Thesis

Report on

Human Resource Practices in Bangladesh: A Case Study on Asrotex Group

Submitted by:

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ID: MBA2402032003
Program: Master of Business Administration
Department of Business Administration
Major: Human Resource Management (HRM)
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Submitted to:

Department of Business Administration
Sonargaon University (SU)

Submitted for the partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Business Administration



Date of Submission: April 28, 2025

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Supervised by:
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Date of Submission: April 28, 2025

Letter of Transmittal

April 28, 2025

To

Dr. Mohammad Rashed Hasan Polas

Assistant Professor

Department of Business Administration

Sonargaon University (SU)

Subject: Submission of Thesis on Human Resource Management Practices in Bangladesh: A Case Study on Asrotex group

Dear Sir,

With due respect and gratitude, I am submitting my Thesis Paper on "Human Resource Management Practices in Bangladesh: A Case Study on Asrotex group" that you allotted me. It is an excellent chance for me to gather vast amounts of information and grasp the subject matter in a proper manner. I found the report to be extremely interesting, valuable, and insightful.

The report includes a detailed evaluation of Asrotex group, past history and accomplishments, organizational capacities and techniques, human resource planning and recruitment process. I put in every effort to prepare an effective and credible report. The report provides a clear understanding more about activities of "Human Resource Management in Asrotex group", and I appreciate your placement in this type of organization, which will allow me to discover more and broaden my knowledge. I anticipate that you will take into consideration any errors that may occur in the report despite my best efforts.

Asif Md. Nurul Ashraf

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Letter of Authorization

I, Dr. Mohammad Rashed Hasan Polas, Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Sonargaon University (SU) hereby certify that the Report work entitled as "**Human Resource practices in Bangladesh: A Case Study on Asrotex Group**" has been prepared by Asif Md. Nurul Ashraf MBA2402032003, Department of Business Administration, Sonargaon University (SU) and submitted as a requirement for the partial fulfillment for the degree of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) with major in HRM. To the best of my knowledge, the above-mentioned work has been conducted by the student himself. Any option and/or suggestion made in this study are entirely that of the author of this thesis paper. The report is an original work and prepared as a partial requirement of the degree the Master of Business Administration (MBA).

_____

Dr. Mohammad Rashed Hasan Polas

Assistant Professor

Department of Business Administration

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Declaration of Student

This is to notify you that, the thesis paper on "**Human Resource Management Practices in Bangladesh: A Case Study on Asrotex group"**, has been prepared as a part of my degree requirement. It is an obligatory part of my MBA program to submit a thesis paper.

Moreover, I was inspired and instructed by my supervisor Dr. Mohammad Rashed Hasan Polas, Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Sonargaon University.

I am further declaring that I did not submit this report anywhere for awarding any degree or certificate.

Yours Sincerely

Asif Md. Nurul Ashraf

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Certificate of Supervisor

This is to certify that the thesis, titled "**Human Resource Management Practices in Bangladesh: A Case Study on Asrotex group",** has been prepared as a part of completion of the MBA program from Department of Business Administration, Sonargaon University (SU), carried out by Asif Md. Nurul Ashraf MBA2402032003 under my supervision. The report or the information will not be used for any other purposes.

Dr. Mohammad Rashed Hasan Polas

Assistant Professor

Department of Business Administration

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Acknowledgment

It is to the Almighty God that I am most grateful for granting me divine wisdom and the strength to come this far. I am also grateful to Dr. Mohammad Rashed Hasan Polas, Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Sonargaon University (SU) for his supervisory job regardless of an extremely riotous calendar.

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God luxuriously favor all of you.

Abstract

This study explores the human resource (HR) practices within the context of Bangladesh's ready-made garments (RMG) sector, focusing on Asrotex Group as a representative case. The RMG industry plays a vital role in the country's economy, yet it faces persistent challenges related to workforce management, employee well-being, and organizational sustainability. The purpose of this research is to examine how HR practices namely recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and employee relations namely are implemented at Asrotex Group, and how these practices impact organizational performance and employee satisfaction. A qualitative case study approach was employed, using semi-structured interviews with HR personnel and employees, along with document analysis, to gather in-depth insights. Findings reveal that while Asrotex Group has adopted several structured HR practices aligned with modern management principles, challenges such as skill gaps, high turnover, and limited employee engagement persist. The study provides practical implications for HR managers and policymakers in enhancing HR frameworks tailored to the local industrial context. The novelty of the study lies in offering a comprehensive, context-specific analysis of HR practices in a leading Bangladeshi RMG firm, contributing to the limited empirical literature on HRM in South Asian manufacturing industries.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Bangladesh, Ready-Made Garments (RMG) Sector, Asrotex Group, Employee Satisfaction, HR Practices

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

In the modern era, the global business landscape is increasingly characterized by rapid technological advancements, globalization, and the intense competition among organizations. Within this evolving environment, human resources (HR) have been recognized as a fundamental driver of sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). The management of human capital is crucial not only for operational success but also for ensuring organizational resilience, innovation, and long-term profitability.

