Enhancing Social Compliance in Garments Factories of Bangladesh: Impact of Social Dialogue

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ABSTRACT

The ready-made garment (RMG) industry is number one foreign currencies earning source of Bangladesh. Now this sector is facing a lot of challenges. Social compliance is one of the most import problems in this sector. Present study has conducted to examine the status of social compliance in garments factories in Bangladesh, to assess the extent of practice of social dialogue approach to enhance the social compliance problems in factories and to evaluate the challenges of implementing social compliance in garment factory. The study was conducted at Dhaka city in Bangladesh. The study was survey type. Total 277 respondents were selected among them respondents 98 were Managers, 80 were Welfare Officers and 99 were Supervisors. From the result it was found that working condition is congenial more or less for employee at all level and work related Job stress is less due to social dialogue approach. Supervisors provide necessary support to the worker when needed except some exceptions. In some cases jobs are not clearly defined and necessary skills & knowledge is not provided. In the recent years it is found that due to social dialogue approaches, opinion of employees is given due respect and tnter-personal conflict and inter departmental conflict is lesser than previous time. Hazard Identification & risk assessments processes are in practice such as fire drill, evacuation drill and all relevant assignment, are in place and up-to-date. More or less all employees are up-to-date with the occupational Health and Safety Act and applicable regulations. Upward and downward communication is more or less smooth and easy. Grievance handling process is in practice and employees are aware about that. From the result it was also found that it is less challenging to foster complying buyers and applicable code of conduct. Different policy and procedures are reviewed to align with updated code of conduct. Garments owners are motivated without providing compliances buyers will not buy their products from their factories or companies. For this reason welfare activities are increasing substantially and social dialogue creates learning environment in the organization. From the above results in can be said that the ready-made garment owners should realize that the international associations of buyers are aware regarding the compliance issues so the ready-made garment owners should become more cautious regarding the compliance issues otherwise the orders from the international renowned buyers will reduce which will hamper the export revenue. Government should come forward in this concern as government gets more foreign exchange from this sector. Government is providing all kinds of supports this support should be increased.

INTRODUCTION

The ready-made garment (RMG) industry of Bangladesh became a prominent player in the economy within a short period of time. The industry has contributed to export earnings, foreign exchange earnings, employment creation, poverty alleviation and the empowerment of women. The export-quota system and the availability of cheap labour are the two main reasons behind the success of the industry. In order to export readymade garments, it is not only the quality parameters which are important towards acceptance of the product as per the intended end use, but also the working environment in which the garments are to be produced, is equally important so that sweatshop concept is totally taken care of and the code of conduct must be stretched towards achieving the objectives of social compliance issues (Deborah Leipziger May 2001).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Major Objective:
- To see the impact of social dialogue in enhancing social compliance in garments factories in Bangladesh.

Specific Objectives:
1. To examine the status of social compliance in garments factories in Bangladesh
2. To assess the extent of practice of social dialogue approach to enhance the social compliance problems in factories
3. To evaluate the challenges of implementing social compliance in garment factory.

METHODOLOGY:
The research methodology of the study was explanatory in nature and was based on documentary analysis. In this research, secondary data were collected.

Sources of Secondary Data
To conduct this research, secondary data were also collected from various sources including authentic writings, books, thesis, articles, documents etc. of eminent authors, journals, statistical reviews, academic papers, government documents, newspapers, magazines, souvenirs, published and unpublished research works, NGO reports, internet homepages etc. relevant to the main theme of the study.

The Study Area:
The study was conducted at Dhaka district which is the capital city of Bangladesh.

SAMPLING
Sampling Frame
The present research was conducted in twenty seven selected garment industries in Dhaka city. Before becoming familiar to the study area, we should have some idea. Industrial dispute, worker's dispute and measure the present industrial psychological condition of garment industry in Dhaka city. As most of the garment industries are situated in Dhaka, so 10 garment industries of Dhaka were selected as the study area for this research. We selected 10 garment industries where worker's disputes were observed. The surveyed garment factories are Beximco Fashion, DEPZ, Saver, Dhaka. I D S garments 367/1, Senpara, Parbata, Mirpur, Dhaka. Fairal Apparel (883rd floor) Shawrapara Bus Stand, Mirpur, Dhaka. Apollo Garments, Mirpur-12, Dhaka. Active Group, Active tower, plot-12, road-1, Mirpur-1/A, Dhaka. Pioneer Apparels, Mirpur-12, Dhaka1216. Soft Tex (Pvt.) Ltd. Unit-1, Mirpur-12, Dhaka. Azmat Group, Mirpur, -7, Dhaka-1216. Concord Garments, Mirpur-7, Dhaka. Sabab Fabrics Ltd., house 340, Road-5, Baridhara DOHS, Dhaka. So it is expected that the findings of the present study will represent the actual situation of worker's dispute in garment factories in Bangladesh.

