Readymade Garments Industry (RMG) Sector in Bangladesh: Is Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) provision will be regulated by the Entrepreneurs or Government?

Fazluz Zaman  
_Lecturer, North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh_  
Munshi Samaduzzaman  
_Adjust Lecturer, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh_  
Munshi Shamsuzzaman Irfan  
_Adjust Lecturer, Academies Australasia, Sydney, Australia_

ABSTRACT
Bangladesh readymade garments business has shaped an innovation concerning factory engagement in the industrialized division. A resource of inexpensive as well as readily accessible work has back to the speedy development of the readymade garments (RMG) sector in Bangladesh. The firm work of millions of employees has likewise contributed in constructing the apparels as the utmost export recipient of the nation. Nevertheless, the labor atmosphere of the apparel businesses is not safe, pleasant and vigorous for the employees, particularly for the women employees. Several of the problems of factory employees are connected to the social setting of the workroom.

INTRODUCTION
In Bangladesh, as in furthermost nations in the west the accountability for wellbeing as well as safety at labour is positioned on the manager, even though the government has certain kind of work-related health upkeep services as well as wellbeing principles. Work-related health service areas are provided as welfares by companies and normally are detached from further unrestricted wellbeing facilities (ILO, 2010). In the unindustrialized nations, numerous of which are experiencing rapid development, the standing of work-related health is progressively comprehended. It is of apprehension that in Bangladesh like further developing nations preceding malnutrition as well as a tall occurrence of communicable illness, nevertheless, the glitches of coverage to work-related threats.

The employment regulations in Bangladesh have been outlined which necessitates companies to embark on corrective procedures on work-related safety as well as health. Dearth of consciousness, preparation, non-agreements of OHS values by the companies, the undesirable participation of the employees could not attain the objective of providing protection and wellbeing to the employees as projected by the regulations (ILO, 2010). In Bangladesh, the main deliberations in businesses are advanced production as well as superior financial yields. The foremost finances centered on the company’s advantage. Little significance is concentrated on the collective outlays in terms of effects on employees, people, and the atmosphere. The influences are compounded through unsuitable importance of life reflections, discomfort and sorrow, opportunity charges as well as queries of equity (ILO, 2010). The approximations of straight financial expenses and welfares are frequently completed keeping sideways the moral obligations to the society as an entirety. Entrepreneurs frequently contemplate the regulatory agreements as well as associated executive costs constraining to efficiency.

By means of such work-related health and safety concerns rests unnoticed. Stretch has arisen to contemplate the Work-related Wellbeing in its factual essence in a universal approach. The strategy creators, lawmakers, managers, and every other associates of the society necessitate understanding the connection of proper social growth with financial improvement through a scheme of respectable practices of work-related safety and health in labour places of manufacturing growth that stimulates the collective aims. There must be consciousness about significances of not talking as well as non-implementations of work-related safety and health principles.
PURPOSE
The initial purpose of this academic journal writing is to have an extensive as well as comprehensive understanding and assessment of the Garments Industry in Bangladesh particular on the Readymade Garments Industry (RMG) in relation or association to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and its underlying provisions. Also, this journal will look into the possibilities of OHS regulation within the RMG sector in Bangladesh as tailored by some entrepreneurs and or the government itself.

METHODOLOGY
The design or approach of this journal are concentrated on various information or evidence with regards to Occupational Health and Safety as connected and or linked to the RMG sector in Bangladesh. This will cater primarily on two essential points, first is on a latest case study presentation concerning to a tragic incident in RMG factory that has been operating in Bangladesh, “Tarzeen Fashions” in particular. Next, will be on a comprehensive critical analysis of such literature review or studies that will aim to assess the current position of OHS provisions within the RMG sector and also to point out and realize whether OHS based regulations are timely done by the entrepreneurs and or the government.

LITERATURE REVIEW/FINDINGS
The Bangladesh apparel is notorious for its wicked wellbeing record. Within a period of Tarzeen Fashion collapse and that around 110 employees were dead and had mislaid their lives. Among 2005 as well as 2010, at slightest 172 factory employees were killed (Das, 2008). Maximum of the wounded were generating garments for renowned global products when they perished. Recent discontent in the RMG Sector has been due to tragic fire associated occasion such as the disastrous episode in "Tarzeen Fashions" on the peripheries of Capital Dhaka, in Bangladesh wherein 110 people perished owing to fire safety associated matters and apprehensions (Haider 2007; Das, 2008). Practically each year, this kind of fire connected carelessness is happening in RMG businesses in Bangladesh. Subsequently, Occupational Health and Safety matters are desecrated not proficient, completely preoccupied and thus lots of unsolicited happenings are taking position. Nowadays the inquiry whether business persons or government will come forward with innovative provision/guideline or government is going to carry new-fangled processes to make certain that the RMG associated workplaces are harmless as well as safeguarded (ILO, 2010; Razzaue and Eusuf, 2007).

