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THE GARMENTS INDUSTRY OF BANGLADESH

The role of women workers in the garment industry in the economy of Bangladesh

**Thesis
CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
International Business
June 2023**



ABSTRACT

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Degree programme Bachelor of Business Administration, International Business		
Name of thesis THE GARMENTS INDUSTRY OF BANGLADESH. The role of women workers in the garment industry in the economy of Bangladesh		
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<p>This study aimed to investigate the role of women workers in the garment industry in the economy of Bangladesh. To acquire this aim, given objectives were followed such as to theoretically understand the significance of women workers in the garment industry. It also tried to investigate the role of women workers in the garment industry of Bangladesh and understand the economic barriers and opportunities for women workers in the garment industry</p> <p>The findings of this study have given valuable insights into the women workers in the garment industry and the role they play in the economic growth of Bangladesh. Female workers make up the majority of the workers in the garments industry and they are the main stakeholders helping the industry to generate a significant amount of foreign revenue every year. The economic development of Bangladesh depends largely upon the foreign revenue generated by the garment industry. Women workers are playing an important role in the annual production of the garments industry which generates a large amount of foreign revenue.</p> <p>To acquire its aim the research followed quantitative and qualitative research techniques. In the quantitative research technique, the researchers used the survey questionnaire. Whereas for the qualitative research technique, the authors gathered data using interview responses. The motive behind choosing these techniques was to get first-hand data to acquire its aim. The literature of this research had been prepared based on the review of well-reputed journals and articles.</p>		
Keywords Empowerment, Garments, Garment industry, Leadership, Role of women workers, Socio-economic.		

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1 INTRODUCTION

The garment industry of Bangladesh is found to be the largest formal industry of manufacturing to employ women. The industry hopes for making an elite industry without any need of making meaningful changes in favour of women worker's rights (Huq 2019). It is adequate to give women a job as evidence of empowerment but then stop any short efforts to further improve the conditions for the working of women or even make changes to double the burdens women experience at home and work (Dvořák, Rovný, Grebennikova & Faminskaya 2020). Although, this kind of success is possible only if women are in the position of leadership in their unions, as it is the space in which feminists and various progressive allies should focus their attention and time if they would like to see the rights of women that are enhanced and significantly develop the women leadership based on the working class (Saha, Akhtar & Hassan 2021).

This study aims to investigate the role of women workers in the garment industry in the economy of Bangladesh. To acquire this aim, given objectives will be followed such as to theoretically understand the significance of women workers in the garment industry. It will also try to investigate the role of women workers in the garment industry of Bangladesh and understand the economic barriers and opportunities for women workers in the garment industry, to provide a set of recommendations for improving the role of women workers in the garment industry of Bangladesh. With the understanding with objectives, the research will address the answers to some important questions such as; what is the significance of women workers in the garment industry and what is the role of women workers in the garment industry of Bangladesh?

It has been found that women make up 80% which is the estimated workforce of 4 million people discussed (Huq 2019). In addition to that, the privatisation policy's implementation as well as other trading policies by the government helps to cope with the global economy since Bangladesh's independence. Since Bangladesh is a country of labour abundant country, the industry of garments have gained huge focus and has become the biggest sector of export in the country of Bangladesh (Saha et al. 2021). From the beginning, the RMG sector depended largely on low-skilled workers of women because low-skilled from rural areas are always willing to work for lower wages (Huq 2019). Hence, women have become the main workforce in the garment sector that has ever been found. Moreover, developing countries make several opportunities for their low-skilled workers in the garment industry who get the option to work in the industry for their family.

To acquire its aim the research has followed quantitative and qualitative research techniques. In the quantitative research technique, we will prepare the survey questionnaire and there will be 30 respondents. Whereas for the qualitative research technique, we will also gather data using interview responses. The motive behind choosing these techniques is that the research will get first-hand data to acquire its aim. The literature of this research has been prepared based on the review of well-reputed journals and articles. The gap has been identified after reviewing a huge count of articles, websites and journals to gather information from already done pieces of literature on the role of women workers in the garment industry. Moreover, the research has discussed the framework of Micro-Meso-Macro that consists of a circle in which the innermost is the micro level and the outermost is counted as the Macro level.

The research has chosen Doreen Apparels Limited as the commissioner for the thesis and represented by Mr Sumon Miah, the quality manager of Doreen Apparels Limited. Doreen Apparels Limited has been able to incorporate the problems adequately regarding working-class women, particularly garment workers to design an inclusive and productive work environment for all the workers. Moreover, it has been able to incorporate the problems of garment workers. Also, it has been found that women are highly affected by the number of developments that are linked to economic activity and globalization inside the workplace of Doreen Apparels Limited.

2 COMMISSIONER

The research has chosen Doreen Apparels Limited as the commissioner for the thesis and represented by Mr Sumon Miah, the quality manager of Doreen Apparels Limited. It is considered to be one of the pioneers of the garments sector of Bangladesh. Doreen Apparels Limited is operating in the garments sector for more than 40 years (Doreen Apparels Limited 2023). It has recruited a multinational talent pool to lead the team of workers. The work environment inside Doreen Apparels Limited is ideal for women workers as they get access to better development opportunities. Mr Sumon Mia has vast experience working with female workers in the garment industry. He has worked on the development of garment workers and has been providing them with training on how to develop specific skills.

As the commissioner of the thesis, Doreen Apparels Limited has an improved understanding of the labour conditions, production chain as well as organisation and composition of the informal sector in the garment industry. It also has an understanding of how feminists and various progressive allies should focus their attention and time if they would likely see the rights of women in the garment industry that are enhanced and significantly develop women's leadership based on the working class (Doreen Apparels Limited 2023). If there exists any greater human resource development, however, women may benefit more from this research on how to enhance their expertise and how to connect them to markets and then make sure about overall standards are to be maintained.

Doreen Apparels Limited has been the leading organisation in Bangladesh's garment industry with the established brand value among its target audience. With certifications in WRAP, QEKO-TEX and GRS, it is maintaining quality over the years with its cutting-edge manufacturing trends. Since 2014, it is exporting its manufactured products to multinational brands such as Walmart, Inditex and George. With a 600000 pieces of apparels or clothings per month production facility, it is meeting the demands of its customers with excellent production and supply chain management.

3 ROLE OF GARMENT WORKERS IN BANGLADESH

This chapter will demonstrate the role of women workers in Bangladesh and their activities within the garment sector. It will also highlight their impact on the economic growth of Bangladesh.

3.1 Garment Sector of Bangladesh

Before the year 1980, a few people from Bangladesh country have received training from a company named Korean Daewoo. When these kinds of people returned to Bangladesh, they started their businesses and then established their factories (Saha et al. 2021). Because of the positive growth in the economy, the sector of Bangladesh's GDP has considerably increased. Various business types can easily be supported by the consistent growth of the garment industry which are insurance, tourism, hotel as well as transportation (Saha et al. 2021).

The garments industry is providing a single source of growth in Bangladesh's fastest-growing economy. Exports of textiles and garments are the main source of foreign revenue for the country. Textiles, items of clothing and RMG cover up 77% of total merchandise exports in Bangladesh (Arun & Olsen 2023). The biggest strength of Bangladesh's garment industry is the RMG sector which consists of more than 4000 factories including a wide range of knitwear and woven garments product (Huq 2019). Bangladesh is currently the 3rd largest exporter of RMG with exports to more than 150 countries around the world which is contributing 16% to the total GDP growth of the country (Saha et al. 2021). There are also 1,430 textile mills in Bangladesh including 796 woven fabric manufacturers and 240 dyeing, printing and finishing mills (Saha et al. 2021). In the last few years, the garment industries of Bangladesh have drastically increased their annual revenue from a total of \$19 billion to approximately \$34 billion which is a total of 79% rise (Huq 2019).

This has made the country the second biggest exporter of garments around the globe and with this sector accounting for 80% of the total export earnings of Bangladesh (Parashakti, Fahlevi, Ekhsan & Hadinata 2020). Moreover, the country has accelerated as well as changed their export substantially from the period. Now the country has shifted its functioning towards the production of the garment industry, as it is the key support division and a significant resource of foreign exchange for about 25 years. Along with that, women garment proportion workers have continued to decrease from the

54.22% in the year 2015 and slightly fallen to 53.8% in the year of 2016 and it has fallen again up to 53.6% in the year 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Arun & Olsen 2023). So this is considered a significant reduction in comparison with the 1980s when a total of 80% of workers in the sector of garments are found to be women (El Wali, Golroudbary & Kraslawski 2021). The language of empowerment in the development discourse is a reason behind the controlling of the garment industry by the Bangladeshi women from the hierarchy of the culture and home life as well as hides the reality of the socioeconomic position of women which has not improved.

The garments industry in Bangladesh is responsible for more than 4.2 million employment opportunities (Islam 2021). It is also a major source of employment for SMEs, local vendors, local businesses, transport companies and local suppliers of Bangladesh who are not a direct part of the industry but are connected through a supply chain network. The impact it has on the overall GDP growth of Bangladesh has been possible due to the foreign revenue it generates every year (Saha et al. 2021). Although the industry had a significant decline in its foreign revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has bounced back in the post-pandemic era and running its regular operational activities once again (Arun & Olsen 2023). The most significant influencer of this industry is its women workers who make up a majority of its workforce. Their contribution has been significant in the growth of the garment industry in Bangladesh. The industry is now operating in foreign markets due to its improved brand value, quality products and efficient workforce.

3.2 Impact on the Economy due to Women Workers

The Bangladesh government have made long-term efforts that are greater to decrease malnutrition and poverty (Rahman, Akter, Rana, Sabuz & Jubayer 2022). In addition, the country of Bangladesh has been focusing on green agriculture for the past two decades. Also, the small group of farmers can play a vital role in giving enough supply of food and support to improve the security of nutrition in rural areas. This represents that the group of small farmers can easily contribute to diversified products of food as well as family income. Presently, the participation of women in the agriculture sector has exponentially grown in the past two decades. Although, women face several severe issues in their working areas (Kabir, Radović Marković & Radulović 2019). In the last few years, the garment industries of Bangladesh have drastically increased their annual revenue from a total of \$19 billion to approximately \$34 billion which is a total of 79% rise (Huq 2019). This has made the country the

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In the 1990s, women made up around 90% of the labor in Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector. The RMG sector, which was founded on the labor of female employees who initially provided lower earnings and were less likely to organize, is concerned about this decline in female workforce participation as well as the RMG sector itself (Parashakti et al. 2020). Women's lack of upward mobility in the workforce is a key contributing element (Hasan 2018). To stop the loss of female employees in the RMG industry, experts advise the implementation of training and skill development programmes by both public and private organizations (Hasan 2018). According to two separate surveys conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the number of female employees in the readymade garments (RMG) sector has decreased by 10.68% over the course of four years (RMG Bangladesh 2023). The fall in female involvement can be linked to societal injustices, inadequate skills relative to male workers, changing technology, and the industry's labor-intensive character. Surveys carried out by other governmental and non-governmental organizations revealed comparable patterns (Huq 2019).

