

CAPACITY BUILDING REQUIREMENT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN READYMADE GARMENT INDUSTRY OF PUNJAB, INDIA

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Abstract: Ready Made Garment industry has an over whelming presence in contributing maximum foreign exchange to Indian economy. Workers are contributing as much as necessary than the past few decades. Human resources development encompasses an array of activities that enhance the ability of all human beings to reach their highest potential, where India is far behind from proper utilization of this opportunity to improve skill and efficiency of human resources in readymade garment industry. The main objectives of the paper is to know the human resource development activities in the readymade garments industry of Punjab, to understand the skill requirements of the industry to equip workers for upgrading their employability potential, living conditions of the labour force in the centre, their lifestyles, needs and aspirations and attitudes towards forming organisations. The method adopted for investigation was survey and observation method. An interview schedule was used to collect the required information and was administered to the respondents personally. Data were collected from 150 readymade garment units of Ludhiana city of Punjab representing different size categories i.e. is small, medium, and large units. Quantitative methods have been used in this paper to analyze capacity building requirement towards the sustainable human resource development in India especially in RMG sector of Punjab and the hindrance of sustainable development of human resources in this area. Education, government initiative, NGOs initiative, training program, career development program, performance management development etc. were the indicators of HRD (Human Resource Development). Study reveals that all indicators are correlated with HRD. Workers of RMG sector in Punjab are not satisfied with work environment and on the initiatives taken by the management of the organization and government. States of sample entrepreneurs were given the opinion that for enhancing labor productivity a number of measures should be taken like organize training for workers, improve compliant situation, diversify production, provide entertainment & refreshment facility, increase workers' wage (compensation), provide other incentives, and ensure good behavior with workers, etc. At the same time, sector is currently facing new challenges and it has structural weaknesses in some areas. To face these challenges necessary policy interventions are immediately required related to training, career development, career counseling, Performance management & Development program, Coaching, Mentoring, Succession Planning, Tuition Assistance which are not sufficient for ensuring sustainable human resources development. The researcher suggested some guidelines to ensure sustainable human resource development in RMG sector of Punjab for taking competitive advantage in world market.

Keywords: Development Program; Human Resources; RMG sector; Sustainable.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian apparel industry has an overwhelming presence in the economic life of the country. In recent years, the readymade garment segment has seen vertical growth. It accounted nearly Rs. 20,000 crores which shows a growth rate of 20 % .

Apparel manufacturing industry has varied product range. To manufacture such various categories of products trained work force is required, rather this trained work force runs the entire apparel manufacturing industry from stage one to final dispatch.

Human resource (HR) is a term used to describe the individuals who comprise the workforce of an organization, although it is also applied in labor economics to, for example, business sectors or even whole nations. Human resource development (HRD) includes the interior exchange of knowledge, coordination, local and foreign training, higher education, etc. (United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report released on 4 November 2010). UNDP measures HRD of the countries (169 out of 194) through different HRDI in 2010. Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development therefore comprises different environmental, social and economic dimensions.[18]

E. F. Schumacher (2001) had written that development does not start with goods, it starts with 'people' and their education, 'organizing', and 'discipline'. Without these three, all other resources remain latent, untapped potential.[16] Success in any field lies in educating and training people. Technology up gradation alone will not bring the desired results. The first and immediate impact of training should be on the ability of participants to do their jobs (Hiba, JC, ILO, GENEVA, 1998).[8]

India has abundant human resources but most of the human resources are unskilled, not trained, underutilized and not developed at all. It is evident that skilled people are the most valuable resource, and the development of a country depends on sustainable development of its human resources. RMG is mainly human resource intensive industry and they are far behind from sustainable development in India. As the paramount proportion of human resources in garment sector is workers, so their capacity building have significant impact on upgrading development level of human resources at garment industry.[3] Sustainable human development places people at the centre of the development process and makes the central purpose of development as creating an enabling environment in which all people can enjoy a long, healthy and creative life. It is not just the responsibility of environmental specialists or communications professionals. It requires contributions from people across all functions of an organization. For sustainable human resource development, different govt. and non govt. organization as well as individual has some key responsibilities in recruitment, selection, training & development of human resources in govt. and non govt. organizations. RMG is the key contributive sector in economic development of country. The garment industry has been leading the Indian economy since the early 1990s. Garment industry is the country's biggest export earning and the industry is a symbol of the country's dynamism in the world economy. The industry is also the main non-farm formal sector creating employment opportunities for the poor.

