Labor Unrest in the Ready-Made Garment Industry of Bangladesh

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Abstract

For the last two decades, Ready-Made Garment (RMG) Industry has been the life-blood of the economy of Bangladesh. This sector accounted for about 80% of the total export earnings of the country. In the recent years, it has been observed that the workers have came down in the street and making insurgence on their demand and tried to destruct public properties. As a result, companies are losing working-hours and production targets. It also hampers export earnings and the image of the country to the international markets. In this connection, this study tried to find out the factors behind the unrest in the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh and identifies some measures to improve the situation. In this study, 244 workers were interviewed from the different garment factories located in Savar and Gazipur district of Bangladesh. Data were analyzed with factor analysis, regression model, and by using other suitable statistical tools. The results show that the main causes of labor unrest include lack of minimum facility and safety at work, sub-standard living conditions, deferred payment of wages and benefits, international conspiracy and coercive role of the law enforcing agency, too much dependency on buyers, pressures from the workers and local terrorists, use of workers by others and rumors, un-fulfillment of education demands of their children, distorted minded workers, political instability of the country, too much workload, lack of promotion opportunity, insufficient wages to survive etc. If the policy makers of Bangladesh consider these causes and make policies to overcome the problems the labor unrest in garment sector may be minimized.

Keywords: labor unrest, ready-made garment, minimum wages, deferred payment, facility and safety

1. Background

Ready-made garment industry has a paramount importance in the economy of Bangladesh. About 80% of the total export of Bangladesh comes from this sector. It has also been observed from the statistics that since 1996 to 2011 the total export of ready-made garment sector has been expanded substantially. In 2010-2011 financial year 78.15% of the total export was from ready-made garment industry (Table 1). However, this industry is heavily dependent on the international markets. After the withdrawal of quota protection in 2005, it was perceived that this industry will have severe negative impact under the new WTO arrangement. But Bangladeshi ready-made garment industry faced it intellectually and the earning of this sector has been increased steadily. This has been attributed by the experts as the low labor cost and the efficiency of the Bangladeshi workers.

Table 1. Statement on export of RMG and total export of Bangladesh

Year	Export of RMG (In million US dollar)	Total Export of Bangladesh (In million US dollar)	% of RMG's to Total Export
1996 –1997	3001.25	4418.28	67.93
1997 – 1998	3781.94	5161.20	73.28
1998 – 1999	4019.58	5312.86	75.67
1999 – 2000	4349.41	5752.20	75.61
2000 – 2001	4859.83	6467.30	75.14
2001 – 2002	4583.75	5986.09	76.57
2002 – 2003	4912.09	6548.44	75.01
2003 – 2004	5686.09	7602.99	74.79
2004 – 2005	6417.67	8654.52	74.15
2005 – 2006	7900.80	10526.16	75.06
2006 – 2007	9211.23	12177.86	75.64
2007 – 2008	10699.80	14110.80	75.83
2008 – 2009	12347.77	15565.19	79.33
2009 – 2010	12496.72	16204.65	77.12
2010 – 2011	17914.46	22924.38	78.15

Source: Export Promotion Bureau Compiled by BGMEA.

One of the remarkable features of the Bangladeshi industry is the entry of women workers into the industrial employment system. At present, 3.60 million workers are working in the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh where 85% of them are female who are mainly from rural areas of the country (Table 2). As such, ready-made garment industry opened a new door for the rural unemployed and illiterate women to engage themselves in the financial activities of the economy of Bangladesh. Labor Force survey (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 1991, 1992) shows that although male employment in the manufacturing sector is more or less stagnant, female employment is increasing significantly which is attributed by the social development in Bangladesh.

Table 2. Growth of the industry and employment in RMG industry of Bangladesh

Year	Number of Garment Factories	Employment (in Million Workers)
1996-1997	2503	1.300
1997-1998	2726	1.500
1998-1999	2963	1.500
1999-2000	3200	1.600
2000-2001	3480	1.800
2001-2002	3618	1.800
2002-2003	3760	2.000
2003-2004	3957	2.000
2004-2005	4107	2.000
2005-2006	4220	2.200
2006-2007	4490	2.400
2007-2008	4743	2.800
2008-2009	4925	3.500
2009-2010	5063	3.600
2010-2011	5150	3.600

Source: http://www.bgmea.com.bd/home/pages/aboutus dated 1 December 2012.

