

## Study on Labor migration in Apparel industry

Md Basarat Ali

*Deputy Manager, Square Fashions Ltd, Vhaluka, Mymensingh, Bangladesh*

*M.Sc.In Textile Engineer, Bangladesh University of Textiles (BUTex)*

*Corresponding Author: Prof.Md.Abul Kashem*

*Vice-Chancellor*

*Bangladesh University of Textiles (BUTex)*

**ABSTRACT:** *The Ready Made Garment industry is the heart of the economy of Bangladesh. The industry is employing about 4.2 million people, highest among industrial employment. Labor migration is a common phenomenon in this sector. Frequent labor migration affects the total apparel production and reduces the production including quality. There are some reasons behind this labor migration such as lack of good working environment, proper safety & comfort, higher wages, available transpiration, housing facility etc. The main focus of this research was to identify the impact of safety and comfort on the labor migration. To do that a semi structured questionnaire was prepared containing 09 (nine) questions for safety and 13 (thirteen) questions for comfort with the help of some experts and honorable thesis supervisor. Then a survey was carried out on 250 stakeholders (50 from each factory) from different 05 (five) garment factories. Most of the participants in this survey were workers but administrative personnel were also involved. The total survey was done using direct interview by the researcher. It was found from this research that the labor migration could be minimized if the workers get the respectable working environment as well as proper safety & comfort.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Labor migration, safety, comfort, Productivity.*

Date of Submission: 06-10-2020

Date of acceptance: 19-10-2020

### I. INTRODUCTION

The working environment in the garment manufacturing units in Bangladesh is not so healthy and not so safe for the workers, resulting in several health problems. Apparel industry is a labor intensive industry. In an existing garment factory or in a new set-up workers' safety & comfort must be considered in the first place. Workers are the main resources that keep machine running in a factory, and making the desired products. In an unhealthy workplace worker could not work for a long time. There are many issues for Labor migration in Apparel industry, among those issues safety & comfort factors are the major issues in order to Labor migration in Apparel industry. So we will discuss safety & comfort factors for labor migration of the workers in Apparel industry.

The study will be conducted in five (05) garment manufacturing units located in Gazipur & Mymensingh Zone, BANGLADESH. The study will be exploring the factor of safety and comfort having direct emphasis on labor migration in the RMG sector of Bangladesh and address the problem thereon.

The study will be a structured questionnaire consisting close ended questions among 250 respondents, consists of 250 workers includes male & female workers. As workers are the most important stakeholder related with labor unrest and as workers are the major portion of the total number of people engaged in RMG sector so majority of the respondents are workers. I will select 50 workers randomly of each factory. So from five factories, respondents will be 250. I will also collect data about labor migration from the Human Research (HR) representatives of each factory.

Both primary and secondary sources of data will be used. Primary data will be collected through interview and questionnaire methods. Secondary data will be collected from different relevant publications, dissertations, books, journals, newspaper articles and reports, government publications, rules, acts, websites etc.

## II. SAFETY & COMFORT FACTORS OF RMG INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH

Safety:-Safety is defined as the condition of a “stable state” of an organization or place doing what it is supposed to do. What it is supposed to do means following national codes and standards, linked with architectural and engineering designs, corporate vision and mission statements, and operational plans and personnel policies. For any organization, place, or function, large or small, safety is a normative concept. It complies with situation-specific definitions of what is expected and acceptable

Thing that includes safety practice as follows

- Safe premises
- Safe machinery and materials
- Safe systems of work
- Information, instruction, training and supervision
- Suitable working environment and facilities.

