

# Effects of Human Resource Management Practices on Labor Dispute of Readymade Garment Sector of Bangladesh

Md. Ziaur Rahman<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*Labour dispute is the most important issue the readymade garment (RMG) sector of Bangladesh has been facing at present. Labour dispute (LD) creates lose-lose situation and impairs the interest of both the workers and employers and thereby creates barriers in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) by hampering economic development of the country. For achieving SDGs within due times, it is necessary to maintain harmonious industrial relation (HIR) in RMG sector. In a HIR both the employers and workers change their mind set up and builds an environment of mutual understanding and trust. Workers with high motivation and commitment consider the interest of the employers as their own interest and always try to avoid dispute. HIR can be maintained through proper exercise of human resource management (HRM) practices. As LD is high in RMG sector, it is necessary to know to what extent HRM practices are exercised in this sector and whether these practices are responsible for labour dispute or not. To do so a questionnaire survey has been conducted on 384 workers of grade IV to grade VII of four major districts. Five focus group discussions and eight key informant interviews also have been conducted to triangulate the data. The findings indicate that HRM practices are poorly exercised in this sector. Among these practices inadequate wages, irregularity in paying wages, sudden dismissal, misbehavior and using slang language, inadequate scope for negotiation are important.*

**Keywords:** RMG, HRM, Labour Dispute, Compensation, Harassment, Labour-management Relations

---

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, E-mail: [zia016156@gmail.com](mailto:zia016156@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

Dispute refers to any type of disagreement which arises from the conflict of interest among parties. Labour dispute (LD) is a state of disagreement over a particular issue or group of issues over which there is conflict between workers and employers, or about which grievance is expressed by workers or employers, or about which workers or employers supports other workers or employers in their demands or grievances (ILO 1993). It may be related to terms and conditions of employment, work or working environment or not. It is found all over the world in different forms and degrees especially in the capitalist economies where peoples sold their labour to employers in return of some compensation. Bangladesh is of no exception. A number of LDs occur in various sector of Bangladesh. However, dispute in Readymade Garment (RMG) sector is more prevalent than any other sector.

The workers of RMG sector showed their protests and involved in different LDs in different times against the negligence of the government as well as the employers. The massive LD of 2006, 2010, 2012, and 2016 are some examples of such protests. On an average 259 LDs occurred in different sector of Bangladesh during the period 2008 to 2014 while the average number of LD in RMG sector is 175 (Hossain 2012). Another study report prepared on the basis of news paper reports shows that on an average 262 LDs occurred in different sector of Bangladesh during the period 2015 to 2019 out of which 48 percent dispute occurred in RMG sector (BILS 2019). These data indicate that LD is more prevalent in RMG sector.

The effect of these LDs is not good for the employers as well as for the workers. The employers are affected as their production is hampered, machine and equipments are damaged, needs more time to send good to buyers, and their image in international market is demolished. The workers are affected as they lose their wages and jobs, police and external miscreant beats them, and employers file cases against them. All these effects hamper economic growth and development of the country which is needed to attain sustainable development goals (SDGs). Bangladesh is committed to attain SDGs by alleviating poverty, hunger, inequality through ensuring decent works, peace and justice by 2030. For attaining

---

<sup>2</sup> For the year 2019, the number of dispute from January to June 2019 has been taken into account.

SDGs, she has to take effective measures to reduce LDs to a minimum level in the 14.07 percent gross domestic product (GDP) contributory and 84 percent export earning contributing RMG sector (Islam, Rakib and Adnan 2016).

There are various reasons behind these LDs. The employers provide inadequate wages and benefits to workers to lead their daily lives (Hossain 2012, Moazzem and Arfanuzzaman 2018). They do not pay overtime payment as per laws (Hossain 2012). Although they are paying less, they do not pay that wage and overtime payment at times (Rahman, Bhattacharya and Moazzem 2008, Kamal, Billah and Hossain 2010). When new wage scale comes in effect, they do not implement this new scale (Hossain 2012). They suddenly retrench workers or close down their factories without any notice and compensation (Ahmed, Raihan and Islam 2013, Choudhury and Rahman 2017). They misbehave, beat and punish workers for silly mistakes (Himi and Rahman 2013, Islam and Ahmed 2014), force workers to do overtime works or night duty, and force workers to work extra hours without any pay (Ahmed, Raihan and Islam 2013, Hasan, Islam and Arifuzzaman 2015).

