

Mapping Violence Against Women within the Discourse of Globalization: An Ethnographic Study Based on South Asian Garments Factory

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ABSTRACT

Globally, one of the twentieth-century developments is the increased participation of women workers in factories. Indeed, women workers continue to play an essential role in the global economy. But the participation of women in wage labour is regarded as a form of violence in South Asian countries, particularly Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

However, this study documenting the experiences of violence against women in garments factory contributes to the idea of 'violence against women as part of Globalization. This study recognizes the relationship between the different sufferings of women workers in garment factories through a gender relations lens and the key issues involving gender inequality, education, coercion and sexual harassment and how they represent global inequality and local identity. This article also offers to understand the trends and challenges of the women workers choosing a career in the garment factory. This study was conducted among the different ages of garment women workers in the garments of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka using ethnographic study under qualitative research method involving in-depth interviews, survey and participant observation was used to collect data about their experiences and suffering of violence against women. The preliminary results of the research show that 98% of women from marginalized backgrounds have faced social, cultural, economic and health issues. In addition, 45% of women reported being sexually harassed by male garment employees. This study extends the position of women, which is the most pressing challenge for women's empowerment. Following an ethnographic analysis of research findings, it can be said that only equal rights, respect, and gender equality pave a new path for women and eliminate all forms of violence globally.

Keywords: Violence Against Women, Garment Factory, Globalisation, Gender Inequality.

INTRODUCTION

Violence Against Women, particularly Gender-based Violence, is a daily phenomenon for women garment workers in brand supplier factories due to global capitalism. Nonetheless, the women trade union leaders of the Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA), which represents thousands of women garment workers in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Cambodia who produce clothing for H&M, Gap, Walmart, Nike, and other well-known brands that global consumers continue to wear, are leading organizing efforts to bring about these changes within global garment supply chains. However, besides Sri Lanka, the ready-made garment sector is the economic backbone of Bangladesh among South Asian countries. The garments manufacturing sector, the country's largest export earner, employs more than four million workers, with women accounting for 85 per cent of the total workforce. The garment industry has paved the way for women's employment in the industrial sector. The availability of cheap female labour has rapidly expanded the garment industry. This scenario for both nations' garment industries contributes to the country's economic growth and provides employment opportunities for women.

Moreover, the MAS industry from Sri Lanka contributes more than 70% of the country's total earnings. Currently, 4 million people in Bangladesh are working in this industry, 80% are women from Bangladesh, and 4.2 billion people from Sri Lanka, 85% are women working in the garment factory.

Despite the improvement in the safety of the ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh since 2013, other workplace health and safety problems remain particularly violence against female workers (Akhter, Rutherford, and Chu, 2019). The word 'violence' at work, the ILO developed a Code of Practice to address the issue of Occupational Safety and Health. However, Physical and psychological violence, including bullying, mobbing, harassment, mental stress, and physical assault up to and including assassination, are all indicators of violence (ILO, 2003). From the perspective of ILO, this workplace violence can be internal, which belongs to the enterprise, among managers, supervisors, and employees, but it can also be external, between workers and staff, clients, patients, students, suppliers, and the general public. Thus, these forms of violence against women in garment factories contribute to the idea of 'Violence against Women' as part of Globalization. According to several studies, many women, in particular, experience physical and verbal abuse while working in the ready-made garment (RMG) industry in developing countries, affecting the workers' personal life. In this way, there is a strong relationship between the different kinds of sufferings of women workers in garment factories and how they represent global inequality and local identity through the lens of gender relations.

Therefore, to meet the challenges of this unequal power of dynamic crisis by choosing a career in a garment factory, women can develop a new prosperous society if given their due respect and rights, and violence against women can be eliminated globally. Thus, the present study aims to have in-depth ideas about eradicating the current system of violence against women as a whole so that further development in the process can be recommended.

