

Bangladeshi Garments Workers' Socio-economic Reality and its Sociolinguistics Perspectives – An Extensive Research

J D Milton

Lecturer, Department of English, Premier University

Syed Jashim Uddin

Associate Professor & Chairman, Department of English, Premier University

Abstract: Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry relies heavily on its workers, whose socio-economic conditions have raised concerns due to their vulnerability to challenges and inequalities socio-linguistically. This paper investigates the living standards, income levels, access to basic amenities, and overall quality of life of these workers. The main objective of this paper is to evaluate their income and financial stability from sociolinguistic point of view. The study also examines the availability of social security benefits, such as healthcare, housing, and education, with a focus on Marxist theory. Additionally, the research explores the working conditions and labor rights of ready-made garments workers, including aspects like occupational safety, access to clean drinking water, sanitation facilities, and adherence to labor laws. The findings aim to enhance understanding of labor and socio-linguistic conditions in Bangladesh, providing valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders involved in worker welfare. This study aspires to serve as a foundation for developing targeted interventions and policy reforms to improve the overall well-being and livelihoods of Bangladeshi ready-made garments workers.

Key Words: Ready-made garments Workers, Laborers, Socio-linguistic Pattern, Socio-economic Condition, and Marxism

Introduction:

Bangladeshi garments workers are often trapped in a cycle of economic dependence. They rely heavily on their employment in the ready-made garment's workers for their livelihoods, but they have limited access to alternative income sources or opportunities for upward mobility. This dependence leaves them vulnerable to exploitation by garments owners and limits their bargaining power in terms of wages and working conditions. In addition, sociolinguistics and the sociological aspects of language study how many social characteristics, such as age, gender, and ethnicity, affect people's lives in societies that lack sufficient food production and depend on outside inputs such as extra laborers from outside.

Bangladeshi textile laborers are frequently caught in a cycle of reliance on their income. Their livelihoods are mostly dependent on their labor as ready-made garment workers, but they have little access to prospects for upward mobility or other sources of income. Because of their reliance, they are less able to negotiate for better pay and working conditions, making them more susceptible to abuse by plantation owners. Moreover, sociolinguistics and the sociological dimensions of language investigate the ways in which many social attributes, including age, gender, and ethnicity, impact individuals' lives in cultures that are food insecure and reliant on outside resources because workers from different districts face societal barriers like underestimated communication, undeserved expenditure and cultural disregards. .

Dependency theory underscores the unequal power relations between the ready-made garment's owners and the workers. Industry owners hold significant economic and political power, while workers are often marginalized and lack representation. This power imbalance perpetuates exploitative labor practices, low wages, and poor working conditions for garments workers. Marxism, however, contends that the conflict between social classes—more specifically, that between the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, and the proletariat, or workers—defines economic relations in a capitalist economy and will unavoidably result in a communist revolution. According to dependency theory, the socioeconomic circumstances of ready-made garments employees are due to a lack of social advancement.

The unequal power ties between the owners of ready-made garment factories and their workforce are highlighted by dependency theory. Readymade garments owners are powerful in both the political and economic spheres, while workers are frequently disenfranchised and unrepresented. For those who work in the garment industry, this power disparity sustains low pay, abusive labor practices, and unfavorable working conditions. Marxism, on the other hand, maintains that the struggle that characterizes economic relations in a capitalist economy and will inevitably lead to a communist revolution is the struggle between social classes, more specifically, the struggle between the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, and the proletariat, or workers. Dependency theory holds that the socioeconomic conditions of employees who produce ready-made clothing are caused by a lack of social advancement.

The focus on export-oriented cash products like clothes such as ready-made garments, often leads to neglect in other areas, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure development. As a result, garments workers often face inadequate access to social services, which further exacerbates their socio-economic challenges.

This theory also points to the role of the global economic system in perpetuating the subordination of underdeveloped countries. Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry is often integrated into global supply chains, where multinational corporations play a dominant role. This integration can reinforce the dependency of garments workers on external markets and subject them to the volatility of global commodity prices. Besides, the sociolinguistic settings of the workers do not support them to be a part of the common society in our country. As a result, they suffer from more discrimination both inside and outside the societal system.

Prioritizing export-oriented ready-made clothing can sometimes result in neglecting other sectors like infrastructure development, healthcare, and education. Because of this, social assistance is frequently inaccessible to garment workers, exacerbating their socioeconomic difficulties.

This theory also highlights how the international economic system contributes to the continued subjugation of developing nations. Multinational firms hold a major position in global supply chains that incorporate Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector. The dependence of garment workers on external markets and their exposure to the fluctuations in global commodity prices can be strengthened by this integration. Furthermore, the workers' sociolinguistic environments prevent them from assimilating into our nation's general society.

In summary, dependency theory emphasizes historical elements, economic dependence, unequal power relations, constrained social growth, and the impact of the global economic system in order to examine the socioeconomic circumstances of garments workers in Bangladesh. By understanding these dynamics, policymakers and stakeholders can work towards addressing the challenges faced by garments workers and promoting more equitable and sustainable development.

Globalization theory provides a framework to understand v the impact of global economic integration on various aspects of society, including labor conditions. Several important points can be considered while analyzing the socioeconomic circumstances of garments workers in Bangladesh via the lens of globalization theory.

To summarize, dependency theory examines the socioeconomic conditions of Bangladeshi garment workers by emphasizing historical components, economic dependence, unequal power relations, restricted social growth, and the influence of the global economic system. Policymakers and other stakeholders may address the issues encountered by garment workers and advance more fair and sustainable development by being aware of these dynamics. A framework for comprehending how global economic integration affects many facets of society, including working conditions, is provided by globalization theory. When applying globalization theory to the socioeconomic conditions of Bangladeshi garment workers, a number of significant factors should be considered.

The expansion of international trade and the liberalization of markets are just two examples of how globalization has significantly altered the composition of the world economy. In the context of Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry, globalization has influenced the sector's organization and production methods. The opening up of global markets and the rise of multinational corporations have brought both opportunities and challenges for garments workers.

The world economy has changed dramatically as a result of globalization, with the two biggest examples being the liberalization of markets and the growth of international trade. Globalization has affected the way the ready-made clothing business in Bangladesh is organized and how it is produced. For those who work in the apparel industry, possibilities and challenges have come with the opening of international markets and the growth of multinational organizations. Approximately over 4 million garments workers serve garments industry officially. This workforce is actually the real lifeline of the economy of Bangladesh. This research has discovered that most of the workers are young women coming from rural areas of Bangladesh, mostly from Dhaka and Chattogram who are actually with underprivileged and lower income background.

Literature Review

South Asia's Bangladesh is a small nation. Bangladesh's economical life is grounded on husbandry. One of the most significant financial factors in this nation is ready-made garments. The indispensable assiduity with the loftiest foreign exchange earnings in this austerity is the ready-made garments assiduity. The ready-made garments civilization has a fairly recent history. According to studies, Bangladesh saw the launch of ready-made garments had grown commercially in the Dhaka and Chattogram divisions where the utmost of the ready-made garments estates in this nation are located. In total, there are over 4000 ready-made garments in this nation. These industry owners employ a large number of ready-made garments yard workers. Still, Ready-made garments Companies do not give acceptable installations for ready-made garments workers.