The employers do not provide any leaves as per law (Hasan, Islam and Arifuzzaman 2015, Choudhury and Rahman 2017). Poor working conditions (Kamal, Billah and Hossain 2010, Himi and Rahman 2013), absence of labour union (LU) (Khan 2011, Islam and Ahmed 2014), rumors (Khan 2011, Hossain and Afroze 2012), aggressive behaviour of workers (Bhuiyan 2013), violent role of police, lack of training and promotion opportunities (Ahmed, Raihan and Islam 2013, Himi and Rahman 2013) and too much work loads (Ahmed, Raihan and Islam 2013) also responsible for LDs. Some of these reasons are related to human resource management (HRM) practices while others are not. In this study an endeavor has been taken to indentify to what extent the HRM practices are responsible for LDs.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is to identify what HRM practices are exercised by the RMG factories and to what extent these HRM practices are responsible for LDs of the RMG sector.

## **Methodology of the Study**

It is a mixed research where both qualitative and quantitative approach has been used to fulfill the research objective. For the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary data have been used. Secondary data are collected from various books, research articles, dissertations, newspaper reports, different documents and websites. Primary data are collected from workers, mid-level management, owners of RMG sector, human resource (HR) experts, trade union leaders and members of civil society. A questionnaire survey of 384 respondents has been conducted among the workers of grade IV to grade VII of RMG sector of Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj and Chattogram districts. Probability Proportional to Estimated Size (PPS) sampling technique has been used to distribute respondents among the study areas.

At first, respondents are distributed on the basis of proportion of number of factories among four districts. Then each district's respondents are subdivided into three factory type wise i.e. woven, knit and composite. The number of respondents fall on each factory type is then subdivided into two gender type i.e. male and female. At last, each gender type respondents are distributed among grade IV to grade VII workers on the basis of their proportion. Five focus group discussions (FGDs)—two in Dhaka, one in Gazipur, one in Narayanganj, one in Chattogram, and eight key informant interviews (KIIs) have been conducted to fulfill the purpose.

## **CONCEPT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Human Resource Management (HRM) deals with the people or personnel related activities or practices of an organisation. However, the range of activities or practices may differ from person to person, or organisation to organisation. There is no universally accepted definition of HRM that could specify HRM practices clearly. Different authors and HR specialists have defined HRM differently.

Though different authors have defined HRM differently, they have all emphasized the effective utilization of the workforce for accomplishing the organisational goals and objectives. Some authors give emphasis on enhancing commitment, quality and flexibility through motivation, and

others give emphasis on strategic integration and cost effectiveness. To sum up, it can be said that HRM is concerned with policies and practices that ensure the best use of the human resources for fulfilling the organisational objectives as well as individual goals by providing motivation to them so that they can be committed, qualified and flexible. For this research purpose, all HRM policies and practices have been broadly divided into six categories (Table-1)

**Table-1:** Functions of Human Resource Management

HRM Policies and Practices	Human Resource Management Activities	Referencing Authors
HR Planning and Analysis	Job evaluation and design; HR forecasting and planning; Job analysis; Maintaining HR information systems	(Dessler 1999), (Mathis & Jackson 2009), (Stredwick 2005), (Bratton &Gold 2012), (Flippo 2010), (Stewart & Brown, 2011), (Paauwe & Richardson 1997), (Guest 1997),(Arthur 2015)
Recruitment and Placement	Ensuring Equal Employment Opportunity; Recruitment; Interviewing Job Candidates; Employee testing and Selection; Job Contract; Providing Appointment letter; Promotion; Termination of Job	(Dessler 1999), (Mathis & Jackson 2009), (Stredwick 2005), (Bratton &Gold 2012), (Flippo 2010), (Stewart & Brown, 2011), (Paauwe & Richardson 1997), (Guest 1997),(Arthur 2015), (Patterson et al. 1997), (Moailer & Cowling 2013), (Pfeffer 1994),