Ruth E. Glock and Grace I Kunnj (2007) states that a firm's human resources are major resources for its productivity. People unlike machines become more valuable to firm with time as they become better trained and more experienced. Machine capacity can extend within its limitations, eventually they become outdated and worn out and must be replaced. Employees in apparel manufacturing units are hired on the terms of direct labour, management and support staff.[7]

Direct labours are the employees of production level, who work directly on the products being produced such as cutting, sewing and finishing operators. They add value to products and convert materials into finished products. Dr. Navneet Bawa (2002) , resulted that, 56% apparel manufacturing units train their work force as they understood that like all other resources , human resources needs to be properly managed, developed and motivated through training before it can be put to effective use.[1]

The principal theme of this paper is that investment in education and training is the main key to progress from one level of economic development to another. It conveys the message that societies which do not gear themselves from now to learning will find it difficult to progress beyond their present level of economic and social development. Even the relatively rich economies seeking to capture some of the key industries of the next century, will need to create the conditions & environment necessary for creativity and innovation essential for moving into and being competitive in the knowledge-based industries which will provide the highest value-added for economies.

As has been perceptively observed by Peter F. Drucker: "We now know that the source of wealth is something specifically human: knowledge. If we apply knowledge to tasks we already know how to do, we call it 'productivity'. If we apply knowledge to tasks that are new and different, we call it 'innovation'. Only knowledge allows us to achieve these two goals." [15]

NEED OF THE STUDY

The reason for the increased importance of HRD in achieving socioeconomic development lies largely in the emergence of knowledge work, technological advances and the demand for information and their relationship to globalization.

The issue for employers (and for employees and economies) goes beyond the need to upgrade the skills of the current workforce. It is also necessary to equip future entrants to the workforce with the requisite education which makes them 'trainable' for emerging and constantly changing skills requirements. Improvements have to be equally qualitative as well. Employees need to be endowed with the capacity to move from one skill to another as each one becomes obsolete, and to develop the cognitive, analytical and inter-personal skills required to work in a modern organization and as the economy progresses from one level of development to another.

Training in readymade garment industry must be practical and directly related to the needs of the enterprise. It must be flexible and must result in a change of behaviour so that job is better performed. The benefits of training reflects in the figures on export sales and profitability, better motivated and skilled staff will provide a higher quality service to customers, develop existing markets. Training is a long term investment in human resources. Although there are direct effects on individual participants, the major impact of training is cumulative, and enterprises should not seek results over a short period.

Benefits of training:

- (1) It improves skills
- (2) It increases morale
- (3) It enhances better export performance
- (4) It increases reputation
- (5) It improves job applications
- (6) It provides possible financial support

People have the ability to improve in the right environment. This requires motivation, training, experience and reinforcement. Management is responsible for the leadership, organization, and decision making related to operation of the firm facilities, and production line. The success of hiring depends on the effectiveness of orientation program, training program and follow up with the individual. New employees must know what is expected out of them, the skills they are expected to learn to or bring into job. Skill training prepares an employee for the specific job or task he or she is expected to perform. Operators learn the procedures and procedure against a learning curve until they reach a certain level of competency. The major RMG centres of Punjab are Ludhiana, Amritsar and Jalandhar. From the list, Ludhiana city was selected for the study as it has the highest concentration of RMG Units.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The long-term aim of the research is to set up service centres at the selected RMG centres that will cater to the needs of the labour market at these selected places. To feed into this initiative, an exploratory study was conducted at the selected centre to understand the skill requirements of the employers in the RMG sector and to understand the inclinations/aspirations and potentialities of the labour force in protecting labour rights with in the given system. On the informative base to be obtained from study, the centres will be set up to provide guidance, counselling and training opportunities to the aspiring labour force in the area and at the same time providing them opportunities to organise themselves for the betterment of their working and living conditions. This may also help fulfilling the skill requirements of the RMG units in the catchments areas of the centre. The present study is an attempt to capture the aforesaid data.