The current competitive strength of RMG producing firms in Bangladesh is essentially emanated from availability of extremely cheap labor force and their efficiency (Bhattacharya, 1996). In terms of labor cost, Bangladesh is well positioned and compares favorably with other Asian countries in this regard. The per hour cost of labor in Bangladesh is $0.25, compared to $0.34 in Indonesia, $0.34 in Pakistan, $0.46 in Sri Lanka, $0.48 in China and $0.57 in India (Khan, 2008). This indicates that the buyers of ready-made garments are more willing to get the products from Bangladesh due to low labor cost. It is also observed that Bangladesh workers

are efficient and the ready-made garments products are highly demanded by the international markets.

But the ready-made garment industry is under the threat of continuous unrest in Bangladesh. Workers are not happy with their wages and the working environments of the factories. The issue of labor unrest is not only related to worker's wages but also related to other non-wage issues such as, high overtime work, lack of leisure and holidays, overall working environment, etc. Paul-Majumder (2007) found that demand for weekly holiday is a major reason for worker's unrest during 2006. It is observed that the workers are engaged in work for all most all days. As far as buyers are concerned, they blame mistrust, rude behaviors of the managers are the reasons for RMG unrest in Bangladesh (The New Age, Wednesday, August 04, 2010). In addition, the wages given to the garment workers are not adequate to survive. Absar (2001) argues that low wages and sub-standard living condition are major causes of labor unrest in the RMG industry of Bangladesh. In the garment industry, the rights of the labors are not well protected. The trade unions are not allowed. The child labors are allowed to work over there (Islam and Ahmed 2010).

The most common reasons of labor unrest in the garment sector of Bangladesh are unpaid wage and the deferred payment. Some garment owners do not give salaries and overtime allowance to the workers on time (Uddin and Jahed 2007). Although the owners claim that more than 90% garment factories pay worker's wages within 1st and 2nd week of the month (Rahman, Bhattacharya and Moazzem 2008). National political environment has significant influence on the ready-made garment unrest in Bangladesh that has been found in the study of Uddin and Jahed (2007). According to New Age Metro (2008), the RMG sector of Bangladesh has experienced at least 72 incidents of labor unrest over demand for payment of dues. It has been reveals a report of the Bangladesh Institute of Labor Studies that in the past six months, from January 1 to June 30 labor unrest has been occurring in Bangladesh. According to the report, 41 of the incidents took place in connection with the demand for payment of their dues. In 13 cases, the workers used streets to protest for the killing or torture of their colleagues. Among others, declaration of lay-off or closure, and termination and curtailment of leave or holiday were the causes of demonstrations and unrest in this sector. Daily Star (May, 2012) reported that the garment workers engage in violent clashes at times on rumors or slightest instigations for lack of proper counseling and poor relations with the management. Except for the massive labor unrest for wage hike in 2010, most other incidents of unrest in the sector happened either following rumors of death of fellow workers or on instigation.

New Age (2012a) also reported that RMG sector is experiencing tough times. The sector has been reverberated with labor rampage, killings, wage disputes and disappearance incidents. The sector experienced serious unrests during mid-July 2010. Then, several thousands of apparel workers went on rampage in different industrial areas demanding a wage structure providing a minimum monthly pay of Tk 5,000. It also reported that the frequent unrest in the sector pertaining to their working conditions, wage and other rights issues have hampered the production and the economy (New Age, May, 2012b). The News Today (2012) reported that the causes for the most of the recent labor disputes were not solely due to demand for salary increments. The nature of the unrest clearly indicated that a well-coordinated and orchestrated conspiracy led to the unrest created by outsiders. Bjorn Claeson (2010) found that the failure of garment factories to implement the minimum wage set for garment workers and a lack of recognized labor unions were the key reasons for the recent unrest.

Worker unrest took place on June 21, 2010 for implementing minimum wages of US $70 per month. In that clash, two hundred peoples were injured and thirty factories were ransacked (Islam and Ahmad 2010). One of the reasons for this unrest in the garment industry is legal and institutional failures to ensure labor rights (Islam and Ahmed, 2010). Most of the garment factories in Bangladesh hardly follow the labor laws and ILO conventions (Islam and Ahmed, 2010). The industry leaders believe that the current bout of the unrest did not stem from the demand for wage hike and said the unrest and vandalism in the factories were not the acts of regular workers (Naim-Ul-Karim 2012). Recent Ashulia's unrest has reportedly spread to many other apparel hubs as the workers took to the streets to express solidarity with their colleagues and also demand wage hike.