Training and Development	Orientation and Socialization; Appraising Performance; Training; Developing Managers; Managing Quality and Productivity; Managing Careers	(Dessler 1999), (Mathis & Jackson 2009), (Stredwick 2005), (Bratton &Gold 2012), (Flippo 2010), (Stewart & Brown, 2011), (Paauwe & Richardson 1997), (Guest 1997),(Arthur 2015), (Patterson et al. 1997), (Moailer & Cowling 2013), (Pfeffer 1994),
Compensation and Benefits	Establishing Pay Plan; Wages and Salary Administration; Overtime Pay; Bonus; Profit Sharing; Insurance Benefits; Retirement Benefits; Severance Pay; Child Care; Canteen Facilities; Rewards-for-performance; Financial Incentives; Benefits and Services; Compensation for Job Termination	(Dessler 1999), (Mathis & Jackson 2009), (Stredwick 2005), (Bratton &Gold 2012), (Flippo 2010), (Stewart & Brown, 2011), (Paauwe & Richardson 1997), (Guest 1997),(Arthur 2015), (Patterson et al. 1997), (Moailer & Cowling 2013), (Pfeffer 1994),
Employee Health, Security and Safety	Health and Wellness; Working Environment; Employee Safety and Security; Risk Management	(Dessler 1999), (Mathis & Jackson 2009), (Stredwick 2005), (Flippo 2010), (Stewart & Brown 2011), (Pfeffer 1994),
Employee/Labour Relations	Sharing Information; Character, Personality, Expectation and temperament Handling;	(Dessler 1999), (Mathis & Jackson 2009), (Stredwick

	Interpersonal and Intra-personal Relationship; Managing Change; Participatory Management; Trade Union and Labour Relations; Lay off and Dismissal; Consultation and Collective Bargaining; Dispute Handling;	2005), (Bratton &Gold 2012), (Flippo 2010), (Stewart & Brown, 2011), (Paauwe & Richardson 1997), (Guest 1997), (Arthur 2015), (Patterson et al. 1997), (Moailer & Cowling 2013), (Pfeffer 1994),
--	--	--

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN RMG SECTOR

### Human Resource Planning & Analysis

There is a lacking in designing proper HR planning in the RMG sector of Bangladesh to recruit employees when demand increases although the employers of RMG factories do job analysis to some extent. The employers do not have any succession planning or replacement chart to fill any vacant post although they sometimes transfer employees from one post to another post to fill these vacant posts but these are not predetermined (KII-5). They temporarily fill the vacant post with the employees who do not possess the skills to serve that post in order to continue the operation. The employers are not capable to recruit new employees instantly to fill the vacant post.

The survey data shows that the employers do not recruit extra workers to lessen the works loads when there is high works pressure in RMG factories. More than 70 percent workers reported that employers do not recruit new workers to decrease works loads. They use the existing workforce to deal with the extra works loads by forcing them to overtime or night duties (64.3 percent). These data indicate that either there is no HR planning in the RMG sector or there is a problem in the implementation of HR planning and it can be claimed that there is a lacking in HR planning and analysis in the RMG sector of Bangladesh.

## Recruitment & Placement

Due to huge supply of workers the RMG sector of Bangladesh, employers rarely use advertisements, professional agencies or online recruiting. The employers often use employee referrals as a source of recruiting. The survey data shows that more than forty five percent workers are recruited through employee referrals and 36.2 percent are recruited by walk-in interview. Due to employee referrals employers can get realistic information about employees and employees also can get real picture of the job. It also reduces the costs of recruiting of the employers. However, through employee referrals employees may recommend workers to recruit who do not possess the skills required to perform the jobs (DeCenzo, Robbins & Verhulst, 2013). Walk-in-interview also saves employers' time and money. When employers cannot meet the demand of job vacancies through employee referrals and walk-in-interviews, then they circulate leaflet and hang on sign board (13.5 percent) offering jobs to workers.

