

# Impact of Social Compliance on Employee Motivation: An Empirical Evaluation

Mohammad Nurul Alam<sup>#1</sup>, Rosima Bte. Alias<sup>\*2</sup>, MD Mahamudul Hassan<sup>#3</sup>

<sup>1#</sup>College of Graduate Studies, Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN),  
Jalan IKRAM-UNITEN, 43000 Kajang, Malaysia.

<sup>1</sup>nurulalam1977@gmail.com

<sup>2\*</sup>College of Graduate Studies, Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN),  
Jalan IKRAM-UNITEN, 43000 Kajang, Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup>Rosima@uniten.edu.my

<sup>3</sup>Tailors Business School, Tailors University, Malaysia.,

<sup>3</sup>hassan12061@gmail.com

## Article Info

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## Abstract:

The primary purpose of this study is to observe the relationship between important social compliance variables (wages & benefits, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays, welfare facilities) and employee motivation. The present study was conducted through positivism philosophy, and by employing Herzberg Two Factor Theory for framing the hypotheses. Furthermore, the study also employed a deductive approach, explanatory research design, and a quantitative methodology. In all, 500 samples were collected from Bangladesh ready-made garment industry through self-administrated scheduled questionnaire method. In addition, the used of Smart-PLS and SPSS was used in analysing and developing the model of the present study. As such, the outcome of the analysis revealed that all five hypotheses were supported. Based on this, it is hoped that this finding will assist the policymakers, government of Bangladesh, factory owners, managers, as well as other stakeholders to formulate the succeeding policy and practice. Finally, it is recommended for further research to employ other social compliance variables, which are not included in this study.

**Keywords:** Employee motivation, social compliance, wage, discrimination, leave, harassment, welfare, RMG industry.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

As far back as the early twentieth century, workers' behaviour has been known to be motivated not only by financial reward but also influenced by how they perceive being treated or observed. This presupposes that a relationship between social compliance variables and employee motivation can be established in many occupational settings [1]. For example, the

demotivated workers' pay diminutive effort to their work by deciding to stay away from their workstation as much as possible and produce the low quality of work. However, when workforces are well motivated, they are able to help the company to survive and grow in a fast-changing workplace [33]. According to Lindner,

who designated that the most challenging role of employers is to motivate workers because their

motivating factors always change with time and environment [19]. Nowadays, human resources have become the most important asset of any organization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century [2]. Taking, for instance, the Ready-Made Garment RMG employees account directly for a significant part of the economic development of Bangladesh, because up to 82% of foreign currency is earned from this sector [3]. Therefore, the success of this industry fully depends upon the motivation of the RMG employees [4]. This is because, it has been found that an association depend on social compliance variables, such as wage, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays, welfare and employee motivation [5]. Hence, the objective of the study is aimed to observe the effect of social compliance variables on employee motivation.

## II. EMERGING PROBLEMS

Available studies have shown that the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry of Bangladesh is labour intensive. As such, the financial success of this sector mostly depends on the employees' performance. At present, it is observed that the workers of the garment industry in Bangladesh are less motivated and satisfied when carrying out their daily activities, and as well as the RMG owners have very little concern over the motivation of their workers [1]. This long-lasting problem at RMG sectors has been viewed likely to continue in the future if enough attention are not given to it [2].

However, social compliance factors are very important variables that play a major part in employee motivation. Unfortunately, these factors are perceived to be missing at present in the Bangladesh RMG industry [3], which have been viewed to be likely to continue as before in the future [20]. Hence, the need to observe the effect of social compliance variables on employee motivation is eminent.

## III. GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

Most of the available literature have all indicated that majority of the garment manufacturing companies in developing countries pay little interest to comply with rights, working standards, as well as do not pay attention to the unsafe working environment of their workers [4]. In addition, there has not been much study conducted concerning Bangladesh garment industries, which focus on the situation of workers' motivation and the relationship between social compliance and employee motivation [45]. More so, establishing the relationship between wage, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays, welfare facilities and motivation of employees are not yet established in developing countries [2]. Based on this, the present research intended to fill this gap by studying the effect of social compliance on employee motivation at the RMG industry in the Bangladeshi context.