The readymade garment (RMG) segment shows a very important part in the financial growth of Bangladesh. The entire influence of RMG to exports is further than 76 per cent of complete export incomes (ILO, 2010; Razzaue and Eusuf, 2007). This seemingly striking routine of trade has been single-handed determined by RMG sector, which has observed its portion of entire transfers increasing from almost nonentity in the year 1980 up to 75 per cent during the year 2007 ((ILO, 2010; Razzaue and Eusuf, 2007). Work-related health as well as safety provision in Bangladesh is still in the developing phase. From within that point, work-related health and safety denotes predominantly to requirements of employees of businesses or various industrial developments but then again does not totally shield all works of the nation. The central regulations connected to work-related health and safety in this nation is Factory Act of 1965 as well as the Factory Rule of 1979 ((ILO, 2010; Das, 2008). There are quantities of further decrees as well as guidelines that are likewise have various provisions associated to work-related health as well as safety. These regulations have requirements on work-related sanitation, occupational sicknesses, manufacturing misfortunes, security of females and young individuals in unsafe employments and likewise shield circumstances of labour, waged hours, safety accommodations, and many others. But utmost of the regulations are deficient in standard morals as well as not precise but somewhat general in environment.

From such positive labour atmosphere influences, manufacturing development, technologies and poisonous materials, definite heights or concentrations of matters in the mid-air have been suggested by numerous global organizations in addition to organizations, which are deliberated to be harmless,
are executed in the particular nation (Paul -Majumder, 2008). Occupational Safety and Health Administration has been denoted for the allowed heights or numerous standard restrictions for working setting. In Bangladesh not one association and or agencies have been industrialized which might be a recommendation center for diverse standard or work-related permitted restrictions (Paul-Majumder, 2008). In place of predominant guidelines as well as protocols in Bangladesh are inadequate or scarce in expressions of values and tolerable parameters. Furthermore, the enforcement division, the department of examination, which is meagre in quantity as well as quality, might not successfully impose to increase the work-related safety as well as health in Bangladesh. Moreover, the enormous scale admission of ladies into the employment marketplace has been unique of the furthermore remarkable landscpae of latest development in Bangladesh. The occupation has extended in an unparalleled custom in the recognized export grounded segments, predominantly in readymade garments business (Paul -Majumder, 2008). In detail, at contemporary Bangladesh garments business is the major employer of workers in the proper industrial sector such as women employees that accounts for around 70 per cent of whole occupation in apparel business of Bangladesh (Paul- Majumder and Begum, 2000). The quick growth of the apparel zone, sideways with its recruitment of female employees, has made it a prevalent matter of apprehension amongst rule makers, advocates as well as researchers (Kibria, 2001).

The increasing consideration is being rewarded to the numerous features of the existence of the employees like waged environment, work-related safety and threats, well-being, living circumstances, collective life and a lot more as going past the humble scheme of occupation, creating revenue for the employees (Paul-Majumder, 2008). The apparel factories are very disposed to fire mishaps since the supplies utilized in these factories are extremely flammable. In furthermore of the workshops firefighting gear is insignificant. Thus, fire exists and or alternative exists are likewise inattentive. The passageways in the factories are consequently narrow that employees cannot leave the factory buildings effortlessly in a crisis condition (Paul-Majumder, 2008). The solitary exit gate is retained locked throughout labor period. As a consequence, the employees though functioning in the factories linger susceptible to fire misfortunes and they constantly burden about fire dangers. Many employees have been destroyed in factory fire in Bangladesh.

Occupational Health and Safety are gradually vital and compulsory manufacturing function. Security gaps are severe matters and the establishments concerned are severely disciplined by the safety controlling establishments for some actions of oversight and directive (International Labor Organization, 2010). Inappropriately in Bangladesh, state security guideline and involvement are tremendously underprivileged. Like the whole thing also, it is likewise referred further to a routine than several anticipation or examination purpose as grounded merely on the impulses and wishes of the factory proprietor (International Labor Organization, 2010). Over periods no valuable safety assessment has been realized, not even some compassionate of inquiry or optimistic actions from the RMG factory proprietors or examination experts who are predominantly accountable for protection in the workroom. Although the Bangladeshi administration has three departments and regulations to defend the privileges of the employees (Paul-Majumder, 2008), unfortunately no one of the departments conveys out their responsibilities by the employees as well as takes stages to avoid the relapse of such tragic incidents like of Tarzeeen Fashions incidence. In previous 10 ages there were further than 100 fires in workshops in Bangladesh (Paul-Majumder, 2008). The administrative centre of Chief Inspector of Factories in the Ministry of Industry is the chief institute responsible for visiting businesses as well as to guarantee health and safety obedience of the factory industries (Paul-Majumder, 2008). Nevertheless, this place of work is not armed with acceptable staff as well as logistics. The last month’s fire accident at Tarzeeen Fashions within the Ready Made Garments (RMG) segment of Bangladesh are miserable prompts of the dangerous position or standing of work-related health and safety in the nation, and the nonappearance of decent societal safety for the relatives of the deceased in addition to the wounded (International Labor Organization, 2010; Das, 2008). Despite the remarkable achievement of the RMG segment, deprived working settings in the factories as well as the absence of
social obedience are stern apprehensions. For instance, there has been an increasing terror in Bangladesh that the readymade apparel division may surface a weakening in demand (International Labor Organization, 2010; Das, 2008). As an upshot, the garments division in Bangladesh prolonged with unparalleled triumph. In spite of deprived working circumstances and the absence of collective agreement endures to be a reason for serious apprehension.