The paper commences with an introduction that delves into the connections between the garment industry and women, drawing from various studies. Subsequently, the study's objectives are outlined. This is followed by an examination of gender-related concerns in the garment sector, encompassing violence against women in both domestic and workplace settings, as well as gender disparities within the industry. The research methodologies and data analysis techniques employed in the study are then detailed. Subsequent to this, the data collected through qualitative means are scrutinized, with discussions structured around categories such as the demographic background of female workers, instances of sexual harassment, physical violence, and health issues, as well as the experiences and challenges faced by women employees, male workers, and office staff. The analysis also includes an exploration of the average percentage of unequal power dynamics based on gender relations, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Finally, the study's findings are presented in light of the discussions pertaining to the analysis conducted.

The Objectives of this research are to:

- Document the experiences of violence against women in garment factories contributes to the idea of 'violence against women as part of Globalization.
- Recognize the relationship between the different sufferings of women workers in garment factories through a gender relations lens and the key issues involving gender inequality, education, coercion and sexual harassment and how they represent global inequality and local identity.
- Understand the trends and challenges of the women workers choosing a career in the garment factory.

Garment Factory and Gender Studies

Garment industries in developing countries are always trying to improve productivity and the quality of

garments to survive in the hugely competitive market. The industry's productivity governs the sustainability and profitability of the apparel industry. Thus the study of Jafhav and Sharma (2017) found that all activities must be synchronized, planned and timed for garment factories to achieve the desired productivity. Their work deals with the time study of the production process of shirts and leggings. The observations of the time study elaborate on the objective of reducing and improving the time taken in the garment industry's production. One of the critical findings of this study is that the timely delivery of parts and order sheets plays a vital role in improving the industry's productivity. Although studies on the development of the garment industry are carried out this way, studies on the inequality of milk status of the garment industry play an essential role today. As a result, most garment industry workers are women, and they play a crucial role in the industry's development, as well as the development of the country. However, the gender gap in factories can create problems for female workers, leading to gender inequality in the workplace.

A gender-based study was conducted in Indonesia during 2012-2014 by Imron, Pramesti, and Wahyuni (2017); this study aimed to examine the working conditions of garment factory workers and identified the causes of gender inequality in the factories. This study, use quantitative and qualitative methods, found that factors which are occupational distribution, pay and hours of work, training and promotion, health and well-being, and perceived barriers and voice influence the persistence of gender inequality in Indonesia. This study established that gender equality in the workplace if adequately managed, is beneficial to garment performance. However, the Fashion Revolution also found gender-based evidence in Bangladesh. Following the Rana Plaza tragedy in Bangladesh in 2013, Carry Somers and Orsola de Castro created the Fashion Revolution. It demonstrates that women have taken the brunt of the reprisal in the months-long crackdown on Bangladeshi garment workers protesting lower wages in December. And it is becoming increasingly clear that in Bangladesh, the preferred method of attack on workers' rights activists is gender-based harassment and violence.

According to Aye Lei Tun (2017), gendering in garment manufacturing is critical. Furthermore, she informs us that as long as women's labour is considered cheap, most factory owners are male, and those owners will continue to seek the lowest cost of production through cheap labour (Tun. L. Aye. 2017) On the other hand, consumers prefer items made by industries that ensure the safety and well-being of their personnel. Because global manufacturing seeks to outsource the high-end fashion sector from affluent nations to less developed countries, the textile industry might be one of developing countries' most excellent export businesses. However, because power has transferred from producers to merchants and retailers, there will be power imbalances and complicated value chains, while employees will have poor benefits. The balance of power has also altered.

Furthermore, she points out that, according to the Myanmar Garments Manufacturers Association (MGMA), female laborers make up most garment factory workers (80%). For the time being, however, Myanmar has reduced salaries to the lowest level to attract international investors and compete with other markets in the area. According to the Pay Indication Foundation's 2015 study, the minimum salary in the textile industry in Myanmar is US\$65 per month, while the minimum wage in Cambodia is US\$128 and in Vietnam is US\$145. The government established a minimum salary of 3,600 Kyat (about US\$3 for 8 hours of labor per day) in August 2015. However, when necessities rise, US\$3 becomes a tiny sum for a person to exist daily.