Determining Sample size

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{\chi^2 NP\,(1\text{-}P)}{\{C^2\,(N\text{-}1) + \chi^2 P\,(1\text{-}P)\}}$$

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{(3.841)\,(987)\,(.5)\,(1\text{-}5)}{\{(.05)(.05)\,(987\text{-}1) + (3.841)\,(.5)\,(1\text{-}5)\}}$$

= 277

Where X^2 is the chi-square value for 1 degree freedom at some desired probability level: N is the population size (which gets more important as N gets smaller): P is the population parameter of a variable; and C is the confidence interval you choose.
Among the respondents 98 were Managers, 80 were Welfare Officers and 99 were Supervisors.

Key Informant
Having managerial position who has completed at least 01 to 03 years of his/her tenure in the same factory chosen as sample key informant.

Field Level Data Collection
Researcher collected data from different factories through personal visit.

Types and Sources of Information
Both primary and secondary source was used to collect information for this descriptive study. Following information/variables were considered to conduct this study which is illustrated below:

Data Collection Instruments
In conducting this exploratory study, interviewing method was used for data collection. A structured interview schedules comprising five scales has been developed for data collection. As it is very difficult to collect data from the factory level, only structured questionnaire has been adopted.

Along with interviewing techniques Focus Group Discussion technique was also used to approach the various issues to assess and to generalize the information within a very short period of time.
The following table gives a preliminary description of data collection techniques with respective tools.

Data Collection Techniques	Data Collection Tools
Interviewing	Questionnaire
Focus Group Discussion	Guide Line

Data Collection and Analysis
In the light of variables, data collection tools and techniques discussed above, a general format was prepared for gathering data related to impact of social dialogue in enhancing social compliance. For all the cases statistical software i.e. SPSS was used as data analysis tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
General Findings

Table-1: Working condition is congenial for employee at all level

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	20	7.2
Somewhat agree	82	29.6
Moderately agree	126	45.5
Agree	49	17.7
Total	277	100.0

Above table reveals that majority (63.2%) of the respondents agreed that the working condition is congenial for employee at all level. Only 7.2 percent respondents not at all agree with the statement where as the rest 29.6 percent somewhat agree with this point.

Table-2: Supervisors provide necessary support to the worker when needed

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	9	3.2
Somewhat agree	55	19.9

Moderately agree	114	41.2
Agree	99	35.7
Total	277	100.0

Supervisors play a key role in managing the result of the factory or organizations. It can be seen from the above table that 76.9 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that supervisors provide necessary feed back or support to the worker when needed. Only 3.2 percent respondents disagreed with the point and they think that supervisors do not provide any supports when needed and the rest 19.9% respondents somewhat agreed with the statement.

Table-3: Jobs are clearly defined and necessary skills & knowledge are provided

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	21	7.6
Somewhat agree	51	18.4
Moderately agree	129	46.6
Agree	76	27.4
Total	277	100.0

Performance of the employees depends how well an employee understand his job adequately. Which reduce the conflicting situation as well as it has an implication in productivity. Productivity has positive impact in implementation of social compliance. It is assumed that social dialogue approach directly and indirectly impacts in productivity that lead to a socially compliant factory. While asking the statement to the respondents, 74 percent of them agreed that their job is clearly defined and organization helps them to acquire the adequate knowledge and skills to perform their job properly. Only 7.6 percent of the respondents are not at all agreeing with this statement. The rest (18.4%) of the respondent are somewhat agreed that their jobs are clearly defined and necessary skills & knowledge are provided by the organization.

Table-4: Due to social dialogue approaches, opinion of employees is given due respect

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	20	7.2
Somewhat agree	70	25.3
Moderately agree	108	39.0
Agree	79	28.5
Total	277	100.0

Scope of sharing thought or opinion regarding employment issues, or conditions of employment, or grievances issues are really influential factor for an employee to remain contended on their performance. Every employee deserves respect from the employer regardless of position and rank. While asking the statement whether social dialogue approach could bring any changes in employers' attitude to show due respect to employees' opinion, majority (67.5%) of the respondents are of the view that employers' shows respect to the employees. Only 7.2 percent respondent not at all agree with the statement and the rest (25.3%) somewhat agree with the statement.