## IV. EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

There has been some inconsistency that have taken place regarding the significance of different motivational aspects. However, the consensus is that motivation is individualistic, as it is described as being deliberate, multidimensional and that the goal of motivational theories is to forecast behaviour [27]. Additionally, the difference between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation have been made clear and significant [22]. According to [22], they are required to deal with all hygiene and motivator factors for uplifting workers' motivation [25].

## V. SOCIAL COMPLIANCE

At present, upholding social compliance standard has progressively been contemplated as one of the significant factors for competitiveness in the RMG international market [13]. This based on the fact that the workers of the RMG industry are being deprived of wages & benefits, discriminative work environment, harassed & abused, enjoy very less leave & holiday's facilities,

including employer facilitating very fewer welfare facilities for their workers [44], [41], [4], [9]. Available literature shows that independent social compliance variables are very important in the context of developing country as follows:

#### *A. Wage*

The wage standard is the most crucial cause of dissatisfaction for employees of the garment industry. As such, employees frequently try to supplement their insufficient wages by doing overtime, which is now a necessary practice in the garment industries [14]. A research was carried out by the Centre for American Progress, and specifies that average wages (51% and 46%) in Bangladesh for 2011, which are the fourth and third largest RMG manufacturers respectively, are lower than that of Indonesia and India. Therefore, it is eminent that the wage issues are significant to retain and motivate the present workers, as well as attract potential workers. Based on this, the relationship between wages over the motivation of workers in the RMG industry of Bangladesh has to be put to test through the following hypothesis.

H1: There is a significant and positive relationship between wage and motivation of employees.

#### *B. Discrimination*

Discrimination has been with humanity since time immemorial, as people have experienced of one form of it or the other [28]. As such, if the organisational norms are weak, there would certainly be a climate for gender, ethnic, colour, racial and religious discrimination [40], [37]. However, the ability to satisfy a need may or may not be related to the perceptions of discrimination. Therefore, hypothesis two is formulated as follows based on this relationship.

H2: There is a significant negative relationship between discrimination and employee motivation.

#### *C. Harassment and Abuse*

In a recent study, 1.6% of its participants stated being bullied once per week, while 8.8% indicated occasionally being bullied, and 30.4% observed bullying in the workplace of Bangladeshi private banks [43]. Based on this, studies show that a person's motivation and performance are negatively affected when harassed by anyone in any form [35]. Harassment in the form of psychological abuse is a significant source of workplace harassment [9]. This harassment & abuse incur some intangible losses like negative impacts on the motivation of employees and their productivity [30]. Hence, hypothesis three was developed as follows:

H3: There is a significant negative effect of harassment & abuse on employee motivation in the RMG industry.

#### *D. Leave and Holidays*

[46] found that legal leave & holiday's systems seek to attract workers to join the company and encourage them to do to their job, as well as motivate them to perform up to a great extent. [47] in her research revealed that, leave & holidays facilities have a significant relationship on employees work motivation. A similar study was done by [48] who recommended that organisational leave facilities may improve the intrinsic motivation of the workers. In line with these studies, [8] reported that many RMG factories in Bangladesh are frequently violating the labour law with regards to breaks, working hours, leave, and festival holidays. Similar studies were done by [5], [24], and [11] who recommended that organisational leave facilities may improve the intrinsic motivation of the workers. As such, it can be assumed that a significant relationship between leave and holiday's system, as well as workers work motivation may be associated to the Bangladesh RMG industry. Thus, hypothesis 4 was proposed as follows:

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between leave and holidays, as well as employee motivation in the RMG industry.

