

# **Working Environment for Female Employees in Bangladesh Corporate Sector Organizations: An Exploratory Study**

Md. Akram Hossain

## **Abstract**

*The participation of women in employment has been increasing gradually in Bangladesh despite challenges and constraints due to the lack of congenial working environment. The issue of working environment is more significant when women are concerned. The objective of this study is to explore the work environment for the female employees at corporate sector organizations (CSOs) in the purview of three major areas- physical, human and policy initiatives- to identify the difficulties and challenges women are facing; to find out the reasons and to recommend appropriate actions to address the problems. The scope of this study is limited to the everyday experiences of female officials in three national and international CSOs. The study found some cases of discrimination, incidences of sexual harassment and identified a few challenging facts for female employees. This paper has also incorporated some recommendations provided by respondents to promote women-friendly working environment in their workplace.*

## **Key Words**

*Staff Amenities, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, Gender Policy, Peer Relationship, Superior-Subordinate Relationship*

## **Introduction**

An employee feels secured in professional life when the environment at office or workstation is suitable for him or her. It is a common notion that corporate sector

---

## **Corresponding Author**

Md. Akram Hossain, Email: akramfrdu@gmail.com

organizations (CSOs) are ensuring better working environment with better office place, higher salary and staff amenities. But there are very few studies conducted to explore the real scenario of CSOs regarding the working environment in terms of women-friendly infrastructural facilities, discrimination, sexual harassment and policy initiatives. The term environment includes many factors like physical, chemical and biotic which influence life of anything living in the material world. In terms of human beings, it is the aggregate social and cultural conditions that have positive or negative impact on the life of an individual or group of people. Work environment, when women are concerned, refers to many issues, conditions and settings which affect their professional lives in any workplace (Agomo, 1995). A congenial work environment in an office or workplace enhances significantly the efficiency of employees, increases productivity, promotes motivation and commitment to work (Jahan, 2012). Employment benefits and amenities motivate employees to work better and in many cases some minimal facilities can make big changes in productivity (Akhter et al., 2010).

Better working environment encourages the individuals to stay in their organization for a long period of time. Behavior and attitude of the higher management and fellow colleagues also play significant role in this respect. The issue of working environment is more important for woman employees as they need some sort of extra care, facilities and protection in and outside the office premises. Women-friendly working environment includes having some gender sensitive policies and arrangement like transport for female officials, maternity leave, child care center, equal treatment in respect to promotion, transfer and responsibilities, and protection from sexual harassment both mentally and physically or any other exploitative practices by her counterpart male colleagues or higher officials. Although women are doing well in their workplace, many times they are neglected in getting equal share in respect to wage, dignity, rights and promotions (Mridula and Khan, 2009). Mr. Zahid Hussain, lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office commented that women are capable of doing almost everything like men in an environment where they can perform with dignity and respect (Byron, 2016).

At present, the participation women in the job market has been increasing day by day and they represent a major part of the workforce in Bangladesh. The number of female employment is increasing with a higher rate compared to the male workforce (CPD, 2004). In Bangladesh, 49.4 percent of the population is women and they are doing well and marching ahead of their male counterparts in terms of many indicators. Women enrollment rate in primary and secondary education is 98.1 percent and 63.6 percent while the rate for men is 95 percent and 51.6 percent respectively (as of 2012). 57 percent of women are economically active

---

and 20 percent seats of national parliament are held by women (Hosen, 2015). Women-owned economic households increased 49 percent a year from 2003 to 2013. Among the total economically active people in Bangladesh, around 83 percent are males and 16 percent are females of which around 64 percent are in manufacturing, largely the garment sector. Although the males have strong dominance in the job market and the females are still insignificant, full-time female workers have increased fourfold from 2003 to 2013 and stood at 30 lakh (Based on Economic Census, 2013 cited in Byron, 2016). Female employment rate in the informal sector is rapidly rising but at the same time the rate is decreasing in the formal sector.

In this backdrop, this study is to explore the experiences and opinions of the women employed in the CSOs regarding the working environment in their offices. This study is basically an exploratory rather than definitive in nature. Exploratory research is an important way of discovering new insights assessing phenomena in a new light (Robson, 2002). It is hoped that it will open up questions for further research, as well as build on the existing information base on the working environment of female employees as a very limited number of studies have been conducted in this arena. A major objective of the study is to gather knowledge by tapping into the everyday experiences of female officials at CSOs.

## **Research Question and Objectives**

The requirement and importance of congenial working environment at office are different for female employees compared to their male counterparts. Females may prefer special kind of infrastructural arrangements inside the office like privacy in workplace, female-friendly facilities and they will need extra care for health, more emphasis on safety and security, transport for safe travel and also to have arrangements for babies. These may be termed as physical working environment. Besides, human dimension of working environment like gender based discrimination, sexual harassment and any other abusive activities by peer colleagues and higher officials in the work place are the most critical issues for female employees. Gender sensitive policies such as maternity leave, gender based recruitment and promotion policy, quota for females etc. are important initiatives to strike a balance between male and female employees and to ensure female-friendly working environment. In this study, an attempt has been taken to explore all these issues in three CSOs of Bangladesh.

The main objective of this study is to explore the working environment for female employees in CSOs regarding the available physical facilities, human environ-

ment and gender related policy measures. This study aims to address the following research questions:

- How suitable the overall working environment of the CSOs are for female employees?
- Is there any discrimination against female employees in the CSOs?
- Does the sexual abuse or harassment exist in the CSOs?
- What are the policy initiatives to address the gender related issues?

## **Statement of the Problem**

The number of women employees is increasing and they are playing a crucial role in the corporate sector organizations in Bangladesh. In an office, female officials bear equal work load as their male colleagues do. On the other hand, compared to the males, females have to carry out much more work at home to serve the family and to arrange different social gatherings for relatives, neighbors, friends, and others. So they have to struggle in maintaining work-life balance if the office environment is not supportive enough. But like many other sectors, working in this corporate world also has not still improved as regards proper women-friendly infrastructure and comfortable office environment for work. There are two major components of work environment- physical and human- which are considered very important for ensuring higher performance and productivity in any organization. In a corporate organization, an employee usually works at least 8 hours a day and sometimes more than that. Therefore, both physical and social aspects of office environment have a significant role to make the employees happy and feel comfortable during their working hours. The issue is more critical for women employees since they need to maintain dual responsibility- office and home. They also face discrimination in getting equal rights to employment, posting and job responsibilities compared to their male counterparts. They do not get extra facilities with supportive policies being women. Moreover, they sometimes fall in a trap of sexual harassment of different forms from slang language to physical abuse by colleagues and seniors. Since there is no formal mechanism and setup to lodge complaints regarding these concerns, they have nothing else to do but remain silent or quit the job.

