

Original Article

Relationship between motivational factors and employee engagement in Bangladesh's Readymade Garments (RMG) industry

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Abstract

Introduction: This study investigates the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors on employee engagement in the RMG industry in Bangladesh

Methods: Based on Herzberg's Two Factor theory, this study has followed a quantitative approach to develop the hypotheses. The questionnaire has been adapted from the previous studies to conduct this study with seven Likert measurement scales. In addition, a self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data cross-sectionally from a total of 500 respondents. Finally, the data have been analyzed by SPSS 29 for respondents' demographic profiles and smart PLS 4 to test the hypotheses.

Results: Extrinsic motivational factors (0.402) and intrinsic motivational factors (0.296) have a large and medium effect size (f square) on employee engagement, respectively. In contrast, extrinsic motivational factors have a significant effect on employee engagement ($b=0.536$, $t=6.365$, $p<0.000$); and intrinsic motivational factors have a significant effect on employee engagement ($b=0.503$, $t=4.528$, $p<0.001$).

Discussion and Conclusion: Extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors significantly influence employee engagement. However, extrinsic motivational factors affect employee engagement more than intrinsic motivational factors. For example, authority, relationship with supervisor, variety, job security, advancement, salary, ability utilization, achievement, responsibility, recognition, and growth positively affect employee engagement in RMG in Bangladesh. On the other hand,

relationships with peers, working conditions, company policy and procedure, Job itself, creativity, independence, and moral values do not affect employee engagement in RMG in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Motivational Factors, Readymade Garments (RMG)

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INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement (EE) is not the problem, but the 'symptom' is likely buried more profound in an employee or an organization. Employees feel a heightened emotional connection to their organization, influencing them to exert more significant discretionary effort on work. The community of practitioners, including policymakers and employers, has been continually interested in EE [1] as they search for fresh approaches to improving performance levels. This is another factor contributing to the importance of the employee engagement problem, particularly in organizational contexts [2]. Employee engagement has also been recognized as a potent corporate tool for boosting worker productivity and enhancing critical organizational performance indicators [3]. Erickson [4] asserted that firms could boost productivity by encouraging people to spend their psychological energy on their jobs. Aon Hewitt (2018), in "treads in global employee engagement", has stated that Asia Pacific (APAC) is coming back in 2017 with a three-point rise. About 65% of APAC employees can be categorized as engaged, a slight increase compared to 62% in 2016 and 63% globally in 2016 (Figure 1).

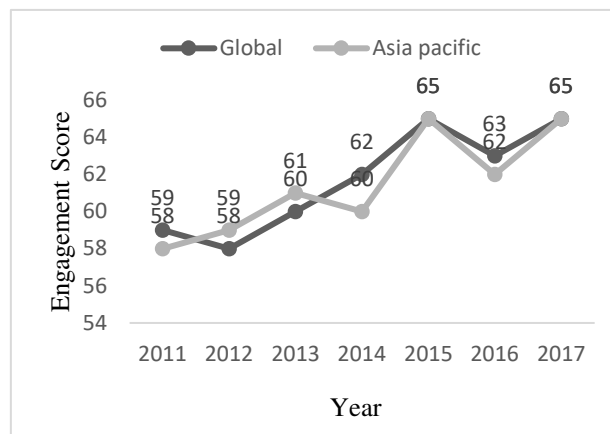


Figure 1. Employee engagement global vs Asia pacific

Aon Hewitt (2018) discovered some motivational factors as the drivers for engagement, such as rewards and recognition, senior leadership, and career development. According to past research, for example, Seijts and Crim [5] and Bakker et al. [6] have pointed out ten employee engagement factors that can attract, focus, and keep the most talented employees, which include connection, career advancement, clarity in communication, conveyance of expectations, congratulations or recognition, contributions, control over own Job, collaboration among employees, credibility in leaders, and Confidence in the company. Additionally, Anitha [7] proposed that employee engagement keys are leadership, team, relationship with peers, training, career development and reward. Other indispensable attributes include organizational policies, procedures, structures, systems, and workplace well-being.

