Navigating the Dual Imperatives of Motivation and Safety: A Critical Analysis of HR Compliance in Dhaka's Apparel Sector

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Abstract

The apparel sector in Dhaka, Bangladesh, is both an economic engine and a site of persistent labor concerns. This manuscript critically explores the dual imperatives of employee motivation and occupational safety within the framework of human resource (HR) compliance in the apparel industry. Drawing on current literature, labor reports, and theoretical models of motivation and regulatory compliance, the paper examines how HR practices in the sector respond to internal organizational demands and external pressures for safety and ethical labor standards. The analysis highlights systemic gaps in compliance implementation and their impacts on worker morale, well-being, and productivity. This paper contends that lasting improvement in worker outcomes calls for a revolutionary approach to HR strategy emphasizing employee dignity, voice, and empowerment in addition to regulatory compliance. Recommendations are made for organizational change and policy reform catered to the socio-economic reality of Dhaka's garment sector.

1: Introduction

The global fashion industry relies heavily on low-cost production hubs, and among them, Bangladesh has emerged as a dominant player. With Dhaka at its epicenter, the country's apparel sector employs millions, predominantly women, who operate under time-bound, labor-intensive, and often hazardous working conditions (Ai et al., 2022). The collapse of the Rana Plaza building in 2013, which killed over 1,100 workers, marked a turning point for international scrutiny of occupational safety and labor rights in the sector. Since then, discussions of compliance, motivation, and worker welfare have become central to academic and policy discourses on Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) industry (Latif & Yasin, 2025).

Despite the proliferation of safety audits and compliance frameworks in the post-Rana Plaza era, evidence suggests that many apparel organizations continue to operate in ways that undermine long-term worker motivation and fail to embed occupational safety as a core value (Rahman et al., 2021). Human Resource (HR) departments, often under-resourced and policy-driven rather than people-centered, find themselves caught between meeting compliance benchmarks and addressing the deeper psychological and environmental needs of workers (Rahaman et al., 2020).

This study adopts a critical lens to explore how HR compliance mechanisms intersect with employee motivation and workplace safety in the apparel sector of Dhaka. It examines whether current HR practices are capable of going beyond formalistic compliance to generate authentic employee engagement and safe working environments. By doing so, the paper contributes to broader conversations on ethical labor governance, industrial relations, and the future of HR in emerging economies (Ahmed et al., 2025).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Employee Motivation in Labor-Intensive Industries

Employee motivation has long been acknowledged as a critical driver of productivity, commitment, and organizational performance (Herzberg, 1966; Deci & Ryan, 1985). In labor-intensive industries like apparel manufacturing, where repetitive tasks and long working hours dominate, intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors play a significant role in maintaining workforce morale (Rahaman, Hossain, & Chen, 2022).

While monetary compensation remains a key driver, studies in South Asian contexts have shown that job security, recognition, supervisor support, and fair treatment significantly impact motivation (Amin et al., 2013; Islam & Mia, 2020).

However, in Bangladesh's apparel industry, motivation is often compromised by exploitative labor practices, limited upward mobility, and poor workplace conditions. Research by Siddiqi (2015) and Rahman et al. (2018) reveals that although many factories meet minimum wage standards, workers experience chronic dissatisfaction due to unpredictable shifts, verbal abuse, and a lack of representation in decision-making processes. Consequently, motivation in this sector is often fragile and short-lived, contributing to high turnover and absenteeism rates (Gazi, Rahaman, Hossain, Ali, & Mamoon, 2021).

2.2 Occupational Safety and Compliance

The issue of occupational safety in Bangladesh's garment sector gained international attention following the Rana Plaza tragedy in 2013. Subsequent reforms, such as the Accord on Fire and Building Safety and the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, introduced stricter compliance mechanisms, including factory inspections, fire safety training, and infrastructural upgrades. These initiatives have yielded measurable improvements in some areas, but challenges remain (Latif, Yasin, & Ali, 2025).

Many compliance programs, as noted by Ashraf & Prentice (2019), are primarily audit-focused and fail to create a culture of safety that is sustained from within. Furthermore, research indicates a disconnect between formal compliance and actual worker experiences (Rahaman, Ali, Wafik, Mamoon, & Islam, 2020). While factories may technically pass safety checks, everyday conditions—such as blocked exits, inadequate ventilation, and long exposure to physical strain—often go unaddressed (Labowitz & Baumann-Pauly, 2015).