Based on the studies above, much research is conducted on garment factories, particularly in developing countries. Some studies discuss building income and contributing to the country's development through incrementing garment factory production. However, many studies (Imron, Pramesti and Wahyuni, 2017; Aye Lei Tun, 2017) show that garment factory gendering is crucial for studies. In this way, our proposed research investigated how gendering performed in the garment factory through women against violence in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Violence against Women in Domestic Space and Work Place

According to Naved et al (2017) study, there is a lot of debate about how women's experiences of domestic and workplace violence are influenced by paid work in Bangladesh. For this study, they conducted nine in-depth interviews with key informants (male workers, factory managers, and employees from non-governmental organizations) and 23 in-depth interviews with female garment workers living in slums in Bangladesh using thematic analysis to analyze the data. Women experienced similar forms of emotional, physical, sexual, and economic violence in both settings, albeit from distinct perpetrators. (Naved R, Rahman T, Willan S, Jewkes R, and Gibbs A. 2017), From this analysis, they find four overlaps between workplace violence and domestic violence, even though these topics are typically considered separately. First, the intersection of institutional economic structures and patriarchal norms influences violence in both settings. Second, portrayals of female garment workers as sex workers or sexually promiscuous facilitate violence against them. Thirdly, women's autonomy is restricted and controlled through economic violence. Fourth, women devise strategies for maintaining employment and reaping its maximum benefits. Lastly, we offer some ideas for how interventions could be used to stop workplace and household violence. Similarly, Hoskins' (2020) research in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan discloses evidence during the COVID-19 pandemic; there was an increase in Gender Based Violence and Harassment against garment workers.

Moreover, Sexual harassment is expected in the worldwide garment sector, according to ILO and IFC (2018-2022) occupational segregation and incentive systems in factories. Sexual harassment is frequently underreported due to unfavourable cultural norms, victim fear, a lack of functioning reporting channels, and a propensity to regard this behaviour as "normal." However, as Better Work began operations, an average of 36% of questioned workers were concerned about sexual harassment in their workplaces, according to our anonymous surveys.

Similarly, our studies focus on gender-based violence in the workplace in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Especially the forms of violence women face during the working time—how this kind of violence affects working women.

Gender inequality in the garment factory

Using a case study of a U.S.-based apparel company that relocated and subcontracted its sewing operations in the 1990s, Collin's (2002) essay examines how managers in a rapidly globalizing industry use gendered discourses of skill to justify and frame their search for inexperienced workers in low-wage regions. It looks at managers' claims that women's sewing skills were disappearing in the United States and that they needed to look for these skills in countries where women don't participate actively in labour markets using insistent theory. How women's labour is devalued by skill naturalization is well-known to feminist researchers. This case demonstrates how the movement of capital in search of pools of workers without labour market experience or union representation is justified by portraying specific skills as naturally occurring resources. Similarly, our studies focus on how gender inequality is represented in the garment factory through income differentiation, training and skill differentiations.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Predominantly we use qualitative research methods that techniques provide a lens for learning about non-quantifiable phenomena such as people's experiences, languages, histories, and cultures. In this study, we use qualitative methods to illustrate based on their case stories and experiences, how South Asian garment factory women suffer from violence. Moreover, we use mixed methods. In this way, we use combined methods that research requires a purposeful mixing of methods in data collection, data analysis, and

interpretation of the evidence. Purposeful data integration enables researchers to investigations that rely on statistical and numerical methods of data collection, analysis, and evidence production to seek a more panoramic view of phenomena from different viewpoints and through diverse research lenses. In this way, we use this method to show women's age, education, and occupations.