According to the latest current survey, 53.82% of the industry's workers are male, while 46.18% are female, with male employment growth in the RMG sector increasing by 11.54% ((Parashakti et al. 2020). The findings of two BBS surveys from 2013 and 2016-2017 suggested that the rate for female workers decreased by 6.56% (RMG Bangladesh 2023). Female involvement is declining due to changing technology, insufficient skills relative to male workers, the labor-intensive nature of the

business, and socioeconomic disparities (Huq 2019). Modern machinery has taken over duties historically undertaken by women, and men are increasingly joining the field as wages rise (Hasan 2018). Since female workers are often less skilled at running various machines than their male counterparts, automation is mostly to blame for the reduction in the proportion of female to male workers. Women generally prioritise home and childcare obligations over institutional education and training, resulting in educational and skill disparities (Arun & Olsen 2023). Additional considerations include the lack of opportunities for women in management and professions other than sewing and finishing.

4 THEORIES OF THE GARMENTS INDUSTRY

This chapter will demonstrate the theories related to the garments sector and their overall impact on the activities of the organisations operating in the industry.

4.1 Introduction to Apparel and Textile Pipeline

From the studies, it has been found that the industry of garment was developed later than the primary industry of textiles that was considered one of the earliest scales based on economic activities which led the procedure of industrialization centuries ago (Huq 2019). It has been found that the version of highly simplified version of progression through pipeline would consist of the Level 1 (fiber manufacturing) that becomes input but Level 2, inside which the fiber is then manufactured then sold to the other firms that are manufacturing textiles industries, apparel or household textiles (Level 3). Moreover, completed product has to be distributed to final customer in several ways.

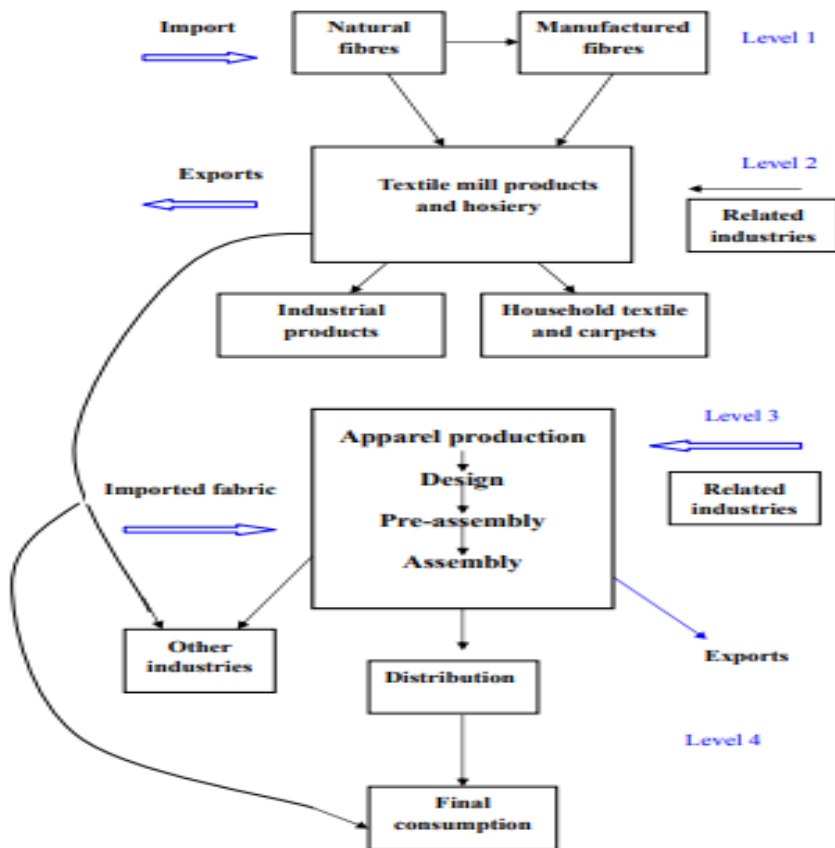


FIGURE 1. Apparel Pipeline (Adapted from : Swazan & Das 2022)

For the modern ready-made garments (RMG) sector, the pipeline starts with the sourcing of various raw materials. Materials such as cotton, wool and synthetic fibers are assembled, cut and sewed by skilled workers. Turning raw materials into finished products requires various quality control in every sector of this pipeline (Ralston & Blackhurst, 2020). Once the production phase is finished, the products are transported to warehouses where the packages are prepared for shipment to the retailers. The pipeline also includes the retail sector where these finished garments are displayed and sold to the consumers through various platforms. The customers access the finished garment products through retail stores, mobile apps, or e-commerce platforms. In recent years, various factors are considered while creating a commercially viable pipeline. The RMG sector in recent years is not only focusing on creating profits but also looking at various ethical and environmental factors (Savageau 2011). Responsible for sourcing of raw materials, reducing waste, and improving the workplace environment is at the core of a modern apparel and textile pipeline (Huq 2019).

4.2 Affected Factors of Garment Industry

In accordance with the pipeline, the significant single component in cost structure of garment production procedure is the fabric that is held to account normally for approximately 40% of overall costing (Huq 2019). The second significant cost structure features in apparel sector is higher labor degree that still categories the production especially at assembling stage. In addition to that the brands and marketing role are found to be very essential in the globalization environment. Ralston & Blackhurst (2020) have considered various economic factors such as GDP growth, inflation, exchange rate etc. of a particular country play an important role in the garment industry.

As the global financial system is currently affecting various parts of the apparel and textile pipeline, the garments industry as a whole is being affected. In addition to these economic and political factors, the garment industry is heavily influenced by customer preferences and emerging fashion trends (El Wali et al. 2021). Seasonal demand also plays an important role as different seasons and weather conditions like to be taken into consideration while producing garment products. Additionally, as new technologies emerge, the garment industry is day by day relying on new innovations and automation during the manufacturing process (Huq 2019). It also plays an important role in supply chain management as well as retailing sectors such as selling of products on various e-commerce platforms instead of physical stores.

4.3 Porter Diamond Theory

Michael Porter's Diamond Model, often known as the Porter Diamond Theory of National Advantage, was first published in his book, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, released in 1990 (Porter 1990). In addition, the model also explains about how the competitiveness of particular firm is related to other firm's performance in the similar industry (Swazan & Das 2022). It has also been found that the firm or industry always try to develop and improve their performance to gain greater competitiveness. Moreover, the target is to sustain and gain the benefits into international market (Ralston & Blackhurst 2020). There are some significant determinants of this model in terms of competitive performance of the firm such as demand conditions, firm's structure, rivalry and strategy, supporting and related strategies as well as factor conditions (Porter 1990). These determinants mainly interact with one another to develop the competitive industry advantages.

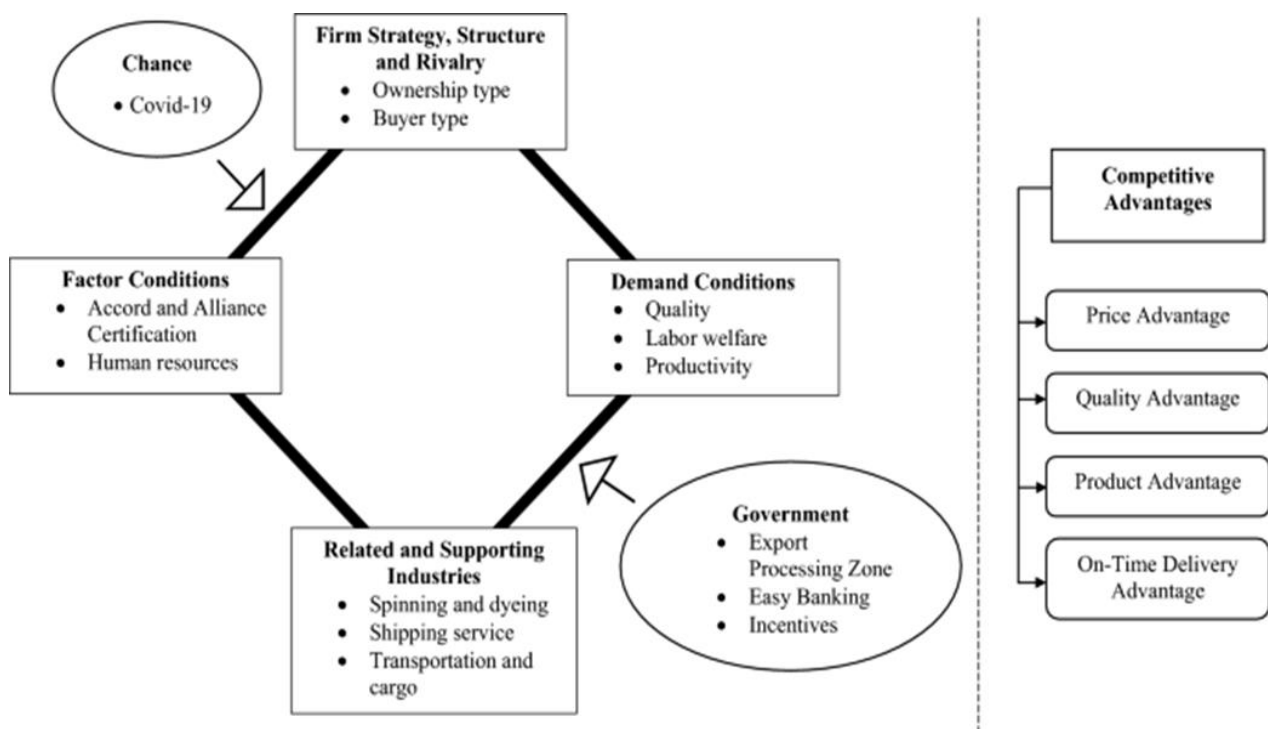


FIGURE 2. Competitive Advantages of Bangladesh (Adapted from : Swazan & Das 2022)

The Porter Diamond theory is an effective tool for understanding the current issues affecting the RMG sector. This tool provides a framework for analyzing various advantages and competitive factors affecting the apparel and textile sector (Ralston & Blackhurst 2020). Within this model, factors such as availability of raw materials within the country, skilled labor, machineries and various supporting

industries are looked at. The Porter Diamond theory also focuses on various government health policies and legislation issues such as taxation, regulations regarding trade, and support for further business within the country (Porter 1990). The theory also prioritizes opportunities of globalization and international trade. Navigating global networks and creating international partnerships is crucial for the textile business as it opens new possibilities of accessing global markets, sourcing raw materials efficiently, and international supply chain management. In this regard, Bangladesh is perfectly suitable for the textile sector as the country has a friendly environment, cheap and expert labor, supportive government legislations, and international trade opportunities.