According to (Barkatetal, 2010.), ready-made garments workers have a pitiful history of unfairness, privation, exploitation, and discontent. They're so fully confined that they solely calculate on businesses to give them with food. In a study on two ready-made garments from Chattagram named **KDS Garments and Industry Situated in Oxygen, Chattagram and Four H Group near Bayezid Bostami Chattgram**, Bangladesh, the process of social rejection of ready-made garments workers in case of medicine, casing, education, etc. was revealed. They've no control over their lives or services, and they aren't given any social standing in Bangladesh. Their stingy pay, long hours, uncomfortable working conditions, and social marginalization deprive them of numerous introductory mortal rights and musts (Das & Islam, 2006). This condition is critically viewed as a reflection of the current class struggle in a Marxist perspective, which is a pivotal premise. Their way of life is inhuman. They cannot share in the planned land society. Because the conception of social rejection is still fairly new, there hasn't been any in- depth exploration on it among ready-made garments yard workers. According to earlier exploration, social rejection is the process through which individualities or groups are wholly or incompletely barred from completely sharing in the society in which they live (Kabeer, 2000 & 2006). It makes reference to Marxism, a social, profitable, and political doctrine that examines how the ruling class affects the working class and causes an unstable distribution of wealth. According to (Sen, 2000), people who are barred are banned from carrying employment, credit, loans, casing, land, a minimal standard of living, health care, knowledge of health, education, rituals, family and conviviality, respect, citizenship and legal equivalency, participation in choices, and use of public goods. Social polarization results from social rejection (Schurmann, 2009). The lower fortunate members of the concentrated society are unfit to take advantage of certain social amenities.

As a result, social rejection encompasses a multitude of profitable and societal issues. Multitudinous studies indicate that poverty is the main reason why people are rejected by society (Sen2000).

Marx allowed that because haves had more wealth and influence than workers, they might make a profit. Also, according to Marxist propositions of public opinion, it's a concession with or a natural progression of the system of control over a society's material and productive resources. Without considering haves, poverty averted a mortal being from having anything. A person or groups of people lose sight of their social and political rights when they depend on the wealth of a capitalist for their subsistence. When the eight-storied Rana Plaza commercial building fell in April 2013, it became one of the world's most photographed industrial disasters, earning the title "Most

Photographed Industrial Disaster in the World" (Ludden, 2013)..Social rejection has other causes besides poverty. Many workers died slowly, trapped beneath tons of rubble, as witnessed by the world media, with the 'miracle girl', Reshma Begum, being dragged out alive from beneath the ruins seventeen days after the collapse was first noticed by the media (Al-Mahmoodetal,2013) (There may be numerous fresh factors (Estivill, 2003) alludes to other factors and fresh socially barred groups, similar as those who are mentally and physically ill, suicidal, senior and disabled, persecuted children, medicine addicts, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem families, and frame individualities. When it comes to subcontracting in the RMG sector, the government issued a guideline in 2019 (Jim, 2017).

Methodology:

This study is conducted in urban and rural setting of the district from two ready-made garments workers **KDS Garments and Industry** Situated in Oxygen, Chattagram Ready-made Garments and **Four H Group near Bayezid Bostami Chattgram**. This paper draws on data from two methods, such as quantitative and qualitative methodology.

Quantitative method:

Primary data were collected by a questionnaire through face to face interview method. Using purposive sampling, the researchers had selected two ready-made garments workers from **KDS Garments and Industry** Situated in Oxygen, Chattagram and **Four H Group near Bayezid Bostami Chattgram**, Bangladesh. Fifty garments' workers were selected randomly in total who are involved this work consistently. For the literature review required data have been collected from secondary sources such as books, reports, journal articles, publication, newspaper and online sources.

The researchers also visited the houses of some respondents, joined the social gathering of them, and observed their household pattern, living standards, religious activities, food habits, cleanliness, sanitary conditions, the status of their children, and other family members. The objective of quantitative measures is to gather data that can be tallied and displayed as frequencies, rankings, or percentages. The additional sources of quantitative data are surveys, self-ratings, and checklists. The close ended questions that are collected from garments workers have actually analyzed by quantitative research method in the latter chapter. Moreover, there have been included twelve close ended questions that are expressed by numerically.

Qualitative Method:

This is an interview-based qualitative observational study. Secondary data were collected from different writing to make the way appropriate to doing this research by observing existing data. For doing this research Inductive reasoning has been used. Through Inductive reasoning new insights and theories from the data rather than testing pre-existing hypotheses have emerged.

Observation:

This kind of research can be done from various kinds of experiments, surveys, interviews and can be done by using different kinds of existing data which can be collected from different sources. This research is also done by taking interviews from the ready-made garments workers and using the pre-existing data.

Pattern recognition:

The second method is a qualitative investigation whose aim is to gain only obtaining concepts in relation to the life of Garments workers. The open-ended questions and interviews that are also collected have in fact presented by qualitative research method in the next section.

Initial hypothesis:

This research is done by using exact patterns and observation so that the initial hypothesis can be established. The hypothesis of this research is to formulate the idea socio-economic condition and its reality of the ready-made garments workers. So this research is elaborated with specific observation.

Data analysis and development of theory:

The research is developed through those collected data and is tried to clarify with explanations.

Generalization:

Inductive reasoning allows generalizing a topic based on observation and data by doing research. This research is also completed through instance evidences and case study.

Participants:

Two types of participants are generally involved in this research.

- a) Men Workers
- b) Women Workers

Data Collection Procedures:

This paper plays a significant role to the discovery of the ready-made garments workers staffs' socio-economic setting and their family background and communication

In this research, both close and open ended questions have been utilized to collect data from the Garments workers. The data have been collected from two ready-made garments workers from **KDS Garments and Industry** Situated in Oxygen, Chattagram and **Four H Group near Bayezid Bostami Chattgram**, Bangladesh Ready-made garments workers. Not all of them respond to the questionnaires and interview questions willingly. Only 36 workers have responded to the questionnaires and 64 to the interviews or open-ended questions. But all others felt interested in answering the questionnaires. One hundred workers were the target but fifty have responded both close and open ended questionnaires. Questionnaires having close as well as open-ended questions are used to collect data from both male and female workers.

Primary Data:

Interviews, surveys, and fieldwork.

Secondary Sources of Data

- Websites
- Journal
- Article

Sampling design: Convenient sampling technique

Area of the study: Chattogram District

Sampling size: 100 respondents

Data Analysis:

Demographic Information

Distribution of the gender of the respondents

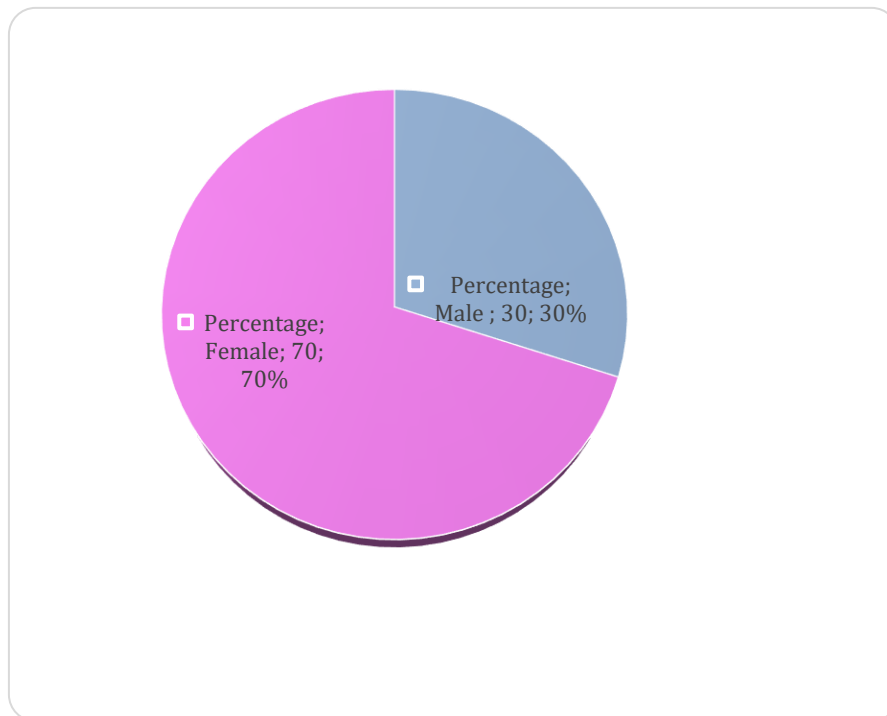


Chart 1- Gender Based Analysis

Chart 1 shows the distribution of the gender of the respondents. The findings show that 30% respondents were in the gender group of Male & 70% respondents were Female. This means that more female or women garments workers are working in this sector than the male counterparts. The ratio here is 3:7 between men and women.