The existence of gender-based discrimination and inequality is now a issue of concern both at the local and global level. At the same time, mass awareness has been increasing regarding gender issue. A combined effort needs to be taken where individuals, organizations and governments will play an active role in promoting gender equality and rights. Some of international conferences have

---

---

highlighted and elaborately discussed gender issues such as the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Beijing Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. These conferences put importance on women empowerment, decision making authority for women, education, health, information and services for women (UCEP-Bangladesh,n.d.).

Currently, much emphasis has been given on the several aspects of employees' life such as friendly and cooperative work environment, safety, hazards and health issues, official relationship with higher authorities as well as among colleagues etc. Very often it is noticed that the work environment in many organizations is not safe as desired, comfortable and friendly enough for the employees, especially the females. Women employees face various kinds of problems and difficulties in their workplace. Some of these problems are related to the human environment of the workplace and some are concerned with physical infrastructure (Jahan, 2012) and some may be policy issues.

It is found that no comprehensive study has been conducted on the different kinds of problems facing the women working in corporate sector organizations in Bangladesh. This study focuses on the office environment for different levels of officials in the corporate sector organizations and tries to identify the challenges from a gender perspective. The purpose of this study to explore the work environment for the female employees in corporate sector organizations (CSOs) in the purview of three major areas- physical, human and policy initiatives- to identify the difficulties and challenges women are facing; to find out the reasons and to recommend appropriate actions to address the problems. There are many factors and components which influence the working environment of an organization. Different literatures and studies explain the office environment differently. In order to satisfy the objectives, this study has covered 3 broad components of working environment- Physical Environment, Human Environment and Policy Initiatives.

## **Literature Review**

The researcher reviews some relevant literature, both national and international, on working environment for women employees, their problems, benefits, etc. including some theoretical discussions on gender discrimination, sexual harassment, organizational policies and practices, and many other aspects of the office environment. Working conditions are poor for women in Bangladesh. But, despite the bad office conditions, women are working because they have to due to necessity. The RMG industry has provided jobs to millions of rural women and

---

prompted extraordinary social changes. But standard of work environment remain poor, and women often face violence or discrimination (Hindstrom, 2011).

Correll and Benard (2006) argued that inequality based on gender still exists in the workplace in the form of discrimination in pay, gender-based work nature and a “glass ceiling” for women, despite considerable improvement and institutional changes have taken place. They also highlighted two types of gender inequality- statistical discrimination explained by economic theories and status-based discrimination of social psychological theories. According to these theories, employers prefer men over equally qualified women during recruitment, salary and promotion due to the limited or biased information and cultural beliefs about low performance capacity of women.

Hojgaard (2002) also blamed the cultural discourse or the societal conventions for differentiating between males and females. In our society, the top leadership is occupied by males and it is masculine in nature. Segregation of gender roles and inequality of women are more emphasized in masculine societies. Sometimes junior female officers face problem due to the masculine superiority in offices but when they become seniors, many of them behave in masculine nature that hinders friendly working environment in the offices (Haque and Mohammad, 2013). Hence, the internal office environment cannot be women friendly. This kind of discriminatory cultural element in Bangladeshi society immensely affects the working relationship among colleagues as well as between seniors and juniors. The office environment is also male dominated; therefore the females often become marginalized and face many difficulties and critical situations.

In a society the level of division of roles and values based on gender determines the difference between masculinity and femininity (Hofstede, 2001). Men in a masculine society are considered and encouraged to have some special kind of characteristics, which include assertiveness, competitiveness, strength, striving for material success and achievement. On the other hand, female oriented characteristics are modesty, caring, and focus on quality of life (Hofstede et al., 2010, Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Women are more concerned with taking care of the home, children and others. Outside the home, men are historically dominant, and recently in the wealthier countries women are able to secure equal position with men in work and politics. In the past, lower-class women entered low-status and low-paid jobs (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Gender discrimination occurs when personnel decisions are taken considering gender rather than based on qualifications and performance level of an individual (Gutek et al., 1996, Ngo et al., 2002 cited in Foley et al. 2005). According to Bal-

---

ser, 2002 (cited in Foley et al., 2005), organizational practices and procedures regarding the personnel management have a great influence on the creation of the perception about discrimination among the employees. Discriminative pay for women and such kind of other organizational practices may also affect one's perceptions of gender discrimination.

Physical and human or social are the two basic components of work environment as identified by Jahan (2012). These two aspects are very important factors for increasing and maintaining productivity of employees and reaching organizational goal. In a full working day, an employee has to work at least 8 hours at his or her office and sometimes, due to extra workload, overtime works are also required in every organization. Therefore, physical like office infrastructures and social environment such as relationships in workplace have significant contributions to make workers happy and feel comfortable while spending time and performing their jobs at office.

Work-life balance is a great challenge for women working outside the home. Extensive work load in office for female officials may create problems in family life (Ralston, 1990); even late hours working for females in office may lead to conflict with their family (Piotrkowski et al., 1987). Khatun (2009) argued that women in Bangladesh are neglected and discriminated. Family, society and the economy are all male-dominated and female struggle for equality, power and recognition. The realities for a poor village woman and an educated urban woman are more or less the same. They are subordinate to men both within and outside the household. Women need to take permission from their father or husband to go outside and work in any office (Avais et al., 2014).

Jahan (2007) said that the presence of women in civil service is low due to the lack of women-friendly work environment. In our society, women's works receive less importance compared to that of men. As a result, every aspect of any organization like workspace, work-patterns are not female-oriented. There are no special arrangements for women officials within the office environment. The problems and obstacles responsible for the limited entry of women in civil service, as identified in several research works are: no day care center for the children of the female staff; unavailability of separate rooms in the workplace; no restroom facilities; inadequate toilet facilities; lack of women-friendly working environment; insufficient transport for pick and drop services; accommodation problems, etc. The reality for private or corporate sector organizations is more or less same regarding the working environment and facilities for women.