Following are the specific objectives of the Research-

- (1) To know the human resource development activities in the readymade garments industry of Punjab.
- (2) To understand the skill requirements of the industry to equip workers for upgrading their employability potential as the industry performance improves.

- (3) To understand the living conditions of the labour force in the centre, their lifestyles, needs and aspirations and attitudes towards forming organisations.
- (4) To recommend some guidelines to ensure sustainable human resource development in RMG sector of Punjab.
- (5) To provide opportunities to the labour force in the area for capacity building and improving their employment potential, better their quality of life, and encourage them for forming their organisations for addressing to the common goals of attaining better and secured living.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As the study is about the capacity of building of workers on sustainable development of Human resources, so population included mainly workers and some of officials of RMG sector. The method adopted for investigation was survey and observation method. An interview schedule was used to collect the required information and was administered to the respondents personally. Data were collected from 150 readymade garment units of Ludhiana city of Punjab representing different size categories i.e. is small, medium, and large units. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the ultimate respondents. Data thus collected were coded and tabulated. Regression analysis, ANOVA and Chi square tests were used to analyze data efficiently.

Research Hypotheses

- H1: There is no significant impact of government initiative on sustainable HR development in RMG sector of Punjab.
- H2: There is no significant impact of training program on sustainable HR development in RMG sector of Punjab.
- H3: There is no significant impact of career development program on sustainable HR development in RMG sector of Punjab.
- H4: There is no significant impact of performance management development program on sustainable HR development in RMG sector of Punjab.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

India should prioritize human resource development in Ready-made Garment (RMG) sector to ensure best use of skill and technology simultaneously to face the challenges in the sector with the phasing out of Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA). Therefore, felt that future implications should be considered with utmost importance as this sector is a substantial employer of female workforce and it was felt necessary to take measures to protect such disaster in RMG sector as predicted by industry experts [6]. Several initiatives have been taken by the government of India for sustainable HR development in the RMG sector; to implement training and HRD for all categories of workers in the RMG sector, setting up institutions and collaborative arrangements on compliance to social and labor standards in the factories, capacity building of the ministry of labor and employment, for registration and retraining of the retrenched workers; etc.

Employment Pattern and Work Environment

Work environment determines and influences working capacity, labour productivity and labour-management relationship. A good work environment may lead towards increased labour efficiency resulting into higher profits while on the other hand, bad work environment always hinders the production process resulting into lowering down the profits. Hence good environment and suitable strategies always pushup the demand for the products. Here, work environment and employment pattern of selected RMG units have been discussed.

The pattern of work force differs with the size of the units. According to table 1, about 51 percent of the total work force in the selected RMG units under study is semi-skilled, followed by 44.12 percent skilled and 4.90 percent trainee work force.

However, the proportion of skilled work force increases with the size of the unit i.e. 36.89 percent in small to 46.67 percent in medium and further to 53.14 percent in large scale RMG units while the proportion of semi-skilled work force shows an inverse relationship with the size. This may be attributed to the larger units running with high technology offer high wages to skilled work force so that they can work on the modern technology efficiently. On the other hand, low capital and poor technology with smaller units tied their hands to attract skilled work force by offering higher wages to them.

Table1: Employment pattern in the selected readymade garments units

Type of employment	(Average Number/Unit)			
	Small (n=120)	Medium (n=23)	Large (n=7)	Total (n=150)
Skilled	19 (36.89)	126 (46.67)	288 (53.14)	45 (44.12)
Semi-skilled	30 (58.25)	131 (48.52)	180 (41.96)	52 (50.98)
Trainee	3 (4.85)	13 (4.81)	21 (4.90)	5 (4.90)
Total	521 (100.00)	270 (100.00)	429 (100.00)	102 (100.00)

(Figures in Parentheses Indicate Percentages)

BASIS OF SELECTION OF WORKERS

Several criterion were used for the selection for workers for the present jobs (table 2). Overall, the highest proportion i.e. 31.72 percent of the total work force in RMG units was selected on the basis of their skill, followed by 31.48 percent on the basis of experience and 23.24 percent through interview. The lowest proportion i.e. 3.63 percent of the total work force in selected RMG units was selected to the present job via approach to the management, followed by 9.93 percent on the basis of academic qualification.