4.3.1 Factor Conditions

These can be described as the position of nation in production constituents like infrastructure, labor as well as resources that are necessary to compete in the provided industry (Porter 1990). In addition, it has also determined some factor conditions as physical resources, human resources, knowledge resources, and infrastructure and capital resources (Ralston & Blackhurst 2020). These are further subdivided into advanced and primary factors. As the primary factors mainly involve location, climate, available materials, unskilled labor and natural resources that do not need further investment. Other than that, the advanced factors involve digital data, skilled labor, infrastructure and communications that can be upgraded with the help of innovation and reinvestment. From the Bangladeshi garment industry firm's perspective, location, cheap labor, and favorable climate can be referred as the primary factor conditions as well as communication, and infrastructure as advanced factor conditions respectively (Ralston & Blackhurst 2020). Firstly, the country has a large number of skilled labors.

As of recent reports from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the textile sector employs over 4 million workers. This large number of employees also offers low labor costs compared to other countries such as China and Vietnam. The government has set a minimum wage for entry level garment workers at approximately 95 US dollars per month (Huq 2019). Additionally, as a major player in the global textile supply chain Bangladesh has a friendly relation with other countries in terms of importing raw materials such as cotton and synthetic fibers (El Wali et al. 2021). The garments industry in Bangladesh also offers good infrastructures, industrial, and export processing zones (Lopez-Pena 2015). The Bangladeshi government offers friendly legislative policies such as trade agreements with various countries. These factors make it possible for the garment sector to flourish within the country.

Not only the country has a domestic demand for clothing but also a friendly export system that can benefit the sector (El Wali et al. 2021).

4.3.2 Demand Conditions

It's a model for determining a country's or group's competitive edge in a specific industry (Porter 1990). The model also suggests some significant aspects of the demand conditions such as demand size, home demand composition and pattern of growth, domestic demand's internationalization and interplay of demand conditions. In addition to that, the demand for the domestic apparel in Bangladesh is lesser in comparison with the international demand.

Over the years the demand for garment products in the domestic market of Bangladesh has seen substantial growth. The increase of disposable incomes, changes in lifestyles and the rise of the middle class have contributed to this high demand for quality garment products (Islam 2021). Some of the major markets for exporting garments products from Bangladesh include the United States, the European Union, Canada, Australia and some African countries (Huq 2019). Bangladesh has also gained international recognition for producing knitwear and woven garments. Through its development path, the garments industry in Bangladesh is not only meeting the domestic requirements but also taking part in international business (Ralston & Blackhurst 2020). Additionally, Bangladesh is also known to be a major player in international exports of garment products (El Wali et al. 2021). The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) reported that during the physical year 2020-2021, earnings from garment exports reached 34.13 billion US Dollars (El Wali et al. 2021).

4.3.3 Supporting and Related Industries

Supporting and related industries are referred as the supplier availability in industry or other related industry into market, which assist any specific industry to grow more and become more competitive (El Wali et al. 2021). It is also a very significant determinant because related industry's present creates the pressure for particular industry or firm to compete internationally and nationally (Porter 1990). Moreover, supporting industries are highly competitive in global market and can provide efficient input for the industry.

The textile manufacturing industry in Bangladesh produces quality raw materials for the garment sector. Bangladesh has many spinning mills and weaving units that supply fabrics to garment factories. According to the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, there are around 409 spinning mills and 1,525 weaving units in the country (Saha et al. 2021). Bangladesh is also known for producing accessories like buttons, zippers, threads, labels, and packaging materials for the garment industry. The country also offers services like dyeing, printing, and finishing treatments for fabrics and garments for a cheap and affordable price (Islam 2021). Additionally, Bangladesh is also reliable in various packaging services. It can support the garment sector by providing packaging, transportation, and warehousing to the finished goods. Ensuring that finished garments are properly packaged and transported efficiently is one of the most important parts of the garment manufacturing sector (El Wali et al. 2021). Moreover, specialized zones and export processing zones in Bangladesh provide dedicated spaces for garment factories, creating an environment conducive to manufacturing (Hasan 2018).

4.3.4 Firm Structure, Rivalry and Strategy

It has been found from the model that the firm's strategy, rivalry and structure are defined as the conditions in nation governing how firms are organized, managed and created and also the nature of domestic rivalry (Porter 1990). Firm strategy, structure, and rivalry highly depend on nation's culture, such as how people mainly contribute towards their nation and also about how they interact with one another and how they behave inside the organization. In addition to that, higher rivalry makes an industry attractive in international market.

Nations that thrive in effective management practices have a better chance of gaining a competitive advantage. The domestic rivalry also has a substantial impact on the other factors outlined by Porter (Swazan & Das 2022). Furthermore, Boudreau (2021) combined the viewpoints of the industrial organization and the resource-Based View to investigate the translation of transient competitive advantages into long-term ones. Another factor affecting local competitiveness is the matching of investments with businesses. Businesses grow when foreign investors find the operating models of such businesses appealing and suitable for their needs (Islam 2021). While individuals looking for high profits may find established firms less enticing, long-term investors may be apprehensive about investing in companies that rely on groups of creative start-ups (El Wali et al. 2021). Firm structure and compliance with codes of conduct or compliance practices in the ready-made garments (RMG)

business are key considerations. Weak organizational structures and ineffective governance practices in Bangladeshi garment enterprises raise concerns about their capacity to win orders from internationally recognized buyers or retailers (Hasan 2018). Many small firms struggle to generate enough revenue because their management processes are disorganized (Huq 2019).

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology consists of various kinds of research techniques and strategies including methods for data collection, philosophy, approach, analysis, and ethical consideration.



PICTURE 1. Types of Research Data (Adapted from: Liamputtong 2020)

5.1 Research Design

Majorly, there are two types of research methods including qualitative and quantitative. A qualitative research study is defined as the type of study in which the researcher explores and gains insights into the research topic (Liamputtong 2020). The quantitative research study helps in dealing with numbers and focuses on numerical data (Bloomfield & Fisher 2019). The chosen method for this research is mixed as it will use both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to collect data from multiple sources.

The qualitative material acquired through interviews were subjected to a thematic analysis. Qualitative data were used and patterns were found by carefully going over a collection of texts and concepts related to the study (Ott & Longnecker, 2015). The quantitative data obtained by the survey questionnaire was subjected to various statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data distribution and summaries responses

5.2 Data Collection

Data collection is the process of gathering information and data from the participants for the data analysis. The data collection procedure is based on the type of research being conducted as there are various types of data collection procedures present. Some of the data collection procedures are surveys, interviews, and experiments (Goddard and Melville 2020). The data collection tools for this research were a research questionnaire and an interview guide. A research questionnaire including 30 questions has been used to collect the necessary data for this research. 30 workers from the garment industry have been selected using the random sampling method to take part in the research. 6 policymakers of the garment industry working with worker empowerment and development have been selected to take part in an interview. The reason for choosing these techniques is that the research gathered first-hand data from the women workers and policymakers of Bangladesh's garments industry to understand the role of women workers and their contribution to the economic growth of Bangladesh from their perspective to acquire the aim of this study.

5.3 Data Analysis

The qualitative material acquired through interviews with the commissioner and decision-makers will be subjected to a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a technique for analyzing qualitative data that involves finding patterns and themes in the data by carefully going over a collection of texts or transcripts to find reoccurring themes or concepts (Ott & Longnecker 2015). The quantitative data obtained by the survey questionnaire will be subjected to various statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze data distribution and summaries responses (Ott & Longnecker 2015). Data were summarized using this strategy by utilizing charts, graphs, and summary metrics such as mean, median, and standard deviation. It explains the data clearly but does not make any inferences (Ott & Longnecker 2015). For example, it will be feasible to investigate the link between the share of female garment workers and changes in international trade.

5.4 Limitations

By being aware of the study's limits, researchers may address the constraints and potential consequences of their research design and methodology on the interpretation and application of the

results. Researchers show an awareness of the study's constraints and a critical attitude to their work by recognizing these limitations (Cacciattolo 2015). Instead of waiting for others, like professors or reviewers, to bring out these limits and perhaps lead to a poor rating, it is preferable for researchers to recognise and admit them on their own. The following limits apply to this study of Bangladesh's garment industry and the economic contribution of women workers:

First, the sample sizes of the study are quite small. 30 survey respondents and 6 interviewers will not be able to represent the full population of women workers in Bangladesh's garments sector. Additionally, employing qualitative research techniques like interviews will bring subjectivity biases. The opinions, experiences, and personal biases of the interviewees will have an impact on the results gained from the interviews. Furthermore, the study concentrated on the role of female garment workers and ignored the perspectives and experiences of other stakeholders. The researcher's assessment of the interview data will contribute to subjective interpretations, thereby affecting the objectivity of the conclusions. Additionally, the study approach mainly depends on self-reported data from both the survey questionnaire and the interviews which will lead to a potential of social desirability bias as respondents will submit responses that they consider to be socially acceptable. Finally, the study does not evaluate the possible influence of external variables on the role of women workers in the garment sector, such as changes in government policy, economic situations, or global events. The scope of the examination and the results of the research will be limited if these external factors are ignored.

5.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues in research involve a set of principles that guide the design and execution of studies, including voluntary participation, informed permission, anonymity and confidentiality protection, risk assessment, and responsible sharing of results. Social expectations have increased attention and accountability for ethical behaviours in research (Cacciattolo 2015). To ensure that participants are fully informed about the goal and methods of the research before agreeing to participate, it will abide by fundamental principles like informed consent. The responders' involvement will be entirely voluntary. The researcher will take all reasonable measures to avoid bias. Additionally, the study team will securely store and limit access to participant information to maintain anonymity.