Abrar Ahmed Apu (2007) identified that low wages, higher wages discrimination/gap in organizational hierarchy, lack of compliance (no weekly day off, no festival bonus, compulsory over-time, but fraction payment or no payment), no responsible organizations who will listen labors' needs and demands; death of any garment labors in the factory premises, could be by fire-smoke, electrified and labor pain for pregnant women; distorted minded boys/males labors create havoc of unrest to press their illegal demands; local influential (could be mastans-mastans are those who are involved in local terrorist or miscreant activities) trading of garment wastes or jhoot (the trade of garments wastes is called jhoot business in local language of Bangladesh), sometimes creates unwanted unrest in the clothing manufacturing areas; and some believe international politics willing creates labor unrest, thus intentionally spread the news of labor unrest in the industry to take unprivileged advantages. In another study, Rahat Ferdous (2012) found that the reason behind the labor unrest is

the absence of legal and institutional arrangements to ensure labor rights in the RMG sector. Many of the garments factories in Bangladesh are alleged not to comply with the Labor Law and ILO conventions. The main reason for labor unrest is inadequate wages of the workers. Mohammad Sirajul Islam and Sonia Ahmad (2010) identified that conveyance, lunch bill and enhancement of casual leave, increase of monthly minimum wages from Tk 1662 to Tk 5000; low house rent and better supply of water and gas are the reasons for the labor unrest in the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh.

In another study, Refayet Ullah Mirdha (2012) found that the rumor, fear of job loss, Jhoot business, case with police stations, fear of shutdown of factories, arrears, checking at entry point and identity cards, pay hike and discrimination in grades, bad relation with workers and mid level management, provocation by locally influential people and international conspirators and some NGOs, fear of police and role of industrial police, sudden order cut by international buyers, production in piece rate, accommodation and higher house rent, lack of motivational training program, inflation etc. are also the reasons for labor unrest in ready-made industry of Bangladesh.

Keeping the importance of the ready-made garment industry in the economy of Bangladesh in mind, this study mainly identified the reasons for the continuous labor unrest in this sector of Bangladesh.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to identify the factors related to labor unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh. The specific objectives are as follows.

- To describe the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh;

- To identify the significant factors related to the unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh.

3. Methodology of the Study

This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the interview of 244 workers from ten leading garment companies located in Savar and Gazipur district. For the last couple of years it has been observed that the majority of the labor unrest has been took place in these districts and for this reason Savar and Gazipur district were selected purposively to collect data to conduct this study. A structured questionnaire with 83 items was used to collect data. The secondary data were collected from the journals, periodicals, annual reports of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) etc.

In collection of data, a group of MBA students of Eastern University, Bangladesh was used. They were given adequate training with the questions of the questionnaire and supervised closely so that they can conduct interview with the garment workers properly to collect data regarding this study. The samples were selected by using convenience sampling method. After collection of data, incomplete, and biased, or abnormally answered data were discarded through a thorough scrutinizing process. The reliability of 83 items in the questionnaire has been tested by using SPSS software and the Alpha Coefficient was 0.9453 in the acceptable limit as per Nunnally (1967 and 1978).

Both descriptive and inferential analysis was done with the survey data. Descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, simple percentages were used describe the present situation of the ready-made garment companies of Bangladesh. Inferential statistics like Factor Analysis (FA) was used to separate the factors related to the unrest of the ready-made garment workers of Bangladesh. Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to identify the significant factors from the factors identified through factor analysis. The overall reasons for the unrest in ready-made garment industry were defined by the personal and socioeconomic status of the workers.

4. Analysis and Interpretations

The analysis part of the study contains two important segments such as (i) the results of factor analysis and (ii) the relations between the overall dissatisfaction and the labor unrest factors of the ready-made garment workers of Bangladesh.

