generally, helper category workers belong to such young age group since in most cases they enter in the garment factory as apprentice and acquire skill to become operator within 1-3 years. But the findings of the present survey as presented in Table 1 show that only 2 operators and 1 other category of workers also belong to such young age group.

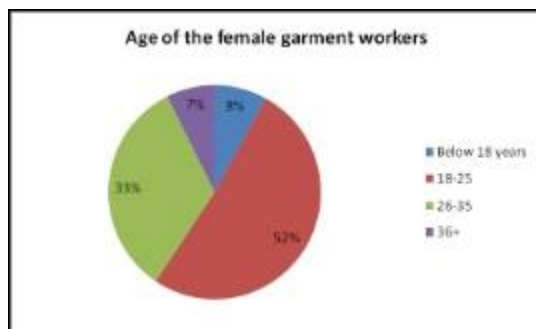


Chart 1: Age of the female garment workers

Education and Training

The female garment workers could not improve their individual in attaining education. Findings of the present survey showed that among 150 interviewees 42% of the female garment workers have no formal education while 37% of the female garment workers were found to get primary education during the survey. Low education is a big problem for female garment workers to improve their working life are educated in the Madrasa or Maktab which gives primarily religious education and religious education. In attaining training too, female garment workers could improve themselves. It can be noticed from Table 1 that 14% of the garment workers received some kind of training while for the rest of the garment workers, training was a dream for them.

From this survey it is very much clear to identify that, there is a few investment from Government of Bangladesh as well as from the BGMEA toward the education, training of female garment workers where both education and training is one of the most important factors of improving life skill.

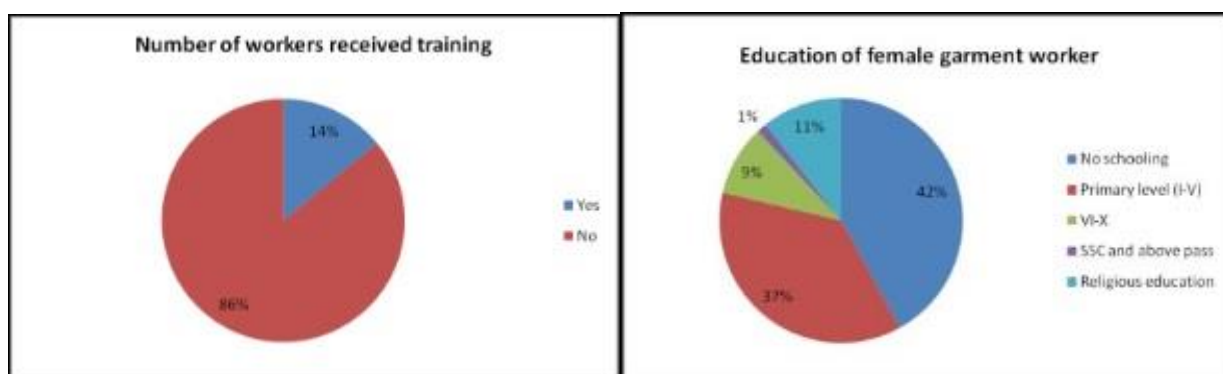


Chart 2 and 3: Training and Education of the RMG workers.

Table 1: Condition of Human Capital of the Female Garment Workers (Age, education and training)

	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Age of the worker				
Below 18 years	9	2	1	12
18-25	32	45	0	77

26-35	8	38	4	50
36+	2	5	4	11
Education				
No schooling	33	23	7	63
Primary level (I-V)	13	41	1	55
VI-X	1	13	0	14
SSC and above pass	0	2	0	2
Religious education	4	11	1	16
Have you Received any training?				
Yes	2	19	0	21
No	49	71	9	129
Total Number of Workers	51	90	9	150

Length of Services

Generally, female workers cannot work in the garment factory for a long period since garment work is very strenuous. Therefore, average length of service of the female workers has been estimated at only 3.7 years. Findings show that 46(31%) numbers of workers lengths of service is below 3, 59(39%) workers of them in between 3-6 years and the 45(30%) number of them are working in the garment factory over 6 years. Garment workers change their job very frequently. Workers reported that low wage is the main reason for job change.

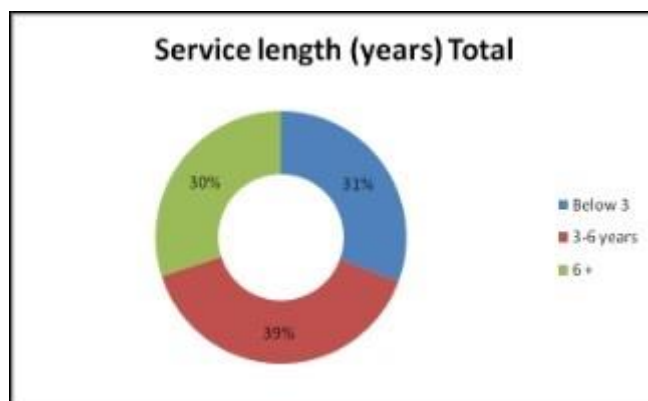


Chart 4: Service length of RMG worker

Table 2: Total length of service in garment factories

Service length(Years)	Category of Worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
Below 3	25	18	3	46
3-6	16	41	2	59
6+	10	4	4	45
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

Work Hour

Work hour is a powerful indicator of working conditions. Findings revealed that on an average a female garment worker works about 9 hours a day (Table 3). Among the 150 workers 73 (49%) of them worked more than 11 hours last working day. Long working hour is the dominant reason for workers' dissatisfaction and as such it is one of the main reasons of their illness.

