

Prospects and Conditions of Strategic HR Issues to Empower Women in RMG Sector of Bangladesh

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Abstract:

The Ready Made Garments (RMG) of Bangladesh started in the late 1970 and became an important pioneer in the economy (contributes 80% of total export earnings of Bangladesh) and in terms of foreign currency earnings Bangladesh is the second largest garments exporter next to china. This study is designed to test whether the functional factors of HRM in garments sector is really exist or not. The study portrait that, most of the garments violate the proper human resource management practices contrast with theoretical framework. The study also suggest that the government as well as all the concerned authority should come forward with considerable efforts to ensure proper human resource management practices for smooth running and sustainable development in this sector which will result in overall economic development of Bangladesh as well as empowering women.

Key-words: RMG, National GDP, National Economic Contribution, Female RMG worker, HR issues and Women Empowerment.

Introduction

Bangladesh is a developing country and its economy is largely dependent on agriculture. However the Ready Made Garment (RMG) has been placed largest export earnings of Bangladesh. Textile industry, pharmaceuticals, agribusiness, jute, leather, tea, food processing, etc. are contributing to the national economic development of Bangladesh. RMG has secured the first position for earning foreign currency amongst all. The first garment factory opened in 1976. The industry has grown dramatically over the past 35 years and treated as a life blood of the Bangladesh economy. it has been the fastest growing industry in the recent years and the industry employees about 4 million people and the growth rate of RMG export was over 20% in the last two decades (BGMEA, Members' Directory 2010-2011). In Bangladesh the industry was expanded mainly on the easy availability of labor especially of the female labor accessibility. This industry has provided the largest employment opportunities for female in the industrial sector where more than 85 percent

of the production workers are female (Islam and Zahid, 2012). RMG Employers prefer female workers for more vulnerable, docile and manageable than male workers. They accept without protest the flexible terms of employment and are also seen less likely to be organized and susceptible to “anti-management propaganda” from outside (Khan 2001). RMG sector contributes more than 13% of GDP of Bangladesh. The RMG sector helps for alleviating poverty from Bangladesh by offering jobs to males and females for improving GDP and earning 80% of foreign currency of total export earnings to the economic contribution, where the role of female garments worker are enormously important. In this context, this study was undertaken to assess contribution in the economy of the female garment workers in Bangladesh.

Literature Review:

Schuler and Jackson (1987) characterized HRM rehearses as a framework that draws, creates, inspires, and holds workers to secure the powerful usage and the survival of the association and its individuals. Due to the passage of time, different authors tried to draw a boundary of the Human Resource Management functions in different perspective, based on culture, region and socioeconomic development. The studies proclaimed HRM as the creator of a linking between the objectives of the organization and the actions of personnel working there. The objective of a human asset administrator is to fortify the business worker relationship. This objective is bolstered by a variety of functions within the human resources department and throughout the organization. David A. De Cenzo and Stephen P. Robbins (2013) classified the key functions of human resource management into four categories: Staffing, Training and Development, Motivation, Maintenance.

Staffing is the procedure of procuring, conveying, and holding a workforce of adequate amount and quality to make positive effects on the organization’s effectiveness. Staffing is the activities which are concerned with seeking and hiring qualified employees (David A. De Cenzo & Stephen P. Robbins, 2013).

Preparing and improvement is a purpose of human resource management worried with authoritative action went for bettering the execution of people and gatherings in hierarchical settings. It has been known by a few names, including "human resource improvement", and "learning and advancement".

Motivation is the inward and outer elements that invigorate thirst and energy in individuals to be continuously intrigued and focused on work, part or subject, or to endeavor to accomplish an objective. Motivation includes monetary rewards, non-monetary rewards, job security, assessment and performance appraisal system, standard leave policy, standard promotion policy and maternity leave.

Maintenance is the activities concerned with the maintaining employees’ commitment and loyalty to the organization (David a. DeCenzo and Stephen P. Robbins, 2013). Maintenance includes existence of congenial work environment, health and medical facilities and flexible working hours.