Center for Policy Dialogue Report (2004) mentioned that employee union should address the issue of sexual harassment at workplace, but in reality there is no such union in any organization of Bangladesh that will work on this issue. There is also a lack of sufficient legal provisions and their proper enforcement to protect workers from unlawful dismissal. The Nari o Shishu Nirjaton Domon Ain of 2000 (The Prevention of Oppression Against Women and Children Act 2000) has a section on sexual harassment but it does not specify the term 'harassment in the workplace'. The Constitution of Bangladesh (Articles 10, 19, 28) has provided women the equal right to work in any occupation, but there is no congenial work environment for women in the workplace. The attitude of both males and females in the society is responsible for the prevailing discrimination based on gender. There is constitution to ensure equality among males and females, several laws are there on special provisions for female like Maternity Benefit Act 1939 and Mines Maternity Benefit Act 1941, but the problem is that these laws have not been implemented properly. Moreover, the authorities in any office often feel irritated and consider women as the source of all disturbances.

Siddiqi (2003) argued that many times women are not willing to share their bad experiences of sexual harassment due to the negative consequence in the society or because of the possible threat from the perpetrator of taking revenge. Especially in the workplace, female employees are reluctant to file charges against their fellow colleagues or superiors due to the fear of losing job, lack of support from law enforcing agencies and a strong masculine culture and attitude. For all these reasons, the actual picture of prevailing sexual harassment in the workplace are difficult to identify correctly.

The above literatures look into different aspects and concepts relating to the working environment for female employees and highlight several issues and problems that females face in their offices and workplaces. The literatures reveal that a number of research and studies have been conducted on women employees working in different professions. Most of the studies have been conducted in the garment or industrial sectors with particular focus on labor class women regarding sexual harassment or abuse. Very few studies speak about women employees at the mid-level and no studies or research or writing emphasize on or discuss exclusively about women officials in the corporate sector in Bangladesh.

Working environment in a corporate sector organization is different and assumed to be better than garment or industrial and factory-based organizations. There should have been enough arrangements and provisions or policies for female employees in the CSOs, and gender discrimination, sexual harassment and any

---

negative or disrespectful attitudes towards women should not have been evident there. Since very few studies have been conducted in the arena of CSOs, the author has tried to explore the gender-related issues in order to identify problems and hurdles the female officials may face in the so-called women friendly corporate organizations.

## **Scope and Methodology of the Research**

The study has covered 3 organizations composed of national and international corporation bodies in Bangladesh. The corporate sector organizations include HSBC, a very old international private bank; Rahim Afrooz, the first superstore and very big corporate sector organization of purely Bangladeshi origin, and Sandhani Life Insurance, a well-known insurance company in Bangladesh. The total size of the respondents is 32 of which there are 7 males and 25 females. Snowball sampling technique was used to identify the respondents but due consideration was given on the work experiences of the employees. The study basically covers female officials in different ranks from junior officers to the managerial level.

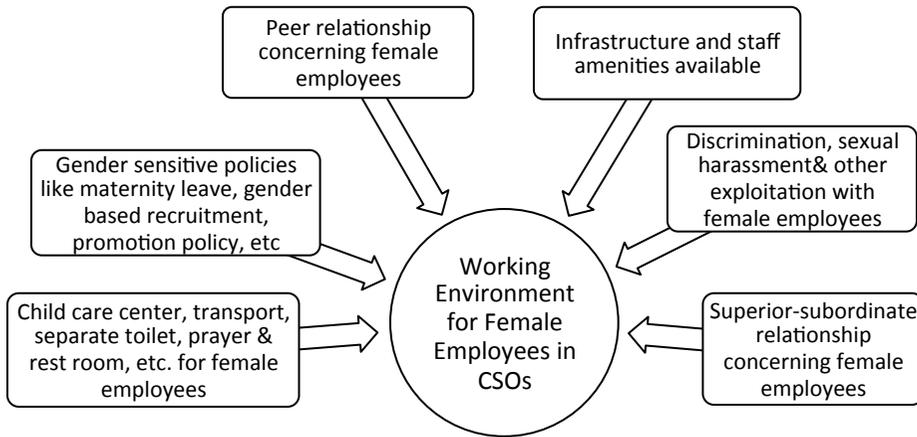
In this study, data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Face-to-face interviews have been conducted with both female and male employees of the organizations to collect the primary information. Two sets of questionnaires were used for two categories of respondents. The male employees were interviewed to get their perception regarding the working environment for females and also to cross-check the findings from female employees. Besides, most often females are usually found reluctant to talk about the sensitive issues like sexual harassment, so the males can provide information of such incidences. A few in-depth interviews within the organization (at management level) and with the concerned resource persons (external experts) were also taken. Working environment was also evaluated through observation of the offices and their facilities. Besides, some secondary sources of information were reviewed that include daily newspapers, published journals, books and relevant websites.

## **Analytical Framework**

The working environment for females in an organization depends on many aspects including organizational policies, available facilities, working relationships, office environment, discrimination, sexual harassment, etc. In this study, the suitability of the working environment for female employees has been assessed depending on these factors. On the basis of literature review and considering the

objective of the study, the following analytical framework has been developed to evaluate the congeniality of the working environment for female employees in 3 corporate sector organizations in Bangladesh:

**Figure 1: Analytical Framework of the Study**



### Studied Organizations

In this study, 1 international bank and 2 national organizations have been covered for data collection. There are several offices of these 3 organizations all over Bangladesh but only 1 office of each organization has been visited for the questionnaire survey with the officials. A brief description of these organizations is given below:

#### HSBC

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Limited, under the HSBC Group, first opened in Hong Kong and later in Shanghai at the beginning of 1865. The Superintendent of Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, Thomas Sutherland was the founder of HSBC. The head office of the bank is located in the central district of Hong Kong- the City of Victoria (HSBC Holdings plc. 2013).

HSBC as the largest financial organization in the world serves more than fifty-five million customers and clients. It has around 6,600 offices and four major types of businesses: Retail Banking and Wealth Management, Commercial Banking, Global Banking and Markets, and Global Private Banking. It has operations in 80 countries including Europe, Asia, Africa, and America (HSBC website). In

1996, HSBC first started its operation in Bangladesh as an international bank. At present it has very few branches in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet (HSBC Fact-sheet).

### **Rahim Afrooz**

In 1950, A C Abdur Rahim initiated a small trade of different items and later on in April 1954 this tiny business was named as Rahimafrooz & Co. Currently, it has become a big business enterprise and formed a group which has eight operating companies (SBUs), many business ventures, and a not-for-profit social enterprise. More than three thousand workforce is directly employed in the group and around twenty thousand suppliers, contractors, dealers and retailers are also working indirectly for the group. Storage Power; Automotive & Electronics; Energy; and Retail are the four broad segments of business of Rahim Afrooz (Website of Rahimafrooz).