Research Setting and Approach

A qualitative approach was conducted as the prime research method, which helped to receive information. This study was primarily an ethnographic study which is a method under the qualitative methodology. But our study also involves mixed methods, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The research targeted the garment women worker, male garment employees and office staff in the garments of Bangladesh and Srilanka to understand their experiences and sufferings of violence against women in garment factories. Besides, understanding the extent to which marginalized women are engaged in a career in the garment factory and the reasons behind such behaviour of violence against the women workers in the garment factory.

Sampling and Respondents

This study selected fifteen female and ten male garment workers respondents, from the garment factory. Five office staff were involved as the key informers and were also chosen as respondents. So, N=30 respondents were randomly selected from the study area.

Data Collection Methods and Data Analysis

We divided it into two parts – In the first part, we would substantiate our study with an ethnographic account (which we began and have been carrying out since March 2022). We selectively conducted around five or six in-depth interviews from the garments of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, enabling us to capture the complexities of garment women workers, if any. We wish to conduct an ethnography of lower-position garment women worker cosmopolitans with a specific focus on the workers of the slum of Savar Bazar Bus Stop near the Dhaka district of Bangladesh. Savar is a relatively large district that is divided into various villages. It is spread across 11,300 inhabitants per square kilometre 29, 0000/sq mi and an abode to 60,290 households (referred to as BBS). As it is one of the massive garment factories, a kind of industrial area, the living conditions, standards and socio-economic status are relatively homogenous, and outlying disparities which might affect the study are curtailed due to the nature of the industrial site. I wish to focus on the slums of Savar Bazar Bus Stop, where the subaltern women workers and labour migrant groups reside and focus on the export-oriented garment industry Beximco Fashions Limited (BFSL), located at Dhaka Export Processing Zone at Savar, Dhaka. The number of employees of this Manufacturing Garments is 2,220.

On the other hand, my research partner focuses on the MAS garment factory in Kilinochchi, a war zone area. Around 3,000 young female workers work there. However, I have worked with the RMMRU (Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit- an NGO in Dhaka that works with labour migrant workers). RMMRU has been engaging with the migrants of these villages for a few years, and they assured me of assistance and guidance for my fieldwork there. As mechanical as we make it sound in this section, we were not mentally prepared for the challenging fieldwork until we finished it to the field and started work. This ethnography used tools like participant observation as we plan to spend at least one month in Savar and Killinochchi, observing the aspirant and returnee migrants and conducting in-depth interviews with them. The marginalized women workers who are looking for garments work and other such female employees' physical and mental sufferings outside gave me an insight into their livelihood and how the challenging journey faced the labour of each.

In the second part, we intend to use a stratified sampling process encompassing respondents of different age groups and from various social and cultural backgrounds, such as religion, gender and others to conduct a

survey. Since we wished to conduct in-depth interviews, the sample size depended on how many workers felt about speaking to us and allowing us to tag along behind them as we observed their lives. A tentative sample size might be 30 women labouring as a respondent, and the data collected from the 30 samples would be quantitative. However, we know that access is still not easy, and given that very few women were willing to talk about sexual harassment in a garment factory or outside of their work environment, our sample size might still need to be fulfilled. Yet, we also procured secondary data from the government data, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and from surveys conducted before my study (by NGOs or other organizations) for further use, which could facilitate our findings on women violence and also help to find out the social problems of subaltern women linkages between the economy and society in urban Bangladesh.

In doing so, this research used both primary and secondary data sources. To collect the primary data required for this research, fieldwork was conducted in the Savar District of Bangladesh and Killinochchi of Sri Lanka. Several primary sources were used, including interviews and documentary primary materials such as government policies, media reports, NGO seminar proceedings and documents of international organizations. Interviews are semi-structured and one-on-one. Documentary materials are collected from online sources, bookshops, government departments, and NGO libraries. Secondary data sources include published books, policy papers, research papers, and journal articles. The purpose of secondary data is to establish the socio-political, historical and economic context to situate the analysis.