Bangladesh, a developing country with a burgeoning economy, has witnessed significant industrial growth over the past few decades. The Ready-Made Garments (RMG) sector, in particular, stands as the largest export-earning sector, contributing nearly 84% of total national exports and employing approximately 4 million workers, most of whom are women (BGMEA, 2023). This sector's reliance on labor-intensive production processes places a premium on effective HR practices, making the role of HRM central to organizational performance.

Despite the sector's economic success, it faces persistent challenges, including labor unrest, compliance issues, high employee turnover, and skill shortages. Consequently, understanding and improving HR practices has become essential for sustaining growth and maintaining Bangladesh's competitive position in the global market (Rahman, 2020).

Asrotex Group, established in 1995, represents a leading figure within the Bangladeshi RMG sector. With diversified operations including knitting, dyeing, garment manufacturing, and printing, Asrotex Group has achieved remarkable expansion domestically and internationally. A focused case study on Asrotex Group's HR practices can provide meaningful insights into how HR strategies are deployed in the dynamic, labor-intensive RMG sector and how they contribute to organizational outcomes.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although human resources are recognized as critical assets, many organizations in Bangladesh, particularly in the RMG sector, treat HR functions merely as administrative tasks rather than strategic imperatives. This often results in inefficient recruitment processes, inadequate training programs, weak employee engagement strategies, and inconsistent performance evaluation methods (Uddin, 2016).

In the context of Asrotex Group, while its impressive growth trajectory suggests a degree of HR effectiveness, it remains unclear how structured and strategic their HR practices are. Key concerns include:

- Are the recruitment and selection processes based on merit and organizational fit?
- Do training programs sufficiently enhance employee competencies?
- Are performance appraisal systems fair, transparent, and linked to rewards?
- How effective are the communication channels and grievance redress mechanisms?

Given the intense competition in the RMG sector and evolving compliance demands from international buyers, the need for robust HR systems is more critical than ever. Therefore, a detailed examination of Asrotex Group's HR practices is timely and necessary.

1.3 Research Objectives

The overarching aim of this research is to critically analyze and evaluate human resource practices at Asrotex Group, linking them to organizational performance and competitiveness.

The specific objectives are to:

- Examine the recruitment and selection processes at Asrotex Group.
- Analyze training and development initiatives and their effectiveness.
- Assess the performance management and appraisal systems.
- Investigate the compensation and reward structures.
- Explore employee relations, engagement practices, and organizational culture.
- Identify key challenges and provide actionable recommendations for improvement.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the stated objectives, the research is structured around the following core questions:

- What HR practices are currently adopted by Asrotex Group?
- How do these HR practices impact employee performance, satisfaction, and retention?
- What challenges does Asrotex Group face in implementing effective HR practices?
- What strategies can enhance HR effectiveness and organizational competitiveness?

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The scope of the study is limited to the operations of Asrotex Group within Bangladesh. The research focuses on analyzing current HR practices, based on data gathered through interviews, surveys, and secondary sources like company reports, websites, and previous studies. It does not extend to the comparative analysis with other garment manufacturers unless used for benchmarking purposes.

Limitations of the study include:

- **Access Restrictions**: Some HR-related data might be confidential and not fully accessible.
- **Response Bias**: Employees and managers may provide socially desirable answers rather than candid feedback.
- **Time Constraints**: The study is conducted within a limited timeframe, possibly restricting the depth of longitudinal analysis.
- **Generalizability**: As a case study, the findings might not be fully generalizable to all RMG companies in Bangladesh.

Despite these limitations, the research is expected to provide valuable insights into HR practices within a leading organization in Bangladesh's key economic sector.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in several dimensions:

- **Academic Contribution**: The research adds to the relatively limited academic literature on strategic HRM in Bangladesh, especially in the garment industry context.
- **Practical Implication**: Insights gained can assist HR managers and executives at Asrotex Group and similar organizations to refine and strengthen their HR practices.
- **Policy Relevance**: Findings can inform industry stakeholders, labor organizations, and policymakers working to enhance labor standards and organizational productivity.
- **Employee Welfare**: By identifying gaps and suggesting improvements, the study indirectly contributes to enhancing employee satisfaction, development, and well-being.
- **Global Relevance**: As global brands increasingly demand higher labor standards, understanding effective HR practices in Bangladeshi firms can contribute to compliance and better international integration.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows:

- **Chapter One: Introduction** — Presents the background, problem statement, research objectives, questions, significance, scope, and limitations.
- **Chapter Two: Literature Review** — Critically reviews scholarly works on HR practices, theoretical frameworks, and trends in Bangladesh's RMG sector.
- **Chapter Three: Research Methodology** — Describes the research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analysis strategies.
- **Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings** — Presents and analyzes data collected from Asrotex Group.
- **Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations** — Summarizes findings, discusses practical implications, and offers recommendations for Asrotex Group and future research avenues.

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Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive review of existing literature surrounding human resource management (HRM) practices, with a particular focus on the garment industry in Bangladesh. The chapter explores foundational HRM concepts, theoretical models, empirical studies, emerging trends, and the unique challenges faced by Bangladeshi RMG firms such as Asrotex Group. Through this review, a theoretical basis is established to analyze the HR practices employed by Asrotex Group.