### **Sandhani Life Insurance Company (SLIC)**

As a public limited company, Sandhani Life Insurance Company (SLIC) Ltd. was incorporated in Bangladesh on January 23, 1990. It has around 0.86 million policyholders till the end of 2010. Micro Insurance, Ordinary Life Policy, Group Insurance, Education Policy, and Hajj Policy are the major areas of business operations of SLIC. SLIC has already covered 35 districts of the country with 6 Service Points, 192 Shakha Karjaloy and 706 Branch Offices. At present, a total of 2,569 employees are working at SLIC. It has some other subsidiary companies, such as: Sandhani Life Finance Ltd.; Sandhani Life Housing and Development Company Ltd.; Sandhani Life Growth Fund; and Sandhani Life Unit Fund (Annual Report 2012).

## **Research Findings and Analysis**

The data and information about the working environment of the three offices have been collected through face-to-face interview with structured questionnaires. A total of 32 respondents (25 females and 7 males) were interviewed from the three organizations.

**Table 1: Number of respondents interviewed**

Organization	Male	Female	Total
HSBC	2	9	11
Rahim Afrooz	3	8	11
Sandhani Life Insurance	2	8	10
Total	7	25	32

The above table shows the distribution of respondents in three different organizations. At the end of the questionnaire survey, three in-depth interviews with experts were also conducted to share the findings of the study and to get some clear ideas from their long work experience on gender relevant issues. The officials interviewed were from different levels and positions with significant years of work experiences in their current organization.

**Table 2: Years of work experience**

Years	Male	Female	Total
0-1 years	0	2	2
2-3 years	0	7	7
4-6 years	4	5	9
7-10 years	3	6	9
10+ years	0	5	5

The above table shows that only 2 female employees have 1 year or less work experience and all other respondents (30) have 2 or more years work experience in the current organization. Around 50 percent of the respondents have more than 7 years work experience whereas 5 female respondents have been working for more than 10 years. The officials with longer tenure must have more experience about their office environment. Besides, the long period of working in an office also provides positive indication for working environment. Some senior female officials said in the interview that ‘we are here for a long time since the working environment is very good and congenial’. In this study, some higher officials like Head of Human Resource Department, Head of Administration and Assistant Vice-Principal, etc. have been included under the questionnaire survey since the senior officials have clear knowledge and more experience about the organizational policies and practices as regards the issue of working environment for female employees.

## Infrastructure and Staff Amenities

Working environment in an office depends on the internal infrastructural arrangements and facilities prevailing in the workplace which includes work-space, transportation, child care facilities, toilet, rest room, air-conditioner, etc. (Jahan, 2012). The facilities in addition to the salary available for the staff are the indicators for assessment of working environment of any office. In the three organizations studied, the following arrangements are more or less available for their employees:

- Transport and housing allowance included in salary

- Health facilities like medical allowance, life insurance, hospitalization allowance, etc.
- Provident fund and gratuity
- Loan facility or salary in advance
- Festival bonus, profit bonus and performance bonus
- Pure drinking water and snacks
- Mobile allowance, car maintenance allowance, club membership, entertainment allowance for senior management, etc.

It can be said that all the three organizations have good facilities for employees. There are some limitation in terms of physical facilities like no transportation and housing system; there are separate toilets for male and female but no rest room or ladies common room. There are air-conditioning systems in HSBC and Rahim Afroz, but in all the three offices, workspace is very congested and there is no privacy since the sitting arrangement is open and separate room facilities are only for the higher management. Almost all the respondents expressed their demand for transport facility, particularly, female employees face difficulties in competing with men for the limited space in the overcrowded local buses and due to inadequate sidewalk and pedestrian facilities young executives face sexual and verbal harassment on the road. Moreover, lack of proper transportation leads to taking more expensive means of transportation which may not be affordable for all. Beside the transportation facility, the respondents demanded for some other provisions like canteen (only SLIC has it), gymnasium, rest room for female, day-care facility, paternity leave, salary increment as per price hike, etc. Child-care facility in the offices is important for the working mothers because, they cannot concentrate totally on work because of the concern of their children they kept at home with maid servants or relatives. They may often make mistakes in working with disturbed mind (Begum, 2002, cited in Jahan, 2012).

However, in all the three offices, every facility is equally applicable for both male and female employees; no special provision or arrangement, except separate toilet and maternity leave, are there for females. One respondent blamed uncleanliness of toilet as well. She said 'toilet should be fully healthy and clean for female in particular'. In the interview, gender expert viewed that only maternity leave is not enough for female employees; they need some extra care and facilities particularly in terms of physical structure of office environment. They need to be accommodated in separate rooms for work, specially, a pregnant woman feels uneasy to work in an open workspace, she may need to take some rest and sit in a more

comfortable way when she needs rest. But, unfortunately, pregnant women are treated as burden or nuisance in our paternalistic office environment.

Some respondents opined for female common room because ‘male can go outside anytime but female cannot, so female officials need such a place where they can get relaxed for a while if necessary’.

## **Gender Sensitive Policies**

In many developed countries like USA, a number of laws and acts are enacted to protect different kinds of discrimination and sexual harassment faced by women at workplace (DeCenzo and Robbins, 2010). But in Bangladesh, there is a lack of laws and acts related to gender issues and problems. There is no gender sensitive policy or special provisions for female employees except maternity leave in the organizations studied. As per government rule, there should be six months with pay maternity leave facility but only HSBC has six months' provision, the other two have only four months. When the respondents were asked whether there were any policies or rules to prevent the female officials from sexual harassment, 56 percent answered negatively. The finding shows that only HSBC has such a kind of policy whereas in the other two organizations either they don't have any policy or employees are not aware of it. One of the major obstacles to women's development in any organization is the absence of women friendly policy (Khatun, 2009). In Bangladesh, there are basically two laws for the working women. Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 is applicable for employees working in the private sector while public officials work following the Bangladesh Service Rules. According to the government service rules, women in the public sector are entitled to six months maternity leave. On the other hand, the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 has the provision of only four months' maternity leave. At the same time, National Women Development Policy 2011 states that Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, as per the rules of business, can initiate required laws and take necessary actions to ensure six months' maternity leave for women. This policy does not make any distinction between public and private sector employees. The discrimination in maternity leave for public and private sector clearly indicates that the government is ‘biased and not gender-sensitive enough’. This kind of injustice still exists since there is no provision in the constitution regarding the discrimination by the private sector in Bangladesh (Sathi, 2012).