Table 3: Work Hour in last day

Time	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
6-8 hours	6	33	2	41
9-11 hours	19	15	2	36
11 +	26	42	5	73
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

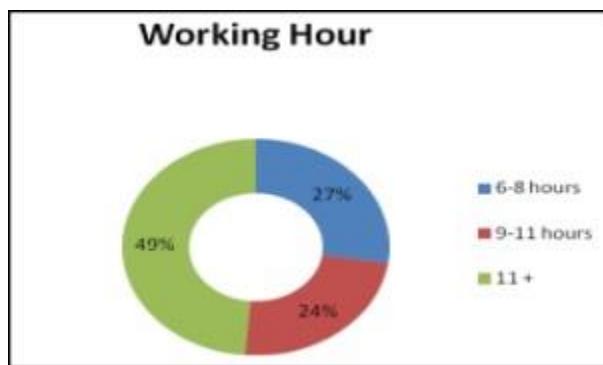


Chart 5: Working Hour by Female RMG Workers

First Job in the Garment

Among the 150 interviewees 114 (76%) of them reported that, this is the first job for them. Women from rural areas are being migrated and getting engaged in the garment factory. They do not have sufficient education, training, skill to do this type of job. By getting garment job very easily poor girls are losing their childhood. Because, without maintaining the labor law the management of garment industry are taking girls for this type of work at a very early age.

Table 4: Work in garment factory is first job

Yes/No	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
Yes	46	67	1	114
No	5	23	8	36
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

Types of facilities and Problems Faced in Garment Factories

Conditions of all other Labor Rights and Facilities in the Workplace

According to labor laws of the country and also according to rules and regulations of the International Labor Organization (ILO), a worker has a number of rights in addition to their right to wages and regular payment of wages. Previous studies showed that both labor laws and various ILO conventions are grossly violated in the garment sector of Bangladesh and this situation affected both workers and industry (Afrar 1998; Zohir and Paul-Majumder 1996; Paul-Majumder 2003; Paul- Majumder and Begum 2006). An attempt has been made in this sub section to assess the present conditions of various labor rights and facilities and to what extent the female garment workers are enjoying these rights and facilities.

Leave Facilities

It has been noticed from Table 5 that among 150 interviewees 54 (34%) of them reported that they enjoy weekly holiday whereas previously it was a great problem for the female garment workers. They had to work 7 days a week and 30 days a month. This situation has changed significantly. The female garment workers enjoy not only weekly holiday but also sick leave (37 numbers of workers) with pay. Previously this type of leave with pay was a dream for most of the garment workers. They are not getting annual leave properly. They are getting 10 days or less of the total 21 days of

annual leave (Afrar 1998; Zohir and Paul-Majumder 1996; Paul-Majumder 2003; Paul-Majumder and Begum 2006). The significant improvement the female garment workers achieved is maternity leave. 6 number of the surveyed workers reported that their factories have maternity leave facilities.

Insurance, Provident fund and other facilities

Table 5 reveals that the female garment workers are deprived most from insurance and provident fund facility. Another facility which the female garment workers are largely deprived from is day care facility. Female garment workers are also largely deprived from their right to medical facilities. It can be noticed from Table 5 that nobody from the surveyed workers reported that their factories have medical facilities like doctor, medicine etc.

Table 5: Type of facilities for Female RMG Workers

Type of Facilities	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Regular wage payment	42	69	7	118
Wage payment according to minimum wage law	2	5	0	7
Overtime	46	68	5	119
Attendance bonus	7	43	3	53
Festival bonus	19	59	6	84
Medical	0	0	0	0
Day care	0	0	0	0
Insurance	0	0	0	0
Maternity leave	1	5	0	6
Provident fund	0	0	0	0
Weekly holidays	13	41	0	54
Tiffin	35	45	0	80
Sick leave with payment	16	21	0	37
Annual leave with payment	0	0	0	0

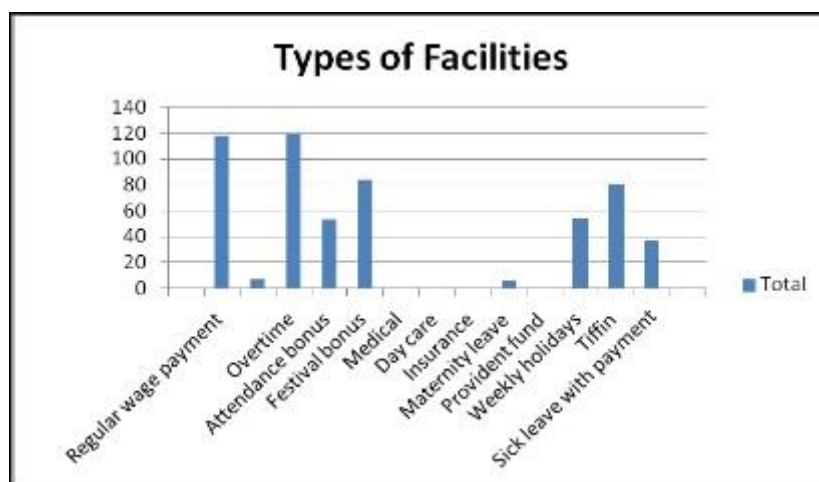


Chart 6: Types of Facilities for Female RMG Workers

Problems face in the Garment

Long working hour is the biggest problem of female garment workers. From this survey it has been reported that, among the 150 workers 132 (88%) number of workers is facing a huge problem from the long working hour, 111 (74%) of them are facing problem for absence of leave facilities, 105 (70%) are feeling stressful due to bad behavior from the management, 150 (100%) do not get any facilities of day care, 142 (95%) has not any appointment letter, and 112 (74.5%) always fear for fire accident.