4.1 Results of Factor Analysis-Labor Unrest Factors

The reasons for the labor unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh were identified through factor analysis. The analysis identified 18 factors responsible for the unrest (Table 3). These factors together explain 91.259% of the variance of the data set. The most important unrest factor is 'Long Working Hour and Layoff' with eigenvalue of 27.62 and variance of 33.68%. The second important unrest factor is 'Lack of Minimum Facility and Safety' with eigenvalue of 5.93 followed by Sub-Standards Living Conditions (5.425), Deferred Benefits (4.599), International Conspiracy and Coercive Role of the Law Enforcing Agency (4.356), Too much Dependence on Buyers (3.73), Pressures from the Workers and Mastans (3.29), Use of Workers by Others and

Rumors (2.90), Price Hike of Necessary Items (2.52), Un-fulfillment of Education Demands of the Children (2.31), Distorted Minded Workers (2.19), Political Instability of the Country (1.90), Too Much and Inhuman Workload (1.81), Reluctance of the Government Regulatory Bodies (1.58), No Promotion Opportunity (1.32), Wages are not Paid On Time (1.27), Poor Working Environment (1.18), and Insufficient Wages for Fulfilling Basic Needs (1.01). This indicates that there are number of important factors associated to the labor unrest in garment sector of Bangladesh.

Table 3. Total variance explained

Components	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1. Long Working Hour and Layoff	27.617	33.679	33.679
2. Lack of Minimum Facility and Safety	5.928	7.229	40.908
3. Sub-Standards Living Conditions	5.425	6.616	47.524
4. Deferred Benefits	4.599	5.609	53.133
5. International Conspiracy and Coercive Role of the Law Enforcing Agency	4.356	5.313	58.446
6. Too much Dependence on Buyers	3.730	4.548	62.994
7. Pressures from the Workers and Mastans	3.289	4.010	67.004
8. Use of Workers by Others and Rumors	2.899	3.535	70.540
9. Price Hike of Necessary Items	2.520	3.073	73.613
10. Un-fulfillment of Education Demands of the Children	2.306	2.812	76.425
11. Distorted Minded Workers	2.108	2.570	78.995
12. Political Instability of the Country	1.897	2.314	81.309
13. Too Much and Inhuman Workload	1.811	2.208	83.518
14. Reluctance of the Government Regulatory Bodies	1.575	1.920	85.438
15. No Promotion Opportunity	1.321	1.611	87.049
16. Wages are not Paid on Time	1.271	1.550	88.598
17. Poor Working Environment	1.176	1.434	90.033
18. Insufficient Wages for Fulfilling Basic Needs	1.006	1.227	91.259

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4 shows that the main factor for the labor unrest in Bangladesh is long working hour and the sudden layoffs. The workers used to work at the factory from dawn to dusk with overtime which is very low in amount. This factor has been formed with 20 items or variables relating to labor unrest. All the variables have high factor loadings indicating that the variables have strong relationship with the factor. This can be attributed by undue overstay of the workers that is compelled by the factory owners in this industry.

Table 4. Long working hour and layoff

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Long working hours	.902
2	Declaration of lay-off or closure of factory without any reasons	.764
3	Workers have no bargaining power with the employer	.722
4	Workers are not getting lunch bill as it would be	.710
5	Workers over-time work is compulsory	.705
6	Workers cannot spend for medical	.679
7	Lack of recognized labor unions	.679
8	Workers have low social status	.678
9	Workers' unable to save money for their future	.638
10	Workers are deprived of from festival bonus	.611
11	Workers want to enhance their casual leave	.601
12	Workers have limited access to social amenities	.588
13	Workers have no recognition in their family, friends and society	.576
14	Irregular payment of overtime work	.566
15	Workers are unable to maintain their family	.555
16	Ruling party create problem to keep the eyes of people away from their failure	.535
17	No rule is implemented for the regular workers	.535
18	Poor relation with workers and management	.523
19	Mistrust between workers and owners	.500
20	Workers have no assurance of payment	.446

The second important labor unrest factor is lack of minimum facility and safety. In Garment Companies of Bangladesh, minimum facilities for canteen, prayer room, washing room, toilets, child care etc. are hardly adequate. Moreover, the safety measures are not up to the mark so that accidents are occurring frequently (Table 5). Frequent accidents also indicate that the safety measures followed are hardly up to the standards in this industry. This factor has been formed with 10 variables with very high factor loadings.