#### E. Welfare facilities

[29] stated that the concept of worker's welfare programmes had been used by many organisations as a strategy to boost employee motivation. This is because, it has been seen that employee welfare programmes help in a significant way, boost self-confidence and intellectual level of a worker [32], [23]. More so, welfare activities bring about economic development by improving the motivation and performance with underlying principle of making employees providing loyal services in a collaborative manner [29], [7]. In line with these studies, [49] revealed that workers' welfare programmes previously were aimed to reduce absenteeism and time off after illness. However, they have taken a broader scope this day, as they now consider almost all aspects related to a worker's wellness and personal development in the workplace. [50] study found that, the provision of welfare schemes is to generate an efficient, loyal healthy and contented labour force within the company. Thus, hypothesis five was proposed as follows:

H5: There is a significant positive effect of welfare facilities on employee motivation in the RMG industry.

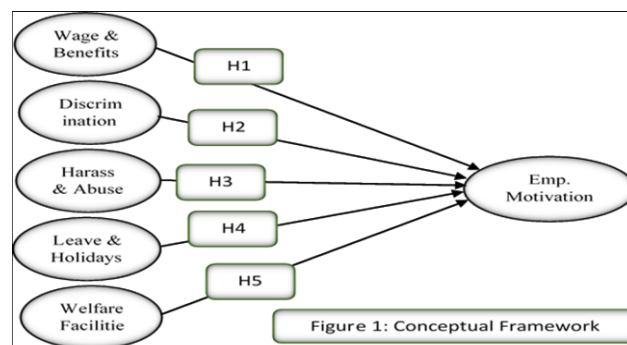
#### VI. FREDRICK HERZBERG'S TWO-FACTOR THEORY (1959)

There are mainly two types of employee motivation (extrinsic and intrinsic motivation). The latter is associated with psychological incentives like a sense of challenge and attainment. While the early is related to tangible incentives like wages and fringe benefits, job security, contractor service, promotion and growth, work condition as well as physical environment of the workplace. As such, [39] stated that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards motivate the employee, which is capable of

providing higher productivity and different important social compliance factors, such as wages & benefits, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays, as well as welfare facilities all having relationship with the motivation of employees. On the other hand, the Herzberg two factor theory provided a strong foundation of the present study by focusing on different important social compliance factors and employee work motivation at the workplaces. This is because, Herzberg keeps wages & benefits in hygiene factors. However, different other research found wages & benefits works as motivator. Also, Herzberg keep supervision in hygiene factors, similar to the supervision considered in the current study that took discrimination, harassment and abuse as hygiene factors. Similarly, leave, holidays and welfare facilities are considered as the hygiene factors. These hygiene factors are also called extrinsic motivation factors. Therefore, the present study examined this social compliance factors working as a motivating factors upon Bangladeshi RMG employees.

#### VII. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

By considering available literature, problems, gaps and underlying theories stated above, the following framework (figure 1) is developed to base the present study.



#### VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is conducted under positivism philosophy, deductive approach, explanatory research design, cross-sectional time horizon and based on quantitative methodology to



measure all constructs of the model, which include wage, discrimination, harassment & benefits, leave & holidays, welfare facilities as well as employee work motivation. A structured and self-administered questionnaire was used to gather the sample from 3,436,847 employees working in RMG industry of Bangladesh. A simple random sampling procedure was employed to select the 500 participants for the study. The scheduled questionnaire method was considered to collect data, and the items of the questionnaire were taken from existing literature. In order to determine the respondents' degree of agreeableness, the questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, while the Smart-PLS is employed for hypothesis testing mainly for the purpose of data analysis. In addition, the descriptive analysis was carried out by using SPSS, to determine the demographic profile.

## IX. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In the present study, there are higher number of representation of female (57.20%), while there also exist different designated employees that were selected amongst them, where the height number of representation were from machine operators (54.20%) and the lowest being marker men (0.40%). The married respondents were 52.20%, while the single ones were 45.60% and 2.20% were divorced. The 61.60% age range was from 18 to 25 years, which was higher and above 35 years old category, representing the lowest (3.20%). Most of the respondents' education level was secondary (49.00%) and above secondary was the lowest (6.40%). More so, the 39.40% respondents were less than 3 years of experience and the lowest was 3.20% who had more than 12 years of experience. The higher wage earners (55.40%) representation were from the range of 5000 to 8000 taka, while lowest (18%) respondents wage range were above 12000 taka.