After recruiting workers, selection of best candidate is needed. The employers of RMG sector do not follow proper selection procedure to appoint job candidates. Most of the cases, employers take job related interviews to select workers. The survey data shows that in 68.2 percent cases job related interviews and in 62.8 percent cases oral interviews of the workers have been taken before providing them jobs. However, technical skills are often required in RMG sector which cannot be ensured by these interviews. Appointing workers without proper testing means fill up the factory with unskilled and inexperience workforce, which may cause chaotic situation in the factory.

After appointing, the employers must provide appointment letter and identity card to the workers (BLA 2006). However, some employers show negligence in providing appointment letter to the workers. The survey shows that 32 percent workers do not get any appointment letter from their employers. The claim is supported by Rahman, Bhattacharya and Moazzem although they claim the rate is above seventy percent (Rahman, Bhattacharya and Moazzem, 2008). Again 9.4 percent workers do not get identity card from the employers. The identity cards and appointment letters are proof of employment of the workers which could be used for compensation in case of accident or dismissal.

The workers are promoted or transfer to better position on the basis



of their job performances not on the basis of their seniority. The survey data shows that two-third workers are always promoted on the basis of their performance. Sometimes employers consider seniority along with job performance of the workers in providing promotion or transfer while 18.8 employers consider workers loyalty. As seniority is given less emphasis on promotion, it shrinks career development possibilities of the workers and the senior workers become frustrated regarding their job careers.

### **Training & Development**

The garment factories do not have sufficient training facilities to provide formal training to workers. The survey data shows that 24.5 percent RMG factories do not have training facilities. The subject matter of training is also important to workers. If the subject matter is linked with the career development of the workers, they become more motivated and productivity of the organization increases. However, in the RMG sector, very few employers provide training that is linked with career development of the workers. The survey data shows that only 9.7 percent workers have experienced skills development training. Most of the training is provided on fire and safety (72 percent) related issues in order to avoid incidence.

However, these fire trainings are not effective and are not provided to all workers. The workers claim that the fire training are initiated once a month or once in every two month when work pressure is relatively low in factory. The management suddenly announces just 15 minutes before closing the factory that today your fire training will be held and they make gathered workers at ground floor and instruct how to use fire extinguishers and shows trial about how to move from the factory (FGD-2). However, they do not provide fire training to all workers. About 45 percent workers reports that only selected workers are called for training while 28 percent claims that training is provided to new workers.

### **Compensation & Benefits**

The Minimum Wage Board (MWB) has determined the minimum wage for garment workers at BDT 8000 (UNB 2018). However, the wages declared by the MWB was not satisfactory to the workers and their

unions as the wages is too low to meet their basic needs. The survey data reveals that most of the RMG workers are not satisfied with their wages and other wage related payments except attendance bonuses and encashment of earned leave. About 68.2 percent workers are dissatisfied regarding their wages. The workers are most dissatisfied regarding their house rent allowances (70.1 percent) as most of the garment factories are in urban areas and workers cannot rent houses with the allowances provided by the owners.

### **Adequacy of wages**

The minimum wage which is set by the MWB is not adequate to meet the daily life of the workers of RMG sector. The living cost of RMG workers living in Dhaka and other adjacent cities in 2016 estimated by global living wage coalition indicates that living cost in Dhaka city was BDT 16460 and other adjacent cities was BDT 13630 (GLWC, 2016). Another study shows that on average a family needs BDT 22465 to meet its monthly expenditure on average (Moazzem & Arfanuzzaman, 2018). There is huge gap between family expenditure and the minimum wage of the workers. The workers usually take loans to meet this earning gap and have to pay installments which also increase their living cost. The wages provided to the RMG workers are not only inadequate but also fewer than the government allocation for a prisoner or a hospitalized person (Hossain, 2012).

### **Schedule of Payments**

Irregularity in payment of wages and other benefits is a major cause of workers dissatisfaction against the management and employer. Some of the employers do not pay their wages within the due time of payments as per law. The study shows that about one-sixth workers do not get their wages in due time. More than fifty percent employers make delay more than two weeks and on average the employers maintain 13.44 days delay in paying workers' wages and salaries.