Age:

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	80	80%
26-35	12	12%
36-45	8	8%
46-55	0	0%
56 and above	0	0%
Total	100	100

Table 1- Age Group Analysis

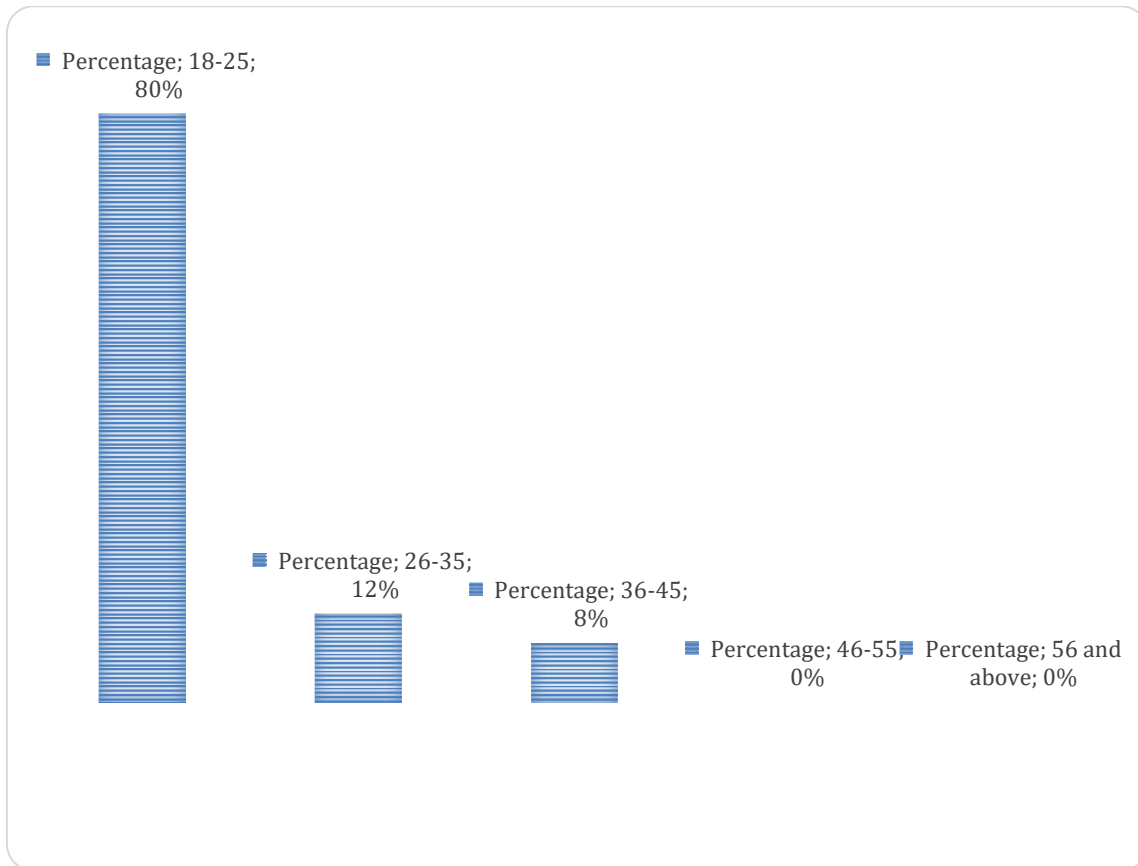


Chart 2- Age Group Analysis

This chart displays the distribution of the respondents considering their age. It shows that 18-25 age group workers is 80%, which means the owners of the garments often target fresh recruits or young workers for managing work. Whereas 26-35 age group workers are only 12% and age group 36-45 workers are exactly 8%. None was found in the age group from 46 to 56 in this research. It means the workers are either unable to take the huge workload at these ages or the owners of ready-made garments industry omit them.

Marital Status:

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Single	30	30%
Married	50	50%
Separated from husband	14	14%
Widowed	6	6%
Sub-Total	100	100

Table -2- Personal and Familial Status Ratio

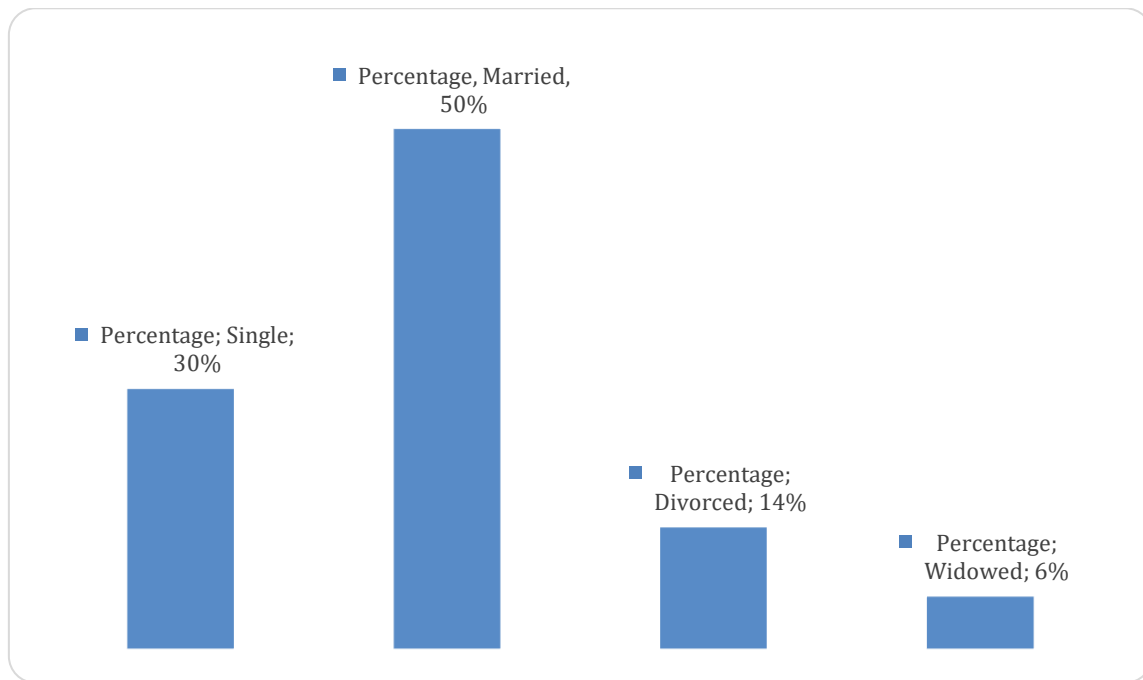


Chart -3- Personal and Familial Status Ratio

Above this table and graph, the marital status are clearly visible. Unmarried workers or Single is 30%, which is almost asset for the garments owners. On the other hand, newly married or married workers are 50%, which means that half of the workers have got family and children to take care. Further, Divorced workers either male or female are 14% & Widowed 6%.

