The Influence of Job Related Variables on Apparel Merchandisers' Job Satisfaction in Bangladesh

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Abstract— This research is investigated to assess the impact of five job related variables (role clarity, role conflict, job autonomy, job performance feedback, job stress) on a prime job related factor such as job satisfaction among the apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. The study has been sought to address the following research questions indeed:(a) Do job related variables significantly predict the variation in job satisfaction among the apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh? And (b) Do these variables have a greater or lesser impact on job satisfaction? A set of questionnaire was distributed to 300 merchandising staff in apparel sector of Bangladesh comprising mainly of factory and buying office merchandisers. A response rate of 70% was achieved resulting in 210 usable questionnaires that were returned. By using random sampling technique, we have taken 60 data from 210 data for reliability test and analysis the data through regression & correlation. The findings revealed that of the five works related variable only three were found to have statistically significant predictive relationship with job satisfaction. Collectively these three variables (role conflict, job autonomy, job stress) account for 68.7%of the variance in job satisfaction.

Index Terms— Apparel Industry, Job satisfaction, Merchandiser, Organizational Behavior.

I. INTRODUCTION

Apparel sector in Bangladesh has been started to bloom from beginning of 1980 [1].Gradually that potential sector turned into a lucrative one. Consequentially, in readymade garments export sector Bangladesh has grabbed second commanding position all over the world [2]. In 2013-14 fiscal year, total annual turnover from apparel sector is $24491.88 million that is 81.13% of total export revenue has been earned through exporting readymade garments and around 4 million people are working directly in this sector in 2013-14 Workers and skilled staffs are the salient contributor for this sector [3]. Merchandiser, who is responsible for the whole order execution from order receipt to order shipment, is playing a dynamic role for garments export. The role of merchandising staff has become increasingly important in Bangladesh undoubtedly. The duties of merchandising staff are quite broad, and thus it is assumed that they have workloads and suffers from high level of work stress [4]. One of the main reasons for this rising job load is the large time difference between Bangladesh and its two major markets, Europe and

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the USA. Merchandising staffs sometimes need to work at night to respond quickly to western customers, but work during the day cannot be avoided as many manufacturers are located in Asian countries [5]. Very little empirical research has been carried out on merchandising staff's job satisfaction in Bangladesh though job Satisfaction has gained considerable empirical attention from researchers as well as scholars in the field of organizational behavior, organizational psychology and human resource management [6].A study was carried out on merchandising staffs regarding work load, stress and job satisfaction in Hong Kong [5]. In Malaysia, a research was executed on organization commitment and job satisfaction mentioning particular impacts of work related variables for Malaysian librarians [7]. However, in Bangladesh context, job satisfaction remains an area that has received very meager attention among apparel merchandisers. This study has been carried out to investigate the influence of five work related variables on job satisfaction of merchandising staffs. This study has tried to identify the correlates and predictors of job satisfaction. Specifically the study has sought to determine whether a set of five works related variables such as role clarity, role conflict, job autonomy ,job performance feedback and job stress can empirically be established as correlates and predictors of job satisfaction among merchandising staffs of Bangladesh. Additionally, the study is carried out to determine whether this set of five jobrelated variables collectively has an impact on job satisfaction and more importantly, whether the impact is greater or lesser.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior to start the discussion of the facets and its relation to other variables, it is essential to understand what is meant by job satisfaction. Spector (1997, p.2) mentions that "Job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is extended to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs" [8] Meanwhile Locke (1976,P. 1300) notes that job satisfaction can be seen as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" [9].Roles represent sets of behaviors that are expected of employees. To understand how organizational roles develop, it is particularly informative to see the process through the eyes of a new employee. Starting with the first day on the job, a new employee is presented with considerable information designed to communicate the organization's role expectations. Some of this information is presented formally through a written job description and regular communications with one's supervisor. Hackman (1992), however, states that workers also receive a variety of informal communications (termed discretionary stimuli) designed to shape their organizational roles [10].

Kahn (Wiley, **1964)** have defined role conflict as the "simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the **other"** (1964, p. 19)[11]. Role conflict has been conceptually defined in terms of the degree to which demands are made on the employees in the workplace (Rizzo, House and Lirtzman 1970) [12]. Such a situation often transpires when two or more supervisors make demands that conflict or when an employee has to do two tasks but has time to carry out only one of them (Spector 1997) [7]. Inter role conflict, defined by Greenhaus and **Beutell (1985,** p. **77)** as conflict experienced, "when pressures arising in one role are incompatible with pressures arising in another role" [13]. Among five variables role clarity and role conflict have been essentially noticed to have statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction. Nauman (1993) found a statistically noteworthy negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction where r= -0.29, p<0.05[14].