### **Overtime Payments**

The workers often engage themselves in overtime works or any other jobs to add any extra earning to their families. The survey data shows that

more than ninety five percent workers of RMG sector involve in overtime works. On an average a worker engage in overtime works for 2.52 hours which is higher than the law provided in the Bangladesh Labour Act (BLA) 2006. The workers of RMG sector are engaged in works more than sixty hours and sometimes, have to attend in works in weekly holiday which is a clear breach of law. In most of the cases, the employers force the workers to perform overtime works. The survey data reveals that about three-fourth workers have responded that the overtime works has been compulsory for them. Although the overtime works is mandatory for most of the cases, the payments for these works are not satisfactory to the workers. The study shows that about two-third workers have responded that the payment for overtime works have not been satisfactory. The employers do not even pay the workers overtime payments in time. The study shows that about one-third workers of the study respond that the employers make fifteen to forty five days delay in paying their overtime payments.

### **Night Duties**

The employers make night duty mandatory for the workers when work load is high. The survey data reveals that almost one-third workers of RMG sector have to perform night duties. However, female workers are also forced to work at nights by the employers. The survey data shows that 25.8 percent female workers are forced to work in night shift although the BLA 2006 clearly states that no female workers can be employed in night duty (BLA 2006). The employers never take any written consent from the female workers regarding their night shift. If any workers disobey the employers regarding night duties or remain absent at night duties, it is considered as misconduct in 29.3 percent cases which may result in retrenchment while 13.3 percent workers have responded that labour-management relation deteriorated if they refuse to do work at night.

### **Leaves and Holidays**

A large portion of RMG workers do not get casual leave as per law. The study shows that 43.5 percent workers do not get casual leave when it is needed to them. The lower level management of an organization always

tries to avoid casual leaves of the workers as it hamper the regular production of the unit and as the leave cannot be store for the next year as per law (FGD-2). As medical certificate is needed to get sick leave, one-forth worker does not get sick leave when they become sick. All the employers do not appointed registered doctor to their factories and it is costly for a worker to visit doctor and get certificate from him. The factories where employer`s appointed registered doctor is available, the doctor does not certify the worker for leave if the worker`s condition not critical (FGD-4).

The study reveals that average duration of festival leaves provided to the workers is 8.68 days which is much lower than the provision of law. Moreover, workers have to work on weekly holidays as general duties from one month earlier of every Eid to get more holydays during Eid (FGD-1,2&3). There is also provision of maternity leave on conditions for pregnant female workers. However, about 11.98 percent female workers do not get maternity leaves from their employers and 17.7 percent employers do not provide wages with leaves.

### **Compensation for Retrenched/Discharged/Dismissed Workers**

In the RMG sector of Bangladesh, retrenchment and dismissal occurs several times. The study shows that 62.2 percent workers have observed retrenchment or dismissal at their enterprises. There is a provision of compensation regarding retrenchment or dismissal in the labour law. However, 37.8 percent cases employers do not provide any compensation in case of retrenchment or dismissal. Whatever employers provide as compensation, they make delay in paying such compensation

### **Employee Benefits**

Employee benefit facilities are very limited in RMG sector. The RMG factories do not have adequate provident fund or group insurance facilities. The study shows that only 23.4 percent cases there is either provident fund or group insurance or welfare fund facilities.

### **Health, Safety & Security**

Every organization has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that workplace where the employees would be engaged in works is safe and

free from unnecessary hazards. The surrounding environment of the workplace should be out of danger and safe. It must not be injurious for the physical and mental health of the workers so that they can exert full attention to their works without having any tension.

### **Health and Hygiene**

Sound physical and mental health is necessary for workers of any organization to properly concentrate on works and improve productivity. The workers of RMG sector do not get enough rest as described in law as the work load in the factory is very high and employers set their target in such a way that they cannot take any rest. They have to complete their production target within the eight working hours. If anyone fails to meet the target he/she has to work extra hours without any pay (FGD-3). Excessive works without taking rest and meals instantly may increase productivity but it hampers physical and mental health of the workers that lead them ill-health conditions and in the long run reduce their productivity.