The study will not cause any kind of physical or physiological harm to any participants. The research also maintained validity and reliability as part of its ethical principles. Reliability is whether a similar

result can be produced from the study under similar conditions and validity is whether the results represent what they were supposed to measure (Ott & Longnecker 2015). The research will produce similar results if the same research method, data collection tools and focused groups are used for data collection, data analysis and other research-related activities. The research used a research questionnaire and an interview guide to collect data from workers in the garments industry and policy makers from the garments industry. The mixed data used are authentic and meets the stated objective of the research as it provides insight about the role of women workers in the industry and how they are impacting the economy. Since the research was able to meet the stated aim through the findings and was able to measure the role of women garment workers in Bangladesh in its economic growth, it proves its validity as it was able to measure the variables using information gathered from the participants.

6 RESEARCH FINDINGS, DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS

This chapter will highlight the findings of this research and analyse them to show that they have met the stated objectives of the study.

6.1 Findings

A research questionnaire including 30 questions has been used to collect the necessary data for this research. 30 workers from the garment industry have been selected using the random sampling method to take part in the questionnaire. The participants took part in the survey using a Google form. The questionnaire was given to them after receiving their consent online. It required a total of 7 days to collect data using the survey questionnaire and analyse the data using the data analysis tool. The participants were selected using the random sampling group from a large population which is the current workers from Doreen Apparels Limited.

6.1.1 Questionnaire

State your age.

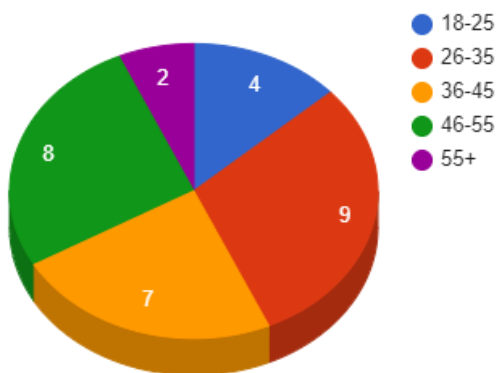


FIGURE 3. Demographic profile of participants, age profile

The participants were asked to state their age. 13.3% of the participants belong to the age group 18-25 years, 30% of the participants belong to the age group 26-35 years, 23.3% of the participants are from the age group of 36-45 years, 26.7% of the participants are from the age group 46-55 years and 26.7%

participants are more than 55 years of age. The largest group here are the participants belonging to the age group of 26-35.

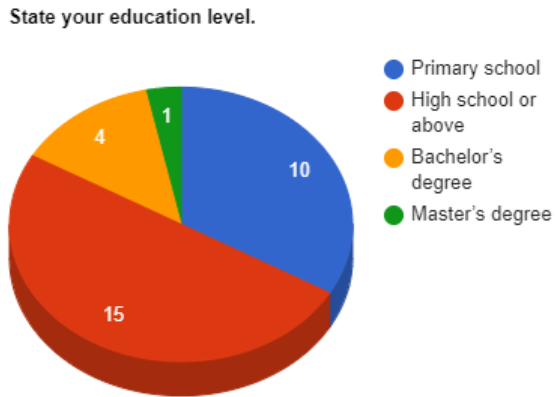


FIGURE 4. Demographic profile of participants, education level profile

The participants were asked to state their education level. 33.3% of the participants studied at the primary level, 50% participants are from high school or above, 13.3% participants have completed Bachelor's degree and 3.3% of the participants have completed a Master's degree. The largest group here are the participants belonging to the high school or above group.

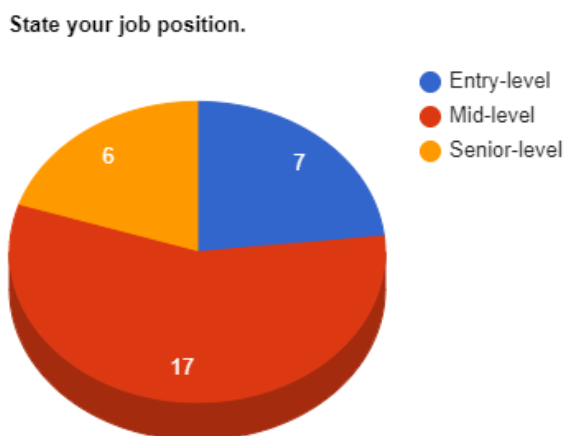


FIGURE 5. Demographic profile of participants, job position profile

The participants were asked to state their job position in the garment industry. 23.3% of the participants are working at the entry-level. 56.7% of the participants are working at the mid-level. 20%

of the participants are working at the senior level. Participants belonging to the mid-level group are the largest.

State your years of experience in the garments industry.

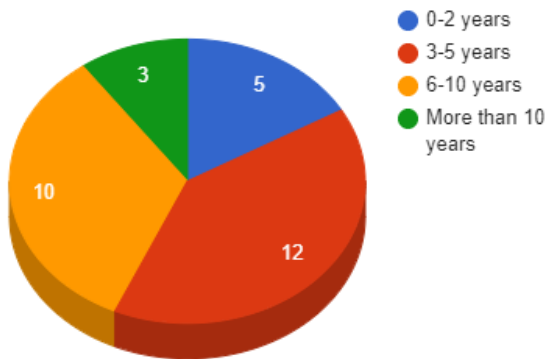


FIGURE 6. Demographic profile of participants, job experience profile

The participants were asked to state their years of experience in the garments industry. 16.7% of the participants are working for 0-2 years. 40% of the participants are working for 3-5 years. 33.3% of the participants are working for 6-10 years. 10% of the participants are working for more than 10 years. Participants with 6-10 years of experience are the largest group.

How satisfied are you with your current job in the garments industry?

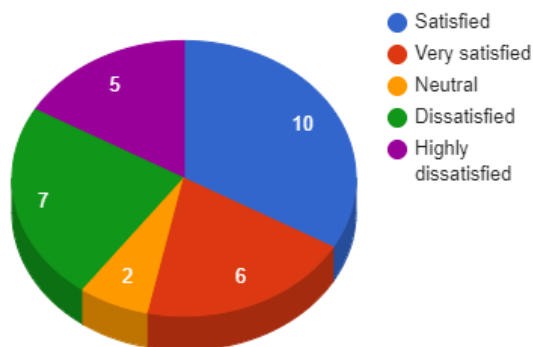


FIGURE 7. Level of satisfaction with the job

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their current job in the garments industry. 33.3% of the participants are satisfied with their jobs while 20% of the participants are very satisfied. 23.3% of the participants are dissatisfied while 16.7% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral about their job satisfaction. The largest group is the participants who are satisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with the benefits you receive from the garment industry.

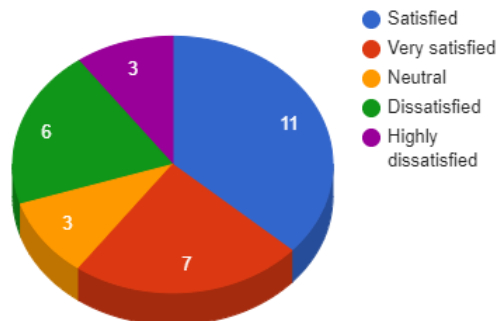


FIGURE 8. Level of satisfaction with the benefits

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the benefits they receive from the garment industry. 36.7% of the participants are satisfied with the benefits while 23.3% of the participants are very satisfied. 20% of the participants are dissatisfied while 10% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 10% of the participants were neutral about the benefits they received. The largest group is the participants who are satisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with the salary you receive from the garment industry.

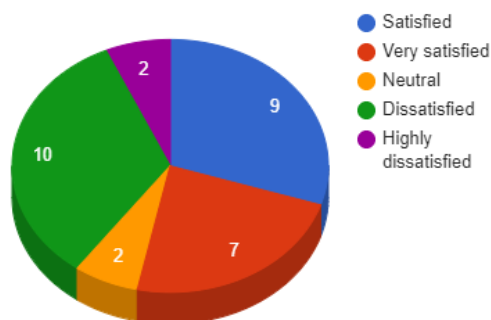


FIGURE 9. Level of satisfaction with the salary

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the salary they receive from the garment industry. 30% of the participants are satisfied with the salary while 23.3% of the participants are very satisfied. 33.3% of the participants are dissatisfied with the salary while 6.7% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with the salary. The largest group is the participants who are dissatisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with the recognition you receive from the garments industry.

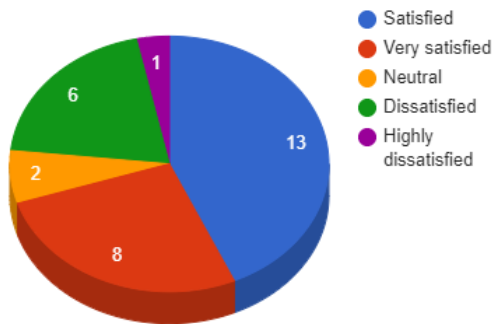


FIGURE 10. Level of satisfaction with the recognition

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the recognition they receive from the garments industry. 43.3% of the participants are satisfied with the recognition while 26.7% of the participants are very satisfied. 20% of the participants are dissatisfied with the recognition they are receiving while 3.3% of the participants is highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with the recognition. The largest group is the participants who are satisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with the development facilities you receive from the garments industry.

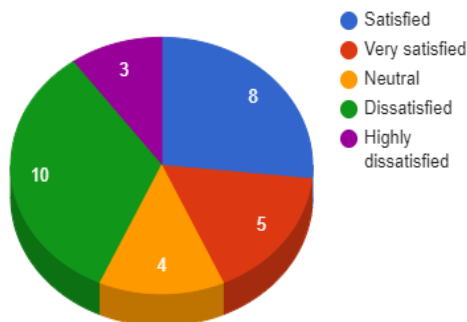


FIGURE 11. Level of satisfaction with the development facilities

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the development facilities they receive from the garments industry. 26.7% of the participants are satisfied with the development facilities while 16.7% of the participants are very satisfied. 33.3% of the participants are dissatisfied with the development facilities while 10% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 13.3% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with the development facilities. The largest group is the participants who are dissatisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with the workplace safety you receive from the garments industry.