Table 6: Problems face in Garment factories

Type of Facilities	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Long working hour	49	78	5	132
Absence of weekly holiday	30	55	2	87
Absence of leave facilities	33	71	7	111
Insecurity of job	38	83	9	130
Hazardous work place	21	55	5	81
Lack of health facilities	45	88	9	142
Bad behavior of the supervisor/production manager	29	70	6	105
Bad behavior of the co-workers	15	37	8	60
Low wages	40	81	4	125
Lack of fringe benefit	51	90	9	150
Miscalculation of overtime use	22	88	9	119
Absence of day care center	51	90	9	150
Non-issuance of appointment letter	50	83	9	142
Fear of fire accident	45	58	9	112
No problem faced	0	0	0	0

Wanted & Required Training for the Future

Required Instruction

About 98 (65%) workers are interested on income generating training, 43 (29%) of them are interested in machine operating, and 9 (6%) of them are interested in cutting. They want these training to improve themselves which can contribute to develop their life skill to get salary more.

Type of training	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
Machine operating	42	0	1	43
Cutting	1	7	1	9
Income generating	8	83	7	98
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

Future Aspiration

From this survey it has been found that, among the 150 interviewees 87 (58%) of the female garment workers want to serve in the present factories above 5 years. 34 (27%) of them want to work from 3 to 4 years. It means that, the female garment workers have the inspiration to work in the garment industry. Though they are not getting the necessary support from the BGMEA and the Government, but they want to serve the national economy for a long time.

Table 8: Want to serve in present factories

Year	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
1-2 years	2	26	1	29
3-4 years	17	11	6	34
5 + years	32	53	2	87
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

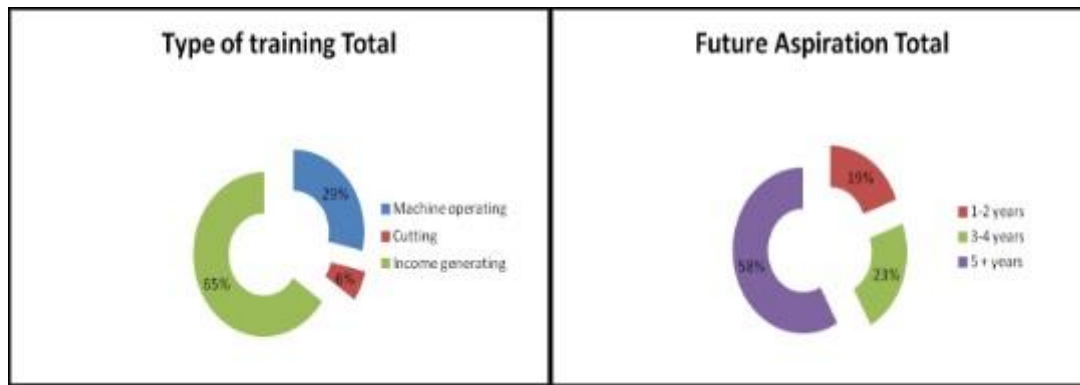


Chart 7 and 8: Type of received training and Future aspiration

Extent of Female garment Workers’ access to information

The extent of female garment workers’ access to information is an influential factor affecting the level of knowledge and awareness of female garment workers. Generally women in Bangladesh lack access to information. Only about 9 (6%) of the surveyed workers reported that they read newspaper (Table 9). It has been noticed from data of the present survey that 44 (29%) numbers of the workers get information from the factory notice board. Mobile phone and television is the major sources of information for female garment workers. Findings showed that 130 (87%) number of female garment workers get information from television.

About 103 (69%) of the female workers reported that they get information from mobile phone.

Table 9: Sources of Information the Garment workers use

Source of information	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Newspaper	3	6	0	9
Mobile phone	34	67	2	103
TV	48	77	5	130
Radio	23	48	1	72
Factory notice board	13	30	1	44
Others	11	16	2	29

Level of Job Satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the Female Garment Workers

Table 10 presents data on job satisfaction and reasons for satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This Table also presents data on the level grief of the workers about their work life. The table shows that 34 (27%) numbers of the surveyed workers are either very satisfied or satisfied with their jobs. The table further shows that 67 numbers of female garment workers have grief about their work life.

Table 11 shows that good pay is the dominant reason of their job satisfaction. Next dominant reasons are good behavior of the co-workers, regular wage payment and good behavior of the supervisor and production manager. Young female workers give much importance on the behavior of co-workers, supervisors and production manager to continue their work in the garment factory. Good behavior of the supervisor and production manager, the female garment workers were even ready to receive less salary (Paul-Majumder 2003).

Majority of the workers who are not satisfied with their jobs mentioned long work hour, low wages and monotonous nature as the dominant reasons for their job dissatisfaction (Table 12). Supervisor’s bad behavior is a dominant reason for job dissatisfaction of 86 (57%) numbers of dissatisfied workers. Respondents of the present survey reported various kind of bad behavior of supervisors like scolding, hitting, slapping etc.

Table 12 shows that, 71(47%) numbers of dissatisfied workers reported that, loss of dignity are one of the reasons for their dissatisfaction with their job. It seems that still now society look down upon garment work. It can be noticed from the same table that long distance between residence and workplace is also an important reason for dissatisfaction of the workers with their jobs. Oppositely proximity of workplace to residence is an important reason for job satisfaction also.