Table 5. Lack of minimum facility and safety

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers are deprive of getting minimum facilities in the factory	.882
2	lack of occupational safety measures	.867
3	Workers family problems	.836
4	Lack of adjustment with spouse and other family members	.742
5	No responsible organizations who will listen to labors' problems	.667
6	Workers are frustrated with their future	.664
7	Accommodation problem of workers and high house rent	.627
8	Termination of worker in lame excuse or no reason	.606
9	Workers feel hassle checking at entry point and identity cards	.581
10	Management usually undermine workers	.551

The third important factor for the labor unrest is sub-standard living conditions of the workers (Table 6). All most all companies do not have housing facilities. Therefore, workers live nearby the factory in the rental houses where the conditions are very poor. They are also unable to higher good house with the financial benefits they receive. Ten variables constituted this factor with high factor loadings values.

Table 6. Sub-standards living conditions

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Sub-standard living (residence) condition	.837
2	Workers are not given value of their voice	.786
3	Workers are not getting conveyance when coming twice a day	.653
4	Downgrading/declination of the society values	.635
5	Workers have no recognition of their work	.614
6	Workers are not getting dinner while working at night shift	.603
7	Physical abuse by the supervisor	.558
8	Workers are absent from social program	.528
9	Workers want to increase their wages	.497
10	Killing or torture on their colleagues	.439

Table 7 shows that deferred payment of benefits is another reason for the unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh. The benefits like bonus, overtime etc are not given on time. These are paid after a long time of the work. This creates frustration among the workers.

Table 7. Deferred benefits

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Deferred festival bonus	.859
2	Workers' wages are very low	.713
3	Workers have no mental peace	.702
4	Legal and institutional failures to ensure labor rights	.691
5	Workers are not getting weekly holiday	.576

Table 8 to Table 21 show the labor unrest factors named International Conspiracy and Coercive Role of the Law Enforcing Agency, Too much Dependence on Buyers, Pressures from the Workers and Mastans, Use of Workers by Others and Rumors, Price Hike of Necessary Items, Un-fulfillment of Education Demands of the Children, Distorted Minded Workers, Political Instability of the Country, Too Much and Inhuman Workload, Reluctance of the Government Regulatory Bodies, No Promotion Opportunity, Wages are not Paid On Time, Poor Working Environment, and Insufficient Wages for Fulfilling Basic Needs.

Table 8. International conspiracy and coercive role of the law enforcing agency

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Some international conspirators and some NGOs work for creates unrest	.706
2	Coercive role of law-enforcing agencies	.679
3	International politics by the competitor country creates labor unrest	.565
4	Opposition party influence workers to make unrest to show the failure of government	.523
5	Personal clash of garment owner with the local leader	.488

Table 9. Too much dependence on buyers

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Sudden order cut by international buyers	.925
2	Implementation of new technology	.732
3	Trading of garment wastes	.696
4	Workers living standard is declining	.503

Table 10. Pressures from the workers and Mastans

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers want to implement minimum wages rate	.793
2	Local influential persons who want to have donation	.720
3	Planned conspiracy led to the unrest created by outsiders	.557
4	Demand for payment of dues	.557

Table 11. Use of workers by others and rumors

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers may be used by the competitor garment factory	.820
2	Rumors of detention or death of fellow workers or on instigation	.770
3	Workers are in fear of shutdown of factories	.549
4	Workers has no job security	.416

Table 12. Price hike of necessary items

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	The inflation in the daily necessary items like food and other items	.822
2	Workers dispute are not solved for long time	.574

Table 13. Un-fulfillment of education demands of the children

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers cannot meet the education requirement of their children	.812
2	Wages discrimination among the workers	.535
3	Workers cannot spend money for recreation	.505
4	Workers have no leisure during their daylong work	.430

Table 14. Distorted minded workers

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Distorted minded workers want to make unrest	.803
2	Worker community have no concern for the society	.556
3	Workers has innate anger to the rich people	.534
4	Deduction of workers wages for lame excuse	.481

Table 15 Political instability of the country

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Political instability at the national level influences violence	.776
2	Supervisor used to use slang language to the workers	.688
3	Rude behavior of the supervisor	.535

Table 16. Too much and inhuman workload

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers to perform inhuman labor for the company	.774

Table 17. Reluctance of the government regulatory bodies

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Government is reluctant about the rights of workers	.845

Table 18. No promotion opportunity

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	No promotion opportunity are available for the workers	.860

Table 19. Wages are not paid on time

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers are not paid of their wages on time	.686

Table 20. Poor working environment

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers working environment is poor	.565
2	Lack of motivational training program	.525

Table 21. Insufficient wages for fulfilling basic needs

	Variables	Factor Loading
1	Workers are unable to fulfill their basic human needs	.515

Note: extraction method: principal component analysis; varimax with kaiser normalization; a: rotation converged in 114 iterations.