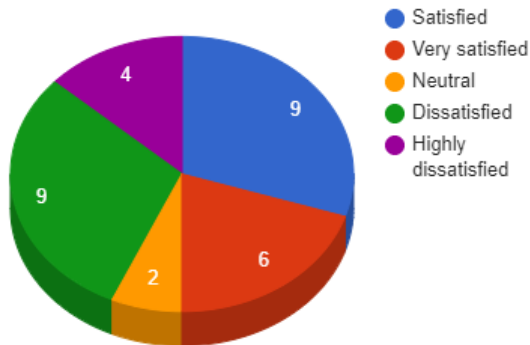


FIGURE 12. Level of satisfaction with the workplace safety

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the workplace safety they receive from the garments industry. 30% of the participants are satisfied with the workplace safety while 20% of the participants are very satisfied. 30% of the participants are dissatisfied with workplace safety while 13.3% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with workplace safety. The largest groups here are the participants who are satisfied and dissatisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with the equality framework in the garment industry.

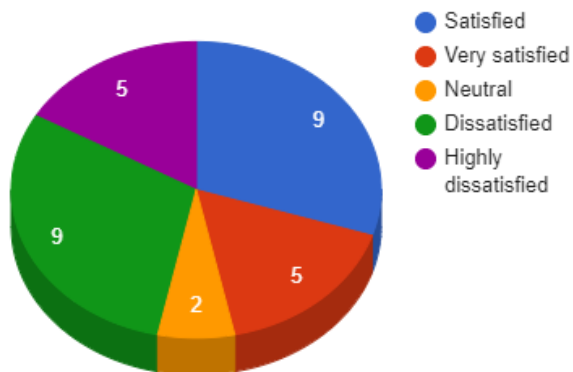


FIGURE 13. Level of satisfaction with the equality framework

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the equality framework in the garments industry. 30% of the participants are satisfied with the equality framework while 16.7% of the participants are very satisfied. 30% of the participants are dissatisfied with the equality framework while 16.7% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral about

their satisfaction with the equality framework. The largest groups here are the participants who are satisfied and dissatisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with employers in the garment industry.

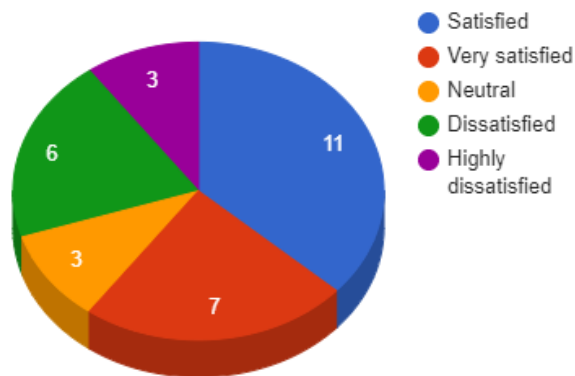


FIGURE 14. Level of satisfaction with the employer

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their employers in the garments industry. 36.7% of the participants are satisfied with their employers while 23.3% of the participants are very satisfied. 20% of the participants are dissatisfied with their employers while 10% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 10% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with their employers. The largest group here is the participants who are satisfied.

Please rate your satisfaction with co-workers in the garment industry.

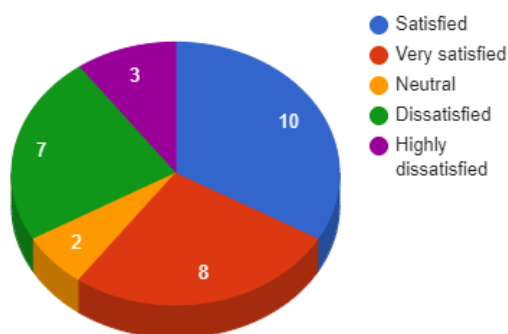


FIGURE 15. Level of satisfaction with the co-workers

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their co-workers in the garment industry. 33.3% of the participants are satisfied with their co-workers while 26.7% of the participants are very satisfied. 23.3% of the participants are dissatisfied with their co-workers while 10% of the participants

are highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with their co-workers. The largest group here is the participants who are satisfied.

Are you satisfied with the corporate legislation and policy frameworks of the garment industry?

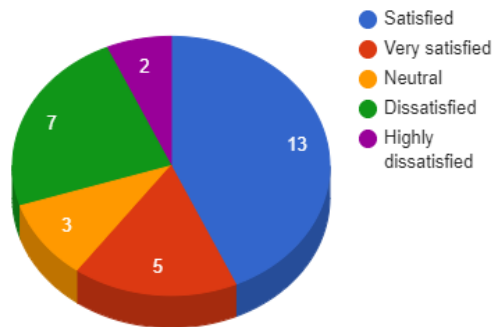


FIGURE 16. Level of satisfaction with the corporate legislation and policy frameworks

The 30 participants were asked if they are satisfied with the corporate legislation and policy frameworks of the garments industry. 43.3% of the participants are satisfied with the corporate legislation and policy frameworks while 16.7% of the participants are very satisfied. 23.3% of the participants are dissatisfied with the corporate legislation and policy frameworks while 6.7% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 10% of the participants were neutral about their satisfaction with the corporate legislation and policy frameworks. The largest groups here is the participants who are satisfied.

Are you satisfied with the development opportunities you receive from the workplace compared to the male coworkers

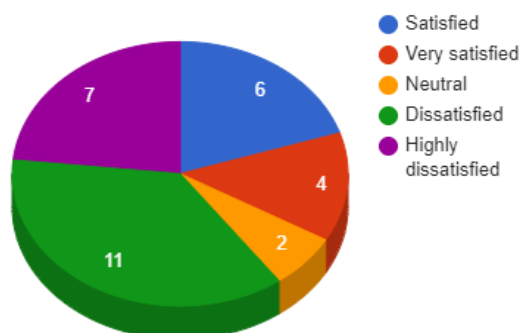


FIGURE 17. Level of satisfaction with the development opportunities

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the development opportunities they receive from the workplace compared to their male coworkers. 20% of the participants are satisfied

with the development opportunities compared to the male coworkers while 13.3% of the participants are very satisfied. 36.7% of the participants are dissatisfied while 23.3% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest groups here is the participants who are dissatisfied.

Do you think the salary you receive is sufficient according to the labour you give?

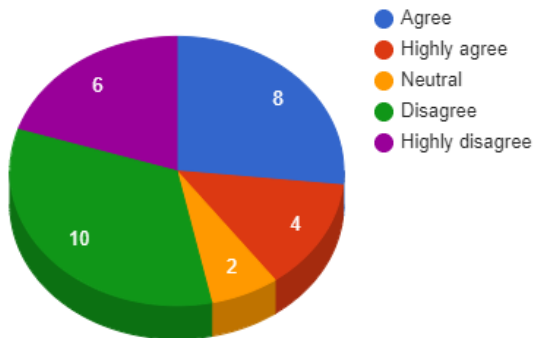


FIGURE 18. Sufficiency of the salary

The 30 participants were asked if they think the salary they receive is sufficient according to the labour they give. 26.7% of the participants agreed that the salary is sufficient while 13.3% of the participants highly agreed. 33.3% of the participants disagreed that the salary is sufficient while 20% of the participants highly disagreed. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who disagreed.

Do you think the recognition you receive is sufficient according to the labour you give?

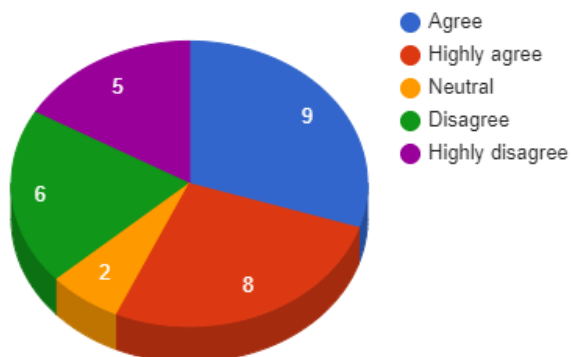


FIGURE 19. Sufficiency of the recognition

The 30 participants were asked if they think the recognition they receive is sufficient according to the labour they give. 30% of the participants agreed that the recognition is sufficient while 26.7% of the participants highly agreed. 20% of the participants disagreed that the recognition is sufficient while 16.7% of the participants highly disagreed. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Do you think you're discriminated against in the garment industry because of your gender?

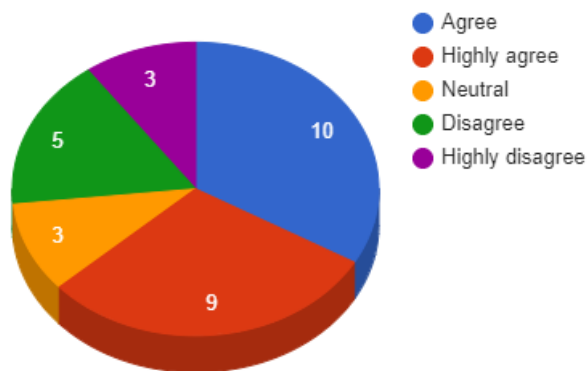


FIGURE 20. Opinion on discrimination

The 30 participants were asked if they think they are discriminated against in the garment industry because of their gender. 33.3% of the participants agreed that they are discriminated against because of their gender while 30% of the participants highly agreed. 16.7% of the participants disagreed while 10% of the participants highly disagreed. 10% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Do you think you're deprived of your employee rights in the garment industry because of your gender?

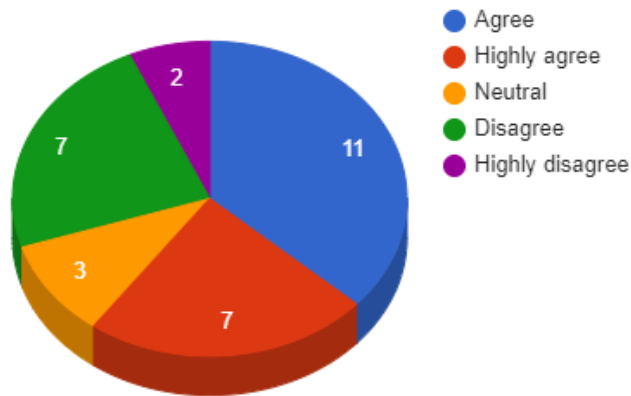


FIGURE 21. Opinion on the deprivation of employee rights

The 30 participants were asked if they think they are deprived of their employee rights in the garment industry because of their gender. 36.7% of the participants agreed that they are deprived of their employee rights while 23.3% of the participants highly agreed. 23.3% of the participants disagreed on this matter while 6.7% of the participants highly disagreed. 10% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Do you think you aren't given enough development opportunities in the garment industry because of your gender?