The proposed conceptual framework of the present study was tested using the Smart-PLS 3.0.

The composite reliability, factor analysis and average variance extracted (AVE) of the variables as presented in Table 1 were tested to ensure the model is valid. Furthermore, no items were deleted as the factor loadings were in between 0.719 to 0.843 to fulfil the minimum threshold criterion of 0.50 [10]. The composite reliability and AVE, as presented in Table 1 provided information regarding item reliability and validity. The composite reliability for all the item was in an acceptable range of reliability, which was above the cut-off value of 0.70 [31]. For the purpose of validity, the study revealed that the convergent validity for every latent variable was greater than the recommended value of 0.5 (50%), which indicated acceptable convergence of each construct [16].

Table 1: Internal consistency and convergence validity results

Factors/Items	F.L	C.A	C.R	AVE
<b>Discrimination</b>		<b>0.855</b>	<b>0.896</b>	<b>0.632</b>
D1	0.784			
D2	0.797			
D3	0.814			
D4	0.808			
D5	0.770			
<b>Emp. Motivation</b>		<b>0.883</b>	<b>0.909</b>	<b>0.588</b>
EM1	0.793			
EM2	0.780			
EM3	0.836			
EM4	0.758			
EM5	0.744			
EM6	0.733			
EM7	0.719			
<b>Harass &amp; Abuse</b>		<b>0.866</b>	<b>0.903</b>	<b>0.650</b>
HA1	0.758			
HA2	0.819			
HA3	0.843			
HA4	0.796			
HA5	0.814			
<b>Leave &amp; Holidays</b>		<b>0.839</b>	<b>0.886</b>	<b>0.608</b>
LH1	0.811			
LH2	0.773			
LH3	0.791			

LH4	0.767			
LH5	0.758			
<b>Wage &amp; Benefits</b>		<b>0.847</b>	<b>0.891</b>	<b>0.620</b>
WB1	0.790			
WB2	0.832			
WB3	0.804			
WB4	0.783			
WB5	0.724			
<b>Welfare Facilities</b>		<b>0.854</b>	<b>0.896</b>	<b>0.632</b>
WF1	0.805			
WF2	0.784			
WF3	0.834			
WF4	0.764			
WF5	0.788			

CR: Composite Reliability; CA: Cronbach's Alpha

Additionally, discriminant validity reflects the actual distinctiveness of one construct from other constructs. The discriminant validity was measured by Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). According to [21], the values of the HTMT must be lower than 0.90. However, in term of the present study, the upper threshold value was 0.472 as shown in table 2 to comply with the discriminant validity because the value is lower than 0.90.

Table 2: HTMT results

Factors	D	EM	HA	LH	WB	WF
D						
EM	0.345					
HA	0.406	0.389				
LH	0.235	0.673	0.281			
WB	0.278	0.424	0.472	0.365		
WF	0.376	0.373	0.295	0.208	0.381	

Based on the above statement, all the requirements have been fulfilled and the criterion to test the present study relationships have also been achieved. According to [10], the bootstrapping procedure was done to estimate *t* statistics and confidence intervals. Table 3 and Figure 2 presented the path coefficient assessment result, where all the proposed hypotheses were supported.

The supported hypotheses are statistically significant at least at the level of 0.05.