Meanwhile during May of 2006, the Bangladesh RMG has been affected with precise severe labour discontent, consequential in comprehensive impairment to garment factories by the employees besides at periods intimidating the very presence of the industry (International Labor Organization, 2010; Das, 2008). The non-compliance of workroom wellbeing, safety as well as security guidelines lead to dangerous work surroundings in which numerous employees become sick or wounded, or mislay their lives through misfortunes, fires and panics (ILO, 2010). Generally, rendering to a checking report by Fair Labour Association (2005, in Paul-Majumder, 2008) permitted Workplace Code of Conduct Violations in Clothing Factories, Bangladesh completes poorly paralleled with further Asian nations in the parts of consciousness of labour regular programs, compulsory labour, as well as nuisance, even though defilements of working hour principles are somewhat subordinate than the further Asian nations excluding China (ILO, 2010). Nonetheless, labour values in RMG division in Bangladesh are commonly reflected to be underprivileged, they are subordinate than in equivalent nations (ILO, 2010).

As a consequence, RMG businesses in Bangladesh have been fronting substantial heaviness from global consumers for obedience with Codes of Conduct.

CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS: TAZREEN FASHIONS TRAGIC INCIDENT
The Bangladesh factory making dresses for Wal-Mart Stores Inc previously a November fire that destroyed 112 workers was functioning deprived of a safety authorization as well as had been cautioned twofold to advance situations there, an emergency facilities official assumed. "We declined to repeat the authorization for the reason that there was an absence of fire safety procedures," told by Abu Nayeem Mohammad Shahidullah, Executive of Fire Service as well as Civil Defence voiced Reuters in Dhaka. "The fire safety authorization terminated on June 30, but the division did not reintroduce it for the reason that fire safety requirements had not remained in place," he said. He added that in July a notice had been directed to the administration of the factory, which is possessed by the garments producer Tuba Group.

The Tazreen fire happening instigated community disgrace as about 100,000 individuals have attended the funeral of 53 employees whose bodies were being unidentifiable. In straight reply to the fire, the government has ongoing inspecting every of the nation’s 4,500 apparel factories (International Labor Organization, 2010). Thus, of 232 factories positioned in the extent where Tazreen factory is situated, 64 have been revealed to the absence of security authorization and or some safety procedures, like that of fire extinguishers. This administration resourcefulness is unique of the optimistic outcomes of disastrous occasion at Tazreen (International Labor Organization, 2010; Das, 2008).

Most events tangled promoted from the factory’s running, whether or not this expected an admiration for global employment standards. Consequently, although Walmart as well as the European association explored and criticized Tazreen factory, (Haider 2007; Das, 2008) it however fortunately sustained to obtain orders like, C and A confessed to the ordering of around 220,000 sweaters from Tazreen Fashions. Nevertheless, the Tazreen circumstance designates that, in order to acquire cheaper possessions, businesses are not merely enthusiastic to permit individuals to labor in tremendously hazardous settings, nonetheless that they will avoid accountability, as rapidly as occasions yield place (Haider 2007; Das, 2008).

The Bangladesh government was likewise earning from the factory’s considerable assembly. The apparel business presently confirms 80 per cent of Bangladesh’ whole export incomes and, consequently, rests practically unobstructed by the administration. At this instance, the government is
failing to achieve its duty to safeguard its residents’ human rights, since it takes to let unembellished employment as well as human moralities exploitations run proliferating slightly than challenging its main income merchants (Haider 2007). The government and business managements are not conscious enough for protection as well as physical well-being of employees as in social happenings by the safety guard to employees (International Labor Organization, 2010; Das, 2008). Not adequate fire exit gates as well as ventilation for mid-air movement of business structure.