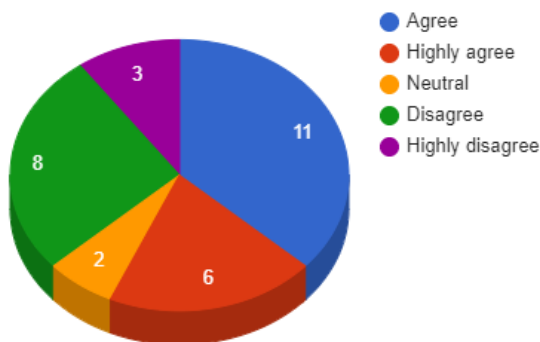


FIGURE 22. Opinion on sufficient development opportunities

The 30 participants were asked if they think they aren't given enough development opportunities in the garment industry because of their gender. 36.7% of the participants agreed that they aren't given enough development opportunities because of their gender while 20% of the participants highly agreed. 26.7% of the participants disagreed while 10% of the participants highly disagreed. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Do you think you're mistreated by your employers and co-workers because of your gender?

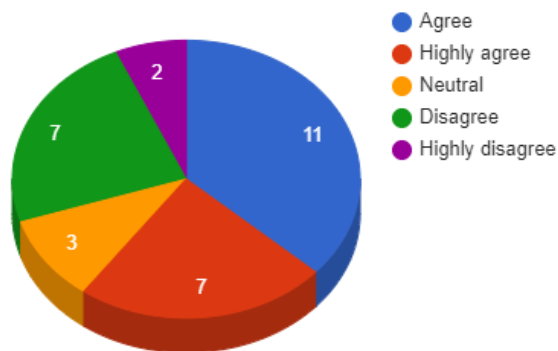


FIGURE 23. Opinion on mistreatment in the industry

The 30 participants were asked if they think they are mistreated by their employers and co-workers because of their gender. 36.7% of the participants agreed that they are mistreated by their employers and co-workers because of their gender while 23.3% of the participants highly agreed. 23.3% of the participants disagreed while 6.7% of the participants highly disagreed. 10% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Do you think the corporate legislation in Bangladesh is failing to ensure equal development opportunities in the garment industry for female employees?

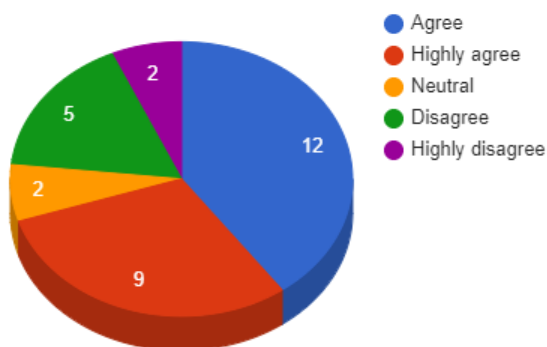


FIGURE 24. Opinion on the failure of corporate legislation in the industry

The 30 participants were asked if they think the corporate legislation in Bangladesh is failing to ensure equal development opportunities in the garment industry for female employees. 40% of the participants agreed that the corporate legislation in Bangladesh is failing to ensure equal development opportunities in the garment industry for female employees while 30% of the participants highly

agreed. 16.7% of the participants disagreed while 6.7% of the participants highly disagreed. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Do you think the government is giving necessary support to the garment industry to support the workers?

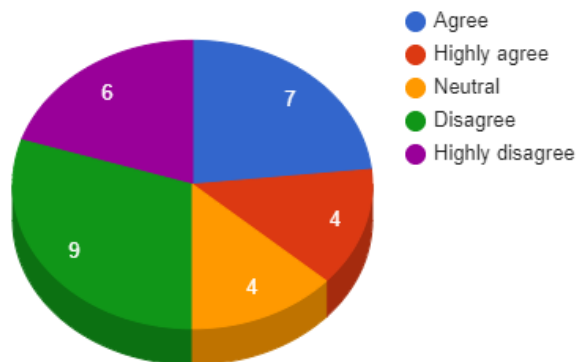


FIGURE 25. Opinion on government support

The 30 participants were asked if they think the government is giving necessary support to the garment industry to support the workers. 23.3% of the participants agreed that the government is giving necessary support to the garment industry to support the workers while 13.3% of the participants highly agreed. 30% of the participants disagreed while 20% of the participants highly disagreed. 13.3% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who disagreed.

What factors do you consider to be ideal to ensure equal development opportunities for female employees in the garment industry?

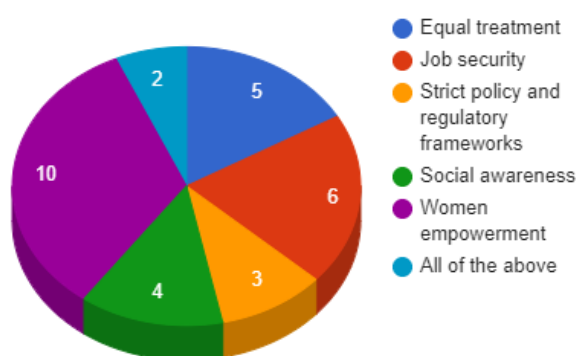


FIGURE 26. Ideal factors for equal development

The 30 participants were asked what factors they consider to be ideal to ensure equal development opportunities for female employees in the garment industry. 16.7% of the participants considered equal treatment to be the ideal factor. 20% of the participants considered the factor to be job security. 10% of

the participants considered strict policy and regulatory frameworks while 13.3% of the participants considered social awareness. 33.3% of the participants considered women's empowerment to be the ideal factor to ensure equal development opportunities for female employees in the garment industry. 6.7% of the participants considered all the abovementioned factors to be the ideal factors. The largest group here is the participants who consider women empowerment to be the main factor.

Do you think your contribution is playing an important role in the growth of the garment industry in Bangladesh?

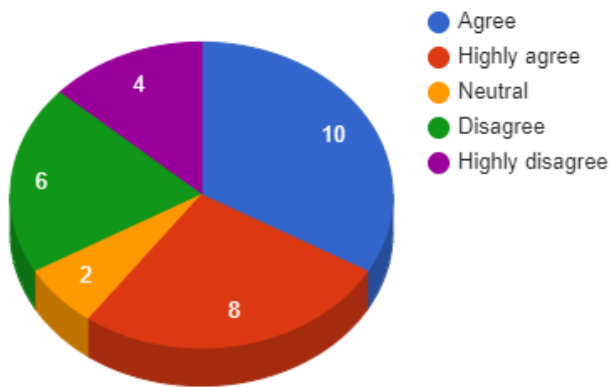


FIGURE 27. Contribution of the role in the growth of garment industry

The 30 participants were asked if they think their contribution is playing an important role in the growth of the garment industry in Bangladesh. 33.3% of the participants agreed that their contribution is playing an important role in the growth of the garment industry in Bangladesh while 26.7% of the participants highly agreed. 20% of the participants disagreed while 13.3% of the participants highly disagreed. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

What factors do you consider to be the main reason for women to be more active in the garment industry?

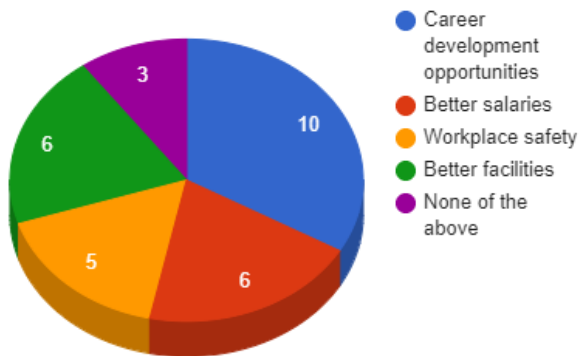


FIGURE 28. Factors for the active role of women workers

The 30 participants were asked about the factors they consider to be the main reason for women to be more active in the garment industry. 33.3% of the participants considered that career development opportunities are the main reason for women to be more active in the garment industry. 20% of the participants considered better salaries and 16.7% of the participants considered workplace safety. 20% of the participants considered it to be better facilities of the garment industry. 10% of the participants considered none of these abovementioned factors to be the main reason for women to be more active in the garment industry. The largest group here is the participants who consider career development opportunities to be the main factor.

Are you satisfied with the total working hour in the garment industry?

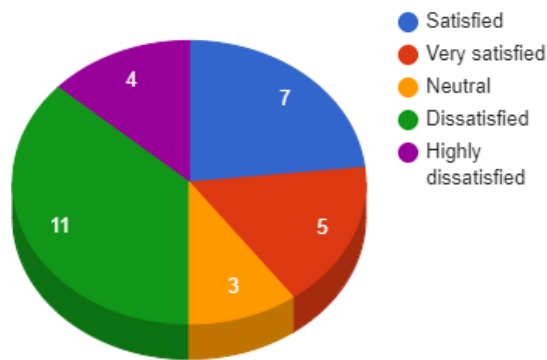


FIGURE 29. Satisfaction of total working hour

The 30 participants were asked if they are satisfied with the total working hour in the garment industry. 23.3% of the participants are satisfied with the total working hour in the garment industry while 16.7% of the participants are very satisfied. 36.7% of the participants are dissatisfied with the total working hour in the garment industry while 13.3% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 10% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who are dissatisfied.

Are you satisfied with the technological support you receive from the garment industry?

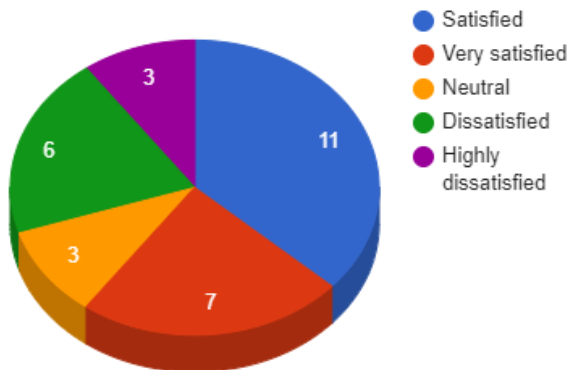


FIGURE 30. Satisfaction with technological support

The 30 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the technological support they receive from the garment industry. 36.7% of the participants are satisfied with the technological support they receive from the garment industry while 23.3% of the participants are very satisfied. 20% of the participants are dissatisfied with the technological support they receive from the garment industry while 10% of the participants are highly dissatisfied. 10% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who are dissatisfied.