Table-5: Inter-personal conflict is lesser than previous time

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	18	6.5
Somewhat agree	59	21.3
Moderately agree	123	44.4
Agree	77	27.8
Total	277	100.0

Inter-personal conflict has effect on organizational performance. It has also direct impact on uplifting an organization at socially compliant one. It is assumed that social dialogue approach will reduce interpersonal conflict.

Majority of the respondent (72.2%) believed that inter departmental and inter-personal conflict is lesser than previous time, and only 6.5 percent respondent not at all agree with the status. The rest 21.3 percent also somewhat agree that conflict is less than previous time.

Table-6: Inter departmental conflict is lesser than previous time

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	26	9.4
Somewhat agree	73	26.4
Moderately agree	98	35.4
Agree	80	28.9
Total	277	100.0

Inter departmental conflict has effect on organizational performance. It has also direct impact on uplifting an organization at socially compliant one. It is assumed that social dialogue approach will reduce departmental conflict. Majority of the respondent (64.3%) believed that inter departmental conflict is less than previous time, and only 9.4 percent respondent not at all agree with the status. The rest 26.4 percent also somewhat agreed that inter departmental conflict is less than previous time.

Table-7: Work related Job stress is less due to social dialogue approach

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	28	10.1
Somewhat agree	64	23.1
Moderately agree	109	39.4
Agree	76	27.4
Total	277	100.0

From the above table it can be seen that majority (66.8%) of the respondents are of the opinion that work-related job stress is lesser than any other time. Only 10.1 percent of the respondents are not at all agreeing with the statement ($p < .007$).

Table-8: Social audit is not a challenge anymore

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	21	7.6
Somewhat agree	55	19.9
Moderately agree	98	35.4
Agree	103	37.2
Total	277	100.0

Social audit is a phobia for all organization. The reasons are quite many but all the export-oriented factories are bound to encounter social audit for the business. They do not have any other alternative. After introducing the social dialogue approach, it is not a challenge any more, as the coordination; cooperative has increased due to social dialogue approach. Social audit is a common part of social compliance implementation. A significant number of the respondents (72.6%) are of the area of the opinion that social audit is not a challenge anymore. Only 7.6 percent respondents are not in favour of the statement ($p < .010$)

Table-9: Fire drill, evacuation drill and all relevant assignment, are in place and up-to-date

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	23	8.3
Somewhat agree	83	30.0

Moderately agree	96	34.7
Agree	75	27.1
Total	277	100.0

It has been revealed that 61.8 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that fire drill, evacuation drill and all relevant assignment, are in place and up-to-date.

Table-10: Hazard Identification & risk assessments processes are in practice

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	41	14.8
Somewhat agree	61	22.0
Moderately agree	101	36.5
Agree	74	26.7
Total	277	100.0

In order to maintain a safety of physical environment in an establishment is very important. Hazard identification and risk assessment processes are important for an establishment. A total of 175 respondents (63.2%) are of the opinion that hazard identification and risk assessment process are in practice. Surprisingly 14.8 percent are of the opinion that they do not agree with the statement.

Table-11: All employees are up-to-date with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and applicable regulations

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	37	13.4
Somewhat agree	61	22.0
Moderately agree	98	35.4
Agree	81	29.2
Total	277	100.0

Out of 277 respondents, 179 respondents (64.6%) believe that knowledge level of employees regarding occupational health and safety regulations are up to date. Only 13.4 percent not at all agree with the statement (p< .012)

Table-12: Upward communication is smooth and easy

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	23	8.3
Somewhat agree	59	21.3
Moderately agree	110	39.7
Agree	85	30.7
Total	277	100.0

In organizations, communication (roughly, the transference of information from sender to receiver and the meaning inferred from that information) from lower to higher members in the hierarchy is vital. The extent to which accurate information is passed during superior-subordinate interactions has implications not only for the attitudes and satisfaction of the sender and receiver but also for organizational decision-making, performance, etc. Certainly, examples of problems with information exchange in upward transmission are easy to find. However, the identification of antecedents of poor information transmission upward is more difficult than merely pointing out their existence. In this study it has been found that 70.4 percent of the respondents agreed that upward communication is smooth and easy and it is the affect of social dialogue that is leading to compliant factory. Only 8.3 percent not at all agreed that upward communication is smooth.