2.3 The Role of HR in Compliance and Worker Well-being

HR departments are typically positioned as intermediaries between management and labor, making them central to implementing compliance standards and promoting employee welfare (Rahaman & Uddin, 2022). In theory, HR practices should integrate motivation-enhancing strategies with compliance mandates to ensure both productivity and protection (Rahaman, Ali, Mamoon, & Al Asheq, 2020). Yet in
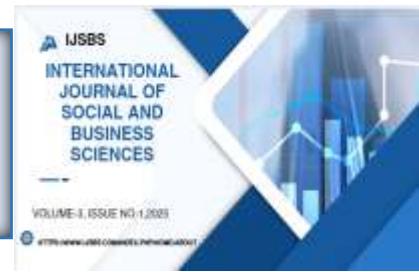
practice, HR in many apparel factories is under-resourced and poorly integrated into strategic decision-making (Ahmed & Nathan, 2016).

Studies show that HR personnel often focus on documentation and legal adherence rather than cultivating positive labor relations (Chowdhury, 2021). There is also a tendency to treat compliance as a box-ticking exercise rather than as an opportunity to engage workers meaningfully. This creates a gap between policy and practice, where HR compliance exists on paper but fails to transform workplace realities (Latif, 2023).

**2.4 Theoretical Framework**

To critically analyze the intersection of motivation, safety, and HR compliance in Dhaka's apparel sector, this study draws on two foundational theoretical lenses:

2.4.1 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, safety, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., recognition, responsibility, growth opportunities). In the apparel sector, hygiene factors such as occupational safety are often emphasized due to regulatory pressures, but motivators are largely neglected. This results in a workplace environment where workers may feel physically safer but remain psychologically disengaged (Ahmed, Saha, Tasrif, Ali, & Khan, 2025). Applying this theory, the study assesses whether HR compliance mechanisms in apparel factories merely address basic survival needs or also incorporate strategies that foster intrinsic motivation and long-term engagement (Rahaman et al., 2021).

2.4.2 Institutional Theory of Organizational Compliance

Institutional theory explains the way organizations comply with the norms, social expectation and industry standards in pursuit of the legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Within the context of the apparel sector in Bangladesh, compliance is more externally driven towards the international buyers, trade unions and non-governmental organizations. This leads to what Scott (2008) calls "ceremonial compliance" – in which organizations pursue formal policies to give off the appearance of legitimacy whilst failing to become culturally embroiled within those practices. This paper critically analyzes if HR practices in the apparel organizations of Dhaka indeed
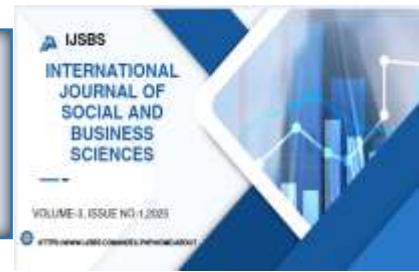
reflect the interest of employees or are just symbolic gestures to appease external monitoring (Saha et al., 2025). To this end, this paper synthesizes the perspective provided by the institutional theory's view of compliance with that of Motivation.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research applies qualitative research design to examine the connection between the HR compliance, occupational safety, and employees' motivation in the apparel sector of Dhaka, Bangladesh. The purpose of choosing qualitative approach was to draw an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of workers and HR professionals in the industry, and complexities of HR practices and their effects on both motivation and safety (Islam, Latif, & Ahmed, 2022).

3.2 Population and Sampling

The population for the present research comprises employees and HR professionals in apparel factories in Dhaka. Participants were received through a purposive sampling choice. Hence, consumers of HR practices or those directly involved in HR practices, safety compliance or employee welfare (Rahaman, 2016). Such an approach guarantees that the participants possess knowledge and experience which would enhance the study's goals. Hence, sample comprises:

HR Managers and Staff: A total of 15 HR managers and staff working in mid- to large-sized apparel factories in Dhaka.

- **Workers**: A group of 30 workers, including both male and female employees, from different departments (production, quality control, and administration) within the same factories.

- **Factory Owners/Managers**: 5 factory owners/managers who have decision-making authority regarding HR practices and safety compliance.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The study employed semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. Semi-structured interviews allow for flexibility, enabling the researcher to ask open-ended questions while also allowing the participants to provide detailed, personal responses (Rahaman, Taru, Prajapat, & Emran, 2023). This approach was essential for understanding the nuanced perceptions of workers and HR professionals. In addition to
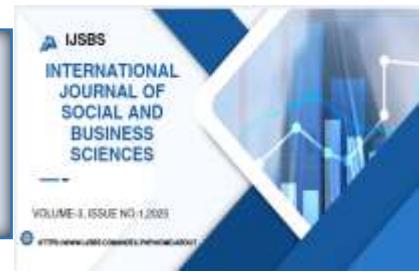
interviews, document analysis was used to examine factory records, HR policies, and safety protocols. By doing this, the investigation learned about the rules and guidelines to follow in the factories' HR processes (Latif, Karim, & Hossain, 2021). From January to March 2025, I conducted the interviews with the group. All interviews were conducted using Bengali, were done with the participants' permission, and were transcribed. The interviews I conducted lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.