Socio-economic Conditions

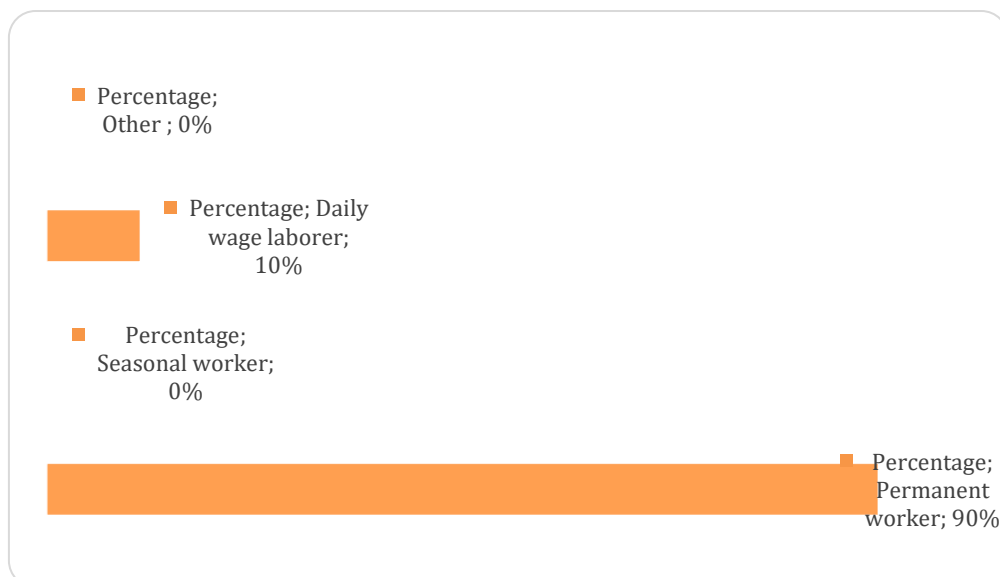


Table 4- Employment Status of the Workers

In this table, it shows that Permanent workers are 90% and daily wage laborers are 10%. This means that the owners want to retain the workers for at least certain period so that the work doesn't get hampered. Most often women workers don't change their job. As a result, female workers are more convenient workers for permanent labor. Moreover, seasonal workers & other workers are 0%. It means the authorities don't often rely on outsourcing.

What is the monthly income from working in the ready-made garments workers? (in Bangladeshi Taka)

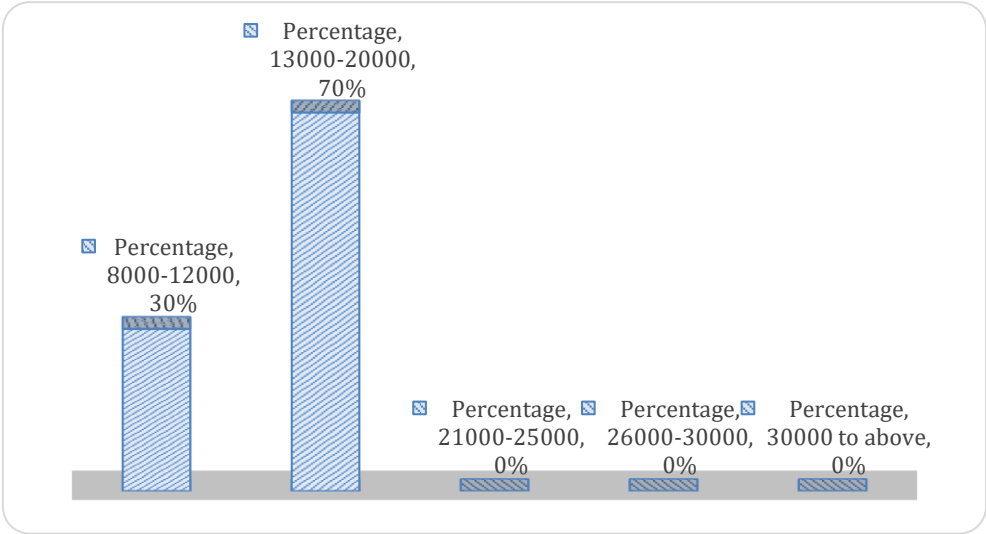


Chart 5- Financial Achievement on monthly payment Range in Taka

In this table, it shows that monthly income from working in the ready-made garments range from 8000 taka to 12000 taka which is about 70 \$ to 110 \$ in Australian Dollars have 30% and salary range 13000 taka to 20000 taka which is about 115 \$ to 200 \$ in Australian currency have 70%. None was found with higher salaries in this finding. It is clear that 21000 taka to 30000 taka salary wasn't their monthly normal payment. The workers mention that if they work extra hours in the garments having 13 to 16 hours stay, they receive extra payment then hourly which is only 300-500 taka per hour.

What is the satisfaction level of employee income?

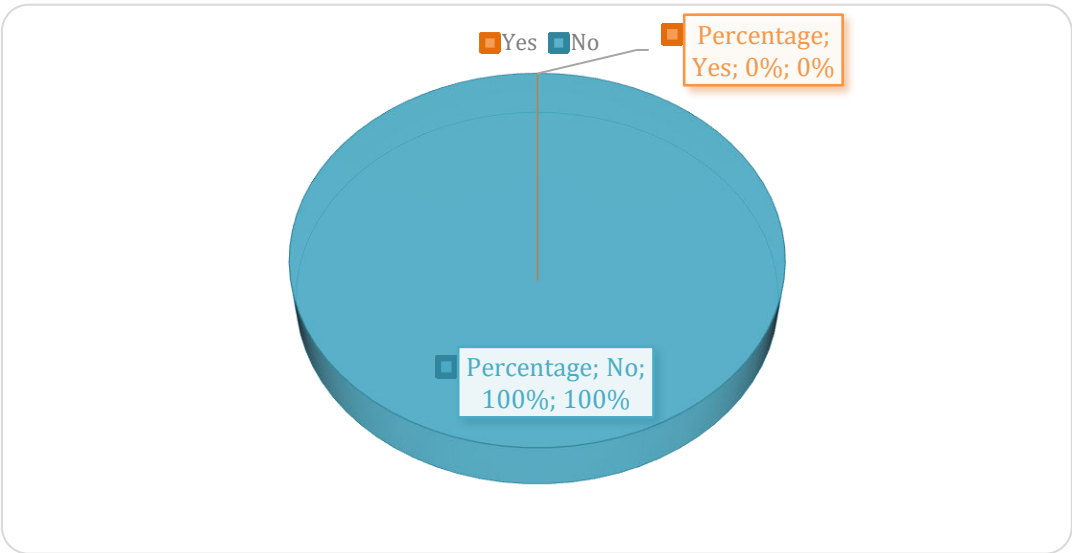


Chart 6- Satisfaction Level

This chart shows that none of them is satisfied with current income as Yes 0% and No 100%. This is because the prices of daily commodities are increasing day by day yet the increase of salary is inadequate. This relates the concept of Karl Marx where the Bourgeoisies are making more money yet the poor is getting poorer.

Do they have any other sources of income apart from working in the ready-made garments workers?