The pattern is found to be different in different size categories of RMG units. In small RMG units, the highest proportion i.e. 49.02 percent of the workers were selected on the basis of experience, followed by 37.25 percent on the basis of skill. The same pattern is observed in the case of medium scale RMG units. But the highest proportion i.e., 36.77 percent of the workers in large scale RMG units was selected after conducting interview, followed by 29.29 percent on the basis of skill and 18.38 percent on the basis of experience. The recruitment on the basis of academic qualification was done to the extent of 5.88 percent in small scale RMG units which increased to 7.50 percent in medium scale RMG units and further to 11.72 percent in large scale RMG units.

Table2: Distribution of work force according to the basis of selection for the present job

Basis of Selection	Small (n=120)	Medium (n=23)	Large (n=7)	Total (n=150)
Skill	19 (37.25)	98 (35.00)	145 (29.29)	262 (31.72)
Experience	25 (49.02)	144 (51.43)	91 (18.38)	260 (31.48)
Interview	2 (3.92)	8 (2.86)	182 (36.77)	192 (23.24)
Approach to the management	2 (3.92)	9 (3.21)	19 (3.84)	30 (3.63)
Academic qualification	3 (5.88)	21 (7.50)	58 (11.72)	82 (9.93)
Total	51 (100.00)	280 (100.00)	495 (100.00)	826 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentages)

SATISFACTION WITH THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

If the employees are satisfied with the work environment of the units, then labour productivity increases and hence profitability and vice-versa. In other words, the work environment and labour productivity are positively correlated. The workers were asked about their level of satisfaction, over different aspects of work environment in term of 'Strongly Satisfied', 'Satisfied', 'Neutral', 'Dissatisfied and Strongly Disagree. These attributes were assigned weights as 2, 1, 0, 1 and -2 respectively. Then mean score of satisfaction was worked out and the percent level of satisfaction out of 2 was computed. The mean extent of satisfaction among workers working in different size categories of RMG units were compared through Analysis of variance. The results, so, obtained are presented in table 3.

Table3 : Extent of satisfaction of workers over different aspects of work environment provided by the selected RMG units

Work environment	Small (n=120)		Medium (n=23)		Large (n=7)		ANOVA	
	Mean	Mean % age	Mean	Mean % age	Mean	Mean % age	F-ratio	p-value
All conditioning	-1.16	-58.00	0.34	17.00	0.41	20.50	4.28	0.05
Working space	0.13	6.50	0.71	35.50	1.16	58.00	6.75	0.01
Lighting/Ventilation	0.31	15.50	0.99	49.50	1.31	65.50	7.35	0.01
Rest room/common room	-0.48	-24.00	0.21	10.50	0.63	31.50	5.09	0.01
Canteen	0.55	27.50	1.15	57.50	1.58	79.00	5.31	0.01
Recreation	-0.98	-49.00	0.87	43.50	1.12	56.00	4.52	0.05
HRD activities	-0.68	-34.00	0.39	19.50	0.64	32.00	3.18	0.05
Behaviour of supervisors	0.99	49.50	0.61	30.50	0.52	26.00	3.14	0.05
Right to protest	0.21	10.50	0.11	5.50	0.06	3.00	2.39	NS
Dispute settlement	0.55	27.50	0.37	18.50	0.21	10.50	1.98	NS
Residential quarters	-0.97	-48.50	0.43	21.50	0.59	29.50	4.11	0.05
Drinking water	0.81	40.50	1.58	79.00	1.64	82.00	6.58	0.01
Toilet provision	0.67	33.50	1.37	68.50	1.47	73.50	6.09	0.01
Efficient Machinery	0.53	26.50	1.09	54.50	1.43	71.50	5.69	0.01