4.1 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was the main approach used to look at the information gathered from the interviews. The idea is to sift information in the data for similarities that become themes, once you have analyzed them. Six thematic analysis steps were used in the process, following the guidelines given by Braun and Clarke (2006).

a. Familiarization with the data: The transcripts were studied many times to really understand the material included.

b. Generating initial codes: Data was coded to highlight information about HR policies, workplace safety, and the motivation of employees.

c. Searching for themes: To capture what participants went through, the codes were organized into larger themes.

d. Reviewing themes: The themes were reviewed and revised to make sure they truly reflected what was found in the results.

e. Defining and naming themes: Each theme was given a label to make it clear what it meant.

f. Writing the report: A final report was created using the main themes and tying them to the studies on HR compliance, safety, and motivation.

1. Furthermore, the researcher relied on NVivo to help with coding and organization, which was key to make sure the research, was done systematically and thoroughly.

4.2 Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the research study with people. Key ethical considerations included:

a. Informed Consent: We explained the purpose of the research to all participants, and received their written consent before interviewing them.

b. Confidentiality: All the participants' information was kept private, and nothing that could identify them was included in the report.

c. Voluntary Participation: People kept the decision to participate, and at any time they could decide to step out without consequences.

d. Non-coercion: People did not receive financial rewards for taking part in the study, and they gave their responses without any pressure.4.3. HR Compliance in the Apparel Industry of Dhaka

4.3.1 The Evolution of HR Compliance in the Apparel Sector

Following the tragic Rana Plaza collapse in 2013, Bangladesh brought in compliance frameworks for its apparel sector. These two incidents, Rana Plaza and Tazreen Fashions fire in 2012, revealed why not having proper rules and good HR systems related to safety and workers' motivation can have dire effects (Prajapat) (Rahman et al., 2023). Because of this, several international stakeholders, including the ILO, BGMEA, and brand owners, wanted to make changes to help improve the safety and working conditions in Bangladesh (Chen et al., 2022).

One important initiative after Rana Plaza was the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, which ensured that factories go through full inspections for safety. Even though measures were introduced in some areas to increase safety, the overall HR compliance issue involving motivation, well-being, and involvement of employees was not addressed enough (Choudhury, Karim, & Latif, 2019). In this situation, organizations mainly followed safety and building rules without considering how HR practices could improve staff engagement and affect the company in the long term (Rashid & Alam, 2018).

4.3.2 Compliance Mechanisms: A Regulatory Perspective

People working in the Dhaka garment sector are governed by complex regulations put in place by the government, inspections, and international guidelines. After being amended in 2013, the Bangladesh Labour Act requires fire exits, provides safety gear, and sets rules for regular breaks. Moreover, having various programs such as the Bangladesh Accord and the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, as well as company-specific rules, has been intended to oversee safety and labor matters (Yu et al., 2024).

Even with these initiatives, it is still difficult to maintain a consistent enforcement of compliance. While global brands charge their larger factories to comply with safety rules, small, unregistered factories are harder to regulate. According to Ahmed & Mohiuddin (2020), the HR departments in these factories are, more often than not, unable to institute strong safety measures or effective motivational processes, which makes following regulations seem shallow.

Many argue that overusing external audits to maintain compliance is unsustainable in the long run. These audits usually look at the physical areas and policies but miss out on considering how employees feel about their jobs and the company's safety programs, respectively (Chowdhury, 2021). As a result, most attention is given to easy-to-see security measures instead of improving the culture of the workplace where workers truly feel safe (Latif, 2017).

4.3.3 The Role of HR in Bridging Compliance and Employee Welfare

HR departments in apparel organizations have the main job of making sure rules are followed, helping employees feel good at work, and motivating the whole team to do their best. However, their ability to help with HR tasks can be affected by problems like being given too little control, not enough training, and they mostly focus on doing day-to-day tasks instead of big changes. In many factories, HR just handles tasks like payroll, keeping track of who showed up to work, and dealing with labor problems, instead of working on ways to keep employees motivated and safe at work. In larger factories, people are starting to use newer HR methods that blend rules and regulations with ways to help motivate employees. For instance, some companies have started putting programs in place where workers can share their safety worries and come up with different ways to make things safer (Hosain, Amin, Imam, Rahaman, & Oláh, 2024). These programs are still not common, and usually only show up in factories that ship goods to places like Europe or the United States, where making sure labor is fair is considered more important. Despite these advances, HR teams still have a hard time creating a workplace where everyone does what is right, not just because it's required by the law, but also because it's the right thing to do. According to Rahman et al. (2017), even though HR can help motivate employees and make sure they are safe, this part of HR work is often ignored because of the need to lower costs, especially when there are

economic problems around the world. In many cases, HR professionals at clothing factories in Dhaka have to deal with many different kinds of workers, often while working under tough conditions and without enough help or tools to really help make things better.