4.2 Relationships between the Overall Dissatisfaction and the Labor Unrest Factors

Multiple regressions analysis results show that the factors or reasons related to labor unrest in the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh are very important to explain the overall dissatisfaction of the workers (Table 22). This means that the reasons for the garment unrest in Bangladesh are from the overall dissatisfaction of the workers in this sector.

Table 22. Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.786	.617	.586	.9295

a: Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 18 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 17 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 16 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 15 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 14 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 13 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 12 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 11 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 10 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 9 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 8 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1, 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 shows that the factors concerning labor unrest in the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh are as a whole responsible for the unrest in this sector (Table 23).

Table 23. Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	313.271	18	17.404	20.143	.000
	Residual	194.401	225	.864		
	Total	507.672	243			

a: Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 18 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 17 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 16 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 15 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 14 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 13 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 12 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 11 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 10 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 9 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 8 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1, 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: OVERALL.

Individual factor relationship with the overall dissatisfaction of the ready-made garment workers show that the factors named lack of minimum facility and safety', sub-standards living conditions, deferred benefits, international conspiracy and coercive role of the law enforcing agency, too much dependence on buyers, pressures from the workers and mastans, use of workers by others and rumors, un-fulfillment of education demands of the children, distorted minded workers, political instability of the country, too much and inhuman workload, no promotion opportunity, wages are not paid on time, and insufficient wages for fulfilling basic needs are significantly related to the overall dissatisfaction of the workers. This means that if there is a change in these factors independently there will be a significant impact on the overall dissatisfaction of the workers (Table 24).

4.2.1 Lack of Minimum Facility and Safety

This study identified that the most important and significant labor unrest factor is lack of minimum working facility and safety measure. Most of the factories are located in the housing areas of the city which are not built by following the factory rules of the country. This has been often causing accidents and the lives of the workers are going under the threat. Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and the government are not serious to improve the situation in this sector.

4.2.2 Sub-Standards Living Conditions

Sub-standard living conditions of the workers are another factor causing unrest in the garment sector of Bangladesh. Due to poor salary, these workers are unable to live in good house. Therefore, the poor living conditions create job dissatisfaction of the workers and that lead to labor unrest in this industry.

4.2.3 Deferred Benefits

In garment companies of Bangladesh, the salary is given after the 15th of the month in order to minimize job turn over in the factory. In addition to this, the benefits like bonus, overtime, etc payments are given after an indefinite period of time that creates labor unrest in the industry.

4.2.4 International Conspiracy and Coercive Role of the Law Enforcing Agency

Saying goes that the garment industry of Bangladesh is controlled by other competitor exporting countries of the world. If there is a chaos and confusion in this sector, the smooth production will be hampered and the other competing countries will be able to export their products in the international markets. Sometimes, it is observed that the law enforcing agencies sometime create unpleasant situation in the factory for nothing that also makes the workers unhappy.

4.2.5 Too Much Dependence on Buyers

The garment export of Bangladesh absolutely depends on the WTO resolution and the agreement of the international buyers. Majority of the companies are fully export oriented. They do not produce products for the local markets. As such, if there is any problem in the GSP of WTO or relationship problem with buyer country, there create a problem in this sector. This causes seasonal layoff at workplace and lead to labor unrest in this industry.

4.2.6 Pressures from the Workers and Mastans/Terrorists

Very often, local pressures cause the problem for the factory and workers. Local terrorists often demands donation from the factory owners. When terrorists do not get donation they come with their gang and try to create unrest in the factory premise. In addition to that, the female workers are disturbed by the mustans when they come in the factory and leave the factory after the work.

4.2.7 Use of Workers by Others and Rumors

The garment workers are from the rural areas and they are very poor. Therefore, there is a chance to use these workers by the local pressures groups that may go against the interest of the company. Moreover, as these workers are illiterate they become militant when there is a rumor against their interest.

4.2.8 Un-Fulfillment of Education Demands of the Children

The workers of the garment factories are unable to send their children to the schools as they are financially incapable to support. This may cause dissatisfaction among the workers in this sector.

4.2.9 Distorted Minded Workers

Due to illiteracy of the workers, they are incapable to think positively that creates unrest in the garment industry of Bangladesh. Sometime, it is also observed that workers are frustrated and they have innate anger to the rich

people. These led them to take part in labor unrest.

