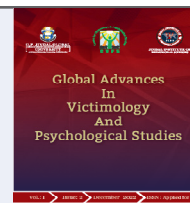


Online ISSN: 2583-5335

Global Advances in Victimology and Psychological Studies



Nature of Workplace Victimization against Female Garment Workers: A Study on the Ready-Made Garments of Bangladesh

Farjana Fariha, Ummahani Shifa, Mst. Safia Akter and Md. Ishtiaq Ahmed Talukder*

Department of Criminology and Police Science, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh; ishtiaq.t@mbstu.ac.bd

Abstract

Workplace victimisation has always been an issue of great concern in the world and also in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry of Bangladesh. According to the latest Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) statistics, Bangladesh is the 2nd largest RMG exporter country. However, it is a matter of fact that female garment workers, being the majority of the workforce, suffer from several forms of workplace victimisation regularly. This paper attempts to capture the overall scenario of the victimisation of female garment workers in the RMG sector in Bangladesh. Its main objective is to fill the gap in the existing literature on the current form of victimisation. All relevant issues regarding workplace victimisation of female garment workers have been analysed here using references from established journals, articles, newspapers, and associated websites of related foundations. This paper revealed that Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is the most common type of victimisation, where verbal abuse stands at the top and physical abuse is next to it. Besides these abuses, sexual harassment is the most heinous, followed by other forms of victimisation such as economic, psychological, etc. The aftereffects of this victimisation are very painful, as it leads to women's disempowerment, which destroys their personal and familial lives. Ultimately, their contribution to the workforce is declining day by day, posing a great threat to the future of this sector. In short, having reached its peak, the RMG sector is still exploiting female garment workers, making them the worst sufferers of all in workplace victimisation.

Keywords: Female Garment Workers, Ready-Made Garment Industry, Violence, Victimization, Workplace

1. Introduction

Victimization is a process by which one individual is deprived of his or her rights. It is an uneven interpersonal relationship where the victim may suffer pain through abusive behaviour leading to a destructive and unfair attitude (Karmen, 2015). Workplace victimization is an act of aggression in a working institution where employees suffer from violence resulting in several

forms of harm caused by one or more members of that organization (Aquino & Thau, 2009) or he or she perceived himself to be a 'target of negative or aggressive behaviour' by his colleague (Lamertz & Aquino, 2004). The workplace is regarded as the second largest place for females in Bangladesh to experience victimization (BSS & SID, 2016). When it comes to the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry, victimization has become an issue of great concern nowadays, especially against female

*Author for correspondence

garment workers. In general, garment worker refers to individuals who serve in the garment industry in any of the four divisions in the textile sector: knitting, dying, spinning and apparel. Female garment workers refer to all the women who are involved in any of the aforementioned sectors.

The pattern of victimization against garment workers in Bangladesh includes physical assault, psychological assault, sexual harassment, economic disadvantages, unfair discrimination, and verbal abuse (Sohani *et al.*, 2011). Around 60% of RMG Industry workers reported having experienced different types of harassment at work, which include both verbal and physical abuse (Fear Wear Foundation, 2013). Another research report detailing gender-based violence in Walmart, Gap, and H&M Asian clothing supply chains released five forms of violence as acts that inflict: physical harm, mental harm, sexual harm or suffering, coercion, threat and retaliation, and deprivation of liberty (ILO (International Labour Organization), 2018). According to the narratives of the Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA), female garment workers are the targets of gender-based violence which includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats of physical or emotional harm, acts of revenge, and deprivations of liberty. Besides, physical and verbal abuse and other forms of violence against female garment workers include constant pressure, other personal restrictions, withholding pay and fear of losing a job (Akhter *et al.*, 2019).

The generation of jobs, revenue, foreign earnings, and economic growth in Bangladesh all primarily are attributed to the RMG sector (Islam *et al.*, 2016). It is the first working platform established in Bangladesh where females hold the majority. About 80 per cent of the 4 million workers (3.2 million workers) engaged in the factories of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) are women (Matsuura & Teng, 2020). However, despite making such a huge contribution, females are constantly being persecuted in this garment sector. (Morris and Rickard, 2019) it is challenging to identify and confront gender-based violence and sexual harassment against female garment workers in Bangladesh. The difficulty lies in publicizing the victimization and enabling individual females to speak about it, due to the dynamic patterns of abuse and the stigma associated with it (Morris & Rickard, 2019). The situation of the neighbouring country India also shows the ugly side of the RMG sector where females

suffer from physical, verbal and emotional abuse with unrealistic target fulfilment leading to serious health issues. Based on an AFWA study, of 773 female garment workers in Indonesia, 56.5% have experienced sexual harassment and 96.6% of them did not report whereas in Cambodia female garment workers are recruited nothing but to exploit as per the Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions (AFWA, CENTRAL, GLJ, LIPS, and SLD, 2018).

These forms of victimization are posing a great threat to the basic human rights to live along with medically unsafe infrastructure. Mass fainting of garment workers due to chemical causes is the best example of it (Soth, 2019). Therefore, with the gradual progress of the world, victimization against female garment workers is still a brutal reality for global garment workers. This paper is an attempt to explore the scenario of workplace victimization of female garment workers in Bangladesh. Therefore, we have only looked for published news articles and reports about workplace victimization which adopted either situational or perceived victimization as individual or organizational variables.

2. Objectives

Female workers are the main driving force in the RMG sector both at the national and international levels. But they have become a common target of victimization due to the dynamic forms of violence against them of which they hardly speak. As a result, the perpetrators can remain in mainstream society without receiving any penalty. This article has aimed to find out the nature, forms and conditions of victimization of female garment workers in Bangladesh and also to search for the answers to why female workers are becoming victims of violence.

3. Method

This is a review-based research work where the data sources are secondary in general. A systematic review was carried out on the published English literature and available in the databases of Ebsco, JSTR, SAGE, Google Scholar, Embase, Medline, PubMed United Nations etc. Authentic websites associated with the concerned topic were also visited including Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA), Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA),

Fear Wear Foundation (FWF), International Labour Organization (ILO), Micro Finance Opportunities (MFO), South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM), Sojag Foundation, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), RMG Sustainability Council (RSC), International Trade Union Confederation (IUTC), and Worker Right Consortium (WRC), etc. Furthermore, both English and Bengali newspapers were reviewed and categorized as per relevancy. The keywords used were 'victimization', 'violence', 'female', 'garment', 'textile', 'clothing', 'garment worker', 'RMG sector', 'nature of victimization', 'socioeconomic background', 'victimizer' etc. The literature search was carried out maintaining a time boundary of 2017 to 2022 to synthesize the data and review them for clearer analysis. A good number of articles, journals, reports, and websites, from 2012 to 2022, were followed throughout the internet and published references. The study is descriptive, and it provides an analysis of the condition where female garment workers are the main target of victimization in the RMG sector of Bangladesh.