Table 10: Level of Job Satisfaction and Grief of the Female Garment Workers and Reasons for Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Very satisfied or satisfied	12	21	1	34
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17	28	4	49
Not satisfied or Very unsatisfied	22	41	4	67
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

Table 11: Reasons for Job Satisfaction

Reasons for Job Satisfaction	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Have good income	3	56	1	60
Good behavior of the supervisor/pm	17	23	2	42
Good behavior of the co-workers	37	51	6	94
Have appointment letter	3	8	0	11
Less overtime work	29	45	0	74
Workplace is near to residence	44	79	6	129
Got promotion	0	90	0	90
Regular wage payment	30	44	3	77
Have no other alternative	43	67	0	110
Scope of going abroad	0	1	0	1
Others	11	23	0	34

Table 12: Reasons for Job dissatisfaction

Reasons for Job dissatisfaction	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Low wage	47	21	8	76
Irregular wage payment	20	56	6	82
Long work hour	45	71	7	123
Temporary nature of employment	23	34	9	66
Distance between workplace and residence is long	6	11	3	20
Monotonous nature of work	40	77	5	122
Bad behavior of the supervisor/pm	12	67	7	86
No dignity	25	41	5	71
Others	13	27	1	41

Level of Knowledge and Awareness about Labor laws

Level of knowledge and awareness of female garment workers about labor laws is powerful indicator garment workers knowledge. It has been noticed from data of the present survey that about half of the surveyed workers do not know about labor laws. They even did not hear the name of these laws (Table 13). However, most of the surveyed workers were found to be aware about some of their labor rights. Table 13 shows that 135 (90%) numbers of surveyed workers know about the workers’ right of weekly holiday; 68 (45) numbers know about right of 8 hours working day and 76 (51%) of them know about the right of maternity leave. From this survey, it has been found that, nobody knows about

the right of equal pay to men and women for equal work. 58 (39%) of the female workers were found to be aware about their right to get appointment letter. About all other rights they were found less informed.

Table 13: Knowledge on labor laws and rights to entitlement as garment worker

Knowledge on labor laws and rights	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Have you heard about labor laws?				
Yes	33	43	0	76
No	18	47	9	74
Total No. of Surveyed Workers	51	90	9	150
Do you know as garment worker what rights are you entitled to				
Appointment letter	17	41	0	58
8 hour of work.	30	38	0	68
Weekly holiday	45	90	0	135
Maternity leave	23	53	0	76
Casual leave	0	0	0	0
Paid medical leave	0	0	0	0
Equal wage to men and women	0	0	0	0
Congenial work place	0	0	0	0
Provident fund	0	0	0	0
Medical allowance	0	0	0	0
Medical support (doctor etc.)	17	42	0	59
Fire exit	12	26	0	38
Medical leave	0	0	0	0
Child care facilities at the factory campus	0	0	0	0
Overtime wage rate is double of basic salary	45	79	0	124

Health status of the Female Garment Workers

Health of a worker is a valuable human capital since health and the productivity of labor are highly correlated. The general health of women in Bangladesh is not good due to gender discrimination in providing food and health care (Osmani and Sen 2003). In addition, women have to perform reproductive function. Thus, it is understandable that if women enter the job market they are more likely to be subject to occupational hazards than their male counterparts. In this context, women's health concerns are more important.

Prevalence of Diseases and Illnesses among the Female Garment Workers

The present survey reveals that more than 127 (85%) numbers of female garment workers suffer from a number of diseases and illnesses last month. It can be noticed from Table 14 that most prevalent illness and diseases are fever, cough and cold, breathing problem and headache. In addition, waist, leg, hand and back pain and physical weakness are also largely prevalent among the female garment workers. The same table further shows, 20 (13%) numbers of the garment workers suffered from fever last month.

Prevalence of cough, cold and some breathing problems among the surveyed workers is evident. It can be noticed from the table 14 that, 33 of the surveyed workers reported these problems. Most of them continued working even though they were suffering from acute cough and cold.

Monotonous work nature and suffocating work conditions are the main reasons of this health problem. Incidence of physical weakness among the surveyed workers has been found quite high. 68 (45%) numbers of workers among the total interviewees complained about physical weakness.

Table 14: Diseases/illness suffered by the female garment workers

Type of diseases and illnesses suffered by workers last month	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
Cough and cold	13	18	2	33
Breathing problem	7	12	0	19
Fever	4	15	1	20
Urine trouble	9	7	0	16
Jaundice	1	3	0	4
Weakness	23	45	0	68
Waist/leg/hand pain	15	51	0	66
Back pain	13	19	0	32
Headache	20	23	0	43
Stomach upset/dysentery	24	33	0	57
Others	1	4	0	5
No illness	13	7	3	23
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

Sources of Health services and Level of Satisfaction regarding Health Services

Treatment and health care facilities in Bangladesh are very scarce. Over the last few years Bangladesh has achieved significant progress in the development of health care infrastructure. Moreover, the question of occupational health and occupational disease has not yet been viewed as of primary importance. Information regarding the access to health services was collected through the present survey, for the month prior to the interviews. Table 15 shows the distribution of the surveyed garment workers who suffered from some diseases or illnesses during the previous month by sources of treatment. The table shows that 17 (11%) numbers of the sick female workers did not take any health service. It can be noticed from Table 15 that in most cases, the female garment workers undertook treatment by buying some medicines from the drug shop.

It can be noticed from Table 15 that only about 6 numbers of the sick workers have access to doctors provided by either Factory or BGMEA clinic whereas BGMEA reported that all its member factories have either full time or part-time doctor. 12 of the sick workers received treatment from the Government hospital or health centre doctors. It is noteworthy from Table 15 that about 5 numbers of the sick workers received treatment from private doctors who are generally very costly.