*Role clarity i*s defined as the extent to which required information is communicated and understood by salesmen, supervisors, and operating employees [10]. Gregersen and Black (1996) posited that role clarity would enhance a sense of felt responsibility and as such would bring about an increase in job satisfaction among employees [15]. Karim (2010) found 0.32 and -0.23 for role clarity and role conflict respectively with job satisfaction [7].

Job autonomy refers to the degree to which the employee is granted freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out [12]. Job autonomy means that the responsibility for coordination falls more heavily on the group itself. Members have to interact and coordinate with other groups, managing resource ties or dependencies with other parts of the organization [16].The more autonomy an employee enjoys, the greater will be his or her satisfaction with his or her job. Rockman (1984) found a statistically significant relationship, positive, between job autonomy and job satisfaction, r=0.41, p<0.01 [17]And Karim found = 0.23 between job autonomy and job satisfaction [7].

Another work related variable, Job performance feedback, has been greatly indicated to have statistically significant positive relationship with job satisfaction. Job performance feedback is "the activity of providing information to staff members about their performance on job expectations" [18].Sims, Szilagly and Mckemey(1970) have conceptually defined job performance feedback as the extent to which employees receive information that reveals how well they are performing on the job [19].Fred and Ferris in a meta-analytic review found a mean correlation of 0.29 [20] and Karim found r= 0.27 between job performance feedback and job satisfaction[7].

The job stress posits that a combination of high work demands and low job control at work, called job stress, is a health risk for employees [21].
Job stress is another work related variable that has been found to correlate significantly with job satisfaction. Wenling Xiao, Wingwai Liu &Wingsun Liu (2009) found job stress to be significantly negatively correlated with promotion satisfaction where r=-0.697& P<0.01[22].

With the inspiration of the above findings, we hypothesized role conflict, role clarity, job autonomy, and job performance feedback and job stress to be significantly correlated with job satisfaction among apparel merchandisers of Bangladesh. We further hypothesized this set of five work related variables to have a big or lower impact on job satisfaction among the apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh.

III. METHODOLOGY

The population for this study was apparel merchandisers of factory merchandisers as well as buying house merchandisers in Bangladesh. We conducted our survey on 15 factories and 5 buying houses among which 12 factories and 3 buying houses responded on our questionnaire set. Survey questionnaires were asked aggregately to 300 merchandisers for data collection through telephonic conversation. A response rate of 70 % was achieved resulting in 210 usable questionnaires. The findings for this study were based on the analysis of responses from the 210 usable questionnaires that were returned. By using random sampling technique 60 data from 210 data has been taken for statistical analysis with Statistical Products, Services and Solutions software (IBM SPSS version 21).

IV. INSTRUMENTATION

A. Job Satisfaction
A 3-item scale from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire was employed to measure overall or global job satisfaction. [23] These items are listed in the Appendix.

B. Role Conflict
A 4-item scale from Rizzo, House and Lirtzman (1970) was employed to measure role conflict [24]. These items are listed in the Appendix.

C. Role Clarity
A 5-item scale from Rizzo, House and Lirtzman (1970) was engaged to measure role clarity [24]. These items are listed in the Appendix.

D. Job Autonomy
A 4-item scale adapted from Hackman and Oldham's (1975) Job Diagnostic Survey was used to measure job autonomy [10]. These items are listed in the Appendix.

E. Job Performance Feedback
A 4-item scale derived from Hackman and Oldham's (1975) Job Diagnostic Survey was employed to measure job performance feedback [10]. These items are listed in the Appendix.

F. Job Stress

A 4-item scale from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire was employed to measure overall or global job satisfaction [23]. These items are listed in the Appendix.

V. VALIDATION AND INTERNAL RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT

A. Job Satisfaction Scale

Table 1 show that all the three items that were employed to measure job satisfaction were loaded on a single discrete factor which jointly explained 55.70% 0f the variance in the global job satisfaction scale. The results of assessing the internal reliability of the scale using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha yielded a value of 0.75 which is below the 0.70 value as recommended by Nunnally (1978) [25] .

Table 1: Construct Validity and Internal Reliability for Job Satisfaction Scale

Scale Items Factor	Loadings Alpha Coefficient
Jobsat 1 0.72 Jobsat2 0.81 Jobsat3 0.86	0.75

Note: Percent of variance Explained (55.70%). Item Descriptions are found in the Appendix.