4. Results and Discussion

Ready Made Garment (RMG) industries play a pivotal job in the advancement of Bangladesh where it has become the single biggest export-earning sector. Starting its journey from the 1980s to today, it has expanded almost all over Bangladesh. The country is divided into eight divisions with a total of 64 districts. Expansion of RMG directing women empowerment dictates the purpose of why initiatives should be taken against victimization in this sector for both economic growth and ensuring respect to the forerunners of the sector that is to say the female garment workers.

Table 1 depicts the number of garments under eight divisions in Bangladesh. The data were found in the **Mapped in Bangladesh** project through the 'Centre for Entrepreneurship Development survey of BRAC University as of January 2022.

4.1 Nature of Workplace Victimization

The RMG sector is showing shocking revelations on several kinds of violence against garment workers mostly against females as per many published reports either on news portals or surveys. The outcome of these reports

Table 1. Number of garments for each division of Bangladesh

Division Name	Number of Garment
Dhaka	3337
Chattogram	419
Rajshahi	6
Rangpur	6
Barisal	5
Khulna	5
Sylhet	47
Mymensingh	36

Source: (CED-BRACU, 2022)

Table 2. Nature of victimization in the RMG sector of Bangladesh

Types of Victimization	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020
a. Verbal abuse	84.7%		
b. Emotional abuse	71.3%		
c. Physical abuse	20%		
d. Sexual abuse/harassment	12.7%	22.4%	
e. Psychological stress		70.4%	
f. Job Insecurity		83%	
g. Forced labour between 9 to 10 hours	50%		
h. Forced labour for more than 10 hours	50%		
i. Refuse to grant leave	25.3%		
j. Lay off without compensation			20%

Source: BBC News, Prothom-alo newspaper, Jugantar newspaper, RTV newspaper, BSS

represented the nature of victimization female workers face in their workplace which is depicted in Table 2.

Workplace victimization against female garment workers is not wholly consistent due to the absence of a sole criterion for the categorization of different forms of violence. This inconsistency leads to some overlapping between categories as well as the nature, pattern and trends of victimization. Table 3 denotes a diverse category of victimization based on some important criteria. However, this is not universal.

Table 3. General classification of workplace victimization

Basis of classification	Number of categories	Name of the categories
Area of workplace	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workplace victimization within the RMG Industry e.g., worker to worker, worker to superior etc. 2. Workplace victimization outside the RMG Industry e.g., victimization during commute etc.
Types of force used	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical violence e.g., physical abuse etc. 2. Non-Physical violence e.g., verbal abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse etc.
Gender	Five / Four	<p>According to Dosao (2020):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Psychological violence, 2. Physical violence, 3. Harmful traditional practices 4. Economic violence, 5. Sexual violence <p>According to Akter and Marx (2021):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical violence, 2. Psychological, 3. Structural violence, 4. Sexualized violence
Rights	Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Violation of Constitutional Rights 2. Violation of Human Rights 3. Violation of Labour Rights
Gravity	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct victimization e.g., physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, deadly accident etc. 2. Indirect victimization e.g., occupational health hazard etc.
Victimizer	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Known: co-workers, supervisor, trade unions, employer, state etc. 2. Unknown: strangers, outsiders etc.

In this study, we have only focused on the workplace victimization against female garment workers within the workplace in the RMG Industry of Bangladesh while excluding transport victimization which refers to victimization outside the workplace. By the way, the Table 3 shows that the victimization of female garment workers occurs in the form of various kinds of violence which covers all the patterns of violence with respective nature. As per the World Report on Violence and Health (Daher, 2003), the nature of violence is categorized into four classes: physical, sexual, and psychological violence and the last one is deprivation or neglect. In the RMG sector, gender-based violence covers all these types of violence. Besides GBV, violation of human rights associated with labour rights violation is another major form of victimization against female garment workers. An in-depth analysis of these two major forms of victimization with nature, pattern and trends is presented below.

4.2 Forms of Violence at the Workplace

4.2.1 Gender Based Violation (GBV)

The RMG sector is an industry where employment opportunities are mostly for female workers. Still, it is a matter of fact that female workers are badly suffering from several types of violence in the factories. GBV against female garment workers indicates two aspects that is to say:

- 1) Violence because of being women and
- 2) Violence is directed to affect women disproportionately (Persson *et al.*, 2020).

The Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity (BCWS) and FEMNET conducted the study titled ‘Wages and Gender Based Violence’ investigating the connection between economic mistreatment and victimization of women workers which shows how lowly they are paid in

comparison with male workers. It was reported that 75% of the Bangladeshi garment workers who participated in the study had experienced gender-based violence in Bangladesh (Munni, 2020). Because of intense gender-based violations in this sector, female workers have become the ultimate sufferers of various levels of gender discrimination including disproportionate division of labour, discrimination in promotion and other service benefits, wage discrimination, discriminated leadership positions, etc. (Islam, 2018). Male workers are paid on average around 8% more than female garment workers and also male workers have a faster promotion rate (Macchiavello *et al.*, 2020). A recent joint survey conducted by Microfinance Opportunities (MFO) and the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM) showed that the median monthly wage of female garment workers was Tk 12000 against Tk 13000 of their male counterparts which is similar even after the pandemic (Munni, 2022).

Nowadays, the use of modern machinery is increasing in the factories. Skilled workers are needed to increase production using technology. Women workers do not get the same opportunity for upskilling training that men do. ILO and International Finance Corporation in their joint study revealed that the management of most of the factories do not have any plan to develop the female workers' skills. Even they prioritize male over female garment workers in training programs (The Business Standard, 2022). The most common nature of GBV with its patterns and trends are as follows.

4.2.2 Physical Violence

Any act which causes physical harm or injury by using physical force is called physical violence that can be serious or minor (EIGE, 2017). Women are the most neglected working force in the garment industry because of their poor demographic profile in Bangladesh. The nature of physical violence varies from factory to factory.

Table 4. Rate of physical violence with respective patterns

Year 2018	Year 2020
Seduce- 44.68% Eve Teasing- 34.04% Sexual Rebuked- 16.78% Attempt to Rape- 4.5% (Akter & Ahmed, 2018)	Beating – 44%, Kicking – 42%. Punching-11% (Dimadura, 2020)

But, slapping, pinching, pushing, kicking, or sometimes even beating etc. are the commonly exercised forms of physical violence against female workers here (Table 4).

As the supervisors are mostly male, they abuse them using their power of authority (Persson *et al.*, 2020). Without any reason, they abuse workers physically by beating them in their backsides in the disguise of showing off their power (Hoskins, 2022). In a word, they are not treated as human beings in their eyes.