4.3.3. Employee Motivation and Occupational Safety: The Inter-linkages

4.3.3.1 Motivation as a Precursor to Safety Compliance

Motivated workers are more likely to participate in safety protocols and contribute to the construction of a safer working environment (Rahaman, Amin, Taru, Ahammed, & Rabbi, 2023). This is one of the reasons why occupational safety and employee motivation are profoundly related. According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), safety is one of the hygiene elements that have to be handled before motivators like recognition and professional advancement may operate. In the clothing industry, where safety is sometimes viewed as a legal obligation, it is especially important to know how motivated workers view safety policies and their part in following safety standards (Ali et al., 2023). Studies in various sectors have revealed that when workers feel appreciated and driven, they are more inclined to adopt safety measures and notify dangers free of fear of retribution (Cohen & Blunt, 2019). On the other hand, employees who are disengaged or feel ignored are less likely to follow safety rules, which could result in accidents, injuries, and long-term health effects (Raj et al., 2019). This dynamic is especially important in Dhaka's garment sector since the industry's high turnover rate and low pay frequently lead to worker apathy, which then compromises safety compliance efforts (Prajapat et al., 2022).

4.3.3.2 The Impact of Workplace Safety on Motivation

Although sometimes seen as a legal issue, workplace safety is more and more acknowledged as a fundamental element of staff drive. Studies have often demonstrated that safe working conditions result in more job satisfaction, organizational dedication, and performance (Robinson & Judge, 2017). Workers in Dhaka's garment factories who feel their workplace is hazardous are more likely to suffer stress, weariness, and unhappiness, which would lower their motivation and involvement (Gazi et al., 2021). A safe workplace not only stops physical injuries but also builds employee-employer trust. Alfarini et al. (2016) found in their research that employees in sectors with high
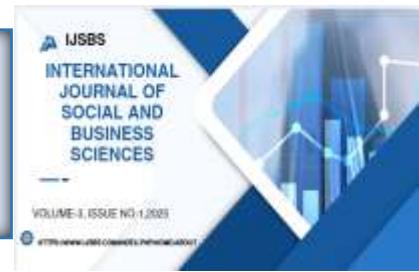
safety cultures express more job happiness and a better feeling of belonging. On the other hand, neglecting or improper safety implementation could make workers feel disposable and cause unhappiness, lower morale, and finally a lack of dedication to safety as well as organizational objectives (Latif, Islam, Noor, Mohamad, & Kongsompong, 2016).

4.3.3.3. The HR Compliance-Safety-Motivation Triad

HR compliance, workplace safety, and employee motivation interact in a complicated trio that can either support or weaken one another. HR departments in Dhaka's garment sector are sometimes charged with striking a regulatory compliance against the requirement to promote staff drive, but rival demands can upset this balance (Tu et al., 2021). Factories, on one hand, are expected to satisfy safety criteria established by international consumers, governments, and NGOs. HR, on the other hand, has to negotiate organizational limits like budgetary restrictions, labor shortages, and opposition to change (Hera et al., 2024).

Where HR compliance systems aim to establish safer work environments, employees are more likely to feel protected and supported, which can improve motivation (Chen et al., 2022). Factories where safety policies are matched with chances for worker participation in decision-making, skill development, and career progression provide clear evidence of this (Latif, Islam, & Noor, 2014). Participatory HR policies, for example, that support employee input on safety concerns not only increase compliance but also help to foster trust and drive (Siddiqi, 2015). The link between safety and drive, however, suffers when safety is viewed as a mere formality and HR compliance is lowered to satisfy outside audits. Many factories in Dhaka follow the letter of safety rules but fail to foster an environment where workers feel really protected or empowered, as Rahman et al. (2018) found. Many Dhaka industries obey the text of safety rules but do not establish an atmosphere where employees feel really protected or empowered, as found in studies by Rahman et al. (2018). In these settings, compliance is more a tool for external legitimacy than a way to promote internal drive (Md Atikur Rahman et al., 2023).

4.3.3.4 Bridging the Gap: HR Strategies for Enhancing Safety and Motivation

HR policies should go beyond following rules and seek to build a culture that honors the employees as integral part of the company, thus closing the gap between safety compliance and worker motivation (Rahaman et al., 2020). This covers:

Participatory Safety Programs: Safety audits and hazard assessments have two sides; not only does involving workers improve compliance, but it also empowers employees to defend themselves actively. Some of the means of increasing confidence and participation via safety are workers-led safety committees or the creation of confidential reporting channels (Latif et al., 2015). Regular safety training and access to personal development opportunities help employees feel they are involved in their well-being and also gain something from their job in the organization. Though not resource-sparing, this approach has been shown to improve safety outcomes and increase job satisfaction (Mia et al., 2020). HR departments must be empowered with authority and resources to assist compliance in the sound use of motivational approaches. It involves offering performance advantages, chances for professional development, recognition programs that boost internal drive, and help to build a more dedicated workforce (Yuan et al., 2022).