After the data collection, we began with the data analysis and writing part of the study. For data analysis, we employed the proper statistical operations through SPSS based on the nature of the data. Considering the research and sample analysis, we would like to fulfil the objectives of our research and thus analyze the association impact, attempt to critique the various dimensions and substantiate the framework of subaltern worker outcomes. Lastly, we will keep a field diary with us at all times to note specific details of our field observations while also noting how we feel throughout this journey.

Research Ethics

The study considered some ethical issues that need to be considered. First, this study was conducted with permission from the garment factories and considered organizational ethical clearance. While we collect the data all participants will be treated with respect and courtesy and maintain their privacy and anonymity. The study is being clarified to all participants and informed of the objectives and purposes of the study with the given strategy of informed consent and the data collection methods, including the use of a tape recorder and the intimate nature of interview questions. Finally, there will be a report – detailing the specific outcome of the project.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

To gain a comprehensive understanding of imbalances in power dynamics stemming from gender relations, the group of researchers conducted a direct, physical observation and meticulous examination of the conditions present within the institutions. The results from this observation, along with all the statements provided by the participants, have been depicted in the following tables: Table 1 and Table 2.:

Table -1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents			
Male Employees and Office Staffs		Women Workers	
Characteristics	Value	Characteristics	Value
Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents			
Total number of male employee and staff, N=30	N=15	Women workers	N=15

Sex		Sex	
Gender	Number	Marital Status	Number
Male	7	Married Women	7
Female	8	Unmarried Women	8
Age		Age	
Years	35-50	Years	10- 40
Education		Education	
5 th grade	2	Four	2
SSC (10 th)	5	Five	4
HSS (12 th)	5	SSC	7
Degree	3	HSC	2
Occupation (Position)		Household Income	
Supervisor	1		
Fabric Store and fabric sourcing keeper	2	Monthly range	5000-50,000
Sewing Machine Operator	3	Religion	
Machine Operator	2	Muslim	10
Data Processing Employee	2	Hindu	3
Accounting And Finance Employee	2	Christian	2
Sample Maker	3		

Source: Field Work, 2022

The table shows the data collected qualitatively, with discussions structured around categories such as the demographic background, number and socio-economic characteristics of respondents such as their gender, sex, marital status, age, education level, occupation, household income and religion of male employees, office staff and women workers, instances of sexual harassment, physical violence, and health issues, as well as the experiences and challenges faced by women employees, male workers, and office staff.

Unequal Power Dynamics Based on Gender Relations

Supervisor were asked to rate 15 workers' condition from among the high and low-quality institutions where Bangladesh and Sri Lanka rating was based on seven criteria on a percentage scale. Worker's assessment report is given in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Average Percentage of Unequal Power Dynamics Based on Gender Relations

Indicators of Unequal Power Gender Relations	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
% of violence against women worker	76	57
% of garment worker wages between male and female	97.1	88.8
% of gender inequalities in the workplace	75	67
% of cutting corners on occupational safety and health	72	17.2
% of women's health issues	72	45
% of women's education as a career level	83.8	20.1

Source: Field Work, 2022

The table above shows that according to Supervisors' rating most of the workers and employee ability of working is satisfactory. But there is a clear difference in rating between the two groups of wages, indicating lower ratings for low-quality factory workers in both countries. Though this rating is not very accurate yet, it provides an indication of multiple forms of discrimination—socioeconomic class and their status as migrants to city workers.

Experiences and Sufferings of Women Workers, Male Employees and Office Staffs

Based on obtained data illustrates that many women join garment factories and immigrate near garment factories for their family conditions factors such as poor economic conditions, marriage and dowry issues, family forces, and so on. However, continuously they suffer from various issues, i.e. cultural and social violence from their community and sexual violence from the factory men's staff. The garment factories' women's interviews and experiences below clarify the violence level that they faced from the community and male staff.