The survey data shows that 16.4 percent respondents are not satisfied with the available facilities of working environment. The reasons behind this dissatisfaction are lack of fresh drinking water (12.2 percent), lack of clean toilet (2.6 percent) and high temperature in the factory. The workers have reported that clean toilet, soap, towel and tissue are available when any visitor comes to visit the factory but after his return, these facilities no longer exist and employers have installed water purified long ago and they never check and change these filter routinely (FGD-2&4). Due to lack of fresh drinking water, workers have to drink this unclean water and suffer from various water-borne stomach diseases (FGD-4).

### **Safety and Security**

Every employer should ensure safe and risk free workplace for his/her workers. However, the study shows that 12.5 percent workers show their dissatisfaction regarding safety and security measures of the factory due to small factory, lack of training, merchandise on stairs, main gate is kept closed during operation. In 38.8 percent cases workers are not informed about occupation risk. Due to lack of information regarding occupational risk a number of incidences occur in RMG factories. The study shows

that 57.6 percent workers have observed incidences in their factories during works. The most common form of incidence is 'pricking of finger by needle'. Fall down due to dizziness, cutting hand, splitting foot and break down of glass of windows are also happened.

### **Workplace Harassment and Violence**

Workplace harassment and violence is common in the RMG sector of Bangladesh. The study shows that two-third workers are sufferer of oral harassment, half of the workers are sufferer of mental, one-third workers are sufferer of physical harassment and five percent workers are sufferer of sexual harassment and violence. Most of the cases, personnel engaged in lower level management—supervisor, line chief or production manager initiate these harassment. The reasons for these harassment are doing mistake in works (14.3 percent) or low productivity (12.2 percent) in case of physical; absenteeism (25.3 percent), low productivity (14.6 percent) in case of mental; inability to fulfill the production targets (46.9 percent) stipulated by their employers or works fault (15.6 percent) in case of oral harassment. Throwing buds or slapping in case of physical, giving more workloads or making standing in front of all workers in case of mental, using slang language or misbehaving in case of oral, and touching body or unethical offer in case of sexual harassment are important mode of harassment.

As most of the harassment is caused by officials who are involved in management of the factories and hold relatively upper position compared to the workers, (72.1 percent) workers do not show reaction against them in fear of losing jobs. As getting new job is a difficult task and also time consuming, and without jobs their family will suffer livelihood problem, they accepted these harassment as fait accompli. However, 22.8 percent victim workers have personally protested against their harassment.

### **LABOUR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS**

Labour-management relation is the most vital part for any organization as it is associated with diverse and complex set of aspirations, needs, attitudes and aptitude of both the employer and the workers and is regulated by the state. It also depends on political, economic and social environment of the organization where it operates.

### **Gender Discrimination**

Any type of discrimination and nepotism hamper harmonious labour relations. In the RMG sector of Bangladesh, 8.3 percent female workers do not get equal wages as per male workers although they do the same jobs. The discrimination in case of promotion is, however, more intensified. The survey reveals that about 35.2 percent female workers are victims of employers' discriminatory decisions regarding promotion. The reason behind this discrimination is that the employers usually mark the workers as best performer whose productivity is high and choose those persons for promotion who are loyal to them (FGD-4).

### **Participation in Decision Making**

In the RMG sector, workers are not allowed to take part in decision making process. The survey shows that employers never discuss with workers regarding transfer, promotion, overtime or night duties in 53.9 percent cases. The employers just declare and inform their decisions to the workers in a meeting or out of meeting.

### **Unions and Collective Bargaining**

Generally, workers join labour unions (LUs) to increase their bargaining power in the bargaining table with their employer to safeguard their wages, bonuses, benefits, compensation, overtime works, night duties and any other employment related facilities and conditions. However, establishment of LUs and workers joining to these LUs is not satisfactory in the RMG sector. The survey data reveals that only one percent workers have responded that there is LU at their organization. The main reason for this low percentage is employers' resistance in forming and joining LUs at their enterprises. The workers who try to establish a LU at their organization or assist in forming LU or become member of a LU, the employers would dismiss those workers one after another. The workers even become a member of a LU federation very secretly (FGD-2,3&4). Sometimes the employer himself establish LU at his enterprise with the help of his loyal workers and provide membership to almost all workers so that they cannot a member of other LU because the labour law states that a worker cannot be member of more than one LU within the same organization (BLA 2006).