Readymade Garment (RMG) industry

The Readymade Garment (RMG) industry plays a significant role in Bangladesh's economy. Around 5876 factories were present in 2012, but only 4222 remained the following year [8]. According to researchers, the number reduced could be related to worker disengagement, labour unrest and national political uncertainty [9, 10, 11].

Poor living conditions, delayed incentives, an international conspiracy, the forcible role of police departments, stress from staff and thugs, lack of education, political turmoil, heavy workloads, a lack of advancement possibilities, as well as other factors all, contributed to labour unrest in the RMG sector [11]. Additionally, Sarker and Afroze [12] noted that the employees would be happy if the employers in the RMG sectors could offer practical non-financial and financial advantages to the workers. Due to this circumstance, it was decided that RMG industries required attention when the research was necessary to address the problem of productivity enhancement and companies closing due to worker discontent.

Literature suggests that the manager needs to understand what motivates employees and how to lead to inspire motivation [13]; this is because motivation may encourage workers to complete their attempts [14]. As a company's most valuable resource, employees must be motivated and satisfied to work at their best. Nevertheless, it is the leader's responsibility to inspire the team, not the other way around [14]. Akter [15] and Khatun [16] suggested that the RMG sector should have relevant motivational factors for employee engagement. However, few scholars like Ahsan and Hossain [17] have studied motivational factors on job satisfaction in the RMG industry. There is a dearth of research on the relationship between motivating factors and EE in the RMG sector of Bangladesh. Therefore, this study will investigate the relationship between motivational factors and EE in RMG in Bangladesh.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivational factors and employee engagement

EE is directly impacted by motivational factors [18, 19]. Mehmood et al. [20] indicated that an appealing and appropriate compensation system enables the firm to boost EE and performance management. Devi [21] and Kathirvel [22] focused on job stability, earnings, conditions of

employment, relationships with higher authority and work colleagues, incentives and recognition, relationships with management, training, health condition, safety, stress relief, and others. They examined the factors at many organizations (for example, Jaganath Textile industries, Murugan Mills, Saradha Mills, Sugana Textile Mills and Cambodia Textile Mills in Coimbatore). They found that These are the key elements that significantly impact an organization's environment, impacting people's engagement and productivity. Effective incentive programs go beyond simply meeting employees' fundamental needs to boost their commitment to the company. Organizational awards strengthen excellent work behaviours and considerably improve each staff work, according to Mujtaba and Shuaib [24]. The administration can keep a highly engaged staff in the company and recruit a pool of suitable applicants by using reward systems. Successful businesses utilize incentives to encourage and hold onto their most skilled personnel. Iqbal [25] revealed that higher levels of EE are related to rewards that have a beneficial effect. According to Ghanbahadur [26], intrinsic factors determining job happiness include ability utilization, achievement, creativity, freedom, moral ideals, responsibility, and acknowledgement. He found that the Irish accountants and American engineers were motivated by their jobs inherently. Jones and Sloane [27] Surveyed employment in Europe in 2002. They observed positive correlations between employee work satisfaction, occupational prestige, and work activity. Therefore, advancement, development, and acknowledgement are sources of motivation [28, 29] to increase EE by satisfying the employee [19]. According to Vanam [30], relationships with supervisors and other job resources have a good, substantial association with EE. Work demand is decreased by pay, career possibilities, job stability, relationships with peers and supervisors, position clarity, and skill diversity [6, 31]. The 15 mid-sized enterprises chosen from the Nigerian states of Oyo, Kwara, Osun, and Ogun were evaluated by Remi et al. [32]. These organizations are engaged in manufacturing companies, academic consultancy, restaurant and lodging services, transport companies, retail, and accommodation facilities. They discovered that the hygiene factors for the employee in Nigeria include job security, decent working circumstances, good earnings, and others. Supervision, working environment, interpersonal interactions, compensation, job security, and corporate policy and administration are all hygiene variables [16]. Researchers investigated relationships with supervisors, job security [33]; salary, bonus, and working environment [10]; the relationship between employers and employees [34] in garments industries in Bangladesh.

Throughout the centuries, two basic types of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic, have been identified and explored in various circumstances [35-37]. This research used these categories in determining the motivation factors that influence EE. Past research suggested that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation could promote individual employee intentions and actions regarding activities and behaviours [38]. Hitt et al. [39] denoted that motivation can be intrinsic and extrinsic. Even though several hypotheses have been offered to explain individual motivation to do work-related activities [40], little is known about the underlying variables affecting intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, particularly when it comes to EE [38].