Four years ago, during Bangladesh's January crackdown, men likely hired by the company tore off women's scarves, a culturally humiliating and degrading action. Police charged a large factory housing a daycare centre and fired tear gas into the building. *"There were 13 to 14 children in the room, and they were all injured," a worker said, adding that all of the women with children at the centre had been fired. Rape threats were also made against women workers."*

A worker of Beximco Fashions Limited (BFSL), a clothing company in Savar, Dhaka Export Processing Zone, who is 23 years old, stated, *"Before joining here, I was unemployed in my house. I'm from a low-income family. My parents are worried about my marriage because we don't have enough money to cover our expenses. I'm here to support my family, which is why I moved. But, since moving here, I've faced so much harassment that I haven't told my family about it. Some male factory workers attempt to abuse me, and the open space in my slum area is risky. I frequently face eve-teasing and sexual harassment. But what can I do? I'm still here only to support my family."*

These two interviews from Bangladesh delve into the plight of female employees in the garment factory, shedding light on the hardships they endure. Furthermore, this study investigates their knowledge of reporting sexual violence and reveals that despite their awareness, they are unable to file complaints due to threats from male staff and their family circumstances.

Conversely, Sri Lankan women employed in garment factories experience exploitation by their male colleagues. Despite working for more than 8 hours, they do not receive adequate payment. Additionally, they grapple with the dual responsibilities of being the primary breadwinner and managing household duties. Consequently, they lament the lack of time available to spend with their children.

A 38-year-old woman in the MAS clothing industry in Sri Lanka said, *"I hardly have time to eat well since I continually work without breaks; every day, I labour for nine hours. Ten to twelve hours of overtime effort are put in for better pay. A long-term stationary job can also lead to severe back pain. As a result, I had difficulty falling asleep at night."*

A 35-year-old woman told her daily routines as a worker, *"I wake up before sunrise, then prepare for going to the factory every early morning, then stay factory from 7.30 .am – 10.00 pm. Then come home and again start cooking for children and family members. After that, back from all household chores, I am ready to again the next day planning with my mother- in- low, how she feeds and caring my 2 years boy and 10 years girl children Besides this, I have to clean my house in my leisure time, and I talk with my village relatives. Besides this, I have no opportunity to see watch any channel to know what's going on in the world. I do not*

find any time to stay with my children. I do not participate in any family program at my village.”

Hence, as we examine these interviews, it becomes evident that women are transitioning to garment factories in pursuit of employment opportunities for a multitude of reasons. The prevailing patriarchal norms, which discourage women from being financially independent, persist in relegating them to lower positions. Consequently, female workers in the garment sector are not remunerated adequately, and they are subjected to sexual exploitation by a society that objectifies them. Moreover, the societal expectation for women to fulfill domestic duties and the negative perception surrounding female migrant workers serve as obstacles to the progress of women.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The economy is the essence of all progress. In fact, the overall quality of life depends on the quality of income in this global growth. To improve the quality income of marginalized garment workers, this study involves the garment factory to understand the experiences of Violence against women in the workplace, contributing to the idea of ‘Violence against women which is part of Globalization. It is not easy to seek only one theoretical perspective on the function of gender studies because gender relations that guide action influence relationships between individuals and society, which has a powerful means of maintaining power structures and social inequalities and creating a docile workforce for capitalism. This study compared Bangladesh and Sri Lankan garment factory conditions, having how many unacceptable violent acts and secure workplaces for women workers, which is most often measured by the percentage of garment worker wages between male and female, Demographic Background of Women Workers, Sexual Harassment, Physical Violence and health issues and gender inequalities in the workplace situations where socio-economic status also would have the same opportunity to succeed. Besides this, the physical conditions of most of the garment factories were miserable: a short place of work, facility and finally, uncared surroundings and economic disparities among the workers. All these have the negative performance of the garment owners. It also found that patriarchal culture within these states is believed to be a result of four main challenges: coordination gaps between the governmental actors, the policymaker’s low priority on labour policy, limited financing and lack of academic quality. Above all, though there are lots of negative consequences, especially the phase of increasing gender inequality, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka has steadily progressed over the past four decades compared to other economies at a similar level of socio-economic development in a short time. As a result, the future manpower requirements in different countries will be improved. Now we must take the initiative to meet the demand. So, this finding usually demands the economy’s future, job security and other national challenges that require proper attitude, respect and rights, gender equality and cosmopolitan education to prepare the next generation of Bangladesh in the rapidly changing world.

