

1 Social Safety & Security of Women Workers in Garments Sector 2 of Bangladesh

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5 *Received: 9 December 2017 Accepted: 1 January 2018 Published: 15 January 2018*

6

7 **Abstract**

8 Bangladesh is the fastest developing country in the world today. Among various sectors
9 responsible for this contribution, the highest important is garments or RMG. The generation
10 of foreign currency employment opportunity are the basics done by RMG at present. Most of
11 this employment is poor women workforce at a very little cost. While the garments sector is
12 dependent on this labor force, the employers are not providing them the facilities according to
13 labor law. Women's social occupational rights are at risk today. This study has gone through
14 the observation of women workers' social safety security conditions with the solution of the
15 problems prevailing in RMG sector

16

17 **Index terms**— women workers, social safety, security, women rights, workplace conditions

18 **1 Introduction**

19 Bangladesh is a labor abundant country because of being available at very little wages, the garment industry gained
20 the highest focus and has become the second-largest ready-made garment exporter in the world. The industry
21 is taking on green manufacturing practices and employs about 4.00 million people, including 80% of them are
22 women. The industry has created a platform for 3.2 million low skilled female to involve in the new productive
23 activities in the society and to empower them through skills development and employment generation. It also
24 creates vulnerabilities for them which are related to their social safety and security. In Bangladesh case, women
25 RMG Workers are suffering from various risks because of working in unsafe home inside and outside conditions
26 and under unrealistic factory rules. Hence, this study tries to find out how the garment industry is prompting
27 violation of women workers' rights.

28 In Bangladesh case, women RMG Workers are suffering from various risks because of working in unsafe home
29 inside and outside conditions and under unrealistic factory rules. Hence, this study tries to find out how the
30 garment industry is prompting violation of women workers' rights.

31 **2 II.**

32 **3 Literature Review**

33 Social safety means freedom from the occurrence or risk of injury or loss mentally & physically. Also refers to the
34 protection of workers from the danger of workplace accidents [1]. Security includes conditions of service ranging
35 from the stage of appointment to the termination of service and even beyond and relates to matters about
36 disciplinary action [2]. The 1980's mark the beginning of the rapid integration of Bangladesh's a small and open
37 home-based garment industry into global garment chain as result of liberalization of the economy [3]. Pratima
38 Paul Majumder and Anwara Begum in their paper discuss the gender imbalance in the export garment industry
39 in Bangladesh [4]. " Naila Kabeer and Simeen Mahmud, Rags, Riches and Women Workers: Export-oriented
40 Garment and Women Workers, was about Bangladesh garments [5]. "Globalization and Bangladesh-A discussion
41 on Bangladesh's Garment Industry" was about globalization and Bangladesh Garment industry ??6]. Previously

42 some studies worked on women workers' discrimination, health issues, workplace safety but there is much lack.
43 No study was about women workers' social safety & security issues in RMG sector. This study highlights those
44 areas where the women workers are deprived of the rights yet that are ensured by Bangladesh Labor Law 2016.
45 It focuses on working condition, problems they face home, society & workplace, their conjugal life, and some
46 other important topic.

47 **4 a) Necessities of social safety & security for women workers
48 of RMG sector in Bangladesh**

49 Today organizations can change their material, needs, goods, and services to other organizations or other
50 countries. But the only one resource which is not exchangeable is human resource. So, we can say that the
51 human is the most competitive asset of any organization that cannot be exchangeable. Human resources or
52 human assets mean the workers or the employee of any organization and a part of this human asset is the women
53 workers who play a significant role in the overall production in RMG sector. If this indispensable part of the
54 employee is not satisfied with the measures and incentives provided by the authority, it will have a negative
55 impact, and the factory has to suffer in the long run. So it is a must to take necessary steps for their benefit as
56 well as for their stakeholder.

57 **5 III.**

58 **6 Objective of the Research**

59 This study mainly aims at justifying the status of social safety and security of women workers' in RMG sector
60 of Bangladesh in line with the national and IV.

61 **7 Research Methodology a) Research Design & Research Tools**

62 The research design for this study was a descriptive survey through the questionnaire. The purpose of using
63 descriptive survey was to collect detailed information that describes an existing phenomenon. From a review
64 of the literature, a survey questionnaire was developed to collect data for the study. The primary data was
65 collected through this form of questionnaire and was hand delivered to the target employees. The participating
66 employees filled the questions and returned. After that, the results were further analyzed using descriptive
67 statistical analysis method to find out how the employee turnover affects their production. This study is a
68 descriptive survey because it adopted the use of questionnaire aimed at finding the impact of employee turnover
69 on organizational performance..

70 **8 b) Data Collection**

71 Primary data collection: Workers provided primary data by oral interview according to the questionnaire.
72 The Sample size was 400 respondents for this project from around fifteen factories around Gazipur, Dhaka,
73 Narayangonj & Chittagong. The data collection time was October 2017 to January 2018. Secondary data
74 collection: The newspapers, internet & books provided the secondary data.

75 **9 c) Data Processing & Analysis**

76 According to the questionnaire, the collected data are represented in analytical charts in the quantitative method.
77 Percentage method is used in the charts and diagrams.

78 Formula: (Frequency/Population) X 100 i. Family life security
79 ii. Social respect At present, RMG factories are increasing day by day, and the number of women workers
80 joining this sector is just running with it. But the main problem is that the people does not respect women
81 worker. 34% women agreed and 24% women strongly admit that they are disrespected most of the times by
82 family and society. The society put rough remarks about them mostly which affects them mentally and thus
83 hampers personal along with working life.

