

Factors Related to Workers' Engagement in Readymade Garment Industry of Bangladesh

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Abstract

Workers' engagement refers to the organizational conditions where all the members of an organization are committed to their organization's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success with an enhanced sense of their own well-being (Little & Little, 2006). Positive engagement is expected by any organization because it makes workers well connected with their jobs, loyal, and increase willing to put extra effort to do their jobs just to accomplish their goals in the company. Readymade garment (RMG) industry of Bangladesh is the main earner of foreign currency that consists of more than 75% of the country's export earnings. But the workers of this industry are often found unengaged at their work due to the ill behavior of their supervisors, poor working conditions, lack of organization incentives, and the absence of motivational policies of the companies. Hence, this study aims at identifying the workers' engagement factors of RMG industry of Bangladesh. This study interviewed 319 RMG workers from ten leading garment companies. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Results show that the RMG workers' engagement factors are: feeling the company as a great company, feeling proud and recommend others, access to learning and good career opportunity, knowing the development of the company, quality supervision and recognition for good jobs done, and manager cares the workers. This study suggests that the RMG policymakers should focus more on the supervision styles of the managers and appreciating policy of the companies that can help improving the engagement level of the workers in this industry of Bangladesh.

Keywords: RMG Industry, Positive Engagement, Quality Supervision, Inferential Statistics, Worker Access to Learning and Good Career Opportunity

1. Background

There is a paramount importance of workers' engagement in a manufacturing concern as it is directly connected with the performance of that organization. Engagement is rather more important where the company is labor-intensive in nature. When workers are engaged at work, it can help organization making better decisions. It can also outperform the competition of the company. It is also perceived that for the growth and innovation of the company, engagement is the key. Workers' engagement is twofold such as, engagement with the organization and engagement with the direct supervisors. When the workers are engaged with the organization, it increases the confidence level of the workers and as a result an environment of trust and fairness is developed. Direct supervisor is another factor of workers' engagement in the company. Issues related to feeling valued, being treated fairly, receiving feedback and direction, and having a strong working relationship between worker and manager based on mutual respect are achieved when supervisors have good relationships with their subordinates¹. This all can ensure workers' engagement at work.

Ready Made Garments (RMG) industry of Bangladesh has been playing a very important role for the economic development of the country that has started its journey in 1980s (Yunus, M., & Yamagata, T. 2012). It is the most important foreign currency earners of Bangladesh. It is the multi-billion-dollar earning business and export industry of Bangladesh. Most of the workers, about 90%, working in this sector are women who come from rural areas of Bangladesh (Islam, Ghosh, Islam, Salam, Khosru, & Al Masud, 2017). If there were no opportunity of these rural women for working in RMG industry they would have been working as maid servants. Hence, readymade garment industry of Bangladesh has not only increased the foreign earnings of the country but also it has contributed to the development of social and economic status of about 40 million rural female workers of Bangladesh. But the engagement at work of these workers in these companies determines the performance of the industry.

Therefore, the broad objective of this study is to identify the worker engagement factors of readymade garment industry of Bangladesh. The specific objectives are: (i) to identify the engagement factors of garment workers in Bangladesh (ii) to identify the significant engagement factors of readymade garment workers in Bangladesh.

2. Research Methods

This study was conducted to identify the factors related to the engagement of readymade garment workers at work in Bangladesh. Both primary and secondary data were used to conduct this study. Primary data were collected from the different workers of departments of garment companies such as, cutting, sewing, finishing and packaging. The secondary data were collected from the books, magazines, and journals.

2.1 Sample Design and Determination of Sample Size

In the readymade garment industry of Bangladesh, there are about 50 million workers working in about 5000 RMG companies. Hence, the sample size of this study was determined by using the following formula suggested by Yamane (1967).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision. For this study, level of precision is presumed as 0.07 and the population size is 50 million. Putting these values in the above equation, the required number of sample size becomes approximately 204. This study interviewed 219 garment workers from 10 companies under study. This figure is well above the critical sample size of 204 for employing multivariate analysis (Hair et al., 1998).

2.2 Questionnaire Design

Through literature review, the questionnaire related to the workers' engagement was developed (Appendix 1). Responses to all the statements in the questionnaire were measured on a five-point scale ranging from 1 to 5 with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree. The collected data were statistically processed subsequently to come to the useful findings.

¹ <https://www.custominsight.com/employee-engagement-survey/what-is-employee-engagement.asp>

2.3 Data Collection & Analysis

Primary data of this study were collected and used for the purpose of identifying the workers’ engagement factors of readymade garment industry of Bangladesh. The survey was conducted among the 219 readymade garment workers from 10 companies (Table 1).

Table 1 Distribution of the Respondent RMG Workers

Sl. No.	Type of Garment Companies	Average Number of Workers Working	Number of Samples Taken
1.	Large Companies	More than 10,000 Workers	99
2.	Medium Companies	5000 to 10,000 Workers	105
3.	Small Companies	Below 5000 Workers	115
Total			319

The survey was conducted in 2019. The interviewers were properly trained on the items included in the questionnaire for data collection before commencing the interview. Along with descriptive statistics², inferential statistical³ techniques such as, Factor Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to analyze the data. A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with an Orthogonal Rotation (Varimax)⁴ using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was performed on the survey data. Multiple Regression Analysis⁵ such as, Multiple Regression was conducted by using SPSS to identify the relationships between the dependent and independent variables and the significant factors.