4.4 Challenges in HR Compliance and Enforcement

4.4.1 Inconsistent Enforcement of Compliance Regulations

The uneven application of HR compliance rules is among the most urgent problems facing Dhaka's garment industry. Many smaller factories still run without sufficient control, even when big, multinational firms selling worldwide brands sometimes fulfill international norms because of outside pressure (Rahaman et al., 2020). The absence of a centralized, effective method for monitoring and implementing labor laws and safety standards accounts for much of this difference. The Bangladesh Labor Ministry's ability to inspect is somewhat constrained; the number of skilled inspectors is inadequate to manage the size of the industry, which encompasses thousands of garment manufacturers (Rahman et al., 2017). Furthermore, factory owners and managers could ignore legal obligations to cut running expenses, particularly if they worry about losing contracts with overseas purchasers (Chen et al., 2023). Factories that pass external audits could still have insufficient safety procedures, non-compliant HR practices, or bad working conditions in practice, so this approach

compromises the efficacy of compliance programs. HR departments in these industries, therefore, find it very difficult to guarantee compliance with safety requirements, much less to handle the more general motivational demands of employees (Siddiqi, 2015).

4.4.2 Lack of Resources and Training for HR Departments

Many garment production sites have HR departments under-equipped and lacking the necessary technicalities to apply the compliance rules and guarantee fair treatment of the workers. HR practitioners in these settings are often overwhelmed with administrative duties that leave no space for strategic initiatives like employee motivation, career growth, or even safety improvement (Chen et al., 2022). Studies have shown that the HR teams of Dhaka's garment sector are not often formally trained on labor rights, safety criteria, and motivating techniques (Amin et al., 2019). Moreover, in smaller factories, HR duties can be included into different administrative duties and there would be less room for HR staff to focus on the requirements of the employees. Inadequate pay and lack of professional growth prospects for HR staff members only serve to exacerbate the situation as if this were not enough (Rahaman et al., 2021). This explains why the HR departments often lag behind the evolving HR compliance criteria and fail to adequately satisfy the complex needs of employees in terms of safety and motivation (Ahmed & Nathan, 2016).

4.4.3 Management Resistance and Cultural Barriers

Factory management's resistance is another significant obstacle to efficient HR compliance. Usually, plant owners prioritize short-term gains over long-term safety and employee loyalty investments (Latif et al., 2017). Such a focus on cost-cutting usually leads to less safety measures, bad execution of compliance rules, and little funding for HR projects that could increase employee involvement (Latif et al., 2014). The form of the HR practice in Dhaka's garment sector is also greatly influenced by cultural elements. Cultural standards usually mute the voice of young, low-skilled women in decision-making in most cases. Such under-representation makes it difficult to meet certain requirements. Relating to employees, especially issues of motivation and safety. In this atmosphere, HR compliance turns from a worker-centered cooperative project to a top-down, paternalistic one (Chowdhury, 2021).

4.5 The Economic Pressures of Globalization

Globalization has added further strain on the Dhaka garment sector, hence aggravating issues with HR compliance. Factory owners are under great pressure to give output priority over employee welfare because of rising demand for inexpensive labor, tight production deadlines, and the ongoing danger of transferring contracts to other low-cost nations (Ali et al., 2023). Many HR departments are forced by this economic reality to concentrate on compliance with fundamental labor laws and safety rules, sometimes at the expense of more thorough HR policies meant to improve motivation, job satisfaction, and long-term worker well-being (Rahaman et al., 2023). For instance, while factory owners are driven to meet strict production goals to secure contracts from global corporations, workers in Dhaka's garment industry may find themselves with grueling work hours and low pay (Latif, Islam, Noor, Saaban, & Halim, 2014). In such an environment, HR compliance may be viewed as a secondary concern to meeting production deadlines and maintaining cost efficiency (Rahman et al., 2018).

5.1. Critical Analysis and Discussion

5.1.1 The Disconnect Between Compliance and Employee Well-being

Though Dhaka's garment industry has thorough safety rules and compliance systems, there is still a notable disparity between official compliance and the real well-being of workers (Hosain et al., 2024). The results of the study show that although many factories satisfy the necessary safety criteria, this compliance usually does not result in a significant increase in employee motivation or morale (Latif et al., 2021). Historically, compliance systems have concentrated on physical safety, sometimes overlooking workers' psychological and emotional requirements (Mustafi et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2024). Several things help to explain this gap between compliance and employee well-being. First, while well-intentioned, the legal systems are sometimes scant and overlook the more profound structural problems in the sector (Yu et al., 2024).