Do you think the employers need to organise more training programmes to improve the technical knowledge of the garment workers?

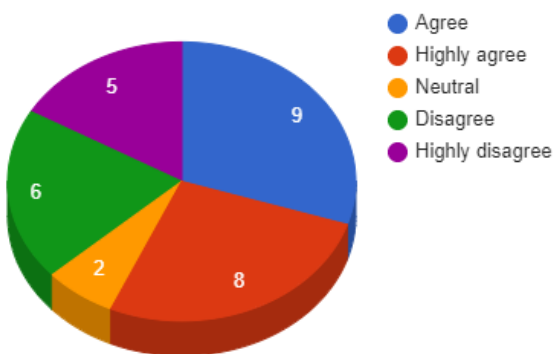


FIGURE 31. Opinion on the training programmes

The 30 participants were asked if they think the employers need to organise more training programmes to improve the technical knowledge of the garment workers. 30% of the participants agreed that the employers need to organise more training programmes to improve the technical knowledge of the garment workers while 26.7% of the participants highly agreed. 20% of the participants disagreed

about organising more training programmes while 16.7% of the participants highly disagreed. 6.7% of the participants were neutral. The largest group here is the participants who agreed.

Please rate your workplace satisfaction rate on a scale of 1 to 10.



FIGURE 32. Workplace satisfaction rate

The 30 participants were asked to rate their workplace satisfaction rate in the Bangladesh garments industry on a scale of 1 to 10. 6.7% of the participants gave their workplace satisfaction a rate of 4, 16.7% of the participants gave it 5, 13.3% of the participants gave their workplace satisfaction 6, 20% of the participants rated their workplace satisfaction 7, 26.7% participants rated their workplace satisfaction 8, 10% participants rated it 3 and 6.7% participants rated their workplace satisfaction 10. The highest rating was 8 by most of the participants.

6.1.2 Interview Guide

6 policymakers of the garment industry have been selected to take part in an interview to get a detailed overview of the situations, policies, frameworks and scenarios regarding the role of female workers in the garment industry. The following interviewees took part in the interview guide.

TABLE 1. Selected respondents for the interview

Participants	Organisation	Designation
Mohammad mohi Uddin Khan	Doreen Apparels Limited	Group Head of Human Resource
Mr Sumon Miah	Doreen Apparels Limited	Quality Manager
Ajay Jaswal	Doreen Apparels Limited	CEO
Parveen Bint Hasheem	Doreen Apparels Limited	Senior Vice Chairman
Anjuman Ara	Doreen Apparels Limited	Executive Manager

Sheema Huq	Doreen Apparels Limited	Assistant Director
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1. Is the current workplace situation in the garment industry of Bangladesh ideal for women workers?

The interviewees were asked if the current workplace situation in the garment industry of Bangladesh is ideal for women workers. Interviewees 1 and 2 thought of the situation to be ideal as they explained how the garment industry is providing better development opportunities to female employees compared to other corporate sectors in Bangladesh. Interviewee 3 and 5 think the situation isn't ideal as female workers are discriminated against in the industry. They think that female workers are mistreated by their employers or male co-workers because of their gender. Interviewees 4 and 6 view the workplace situation to be somewhat ideal but consider that it needs further development such as proper regulations and equal treatment to become the most ideal place for female workers to work in Bangladesh.

2. What role do the women garment worker have in the economic growth of Bangladesh?

All of the interviewees agreed on the matter that female garment workers play a key role in the economic growth of Bangladesh. According to them, female workers make up the majority of the workers in the industry and they are the main workforce that runs the production in the garment industry. They make up the majority of the workforce of the garments industry generate a significant amount of foreign revenue and impact the economic growth of the country.

3. The present garment industry has failed to adhere to some government frameworks such as providing workplace safety to women workers. Would you please explain if you think the argument is correct?

Interviewees 1, 5 and 6 think that the garment industry has failed to adhere to some government frameworks such as providing workplace safety to women workers. According to them, the garment industry has failed to implement workplace safety regulations and equality frameworks as proposed by the government. Interviewees 2 and 3 think that the garment industry has been successful in implementing government legislation properly to ensure an inclusive and safe work environment for female workers. Interview 4 thinks there should be a change in those government legislations considering the current situation of the garments industry.

4. What do you consider to be ideal in the garment industry to ensure equal development opportunities for female workers?

The interviewees were asked to consider various factors that they think are ideal in the garment industry to ensure equal development opportunities for female workers. Interviewee 1 thinks that equal treatment can ensure equal development for female workers. Interviewee 2 thinks that strict policy and regulatory frameworks by the industry can ensure equal treatment. Interviewees 3, 4 and 6 consider social awareness to be the ideal factor. Interviewee 5 considered women's empowerment to be ideal in the garment industry to ensure equal development opportunities for female workers.

5. Why do you think female workers in the garment industry are considered to be the key stakeholders in generating foreign revenue?

The interviewees were asked to explain why they think female workers in the garment industry are considered to be the key stakeholders in generating foreign revenue. Interviewees 1, 4 and 5 think the main reason is that they make up the majority of the workforce in the garments industry. Interviewee 2 thinks that female workers are more dedicated to their work and play an important role in the annual production of the garments industry which generates a large amount of foreign revenue. Interviewees 3 and 6 think female workers are responsible for their job roles considering the socio-cultural aspect of Bangladesh. They work hard in the job sector to receive proper recognition and thus contribute to generating foreign revenue.

6. Do you think the garment industry of Bangladesh should incorporate digital innovation to improve the technical skill of female workers?

The interviewees were asked if the garment industry of Bangladesh should incorporate digital innovation to improve the technical skill of female workers. All of them were positive about the inclusion of various digital technologies and tools to ensure digital innovation. Interviewees 3 and 5 further added that digital innovation will increase the productivity of the garment industry and reduce the workload of the workers, especially female workers who are engaged in more heavy duty compared to male workers.

7. What is your opinion on the socioeconomic status of female garment workers in Bangladesh?

The interviewees were asked to give their opinion on the socioeconomic status of female garment workers in Bangladesh. Interviewees 1,2 and 4 said that the female garment workers in Bangladesh belong to a lower or lower-middle-class economy. The majority of them have to work in the garment industry to support their family. Many of these workers don't receive higher education and are deprived of their basic human rights in the social aspect of Bangladesh. Interviewees 3 and 5 highlighted how these women are discriminated against from early childhood by their family members and even by their in-laws. Interviewee 6 mentioned domestic violence and how many female garment workers are victims of family abuse or hate crimes in Bangladesh.

8. How the female workers in the garment industry playing a pivotal role in women's empowerment in Bangladesh?

The interviewees were asked how the female workers in the garment industry are playing a pivotal role in women's empowerment in Bangladesh. Interviewees 1 and 3 think these female workers have paved the way for women from the underdeveloped communities of Bangladesh to become financially stable by becoming part of the garments industry. Interviewees 2, 5 and 6 think that these female workers have been an example of women's empowerment with their direct impact on the economic growth of Bangladesh. Interviewee 4 thinks that female garment workers are a prime example for young girls in Bangladesh who are looking for economic solvency and social security in Bangladesh.

9. What are the development opportunities for female employees to advance their careers in the garment industry of Bangladesh?

The interviewees were asked to explain the development opportunities for female employees to advance their careers in the garment industry of Bangladesh. Interviewees 1 and 6 said that female garment workers can develop their technical skills and further advance their careers into more technical sectors in Bangladesh. The rest of the interviewees think that the garment industry is providing financial stability and social security to female workers. As a result, they can focus more on career development and look forward to new opportunities for developing their careers.

10. What support the government should provide to the garment industry to ensure equal development for all of its employees?

The interviewees were asked about the support they think the government should provide to the garment industry to ensure equal development for all of its employees. Interviewee 1 thinks that the government should make a proper equality framework and implement it properly in the garments sector. Interviewees 2, 3 and 6 think that the current frameworks are sufficient to ensure equal development opportunities but the government must do regular monitoring of the garment industry to properly implement those equality and diversity frameworks. Interviewees 4 and 5 think that the government should be strict about the implementation of policy frameworks and support the workers to ensure equal development opportunities for all in the garment industry.

6.2 Analysis

The findings of the study have given various insights about the women workers in the garment industry and the role they play in the economic growth of Bangladesh. The participants from the questionnaire session reflected upon the satisfaction of women workers regarding workplace safety, remuneration, recognition and development opportunities in the garments industry. They also reflected upon the ideal factors to ensure equal development opportunities for female employees in the garment industry. The interviewees from the interview session provided a more in-depth analysis of the female worker's contribution to economic development and women empowerment in Bangladesh. The respondents have provided the necessary information to this study about the role of women garment workers and their contribution.

The majority of the participants and the interviewees have focused on the fact that the current workplace situation in the garment industry of Bangladesh is ideal for women workers to develop their careers. They explained how the garment industry is providing better development opportunities to female employees compared to other corporate sectors in Bangladesh. But some of the participants think that female workers are mistreated by their employers or male co-workers because of their gender. The participants and interviewees think that proper regulatory frameworks by the government of Bangladesh and equal treatment from employers can make the garment industry an ideal place for female workers to work in Bangladesh. Most of the participants and interviewees said that the garment industry is trying its best to ensure equal development opportunities for female workers. They think strict policy and regulatory frameworks by the industry can ensure equal treatment.

The participants and the interviewees' considered female workers in the garment industry to be the key stakeholders in generating foreign revenue. They think that female workers make up the majority of the workforce in the garments industry, and the development facilities they receive are important for the development of the industry as well. Since female workers are more dedicated to their work and play an important role in the annual production of the garment industry, they should be given more respect and better treatment. The socio-cultural aspect of Bangladesh prevents women workers from a better lifestyle. They can't get access to better accommodation or livelihood. They work hard in the job sector but they don't receive proper recognition of their contribution. Many of these workers don't receive higher education because of their family's poor economic condition and are deprived of their basic human rights in the social aspect of Bangladesh. The interviewees reflected on how these women are discriminated against from early childhood by their family members and even by their in-laws.