There are several safety issues for RMG industry but they can be classified mainly on followings

- Fire safety
- Building Safety
- Electrical Safety
- Personal Safety/OHS
- Environmental Safety

Among those safety issues we will discuss on followings -----

- Availability of PPE
- Emergency exit kept open always
- Emergency evacuation systems
- Presence of enough fire extinguishers
- Presence of enough first aid boxes
- Pure drinking water facilities
- Monthly preventive & schedule machine maintenance
- Factory building condition
- Proper wiring & labeling of electrical installations

### • Response regarding Safety

Topics	Factory-A	Factory-B	Factory-C	Factory-D	Factory-E
Availability of PPE	100%	96%	84%	66%	21%
Emergency exit kept open always	100%	95%	80%	65%	75%
Emergency evacuation systems	88%	91%	62%	0%	0%
Presence of enough fire extinguishers	100%	95%	83%	67%	100%
Presence of enough first aid boxes	92%	94%	74%	9%	0%
Pure drinking water facilities	100%	93%	83%	64%	0%
Monthly preventive & schedule machine maintenance	89%	91%	80%	0%	69%
Factory building condition	100%	100%	87%	46%	71%
Proper wiring & labeling of electrical installations	98%	100%	92%	78%	89%

### COMFORT:

Comfort is a pleasant condition of being physically or mentally relaxed, happy, warm *etc.*

If we are doing something in comfort, we are physically relaxed and contented, and are not feeling any pain or other unpleasant sensations. Comfortable working environment can do more than make workers happy: it can improve productivity as well.



Fig.1. Comfort comparison during sitting & standing at work.

The following comfort issues we will discuss -----

- Proper lighting condition
- Proper noise controls
- Proper dust controls
- Proper temperature controls
- Sanitation facilities
- Congested working area
- Proper sitting & standing working position
- Medical facilities
- Satisfaction of wages
- Festival bonus & allowances facilities
- Annual production incentives & profit share facilities
- Over time facilities
- Mental Harassments

**Response regarding Comfort**

Topics	Factory-A	Factory-B	Factory-C	Factory-D	Factory-E
Proper lighting condition	100%	100%	81%	79%	72%
Proper noise controls	87%	95%	82%	77%	83%
Proper dust controls	87%	94%	69%	71%	86%
Proper temperature controls	100%	89%	67%	71%	50%
Sanitation facilities	100%	94%	87%	79%	82%
Congested working area	95%	88%	78%	72%	85%
Proper sitting & standing working position	90%	92%	80%	85%	50%
Medical facilities	100%	91%	83%	0%	0%
Satisfaction of wages	95%	90%	81%	46%	70%
Festival bonus & allowances facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Annual production incentives & profit share facilities	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Over time facilities	100%	100%	100%	0%	78%
Mental Harassments	93%	91%	84%	69%	74%

**III. GARMENTS INDUSTRY AND LABOR MIGRATION**

Migration is the act of people moving from one place to another, especially in order to find work.

Movement of people to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions. (English oxford dictionary)

The process of a person or people travelling to a new place or country, usually in order to find work and live there temporarily or permanently(Cambridge dictionary)

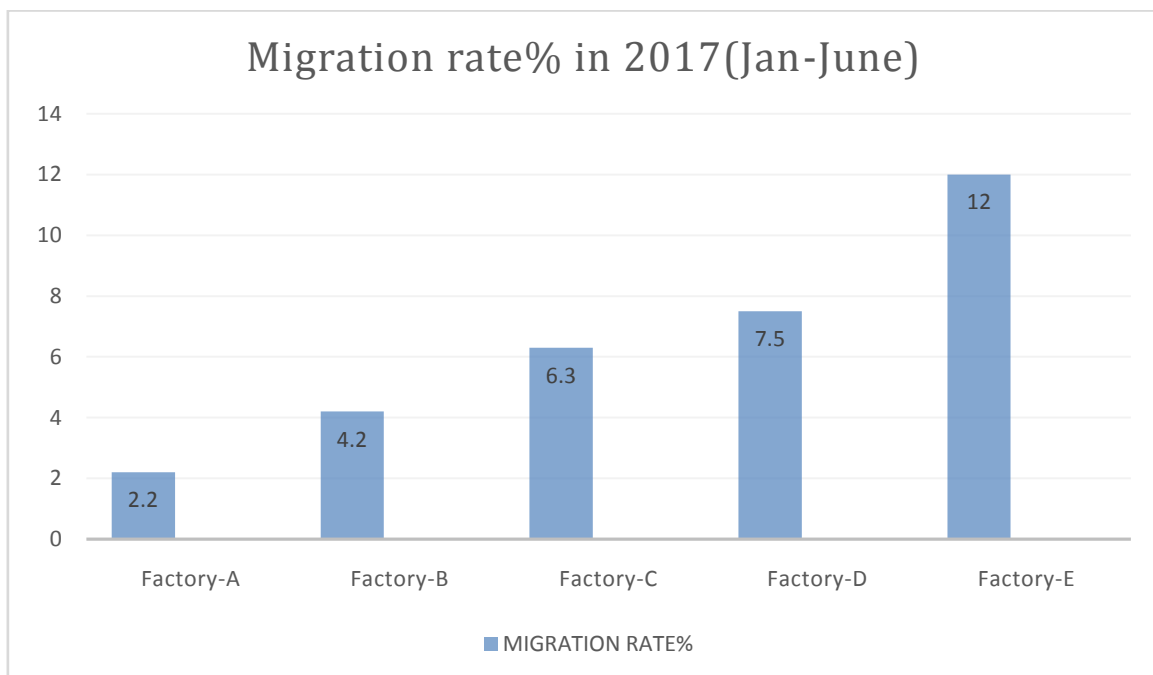
Why do workers migrate?