As the number of LU is very limited in this sector, existence of collective bargaining agent (CBA) is also very limited. However, some of the LUs are established by the loyal workers of the employers that makes CBA of those enterprises under question. The survey data reveals that CBA is available only in 2.1 percent organizations. The workers claims that if the employers allow LU formation at their organization and leaders are elected through open ballot in formal election, then he/she can negotiate any claims of workers with employers and employers also transmit information to the workers through him/her and thereby the organization can avoid any unexpected situation like strike (FGD-1).

### **Dispute Settlement**

Due to lack of representative of workers in the RMG sector, dispute cannot be settled initially as the number of LUs and CBA is very limited in this sector. The workers even do not know the legal procedure of dispute handling. Most of the cases (80 percent), workers try to communicate with management regarding their claims. However, employer almost all times do not respond to the workers claims. Once, to create more pressure upon the employer workers go for illegal dispute and stop their works. The situation goes out of control and third party intervention become essential at this stage. Government official from Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments or Department of Labour, politicians and federation leaders as a third party settle disputes at the final stage by negotiating with both the parties.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the RMG sector of Bangladesh, the HRM policies and practices are not satisfactory at all. There is no proper HR planning to meet emergency labour needs, no formal procedure to recruit and select skilled personnel or to promote them, no skill enhancing formal training, no social training, inefficient fire and fast aid training, inadequate wages and benefits, delay in payments of wages and overtime payments, high work pressure, compulsory night duty, non-compliance in case of leaves and holidays, no social security programs, no security of jobs, in adequate supply of drinking water at workplace, no trade union and CBA in the RMG sector of Bangladesh. The data regarding HRM practices indicate that workers are very much dissatisfied regarding the HR policies and practices. As the



HRM practices do not satisfy them, rather de-motivate them and they do not consider themselves as an integral part of the organization.

As a result, their integrity and commitment towards the organization dissolves and they initially show non-cooperation with the employers. They strategically want to reduce their productivity and claims that their production target is too high to reach. However, due to employer's strong control over production target, they cannot exert their grievances out of their mind. As there is no LU and CBA in within the factory, they also cannot transmit their grievances to the employers. However, in some cases, when workers express their grievances to the management, the management most of the cases do not consider workers' claims. These accumulated grievances and frustrations are sometimes expressed by workers through labour dispute.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S., Raihan MZ. & Islam, N. 2013. 'Labor Unrest in the Readymade Garment Industry of Bangladesh.' *International Journal of Business and Management*, Vol. 8, No. 15, pp.70-79
- Arthur, D. 2015. *Fundamentals of Human Resources Management*. AMA Self-Study.
- Bhuiyan, MI. 2013. Reasonable Wages for Workers to Eliminate Unrest in Bangladesh's Ready-made Garments (RMG) Sector. Working Paper Series 17, Bangladesh Development Research Center. pp. 9-11
- BILS. 2019. Labour Market Situation, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) <http://bilsbd.org/labour-market-situation/>
- Bratton, J. & Gold J. 2000. *Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice*. 2nd ed. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Choudhury, S. & Rahman, MH. 2017. 'Labor Unrest in the Ready-Made Garment Industry of Bangladesh: Causes and Consequences.' *European Scientific Journal*. Vol. 13, No. 34. pp.93-97
- DeCenzo, D.A., Robbins, S.P. and Verhulst, S.L., 2013. *Fundamentals of human resource management*. 11th ed., John Wiley & Sons. 147
- Department of labour, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of Bangladesh accessed October 13, 2019 <http://103.48.18.197/bn/trade>