Table-13: Downward communication is well accepted by the employees

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	23	8.3
Somewhat agree	65	23.5
Moderately agree	117	42.2
Agree	72	26.0
Total	277	100.0

Downward communication occurs when messages and orders are sent from the top of an organization down through to the lower levels of the organization. Advantages of downward communication include organizational discipline, some efficiencies, goal explanation and ease of delegation. It has been revealed from the above table that, 68.2 percent of the respondents of the study agreed that downward communication is well accepted by the employees. Likewise upward communication, a similar number of respondents do not agree with the statement.

Table-14: Grievance handling process is in practice and employees are aware about that.

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	28	10.1
Somewhat agree	79	28.5
Moderately agree	100	36.1
Agree	70	25.3
Total	277	100.0

Employee grievance may be resulted either from management policies, or working conditions of the organization or personality traits of employees. These are the primary forces that give impetus to the emergence of grievance in the actual work floor. A firm can hardly operate without the influence of grievance. Hence, handling grievance through appropriate procedures plays a key role in the settlement of management's mistakes and weakness. If grievances are handled with a proper care and attention, they will introduce positive changes in the organization, thereby enhancing social compliance, organizational productivity and employee satisfaction.

With a view to reveal the grievance redressal system of the factory, respondents were asked whether they agree that employees are aware about that, and 61.4 percent agreed that a grievance redressal system is in existence and functioning properly. A quite significant number (11.9%) of the respondent not at all agreed that grievance handling procedures are in existence.

Table-15: Result based feedback mechanism is in place

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	33	11.9
Somewhat agree	56	20.2
Moderately agree	115	41.5
Agree	73	26.4
Total	277	100.0

Effective feedback is critical to the success of each employee, team and company. It motivates employees to improve their job performance by enhancing ability, encouraging effort, and acknowledging results. If included in a managerial strategy and given consistently, effective feedback can reduce employee mistakes, enhance performance and increase efficiency within the workplace. It is therefore critical that managers seeking to increase productivity and reduce costs provide effective feedback to their employees.

From the above table it can be seen that 67.9 percent of the respondents believed that result based feedback mechanism is in place at factory level where social dialogue approaches were adopted. A total of 56 respondents (20.2%) somewhat agreed with the statement and the rest 11.9% not at all agreed with the statement.

Table-16: It is less challenging to foster complying buyers and applicable code of conduct

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	29	10.5
Somewhat agree	82	29.6
Moderately agree	97	35.0
Agree	69	24.9
Total	277	100.0

After introducing social dialogue approach toward enhancing social compliance at factory level, it is less challenging for the employees to comply the buyer's code of conduct as it is very easy to make the understand and bring them all in a same philosophy of the social compliance. From the above table it can be seen that 59.9 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that it is now less challenging to comply with the buyers' code of conducts.

Table-17: Different policy and procedures are reviewed to align with updated code of conduct

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	21	7.6
Somewhat agree	80	28.9
Moderately agree	101	36.5
Agree	75	27.1
Total	277	100.0

Implementing social compliance is a mere dream if the policy does not commensurate with the code of conduct of different foreign buyers. It has to be regularly updated and must be aligned with the code of conducts of different buyers. While asking the statement, majority of the respondents are of the opinion that different policies and procedures are reviewed to align with the updated code of conduct (63.6%). Only 7.6 percent of the respondents are not at agree with the statement.

Table-18: Supervisor provided feedback and guidance on functional Participation Committee

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	64	23.1
Somewhat agree	72	26.0
Moderately agree	88	31.8
Agree	53	19.1
Total	277	100.0

Above table shows that 50.9 percent of the respondents believed that supervisors provide feedback and guidance on functions of participation committee in order for improving the industrial relations condition in a factory.

Table-19: Welfare activities increased substantially

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	25	9.0
Somewhat agree	67	24.2
Moderately agree	107	38.6
Agree	77	27.8
Fully agree	1	.4
Total	277	100.0

Above table reveals that welfare activities increases compare to previous time. Among the respondents 66.8 percent mentioned that welfare activities have increased substantially. Only 9.0 percent did not agree at all with the statement.