Table 15: Sources of health services

Source of health services	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
Factory doctor/ factory hospital/clinic/BGME clinic	5	1	0	6
Government hospital/health centre	5	7	0	12
Private hospital/clinic	2	3	0	5
Private doctor	9	7	0	16
Drug shop	25	48	3	76
Bought medicine without consulting doctor	33	54	2	89
Others (specify)	1	6	0	7
No service received	7	10	0	17

Safety measures adopted by employees

Among the total 150 interviewees, 131 (87%) numbers of garment workers do not take any precaution. It can be noticed from Table 16 (where various precautions undertaken by female garment workers have been shown) that only 7 (5%)

of the workers undertook precaution to protect finger from pricking. Therefore, injury due to pricking cannot cause much harm.(Paul-Majumder 2003).

Table 16 shows that, 17 (11%) of the surveyed female workers undertook precaution to protect hair and urna from tangling with sewing machine, 13 (9%) numbers of female workers are using mask. All these facts reveal that workers' knowledge regarding occupational hazards is still now very low.

Table 16: Personal safety measures

Use of safety measures	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Other	Total
Yes	3	16	0	19
No	48	74	9	131
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150
What personal safety measures do you take while working				
Use mask	3	10	0	13
Protect hair and orna from tangling with machine	2	15	0	17
Protect finger from pricking	0	7	0	7
Apron	0	5	0	5
Wear rubber shoes	0	0	0	0
Do not take any measures	48	74	9	131
Others	0	0	0	0

Relation with Factory Management

Table 17 reveals that workers get help from the management too. The management of the garment factories becomes conscious about worker-management relationship. Some employers hold regular worker-management meeting. It can be noticed from Table 17 that, among the 150 interviewees 12 (8%) of the female garment workers have very good relation with the management, 29 (19%) of them have a good relation, 55 (37%) are in moderate relationship, 27 (18%) of them have bad relationship and 27 (18%) of them have very bad relationship with the factory management.

Discussion with the garment owners and management personnel revealed that this employers' association has been playing a significant role to improve the workers-management relation. The discussants mentioned that BGMEA has made mandatory for its member factories to appoint a labor arbitration officer or welfare officer to solve any conflict between management and workers. In addition, to meet the skill needs of the workers the BGMEA started a training curriculum on basic concept like machineries and its operation. BGMEA is operating another training program in collaboration with Department of Youth and Development (DYD). BGMEA personnel said that "We are providing this training with a morale to providing the certificate in one hand and the appointment letter on the other." Improved relation of the garment workers with management also revealed when it is found that BGMEA has started scholarship program for the children of the garment workers.

Table 17: Relation with Factory Management

Type of relation	Category of worker			
	Helper	Operator	Others	Total
Very Good	3	9	0	12
Good	12	17	0	29
Moderate	17	31	7	55
Bad	10	15	2	27
Very bad	9	18	0	27
Total Number of worker	51	90	9	150

**Violence in the Factory
Workplace Environment**

It has already been mentioned in the earlier section that female garment workers feel unsafe and frightened in the workplace because of bad behavior of supervisors. All categories of workers almost equally complained about supervisor’s bad behavior. The interviewees complained that supervisors who are mainly men use filthy words to scold them. The workers complained that they always remain afraid of their supervisor and therefore they cannot concentrate on their work and often make mistake in their work. Thus, solution of this problem is essential not only for the well being of the workers but also to raise the productivity of the garment industry.

Violence against female garment workers in the workplace

Incidence of violence occurred in the factory during the last one year has been present in Table 18. It can be noticed from the table that 57 (38%) numbers of total surveyed workers reported that they faced violence in the factory during the last one year. In most cases they faced verbal abuse and perpetrators were mostly supervisors. 27 (18%) workers reported that perpetrators were management staffs. Sexual harassment was reported by 8 (5%) workers, but no worker reported incidence of rape. Most of the victims did not seek any support from anybody.

Table 18: Violence in the factory (During the last one year)

Violence in the factory	Category of worker			Total
	Helper	Operator	Others	
Did you face any violence in the factory during last one year?				
Yes	21	32	4	57
No	30	58	5	93
Total Number of Surveyed Female Workers	51	90	9	150
What type of violence did you face?				
Verbal abuse	19	31	4	54
Physical torture	4	2	0	6
Sexual harassed	3	5	0	8
Threatened to dismiss from job	8	12	0	20
Threatened for sexual harassment	1	6	0	7
Raped	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Who did harassment?				
Management staff (PM and above)	6	19	2	27
Supervisor	21	28	0	49
Security personnel	7	15	7	29
Colleagues	3	9	0	12
Others	3	6	0	9

**Findings from the Quantitative Method through Z Test
Salary (with overtime) of the workers who received training**

5600	4850	5280	6720	7200
6080	6550	7990	5000	6300
7000	6200	6200	7100	7225
4600	5600	4970	5700	4890
8200				

N=21

Mean, = 6155

$$\bar{x} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N x_i$$

$$SD \quad s = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N-1} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \bar{x})^2} = 1047.5543$$