Theory and research framework

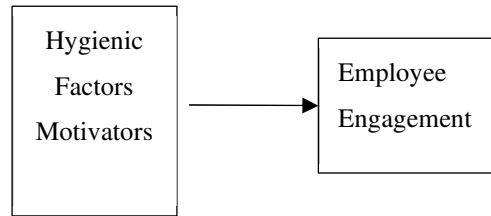


Figure 2. Herzberg two factors theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory relates to employee satisfaction and discontent, which are connected to EE. This view claims that inner elements motivate people, such as employee satisfaction is influenced by success, the work itself, growth, acknowledgement, innovation, freedom, accountability, capacity to use, and ethical principles. If these factors are not met at work, the employee will not be happy but will not be dissatisfied [41]. On the other side, extrinsic motivating variables include job security, compensation, relationships with coworkers and supervisors, the workplace atmosphere, corporate policy, authority, variety of work, and advancement. These elements do not guarantee employee contentment, but their absence will result in an unhappy workforce. Based on the discussion above, two hypotheses have been developed:

H1: There is a significant effect of extrinsic motivational factors on EE in the RMG industry in Bangladesh

H2: There is a significant effect of intrinsic motivational factors on EE in the RMG industry in Bangladesh.

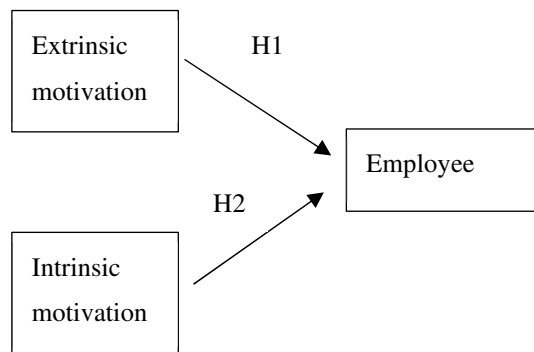


Figure 3. Research Framework

METHODS

Based on empirical data, the self-administered structural closed-ended questionnaire was used for this study to collect the data cross-sectionally from the total 500 employees of 33 RMG companies in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Non-probability, specifically consecutive and convenience sampling techniques, had been used to draw the sample from the entire population. The questionnaire had been adapted from previous studies. The scale "Utrecht Work Engagement (UWES)" of EE, developed by Schaufeli et al. [42] and tested by Vanam [30], have nine items questionnaire to measure three dimensions (vigour, dedication, absorption) of EE. In measuring motivational factors, the scale developed by Weiss et al. [43] and used by Ghanbahadur [26], named the "Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire", was adopted. The motivational factors distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Accomplishment, the Job itself, progress, promotion, and acknowledgement are intrinsic motivating factors. Extrinsic motivating factors include job stability, salary, relationships with peers and supervisors, workplace conditions, corporate policies and procedures authority, variation, and development. Every question was evaluated using a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 being the most vigorous disagreement and 7 being the most robust agreement. SPSS 29 was utilized for the respondent's demographics profile analysis, and the PLS-SEM technique (smartPLS 4) was applied to investigate the hypothesis.

RESULTS

Respondents' profile

The female respondents were 53% (265), and the males were 47% (235). 24.6% (123) respondents were 18-25 years, 40.2% (201) were 26-33 years, 19.8% (99) were 34-41, and 15.4% (77) respondents were below 18 years old. 68.3% (342) were unmarried, 28% (140) were married, and 3.7% (18) were divorced among them. Regarding the level of study, 59.7% (298) respondents had completed primary, 19.37% (97) secondary, 10.3% (51) Higher secondary, and 10.63% (54) had completed bachelor education. 180 (36%), 139 (27.8%), 62 (12.4%), 31 (6.1%), 15 (3.1%), and 73 (14.6%) respondents earn Taka 7001 to 9000, 9001 to 11000, 11001 to 13000, 13001 to 15000 and more than 15000 respectively. Of the working duration of 159 (31.7%) respondents, 136 (27.19%), 76 (15.2%), and 71 (14.31%) respondents were 55-60, 48-54, 61-66, 67-72 hours per week and 58 (11.6%) respondents work more 72 hours per week.