Majumder and Anwara (2000) centered that in spite of the fact that the garments industry fits in with the formal division; the enrollment technique is to a great extent casual contrasted with western practice. As there is no agreement or arrangement letter, many garments industry workers

are helpless against losing their occupations immediately without any warning. Besides, sexual orientation issues in garments industry is responsible for creating job insecurity, asymmetrical wage payment, deprivation of minimum wage and promotion policy. Truth be told contrasted with other work part in Bangladesh, work shakiness is higher in the RMG area. An exploration study (Mamun & Islam, 2001) inspected the human resource management (HRM) practices in RMG sector. The study underlined on enhancing efficiency of pieces of clothing specialists through legitimate HRM practices to face difficulties of globalization. They found the causes behind the low efficiency of workers, for example, unsystematic enrollment and determination of employees, absence of training facilities, inadequate financial conveniences, and little inspiration level of workers. Bansari (2010) expressed that, the recruitment system are exceedingly casual contrasted with western models and there are no composed formal contracts and arrangement letters. They are subsequently powerless against losing their employments whenever.

However, fear of losing their jobs and lack of alternative job opportunities compel workers to continue in unsatisfactory employment. However, trepidation of losing their occupations and absence of alternative job opportunities make workers to proceed in inadmissible vocation.

Another researcher Morshed (2007) presumed that a large portion of the garments laborers are not fulfilled by their present occupation in the RMG division. The level of wages is the most remarkable wellspring of disappointment for laborers in the RMG business. The owner of RMG regularly denies that they have the ability to enhance the wages or states of laborers. Two late studies (Billah & Islam 2009; Billah, Prince, & Islam, 2009) found that HR rehearses have noteworthy relationship with worker turnover and hierarchical duty.

Priyo (2010) expressed that, Most of the articles of clothing plants don't have standard working hours. Constrained work is regular in Bangladesh particularly in the RMG segment. Workers are regularly given an amount to satisfy. On account of laborers not able to satisfy their portion amid work hours, they need to stay behind and work without pay. Late or sporadic pay installments are regular in the division. Generally the greater part of the industrial facilities doesn't give any pay slip. The factories, which give pay slips, don't have straightforwardness.

Objectives of the Study:

The major objectives for conducting the study are:

1. To provide an overview of the present conditions of HRM practices in garments of Bangladesh.
2. Whether there is any discrimination in their function of HRM in empowering women.
3. To suggest how to improve the HRM practices ensuring women empowerment in RMG sector of Bangladesh.

Methodology:

Sampling Design: The studies conducted on 100 respondents from five garments industries of Bangladesh and are randomly selected. 20 respondents from every garment are randomly selected as sample size.

Data Sources and Instrumentation: The study was ordered with the assistance of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through direct personal interview through

questionnaire. The questionnaire contains 12 specific questions. In order to take answer of the questions from the respondents there is used a 05 point Likert scale ranging from 01 to 05. In which 05 indicates “strongly agree”, 04 indicates “agree”, 03 indicates “Neutral”, 02 indicates “disagree”, 01 indicates “strongly disagree” is utilized which is the single worldwide rating approach (Davidson, 1979) as it is accepted as the less demanding way to deal with gathering data (Haque & Taher, 2008; Yu & Egri, 2005). Moreover, secondary data from different reports and magazines, newspapers, different books, publications, journals and internet are also used for conducting this research.

Data Collection Process: This paper is mainly based on primary sources of data and some secondary information. In this study, 100 respondents from five garments industries of Valuka, Mymensingh are randomly selected. To understand the human resource management practices in RMG sector the researcher primarily find out the basic functions of human resource division of an organization. According to David A. DeCenzo and Stephen P. Robbins (2013) basic functions of human resource division are categorized into four classes’ namely staffing, training & development, motivation and maintenance. Three questions from each category are taken as the variables of the questionnaire.

Analysis & Results:

Staffing: The first step of staffing is to make proper employment planning. Employee planning is a key procedure of methodical identification and examination of an association's needs to figure out what this association requires as far as the size, sort, and nature of utilized faculty to accomplish its business destinations and objectives. The procedure intends to characterize the most suitable blend of experience, learning, and aptitudes that are required for workers to perform their obligations and add to achievement of business targets and objectives. However our study finds the following facts regarding employment planning.

Table 1. Availability of employment planning

| | Description of Respondents | | | | | | WA | SD | Z-test Cal. Value | Z-test Crit. Value |
|------------|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | SD | D | N | A | SA | Total | | | | |
| Number | 14 14% | 51 51% | 15 15% | 18 18% | 02 02% | 100 | 2.43 | 1.00 | -5.70 | 1.96 |
| Percentage | | | | | | 100% | - | - | - | - |

Notes. WA = Weighted Average; SD = Standard Deviation; Cal. Value = Calculated Value; Crit. Value = Critical Value.