Table-20: Social dialogue creates learning environment in the organization

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	31	11.2
Somewhat agree	68	24.5
Moderately agree	84	30.3
Agree	94	33.9
Total	277	100.0

One of the motivational factors for an employee is that whether an organization can create learning environment to develop individual level skill to perform multi-tasking job. From the table above it can be seen that majority (64.2%) believed that organizations are able to create a learning environment for the employees'.

Table-21: Equity is in existence in decision making process

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	27	9.7
Somewhat agree	105	37.9
Moderately agree	80	28.9
Agree	65	23.5
Total	277	100.0

Equity in a workplace means everyone receives fair treatment. There's a transparency to cause and effect, and everyone knows what to expect in terms of consequences and rewards. When equity exists, people have equal access to opportunities. It sets up an advantageous environment for both the employees and the employer. Above table shows that 52.4 percent respondents agreed that equity is in existence in decision making process where as 37.9 percent of the respondents somewhat agree with the statement and only 9.7 percent not at all agreed with the statement.

Table-22: Absenteeism is reduced substantially due to easy leave handling mechanism

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	17	6.1
Somewhat agree	54	19.5
Moderately agree	111	40.1
Agree	95	34.3
Total	277	100.0

Absenteeism is a major issue that needs instantaneous attention by both employers and employees. Employees Absenteeism is a habitual absence from work. Absenteeism among worker is not only from point of view of cost concept, but it is important from the point of the morale of employees.

Social dialogue approach has positive influence in absenteeism. If the leave management procedure is maintained properly, and production planning is done accordingly absenteeism rate may be reduced. Above table reveals that 74.4 percent respondents are of the opinion that absenteeism rate is reduced due to social dialogue approach. Only 6.1 percent respondents do not agree with the statement.

Table-23: Turnover rate is less due to the impact of social dialogue

Response	No. of Respondents	Percent
Not at all agree	25	9.0
Somewhat agree	56	20.2
Moderately agree	119	43.0
Agree	77	27.8

Total	277	100.0

One of the challenges that human resource department always encounter in a labour intensive factory is the high turnover in employees. In this study it was approached to know how far the turnover rate is influenced after introducing social dialogue approach. It is found from the above table that 70.8 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that turnover rate is less now due to the impact of social dialogue. Only 9 percent of the employees are not infavour of the statement. (p< .006)

CONCLUSION

For a few decades now, the RMG sector became a flourishing and promising sector with the highest exports and employment in the economy. The European Union, the United States, Canada, Japan, and Australia are our main garment importing countries, though many other countries all over the world are importing garments from Bangladesh. Approximately 18 to 20 million livelihoods directly and indirectly depend on this sector.

However, the RMG sector has recently faced some unacceptable events that hamper its growth and productivity. Compliance factor is one the most important factor. The topmost foreign exchange earning sector of the country is undergoing severe trepidation. Unrest and conflict in this sector become a very common phenomenon. Conflicts ensue typically first from within the factory, where workers and management fight with each other. Then management asks for law enforcing agency's protection to oust the workers from the factory, which then take it to the streets to protest against the exploitation of management and owners of the garments. Police then tries to disperse them. Workers try to resist the police by lobbing stones and bricks at them. Sometimes workers vandalize and put up road barricades which cause severe traffic jams. Police then use tear gas and other ways to once again disperse the workers. This scenario is continuing in our garments industries due to several factors, low wages or demand for raising salary is the top most and crucial factor Wage discrimination among garments employees, lack of compliance (no weekly day off, no festival bonus, compulsory over-time, but fraction payment or no payment, retrenchment without prior notice), closure of factory for indefinite time without prior notice are other important sources of unrest.

Most garment jobs are available without having high qualifications or skills. A very destitute group of people coming many times from extremely poverty-stricken rural areas come to the cities looking for jobs. Many poor women are employed in the RMG sector to support their families with their earnings. The percentage of women employed in Bangladesh's RMG section is above 90 percent. They contribute to the main working force in garment factories as they are relatively cheaper than men and typically also have lower educational qualifications than men. The Dani Resource Center (DRC) is a service provider organization established in 2005. DRC strives to offer services to enable sustainable management that effectively correlates economic, social and ecological performance of our clients and strengthens their competitiveness. For further information, please see: http://www.daniresourcecenter.org/.