4.2.3 Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse means “harsh and insulting language directed at a person (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It is one of the most common patterns of victimization in the ready-made garments industry. Bangladeshi female garment workers of H&M factories described that they go through verbal abuse continuously from the beginning to the end of their shift. It is a type of victimization where the pain of female workers remains invisible. Therefore, the shift supervisors verbally attack them regularly without any hesitation. Shouting, insulting, and criticising them publicly are common practices in this context. Although verbal abuse causes no physical harm, its effect is very dangerous. About 85% of the female workers were victims of verbal harassment as per the research report titled “Estate of Rights Implementation of Women Ready Made Garment Workers” (Rashid, 2018). Again, gender-based abuse, violence, and harassment against women garment workers in Asia uncovered by the GPS (Global People Strategist) team in current affairs declared that statistically 75% of workers in the RGM industry in Bangladesh have been verbally abused at work (Global People Strategist, 2018). Care Bangladesh in their study report named “Rights Implementation Status of Women Workers in Bangladesh’s Ready-Made Garment Industries” showed the existence of 93% verbal harassment against female workers in the industry (The Financial Express, 2021).

4.2.4 Sexual Abuse

Any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act, as well as unwanted sexual remarks or acts to traffic, that is directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion by anyone, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including at home and work, are all considered to be sexual violence (WHO, 2021). According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), there are two types of sexual harassment (EEOC, 1990):

- 1) “quid pro quo” means “this for that” - It entails explicit or tacit requests for sexual favours in return for a gain, such as a promotion, pay raise, or the avoidance of being fired or demoted at work.
- 2) Hostile work environment - It can happen to anyone at work and includes unwanted contact, sexual jokes or comments, persistent dating requests, etc.

The Table 5 presents data on sexual harassment and related behaviours reported across multiple years by different sources. Findings indicate varying prevalence rates of sexual harassment, molestation, and assault, with notable categories including harassment in factories, sexual intimate proposals from higher management, and eve-teasing, highlighting the multifaceted nature of these issues.

As per the BSS News portal (2021), a study conducted on 22 garment factories situated in Mirpur of Dhaka and Panchlaish and Bayezid Bostami areas of Chattogram revealed that 22.4% of female workers are victims of sexual harassment. The types of sexual harassment female garment workers face in their workplace (BSS News, 2021) are included below:

- The most common is looking with lust, which is 42.33%
- Then throw something on the sensitive organ, which rate is 34.92%

- Then gazing greedily at the sensitive organs, which amount to 30.85%
- Touching hands or body parts while explaining work or talking, which depicts 28.57%.

4.2.5 Psychological Violence

Psychological violence refers to any behaviour that harms a person's mental health, whether it takes the form of coercion, defamation, verbal abuse, or harassment (EIGE, 2017). The “intensification of work” required to reach daily goals, the stringent factory rules and regulations, the low pay, the unfavourable working conditions, the maltreatment of employees, and other factors contributed to work stress and fear of losing one's job etc. About 21% of garment workers are suffering from depressing syndrome leading to severe health issue (Table 6).

4.3 Why is Violence Occurring?

Rights are the privileges to conduct particular activities, to be in specific states, or to demand that others refrain from performing those actions or from being in such situations (Zalta, 2020). RMG sector being a booming industry of export is followed by labour rights for the betterment of the workers. Throughout the study, the neglect of the implementation of these rights is depicted in the form of a variety of violence. Besides Human Rights Watch has also addressed workers' rights violations in the RMG sectors

Table 5. Types of sexual violence

Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment in the factory- 20.83% • Sexual intimate proposal from the higher management- 16.66% • Sexual harassment from fellow workers- 11.66% • No comment-50.83% <p>(Osmani & Hossen, 2018; Chowdhury, 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexually harassed/molested/ assaulted- 12% • Being subjected to sexual harassment, molestation, assault- 10% <p>(ActionAid, 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eve teasing-15.5% • Inappropriate touch-9.8% • Molesting- 3.9% • Other- 12.7% <p>(Akter & Marx, 2021)</p>

Table 6. Rate of psychological violence with respective patterns

Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2021
<p>Depression-20.9%</p> <p>(Fitch <i>et al.</i>, 2017)</p>	<p>Fear – 62.5%</p> <p>Stress– 37.5%</p> <p>(Akter & Ahmed, 2018)</p>	<p>Psychological harassment- 86.7%</p> <p>(Hoskins, 2022)</p>

of Bangladesh along with violations of fundamental rights especially against female workers.

4.3.1 Discrimination in the Workforce

Discrimination is when individuals or groups are treated unfairly or negatively due to traits like colour, gender, age, or sexual orientation (APA, 2019). Gender-based violence in the previous section already depicted how female garment workers are suffering from discrimination in the workplace. Besides gender-based violence, in terms of receiving desired job postings, timely salaries, and promotions based on their talents and competencies, they are being discriminated against on the grounds of proper respect and justice (Haque *et al.*, 2020). The scenario of these forms of discriminatory violence against female workers in the RMG industry in Bangladesh are stated below:

Wage Discrimination: Female garment workers are going through a variety of gender-based violence with insufficient wages. Besides wage discrimination has added a new dimension to their workplace victimization.

Positional Discrimination: The RMG industry is dominated by female labourers, but higher position is allotted for male workers to take advantage of them in terms of wage and other kinds of superiority (Islam, 2016). Even though women make up the majority of the workforce in the sector, only 1% of women hold leadership roles (The Business Inspection, 2022).

Recruitment-Based Discrimination: Equality in every sphere of life is a basic right for every human being. However, female garment workers in the RMG industry go through this even before employment. But, in the RMG industry, four out of every five females work as line workers in factories (Zaman, 2020). Gender-based violence in garment factories is caused by lower positions (Akter & Marx, 2021). Females have historically been thought to be physically weak, soft-spoken, and submissive. Therefore, they are regarded as unable to make decisions over official matters and incapable of handling managerial positions. That's why males are preferred and recruited more often for managerial positions than females (Macchiavello *et al.*, 2015; Sultana, 2021). According to an ILO report, in the hiring process, the highest position preference is given to men over women, as a result in the RMG sector 83.8% of women workers are found to be in lower positions (The Business Inspection, 2022).

Promotion-Based Discrimination: Promotion is the act of raising someone to a higher or more important position or rank (Cambridge Business English Dictionary, n.d.). It is a right for every employee to be encouraged by their skills and efficiency in work performance through promotion. However, female garment workers have limited upward mobility in terms of getting promotion in comparison to their male colleagues (The Plan International, 2020; Fear and Wear Foundation, 2018). Within months males are promoted to higher ranks whereas females remain in their lower rank positions for years. Only 1 in 20 supervisors is female (Zaman, 2020). A 2014 study by the International Growth Centre found that 80% of sewing machines were female with just 5% of supervisors (Hassan, 2021).

4.3.2 Wage-Related Dispute

Wage-related dispute is a type of workplace dispute which refers to disagreement between employers and employees over wages (BILS, 2015).