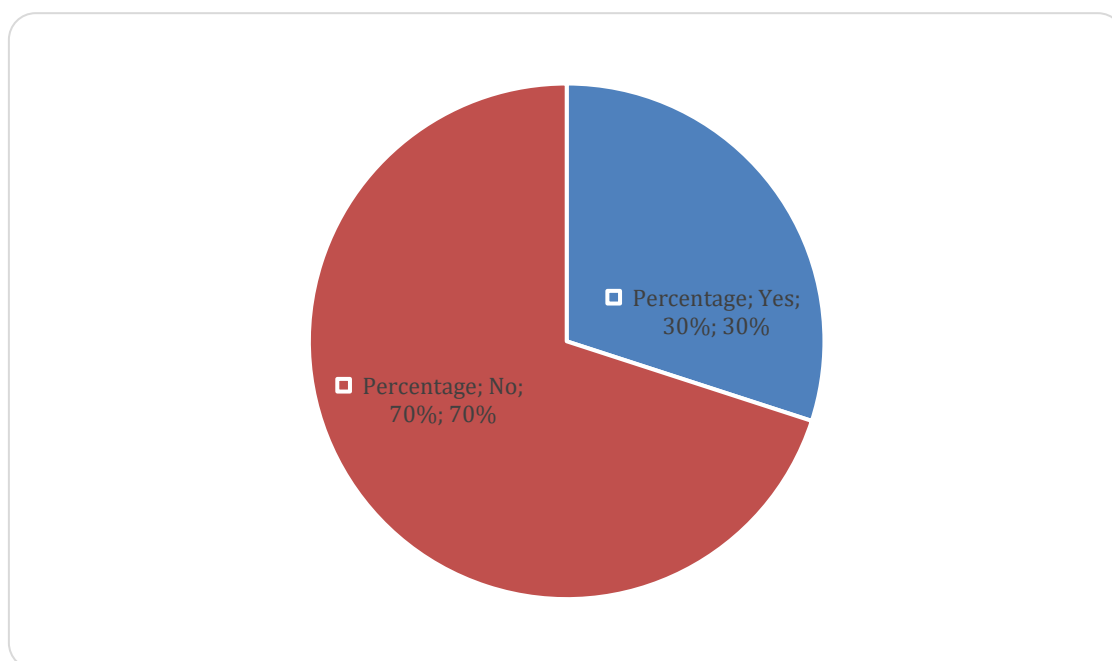


Chart 7- Extra Sources of Income

Above the chart shows income apart from working in the ready-made garments. Workers have responded Yes 30% which means that they work extra time somewhere else after working in the garments. The workers mention that they can't bear the expenses of daily necessities of their families by depending on the salary from the garments and No response is 70%, which means that the garments workers don't have any other sources of income apart from this job. Here, the workers note that after full time work or some extra hour work, they don't have enough energy or caliber to work again after coming in the evening.

What is the working condition in the ready-made garments workers?

Particular	Prevalence	Proportion
Good	4	4%
Very Good	2	2%
Neutral	4	4%
Poor	36	36%
Very Poor	50	50%
Total	100	100

Table: 3- Working Condition in the ready-made garments.

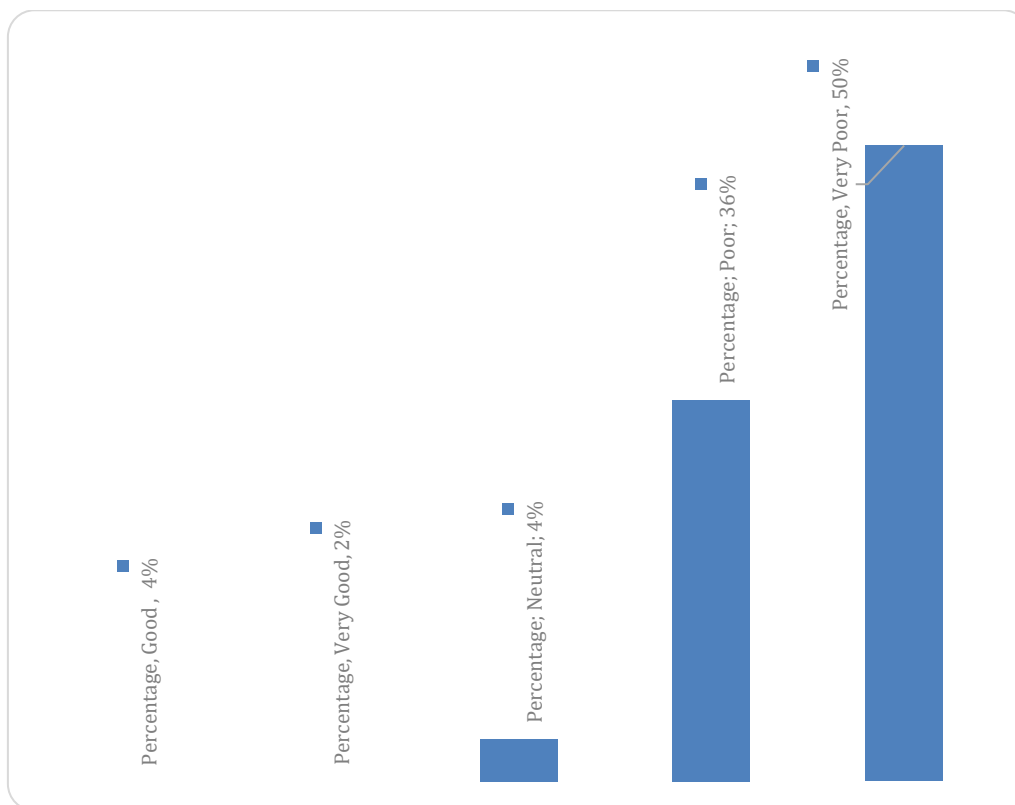


Chart 8- Working Environment Status

In this table and chart, it has been displayed that the workers perceived the working conditions in the ready-made garments workers is not satisfactory for the workers as 86% workers have responded against the standard. On the other hand, Good 4%, Very good 2%, Neutral 4% respondents reflect poor condition in the working place. Many working mother actually mentioned that baby care center may make their workplace better and safer. Some workers are dissatisfied with the toilets and bathrooms. Some others are not happy about canteen or dining room in the working place. Some more workers are unhappy about health and medical facilities.

How would they rate the availability and accessibility of basic amenities (e.g., healthcare, sanitation, and housing) in the ready-made garments workers?

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	0	0%
Agree	0	10%
Neutral	10	10%
Disagree	30	30%
Strongly disagree	60	50%
Total	100	100