All key players including the Workers Association, the owners/managers and the Government must join efforts to settle existing conflicts to avoid further unrest in the RMG sector. There should be a significant change in the mindset of the owners. Slogans like "owners-workers are brothers" will not bring any significant change. The owners should meet the justified demands of the workers and implement the agreed points as early as possible and with communicating and following an agreed time plan. Obviously, no owner of a factory will continue with her/his business if incurring losses, but the typical situation is that RMG owners make huge profits. Low wages of factory workers and a highly unfair distribution of profits are the main cause of unrest, which are inauspicious and unfavorable for the overall situation of our country.

Main Causes of Challenges in the RMG Sector

Conflicts are a part of human endeavors and pursuits. Some experts say that rising prices of essentials, unpaid salaries, government's inaction and absence of responsible trade unions are some of the reasons responsible for the rising violence in the RMG sector. Khan (2011, p. iii) has stated that based on his questioning of workers and managers, the major causes of labor unrest are "irregularities in payment, low wage, mistreatment of the workers by managers/officers, rumor, absence of trade unionism, conspiracy, non-execution of labor laws, unruly nature of the workers and political intervention." Recent conflicts have shown that demands for higher wages are a fundamental part behind all recent conflicts in Bangladeshi RMG factories. However, as shown by Apu (2010), a second factor is

wages discrimination; that is, top-level employees draw more than 100 times monthly salaries than low-level employees, plus other company's benefits in the hierarchy, which creates non-motivation by lower paid workers, jealousy, and consequently less productivity by unrest in the production environment.

According to RMG workers, the increase reflected in the fourth wage structure is not satisfactory if comparing it with the cost increase of essential commodities. So that some worker resorted to movement with the argument that the lowest amount for a worker's salary should be at least Tk5000 and be effective from August, 2010. This is a reason why the labor unrest gaining winds despite the declaration of a revised wage. Now, the RMG owners are saying that they cannot help but close down their factories if arson and anarchy continues further. So, what is the ultimate remedy of this crisis? Whatever may be the reason, the situation now remains subdued as the workers have started working and production is once again in full swing everywhere. However, the question is how long it will take until the next cycle of violence will erupt. According to nutritionists, a person needs at least taka 75 (about $1) for her/his daily food requirement. So for a family of 4 persons, the basic food requirement would be Tk. 300 a day or Tk. 9,000 a month. Furthermore, the monthly rental rate in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Chittagong for a very narrow room (which can be accommodated at best by four persons) is about Tk. 3,000. Including other basic expenses (like clothing, educational and medical expenses), the total monthly required for a 4-person family amounts to about Tk. 15,000. Hence, the question is how Tk. 3,000 minimum wage is sufficient for a worker?

Salary and wages discrimination is another important reason of unrest in the RMG sector. Employees that have been working for many years at a factory complain that they do not get a fair compensation compared to new employees. For example, an officer (team member) that worked for seven years at the Youngone Corporation Limited (CEPZ) in the same position got paid a total Tk. 15,000 as his monthly emolument. On the other hand, a new employee at the same position gets Tk. 12,000 as monthly emolument. Salary and wages discrimination between and among workers and officers in senior and junior levels was an implicit reason behind the disastrous unrest in Youngone Corporation on December 12, 2010. Indeed, the Garment Workers' Federation termed the new (fourth) minimum wage structure defective because the salary of the junior workers has been increased to match that of the senior workers' pay.

Famous psychologist Sigmund Freud determined that all instincts fall into one of two major classes: a) the life instincts and b) the death instincts. The life instincts are those that deal with basic survival, pleasure, and reproduction. These instincts are important for sustaining the life of the individual as well as the continuation of the species (hence, they are often called sexual instincts). On the other hand, self-destructive behavior is an expression of the energy created by the death instincts. When this energy is directed outward onto others, it is expressed as aggression and violence. RMG workers sometimes become agile and volatile and express their aggressive mood onto the owners, management, properties of factories and factories violently. When they are severely frustrated with their low wages and unprivileged facilities, they may try to satisfy their needs in irresponsible, non-normative and even disruptive way.