B. Role Conflict Scale

A visual inspection of Table 2 shows that all the five items that were employed to measure role conflict were loaded onto a single discrete factor which jointly explained about 56.3% of the variance in the scale. The results of assessing the internal reliability of the scale using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha yielded a value of 0.70 which met the value as recommended by Nunnally (1978)[25].

Table 2: Construct Validity and Internal reliability for Role Conflict

Scale Items Factor	Loadings Alpha Coefficient
Rolcon1 0.80 Rolcon2 0.43 Rolcon3 0.84 Rolcon4 0.78 Rolcon5 0.83	0.70

Note: Percent of variance Explained (56.30%). Item Descriptions are found in the Appendix.

C. Role Clarity Scale

Table 3 shows that all the five items that were employed to measure role clarity were loaded onto a single discrete factor jointly explained 46.8% of the variance in the scale. The results of assessing the internal reliability of the scale using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha yielded a value of 0.87 which is above the value of 0.70 as recommended by Nunnally (1978) [25].

Table 3: Construct Validity and Internal Reliability for Role Clarity

Scale Items Factor	Loadings Alpha Coefficient
Rolcla 1 0.74 Rolcla 2 0.84 Rolcla 3 0.80 Rolcla 4 0.87 Rolcla 5 0.82	0.87

Notes: Percent of Variance Explained (46.8%). Item Descriptions can be found in the Appendix.

A. Job Autonomy Scale

Table 4 shows that all the four items that were employed to measure job autonomy were loaded onto a single discrete factor jointly explained 61.4% of the variance in the scale. The results of assessing the internal reliability of the scale using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha yielded a value of 0.75 which is above the value as recommended by Nunnally (1978) [25].

Table 4: Construct Validity and Internal Reliability for Job Autonomy Scale
Scale Items Factor Loadings Alpha Coefficient

Scale Items Factor	Loadings Alpha Coefficient
Jobauton 1 0.72 Jobauton 2 0.85 Jobauton 3 0.86 Jobauton 4 0.84	0.75

Notes: Percent of Variance Explained (61.4%). Item Descriptions are found in the Appendix.

B. Job Performance feedback Scale

Table 5 shows that all the four items that were employed to measure job performance feedback are loaded onto a single discrete factor jointly explained 42.2% of the variance in the scale. The results of assessing the internal reliability of the scale using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha yielded a value of 0.72 which met the value as recommended Nunnally (1978) [25].

Table 5: Construct Validity and Internal Reliability for Job Performance Feedback Scale

Scale Items Factor	Loadings Alpha Coefficient
Perfee 1 0.60 Perfee 2 0.75 Perfee 3 0.75 Perfee 4 0.80	0.72

Notes: Percent of Variance Explained (42.2%). Item Descriptions are found in the Appendix.

C. Job Stress Scale

Table 6 shows that all the three items that were employed to measure job involvement were loaded onto a single discrete factor jointly explained 64.75% of the variance in the scale. The results of assessing the internal reliability of the scale using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha yielded a value of 0.80 which met the value as recommended by Nunnally (1978) [25].

Table 6: Construct Validity and Internal Reliability for Job Involvement Scale.

Scale Items Factor	Loadings Alpha Coefficient
Jobst 1 0.72 Jobst 2 0.81 Jobst 3 0.86 Jobst 4 0.84	0.80

Notes: Percent of Variance Explained (64.75%). Item Descriptions can be found in the Appendix.

VI. TESTING OF HYPOTHESES: PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION ANALYSES

We hypothesized that each five work related variables (role conflict, role clarity, job autonomy, and job performance feedback and job involvement) would correlate significantly with job satisfaction. In order to conduct above hypotheses, we have used bivariate correlations using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analyses. The results of running Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analyses are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: Bivariate Correlations between Work Related Variables and Job Satisfaction

Independent Variable	Job Satisfaction
Role Conflict	-0.31**
Role Clarity	0.12*
Job Autonomy	0.39**
Job Performance Feedback	0.19**
Job Stress	-0.62**

* Correlation is significant at $p < .05$
** Correlation is significant at $p < .01$

An examination of Table 7 however shows that only 3 of the 5 work related variable score relate significantly with the dependent variable, job satisfaction: role conflict, r = -0.31, $p < .01$; job autonomy, r = 0.39, $p < .01$; Job stress ,r= 0.52,r<0.01. However, role clarity and job performance feedback did not correlate significantly with job satisfaction.