Although infrastructure checks and safety audits are essential, they overlook the larger work environment, including management practices, interpersonal interactions, and chances for career advancement, shaping staff motivation (Amin et al., 2019). Systemic problems include lack of resources, training, and authority, among others, often undercut the function of HR departments in carrying out safety and motivation

programs (Karim et al., 2021). In many workplaces, HR is not authorized to significantly alter organizational policies or to advocate for workers' rights and interests. HR departments are therefore pushed into a reactive posture, mostly handling administrative duties and responding to complaints rather than actively developing a workplace culture that promotes motivation, safety, and long-term involvement (Rahman et al., 2018).

5.1.2 HR's Part in Establishing a Motivational Safety Culture

HR teams have a vital part in changing the safety culture into one that also fosters motivation even if safety compliance is still a top concern (Latif et al., 2014, p. 71). HR can change the emphasis from merely satisfying basic safety criteria to including safety into a more general organizational framework including acknowledgement, development, and employee involvement by drawing on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Latif et al., 2015). This strategy can assist in establishing a workplace where employees feel respected and valued and go beyond compliance as a bare minimum (Chen et al., 2022). HR departments can also use participatory safety initiatives, which motivate employees to spot safety risks and offer remedies, hence including them more in the process (Prajapat et al., 2023). HR not only increases motivation but also guarantees that safety measures fit the actual hazards experienced by employees by including them in the decision-making process (Rahaman et al., 2023). By encouraging a feeling of ownership and responsibility among employees, participatory HR policies have been proven to increase safety compliance as well as job satisfaction (Siddiqi, 2015). Moreover, HR may be changing by making sure safety is not only about physical measures but also about building a psychologically secure space (Rahaman et al., 2024). This covers problems such as supervisor bad relationships, job stress, and harassment (Rahaman, 2016). Motivation is fostered, and compliance with safety requirements is promoted by psychological safety, in which workers feel free to voice worries and ideas without fear of reprisal (Cohen & Blunt, 2019).

5.1.3 HR's Economic and Structural Constraints in Dhaka's Apparel Sector

Although HR departments have a great possibility to promote safety and motivation, the economic realities of the Dhaka apparel sector severely limit HR efforts (Latif et al., 2015). Low profit margins and the ongoing demand to fulfil production
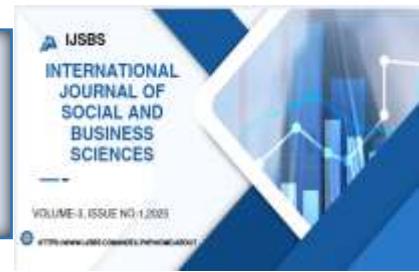
targets provide limited space for manufacturers to invest in all-encompassing HR plans (Gazi et al., 2024). Many factories, especially smaller ones, run under strict financial limits, which might cause safety and incentive to be less important than short-term economic objectives (Karim et al., 2019).

Moreover, the strict hierarchical structure in many garment factories prevents HR from putting worker-centered policies into effect (Rahaman et al., 2022). In a top-down culture, HR's function is sometimes more about enforcing policies than about promoting management-employee communication. This systemic problem hinders HR's capacity to properly handle employee issues regarding motivation and safety (Bin Latif et al., 2024). The difficulty in this regard is not just in enhancing compliance systems but also in developing a viable economic model that gives worker well-being first priority without compromising revenue (Latif et al., 2024). Building closer partnerships among factory owners, multinational purchasers, and labour unions could help to guarantee that workers' rights are sufficiently safeguarded even under competitive manufacturing criteria (Ashraf & Prentice, 2019).

5.1.4 Policy Suggestions to Improve HR Compliance and Worker Welfare

Several policy suggestions are made to improve HR compliance and raise worker motivation and safety in Dhaka's garment industry in order to solve the difficulties noted in this report. HR departments should be equipped with the required resources and training to efficiently manage both safety and motivational strategies. HR departments should be provided with the required tools and training to properly handle both safety and motivational initiatives. This entails giving HR staff members particular training on labor rights, safety requirements, and motivating strategies supporting employee involvement (Latif et al., 2024). HR policies should be intended to connect safety measures with motivation. HR policies should be meant to connect safety measures with drive. Participatory safety initiatives, recognition programs, and career development prospects that not only safeguard employees but also enable them to feel appreciated and inspired can help to do this (Latif et al., 2023). Government and regulatory agencies should strengthen the monitoring and enforcement of safety rules, especially in small businesses. Inspections and fines for non-compliance based on random, unannounced visits randomly, unannounced inspections and fines for non-

compliance would motivate companies more to regularly follow safety requirements (Chen & Rahaman, 2022). would provide employers more motivation to regularly follow safety criteria (Chen & Rahaman, 2022). Encouraging worker representation via trade unions or worker councils can help individuals have a say in safety and HR issues. These organizations can support the inclusion of safety with more general motivational initiatives, fair treatment, and improved working circumstances (Song et al., 2025). Encouraging international consumers to not only apply safety standards but also reward factories carrying out thorough HR policies, including worker welfare and motivation, will help to foster cooperation with global brands. By establishing industry-wide standards that give both compliance and employee happiness top priority, brands may help (Rahman et al., 2025).