Source: Field Survey, 2016

H_0 = Proper employment planning is not available; H_1 = Proper employment planning is available.

From the total of our respondents it has been found that, 14% respondents strongly disagreed, 51% respondents disagreed, 15% respondents are neutral, 18% respondents agreed and 02% respondents strongly agreed that proper employment planning is available. Here, the calculated value of Z is -5.70 and the critical value of Z is 1.96. As the critical value of Z is greater than the calculated value of Z so the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. So, proper employment planning is not available in our selected garments industries.

Training and Development: Employee training is intended to help workers in securing better aptitudes for their present place of employment. The purpose of employment training is on present place of employment expertise necessities (David A. DeCenzo and Stephen P. Robbins). Employee training is essential for an organization’s success. The study presents the following facts regarding employee training.

Table 2. Availability of proper employee training

| | Description of Respondents | | | | | | WA | SD | Z-test Cal. Value | Z-test Cri. Value |
|------------|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | SD | D | N | A | SA | Total | | | | |
| Number | 05 | 38 | 18 | 27 | 12 | 100 | 3.03 | 1.15 | 0.26 | 1.96 |
| Percentage | 05% | 38% | 18% | 27% | 12% | 100% | - | - | - | - |

Notes. WA = Weighted Average; SD = Standard Deviation; Cal. Value = Calculated Value; Cri. Value = Critical Value.

H₀= Proper employee training facilities are not available; H₁= Proper employee training facilities are available

05% respondents strongly disagreed, 38% respondents disagreed, 18% respondents are neutral, 27% respondents agreed and 12% respondents strongly agreed that proper employee training facilities are available. Here, the calculated value of Z is 0.26 and the critical value of Z is 1.96. As the critical value of Z is greater than the calculated value of Z so the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted and alternative hypothesis (H₁) is rejected. The mathematical analysis shows the result that, our selected garment industries have no proper employee training facilities for their employees.

Career development projects are intended to help representatives in propelling their work lives. The purpose of career development is to give the fundamental data and appraisal in helping employees understand their career objectives. It is the accountability of individual, not the association (David A. DeCenzo & Stephen P. Robbins). But our study finds that most of the employees are unconscious about their career development. The study finds the following facts:

Table 3. Availability of career development facility

| | Description of Respondents | | | | | | WA | SD | Z-test Cal. Value | Z-test Cri. Value |
|------------|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | SD | D | N | A | SA | Total | | | | |
| Number | 03 | 41 | 08 | 46 | 02 | 100 | 2.79 | 1.00 | -2.10 | 1.96 |
| Percentage | 03% | 41% | 08% | 46% | 02% | 100% | - | - | - | - |

Notes. WA = Weighted Average; SD = Standard Deviation; Cal. Value = Calculated Value; Cri. Value = Critical Value.

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

H₀= There is no availability of career development facilities; H₁= There is availability of career development facilities.

The above mathematical analysis portrays that, 03% respondents strongly disagreed, 41% respondents disagreed, 08% respondents are neutral, 46% respondents agreed and 02% respondents strongly agreed that there is availability of career development facilities. Here, the calculated value of Z is -2.10 and the critical value of Z is 1.96. As the critical value of Z is greater

than the calculated value of Z so the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. So from the above analysis it can be said that, career development facilities are not available in our selected garments industries.

Motivation: Motivation is the inside and outside components that arouse hunger and strength in individuals to be eternally intrigued and focused on an occupation, part or subject, or to attempt to accomplish an objective. Among the various motivational factors job security is a great motivational factor. Job security is the assurance that an employee has about the continuity of gainful employment for his or her work life. Our present study represents the following scenario regarding job security of the employees:

Table 4. Organization ensures high job security

| | Description of Respondents | | | | | | WA | SD | Z-test Cal. Value | Z-test Cri. Value |
|------------|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | SD | D | N | A | SA | Total | | | | |
| Number | 56 | 17 | 14 | 11 | 02 | 100 | 1.86 | 1.14 | -10.00 | 1.96 |
| Percentage | 56% | 17% | 14% | 11% | 02% | 100% | - | - | - | - |

Notes. WA = Weighted Average; SD = Standard Deviation; Cal. Value = Calculated Value; Crit. Value = Critical Value.

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

H_0 = Organization does not ensure high job security; H_1 = Organization ensures high job security.

56% respondents strongly disagreed, 17% respondents disagreed, 14% respondents are neutral, 11% respondents agreed and 2% respondents strongly agreed that organization ensures high job security. Here, the calculated value of Z is -10.00 and the critical value of Z is 1.96. As the critical value of Z is greater than the calculated value of Z so the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. So, it can be highly affirmed that, organization does not ensure high job security.