The administration deals no selection communication for some types of employee (Das, 2008). It is instituted that utmost of the apparel businesses do not utilize safety signal according to ILO agreements (International Labor Organization, 2010). Most of fire as well as smoke bells do not work in apparel businesses and numerous garment businesses in Bangladesh do not have fire in addition to smoke alarm schemes. Indeed, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers as well as Exporters Association (BGMEA, 2010) has articulated its private code of behaviour for the business, in partnership with the foremost employment unions, and has agreed up a compliance division that observes labor situations in its affiliate factories (UNIFEM 2008). During the year 2006, Government agreed an innovative labor code, subsequently after twelve years of discussion and engagement. It relates to every employee, and the new-fangled segments applicable to the garment business comprising of transcribed agreements and individuality cards, well-timed compensation, and explicit regulations on occupational health and safety within the work area (UNIFEM 2008).

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

Particular considerations, although being constructively adjacent to the subject beneath OHS and factory management reflection for safe and healthy workplace, unavoidably embark on the ideas and concepts for literatures and a particular case study is the main limitation of this journal. The journal has pursued proper data and information pertaining on safety standards and management for garment factories in Bangladesh in addition to an investigation of the works of authors contributing to the application of literature studies supporting such specific query or question.

Originality/value

The paper is unique in that it pursues to associate an analysis of the literature on RMG sector in Bangladesh that links to the Occupational Health and Safety and from such case scenario of the Tarzeen Fashions incident as well as understanding certain regulations on OHS as grounded by the entrepreneurs or the government of Bangladesh. Likewise, the presence of critical assessment of various literature support and influence from realization and recommendations of proper actions to do within the RMG sectors of the country.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

In discussion with Bangladeshi mergers and the integrating proposals established by International Textile, Garment as well as Leather Workers Federation, there have been accumulated lists of actions that businesses obtaining apparels from Bangladesh must yield within their private resource sequence to avoid upcoming misfortunes. There is ample need to call upon global products obtaining from factories where current tragedies happened to safeguard those victims as well as their relatives take reasonable as well as sensible payment. Consequently, a harmless and safe working setting is the essential right of the employees from the worldwide social rights devices are to be protected in Bangladesh due to absence of application mechanisms and reluctance of various individuals that such issues will be solved. Garment makers persistent to construct garments factories without appropriate structure and services cannot be defensible. The current phases engaged by government as well as BGMEA presented several development in taking OHS procedures in Bangladeshi factories. The government as well as the entrepreneurs of garment factories must be more worried about manufacturing safety connected rules as well as guidelines which will minimalize their expenditures as well as the austere fatalities due to fire accidents and many others. Examination, reporting as well as obedience of prevailing nationwide and global regulations and morals must be imposed appropriately to lessen additional events owing to absence of occupational protection requirements. In the
circumstance of factories functioning in buildings covering more than single enterprise, in accumulation to the events of tragic incidents must have a corresponding fire alternative strategy and measures, reachable firefighting equipment, selected and skilled employees, in addition to a platform of consistent fire workouts for the whole structure.

There is a need to set up sophisticated fact-finding group to demeanor investigations into misfortunes at factories involving employee losses or numerous grave injuries. Such a group must conduct a systematic examination into the reasons of tragic incident as well as issue a community report of the investigation. The government of Bangladesh should chase every pertinent illegal charge against the company in the situation of OHS based negligence. Moreover, there is a need for appropriate enlarge fire exit gates as well as enough ventilation with appropriate care for air passage must be intended for manufacturing building. Consistent fire workouts must be apprehended, at least twice a year. There is a need for permanent medical maintenance as well as first aid management with doctors and extremely trained nurses for the employees. Thus, every building of garment businesses must have appropriate notice scheme such as to how to get out of the building in case of accidents like fire inside the factory. Similarly, it is necessary for the Bangladesh government as well as factory management to make certain as well as ensure the elimination of every illicit or perverse difficulties to the record-keeping of factory businesses and its underlying unions. In addition, there is a need for application as well as conduction of regular safety and health auditing of RMG grounded factories to guarantee the services are yielding with appropriate organizational as well as fire safety criterions. Also, the development of an applicable system that comprises expressive appointment with labor clusters at every phase of the assessment procedure, comprising of such pre-audit scheduling, preparations for labor clusters to escort product legislatures to perceive examinations at definite RMG sector facilities, as well as the review of audit judgments. There is ample requirement also to notify the Bangladesh administration as well as BGMEA when factory audits and recognize health as well as safety threats, and openly reveal the outcomes of such OHS based audits. Also, there is ample need for accurate information that factory workers must know about as well as proper access to reliable mechanisms in direction to report data about health as well as safety dangers. Guarantee respect for employees’ globally documented rights of autonomy of connotation and shared bargaining of which the entrepreneurs or government ideally play a dominant part in endorsing occupational health as well as safety practices.

REFERENCES