Standard Error $SE_{\bar{x}} = \frac{s}{\sqrt{n}} = 228.5951$

$$z = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma} = -0.5298$$

Salary (with overtime) of the workers who didn't receive training

3200	2800	4500	3600	3250	3380	3650	2900	3000	4450
4800	4210	2800	2790	2850	3000	3210	3075	3100	3200
3000	3150	3450	2970	4200	3450	4000	3250	3380	4200
4100	3500	3750	4100	4550	2990	3175	4500	4255	5600
3150	3400	3100	5100	3780	4200	3560	5800	4760	4550
5600	5210	4500	3210	4500	4600	4550	3180	4560	3560
5600	4100	4250	4200	4150	5200	4500	4320	4400	4570
4500	5500	4250	5550	4200	4000	4400	3250	3470	4200
3560	3450	3300	3100	3250	4100	3100	3700	4100	3450
3250	4440	3540	3240	4150	3800	5190	4230	4150	3210
3870	3100	3455	4435	2970	3450	2950	3265	3420	4350
4835	4000	4120	3450	3215	3420	4850	4100	3250	3100
3200	4500	4100	3635	4210	4380	3400	3410	4000	

N=129

Mean, $\bar{x} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N x_i = 3872.5969$

SD $s = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N-1} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \bar{x})^2} = 717.7676$

Standard Error $SE_{\bar{x}} = \frac{s}{\sqrt{n}} = 63.1959$

$$z = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma} = -0.9371$$

Calculated by: <http://ncalculators.com/statistics/z-score-calculator.htm>

From this quantitative technique it is clear to understand that, the female garment workers, who have got some kinds of training is getting high salary including overtime rather than the workers who did not get any types of training, due to the variation of production output. The difference between the two category workers productivity is -0.4073. From this calculation it can be said that, the null hypothesis of this research which is, the female garment workers, who have got the training is getting more salary due to high production in the RMG sector, is acceptable. It supports the statement of the research also. Because, the broad objective of the research is, to find out the empowerment process of female garment workers directly or indirectly leads to the contribution on high production in the Bangladeshi RMG sector. Since, the human capital (i.e. education, awareness, training) is one of the most important instruments of empowerment. If education, training can be provided to the female garment workers, then their life skill will be increased. They will be capable to provide more productivity, which will directly contribute to the national GDP rate of Bangladesh. If the

productivity of the worker is high then, their salary will also be increased due to their high productivity. The high salary will impact to their regular livelihood which can play a vital role to the workers physical and mental health.

Contribution of Female Garment Worker in the National Economy of Bangladesh

Bangladesh's economy would not be where it is now without the garment industry. During the past three decades, this sector of the economy in Bangladesh has grown at an unprecedented rate, becoming the country's primary export. The sector is crucial in supplying money to the underprivileged and creating jobs for the unemployed. Around 10 million individuals are connected to the sector in some way, with over 4 million working in it directly. In such case, women make up the bulk of the workforce (at 80 percent). The industry's contributions to the country's economy and society have been substantial as well. The growth in RMG's share of GDP from 3% in FY 1990-91 to 17% in FY 2012-2013 is impressive. Clearly, this shows the industry's importance to the economy as a whole. The rapid growth of the RMG industry has been a driving force in the country's rapid industrialization. Unfortunately, both the level of investment in this industry and the number of people working in it are dismally low. To put it simply, Bangladesh has the lowest cost of labor in the world. No other country is using their labor is as cheap like Bangladesh. The female garment workers are not getting any education, awareness, training, which will help them to improve their life skill. They are suffering a lot of violence from the garment, living condition is very low. The garment industry does not implement the labor law accordingly. There is lots of garment industry which is basically non compliance. Non compliance garment is not the member of BGMEA also. They do not have any existence in the BGMEA garment list as well as in the buyer's concern. They usually take young girl, without any skill, who is under 18. So that, the garment management can gives the lowest salary to the workers. They do not provide any types of facilities according to the law. There is nobody for monitoring the sector. Government as well as the BGMEA also ignores these types of problems of workers.

If the government along with the can take a program to enhance the capacity of these female garment workers through provide education, awareness, training which will enhance their capacity, then the female garment workers will be able to provide high productivity in the RMG sector. They will step ahead in the way of their bargaining capacity, decision making skill, and strong self confidence level. They will be aware about the labor law of Bangladesh so that violence against the workers will also reduce. It will make them physically as well as mentally happy. They will be able to lead a happy family life and the productivity of their work will also be tremendously high. Proper information and communication skill will help them to restraint away from labor unrest situation along with the management- workers unrest situation which will play a great impact in the national economy as well as the increase of GDP rate in Bangladesh. Without any support from the Government the workers are earning the highest foreign currency for the nation, if the nation provides necessary support to the workers then the earning rate of foreign currency will tremendously increase. Without any skill the workers are accelerating 17% GDP rate in the total economy of Bangladesh. After getting necessary education, information as well as the training the GDP rate of Bangladesh from the RMG sector will be 50% of the total national economy.

Recommendation

Findings of the present survey have revealed that improvement of female garment workers' are the basic levers of their empowerment.

Facilitate women's access to information regarding gainful employment

Findings have revealed that absence of women's access to job information is an acute problem. In most cases, for this problem women undertake job in the garment industry at low wages. Hence, it is very urgent to facilitate their access to employment information. Access to employment information will strengthen female workers' bargaining power which in turn helps them to protest against all discrimination and exploitation. Government of Bangladesh can supply employment information to rural areas through Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television. Findings of the present survey have revealed that women have access to these news media.

Provide Education and Training

Education and training are influential factors affecting garment workers' empowerment. Findings of the present survey have revealed that level of both education and training is low among the female garment workers this is one of the main reasons for their low bargaining power. Findings have further revealed that female garment workers have eagerness to receive training and education. Both the government of Bangladesh, employers and NGOs should take measures to provide these two qualities. Community based association can also undertake program to provide training and education to female garment workers.

Provide Functional Literacy

Most of the participants of the survey said that, there is disparity between the wage amount they signed in the office paper and the actual amount they receive. Many workers also reported that they do not understand what paper they sign when they receive payment. These facts reveal that there is need for providing of functional Literacy like counting, simple math,, pay receipt etc. among the female garment workers.