In Bangladesh civil service, specific quota system is followed for recruiting more females but there is no quota or special arrangement for females in the private sector, although the number of female employees is significantly low here. Many

---

respondents suggested that more females need to be recruited to ensure gender-friendly and congenial working environment for the existing female employees. The gender expert, in the interview, expressed that females are discriminated in the way that employers are usually biased and give special preferences to men over women with same qualifications at the time of taking decision for recruitment, fixing salary and promotion etc. In some job circulars it is mentioned that females are encouraged to apply or 1/3 females will be recruited, etc. but those promises are only on paper not in practice. Females are often discriminated and sexually harassed, but there is no special written policy or rules to protect them and ensure equal rights.

There is still not enough opportunities and unequal treatment for women and they often face different kinds of barriers in work life. Special provisions such as gender equity can help women overcome these constraints and challenges. Therefore, many gender experts advocate for the equity approach to ensure equal opportunity and equal benefit for women and men. The main objective of the equity approach is to create a situation so that women can also get opportunities to come forward and compete with men and thereby equity will lead to equality. It can also be termed as positive discrimination and affirmative action for ensuring equality and balance circumstances both for men and women. The positive actions for females are imperative to ensure their active involvement in public life in order to enhance their role in society, eliminating the de facto inequality and discrimination based on gender. This positive discrimination is also necessary for making balance between men and women since the reality of our patriarchal society produces inequalities and creates artificial gap among these two social groups (ILO, 2007). Therefore, the government of Bangladesh should have specific policy on gender issues equally applicable both for public and private sector to ensure equal rights for the both genders and at the same time protect against any form of discrimination against women.

## **Peer Relationship**

In an office, an employee spends more time with peer coworkers than with anyone else at work. Peer coworker relationships refer to relationships between employees of the same hierarchical level who have no formal authority over one another. Relationship among the colleagues is an important but non-visible factor that has a great influence in molding working environment of any office. Gender is one of the determinant factors for this relationship of women and men. The culture or tradition in society prescribes rights, roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men. 'Gender Stereotypes' are such societal perceptions and value

systems in a patriarchal society and office environment, where women are treated as weak, dependent, subordinate, indecisive, emotional and submissive (ILO, 2007).

**Table 3: Relationship with colleagues at office**

Relationship with colleagues	% of respondents
Very cooperative	63
Cooperative	28
Just working relationship	6
Better understanding with male colleagues	41
Better understanding with female colleagues	44
Better understanding with the both	16

In the studied three organizations, 63 percent of the respondents (17 females and 3 males) said that the relationship among the colleagues is very cooperative, 28 percent of them (5 females and 4males) evaluated it as cooperative while only 6 percent of the females expressed that they have just working relationship with their colleagues. As regards better understanding with colleagues, 41 percent of the respondents (3 males and 10 females) said that they have good relations with male colleagues while on the other hand, 44 percent of the interviewees (1 male and 13 females) mentioned female colleagues and 5 officials (3 males and 2 females) did not want to choose any one but they said that they have a good understanding with both male and female colleagues.

So, in the studied organizations, the working environment in terms of peer relationship was found quite satisfactory and there was no problem in understanding among the colleagues due to the identity of gender. However, some of the female officials explained that there are very few or no female colleagues in her department/section so they ultimately have had to maintain relationship with only male colleagues. One comment was that ‘Colleagues are cooperative but not necessarily friendly’. Many respondents also identified the low number of female colleagues as a problem which affects the gender-friendly working environment.

### **Superior-Subordinate Relationship**

An employee spends very little time with his/her superior, but the relationship between the superiors and subordinates plays a significant role in making the working environment friendly or hostile. It is a complex relationship, but there are many opportunities for both superiors and subordinates to make the relationship meaningful and productive. The organization will face several difficulties in a problematic relationship between superiors and subordinates (Schmieding, 1993). The relationship becomes more complex when superiors are predominantly

males with paternalistic attitude and subordinates are females. An employee feels comfortable and convenient if he/she has a good and cooperative relation with higher officials.

**Table 4: Superior-subordinate relationship**

Relationship with higher officials/management	% of respondents
Very cooperative	22
Cooperative	44
Highly formal & just working relationship	13
Easier to talk with male superior	28
Easier to talk with female superior	16
Don't have female superior/no difference	56

In this study, 22 percent of the respondents (6 females and 1 male) said that they have very cooperative relationship with higher officials, 44 percent of them (10 females and 4 males) mentioned the relationship as cooperative while only 16 percent (4 females) expressed that they have highly formal and just working relationship with their superiors. In Agora of Rahim Afrooz, a few respondents explained that they have only formal or working relationship with Chief Executive Officer (CEO) since he is a foreigner. On the other hand, when the respondents were asked whom they feel convenient to talk with; male or female superior, most of them (56%) replied that they do not have female superiors whereas 28 percent (4 males and 5 females) answered male superiors and only 16 percent (5 females) pointed to female superiors. Some respondents did not want to differentiate their relationship between male and female superiors; rather they argued for equal relationship with the both. Some of the female respondents particularly in Agora of Rahim Afrooz, expressed 'they are afraid of being fired anytime by the higher authority'. They also termed this as 'the failure of management that they failed to make sense of security among the staff'.

## Gender Discrimination at Workplace

Discrimination in employment may stem from a decision in any organization based on factors other than those relevant to the job. A few decades back, many jobs were considered as male or female-oriented. For example, librarian, nurse, and elementary school teacher were considered as jobs for women; and on the other hand, jobs for male were as police officers, truck drivers, and top management positions, etc. Male-dominated jobs have traditionally been paid more than female-oriented jobs (DeCenzo and Robbins, 2010). Men always try to maintain gender discrimination through creating an antagonistic work environment for women for two types of benefits, material and psychological. Holding highly paid

employment, men are earning more than women and thereby dominate both at the household as well as at the workplace. On the other hand, earning the bread and work competence are both acknowledged as solely manhood domains in our society and therefore, men always try to protect their position by treating women as inferiors. As a result, gender discrimination is maintained everywhere in the organizations and men create such environments that undermine the capabilities of women (Dowling, 2010).

Gender discrimination in the government sector, semi-government and autonomous bodies and nationalized mills and factories are not visible. But in private sectors and multinational organizations gender discrimination is visible (ILO, 2007). In Bangladesh, both in the formal and the informal sectors, there is a substantial gap between men and women in terms of wages and salaries. Women are often employed in low-skilled work with less income (Khatun et al., 2008). It is often argued that females are paid less due to their lower level of education, skills and experiences, efficiency and productivity compared to males. But the CPD study found woman with education level up to a SSC earns only 87.1% of the earning of a male with the same level of education (Khatun, 2009).