Table 04- Availability of Basic needs

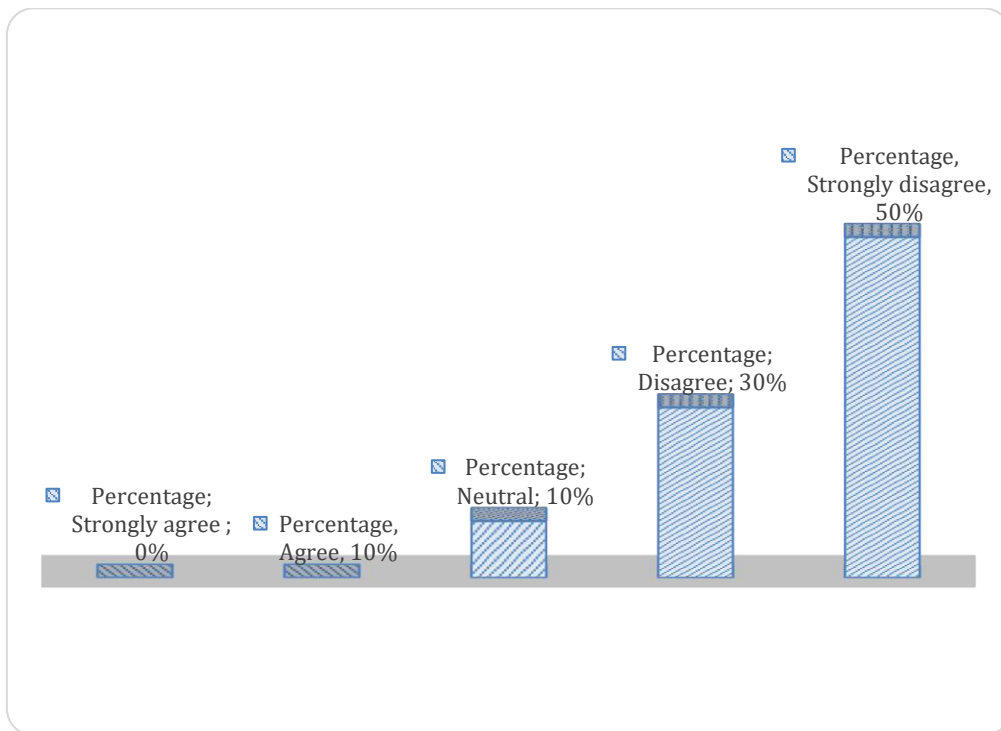


Chart 9- Basic Amenities Status Ratio

Above table and chart rate the availability and accessibility of basic amenities in the ready-made garments workers. It is clearly visible that 50% meaning half of the workers strongly disagree with the amenities basic facilities. Only 20% Workers respond in favor of the garments- either Agree 10% or Neutral 10%. Moreover, there are workers exactly 30% who disagree that there is enough facility, whereas Strongly agree is 0%.

Did they face or any of their family members face any form of discrimination or harassment due to sociolinguistic differences at the ready-made garments?

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	34	34%
No	6	6%
Not Sure	60	60%
Total	100	100

Table -5- Discrimination for Sociolinguistic Differences

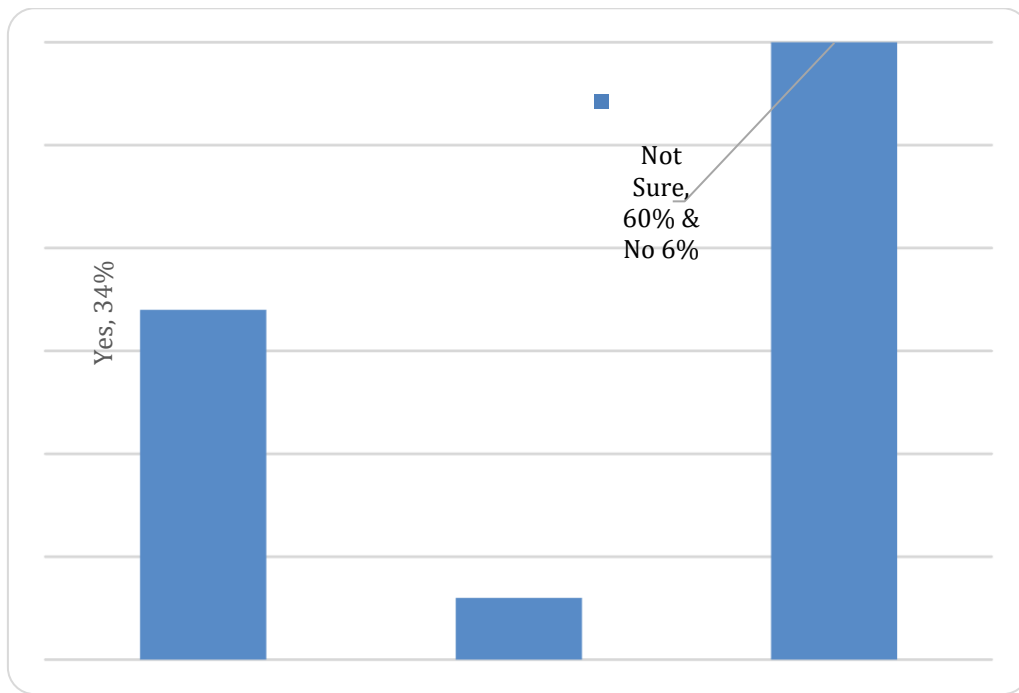


Chart 10- Sociolinguistic Discrimination Status

This table and chart show that 60% workers believe that they face inequality or harassment for cultural and language differences despite having similar religion. Many family members reported that they faced form of discrimination or harassment at the ready-made garments for their mismatch with the language or local accent or eating habits. They have also reported that they are often considered outsider calling them “Voinga”. In this case, the responses are yes 34%, No 6% and not sure 60% with respective respondents.

Living Conditions and Social Welfare

What is the condition of their housing despite social and language differences in the ready-made garments workers?

Particular	Frequen cy	Percentage
Adequate and well-maintained	0	0%
Adequate but poorly maintained	42	42%
Inadequate	58	58%
Total	100	100

Table-6- Condition of Housing

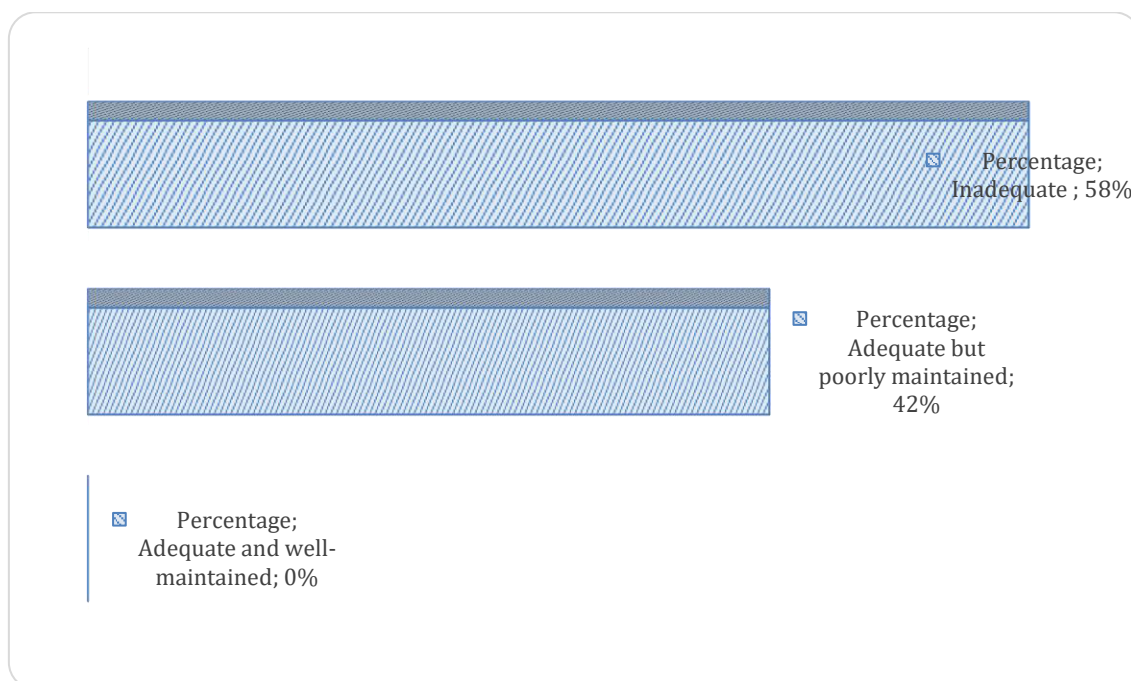


Chart 11- Housing Status

This chart and table clearly demonstrate the housing condition of the ready-made garments workers. The population in the industrial areas and commercial zones are extremely over-populated. The house rent and daily necessities are on the rise. This open ended question got 0% response for adequate and well-maintained whereas adequate but poorly maintained is 42% while most surprisingly, 58% workers believe that it is inadequate. In fact, it is found that many of them live tin shed small cottage type congested houses where every room is packed with men and materials.