Hypothesis testing

Evaluation of measurement model

It is essential to evaluate the measurement model before analyzing the structural model. Measurements of construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity can be used to analyze the measurement model. According to Hair et al. (2014), Composite Reliability (CR) should be used to evaluate the study's internal consistency, and the threshold value should be at least 0.7. Based on Table 4, the value of composite reliability is 0.863 (EE), 0.846 (intrinsic motivational factors) and 0.918 (extrinsic motivational factors), disclosing that the three constructs have high levels of internal consistency. Some extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors like Job, creativity,

independence, moral values, relationship with peers, working condition, company policy and procedure have been deleted because of lower outer loadings. The values of Cronbach's alpha (CA) are also at the accepted level (Table 1).

The validity of convergence was also examined. The degree of convergence of an individual construct about the measure of another construct is known as convergent validity, denoted by average variance extracted (AVE) [44]. This refers to how well a latent concept elaborates the differences between its indicators [45]. Table 1 demonstrates that all AVE values are above 0.5 and above the suggested standards, making them all acceptable.

Table 1. Convergent validity, CR and AVE.

Items	Outers loadings	CA	CR	AVE
Employee Engagement		0.673	0.863	0.563
Vigour1	0.374			
Dedication1	0.844			
Dedication2	0.673			
Vigour2	0.835			
Absorption1	0.583			
Absorption2	0.674			
Extrinsic Factors		0.868	0.918	0.647
Authority	0.834			
Relationship with supervisor	0.725			
Variety1	0.835			
Variety2	0.526			
Advancement	0.539			
Salary	0.836			
Job security1	0.574			
Job security2	0.845			
Intrinsic Factors		0.751	0.846	0.745
Ability utilization1	0.846			
Ability utilization3	0.735			

Achievement	0.901
Responsibility	0.834
Recognition1	0.835
Recognition2	0.587
Growth1	0.519
Growth2	0.628

Discriminant validity

To determine the extent of shared variance across the model's latent constructs, researchers frequently utilize the Fornell and Larcker criteria [46]. According to Fornell and Larcker's [46] guidelines, the Table 2 findings show adequate or enough discriminant validity, in which the square roots of AVE (diagonal) are greater than correlation (off-diagonal) for all of the reflective constructs.

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	Y1	Y2	Y3
Employee engagement (Y1)	0.808		
Extrinsic motivational factors (Y2)	0.691	0.735	
Intrinsic motivational factors (Y3)	0.517	0.327	0.816

Evaluation of Structural Model

R Square, f Square and Predictive Relevance

The value of the R square is 0.701, indicating that extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors can account for 70%% of the variance in the EE. f square to examine the relative impact of a predictor construct concerning the endogenous construct. Based on the result in Table 3, extrinsic motivational factors (0.402) and intrinsic motivational factors (0.296) have a large and medium effect size (f square) on EE subsequently. Fornell and Larcker [46] Suggest that the model is predictively relevant if the value of the Q square is more significant than zero. The values of Q Square for EE in Table 3 show that it is greater than zero, indicating that it has predictive validity.

Table 3. f Square, R Square, Predictive Relevance

f Square	R Square		Predictive Relevance			
	Y1	R Square	Adjusted R Square	SSO	SSE	Q ²
Employee engagement (Y1)		0.701	0.601	604.000	393.712	0.428

Extrinsic motivational factors (Y2)	0.402
Intrinsic motivational factors (Y3)	0.296

Path coefficient

Table 4 depicted that there is a significant effect of extrinsic motivational factors on EE (b=0.536, t=6.365, p<0.000); and intrinsic motivational factors and EE (b=0.503, t=4.528, p<0.001).

Table 4. Direct Effect (Path Coefficient).