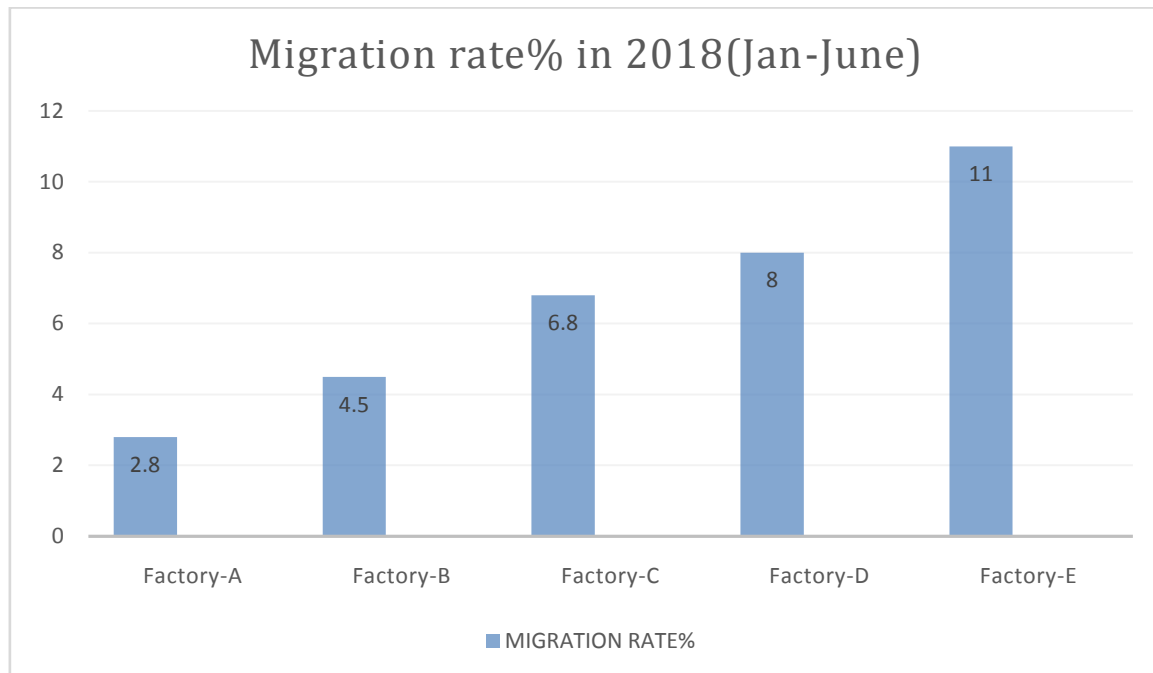
- In search of higher incomes.
- Lured by friends and relatives and social networks.
- In search of exploration.
- In search of curiosity.
- Fleeing from harassment and conflict.
- Poor working environment.
- In order to be Higher Designation.