VII. TESTING OF HYPOTHESES: MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSES

The next step in the data analysis procedure was to examine the impact of this set of work related correlates on job satisfaction. Additionally, the analysis was carried out to determine whether the impact was greater or lesser on job satisfaction through a multiple linear regression analysis. Job satisfaction has been considered as dependent and role conflict, role clarity and job stress are taken as independent variables in this regression analysis. Tables 8 shows that of the three correlates of job satisfaction, all three have a predictive relationship with job satisfaction: role conflict, beta = -0.61, p = 0.05, Job autonomy, beta=0.38, P=0.05, Job stress, beta = 0.43, P=0.05. Collectively, these three predictors account for 68.7% of the variance in job satisfaction.

Table 08: Multiple Regression of Work Related Variables on Job Satisfaction

Independent Variable	Beta	P value
Role Conflict	-0.34	0.05
Job Autonomy	0.38	0.05
Job Stress	-0.61	0.05
R Squared = 68.7%		

VIII. DISCUSSION

This study sought to identify the correlates and predictors of job satisfaction among apparel merchandisers of Bangladesh. The findings revealed that of these five works related variables, only three were found to be correlates of job satisfaction and these three were also found to be predictors of job satisfaction: role conflict, job autonomy & job stress. Role conflict was found to correlate significantly and negatively with job satisfaction (r = -0.31, beta = -0.28). This finding is consistent with previous findings in which role conflict was found to correlate significantly and negatively with job satisfaction (Nauman 1993) [14]. This means that the more conflict exists in the merchandising workplace, the lower would be the levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Role conflict can also work as a predictor for job satisfaction, (beta = -0.34) [17]. It indicated that lower level of role conflict may increase job satisfaction.

Job autonomy is another work related variable that was found to correlate significantly with job satisfaction (r = 0.39). This finding supports those of previous studies in which job autonomy was reported to have statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction [14]. In this study, job autonomy was found to be a predictor of job satisfaction where beta = 0.38.Apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh are likely to remain in their current organization if they are allowed more freedom, independence and discretionary powers when carrying out their job roles and responsibilities. *Job performance feedback* is another work related variable but not to correlate significantly with job satisfaction (r= 0.19). This finding indicates that job performance feedback was not found to correlate significantly with job satisfaction among Bangladeshi apparel merchandisers.

Job stress is another work related variable which was found to correlate most significantly job satisfaction (r= -0.62). This finding reinforces that of previous studies in which job stress was found to correlate significantly with and job satisfaction.

Job stress can work as a predictor for job satisfaction, (beta = -0.61[6]. It indicated that lower level of job stress may increase job satisfaction.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this research, it has been found out that work stress has a great impact on merchandising staff's job satisfaction that can be assumed as a predictor for employees' gratification to his job. We suggest to employer of the apparel sector of the Bangladesh to consider the rational work load for the merchandisers. As merchandisers are one of the key persons for apparel export, they should not be over loaded with relevant or irrelevant works. Extraneous work stress can affect negatively on employee's work efficiency, health and social life.

As this research did not incorporate all possible work related variable in the survey instrument, it may not deliver a pragmatic reflection of the merchandising staff's job satisfaction. For broader and deeper findings among merchandising staff's job satisfaction, more research is required without any suspicion. More colossal empirical research need to be conducted to demonstrate a guide line of how a set of work variable can affect the variation in job satisfaction for merchandising staffs in Bangladesh apparel sector.

APPENDIX

A. Job Satisfaction Scale

1. All in all I am satisfied with my job
2. In general, I don't like my job
3. In general, I like working here

B. Role Clarity Scale

1. I feel certain about how much authority I have been given to do my job
2. There are clear planned goals and objectives for my job
3. I know exactly what is expected of me
4. I have been given clear explanations of what is expected of me

C. Role Conflict Scale

1. I often find myself in situations in which there are conflicting requirements
2. I am often asked to do work that are against my better judgment
3. I often have to break a rule or policy in order to carry out a job assignment
4. I often receive incompatible requests from two or more individuals in the workplace
5. I am often asked to do things that are unnecessary

D. Job Autonomy Scale

1. I have a lot of say over what happens on my job
2. I have enough authority to do my best when carrying out my job
3. My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own
4. I have enough freedom as to how I should do my job

E. Job Performance Feedback Scale

1. The nature of my job provides me with very few clues to figure out whether I am performing or not (R)
2. The nature of my job provides me with plenty of clues to figure out whether I am performing or not
3. My immediate superiors and co-workers on this job almost never give any feedback as to how well I am performing
4. My immediate superiors and co-workers on this job often provide me with feedback as to how well I am performing

F. Job Stress Scale

1. I never seem to have enough time to get everything done
2. I have too much work to do to do everything well
3. The amount of work I am asked to do is fair
4. The level of performance expected of me is reasonable

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