It is obvious from the analysis that among workers working in small scale RMG units, there was a clear cut dissatisfaction over some aspects related to work environment such as air conditioning, provision of rest room common room, recreational facilities, human resource development activities and provision of residential quarters. The score of satisfaction over these aspects are negative indicate dissatisfaction. But the workers are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied over working space, lighting/ventilation, canteen facilities, right to protest, dispute settlement and efficiency of machinery as the percent score of satisfaction ranges between 1.00 percent to 33 percent. These workers are satisfied with behaviour of supervisors, drinking water facility and toilet provision, as the mean percent score of satisfaction over these aspects ranges between 33.01% to 67.00%. No mean % score of satisfaction came to be more than 67.00 percent indicating that workers working in small scale RMG units are not highly satisfied on work environment provisions.

Among workers working in medium scale RMG units, there was no dissatisfaction over different aspects of work environment but their response was found to be neutral in the case of provisions of air conditioning, rest room / common room provision, human resource development activities, behaviour of supervisory, right to protest, methods of dispute settlement and residential quarters facility. The workers are satisfied over all other aspects of work environment such as working space, lighting/ventilation, canteen, recreational activities, behaviour of supervisors and efficiency of machinery while they are highly satisfied over drinking water facility and toilet provision.

Workers working in large scale RMG units are not dissatisfied with work environment. However, the respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied over air conditioning, rest room/common room facility, HRD activities, right to protest, methods of dispute settlement, behaviour of supervisors and residential quarters facility. They expressed their satisfaction over working space, lighting/ventilation and recreational facilities. The workers are highly satisfied with the canteen facility, drinking water facility, toilet provision and efficiency of machinery in the large scale RMG units.

Size-wise analysis of extent of satisfaction over each aspect of work environment shows that there are significant differences in the level of satisfaction across various size categories of RMG units in all the aspects of work environment, except right to protest and dispute settlement. Over air-conditioning facility, workers of small scale RMG units are dissatisfied while those of medium and large scale RMG units are satisfied. In the case of working space, the response of the small scale RMG units workers was neutral while those in medium and large scale expressed satisfaction over this aspect. Similar is the pattern in case of lighting/ventilation. As far as rest room/common room facility is concerned, the workers of small scale RMG units are dissatisfied and the workers of medium and large scale RMG units are neutral and a similar pattern was observed in the case of HRD activities and residential quarters facility. With respect to recreational activities, the small scale RMG units workers are dissatisfied while the workers of medium and large scale RMG units are satisfied.

As far as canteen facilities are concerned, the workers of small units are neutral, those from medium units are satisfied and workers of large units are highly satisfied. The satisfaction level over behaviour of supervisors is significantly higher among workers of small units as compared to the larger units. Very poor level of satisfaction was observed over the exercise of right to protest in all the three size categories of RMG units, while the response was indifferent regarding methods of dispute settlement in all size categories of RMG units. Over drinking water facility and toilet provision, the workers of small scale units expressed satisfaction while the workers of medium and large scale units are highly satisfaction. In case of efficiency of machines, the small scale workers are indifferent, medium scale workers are satisfied and large scale workers are highly satisfied.

Overall, there are significant differences in the level of satisfaction among workers over almost all the aspects of work environment in different size categories of RMG units. Parimalam (2006) in his study highlighted the problems related to work environment such as congested work area, improper ventilation, dust, excessive noise etc.[14]

HR Development in RMG Industry

It was found from the survey that Garments factory arrange several training program for selected group of employees such as cutting, sewing employees but it is not sufficient for employees' development. Table 4 shows that for HR development there are many others program other than training like, career development and counseling, performance management and development, coaching, mentoring, succession planning etc. are not applicable in garment industry of Punjab at least in the domestic organization. In some case foreign owned or join venture RMG garments practices few of the activities.

Table 4: Practicing scenario of HR development in the RMG industry of Punjab.