**Table 5: Discrimination at workplace**

Evidence of discrimination	% of respondents
Gender based discrimination	10
Discrimination on region and political basis	13
Employees don't raise voice against discrimination due to the fear of losing job	38

Although the gender discrimination in different forms is extensively found in several formal and informal sectors especially industrial and garment sector as explained in different studies, the evidence of gender discrimination in the studied corporate organizations is not found significantly. Only three female respondents (10%) admitted that they faced some sort of discrimination for being a women while around 13 percent of the respondents said that there are some other types of discrimination like on regional and political ground. This happens when the region of any employee or his/her political identity is similar or favorable to the higher authority. Sometimes, candidates are recruited on the basis of political and/or regional consideration or based on references from political leaders or high profile influential persons. Nepotism and favoritism also prevail in terms of providing responsibility, awarding promotion or better position, increasing salary, etc. One respondent expressed her view that 'there may be some discrimination but I do not want to comment on it'. Another respondent said that 'Favoritism is the basis of anything'.

However, almost all the respondents said that the overall commitment level of the company is good towards non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all regardless of gender, religion, region and political identity. Although, there are no visible measures or internal mechanism to address the issue of discrimination but higher management is careful about it. Some respondents of HSBC pointed out that it has some internal mechanisms to ensure equality and non-discriminatory work environment, such as HSBC's internal survey, one-to-one meeting, and online review based on performance of the employees. However, one of the respondents expressed her feelings in the following way:

*“Favoritism is the basis of anything. The commitment of higher management is fair enough and sound but written commitment in terms of policy is not enough for a subjective management. There are some issues which meant to be confidential. Many things and options pop in our mind due to the confidential matters which may make interpersonal relation among colleagues doubtful and unfair. Those matters mainly dissatisfy how someone getting better position or really she/he gets or not since things are confidential. Clearly, I do not know how much my colleagues are paid undertaking similar responsibilities...”*

Another respondent said, ‘Commitment level is fair enough and sound but written commitment in terms of policy is not enough for a subjective management’.

## **Sexual Harassment at Workplace**

Sexual harassment at the workplace is a serious issue in both public and private sector organizations. It causes absenteeism, low productivity and high turnover. It also creates a hostile environment in workplace for employees and curtails their ability for better performance in job (DeCenzo & Robbins, 2010). Maintaining intimacy with higher officials is sometimes termed as ‘Corporate Culture’ which is often considered as the steps to reach the upper rung in the organization. If you want to step forward in your career path fast you have to maintain the (so called) corporate culture. Unfortunately, some female officials are found to compromise with this culture to get extraordinary favor from the higher authority. At the same time, the females who do not want to compromise either keep working ignoring the issue or leave the job silently. Very few of them raise their voice against sexual harassment. One female official expressed such opinion that ‘in our office most of the female staffs are somehow sexually assaulted by the higher officials but they are working silently, they will never raise voice or admit the issue. Unfortunately, some of them are compromising with the situation to get some extra benefits’.

**Table 6: Sexual harassment at workplace**

Evidence of harassment	% of respondents
Negative approach from male colleague/superior	13
Heard about other of such incidence	6
Extra marital relationship	10
No policy to prevent the harassment	56
Managements are active to address such problems	97

In this study, few incidences of sexual harassment are found. 19 percent of the respondents admitted that they confronted personally or heard someone else to be have faced negative approach from male colleagues or superiors. A few respondents said that sometimes female officials are sexually assaulted by the customers or clients of the office. Moreover, according to 10 percent of the respondents, there are also some stories of extra official relations of some female officials with higher management. This type of incidents often happen in order to get some extra privileges and undue favors for career progression. There are provisions for complaints and in many cases female officials complain to the higher authority but sometimes due to the various reasons they maintain silence and leave the job.

***Keep silent or quit the job!***

*Mr. Masud Rana from Dhanmondi, Dhaka wrote to the editor of The Financial Express in the following way: "A few days ago, I was talking to my female colleague who told me with a heavy heart that she had left a better job previously only because a senior colleague of her wanted to be too friendly with her and when she found no other way she decided to quit the job. She didn't make any complaint against that pervert colleague to the higher authority because he had good terms with the authority. So, she thought it would not bring any fruit and she quit the job. Women face greater difficulty than men in our society. But I think we must break the silence and only then we can expect some changes" (Rana, 2013).*

We do not feel comfortable to talk about the sexual harassment of women at the workplace, as it is considered a taboo and many women hide it fearing stigma. Sometimes women job-seekers are told in interviews that the female candidates are expected to render some special favours and the selection also depends on her response (Rana, 2013). Since the victim female officials are always found reluctant to share their bad experience of sexual harassment at workplaces because of several reasons, it is not readily available in literatures, newspaper reports or the media.

***Sexual harassment is a common occurrence!***

*“I’m so afraid to report him—I could lose my job and my family depends on my income to make ends meet.” This statement was made by a young woman working for an international organization in Bangladesh. Finally, she reported him and an investigation took place. She was threatened by his friends, as was her family. He was fired and she was forced to move out of the country to the organization’s headquarters. This situation was highly traumatic for her and she had a difficult time adjusting. This is a common occurrence in developing countries like Bangladesh. Many victims are afraid to come forward because of economic or societal pressures (Kay, n.d.).*

In some organizations, more acute cases are also found. Female officials are raped by their superiors. Many times such cases are not reported and no complaint or measures are usually taken by the victim and the organization due to social stigma. Moreover, the victim female officials are in a weak position and have not had mental strength to take necessary actions against the perpetrator.

### ***Rape cases in office!***

*Selina who was base line worker in the Field Office used to get harassed by her supervisor. The supervisor, on various occasions, used to touch her and brush his body against her. One day she got held up because of rain and had to wait in supervisor’s office room. The supervisor raped her. In another case a rape incident took place in Comilla Field Office where a trainee was raped by the supervisor. Both incidents took place in mid-1990s before the adoption of the sexual harassment policy but upon complaints both supervisors lost their jobs. However, it is to be noted that even after the adoption of the policy lots of rape cases have been reported (BNWLA, n.d.).*

Although, such kind of extreme level of sexual assaults is not found in the studied organizations, it is evident in daily newspapers and on internet regularly. It is very difficult to explore such embarrassing issues since the victims usually don’t want to share the unexpected incidences with the public.

## **Conclusions**

Many organizations including the corporate sector in Bangladesh are practicing gender equality in recruitment, training, compensation, promotion, etc. though they don’t have any written form of gender-equal policies. In this study, it is revealed that all the three organizations have a number of provisions, facilities and infrastructural arrangement, but there is no special arrangement or consideration for the care of female employees except maternity leave. Since the problems and needs of a female staff are different and complex, they should have some extra care and provisions in terms of policies, infrastructure and other facilities.