Wage Delay: A delay in wage providence is a form of structural violence related to an economic crisis where female workers suffer financially leading to a mental breakdown. The wages they get are insufficient to meet their basic needs. In addition to this poor wage, delay in the payment leads to several forms of destruction. Wage delay mainly irregularities in payment has become one of the major causes of labour unrest in Bangladesh as per a study conducted in different garment factories in Dhaka, Savar, Gazipur and Narayanganj. In that study, 12.5% of the respondents blamed irregularity of payment as the prime cause behind labour unrest in the RMG industry (Hasan & Islam, 2015). To obtain a monthly wage, which could hardly meet their basic needs, they have to take to the street and resort to violent strategy which includes but is not limited to roadblocks, vandalizing, picketing etc (Osmani & Hossen, 2018) There is even no specific limit of wage delay for them not to resort to violence. A web post published by RMG Bangladesh revealed that Nazma Akter with Awaj Foundation stated around 30% of payment delays in the RMG sector of Bangladesh are due to delayed brand payments where garment workers are the main sufferers (RMG Bangladesh, 2020) The workers of Style craft Limited of Laxmipura area in Gazipur took position on the highway Gazipur- Dhaka highway with bamboo barricades on demand of their last eight months due wage (Karmakar, 2021). The latest study report of Care

Bangladesh also reported instances of two to four months of wage delay (Hoskins, 2022). The cycle of RMG workers to street is a continuing matter in case of getting their salary as per the news portal Dhaka Tribune (Hasan, 2022).

Wage Cutting: Wage cutting is a silent form of workplace victimization. In the RMG sector, it poses a great threat to all the workers especially against female workers as they are continuously fighting two enemies: overall insecurities in life as women and poverty (Akter & Ahmed, 2018). A total of 93.4% of the surveyed RMG workers in Bangladesh faced up to 65% cut in wages as per the study conducted by Care Bangladesh (Hoskins, 2022).

Unpaid Overtime: Unpaid overtime has become a harsh reality not only for the females but also for the whole garment workers. But as female workers are the majority of the workforce, so they are to be largely exploited. About 92.1% of workers in knit factories worked overtime, with 40% of them exceeding the legal threshold (Hoskins, 2022).

Arrear Salary and Festival Bonus: Bangladesh is a Muslim-majority country where all employees regardless of sex, age, gender, or religion are bound to receive a bonus in the RMG sector during Eid as per the direction of BGMEA (Bangladesh Manufacturers and Exports Federation). Faruque Hasan, president of BGMEA claims that 99% of factories have already paid the Eid bonus of Eid-ul-Fitr. However, the union leaders stated that some 200 factories could not pay workers' salaries and festival bonuses (Refayet, 2021). Prothom Alo news report of 2021 also revealed this scenario (Table 7) which is presented below:

4.3.3 Issues with the Working Environment at RMG Industries

Safety and Environment Problem: A safe and secure environment is one of the prerequisites for any worker in the respective workplace. A healthy working environment

is an inevitable part of any business enterprise to continue as a workplace both national and international workplace with standard human rights responsibilities to the RMG industry of Bangladesh. Despite being the 2nd largest global exporter, female garment workers in the RMG sector of Bangladesh are surrounded by various patterns of victimization including gendered segregation, lack of professional development, negligence, and harassment (The Plan International, 2020). A study of causal determination behind labour unrest in the RMG industry depicts that 30% of the studied respondents think that there are safety and environmental problems in garment factories (Hasan & Islam, 2015). Again in an observation of the working environment of the female garment workers it is presented that 18.75% of the respondents feel insufficient social security (Rahman *et al.*, 2020). Tremendous pressure to produce garment products has turned the working environment into a hostile one followed by violence whereas 64% of garment workers are under excessive pressure to produce products and 35% of workers face humiliation or physical threat by superiors to produce more (Akter & Marx, 2021). While human rights considerations include, but are not limited to, annual leaves, maternity benefits, non-discriminatory practises, eliminating child labour and forced labour, gender equality at all levels, occupational safety and health, social governance, and grievance mechanisms, the RMG sector in Bangladesh is still far from protecting human rights in their governance structure and practises (Jabbar, 2022).

Hygiene and Sanitation Problem: Hygiene and sanitation problems are an inevitable part of garment workers' lifestyle in the RMG industry. A report called "World Business Council for Sustainable Development: Business Action for Safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene" shared that more than 70% of the workers experience a lack of safe drinking water, poor ventilation systems in the factories and often reach blistering temperatures (Islam, n.d.). An investigation on occupational health risks from

Table 7. Industry-wise wage and incentives crisis in Bangladesh

Organization	Number of factories	Number of factories that did not pay wages	Number of factories that did not pay bonuses
BGMEA	1643	180	120
BKMEA	816	81	48
BTMA	310	34	28
Industrial Police	4754	281	436

Source: Prothom Alo, 2021

January to June 2013 revealed that 51% of respondents experienced headaches or shoulder pain, 20% reported having trouble sleeping or hearing, and 33.8% reported noise pollution (Khan *et al.*, 2016). About 28% of the respondents depicted hygiene and sanitation as a threat to workers' health as well as a major cause of labour unrest. Due to an unhygienic work environment around 87% of female garment workers suffer from various diseases including but not limited to fungal asthma, breathing difficulty, pruritus, skin allergy etc. (Osmani & Hossen, 2018). An urgently required overview of self-reported chronic health issues among female garment workers was provided by a recent survey-based research study. According to reports, the following medical disorders are most common in this population: joint pain, high blood pressure, eye issues, sleeplessness, asthma, anxiety, gout, diabetes, and heart attack (Alamgir, 2019). Another study report conducted in four garment industries in Dhaka city revealed that 20.83% of respondents expressed about lack of proper toileting in the factories (Rahman *et al.*, 2020).

Emergency Exit Problem: According to the Oxford Dictionary, "emergency exit refers to the designated way out of a building or vehicle, to be used for escape in the event of an emergency". It plays an important role in tackling unwanted incidents such as fire tragedies, building collapsing, electrical short-circuits, natural calamities, etc. However, it is a fact that most of the RMG factories in Bangladesh neglect emergency exit plans in their construction structure. As a result, garment workers suffer from various deadly hazards. It is considered one of the major causes of labour unrest as per 57.5% of respondents in a study (Hasan & Islam, 2015). Besides building collapsing, fire incidents have become a daily reality in the RMG industries of Bangladesh. From 1990 to In 2016, there were 69 incidents in the RMG sector in Bangladesh where almost 1626 people died and 4829 people were injured through the majority of fire incidents with little bit of building collapsing (Hasan, 2017). In the case of fire, exit and assembly door, stairway, separation of exit access ramps, corridors, aisles and ramped aisles, exit passageway, exit discharge with proper number of arrangements etc. were highlighted as means of fire evacuation safety (Barua *et al.*, 2018).