Maintenance: Creating of a congenial work environment is a core maintenance function of HR manager. Congenial work environment refers to friendly and safe work environment for the employees. But our study finds that most of the garments have no congenial work environment. As a result maintenance functions of HR division hampers.

Table 5. Existence of congenial work environment

| | Description of Respondents | | | | | | WA | SD | Z-test Cal. Value | Z-test Cri. Value |
|------------|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | SD | D | N | A | SA | Total | | | | |
| Number | 35 | 20 | 13 | 22 | 10 | 100 | 2.52 | 1.41 | -3.40 | 1.96 |
| Percentage | 35% | 20% | 13% | 22% | 10% | 100% | - | - | - | - |

Notes. WA = Weighted Average; SD = Standard Deviation; Cal. Value = Calculated Value; Crit. Value = Critical Value.

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

H_0 = There is no existence of congenial work environment; H_1 = There is existence of congenial work environment.

From the total of our respondents it is found that, 35% respondents strongly disagreed, 20% respondents disagreed, 13% respondents are neutral, 22% respondents agreed and 10% respondents strongly agreed that there is existence of congenial work environment. Here, the calculated value of Z is -3.40 and the critical value of Z is 1.96. As the critical value of Z is greater than the calculated value of Z so the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. So there are no congenial work environments in our selected garments.

The application of the HRM practice in the Ready-made garments sector in Bangladesh is not satisfactory according to theoretical framework (De Cenzo A. David & Robbins P. Stephen, 2013). The study limits upon the cultural and socioeconomic factors of the region. All the factors of functions of HRM rejects alternative hypothesis which validates the previous studies.

From the empirical analysis it is shown that, in discharging the function of staffing, most of the organizations do not make proper employment planning. Very few organizations give advertisement for offering job in formal way. Most of the garments industries use personal contact as the primary means of advertisement. Furthermore, they do not make proper screening of the candidates. They do not make any contract and not give any appointment letter.

So the recruitment procedure is highly informal (Bansari, 2010). As a result, all the factors of staffing rejects the hypothesis.

The study has also found that, most of the garment industries of our study are not conscious about providing proper training and development facilities to their employees. This result is consistent with the previous studies of Islam (2003). In our study, all the variables using for judging HR practice regarding training and development are shown negative results. These are the crucial indicators which depict that, training and development facilities are not available in most of the garment industries. The result also violates the framework pronounced by Gibb (2001); Coda, Cesar, Bido, and Louffat (2009).

Most of the organizations have no congenial work environment. In our survived industries it has been found that employees do not get enough health and medical supports from the industries. Health and Safety regulations, as recommended in Factory Rules 1979 are routinely disregarded by administration and are not really authorized by government. This result is also validate the previous findings of Qudus and Uddin (1993) and Dasgupta (2002).

Recommendation & Conclusion:

This article has examined current HR hones especially for women in the Bangladesh instant pieces of clothing division. It has found that, the working conditions are poor, in spite of Bangladesh work laws and the nation's enrollment of the WTO and ILO. The article took a glimpse at the act of main performers in HR, Bangladesh government base was observed to be poor, because of limited economic resource. The Bangladesh Government needs to give careful consideration to enhance this area. Ensuring work fulfillment, over the long haul, requires careful planning and exertion both by management and by employees. Consequently the management, universal group and partner ought to work in cooperative energy in enhancing working conditions in the RMG

segment with the foundation of a HRM unit or Personnel Management unit in each RMG industry. Indeed the framework of Bangladesh RMG part is poor because of an absence of monetary backing and also government and approach creators lacking thoughtfulness regarding this area. If a good governance system can be implemented in the RMG sector then the sector becomes the main stream of the economy with high contribution to GDP which accelerate the government's development activities.

The RMG sector would be benefited by the institution of current Human Resource exercises through the creation of human resource or personnel department in the business. The institution of human resource management would guarantee that work models are addressed, those workers' rights are not abused, and that there is a protected workplace. Keeping in mind the end goal to ensure work rights, professional stability and different advantages, laborers ought to be furnished with arrangement letters itemizing the states of occupation. HRM can make a friendly workplace in the RMG that upgrades work fulfillment, through training and development, professional stability, presenting adaptable working times, empowering new innovation and presenting prizes, advantages and other periphery installments.

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