3. Analysis and Interpretations

This part of the study explains the results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and the results of Multiple Regression Analysis of workers’ engagement variables in readymade garment industry of Bangladesh.

3.1 Results of Factor Analysis

The study identified the workers’ engagement of readymade garment industry of Bangladesh. Factor analysis results show that the communalities of the variables concerning workers’ engagement are very high indicating that the data set has higher level of relationships among them (Table 2).

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² Descriptive statistics includes statistical procedures that we use to describe the population we are studying. The data could be collected from either a sample or a population, but the results help us organize and describe data. Descriptive statistics can only be used to describe the group that is being studying. That is, the results cannot be generalized to any larger group.

³ Inferential statistics is concerned with making predictions or inferences about a population from observations and analyses of a sample. That is, we can take the results of an analysis using a sample and can generalize it to the larger population that the sample represents.

⁴ Varimax rotation is an orthogonal rotation of the factor axes to maximize the variance of the squared loadings of a factor (column) on all the variables (rows) in a factor matrix, which has the effect of differentiating the original variables by extracted factor. Each factor will tend to have either large or small loadings of any particular variable. A varimax solution yields results which make it as easy as possible to identify each variable with a single factor. This is the most common rotation option.

⁵ In statistics, regression analysis is a statistical process for estimating the relationships among variables. It includes many techniques for modeling and analyzing several variables, when the focus is on the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. More specifically, regression analysis helps one understand how the typical value of the dependent variable (or 'Criterion Variable') changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed.

Table 2 Communalities of the Engagement Variables

Variables	Extraction
1. I am proud to work for my company	.786
2. I would recommend Company as a great place to work	.773
3. I rarely think about looking for a job at another company	.846
4. I see myself still working at this company in two years' time	.769
5. My Company motivates me to go beyond what I would in a similar role elsewhere	.573
6. The leaders at company keep people informed about what is happening	.734
7. My manager is a great role model for workers	.841
8. The leaders at this company have communicated a vision that motivates me	.786
9. I have access to the things I need to do my job well	.799
10. I have access to the learning and development I need to do my job well	.673
11. Most of the systems and processes here support us getting our work done effectively	.836
12. I know what I need to do to be successful in my role	.510
13. I receive appropriate recognition when I do good work	.800
14. Day-to-day decisions here demonstrate that quality and improvement are top priorities	.776
15. My manager (or someone in management) has shown a genuine interest in my career aspirations	.852
16. I believe there are good career opportunities for me at this company	.657
17. This is a great company for me to make a contribution to my development	.772

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Factors analysis results also show that there are six factors related to the workers' engagement in readymade garment industry of Bangladesh. The factors are: (i) feel the company as a great company, (ii) feel proud and recommend others, (iii) access to learning and good career opportunity, (iv) workers know the development of the company, (v) good supervision and recognition for good job, and (vi) manager cares the workers (Table 3). The most important factor is feel the company as a great company (22.59%) followed by feel proud and recommend others to work here (16.41%), access to learning and development and good career opportunity (12.08%), know the development of the company (9.21%), good supervision and recognition for good jobs done (8.72) and manager cares the workers (6.18%)

Table 3 Workers' Engagement Factors

Engagement Factors	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1. Feel the Company as a Great Company	3.840	22.587	22.587
2. Feel Proud and Recommend Others	2.790	16.410	38.997
3. Access to Learning and Good Career Opportunity	2.054	12.084	51.081
4. Workers Know the Development of the Company	1.565	9.208	60.289
5. Good Supervision and Recognition for Good Job	1.482	8.719	69.009
6. Manager Cares the Workers	1.050	6.179	75.187

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4 shows the rotated component matrix of the workers’ engagement factors of the RMG industry. It shows that the factor named feel the company as a great company is constituted with four variables and the variables have higher level of factor loadings indicating that the variables have higher level of correlations with the factor. The second factor is constituted with three variables, third factor is formed with three variables, the fourth factor is constituted with three variables, fifth factor is formed with two variables and the sixth factor is formed with the two variables.

Table 4 Rotated Component Matrix^a

Variables	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Factor 1 Feel the Company as a Great Company</i>						
This is a great company for me to make a contribution to my development	.821					
I have access to the things I need to do my job well	.791					
I see myself still working at this company in two years’ time	-.703					
My Company motivates me to go beyond what I would in a similar role elsewhere	.603					
<i>Factor 2 Feel Proud and Recommend Others</i>						
I am proud to work for my company		.868				
I would recommend other company as a great place to work		.757				
The leaders at the company have communicated a vision that motivates me		.740				
<i>Factor 3 Access to Learning and Good Career Opportunity</i>						
I have access to the learning and development I need to do my job well			-.783			
I believe there are good career opportunities for me at this company			.748			
Day-to-day decisions here demonstrate that quality and improvement are top priorities			.747			
<i>Factor 4 Workers Know the Development of the Company</i>						
The leaders at this company keep people informed about what is happening				.835		
Most of the systems and processes here support us getting our work done effectively				.666		
I know what I need to do to be successful in my role				-.643		
<i>Factor 5 Good Supervision and Recognition for Good Job</i>						
My manager is a great role model for workers					-.881	
I receive appropriate recognition when I do good work					.634	
<i>Factor 6 Manager Cares the Workers</i>						
My manager (or someone in management) has shown a genuine interest in my career aspirations						.703
I rarely think about looking for a job at another company						-.641

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.