- Dessler, G. 1999. *Human Resource Management*. 7th ed. Prentice Hall.
- Flippo, EB. 1976. *Principles of Personnel Management*. McGraw-Hill.
- Hasan, K., Islam, A. & Arifuzzaman, M. 2015. 'A Study on the Major Causes of Labour Unrest and Its Effect on the RMG Sector of Bangladesh.' *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*. Vol. 6, Issue 11, pp.200-212
- Himi, SA. & Rahman, A. 2013. 'Workers' Unrest in Garment Industries in Bangladesh: An Exploratory Study.' *Journal of Organisation & Human Behaviour*. Vol. 2 Issue 3, pp.49-55
- Hossain, J. & Akter, A. 2016. 'State of Bangladesh Garment Sector Tripartism and the Scope Harmonious Industrial and Labour Relations,' *Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies* vol.19 Issue 2, p.7-34
- Hossain, J. 2012. 'Economic Security for the Working Poor? Trade-linked Labour Standards, Workers' Rights, and the Politics of Representation of Bangladesh's Garment Workers.' PhD Dissertation, University of Trento, pp.178-180
- Hossain, CG. & Afroze, A. 2012. 'Recent Unrest in the RMG Sector of Bangladesh: Is this an Outcome of Poor Labour Practices?' *International Journal of Business and Management*. Vol. 7, No. 3, pp.206-215
- ILO 1993. 'Resolution Concerning Statistics of Strikes, Lockouts and other Action Due to Labour Disputes.' *International Labour Organisation (ILO)*, pp.2-3
- Islam, MS., Rakib, MA. & Adnan, A. 2016. 'Ready-Made Garments Sector of Bangladesh: Its Contribution and Challenges towards Development.' *Journal of Asian Development Studies*. Vol. 5 Issue 2, pp.50-61
- Islam, N. & Ahmed, S. 2014. 'Socioeconomic Factors and the Labor Unrest in Ready-made Garment Industry of Bangladesh.' *Journal of Education Research and Behavioral Sciences*. Vol. 3(2), pp.65-71
- Kamal, M., Billah, MM. & Hossain, S. 2010. 'Labor Unrest and Bangladesh Labor Act 2006: A Study on Ready Made Garment Factories in Gazipur.' *Journal of Business and Technology*. Vol. V,

Issue 2, pp.8-17

- Khan, MAI. 2011. 'Labor Unrest in the RMG Sector of Bangladesh: A Public-Private Cooperation Perspective.' Master Thesis, Department of General and Continuing Education, North South University, Dhaka, pp.42-54
- Moiler, C & Cowling, A. 2013. *Managing Human Resources*. 3rd ed. Routledge.
- Mathis, RL. & Jackson, JH. 1991. *Human Resource Management*. 9th ed. West Publishing Company.
- Moazzem, KG. & Arfanuzzaman, M. 2018. *Livelihood Challenges of RMG Workers: Exploring Scopes within the Structure of Minimum Wages and Beyond*. CPD Working Paper 122. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
- Pauwe, J & Richardson, R. 1997. 'Introduction'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. Vol.8 No.3, pp.257-262
- Patterson, M.G., et al. 1997. *Impact of People Management Practices on Business Performance*. Institute of Personnel and Development, London.
- Pfeffer, J. 1994. *Competitive Advantage through People Unleashing the Power of the Workforce*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston.
- Rahman, M., Bhattacharya, D. & Moazzem, KG. 2008. *Bangladesh Apparel Sector in Post MFA Era: A Study on the Ongoing Restructuring Process*. Centre for Policy Dialogue in association with IFC and SEDF, Dhaka
- Stewart, GL. and Brown, KG. 2011. *Human Resource Management: Linking Strategy to Practice*. 3rd ed. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Stredwick, J. 2005. *An Introduction to Human Resource Management*. 2nd ed. London: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- The Bangladesh Labour Act 2006
- The Global Living wage Coalition, accessed January 29, 2020 <https://www.globallivingwage.org/living-wage-benchmarks/urban-bangladesh/>
- UNB, 'Gazette published fixing BDT 8,000 as minimum wage for RMG workers' United News of Bangladesh(UNB), November 26, 2018

accessed January 19, 2020  
<https://unb.com.bd/category/Bangladesh/gazette-published-fixing-tk-8000-as-minimum-wage-for-rmg-workers/7285>.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.