Lobbying with the Factory management to Provide Appointment letter to garment workers Insecurity of work is rampant among the female garment workers since more than 80 percent of them did not get appointment letter. Absence of appointment letter and promotion facilities is the most influential reasons for frequent job change of the female garment workers. Because of absence of these two facilities, the garment workers do not feel any commitment to their work. Due to their lack of commitment female garment workers hardly can attain any improvement in their working life.

Findings revealed that short length of service of the female garment workers is a stumble block in the way of undertaking any factory based welfare program for them. This block deters workers from gaining work experience and seniority in their work life. These qualities are essential for a worker to have promotion and other facilities of work. Hence, it is very clear that efforts have to be made to achieve garment workers' right to get appointment letter. This right will raise female garment workers' individual several times which in turn enable garment workers to attain other rights of work.

Arrange advocacy on female garment workers' role in the society and economy

Although reputation of female garment workers in the society improved over the last two decades still the young female garment workers have to face the comment that "garment women workers are not good women" This is the main reason of their grief about their garment job. During the present survey more than 18 percent dissatisfied workers reported that loss of dignity is one of the reasons for their dissatisfaction. For the same reason most of the workers do not want their daughter to work in the garment factory. It seems that still now, society look down upon garment workers. To increase garment workers' empowerment society's attitude towards garment workers have to be improved and this can be done by arranging advocacy on garment workers role in the society and economy through Radio and Television Channels. In addition rigorous campaign should have to be undertaken to remove the bad reputation of the garment workers from the society.

Arrange training for changing supervisors' behaviors

Findings showed that good behavior of the supervisor is a dominant reason of job satisfaction of the female garment workers. Alternatively, findings showed that bad behavior of the supervisor is the main reason for female garment workers' grief about their work life. Young female workers give much importance on the behavior of co-workers, supervisors and production manager to continue their work in the garment factory. For good behavior of the supervisor and production manager, the female garment workers were even ready to receive less salary. Hence, strategy has to be found out to convert supervisor's and production manager's behavior into workers-friendly behavior.

Provide awareness raising training regarding occupational hazards

Findings showed that female workers' knowledge regarding occupational hazards is scarce. Mainly due to ignorance about occupational hazards female garment workers suffers from some health problems like cough, cold, headache, waist

pain etc. Hence awareness raising training regarding occupational hazards has to be provided to female garment workers.

Provide Training on Labor Law

Present study has shown that about half of the surveyed workers do not know about labor laws. They even did not hear the name of these laws. To increase female garment workers' empowerment rigorous campaign and training on labor laws are urgently necessary.

Measures should be undertaken to improve female garment workers' Health Conditions Discussion in this section clearly reveals that although some improvement in the health condition of the female garment workers has been achieved overtime, still prevalence of diseases and illnesses are quite high among them. Efforts have to be made on urgent basis to improve the health condition of the female garment workers not only for the well being of the workers but also for the development of the garment sector of Bangladesh since productivity of this labor intensive industry largely depends on workers' health conditions.

Provide ration facility to the female garment workers

Compare to minimum wage rate, present wage rate in the garment factory is good. But if one considers the rate of inflation existing in the country for the last few years, this amount of wage is not adequate. Hence, measures should be undertaken to help the garment to compensate the pressure of inflation on their income. For this purpose, garment workers should be given access to Safety net facilities of the government. In addition, ration facility provided by the Government to garment workers should be widened and care should be undertaken to ensure this facility for each and every female garment workers.

Provide Bank Facility

Findings revealed that female garment workers are eager to open bank account, but they cannot manage time to go to bank. It will be convenient for the young female workers if the bank comes to workers i.e. if the commercial banks open booth in the garment factories.

Provide loan to female garment workers to buy labor productivity augmenting appliance

Fan helps them to sleep well and to work efficiently. Similarly possession refrigerator also raise their productivity by saving their time in marketing and cooking. But very few garment workers own this asset. Hence, efforts should have to be made so that garment workers get easy loan to buy refrigerator and other time saving kitchen equipment.

Provide confidence and professionalism enhancement training to the female garments workers Findings of the present study revealed that female garment workers could not improve their individual to undertake the job of supervisor. It is mainly due to lack of confidence and professionalism among them. Confidence and professionalism enhancement training may help them to grow these two essential qualities.

Provide Counseling Support

To improve mental health of the female garment workers BGMEA may undertake an advocacy program with garment employers to create a gender sensitive environment in the factories and also to motivate the employers to provide psychological counseling support service to the workers.

Discussion with BGMEA Personnel

Focus Group Discussion with the Garment Owners and Management

Greater involvement of women workers in RMG sector- what is the reason behind this

Mr, Reaz –Bin – Mahmood, M.D., La-Bella Group, said

"We prefer to employ women workers in garment factory because women garment workers are docile and much more sincere in work than men worker;, they are efficient and try to do work perfectly. Moreover, garment work is suitable for young girls since they have nimble finger"

They also said that in knitting work usually they do not prefer women workers because these are laborious work. They also said that women workers' presence is very fewer in cutting section since women have not enough strength and it is also a load taking work.

Problem with Women Workers

The discussant narrated some problems usually they faced with the women garment workers. Leaving from the job without notice is the common problem of women garments worker. Ms Nahid Hasan, M.D. Shomahar Sweaters Limited, said

"One skilled women worker go on leave for her marriage or pregnancy without notice. But after completion of leave period she does not come back; sometime they joined another garments factory. If she gives birth of four children she would enjoy maternity leave in 4 garments.