Informal Working Policy: WEIGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing) defines the informal economy as such economic activity or work that does not fall under the formal regulations

protected by the state where the employment does not ensure job security (Svarer *et al.*, 2017). Informality towards female workers is still ongoing here in the form of the absence of issuing appointment letters. An appointment letter is such a letter that enables the workers to be entitled to their designated rights as proof. However, a part of the research on War or Want revealed that 53% of respondents did not receive any appointment letter (Islam, n.d.). A study conducted by Kormojibi Nari and Care Bangladesh in association with the Australian Development Corporation positively affirmed the existence of an informal economy in the RMG sector that is nothing but an active exploiter against garment workers especially against female workers. According to a report published in a reputed national daily in 2018 shared that about 31% of workers' appointments were not delivered and about 53% were deprived of receiving their service book (Jugantor, 2018). Hoskins (2022) also found almost similar results in his finding after four years from the national daily result which shared that only 27% got their appointment letter after joining, a majority did not get their service book and 40% were unaware of the signature in the service book.

Political Instability: Political instability is a phase of uncertainty or impermanence or imbalance of political and trade union issues due to some factors including but not limited to conflicts between the opposition and the ruling parties, a lack of resources, proximity to a country at war, tensions between two ethnic groups, a rapid shift in a country's circumstances that sparks uprising, terrorism, the secrecy of the ruling parties, etc. (Papon *et al.*, 2017). Its impact is very dangerous for the RMG enterprises due to order cancellation, costly air shipment, less productive working environment etc. where workers are the ultimate sufferers. According to a report published in 2015 labour unrest was used as an issue of political violence (Hasan & Islam, 2015) which was supported by about 33 percent of the respondents. Another research conducted right after the previous one showed that the majority of the respondents (70% strongly agreed and 24.66% agreed) believed that political instability hurts the socioeconomic life of workers and also hampers the safety of the workers as half of the respondents strongly suggested that.

Forced Labour: Forced labour is a violation of the Labour Act. But overlooking the law the practice of forced labour in the RMG industry in Bangladesh has become a reality that most female garment workers face in their workplaces. Established articles, news portal reports,

as well as organizational reports, is a proof of this cruel reality. Established article, news portal report, as well as organizational report, is a proof of this cruel reality (Table 8).

Table 8. Year-wise forced labour picture in Bangladesh

Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2022
Forced labour (9 to 10 hours)- 50% Forced labour (more than 10 hours)- 50% (Jugantor, 2018)	Forced to meet unrealistic daily targets- 70% Forced labour (13 to 14 hours)- 50% (Islam, n.d.)	Excessive work hours increased for Female-35% Male-41% (Stuart, 2022)

4.3.4 Nature of Administration at the Industries

Rarely can RMG employees receive accessible and reasonable support from their employers and RMG company owners in every critical situation and emergency. They have two options: either they fight and lose (alluding to the numerous employees who lost their jobs as a result of worker protests) or they give in to the abhorrent working conditions and pay out of concern for the further uncertainties that would result from unemployment (Akter & Islam, 2022).

Negligence towards Females during Pregnancy: Female workers are supposed to be unproductive during pregnancy. So, in the disguise of finding fault tactfully for the pregnant female workers authorities instigated the workers to resign on their own (Choudhury & Rahman, 2017). Dismissal from a job as well as lack of re-joining the same RMG factory have become a trend for pregnant women here. Even 98% reported not offering any health check-ups both during pregnancy and before returning to work (Children & Sector, n.d.).

Denial of Maternity Leave: During pregnancy, every woman is bound to receive proper care both at home and workplace as per the possession of human as well as labour rights. The Fair Wear Foundation's Bangladesh County Report (2018) in some cases found that female garment workers lose their jobs for being pregnant. It is a shocking fact that in the RMG sector not only their rights to maternity leave are denied but also it is used as an excuse to fire them (Zaman, 2020). The Labour Act of 2006 establishes a standard maternity leave of 3.7 months for women factory workers (Haque & Bari, 2021). Yet 66% of women garment workers are still denied maternity

leave as per a recent study report published on an online website namely The Asia Foundation (Hassan, 2021).

Lack of Child Care Centre: Where the front liners in the RMG industry have their basic human rights denied that too during pregnancy, it is unexpected that there will be child care centre facilities. Although there is national and international recognition of this facility, the practice of it cannot be imagined as a whole. Only in Dhaka centric some well-known factories provide child care centres or daycare centres inside the factories. However, it was seen in a survey of UNICEF to ensure Better Business for Children that 98% of the surveyed workers' children do not use daycare centres and 68% of the surveyed expressed a strong preference for grandparents looking after their children (Children & Sector, n.d.). The Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 states, "In every establishment, where 40 or more female workers are ordinarily employed, one or more suitable rooms shall be provided and maintained for the use of their children who are under the age of six years." Surprisingly a research report prepared by the International Finance Corporation on the same issue in 2019 on 306 companies showed that only 23 per cent of the companies provided access to the desired childcare service whereas the other 61 per cent had to plan to provide the service (Malik, 2019; Kanya, 2021).

Denial of Sick Leave: Sick leave is another form of right of an employee that has to be ensured by the employers according to the law. But it is a matter of concern that the garment workers have to struggle a lot for it to be granted. A joint report conducted by Awaj Foundation and Consulting Service International Ltd. (CSI) titled 'The Workers' Voice Report' revealed that 21% of workers are denied sick leave (The Financial Express, 2019). Female garment workers around 25% don't even get mercy during illness due to negligence and lack of medical facilities (Rahman *et al.*, 2020). Another report published in a web portal depicted that 24% of workers are unable to be granted sick leave (Hassan, 2021).

Denial to Compensation: The RMG industry in Bangladesh is an epicentre of tragic incidents. Fire incidents, building collapsing, chemical explosions etc. have become very common phenomena here, especially in the RMG factories. These incidents are deadly as they take away the lives of the workers. But it has become a shameful fact that even though the workers of the industry lose their lives or are injured in such a way that they can seldom return to work, the factory owners do not even care to compensate them. It becomes worse when the

injured or deceased worker is supposed to be the only breastfeeding member in the family. The collapse of Rana Plaza and the devastating fire at Tazreen Fashions caught the attention of both the whole nation and worldwide brands and retailers. These incidents were regarded as tragedies where the families of the garment workers lost their loved ones. Besides, suffering from psychological trauma they were also victims of the financial crisis as they did not get compensation even after several months of the deadly incidents as per the joint report of the Clean Clothes Campaign and International Labour Rights Forum (Foxvog *et al.*, 2013).