Findings from Field Research:

- KDS Ready-made Garments workers opined that there has been widespread irregularities and discrimination in workers for a long time regarding office hours. Although there are instructions to machinery servicing every year, it has not been done properly. There has been gross negligence in the medical system and communication system. Constantly giving less amount of ration and what is given is of very normal quality. Besides, roads are becoming unusable for communication around the working zone. They said that workers are being mistreated and sent back from work every now and then if they have had health issues.
- The factories have scarcity with clean drinking water, resourceful medical facilities, and proper ventilation management and often lack enough safety equipment.
- Women workers have reported verbal abuse and sexual abuses, unsafe night shift work without proper transportation facilities having repetitive physical tasks.
- Workers reported some problems like back pain, breathing suffocation from fabric dust, dehydration, eye burning, and physical illnesses from long working hours.

- Most of the workers stay permanently in urban slums lacking proper sanitation, basic nutrition and proper housing needs, struggling on average monthly wages of approximately \$95.
- Female workers keep doing household duties, childcare responsibilities and family maintenance yet they have social stigma of garments working mothers.
- Worker Welfare Associations in Export Processing Zones (EPZ) have wonderfully developed working condition of the workers by ensuring proper negotiations, management and advocacy.
- Most of the female workers display courage by balancing act of work pressure, facing challenges of harassment, education for children and holding their dignity.
- The workers have got a wonderful cooperative system among themselves by helping each other sharing emotional aid, financial support during crisis.
- There is intense pressure on factory owners by the International brands' to lower-cost production in order to minimize expenses which often impact directly on workers welfare.
- International scrutiny, monitoring and compliance programs have certainly bettered some conditions through factory audits and certifications, nevertheless significant gaps remain between policy and practice.
- From July 2024, if there is any health issue for resistance in work or political issue, the owners stubbornly declare the closure of the ready-made garments workers completely unilaterally without any discussion with the workers. Workers are sent back from work. For this reason, the innocent ready-made garments workers are spending days with starvation or half starvation and are facing an uncertainty. For example, from our interviews with garments workers and the worker's authorities, we found that readymade garments owners made huge contribution for the quick delivery of export quality products for shipment in time. Yet, the working benefits are often not shared with the workers in time. Moreover, Industry owners sometimes become callous in case of health and medical emergency of the workers.
- Garments workers in Bangladesh typically receive meager wages, often below the minimum wage set by the government since the daily commodities' price is rising. These low wages make it difficult for them to meet their basic needs and lead a decent life.
- Many ready-made garments worker's owners exploit their workers by engaging in unfair labor practices- often sixteen hours of work who are skilled. They may not provide proper employment contracts or fail to adhere to labor laws regarding working hours, overtime pay, and benefits such as paid leave.
- The living conditions in ready-made garments workers' settlements are often substandard. Workers often live in overcrowded and dilapidated houses with inadequate access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and healthcare as Oxygen Moor working zone in Chattogram shows it clearly. These conditions contribute to poor health and hygiene among the workers and their families.
- Garments workers often lack access to social security benefits such as healthcare, insurance, and retirement plans. This absence of social safety nets further exacerbates their vulnerability and makes it difficult for them to cope with emergencies or retire with dignity.

- Education facilities for the children of garments workers are often inadequate or nonexistent as they are not treated properly in the society. The lack of access to quality education perpetuates a cycle of poverty, limiting the prospects for future generations.
- Female garments workers face additional challenges, including gender-based discrimination and harassment. Male counterparts are often receiving higher wages than the females by doing the same work and females may also face barriers in accessing healthcare and education.
- Some ready-made garments worker's owners exploit child labor, engaging children in hazardous work providing them with no real access to education. This practice deprives children of their normal life here in Chattogram as they come from various districts of Bangladesh. Their language is often different variation of Bengali. Consequently, the local dialect of Bengali is a mismatch for the workers coming from other districts of Bangladesh. As a result, this leads to social discrimination between local and outsider focusing on the linguistic differences.
- Many garments workers face challenges in organizing and forming labor unions due to a lack of awareness, intimidation from owners, and limited support. The absence of strong unions makes it harder for workers to collectively advocate for their rights and negotiate better working conditions.

Findings from Socio-Linguistic Setting Relating Marxism

Many workers have very minimum level of education like primary schooling with the huge number having illiterate or semi-literate in Bengali Language. Therefore, this restricts them to have entry to formal information and communication channels. Most interestingly, Garments industry have got diverse linguistic environment where the workers generally speak in local language or in their own form of Bengali dialect and the higher officials usually speaking in standard Bengali or English. This creates a clear language distinction among the classes of official staffs and workers.

As a result, the language gap accelerates misunderstanding among higher and lower agencies of the same organization. This gap provides impact on working expectation and production. Thus, language barriers exclusively affects working environment, mental health of the workers and communication gap. So, the workers don't get proper access to safety info, their working rights and negotiation of complaint.

This is a very important finding of the research that effective communication in the workplace and application of language are interrelated. They unsure to build better working environment through negotiation and protect everyone's right.

- **Low Wages:** Garments workers in Bangladesh typically receive meager wages, often below the minimum wage set by the government. These low wages make it difficult for them to meet their basic needs and lead a decent life.
- **Unfair Labor Practices:** Many ready-made garments worker owners exploit their workers by engaging in unfair labor practices. They may not provide proper employment contracts or fail to adhere to labor laws regarding working hours, overtime pay, and benefits such as paid leave.

- **Poor Living Conditions:** The living conditions in ready-made garments worker's worker settlements are often substandard. Workers often live in overcrowded and dilapidated houses with inadequate access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and healthcare. These conditions contribute to poor health and hygiene among the workers and their families.
- **Lack of Social Security:** Garments workers often lack access to social security benefits such as healthcare, insurance, and retirement plans. This absence of social safety nets further exacerbates their vulnerability and makes it difficult for them to cope with emergencies or retire with dignity.
- **Limited Education Opportunities:** Education facilities for the children of garments workers are often inadequate or nonexistent. The lack of access to quality education perpetuates a cycle of poverty, limiting the prospects for future generations.
- **Gender Inequality:** Female garments workers face additional challenges, including gender-based discrimination and harassment. They often receive lower wages than their male counterparts for doing the same work and may face barriers in accessing healthcare and education.
- **Child-Labor:** Some ready-made garments worker owners exploit child labor, engaging children in hazardous work in ready-made garments instead of providing them with access to education. This practice deprives children of their rights and perpetuates the cycle of poverty.
- **Lack of Unionization:** Many garments workers face challenges in organizing and forming labor unions due to a lack of awareness, intimidation from owners, and limited support. The absence of strong unions makes it harder for workers to collectively advocate for their rights and negotiate better working conditions.
- **Linguistics Barriers:** Bengali is an international language, yet this language has a unique dialect in Chattogram which is absolutely a mismatch for other groups of people coming from all other districts to work here. Host and Guest groups of workers are always treated differently in this area. Socio-linguistic variation leads to clear disregard of the guest group of workers who are not local or not from Chattogram. Thus, the unnoticed socio-linguistic barrier works silently.

Recommendation

- Ready-made garments workers are not given any formal education or training, those who can read and write, do so only up to the elementary level. Their income is expected to increase further if they are given formal education and training.
- They are not satisfied with the present income. Although they receive salary every month, their salary was increased very little in comparison to the profit of the industry owners.
- Many of the ready-made garments workers needed to do extra work for adjusting with the price hike of daily commodities, if they do extra work along with their insufficient income and they are likely to face health issues due to over-workload.
- The findings show that health problems are often faced by the family members due to working in ready-made garments for long hours as many of the respondents said they became physically ill while working.