3.2 Results of Regression Analysis

The results of regression analysis show that all the six engagement factors can explain the dependent variable by 29% (R Square) indicating that the model is important (Table 5). This study covered only 29% of the factors that have influence on workers’ engagement in readymade garment industry of Bangladesh. The other factors, which were not covered in this study, might be concerned with the socioeconomic and political factors of Bangladesh.

Table 5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.538 ^a	.290	.276	.468

a. Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) shows that five factors are significantly related to the overall workers’ engagement of readymade garment companies of Bangladesh (Table 6).

Table 6 ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	27.802	6	4.634	21.193	.000 ^a
Residual	68.217	312	.219		
Total	96.019	318			

a. Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1

b. Dependent Variable: Considering all the factors mentioned above, I like my job very much and I am proud of my job.

The individual factor relationships with the overall workers’ engagement show that five factors such as, feel the company as a great company, feel proud and recommend others, access to learning and good career opportunity, workers know the development of the company, good supervision and recognition for good job are significantly related to the overall engagement of the garment workers in Bangladesh (Table 7). This means, if there is a change of each of these factors there will be a significant change in the overall engagement of the workers. Factor like ‘manager cares the workers’ was found not significant in this study. The reason can be attributed by the expectation of the garment workers to the managers. In RMG companies of Bangladesh, the managers’ behavior is unfair and hence workers do not expect good behavior from them.

Table 7 Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.392	.026		167.755	.000
<i>Feel the Company as a Great Company</i>	.057	.026	.104	2.189	.029
<i>Feel Proud and Recommend Others</i>	.165	.026	.301	6.311	.000
<i>Access to Learning and Good Career Opportunity</i>	.134	.026	.243	5.096	.000
<i>Workers Know the Development of the Company</i>	-.154	.026	-.280	-5.873	.000
<i>Good Supervision and Recognition for Good Job</i>	.122	.026	.222	4.645	.000
<i>Manager Cares the Workers</i>	.018	.026	.033	.699	.485

a. Dependent Variable: Considering all the factors mentioned above, I like my job very much and I am proud of my job.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The objective of this study was to identify the workers' engagement factors of readymade garment industry in Bangladesh. Factor analysis identified six factors related to the workers' engagement in this important industry of Bangladesh. The workers' engagement factors are: feel the company as a great company, feel proud be a member of this company and recommend others, have access to learning and good career opportunity, know the development of the company, good supervision and recognition for good job, and manager cares the workers. The regression analysis shows that five factors are important for workers' engagement in readymade garment industry of Bangladesh. The individual factor relationships with the overall workers' engagement show that the factors such as, feel the company as a great company, feel proud and recommend others, access to learning and good career opportunity, workers know the development of the company, good supervision and recognition for good job are significantly related to the overall engagement of the garment workers in Bangladesh. Hence, if the policymakers focus on these engagement factors there will be the increase of company performance of this important industrial sector of Bangladesh. However, there is an ample scope to conduct further study by taking more sample workers into account for more precise results in future in this regard.

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7. Appendix

Appendix 1 Review Literatures on Workers' Engagement

	Worker engagement	Worker performance	Training & Development	Compensation	Job Security	Supervisor Relations	Promotion Opportunity	Team and co-worker relationship	Working environment	HR practice	Work pressure	Labour union
Ahmed, S., Ahmad, F. B., & Joarder, M. H. R. (2016).	√	√	√	√	√	√	√					
Anitha, J. (2014)	√	√						√	√	√		
Mmbusa, M. I. & David Kiiru. (2019).				√			√		√	√	√	
Alam, M. N., Azim, M. T., & Alias, R. B. (2017).			√	√					√		√	
Ratnawat, R. G., &Jha, P. C. (2014)							√		√		√	
Bhuiyan, Z. A. (2012).				√	√							
Khatun, R., & Shamsuzzaman, M. (2017).				√					√	√		
Hossan, C.G., Sarker, M.A.R. and Afroze, R., 2012.						√		√	√	√	√	√
Bhuiyan, M.A.H., 2010						√			√			√
Akterujjaman, S.M. and Ahmad, M.H., 2016			√	√					√		√	
Islam, M., Mustafi, M. and Islam, N., 2016				√		√			√		√	
Mukul, A.Z.A., Rayhan, S.J., Hoque, F. and Islam, F., 2013			√	√	√							
Akter, A., Wali, S.B., Kamal, M.R., Mukul, A.Z.A. and Mahmuda, M., 2017				√	√				√		√	