Lack of Training Facilities: At present, we are living in an era of digitization. The adoption of automated technology has become a must for increased production in the RMG sector. Around 29.1% of female garment workers are literate as per an ILO report and the illiterate females are recruited at cheaper labour (The Business Inspection, 2022). According to a joint study conducted by the ILO and International Finance Corporation in 2018, factory managers do not specifically intend to upskill female RMG workers, and they do not receive enough training. The survey also revealed that men were given preference over women when it comes to mastering new machine functions (Kanya, 2022).

4.3.5 Health-Related Dispute

It is known to all that 'health is wealth'. Without better health, the life of a human being is monotonous, useless and unproductive. But to maintain good health a safe and secure environment with necessities is a must. However, the RMG sector in Bangladesh ignores the health issue of their workforce without whom they can seldom run their business. The absence of medicine and medical care is proof of that. About 35% of the workers recognized the lack of medicine and medical care as a cause of labour unrest in the RMG industry (Hasan & Islam, 2015). In a case study it was found that after working long hours throughout the week, if the order is cancelled for any defect, they are deprived of their salary without taking account of the workers' possible health risk and also, they are not provided with any life insurance as a safety of their family (Choudhury & Rahman, 2017). Additionally, the high cost of medical treatment is a critical issue in Bangladesh where 40% of the RMG workers are deprived of medical treatment due to costly treatment. Professor Dr Syed Abdul Hamid of the Institute of Health Economics

of Dhaka University said that 43% of female garment workers fall ill at some point in the year for the type of work in the industry which is associated with the poor working environment. He added that due to the excessive cost of healthcare services at both government and private hospitals, they do not get treatment. He further added that the only alternative to this dispute is the introduction of health insurance coverage at large which is now only 1% (Mim, 2021).

4.3.6 Deprivations of Facilities

RMG sector is such an enterprise where deprivation has become a common phenomenon through violation of basic rights including but not limited to food, water, residence, transportation, sanitation, weekend and recreation etc. Around 80% of the workers are forbidden to carry safe water inside the factory and even there are poor menstrual hygiene practices inside the factory due to a lack of sanitary napkin services where more than 61% of the workers have to purchase their own subsidized sanitary napkins or bring them from home as per the report of UNICEF (Children & Sector, n.d.). Besides, garment workers are often deprived of weekend facilities despite working long hours throughout the week which is in general around 8.9% with 100% deprivation of recreational facilities (Akter & Ahmed, 2018). According to a joint survey by the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling and the Microfinance Opportunities, 92% of workers who responded to a poll said their mode of transportation had not changed, indicating that only 4% of workers received transport facilities that during COVID-19 pandemic (New Age Bd, 2021). Additionally, 77% of workers have anaemia as a result of their bad eating habits, which directly affects line-level performance and results in sickness and absenteeism in the absence of a cafeteria and food supply inside the factory (Sun Business Network, 2022).

5. Conclusions

RMG Industry is a stepping stone that obtaining job opportunities mostly for females. Whereas the golden old working sector has come to a standstill, poor, uneducated rural females contribute in such a way that the sector has reached its peak nowadays. It is the blood-paid labour of female garment workers that has been paid today in the form of exported goods. We only look at the colourful

products produced by them avoiding their existence even. The brutal nature of the commoners as well as the employers who hire them treat them as a tool to use for their benefit.

Despite providing them with basic rights and proper respect, the employers themselves victimize them in a different, heinous way. Violation of labour rights especially against females in the disguise of authoritarian rule is a regular phenomenon here. This has negatively impacted the fall of female workers, with physical, mental, psychological, and economic breakdowns damaging women's empowerment. It has made female garment workers the worst sufferer of all. Though the male counterpart is replacing female workers in number, the production level is still far from the best. However, the biased support of training facilities for males in comparison with female garment workers has added fuel to the ongoing victimization process. The victimization of female garment workers is such a thorn in the side of women's empowerment that it would not only damage them personally but also their family lives and the steady development of Bangladesh.

As a result, to modernize them and safeguard both their future and that of the entire country, equal rights for women must be established and upheld with sufficient support. While there have been some initiatives to address this issue, such as the passing of laws and the creation of committees to look into and report violent acts, development has been uneven and insufficient. Government, factory owners, civil society organizations, and global brands must work together to address the underlying causes of violence against female employees if this problem is to be resolved. This entails making workplaces safe, offering instruction on workers' rights and obligations, and stepping up the enforcement of rules and laws that guard against the abuse and exploitation of workers.

Furthermore, it is critical to understand that workplace violence against women is both a violation of their human rights and a barrier to social and economic advancement. As a result, tackling this issue is not only morally necessary but also advantageous for all parties involved economically. It is time to take decisive action to solve this issue and provide a working environment where each employee may feel appreciated and protected.

6. References

- ActionAid. (2019). *ActionAid briefing paper: Sexual harassment and violence against garment workers in Bangladesh*. ActionAid. <https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/publications/ActionAid%20briefing%20paper%20on%20Bangladesh%20garment%20workers%20FINAL.pdf>
- AFWA, CENTRAL, GLJ, LIPS, & SLD. (2018). *Gender based violence in the H&M Garment Supply Chain. Development Synergy Institute in Bangladesh; CATU and CENTRAL in Cambodia; Society for Labour and Development in India; Sedane Labour Resource Centre/Lembaga Informasi Perburuhan in Indonesia; and Asia Floor Wage Alliance in Sri Lanka*. <https://www.globallaborjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/GBV-HM-May-2018.pdf>.
- Akhter, S., Rutherford, S., & Chu, C. (2019). Sufferings in silence: Violence against female workers in the ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh: A qualitative exploration. *Women's Health*, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745506519891302> PMID:31856698 PMCID:PMC6927197
- Akter, K., & Marx, S. (2021). *Break the silence: Stop the violence gender-based violence in the garment sector of Bangladesh: A study on cases, causes and cures*. BCWS FEMNET. https://bts.fandom.com/wiki/Break_The_Silence:_Docu-Series
- Akter, M., & Ahmed, M. K. (2018). *Nature of victimization of female garments workers: An empirical study in Dhaka. Labour, 21st Year*(2), 43-57.
- Akter, T., & Islam, S. M. D. (2022). *The RMG industry takes all the praise. But does it do enough for its workers?* [Press release]. <https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/rmg-industry-takes-all-praise-does-it-do-enough-its-workers-477962>
- Alamgir, H. (2019). *Health issues of RMG workers need attention*. The Daily Star. <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/human-rights/news/health-issues-rmg-workers-need-attention-1724074>
- APA. (2019). Discrimination: What it is, and how to cope. *American Psychological Association*. <https://www.apa.org/topics/racism-bias-discrimination/types-stress>
- Aquino, K., & Thau, S. (2009). Workplace victimization: Aggression from the target's perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 717-741. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163703> PMID:19035831
- Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). (2016). *Statistic and informatic division, Ministry of Planning of, and People's Republic Government of Bangladesh. Report on Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey 2015*.
- Barua, U., Wiersma, E., Billah, M., & Ansary, M. (2018). Fire evacuation safety in Bangladesh RMG factories: A comparison of standards and non-compliance issues of means of escape. *Safety in The Garment Industry, Five Years After Rana Plaza*, 78-88.