- The recreational facilities or cultural activities organized in the ready-made garments owners are often extremely rare. Yet there is new year celebration.
- The government and policy makers should play a more active role in ensuring the socio-economic well-being of ready-made garments workers to bridge the gaps.
- Censuses are conducted but ready-made garments workers are never enumerated. Therefore, the workers should be treated more respectfully by the help of media since they contribute directly for country's development of GDP.
- Social media and all sorts of electronic media should highlight the garments' workers are heroes of Economic growth.
- The Garments' workers and their families should be given all the facilities by the governments so that they can stand tall like all other professions in the country.

Conclusion:

The socio-economic conditions at the level of sociolinguistic setting of garments workers in Bangladesh are characterized by various challenges and disparities. The workers face low wages, poor living conditions, limited access to healthcare and education, and a lack of social protection. Further, their own local forms of Bengali languages often do not match with the working place of Chattogram. As a consequence, the locals often manipulate or underestimate their language calling them "Voingga"- which means the outsiders. This discrimination often creates dissatisfaction and mismatch among the hosts and garments workers coming to work from all other districts of Bangladesh. These factors contribute to a cycle of poverty and inequality within the ready-made garments worker's communities. Marxism is a theory that believes that capitalist society is based on inequalities as Marxists argue that every aspect of an individual's life is influenced by economic and social conditions, particularly the class relations that arise from them since the workers' low wages make it difficult for them to meet their basic needs and provide for their families. Unfortunately, the working environment in this sector is unfriendly and unhealthy for women to work comfortably and the labor rights and social compliance are violated (Ali, 2008&Rubya, 2015) refers in their True history of Ready-made garments.

Many live in cramped and substandard housing with inadequate sanitation facilities. This not only affects their physical well-being but also hinders their ability to escape poverty and improve their living conditions.

Limited access to healthcare services further exacerbates the plight of garments workers. They often lack proper medical facilities, leading to inadequate healthcare and higher susceptibility to diseases. Additionally, the absence of quality education in ready-made garments worker's areas restricts the opportunities for upward mobility and perpetuates intergenerational poverty. Furthermore, the absence of social protection mechanisms leaves garments workers vulnerable to exploitation and precarious working conditions. They lack job security, face long working hours, and often work under hazardous conditions. The lack of legal protection and representation further undermines their rights and bargaining power.

Efforts to improve the socio-economic conditions at their sociolinguistic setting of garments workers should focus on several key areas. To begin with, it is important to guarantee equitable and sustainable salaries that allow employees to fulfill their fundamental requirements. This can be accomplished by implementing more robust labor regulations and enforcing them effectively. Enhancing the quality of housing and granting garments workers access to essential resources like clean water and sanitation facilities are crucial for enhancing their overall welfare.

This requires investments in infrastructure and targeted programs aimed at upgrading living conditions in ready-made garments worker's communities. Access to quality healthcare and education is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty. Initiatives should be undertaken to improve healthcare services in ready-made garments worker's areas and promote education opportunities for both children and adults. More importantly as Marxism argues that economic class struggle can bring an enormous social change according to its political and social theory.

Lastly, comprehensive social protection programs should be established to provide garments workers with a safety net. This includes measures such as social insurance, health coverage, and legal support to ensure their rights are protected.

To sum up, effectively dealing with the socio-economic difficulties faced by garments workers in Bangladesh, within their sociolinguistic context, necessitates a comprehensive strategy that includes fair pay, better living conditions, healthcare and education access, and strong social safety nets. These endeavors are essential for fostering equality, reducing poverty, and empowering garments workers to live with dignity. The profits of the factory owners are not expected to come by costing the dignity of the workers. From factory boardroom to factory floor, ethical and accountable supply chain is highly required. This shows up how socio-economic and socio-linguistic realities of the garments workers revealing how language, poverty and power are connecting their opportunities and working experiences together.

References:

1. Ahmed, N., & Nathan, D. (2014). Improving wages and working conditions in the Bangladeshi garment sector: the role of horizontal and vertical relations May 2014 Working Paper 40. Book: Capturing the Gains, (May), 1-25.
2. Asian Center for Development (2015). Garment Workers In Bangladesh: Social Impact of The Garment Industry. House 72 Road 17 Banani C Dhaka 1213: Asian Center for Development. Retrieved from: acdonline.org.
3. Asian Development Bank. Women in Bangladesh. Manila: ADB, 2001.
4. Absar, S. S. (2002). Women Garments Workers in Bangladesh. Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 37, No. 29 (Jul. 20-26, 2002), pp. 3012-3013+3015-3016
5. Anderson, E. (2013) Violence as a Continuum: Gender-Based-Violence in Malawi. PIED 3261 Violence and Reconciliation in Africa. 10 October. University of Leeds
6. Ahamed, F. (2013). "Improving Social Compliance in Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment Industry." Labor and Management in Development, PP. 1-26. Retrieved from: www.nla.gov.au.

7. Bryman. A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press: New York. Retrieved from: [notendur.hi.is.Kafli13.pdf](#) Accessed May 2, 2016
8. Bearnot, E.(2013). Bangladesh: A labor paradox. *World Policy Journal*,30(3), 88–97. (Bearnot, 2013)
9. Estivill, J. (2003). *Concepts and strategies for combating social exclusion. An overview*. Geneva: International Labour Office. (Estivill, 2003)
10. European Union. (2010). *Poverty and social exclusion report*. Brussels's Opinion & Social Avenue Herrmann Debroux. (European Union, 2010)
11. Kabeer, N. (2000). Social exclusion, poverty and discrimination: Towards an analytical framework. *IDS Bulletin*, 31, 83–97. x. (Kabeer, 2000)
12. Kabeer, N. (2006). Poverty, social exclusion and the MDGs: The challenge of 'durable inequalities' in the Asian context. *IDS Bulletin*, 37, 64–78. (Kabeer, 2006)
13. Sadekin, M. N., Muhibbullah, M., & Alam, M. M. (2021). Global Economic Change and Inequality. In Walter Leal Filho et al. (eds), *Reduced Inequalities: Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*. Springer, Cham. (Sadekin, Muhibbullah & Alam, 2021)
14. Schurmann, A. T., & Mahmud, S. (2009). Civil Society, Health, and Social Exclusion in Bangladesh. *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition*, 27(4), 536–544.
15. Sen, A. (2000). *Social exclusion: concept, application, and scrutiny*. Social Development Papers No. 1. Manila: Asian Development Bank. (Sen, 2000)
16. Hasan, J. (2008). *Labour Rights in the Readymade Garments Industry in Ba*. Dhaka: Odhikar.
17. Huq, A & Rubana Huq (2013), 'Letter from a Bangladesh Factory', *The Wall Streat Journal*, May 15.
18. Hossain, I. and Al-Amin, M. (2012). "Employment of Women in the Globalization of Production in the Ready-Made Garment sector of Bangladesh: Welfare or Exploitation?" *Empowerment*, Vol. 19, Women for Women, Dhaka, Bangladesh PP. 1-16
19. International Labor Organization. (2009). *A Hand Book on the Bangladeshi Labor Act 2006*.
20. Levin, H., Gallimore, R., Weisner, T., Turner, J. (1980) "Teaching Participant-Observation Research Methods: A Skills-Building Approach". *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*. Vol. 11. No. 1, PP. 38-54
21. Labotilz, S and Bauman-Pauly (2015), "Apparel Workers". Centre for Business and Human rights, December 2015.
22. Mariani, R. D., & Valenti, F. (2013). Working conditions in the Bangladeshi garment sector: Social dialogue and compliance 1, 1–142.
23. (PDF) Rana Plaza Tragedy: Bangladeshi RMG and Everyday Struggle. Available from: www.researchgate.net, accessed Oct 13 2025].