The interviewees and the participants think that female workers in the garment industry are playing a key role in women's empowerment in Bangladesh. According to them, the women garment workers have paved the way for women from the underdeveloped communities of Bangladesh to become financially stable by becoming part of the garment industry. They have been an example of women's empowerment with their direct impact on the economic growth of the garments industry in terms of generating foreign revenue and increasing the GDP growth in Bangladesh. Female garment workers are developing certain skills and further advancing their careers into more technical sectors in Bangladesh to ensure financial stability and social security for them.

The findings were able to meet the stated objectives which have been discussed below using information gathered from data collection and secondary sources to justify their authenticity.

6.2.1 Impact of Women Workers in the Garments Industry of Bangladesh

In the last few years, the garment industries of Bangladesh have significantly increased their annual revenue. This has made the country the second biggest exporter of garments around the globe and with this sector accounting for the majority of the total export earnings of Bangladesh. Moreover, the country has accelerated as well as changed their export substantially from the period (Islam 2021). Now the country has shifted its functioning towards the production of the garment industry, as it is the key support division and a significant resource of foreign exchange for about 25 years. Along with that, women garment proportion workers have contributed significantly to such development. Female

workers make up the majority of the workers in the garments industry and they are the main workforce that runs the overall production in the industry. Their contribution is helping the industry generate a significant amount of foreign revenue every year.

6.2.2 Role of Women Garment Workers in the Economic Growth of Bangladesh

Women garment workers are playing an important role in the economic growth of Bangladesh. The economic development of the country depends largely upon the foreign revenue generated by the garment industry. The industry's workforce is mostly made up of women workers and they are more dedicated to their work (Huq 2019). They are playing an important role in the annual production of the garments industry which generates a large amount of foreign revenue (Huq 2019). Using foreign revenue, the country is running various development projects within different sectors. Female workers are responsible with their jobs in the garments industry and they work hard in the job sector to receive proper recognition and thus contribute to generating foreign revenue.

Female workers have paved the way for women from the underdeveloped communities of Bangladesh to become financially stable by becoming part of the garment industry. This is another reason why the economy of the country is developing as more people are becoming employed and increasing the GDP of the country. These female workers have been an example of women's empowerment with their direct impact on the economic growth of Bangladesh. Female garment workers are motivating young girls in Bangladesh to find economic solvency and social security. The female garment workers in Bangladesh belong to a lower or lower-middle-class economy and they have to work in the garment industry to support their family. They are changing their financial condition by becoming a part of the garment industry and contributing to the economic growth of the country as well.

6.2.3 Economic Barriers and Opportunities for Women Workers in the Garment Industry

The current workplace situation in the garment industry of Bangladesh is ideal for women workers. The garment industry is providing better development opportunities to female workers compared to other corporate sectors in Bangladesh. The garment industry is providing financial stability and social security to female workers as the majority of the female workers belong to poor economies and underdeveloped communities in Bangladesh (El Wali et al. 2021). The work environment they are

receiving from the garment industry can help them to focus more on career development and look forward to new opportunities for developing their professional careers. Many female workers have become the main earning members of their families and improve the financial condition of their community.

But there are some economic barriers that women workers face in the garments industry of Bangladesh. A significant amount of garments in Bangladesh don't provide women workers equal salaries. Gender discrimination is depriving women workers the basic employee right such as equal development opportunities like male co-workers. They are also mistreated by employers as they don't receive proper recognition for their contribution to the garments industry. Many female employees are victims of sexual harassment by employers and many co-workers. In most cases, they don't receive justice or the whole incident gets unnoticed by the employers. This is a major barrier for women workers who are working in the garments industry of Bangladesh.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study on the role of female workers in the garments industry on the development of the industry and the economic growth of Bangladesh, the following recommendations are suggested.

The study identified a lack of government support in the development of the work environment and safety regulations for female workers in Bangladesh. Government support is necessary to reduce harassment or mistreatment of women workers in the garment industry. The government should make a proper equality framework and implement it properly in the garment sector. The government must regularly monitor the activities of the garment industry to properly implement those equality and diversity frameworks and support the workers to ensure equal development opportunities for all women workers in the garment industry.

The study found that there are still cases of gender discrimination in the garment industry. Women workers in some cases don't receive a satisfactory salary and they don't receive proper recognition for their contribution. Employers can make the garment industry an ideal place for female workers to work in Bangladesh by ensuring equal development opportunities. There should be an equality framework

that ensures equal salaries for all employees. Besides, employers should identify the contribution of all the workers and give them proper recognition.

The study reflected upon the fact that women workers in the garment industry are playing a significant role in women's empowerment in Bangladesh. They are motivating women to contribute to the economic growth of Bangladesh while focusing on individual development. These women should receive regular support from the government, local authorities and the garment industry to develop skills that can help them to achieve a better professional career. Turning them into important human resources can change the socioeconomic condition of the women in Bangladesh and make them an important part of the garments industry to ensure sustainable development.

7 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have given valuable insights into the women workers in the garment industry and the role they play in the economic growth of Bangladesh. The economic development of Bangladesh depends largely upon the foreign revenue generated by the garment industry. Women workers are playing an important role in the annual production of the garments industry which generates a large amount of foreign revenue. These female workers have been an example of women's empowerment with their direct impact on the economic growth of Bangladesh. They are changing their financial condition by becoming a part of the garment industry and contributing to the economic growth of the country as well. The findings of this study also suggest that the garment industry is providing financial stability and social security to female workers as the majority of the female workers belong to underdeveloped communities in Bangladesh.

Many female workers have become the main earning members of their families and improve the financial condition of their community. But there are some economic barriers that women workers face in the garments industry of Bangladesh. A significant amount of garments in Bangladesh don't provide women workers equal salaries due to gender discrimination. Some women workers don't get any access to basic employee right such as equal development opportunities compared to their male co-workers. They are also mistreated by employers and are victims of sexual harassment by male co-workers. This is a major barrier for women workers who are working in the garments industry of Bangladesh. The findings of the study recommend that government support is necessary for the development of the work environment and safety regulations for female workers in Bangladesh. Government should give necessary support to female workers to reduce harassment or mistreatment of women workers in the garment industry.

This study aimed to investigate the role of women workers in the garment industry in the economy of Bangladesh. To acquire this aim, given objectives were followed such as to theoretically understand the significance of women workers in the garment industry. It also tried to investigate the role of women workers in the garment industry of Bangladesh and understand the economic barriers and opportunities for women workers in the garment industry. The findings of this study have given valuable insights into the women workers in the garment industry and the role they play in the economic growth of Bangladesh. Female workers make up the majority of the workers in the garments industry and they are the main stakeholders helping the industry to generate a significant amount of

foreign revenue every year. The economic development of Bangladesh depends largely upon the foreign revenue generated by the garment industry. Women workers are playing an important role in the annual production of the garments industry which generates a large amount of foreign revenue.

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Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire**1. State your age.**

- a) 18-25 years
- b) 26-35 years
- c) 36-45 years
- d) 46-55 years
- e) More than 55

2. State your education level.

- a) Primary school
- b) High school or above
- c) Bachelor's degree
- d) Master's degree
- e) Doctorate or above

3. State your job position.

- a) Entry-level
- b) Mid-level
- c) Senior-level

4. State your years of experience in the garments industry.

- a) 0-2 years
- b) 3-5 years
- c) 6-10 years
- d) More than 10 years

5. How satisfied are you with your current job in the garments industry?

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied

e) Highly dissatisfied

6. Please rate your satisfaction with the benefits you receive from the garment industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

7. Please rate your satisfaction with the salary you receive from the garment industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

8. Please rate your satisfaction with the recognition you receive from the garments industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

9. Please rate your satisfaction with the development facilities you receive from the garments industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

10. Please rate your satisfaction with the workplace safety you receive from the garments industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral

- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

11. Please rate your satisfaction with the equality framework in the garment industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

12. Please rate your satisfaction with male employers in the garment industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

13. Please rate your satisfaction with male co-workers in the garment industry.

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

14. Are you satisfied with the treatment you receive from the workplace compared to the male coworkers?

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

15. Are you satisfied with the development opportunities you receive from the workplace compared to the male coworkers?

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied

- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

16. Do you think the salary you receive is sufficient according to the labour you give?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

17. Do you think the recognition you receive is sufficient according to the labour you give?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

18. Do you think you're discriminated against in the garment industry because of your gender?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

19. Do you think you're deprived of your employee rights in the garment industry because of your gender?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

20. Do you think you aren't given enough development opportunities in the garment industry because of your gender?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

21. Do you think you're mistreated by your male employers and co-workers because of your gender?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

22. Do you think the corporate legislation in Bangladesh is failing to ensure equal development opportunities in the garment industry for female employees?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

23. Do you think the corporate legislation in Bangladesh is failing to ensure the safety of the garment industry for female employees?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

24. What factors do you consider to be ideal to ensure equal development opportunities for female employees in the garment industry?

- a) Equal treatment
- b) Job security

- c) Strict policy and regulatory frameworks
- d) Social awareness
- e) Women empowerment
- f) All of the above

25. Do you think your contribution is playing an important role in the growth of the garment industry in Bangladesh?

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

26. What factors do you consider to be the main reason for women to be more active in the garment industry?

- a) Career development opportunities
- b) Better salaries
- c) Workplace safety
- d) Better facilities
- e) None of the above

27. Are you satisfied with the total working hour in the garment industry?

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

28. Are you satisfied with the support you receive from your employers during any crisis?

- a) Satisfied
- b) Very satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly dissatisfied

29. Do you think the employers try to meet your demands and necessities at a satisfactory level

- a) Agree
- b) Highly agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Highly disagree

30. Please rate your workplace satisfaction rate on a scale of 1 to 10.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

1. Is the current workplace situation in the garment industry of Bangladesh ideal for women workers?
2. What role do the women garment worker have in the economic growth of Bangladesh?
3. The present garment industry has failed to adhere to some government frameworks such as providing workplace safety to women workers. Would you please explain if you think the argument is correct?
4. What do you consider to be ideal in the garment industry to ensure equal development opportunities for female workers?
5. The female workers in the garment industry are key stakeholders in generating foreign revenue. Do you agree with this statement?
6. Do you think the garment industry of Bangladesh should incorporate digital innovation to improve the technical skill of female workers?
7. What is your opinion on the socioeconomic status of female garment workers in Bangladesh?
8. Are female workers in the garment industry playing a pivotal role in women's empowerment in Bangladesh?
9. Does the garment industry provides sufficient development opportunities for female employees to advance their career?
10. Do you receive sufficient support from the government to get better facilities from the garment industry?