There are still many problems and difficulties female officials often face in terms of equal rights, privileges, verbal or non-verbal abuse, and both mental and physical harassment. Sexual harassment of female officials by male co-workers and supervisors has been a long standing menace in many organizations including the corporate sectors of Bangladesh. But the victims are often reluctant to disclose such information and do not share the bitter experience of their professional life due to socio-cultural factors and therefore the problem is not rectified. In this study, the researcher also found the employees interviewed reluctant to express their opinion freely due to the fear of losing their job. Specifically, they hesitated to share the issues related to sexual harassment and other forms of negative approaches from male colleagues and superiors. An in-depth study might be helpful in exploring the real scenario of CSOs regarding the gender-based working environment.

Women in Bangladesh have attracted the attention at home and abroad for better performance in education and high productivity in the readymade garments, micro-credit sectors, and also in corporate sectors. Thereby, they have come out of the typical poor, pregnant and powerless image. Over the last 3 decades, there is a substantive positive change in the legal status of women in many sectors as a result of government emphasis on ensuring gender equality and mainstreaming gender issues through various policies and strategies (Haque and Mohammad, 2013). Although, Bangladesh has made significant progress in women's employment due to better education and wider opportunities, it scored the lowest among the 16 Asia Pacific countries in terms of breaking the glass ceiling and securing top position in corporate ladder for women. For example, out of every 100 male business leaders, there are only 6 females in top positions (Saha, 2015). Several kinds of economic and social discrimination against women in Bangladesh are still issues of concern. They are continuously facing inequality in employment, income, access to resources, ownership of assets, access to power, domestic violence and physical or sexual harassment. Gender inequality influences the lives and well-being not only of women but also of the whole society in the end. Professor Amartya Sen says: "Gender inequality is a far-reaching societal impairment, not merely a special deprivation of women" (Khatun, 2009).

Although, women in corporate sector do not face blatant wage discrimination as in informal sectors, the office environment is still not congenial or friendly for them. As suggested by the respondents of the study, there is a need for gender sensitive policies, improving various facilities with special focus on women employees, and making the office environment comfortable and pleasant for them. For example: earlier leave from office during closures or shutdowns (Hartal) and

---

other crisis, flexible leave permission, separate room or sitting arrangement particularly for a pregnant woman, arrangement of child care, female common room because male can go outside anytime but a female can't, so females needs such a place where they can relax for some time, seniors should act as role model and make active contribution to make a women- friendly environment, tour or any other outside gathering can be arranged to ensure more cooperative and friendly relationship, more focus on team building with mixed gender. Finally, a female number is very much low in all the organizations so the number of female employees has to be increased in order to create a woman-friendly working environment.

It is assumed that Bangladesh has enough good policies, programs and commitments in paper regarding every issue but there is a big question over the implementation process. Moreover, the government policies have little influence and control on the corporate sector organizations. The State Minister, MoWCA told that the government has lack of control and is not able to create pressure on the private sector to compel them to provide required facilities to their officials. The ministry can only persuade and motivate them. And, there is no formal monitoring mechanism and the government cannot force the private companies to follow the law. In January 2012, Chairman of a parliamentary standing committee, expressed his view that it is not possible to ensure equal wage for male and female workers as the work capacity of males is higher than that of females. On the other hand, the Vice President of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) told that the MoWCA is ignoring women in the private sector where millions of women are working and their number is higher than that in the government offices. The Minister for Labour and Employment, told that the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 is 'really discriminatory' against women (Sathi, 2012). So, it would be a big challenge to ensure equal rights and congenial working environment for women at the workplace.

## References

Agomo, C.K. (1995), "Work Environment and Women: U.S. Practice", Annual Survey of International & Comparative Law, Vol. 2, Issue 1.

Akhter, S., Salahuddin, A.F.M., Iqbal, M., Malek, A.B.M.A. and Jahan, N. (2010), "Health and Occupational Safety for Female Workforce of Garment Industries in Bangladesh" Journal of Mechanical Engineering, Vol. ME 41, No. 1.

Annual Report (2012), Sandhani Life Insurance Company Ltd. pp. 09 & 19.

Avais, M.A., Wassan, A.A. and Shah, S. (2014), "A Case Study on Problems of Working Women in City Sukkur", *Academic Research International*, Vol. 5(2)

Balser, D.B.(2002), "Agency in organizational inequality: Organizational behavior and individual perceptions of discrimination", *Work and Occupations*, 29, 137-165.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) (2011), *Labour Force Survey 2010*, Statistics Division, Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) (n.d), Writ Petition No. 5916 of 2008, available at: [www.law.georgetown.edu/rossrights/chapters/BangladeshWomenLawyers.html](http://www.law.georgetown.edu/rossrights/chapters/BangladeshWomenLawyers.html), accessed on January 15, 2014,

Byron, R.K. (2016), "Women's economic footprints are growing", *Daily Star*, Marc 8, 2016. <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/womens-economic-footprints-are-growing-787909>

Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD) (2004), "Workplace Environment for Women: Issues of Harassment and Need for Interventions", CPD Dialogue Report no 65, March 2004.

Correll, S.J. and Benard, S.(2006), "Biased Estimators? Comparing Status and Statistical Theories of Gender Discrimination", *Social Psychology of the Workplace*, *Advances in Group Processes*, Volume 23, 89–116, Elsevier Ltd.

DeCenzo, D.A., & Robbins, S.P.(2010), *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management—10th ed.* USA, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Dowling, C.(2010), "A Hostile Work Environment for Women at the Top", available at: [www.womens-wellbeing-and-mental-health.com](http://www.womens-wellbeing-and-mental-health.com), accessed on December 5, 2013

Economic Census (2013), Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Foley, S, Hang-Yue, N. and Wong, A.(2005), "Perceptions of Discrimination and Justice Are there Gender Differences in Outcomes?" *Group & Organization Management*, Vol. 30, No. 4.

UCEP-Bangladesh (n.d), "Gender Policy, Underprivileged Children's Education Programs", available at [www.ucepb.org/report/Gender%20Policy.pdf](http://www.ucepb.org/report/Gender%20Policy.pdf), accessed on January 2, 2014

Gherardi, S.(1994), "The gender we think, the gender we do in our everyday organizational lives", *Human Relations*, 47, 6, 591-610.