S.N	HRD Factors	Percentage of Local Garment Practicing	Percentage of Foreign or Joint Venture owned Garmet Practicing
1.	Training	60%	100%
2.	Career Development	-	38%
3.	Career Counseling	10%	48%
4.	Performance Management & Development Program	05%	30%
5.	Coaching	-	05%
6.	Mentoring	-	-
7.	Succession Planning	-	05%
8.	Tuition Assistance	-	-

Source: Field Survey

Respondent status of HR development before and after employment in the RMG sector

From the survey study on our respondents (Table 5) we have also found some practical scenario of HR development status in the RMG sector of Punjab. Only 30% employees are satisfied on the training program of the organization while about 72% workers got short training during their servicing. Among the surveyed respondents, about 9% workers got training before starting their job. But others factors of HR development like career development, career counseling, performance management etc were not got by the workers before their job but few percentages of workers got it informally throughout their job period.

Table 5: Comparison HR development in RMG industry before and after employment.

S.N	HRD Factors	Before taking jobs	After taking job
1.	Training	09%	81%
2.	Career Development	-	31%
3.	Career Counseling	12%	41%
4.	Performance Management & Development Program	-	05%
5.	Coaching	-	03%
6.	Mentoring	-	-
7.	Succession Planning	-	-
8.	Tuition Assistance	05%	-

Source: Field Survey

On the basis of survey findings using 5 point scale for measuring capacity building of workers (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951) on Sustainable Human Resource Development (SHRD) in the Ready Made Garments (RMG) sector in Punjab. From the study it is found that on the issue of 'training taken' 81% (Table-5) respondents reply they have training.

REGRESSION, CHI SQUARE TEST, AND ANOVA

Analysis found relationship between HR development status and variables of HR development like training program, career development program and performance management development program are highly positively correlated and linear regression is significant on the basis of relationship of dependent and independent variable. From the development of hypothesis was there is no impact of variable RGI, TRP, CDP, PDP on sustainable HR development i.e significant level =0' in ANOVA and Chi-square test Analysis. So, it indicates null hypothesis is rejected and alternative is accepted so, there is impact of HR development variables RGI, TRP, CDP, and PDP on sustainable HR development in RMG sector of Punjab. Again from the study of regression analysis of data findings from the different executive of garment factory showed relationship of the dependent and independent variable also significant and highly positively correlated. In conclusion we can say, Training, career development program, performance management program, government initiation as a factor of HR development is very much important for sustainable development of HR in RMG sector of Punjab rather than existing education level.

CONCLUSION

Indian economy at present is more globally integrated than at any time in the past. Cheap labor is no longer seen to be a mainstay of comparative advantage. At present RMG sector working with the unskilled labor but these may not provide sustainable competitive advantage over a period compare with others competitor in the world market. Thus, sustainable human resources development in this sector is one of the key factors to maintain current competitive advantage in long run. The need for establishing strong backward linkage was appropriately realized and accordingly necessary steps were taken by all quarters of the RMG industry, which has been reflected in the decreased pattern of back-to-back import supported by increased domestic value addition. However, further progress is in order, and a strong public sector role is necessary to mediate the establishment of textile mills with global standards. An appropriate policy regime is needed to encourage the human resources development, importation of technology, intermediate and raw materials, so that the local industries get a chance to reduce its average cost to international level and narrow the lead time. Though the India facing different problems like workers, who are mostly young women, also face an acutely difficult working environment – wages are low, hours are long, forced labor is practiced, child labor exists, freedom is curtailed, whether it be locked doors or rights of association, and there are a multi-attitude of other practices which go against international labor standards and codes of conduct (non-compliance). At the level of legislation and business dealings, lack of implementation of laws, restrictive laws and unfair buying practices by buyers compound the issue of non-compliance. But development of the following issues with ensuring sustainable human resources development in RMG sector may take competitive advantage over long period. Workers also gave their opinion about the matter. States of sample entrepreneurs were given the opinion that for enhancing labor productivity a number of measures should be taken like organize training for workers, improve compliant situation, diversify production, provide entertainment & refreshment facility, increase workers' wage (compensation), provide other incentives, and ensure good behavior with workers, etc. At the same time, sector is currently facing new challenges and it has structural weaknesses in some areas. To face these

challenges necessary policy interventions are immediately required related to training, career development, career counseling, Performance management & Development program, Coaching, Mentoring, Succession Planning, Tuition Assistance which are not sufficient for ensuring sustainable human resources development.

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