Demographic Background of Women Workers

Both data (Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) present the socio-demographic characteristics of female workers. Most were illiterate or had only completed primary education level (up to grade 5 to grade 12). Most were less than 40 years old. In Bangladesh, many women are married and have two to three children. All had migrated from villages outside the city. Sometimes, they live in a slum of lower cost rent household with their family member and sometimes, living alone in a mess of slum areas to contribute to their family income. On the other hand, most unmarried women work in a MAS garment factory in Sri Lanka. Most of the northern part (Kilinochi garment workers migrant district to the district for family support and to earn money and save for their weddings. Moreover, Most of them work as helpers and machine operators, and some as quality inspectors, tailors and packing, based on lower and upper position work.

Verbal violence Our data reveals violence from men, including supervisors and other working men.

Similarly, Hoskins's studies state that men in power used the pandemic to exploit further and abuse women, which explains the gender power dynamic. Our data indicate that 57% of women faced verbal harassment during work. One of the interviewees from Sri Lanka says that this verbal harassment is very stressful daily. She said that the supervisor always calls women unhearable words, such as idiot, fool, and lazy and word that refers to inanimate objects.

Sexual Harassment, Physical violence and Health Issues

The primary health issues that garment workers face were revealed by the studies. The data indicate that mental illness, cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, gynaecological, ophthalmological, nutritional, and musculoskeletal disorders are present. With a prevalence of 72%, musculoskeletal issues were the most prevalent. The back, followed by the shoulder, was the most frequently affected area. According to this study, mental health issues affect female garment workers. Particularly symptoms of depression, social dysfunction, and anxiety (17.6%), A garment factory in Bangladesh was the subject of a study that found that 75% of workers had work pressure, 72% had mental tension, and 45% had stress related to their jobs. In Sri Lanka, a study found that 20.1% of workers had insomnia, and 5.9% were in severe psychological distress. Lillypet, Jain, and Joseph's conducted the seventeenth review studies. From their literature review, studies show that female garment workers suffer from physical and mental health issues (Lillypet, Santham, 2017). Most of the 17 studies reviewed identified musculoskeletal problems as the most prevalent health issues in the garment industry. A survey among sewing machine operators revealed that most men (45.4%) suffered from shoulder pain while 60% of women suffered back pain, and 29% of men and 38.1% of women faced back and neck pain. A small percentage complained of pain in their hands. The studies also revealed gender differences.

CONCLUSION

This research examined workplace violence in the garment industry in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and observed that it took many forms, affecting women physically and mentally. This study also provided evidence of the experiences and sufferings of women garment factory workers as a result of such unacceptable violent acts, which were connected to health issues involving gender inequality, education, the reason for choosing such work, coercion, and sexual harassment. Simultaneously, the data revealed and observed that unequal power based on gender relations and socio-economic discrimination are significant obstacles and causes of Violence among women workers. However, we continue our research despite this risk because South Asian garment factories are engaging in various activities contributing to the interpretation of Violence against women. Consequently, this research suggests that the nation's economic development has been achieved at the cost of disgrace and suffering due to the Violence imposed on women workers, and it recommends necessary measures to improve the situation.

Note: Aye Lei Tun. "Gendering in Garment Factories: Lives of Women in Economic Development": This speech was delivered at the ASEAN Economic Integration Forum 2017 that took place on 14 and 15 September 2017 at UNCC, Bangkok. The views expressed are the responsibility of the author(s) of the study and do not necessarily represent the views of the organizers of the ASEAN Economic Integration Forum 2017 or the members of the United Nations.

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