5.2.1 Final Thoughts

Responding to global pressure and labor tragedies, the garment industry in Dhaka, Bangladesh, has made notable progress in enhancing occupational safety and HR compliance. Though, even with these developments, the industry still struggles greatly to completely include safety and staff motivation. This important study has brought out several important results:

Although compliance with safety rules has improved bigger factories, the application of thorough HR practices that encourage employee motivation stays uneven. Although adherence to safety rules has been better in bigger plants, the use of thorough HR policies supporting employee incentives still varies. Often, compliance systems concentrate on fulfilling fundamental physical safety criteria while neglecting more general employee welfare issues, including psychological safety, job happiness, and career progression. Structural elements, including low pay, long hours, and poor management practices, often undermine employee motivation in Dhaka's garment sector. Structural elements, including low pay, long hours, and bad management practices, often impede employee motivation in Dhaka's garment business. Although necessary, safety policies cannot be a single remedy for employee discontent and disengagement. Also, though many HR practitioners are limited by a lack of resources, training, and authority, HR departments are essential in closing the gap between safety and incentives. Often, HR's function is reduced to administrative duties, which offers

limited space for strategic projects meant to create an inspiring and helpful workplace.

Economic realities of the garment sector in Dhaka, including cost-cutting pressures and intense competition, make it even more difficult to carry out HR policies giving worker welfare top priority. Economic realities of the garment industry in Dhaka, including cost-cutting demands and intense rivalry, make it even more difficult to carry out HR policies that give worker welfare top priority. Many factory owners still find it quite difficult to strike a balance between employee happiness and safety, and profitability.

5.2.2 Suggestions

Several suggestions are made depending on the results and study to strengthen HR compliance, raise safety requirements, and create a more driven workforce in Dhaka's garment industry. First, investing in the professional growth of HR staff members is absolutely vital if they are to properly handle both compliance and motivation. HR personnel should be given particular training in labor rights, safety management, and motivating techniques, arming them with the tools to foster a more supportive workplace. Second, HR departments have to use more thorough approaches that combine safety with motivation. HR departments have to use more thorough approaches that combine safety with drive. This calls for developing chances for career progression and skill development, providing performance rewards, and using participatory safety initiatives. HR can build a more involved and efficient staff by connecting safety with employee drives. Third, especially in small factories, safety requirements need to be more strictly enforced. More regular, surprise inspections and the use of fines for non-compliance will help to accomplish this. Regulatory agencies should also cooperate closely with factory owners to guarantee that compliance is not only a formality but a continuous dedication to worker safety. Fourth, encouraging worker representation through trade unions, worker councils, or other types of collective bargaining can help guarantee that workers have a say in safety and HR issues. Encouraging worker representation via trade unions, worker councils, or other types of collective bargaining can help guarantee that employees have a say in safety and HR issues. This will not only enhance safety compliance but also provide employees a voice to voice their issues and help shape decisions. Encourage

Cooperation with International Brands: Global brands and consumers have a special chance to set an example in supporting both safety and employee well-being. Global brands and consumers have a special chance to lead by example in supporting both safety and employee welfare. By rewarding factories that use whole HR policies, they can encourage factories that give worker safety and motivation top priority to receive preferential treatment in sourcing choices or longer-term contracts. Finally, factory owners, HR departments, and legislators should concentrate on long-term plans to enhance worker welfare, including higher pay, lower work hours, and more chances for professional growth. Policymakers, industrial owners, and HR departments should last concentrate on long-term plans to enhance worker welfare, including better pay, fewer hours, and more chances for career growth. Investing in employee well-being over the long term will not only improve safety and compliance but also help create a more sustainable and productive organization.

5.2.4 Study Limitations

This study has some major limitations: First, Geographical Emphasis: The study was confined to garment factories in Dhaka, which might not reflect the larger setting of Bangladesh or other nations in South Asia. Geographical Emphasis: The study concentrated on Dhaka's garment industry, which could not reflect the larger setting of Bangladesh or other South Asian nations. The results might not so apply to all clothing categories. Second, the sample size was rather tiny, which might restrict the capacity to make generalizations. The sample size was somewhat small, which would restrict the capacity to make generalizations. A bigger sample or statistical method could offer a more complete knowledge of the problems at hand. Fourth, being a qualitative study, the research depends on the interpretations of the participants and the researcher. Although attempts were made to reduce bias, qualitative research by its very nature includes subjectivity in data gathering and analysis.