Table 3: Path coefficient result

Hypotheses	Beta	T	P	Decision
H1: W -> EM	0.104	2.031	0.043	Supported
H2: D -> EM	-0.094	2.125	0.034	Supported
H3: HA -> EM	-0.115	2.593	0.010	Supported
H4: LH -> EM	0.443	9.883	0.000	Supported
H5: WF -> EM	0.170	3.670	0.000	Supported

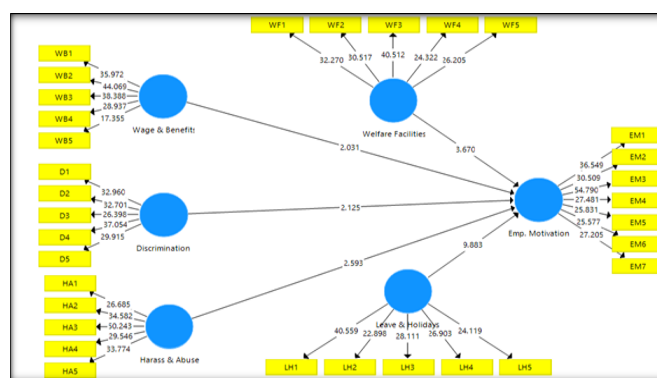


Figure 2: Structural model (Bootstrapping with inner t-values)

## X. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

From the results of the present study, it is discovered that among the five predictors, the leave & holidays factors are the most significant positive relationship towards the employee motivation, which is also supported by the findings of [36] and [15]. This is because; it is found that the employee is motivated when they get adequate leave & holiday's facility. As it is found in existing literature, workers of RMG industry are deprived to get sufficient leave. Therefore, management of RMG industry should provide sufficient leave & holidays to their employee to keep them motivated.

The second most influential predictor is welfare facilities. This factor has a positive and significant effect on employee motivation, which is also in

line with the result of [34] and [26]. Hence, the RMG workers will be motivated if they get adequate welfare facilities.

On the other hand, harassment & abuse have a significant negative effect on employee motivation and the result is also supported by the previous studies like [38] and [6], who found a significant negative relationship between harassment & abuse, with employee motivation. Therefore, if the RMG employees are free from any kinds of sexual and physical harassment, as well as abuse, will no doubt motivate the workers towards their work.

Furthermore, the result also showed that wage has a significant positive effect on employee motivation. This finding is in line with that of [17] and [39] who revealed a positive relationship between wage and employee motivation. As such, the RMG employees will also be motivated by the wage. If the management can ensure minimum and fair wages for their employees, it will work as a great motivator.

The result of discrimination and employee motivation is aligned with the result of [18], [42] who found a negative relationship between discrimination and employee motivation. Therefore, the management of RMG must ensure the workplace is free from any kinds of discrimination, which is based on religion, ethnicity, cast, colour, sex etc., which will no doubt make the employees to be motivated.

## XI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study also finds that there is a significant relation among wage, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays, as well as welfare for the motivation of employees. As such, the findings of the present study are worthwhile for all stakeholders, ranging from employees to employers of the garment sector as well as various private organisations to the government. More so, the present study will encourage the Bangladeshi RMG producers to carry out steps for future preparedness in the competitive RMG market.

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Finally, the study recommends providing employees sufficient wage & welfare facilities, leave & holidays on time and make a non-discriminative and harassment free work culture to keep the employees motivated and productive. Thus, a practical implementation of a decent wage package, leave & holidays and adequate welfare facilities can be well strategized and put in to practice. Similarly, a written policy can be adopted against discrimination, harassment and abuse.

Theoretically, this study has contributed to the body of knowledge by uncovering the causal relationship among wages, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays and welfare facilities as independent variables, and employee motivation as the dependent variable. Extensive literature reviews on wages, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holidays and welfare facilities as well as employee work motivation, will also be helpful for future researchers. Additionally, the underpinning theory considered for the present study revealed a relationship model between wages, discrimination, harassment & abuse, leave & holiday, welfare facilities, and employee work motivation. Beside hypotheses testing, this study had fundamental objectives of generalisation of the findings for future studies in a similar developing country context in the field of emerging manufacturing industries. As such, a comprehensive literature reviews, viable methodological tools, key findings, recommendations will also be helpful for future researchers. Finally, the study will be useful for not only practitioners and academics of Bangladesh but also globally as a whole in a similar non-west developing country context.

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