---

- Gherardi, S.(1995),*Gender, Symbolism and Organizational Cultures*,London, Sage.
- Guttek, B.A., Cohen, A.G., and Tsui, A.(1996),“Reactions to perceived discrimination”,*Human Relations*, 49, 791-813.
- Haque, S.T.M.and Mohammad, S.N.(2013), “Administrative Culture and Incidence of Corruption in Bangladesh: A Search for the Potential Linkage”, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 36:13, 996-1006.
- Hearn, J.and Collinson, D.L.(1996),*Men as Managers, Managers as Men*, London, Sage.
- Hindstrom, H.(2011),“Bangladesh: Working Women Face Violence and Discrimination”. *Guardian*,21 November, viewed January 10, 2015,[www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)
- Hofstede, G.(1980),*Culture’s consequences: International differences in work-related values*,London: Sage.
- Hofstede, G.(2001),“Culture’s consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations”, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.
- Hofstede, G.&Hofstede G.J.(2010), *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival*,USA, McGraw Hill.
- Hojgaard, L.(1997),“Working fathers Ð caught in the web of the symbolic order of gender”,*Acta Sociologica*, 40, 245-261.
- Hojgaard, L.(2002),“Tracing Differentiation in Gendered Leadership: An Analysis of Differences in Gender Composition in Top Management in Business, Politics and the Civil Service”, *Gender, Work and Organization*,Vol. 9, No. 1.
- Hosen, A.(2015), “Work equal, wage not”, *Daily Star*, March 8,viewed on March 8, 2015, [www.thedailystar.net/work-equal-wage-not-68302](http://www.thedailystar.net/work-equal-wage-not-68302)
- HSBC Factsheet (n.d.), HSBC Bank Limited, available at: [www.hsbc.com.bd/1/PA\\_ES\\_Content\\_Mgmt/content/bangladesh60/attachments/factsheet.pdf](http://www.hsbc.com.bd/1/PA_ES_Content_Mgmt/content/bangladesh60/attachments/factsheet.pdf), accessed on December 15, 2015.
- HSBC website, “HSBC structure and network”, available at: [www.hsbc.com](http://www.hsbc.com), accessed on December 15, 2015.
- HSBC Holdings plc(2013),“The HSBC Group Our story, HSBC Group Knowledge Management”. Available at: [www.hsbc.com](http://www.hsbc.com)

ILO (2007), "Promoting Gender Equality at the Workplace", Workshop Report, ILO, Bangladesh, [www.ilo.org/dhaka/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS\\_107675/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_107675/lang-en/index.htm), accessed on December 16, 2015.

Jahan, M.(2007), "Gender Mainstreaming in Bangladesh Civil Service: Prospects and Constraints", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 1.

Jahan, M.(2012), "Women Workers in Bangladesh Garments Industry: A Study of the Work Environment", *International Journal of Social Science Tomorrow*, Vol. 1 No. 3.

Kay, S.(n.d), "Sexual Harassment at the Workplace", available at: [www.asktheinternettherapist.com/articles/sexual-harassment-at-workplace](http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/articles/sexual-harassment-at-workplace)

Khatun, F.(2009), "A Woman's Worth", *Forum*, a monthly publication of Daily Star, Volume 4 Issue 3, March.

Khatun, F., Rahman M., Bhattacharya, D., and Moazzem, K.G.(2008), "Gender and Trade Liberalization in Bangladesh: The Case of the Ready-Made Garments", CPD Monograph 2, available at: [www.cpd.org.bd](http://www.cpd.org.bd), accessed on January 14, 2014.

Mridula, S.M. and Khan K.A.(2009), "Working Conditions and Reproductive Health Status of Female Garments Workers of Bangladesh", study report, Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation (OSHE), Dhaka, available at: [www.amrc.org.hk/sites/default/files/Final%20Garments%20Study%20Report.pdf](http://www.amrc.org.hk/sites/default/files/Final%20Garments%20Study%20Report.pdf), accessed on January 25, 2014.

Ngo, H.Y., Tang, C. and Au, W.(2002), "Behavioural responses to employment discrimination: A study of Hong Kong workers", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13, 1206-1223.

Piotrkowski, C. S., Rapoport, R. N., and Rapoport, R. (1987), "Families and Work", Sussman, M.B. Steinmetz, S. K., *Handbook of Marriage and the Family*, New York, Plenum Press, 251-279.

Ralston, D. A. (1990), "How Flextime Eases Work/Family Tensions", *Personnel*, 67 (8), p.45-48

Rana, M.(2013), "Raise Voice against Sexual Harassment at Workplace", *Financial Express*, 16 February, 2013, available at: [www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/index.php?ref=MjBfMDJfMTZfMTNfMV83XzE2MDM2NA](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/index.php?ref=MjBfMDJfMTZfMTNfMV83XzE2MDM2NA), accessed on February 17, 2015.

---

---

Robson, C. (2002), *Real world research*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Blackwell.

Saha, S.(2015), “Bangladesh a bright example of women's employment: study”, *Daily Star*, 8 March, 2015, available at: [www.thedailystar.net/bangladesh-a-bright-example-of-womens-employment-study-68245](http://www.thedailystar.net/bangladesh-a-bright-example-of-womens-employment-study-68245), accessed on March 8, 2015.

Sathi, M.C.(2012), “Discrimination continues against working women”, *New Age*, 8 March, 2012, available at: [www.newagebd.com/detail.php?date=2012-03-08&nid=3245#.UT70hDcYrFw](http://www.newagebd.com/detail.php?date=2012-03-08&nid=3245#.UT70hDcYrFw), accessed on March 8, 2015.

Schmieding N.J.(1993),“Successful Superior-subordinate Relationships Require Mutual Management”,*Health Care Superv*,Jun; 11 (4): 52-63.

Siddiqi, D.M.(2003),“The Sexual Harassment of Industrial Workers: Strategies for Intervention in the Workplace and Beyond”, Paper 26, CPD & UNFPA, Dhaka, available at: [www.bdresearch.org/home/attachments/article/650/unfpa26.pdf](http://www.bdresearch.org/home/attachments/article/650/unfpa26.pdf), accessed on January 6, 2015.

SLIC Website,Sandhani Life Insurance Company Limited, available at:[www.sandhanilife.com](http://www.sandhanilife.com), accessed on December 15, 2013.

West, C.& Zimmerman, D.H.(1987),“Doing Gender”, *Gender and Society*, 1,2, 125-151.

Website of Rahimafrooz, Rahimafrooz Limited, available at: [www.rahimafrooz.com](http://www.rahimafrooz.com), accessed on December 15, 2015.

---