4.2.10 Political Instability of the Country

Due to political instability of the country, like strike, worker cannot come to the factory to work and they marked absent by the factory managers. This sometime makes workers aggressive and lead to unrest in this sector.

4.2.11 Too Much and Inhuman Workload

Too much and inhuman workload is a common phenomenon in this sector of Bangladesh. The payment rate is very poor and the overtime rate is also insignificant for the workers. As a result, they need to work from dawn to dust for a minimum amount of salary. Therefore, workers take part in unrest to establish their rights.

4.2.12 No Promotion Opportunity

In garment sector of Bangladesh, promotion is a rare case. Workers had to work in a same position for long period of time. They also reluctant to switch the company because of the risk of losing one month salary that sometime lead to labor unrest.

4.2.13 Wages Are not Paid on Time

After 15th of each month the salary is disbursed for the workers in garment workers in Bangladesh. This ill motive of the owners creates labor unrest among the workers.

4.2.14 Insufficient Wages for Fulfilling of Basic Needs

The basic needs of the workers are food, clothing and the shelter. However, these are costly in the area where the factories are located. The salary workers receive is extremely inadequate to fulfill these needs. Therefore, they create labor unrest to establish the minimum wages.

Table 24. Coefficients

Factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.426	.060		57.578	.000
1. Long Working Hour and Layoff	-7.155E-02	.060	-.050	-1.200	.231
2. Lack of Minimum Facility and Safety	.391	.060	.271	6.565	.000
3. Sub-Standards Living Conditions	.114	.060	.079	1.904	.058
4. Deferred Benefits	-.425	.060	-.294	-7.126	.000
5. International Conspiracy and Coercive Role of the Law Enforcing Agency	.335	.060	.231	5.610	.000
6. Too much Dependence on Buyers	.335	.060	.232	5.622	.000
7. Pressures from the Workers and Mastans	.206	.060	.142	3.449	.001
8. Use of Workers by Others and Rumors	.130	.060	.090	2.186	.030
9. Price Hike of Necessary Items	-2.685E-02	.060	-.019	-.450	.653
10. Un-fulfillment of Education Demands of the Children	.130	.060	.090	2.182	.030
11. Distorted Minded Workers	.425	.060	.294	7.134	.000
12. Political Instability of the Country	.149	.060	.103	2.501	.013
13. Too Much and Inhuman Workload	-.427	.060	-.295	-7.159	.000
14. Reluctance of the Government Regulatory Bodies	7.685E-02	.060	.053	1.289	.199
15. No Promotion Opportunity	-.146	.060	-.101	-2.446	.015
16. Wages are not Paid On Time	.266	.060	.184	4.466	.000
17. Poor Working Environment	-5.565E-02	.060	-.039	-.933	.352
18. Insufficient Wages for Fulfilling Basic Needs	.387	.060	.268	6.486	.000

a: dependent variable: overall.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Labor unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh has been characterized by eighteen factors responsible identified from this study. These factors are together significantly related to the overall dissatisfaction of the workers in this sector. The main factor for the labor unrest in Bangladesh is long working hour and the sudden layoffs. The workers used to work at the factory from dawn to dusk with overtime which is very low in amount. Although, this factor, independently, is not significantly related to the overall dissatisfaction of the workers, it contributes a lot when all other factors come together with it.

Results show that the labor unrest factors are also independently and significantly related to the overall dissatisfaction of the ready-made garment workers in Bangladesh. This study identified that the factors that are responsible for the labor unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh are minimum facility and safety, sub-standards living conditions, deferred benefits, international conspiracy and coercive role of the law enforcing agency, too much dependence on buyers, pressures from the workers and mastans, use of workers by others and rumors, un-fulfillment of education demands of the children, distorted minded workers, political instability of the country, too much and inhuman workload, no promotion opportunity, wages are not paid on time, and insufficient wages for fulfilling basic needs are significantly related to the overall dissatisfaction of the workers. This means that if there is a change in these factors, independently, there will be a significant impact on the overall dissatisfaction of the workers. As such these factors might be identified as the main reasons for the labor unrest in ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh. If the policymakers associated to this industry consider the factors identified through this study in making their policy, the situation might be changed and improved. However, there is an ample scope to conduct further investigation to uncover the reasons for the labor unrest in ready-made industry of Bangladesh by taking more samples of workers.

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