- BILS. (2015). Workplace Situation Report 2015. *Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies*.
- BSS News. (2021). *Garmentse narir jouno hoyrani bondhe dorker bebosthaponay narir songkha briddhi o sochetonota (Number of female worker representative in the administration need to be increased in order to stop harassment of female worker at the garments industry)_ Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS)* [Press release]. <https://wp.bssnews.net/bangla/?p=354779>
- Cambridge Business English Dictionary. (n.d.). *Promotion meaning, definition in Cambridge English Dictionary*. Cambridge Business English Dictionary. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/promotion>.
- Centre for Entrepreneurship Development, BRAC University (CED-BRACU). (2022). *Mapped in Bangladesh*. <https://map.rmg.org.bd/?district=Dhaka>.
- Children, U., & Sector, R. G. (n.d.). *Better business for children understanding children's rights and the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh*.
- Choudhury, S., & Rahman, M. H. (2017). Labor unrest in the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh: Causes and consequences. *European Scientific Journal*, 13(34), Article 87. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n34p87>
- Chowdhury, S. (2019). Study of deprivation on female garments workers in Bangladesh: A case study of Chittagong City Corporation. *Social Change*, 9(1), 14-28.
- Daher, M. (2003). World report on violence and health. *Journal Medical Libanais*, 51(2), 59-63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf03405037>
- Dimadura, S. (2020). *Fashion victims: Gender based violence in garment industry*. Changemakr.Asia. <https://changemakr.asia/fashion-victims-gender-based-violence-in-fashion-industry/>
- Dosao, M. (2020). *Lesson 1: Gender based violence definitions, forms, settings, causes and consequences* [Video]. YouTube. ActionAID International the Gambia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsMIM-xyf5k&t=24s>
- EEOC. (1990). *Policy guidance on current issues of sexual harassment*. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/policy-guidance-current-issues-sexual-harassment>
- EIGE. (2017). Psychological violence. *European Institute for Gender Equality*. EIGE. <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1334>
- Fitch, T. J., Moran, J., Villanueva, G., Sagiraju, H. K. R., Quadir, M. M., & Alamgir, H. (2017). Prevalence and risk factors of depression among garment workers in Bangladesh. *The International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 63(3), 244-254. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764017695576>
- Foxvog, L., Gearhart, J., Parker, L., Vanpeperstraete, B., & Zeldenrust, I. (2013). Still waiting: Six months after history's deadliest apparel industry disaster, workers continue to fight for reparations. *Business and Human Rights Resource Centre*.
- Fear Wear Foundation. (2013). *Standing firm against factory floor. Preventing violence against women garment workers in Bangladesh and India*. Fair Wear Foundation. <https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/StandingFirmReportFWF2013.pdf>
- Fear Wear Foundation. (2018). *Bangladesh country study 2018*. Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Government of Netherlands. Amsterdam, The Netherlands. <https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Fair-Wear-country-study-Bangladesh-2018-new.pdf>
- Global People Strategist. (2018). *Gender-based abuse against garment workers in Asia*. Global People Strategist.
- Haque, A. K. E., & Bari, E. (2021). *A survey report on the garment workers of Bangladesh*. Asian Center for Development. <https://acdonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ACD-Report-on-garment-workers2020.pdf>
- Haque, M. F., Sarker, M. A. R., Rahman, M. S., & Rakibuddin, M. (2020). Discrimination of women at RMG Sector in Bangladesh. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1991.03.01.152>
- Hasan, K., & Islam, A. (2015). A study on the major causes of labour unrest and its effect on the RMG sector of Bangladesh. *International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research*, 6(11), 199-212.
- Hasan, T. M. (2022). *A never-ending tragedy*. The Dhaka Tribune. <https://www.dhakatribune.com/op-ed/2022/05/06/a-never-ending-tragedy>
- Hassan, F. M. (2021). *Bangladesh: Toward better governance in the ready-made-garment sector*. The Asia Foundation. <https://asiafoundation.org/2021/06/09/bangladesh-toward-better-governance-in-the-ready-made-garment-sector/>
- Hasan, M. M. (2017). Deadly incidents in Bangladeshi apparel industry and illustrating the causes and effects of these incidents. *Journal of Finance and Accounting*, 5(5), 193. <https://doi.org/10.11648/J.FA.20170505.13>
- Hoskins, T. (2022). *Violence against women garment workers* [Press release]. <https://www.newagebd.net/article/163486/violence-against-women-garment-workers>
- ILO (International Labour Organization). (2018). Ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, Vol (1). *International Labour Conference*, (pp. 1-127).
- Islam, M. S., Adnan, A., & Rakib, A. (2016). Ready-made garments sector of Bangladesh: Its growth, contribution and challenges. *Journal of Asian Development Studies*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.17265/2328-7144/2019.01.004>
- Islam, N. (n.d.). *RMG workers in Bangladesh: Violation of the rights or overlooking the law?* London College of Legal