The discussant reported that female garment workers always complain. We never can satisfy them.

Ms Nahid Hasan , M.D. Shomahar Sweaters Limited, said,

"We always try to provide good food, but it is difficult to satisfy the worker in providing food. In my factory fruit is mandatory in Tiffin and most of the time I give banana. But there is a common complain "banana is small" or "banana is rotten" etc

Plan of BGMEA about Workers welfare

The discussant reported that every year around 2 million people are joining the labor force seeking work, while opportunities for productive employment are also increasing in the garment sector. Within the perspective of a quickly changing labor market with emphasis on evidence-based skilled worker shortage, BGMEA has been playing a significant role to quantify the scope and potentials of employment through skills training which is necessary to improve the skill shortage. They also informed that, *"to secure the job placement they started a training curriculum on basic concept like machineries and its operation"* Mr, Reaz –Bin – Mahmood , Director BGMEA and M.D., La-Bella Group informed *"To address the need of skilled workers, BGMEA started a project on increasing and strengthening the capacity of 12 Technical Training Centers (TTC). Mr, Reaz –Bin – Mahmood also said – "BGMEA is operating a training program In collaboration with Department of Youth and Development (DYD). We are providing this training with a morale to providing the certificate in one hand and the appointment letter on the other."*

They also perceived that in spite of all their efforts these are not sufficient. Yet there has been a meticulous divergence between the employment potentials and the skill development initiatives. Therefore, proper attention and care should be taken on skill training and productivity enhancement.

Appointment letter and Health Facilities.

Regarding Appointment letter the discussant said that every worker get the appointment letter and it is mandatory.

The discussant informed that all the member Factories of BGMEA have health facilities. But the women garment workers are not interested to avail the facilities. Mr Nahid Hasan, director, BGMEA , M.D. Shomahar Sweaters Limited said,

"Every garment factory has doctor but most of the cases the doctors are male and so the women garments worker feel shy to go to the male doctor. Another thing is that health facilities without cost is not valuable to the women garments worker"

The discussants said that good health need to be ensured for the garment workers who are the main driving force and they informed that they are running a dozen of health centers. The BGMEA is planning to set up full fledged hospitals.

Mr, Reaz –Bin – Mahmood , Director BGMEA informed that they created a provision of workers' health insurance

Regarding Housing

Discussant from BGMEA said that it is too difficult to arrange housing facilities for all garments worker however, they proposed to the Government for creating a provision of dormitory for the garments workers

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)

Mr, Reaz –Bin – Mahmood , Director BGMEA, said

“As a Part of CSR, BGMEA has been working with disable people with an objective of comprising this huge workforce in our RMG family. We signed an agreement with Center for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) with the responsibilities of providing job to the group of disable manpower in RMG sector. We do believe that they can also be the dynamic and potential resources for an organization.”-

Facilities for children

They informed that even now they could not provide enough facilities to children of the garment workers. However, they started to provide scholarship to meritorious children of the garment workers

Relation with the Workers Freedom of association

Participants in the discussion were found in favor of trade union. But they demand that trade union should be healthy and should be organized by garment workers themselves and not by any outsider and it should be free from any political influence. They also opined this sector not yet ready to have freedom association.

In this regard Mr, Reaz –Bin – Mahmood , Director BGMEA said

“freedom of association is not functional in our sector. At first education of garments worker is needed. Manufacturers and workers are the two wheel or tire of a cycle the body is Trade union. It is a common problem the general worker can not define what are their rights and what are their responsibilities due to lack of education. On the other hand, trade union body, most of the time think about their own benefit. So the general garment worker do not feel interest to join herself in trade union.” Regarding workers unrest in the factory they said *“ in 85% cases local people fabricated the problem or unrest”*

Watchdogs, Workplace safety and Compliance

The BGMEA discussants informed that they have regular monitoring system to check compliance of member factories. They said

“We do not like to say all of our 500 members manufacturers are came from the same background. But we have monitoring system to check the anomalies in terms of legal wage , overtime, salary in time etc.”

They also informed that for this sector there is no single ministry. BGMEA has to make contact with different ministry.

Conclusion

There are a variety of problems that greatly affect empowerment of female garment workers like education, awareness, training, information, communication skill, relationship with the management, health issues, personal protection equipment, violence in the workplace, labor law, salary, working hour, future aspiration of the female garment worker, labor rights, working condition, reason for job satisfaction along with the dissatisfaction , which are mapped out and explored in this study. Concerning workers' rights and social conformity, these problems need to be solved. Therefore, this study focuses on how national and international policies, as well as the ILO's conventions, the Factory Act of 1965, and the Fair Labor Act of 2009, all of which apply to the RMG sector, may help empower women working in the garment industry. The government, BGMEA, multinational-agencies, and other stakeholders' responsibilities in the plight of female garment workers are also investigated. This study finds strategies to boost employees' conditions of female garment workers which will increase their capacity so that the earning of foreign currency of Bangladesh will be high. It will play a great positive role in the overall GDP rate of the country. Improving working conditions for RMGI employees is a top goal, making the implementation of HR throughout the organization a top priority. Protecting the rights of women in the garment industry to form unions and engage in collective bargaining is also crucial to bringing about long-lasting change for the workforce. The state has an obligation to safeguard these rights by establishing procedures for hearing complaints, making decisions, providing relief, and enforcing punishments for infringement. At last, Bangladesh's labor legislation is getting the attention it deserves, it is important for each and every owner as well as the management from every garment factory to ensure the labor rights along with the implementation of labor law in all

the garment factory so that the female garment workers can live a happy, healthy and dignified life as well as can enjoy their hard work with their family.

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