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Extrinsic motivational factors > Employee engagement	0.536	0.494	0.034	6.365	0.000
Intrinsic motivational factors > Employee engagement	0.503	0.374	0.041	4.528	0.001

DISCUSSION

The study examines the effect of motivational factors on EE in RMG in Bangladesh. Testing the influence of extrinsic motivational factors on EE is the first hypothesis. Our findings suggest that the extrinsic motivational factors have a significant effect (P= 0.000) on EE (Table 4), and the f squared (0.402) proposes extrinsic motivational factors give a 40% effect (Table 3) on EE, which is mainly significant. Thus, Hypothesis H1 has been accepted. Relationships with peers, working conditions, company policy and procedure have no role in extrinsic motivational factors. The second hypothesis is to examine the effect of intrinsic motivational factors on EE. The p-value is 0.001 (Table 4), and the f squared (0.296) suggests that these factors give a 29.6% effect (Table 3) on EE, which is moderately significant. Thus, hypothesis H2 has been accepted. Some items like Job, creativity, independence and moral values do not contribute to intrinsic motivational factors at RMG in Bangladesh.

The study reveals that motivational factors have a significant effect on EE, which is supported by the study of Hossan [23, 53], and Hossan et al. [54]. The R squared (0.609) suggested that the motivational factor gives 61% variance on EE according to Table 3, which is moderately significant. This result is similar to Bergstrom and Martinez [18] and Putra et al. [47]. The findings are in line with and similar to Bergstrom and Martinez [18] and Khan and Iqbal [19] and show that when these elements for the employees are raised, it will also boost their level of engagement. Extrinsic motivational factors have more impact on EE than intrinsic motivational factors at RMG in Bangladesh, and the result is similar to Hossan et al. [52].

The RMG industry has emerged as the most significant foreign currency earner for this developing country in South Asia [48]. Due to the increasing demand for garments worldwide and the availability of cheap labour in Bangladesh, the manufacturers have created an ambitious target to earn more than \$50 billion by 2021 [48]. RMG has a bright future, which Mickensey [49] predicted will be \$45 billion by 2015. However, the sector's contribution in 2016 was only \$26 billion. The average output during the previous few years projected a lower production than anticipated [50]. According to Rubel et al. [51], the Bangladeshi RMG industry's workforce was not engaged due to the frequent turnover of staff.

EE is caused by extrinsic motivational variables such as authorities, relationship with supervisor, variety, advancement, salary, and job security, as well as intrinsic motivational factors such as ability usage, achievement, responsibility, recognition, and growth. Based on this study, managers should focus more on the above extrinsic motivational factors (hygienic factors) to the employee. Otherwise, the employee will not be engaged in their work. Managers also need to focus on the intrinsic motivational factors (motivators) for better employee engagement according to the Herzberg two factors theory in the RMG industry in Bangladesh.

Study implications

The study has important implications on both practical and theoretical levels. Most of the prior EE research was conducted in the western context. This study is significant in that it included respondents from the operational level of RMG, which frequently includes low-income workers with high expectations of their employers regarding their ability to overcome the unhappiness and fulfil their needs for motivation and fulfilment.

In this study, the motivating factors of EE are validated using the Herzberg two factors theory. Before concentrating on how to boost EE, management must make more significant efforts to raise the level of employee happiness and motivation.

The management of the RMG sectors in Bangladesh must focus on creating motivating elements, mainly extrinsic values. In addition, to demonstrate a strong level of support and commitment from employers, managers must clearly and appropriately communicate their expectations and concerns to their employees clearly and appropriately.

Study limitations and recommendations

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation were the only critical factors in this study; additional predictors, such as culture and leadership styles, were not considered. Therefore, these factors may be incorporated into later investigations. In addition, future studies can use longitudinal and multilevel data instead of cross-sectional and single-source data. This is so that participants could provide deeper insights based on analysis, debates, and explanations using longitudinal and multilevel data.

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors (authority, relationship with supervisor, variety, job security, advancement, salary, ability utilization, achievement, responsibility, recognition, and growth) significantly affect EE in RMG in Bangladesh. However, extrinsic motivational factors (authority, relationship with supervisor, variety, job security, advancement, salary) are more significant in employee engagement than intrinsic motivational factors (ability utilization, achievement, responsibility, recognition, growth). Therefore, the policymakers and managers of RMG should focus more on extrinsic motivational factors than intrinsic motivational factors to increase production in the industry by engaging employees.

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