5.2.5 Future Studies

Although this paper offers a thorough examination of the link between HR compliance, employee motivation, and occupational safety in Dhaka's garment sector, further investigation is required to find certain motivating elements particular to this sector. First, future research should look at how cultural elements, including the role of

gender and social norms, affect motivation in the garment business. For instance, knowing how female employees, who make up the majority of the workforce in this industry, see safety and motivational policies, could help to clarify how HR tactics might be customized to fit their requirements. Second, future studies may explore how post-pandemic developments—such as the integration of big data analytics, circular economy practices, and digital marketing as studied by (Raffat & Ahmad, 2025) interact with flexible work schedules to influence employee behavior and turnover intentions, particularly in digitally transformed and sustainability-oriented firms. Third, a longitudinal study could provide insightful analysis of how changes in HR practices and safety rules over time affect employee motivation and general well-being. Such studies might follow employees in different factories over lengthy periods to assess how changes in HR strategy and safety measures affect long-term health results, retention rates, and job happiness. Results of such studies could enable plant owners and legislators to create more efficient, long-term HR plans. Fourth, studies should investigate how automation and technology in Dhaka's garment sector affect safety and motivation as the global clothing industry progressively embraces them. Safety compliance might be transformed by the advent of digital platforms for reporting safety problems, automated machines, or wearable safety gadgets. But the effects of these technologies on worker motivation, job satisfaction, and skill development are still underexplored. Studies in this field could provide understanding of how technology might be used to improve employee involvement as well as safety requirements. Fifth, examining HR practices, safety standards, and motivating techniques across several Asian garment manufacturing centers could provide insightful analysis of the efficacy of diverse HR compliance systems. Studies could concentrate on areas like Vietnam, India, or Cambodia, which have characteristics with Bangladesh in terms of labor force makeup and industry difficulties. Such comparative studies would offer a wider knowledge of best practices that manufacturers in Dhaka may use to enhance both compliance and worker drive. Future research can also integrate the role of artificial intelligence and advanced supervised learning models, as explored by Rafi & Sulman (2025) in assessing money laundering activities. Six, additional studies should also emphasize how overseas buyers and brands influence HR policies and safety rules in
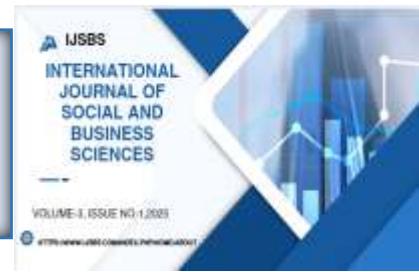
the garment industry. Although brands usually define the criteria for safety and compliance, their direct influence on increasing employee motivation has not been adequately studied. Research might evaluate how HR and safety policies are affected by the supply chain dynamics among foreign consumers, factory owners, and workers, and how these linkages could be used to produce more sustainable and worker-friendly practices. Finally, more qualitative studies might emphasize workers' own lived experiences and views on safety and drive. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups with employees in different factories would provide insightful analysis of the psychological and emotional effect of safety measures, HR policies, and workplace culture on motivation. Knowing workers' points of view can help HR departments and Dhaka's apparel sector legislators to make more sensible and realistic suggestions.

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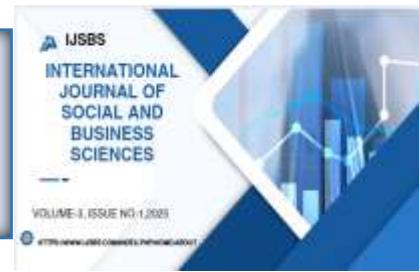
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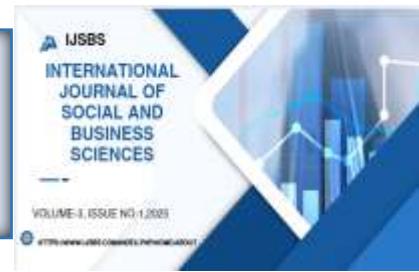
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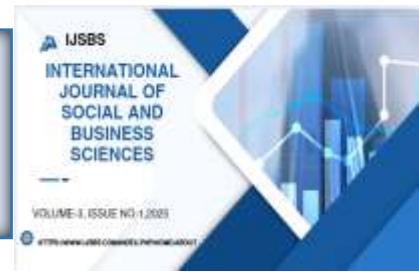
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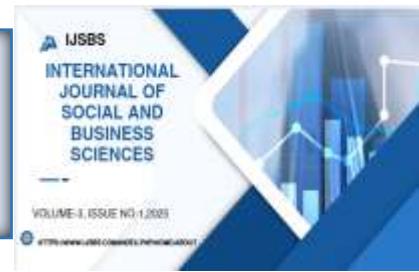
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