- Studies (South). <https://lcls-south.com/rmg-workers-in-bangladeshviolation-of-the-rights-or-overlooking-the-law/>
- Islam, S. (2016). Feminization of employment and gender inequality of Bangladesh labour market: The case of garment industries. *Developing Country Studies*, 6(2), 157-168.
- Islam, M. M. (2018). *Workers rights and gender based violence in the RMG and TU capacity to deal with these*. <http://bilsbd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Workers-Rights-Gender-Based-Violence-in-the-RMG-and-TU-Capacity-to-Deal-with-These-Final-Draft.pdf>.
- Jabbar, J. S. (2022). *Protecting human rights at the workplace: Observations for the RMG industry* [Press release]. <https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2022/01/24/protecting-human-rights-at-the-workplace-observations-for-the-rmg-industry>
- Jugantor. (2018). *Poshak karkhanay nari shramikder voyaboho nirjaton*. Jugantor. <https://www.jugantor.com/national/22625/পোশাক-কারখানায়-নারী-শ্রমিকদের-ভয়াবহ-নির্যাতন>
- Kanya, P. (2021). *Day care centres inside RMG factories: A blessing for female workers* [Press release]. <https://www.tbsnews.net/feature/panorama/day-care-centres-inside-rmg-factories-blessing-female-workers-230938>
- Kanya, P. (2022). *Why are female workers disappearing from our RMG factories?* [Press release]. <https://www.tbsnews.net/features/panorama/why-are-female-workers-disappearing-our-rmg-factories-389102>
- Karmakar, S. (2021). *Many garment factories yet to pay workers' wages* [Press release]. <https://en.prothomalo.com/business/local/many-garment-factories-yet-to-pay-workers-wages>
- Karmen, A. (2015). *Crime victims: An introduction to victimology* (9th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Khan, N. R., Dipti, T. R., Ferdousi, S. K., Hossain, M. Z., Ferdousi, S., Sony, S. A., Zafrin, N., Paul, N., & Islam, M. S. (2016). Occupational health hazards among workers of garment factories in Dhaka City, Bangladesh. *Journal of Dhaka Medical College*, 24(1), 36-43. <https://doi.org/10.3329/jdmc.v24i1.29560>
- Lamertz, K., & Aquino, K. (2004). Social power, social status and perceptual similarity of workplace victimization: A social network analysis of stratification. *Human Relations*, 57(7), 795-822. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726704045766>
- Macchiavello, R., Menzel, A., Rabbani, A., & Woodruff, C. (2020). Challenges of change: An experiment promoting women to managerial roles in the bangladeshi garment sector (No. w27606). *National Bureau of Economic Research*. https://chriswoodruff.qeh.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Challenges-of-Change_July2020.pdf
- Malik, A. (2019). *Daycares matter* [Press release]. <https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/news/daycares-matter-1829551>
- Matsuura, A., & Teng, C. (2020). Understanding the gender composition and experience of Ready-Made Garment (RMG) workers in Bangladesh. *International Labour Organization*. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/asia/ro-bangkok/ilodhaka/documents/publication/wcms_754669.pdf
- Mim, Z. I. (2021). *Only about 1% RMG workers have health insurance coverage* [Press release]. <https://www.textiletoday.com.bd/1-rmg-workers-health-insurance-coverage/>
- Morris, J., & Rickard, S. (2019). *Violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, in garment factories and supply chains*. UK Aid and Work and Opportunities for Women.
- Munni, M. (2020). *Fast fashion largely responsible for gender violence: Study* [Press release]. <https://www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/fast-fashion-largely-responsible-for-gender-violence-study-1606365203>
- Munni, M. (2022). *Women in RMG sector get lower wages than men* [Press release]. <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/women-in-rmg-sector-get-lower-wages-than-men-1656383541>
- New Age Bd. (2021). *4pc RMG workers get transport facility during restrictions: Survey* [Press release]. <https://www.newagebd.net/article/139960/4pc-rmg-workers-get-transport-facility-during-restrictions-survey>
- Osmani, N. M., & Hossen, B. (2018). Empowering women in Bangladesh: A study on the problems of working women in garments industries. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 57(3), 277-289.
- Papon, A. I., Nabi, M. N., & Parvin, M. (2017). Impacts of political instability on garments productions and productivity: A study on a group of textile industries in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research*, 8(4), 535-551. <https://doi.org/10.14299/ijser.2017.04.003>
- Persson, K. J., Hyman, J., Oke, F., Chowdhury, S. R., Rukmini, Sophorn, Y., Kashyap, A., Sokha, C., Bhattacharjee, A., Sen, kalyani M., & Chakry, S. (2020). *Gender-based violence in garment supply chains: An Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA) documentary* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4dVscid4lY>
- Plan International. (September 2020). *Cashing in: The business case for women's empowerment in the garment industry*. Plan International in Asia. Thailand.
- Prothom Alo. (2021). *Many RMG workers yet to receive wages and bonus* [Press release]. <https://en.prothomalo.com/business/local/many-rmg-workers-yet-to-receive-wages-and-bonus>
- Rahman, S., Yesmen, K., & Ahmed, R. (2020). Working environment of the female garments workers in Bangladesh:

- An observation. *The Journal of Empowerment Women of Women*, 25, 1-14.
- Rashid, H. R. S. (2018). *Bangladeshe nari Shramikder voyaboho chitra* – DW [Press release].
- Refayet, M. U. (2021). *200 RMG factories yet to pay salary, bonus* [Press release]. <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/200-rmg-factories-yet-pay-salary-bonus-2092277>
- RMG Bangladesh. (2020). *The global impact of delayed payments and factory closures for garment makers*. RMG Bangladesh. <https://rmgbd.net/2020/06/the-global-impact-of-delayed-payments-and-factory-closures-for-garment-makers/>
- Sohani, N. Z., Faruquee, M. H., Bashar, M. A., & Yasmin, R. (2011). Pattern of workplace violence against female garment worker in selected areas of Dhaka city nurses occupational health and safety view project occupational health and safety view project. *SUB Journal of Public Health*.
- Soth, K. (2019). *Cambodia: A National Social Security Fund working group finds the smell of engine oil as a root cause of mass fainting at a garment factory* - Business & Human Rights Resource Centre. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre. <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/cambodia-a-national-social-security-fund-working-group-finds-the-smell-of-engine-oil-as-a-root-cause-of-mass-fainting-at-a-garment-factory/>
- Stuart, G. (2022). *Excess work hours, Part One* - GWD. Global Worker Diaries. <https://workerdiaries.org/excess-work-hours-part-one/>
- Sun Business Network. (2022). *Better nutrition for better productivity and efficiency in the RMG sector*. Sun Business Network. <https://sunbusinessnetwork.org/better-nutrition-for-better-productivity-and-efficiency-in-the-rmg-sector/>
- Svarer, C., Meiers, R., & Rothmeier, B. (2017). *Empowering female workers in the apparel industry about this report*. https://www.bsr.org/reports/BSR_Empowering_Female_Workers_in_the_Apparel_Industry.pdf
- The Business Standard. (2022). *Inflation gobbles up overtime income of RMG workers: Sanem survey* [Press release]. <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/inflation-gobbles-overtime-income-rmg-workers-sanem-survey-423154>
- The Business Inspection. (2022). *Factors affecting lack of woman leadership in RMG industry of Bangladesh*. The Business Inspection. <https://businessinspection.com.bd/lack-of-women-leadership-in-rmg/>
- The Financial Express. (2019). *21pc RMG workers say they don't get sick leave: Report* [Press release]. <https://www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/21pc-rmg-workers-say-they-dont-get-sick-leave-report-1561523473>
- The Financial Express. (2021). *Over 93pc RMG workers faced up to 65pc wage cuts in pandemic: Survey* [Press release]. <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/over-93pc-rmg-workers-faced-up-to-65pc-wage-cuts-in-pandemic-survey-1624266324>
- Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Verbal abuse Definition and Meaning* - In Merriam- Webster Dictionary. [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/verbal abuse](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/verbal%20abuse)
- WHO. (2021). *Violence against women*. WHO. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>
- Zalta, N. E. (2020). *Rights (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy)*. The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights/>
- Zaman, F. (2020). *The delusion of women empowerment in the ready-made garments industry of Bangladesh*. Voice of International Affairs. <https://internationalaffairsbd.com/the-delusion-of-women-empowerment-in-the-ready-made-garments-industry-of-bangladesh/>