A disruptive force is usually created through a crowd, mob and a conflict. When needs and demands are dissatisfied and disapproved by the owners or management, the workers get frustrated and this accumulated frustration leads to the conflict. Misunderstandings, deprived of getting due rights and a persistent conflict in the garments sector produce a disruptive force. A disruptive force may consist of a well-organized group of people who undergo a long period of oppression and deprivation, observe a frequent breach of commitment and enjoy insufficient amount of opportunities and independence. The members of disruptive force are devastating and unruly and comprises of this force at least 50 to innumerable workers or people. Each of the members of this group is destructive, self-destructive, aggressive, infuriated and agitated. This group is considered to be detrimental to the owners and properties of the industries. Two types of disruptive force are usually seen in the industrial premises. One disruptive force comes out of the workers' side. This force grows out after observing many inequalities between management and workers. Members of disruptive forces march ahead of the workers during clashes and demonstrations. They often vandalize factories and passing vehicles on the road. Destructive activities have to lead to the indefinite closure of the factories or transfer ownership to the local investors. According to The Daily Noya Diganta, at least 50 owners of RMG companies were compelled to transfer their ownership to others due to frequent attack and unrest in their factories.6 Furthermore, around 100 RMG factories are about to be sold.

Challenges Resolution Processes
Conflicts in the workplace are a fact of life. We have all seen situations where different people with different goals and needs have come into conflict. When different goals and needs of different people differ from each other then

conflict becomes an inevitable phenomenon. Workers' agitation and vandalism turned the country into an absolute anarchic state for days now. The untoward situation leads to immediate closure of many RMG units in both Dhaka and Chittagong. In 2008, there were a total of 5,608 RMG factories in Bangladesh. Today, the number has been reduced to 3,260; hence, 2,342 RMG factories have been closed so far, mostly due to frequent unrest, lack of implementation of compliance issues, and inadequate infrastructure facilities.8 Frequent conflicts in the garments industries also slander our long standing image outside of the country. As a result, foreign investors lose their interest in investing in this sector. Effective conflict resolution processes are needed to save this sector from losing its long standing positive image.

1. Understanding the Problems
By resolving conflicts successfully, we can first of all solve many of the problems that are brought to the surface and second, get benefits that might not be expect initially. These are related to implementing compliance issues, listening to the complaints, setting up communication between workers and management during conflicts, increased understanding, and increased group cohesion, which are each explained in more details below.

Challenges Resolution Styles
In 1974 Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann identified five main styles of dealing with conflict that vary in their degrees of cooperativeness and assertiveness. They argued that people typically have a preferred conflict resolution style. However, they also noted that different styles were most useful in different situations. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TkI) helps to identify which style may be the most appropriate to resolve conflicts. Thomas and Kilmann's styles are:

- **Competitive:** People who tend towards a competitive style take a firm stand, and know what they want. They usually operate from a position of power, drawn from things like position, rank, expertise, or persuasive ability. This style can be useful when there is an emergency and a decision needs to be made fast; when the decision is unpopular; or when defending against someone who is trying to exploit the situation selfishly. However it can leave people feeling bruised, unsatisfied and resentful when used in less urgent situations.

- **Collaborative:** People tending towards a collaborative style try to meet the needs of all people involved. These people can be highly assertive but unlike the competitor, they cooperate effectively and acknowledge that everyone is important. This style is useful when you need to bring together a variety of viewpoints to get the best solution; when there have been previous conflicts in the group; or when the situation is too important for a simple trade-off.

- **Compromising:** People who prefer a compromising style try to find a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone. Everyone is expected to give up something and the compromiser him- or she also expects to relinquish something. Compromise is useful when the cost of conflict is higher than the cost of losing ground, when equal strength opponents are at a standstill and when there is a deadline looming.

- **Accommodating:** This style indicates a willingness to meet the needs of others at the expense of the person's own needs. The accommodator often knows when to give in to others, but can be persuaded to surrender a position even when it is not warranted. This person is not assertive but is highly cooperative. Accommodation is appropriate when the issues matter more to the other party, when peace is more valuable than winning, or when you want to be in a position to collect on this "favor" you gave. However people may not return favors, and overall this approach is unlikely to give the best outcomes.

- **Avoiding:** People tending towards this style seek to evade the conflict entirely. This style is typified by delegating controversial decisions, accepting default decisions, and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings. It can be appropriate when victory is impossible, when the controversy is trivial, or when someone else is in a better position to solve the problem. However in many situations this is a weak and ineffective approach to take.

- Different styles may be more or less useful for any specific conflict. Some conflicts may require an appropriate mix of styles, as well as additional approaches or changes. Ideally, a style and approach that meets the situation, resolves the problem, respects people's legitimate interests, and mends damaged relationships. Furthermore, over time, people's conflict management styles tend to mesh, and a "right" way to solve conflict emerges.