84 iii. Traveling way safety Garment women workers are not safe at the proper level on the way traveling to
85 factories. Maximum 28% disagreed in the case of safety. Almost all factories have no transportation system for
86 women workers for taking care of their safety. Women are victimized through harassing situations and most of
87 the time they are not safe on the way to returning to home especially after doing overtime.

88 **10 iv. Sexual harassment in the workplace**

89 In Bangladesh, garment women workers are yet harassed sexually by colleagues like a lineman, supervisor, and
90 manager sometimes but the no. is little. 20% women agreed about harassment and 14% strongly agreed. Though
91 it has been reduced to an extent, still women are threatened, raped and sometimes burnt by acids.

92 v. Female membership quota in trade union At present, many factories have no trade union. Which factories
93 have trade union, most of them do not have female membership quota. 35% women disagreed in getting this
94 facility and 25% strongly disagreed. Most of the women did not know about labor rights and deprived of their

95 rights. If there are quotas for women in the trade union, elected representatives can raise their voice to acquire
96 all their rights to stated authority and can aware women about their labor rights.

97 vi.

98 **11 Maternity leave facility**

99 In Bangladesh, almost all factories are giving maternity leave facility to women workers, but workers do not enjoy
100 leave duration in the proper way according to labor law. Labor law says, eight weeks preceding the expected
101 day of her delivery and eight weeks immediately following the day of her delivery with payment should be the
102 maternity leave duration. And here 38% women disagreed, and 24% strongly disagreed in getting adequate
103 maternity leave.

104 At present, women workers are not getting childcare & canteen facility. Most of the factories do not have
105 any childcare system, and some do not have canteen yet. Maximum canteen arrangements are very poor and
106 unhygienic. So, workers have to go the home for their lunch. 34% women disagreed, and 22% strongly disagreed
107 with having these facilities.

108 viii. Payment of overtime Unfortunate but truth is in Bangladesh's perspective; women workers have to do
109 overtime because of poverty although being a safety issue. But they are not paid according to labor law which
110 hampers their economic security. Maximum 45% disagreed, and 28% strongly disagreed in getting the proper
111 payment of overtime. Labor law says, overtime payment should be twice one's ordinary rate of basic wage and
112 dearness allowance and ad-hoc or interim pay if any. But they are not getting this.

113 ix. Performing dangerous work Women workers have to perform yet risky works in factories near machinery
114 in motion like high-speed rotary machines which is not safe for them. According to labor law, operations in
115 motion shall be made or carried out only by a specially trained adult male worker wearing tight-fitting clothing
116 whose name has been recorded in the register prescribed in this behalf. So, these works are strictly prohibited for
117 women. Many factories have no concern in taking care of this. 40% women agreed in this purpose. In Bangladesh,
118 garment women workers' family life is affected by their work yet. 33% women agreed, and 30% strongly agreed
119 that a negative impact is present here rudely. Women are being tortured mentally and sometimes physically by
120 their husbands. And families have broken off many. Though women are working, being independent economically
121 and contributing to the family, yet they are facing severe negligence in family life.

12 vii.

123 Childcare & canteen facilities 2. To implement government laws in women rights reservation issues in family &
124 every level of society and manage proper punishment for offensive actions. 3. To provide safe transportation
125 facilities for women workers from a factory. 4. To make them feel safe & comfortable. 5. To arrange the
126 motivational program to avoid illtreatment for women workers. 6. To give them proper knowledge about their
127 rights according to the labor law. 7. To provide quota for female membership in the trade union. 8. To ensure
128 their adequate maternity leave and other leaves with payment. 9. To provide childcare in the factory. 10. To
129 provide hygienic canteen facilities in the factory. 11. To ensure a proper allowance for overtime work 12. To have
130 welfare officer and maintain welfare and counselor Register. 13. To implement labor law & prohibit dangerous
131 works for women.

132 VII.

133 **13 Conclusion**

134 Bangladesh readymade garment industry creates several vulnerabilities related to women rights, life standard,
135 and life-threatening risks. The findings of this research is that employers are neglecting women workers' rights
136 & have made the entire work environment dangerous and insecure for women. This study highlights the actual
137 working condition prevailing in garment industries, women workers' demands, wants and needs, the problems
138 continuously they face in their family, society, workplace, and all-over social safety & security conditions. This
139 study also gives the solution should be taken to satisfy this workforce. Proper coordination between private &
140 government measures should be ensured to uphold RMG women workers' social & occupational safety & security.

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Year

2018

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Volume XVIII Issue III Version I - Global Journal of Human Social Science (C)

		Questions	Does your work have any negative impact on your from society? Do you feel safe on the way traveling to factory? Do you face any sexual harassment in your factory? Does your factory have female membership facilityin trade union? Do you get adequate maternity leave? Do you get child-care & canteen facilities in the workplace? Do you get proper respect family life?	Strongly Agree	Response variables	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1.	3.	Does your work have any negative impact on your from society? Do you feel safe on the way traveling to factory? Do you face any sexual harassment in your factory? Does your factory have female membership facilityin trade union? Do you get adequate maternity leave? Do you get child-care & canteen facilities in the workplace? Do you get proper respect family life?	120	30%	120	30%	10%	17%
4.	5.		68	17%	68	17%	56	14%
6.	7.		16	14%	16	14%	16	04%
2.			52	13%	52	13%	72	18%
			40		40			
8.		Do payment for overtime? you get proper	12	21%	84	21%	12	180
9.		Do you have to perform any dangerous work?	80	20%	160	40%	44	92
							11%	23%

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Figure 1: Table 1 :

141 [Factory Act ()] , *Factory Act* 2006. 1965. Chapter. (2) . (Chapter)

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