- On time salary & other financial benefits.
- Good Yearly salary increment.
- Suitable duty time

**Response regarding labor migration**

Response	Average worker per month in 2017 (Jan-June)	Average resign worker per month in 2017 (Jan-June)	Average worker per month in 2018 (Jan-June)	Average resign worker per month in 2018 (Jan-June)	Migration rate% in 2017 (Jan-June)	Migration rate% in 2018 (Jan-June)
Factory-A	6240	138	6942	192	2.2%	2.8%
Factory -B	3250	135	3435	156	4.2%	4.5%
Factory -C	2360	148	2480	169	6.3%	6.8%
Factory -D	2180	165	2290	185	7.5%	8.0%
Factory -E	300	35	380	42	12%	11%





#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There are many issues for Labor migration in Apparel industry, among those issues safety & comfort factors are the prime facts.

After concluding the research work, we have been seen the below results (For five factories)

Factory –A in 2017 (Jan-Jun) & in 2018(Jan-Jun) Labor migration rate is 2.2% & 2.8%,  
 Factory –B in 2017 (Jan-Jun) & in 2018(Jan-Jun) Labor migration rate is 4.2% & 4.5%,  
 Factory –C in 2017 (Jan-Jun) & in 2018(Jan-Jun) Labor migration rate is 6.3% & 6.8%,  
 Factory –D in 2017 (Jan-Jun) & in 2018(Jan-Jun) Labor migration rate is 7.5% & 8.0%,  
 Factory –E in 2017 (Jan-Jun) & in 2018(Jan-Jun) Labor migration rate is 12% & 11%,

The more the Safety & Comfort is good, the less Labor Migration.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The Ready-Made Garments (RMG) industry occupies a unique position in the Bangladesh economy. It is the largest exporting industry in Bangladesh, which experienced phenomenal growth during the last 25 years. By taking advantage of Multi Fiber Agreement (MFA) of GATT, the industry plays a key role in employment generation and in the provision of income to the poor. To remain successful, Bangladesh needs to remove all the structural obstacles in the transportation facilities, telecommunication network, and power supply, management of seaport, utility services and in the law and order situation above all improving workers safety & comfort. When every garment industry can ensure all the safety & comfort factors of the workers, then labor migration will be minimized & Productivity will also be improved.

#### REFERENCES

- [1]. Mridha, R.U., Bangladesh remains second largest garments exporter ,against all odds, in The Daily Star. 2016, Mahfuz Anam: Dhaka.
- [2]. Watawat, Lets Talk about Safety, in Safety Point, S. Point, Editor. 2012, Safety Point:
- [3]. Blogpost.com.
- [4]. DuPont, Safety training observation program for supervision. 1994, DuPont:
- [5]. Wilmington, USA. p. p.p 1.3.
- [6]. Kuhlman, T. and J. Farrington, What is Sustainability? . Sustainability Journal, 2010.
- [7]. 2(11): p. 3436-3448.
- [8]. Rahman, D.M.H. and S.A. Siddiqui, RMG: Prospect of Contribution in Economy of Bangladesh. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 2015. 5(9).
- [9]. Md. and Z. Rayhan, The Competitiveness of RMG I ndustry of Bangladesh after Some Tragic Incidents: An Overview of the Present Compliance Practice at RMG Sector of Bangladesh. Research journal of science and management, 2016. 5(10): p. 14.

- [11]. Mahmud-ul-Islam, S., Approaching Sustainability in Textile and Garment Industries, Bangladesh, in Department of Industrial Ecology. 2013, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH): SE-100 44 STOCKHOLM, Sweden. p. 44.
- [12]. Quadir, S., Bangladesh factory fire kills 23, injures dozens more, in Reuters. 2016.
- [13]. Correspondent, S., Third victim of Ashulia lighter factory fire dies, in bdnews24.com. 2016: Dhaka.
- [14]. 2016: Dhaka.
- [15]. Yunus, M. and T. Yamagata, Dynamics of the Garment Industry in Low-Income Countries: Experience of Asia and Africa (Interim Report). Chousakenkyu Houkokusho, IDE-JETRO, 2012. . 2012, Institute of developing economics: Japan.

Md Basarat Ali. "Study on Labor migration in Apparel industry." *American Journal of Engineering Research (AJER)*, vol. 9(10), 2020, pp. 83-88.