Challenges Resolution Processes

- In addition to using the appropriate conflict resolution style, the following five-step resolution process should be used to resolve a conflict.

- **Step One - Set the Scene:** If appropriate to the situation, agree the rules of the IBR approach (or at least consider using the approach yourself.) Make sure that people understand that the conflict may be a mutual problem, which may be best resolved through discussion and negotiation rather than through raw aggression. If you are involved in the conflict, emphasize the fact that you are presenting your perception of the problem. Use active listening skills to ensure you hear and understand other's positions and perceptions. That is, restate, paraphrase and summarize. Make sure that when you talk, you are using an adult, assertive approach rather than a submissive or aggressive style.

- **Step Two - Gather Information:** Here you are trying to get to the underlying interests, needs, and concerns. Ask for the other person's viewpoint and confirm that you respect his or her opinion and need his or her cooperation to solve the problem. Try to understand his or her motivations and goals, and see how your actions may be affecting these. Also, try to understand the conflict in objective terms: Is it affecting work performance? Damaging the delivery to the client? Disrupting team work? Hampering decision-making? Or so on. Be sure to focus on work issues and leave personalities out of the discussion. This implies to listen with empathy and see the conflict from the other person's point of view; to identify issues clearly and concisely; to use "I" statements; to remain flexible; and to clarify feelings.

- **Step Three - Agree that there is a Problem:** This sounds like an obvious step, but often different underlying needs, interests and goals can cause people to perceive problems very differently. You shall need to agree the problems that you are trying to solve before you shall find a mutually acceptable solution. Sometimes different people will see different but interlocking problems - if you can't reach a common perception of the problem, then at the very least, you need to understand what the other persons see as the problem.
- **Step Four - Brainstorm Possible Solutions:** If everyone is going to feel satisfied with the resolution, it will help if everyone has had fair input in generating solutions. Brainstorm possible solutions, and be open to all ideas, including ones you never considered before.

- **Step Five - Negotiate a Solution:** By this stage, the conflict may be resolved: Both sides may better understand the position of the other, and a mutually satisfactory solution may be clear to all. However you may also have uncovered real differences between your positions. This is where a technique likes win –win negotiations can be useful to find a solution that, at least to some extent, satisfies everyone.

- Conflict in the workplace can be very destructive to teamwork, resulting in situations where co-operation breaks down and the team's mission is threatened. To calm these situations down, it helps to take a positive approach to conflict resolution, where discussion is courteous and non-confrontational, and the focus is on issues rather than on individuals. If this is done, then, as long as people listen carefully and explore facts, issues and possible solutions properly, conflict can often be resolved effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendations (Priority wise based on the value of Standardized Coefficient)
- Organization may take initiative to retain employees through various ways, e.g. market average pay structure, improving job design that may include job rotation, job enlargement, job enrichment etc. Human resource department should take various programmes to accommodate different approach to retain good performers. (Standardized Coefficients.379)
- Organization should develop a system of operation especially in decision making process so that scope of unethical behavior reduces to minimum level. (Standardized Coefficients .321)
- An enabling environment should be developed so that each of the point of operation employees understand the productivity improvement issue and bring all the necessary steps to increase productivity. (Standardized Coefficients .240)

- Leave procedure should be maintained by human resource department such a way so that all employees can avail their leave properly and managers are able to approve leave adjusting with the production plan and other operational activities. (Standardized Coefficients .193)
- Job satisfaction study should be done in a regular basis so that employees' level of satisfaction can be understood to take action well ahead. (Standardized Coefficients .186)
- Job related stress should be at minimum level to avoid job dissatisfaction, turn over. Managers may be provided with adequate training to manage their job in a systematic way that helps them managing employees' performance. Necessary training needs assessment may be conducted to identify the training needs of the managers in the area of performance management. (Standardized Coefficients.161)
- Organization should take all sorts of initiative to reduce harassment and abuse to zero level. (Standardized Coefficients -.154)
- Human resource department should be more vigilant in recording the conflicting situation and identify the reasons for conflicts and organize training program or workshop involving all departmental head to take necessary initiative so that conflicting situation does not arise frequently. (Standardized Coefficients - .151)
- All organization should keep the turnover rate to a minimum level. Deriving the reasons for turnover from the exit interview must be taken into consideration and accordingly authority should take probable steps to reduce turnover. (Standardized Coefficients -.146)

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