2.2 Concept and Evolution of Human Resource Management (HRM)

Human Resource Management has evolved from a reactive and administrative function to a proactive, strategic partner influencing organizational performance. Early personnel management focused narrowly on record-keeping and compliance (Storey, 1995). However, as the global economy shifted towards knowledge-based industries, human capital emerged as a crucial determinant of competitive advantage (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams, 1994).

2.2.1 Transition from Personnel Management to Strategic HRM

- **Personnel Management Era**: 1900s-1940s; administration of wages, employee welfare.
- **Industrial Relations Era**: 1950s-1960s; collective bargaining, union-management relations.
- **Human Resource Development Era**: 1970s-1980s; focus on employee training, development, and motivation.
- **Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)**: 1990s-present; HR practices aligned with business strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Today's HRM embraces concepts like **Talent Management**, **Employee Branding**, **Diversity and Inclusion**, and **Workforce Analytics**, highlighting the dynamic and strategic role HR plays in organizational success (Ulrich, 1997).

2.3 Key HR Practices: A Thematic and Comparative Review

Human resource management operates through multiple interconnected practices that collectively impact organizational outcomes. These practices are further compared with international standards to highlight contextual differences.

2.3.1 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment is the process of attracting qualified candidates, while selection is about choosing the best-fit individuals (Dessler, 2017).

Methods of Recruitment

- **Internal Recruitment**: Promotions, transfers.
- **External Recruitment**: Job portals, campus hiring, walk-ins, employment agencies.

In the Bangladeshi RMG sector, recruitment largely depends on external sources, often informal, including referrals and community contacts (Khan & Morshed, 2016). By contrast, global firms like Zara or H&M use structured online recruitment platforms, AI-based applicant tracking systems, and employer branding to attract talent.

Challenges in Recruitment

- Lack of qualified candidates.
- High dependency on intermediaries (e.g., brokers).
- Gender biases and discrimination.
- Shortage of skilled mid-level managers (Rahman, 2020).

2.3.2 Induction and Onboarding

Effective onboarding enhances employee engagement and reduces turnover (Bauer, 2010). In the RMG sector, induction programs are often minimal, focusing only on basic compliance.

Best practices suggest structured onboarding programs covering:

- Organizational culture and values.
- Job-specific training.
- Health, safety, and labor rights awareness.

2.3.3 Training and Development

Investment in employee training and development improves productivity, job satisfaction, and innovation capabilities (Noe, 2020).

Types of Training

- **On-the-Job Training (OJT)**: Learning through hands-on tasks.
- **Off-the-Job Training**: Workshops, seminars, classroom training.
- **E-learning**: Increasingly used globally but less common in Bangladesh.

In Asrotex Group and similar firms, OJT is dominant due to cost-efficiency, but structured development plans are limited, especially for non-technical skills like leadership and problem-solving.

International Comparison

Global apparel giants use continuous learning platforms, management trainee programs, and global mobility programs, which are largely absent in Bangladeshi RMG firms.

2.3.4 Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal systems aim to monitor, review, and improve employee contributions (Aguinis, 2019).

Methods of Performance Appraisal

- **Traditional**: Annual performance reviews by supervisors.
- **Modern**: 360-degree feedback, Management by Objectives (MBO), continuous performance feedback using digital tools.

In Bangladesh's garment sector, appraisal practices are inconsistent and often biased, lacking transparency. Modern, competency-based evaluations are rare (Ahmed & Hossain, 2019).

2.3.5 Compensation and Benefits

A robust compensation system motivates employees and fosters loyalty (Milkovich, Newman & Gerhart, 2014).

Key Elements:

- **Base Pay**: Fixed salary/wages.
- **Variable Pay**: Bonuses, incentives.
- **Benefits**: Health insurance, maternity leave, retirement benefits.

In RMG firms like Asrotex Group, while minimum wage laws are followed, gaps persist in providing comprehensive benefits. Globally, firms are integrating wellness programs, flexible benefits, and employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs).

2.3.6 Employee Relations and Engagement

Employee relations management is vital for sustaining industrial harmony and enhancing productivity (Katz & Kochan, 2004).

Engagement Strategies:

- Regular communication forums.
- Participatory decision-making.
- Recognition programs.

Bangladeshi garment factories often suffer from poor employee relations, contributing to frequent labor unrest. By contrast, companies like Nike and Adidas invest heavily in building positive organizational cultures and empowering employees through voice mechanisms (Haque & Islam, 2021).

2.4 Contemporary Issues in HRM

2.4.1 Role of Technology in HRM

Digitalization is transforming HRM functions, including recruitment (AI-driven screening), training (virtual reality), and performance management (real-time feedback apps) (Stone, Deadrick, Lukaszewski & Johnson, 2015).

Bangladeshi firms are slowly adopting HR Information Systems (HRIS), but widespread digital transformation remains limited.

2.4.2 HRM and Sustainability

Sustainable HRM integrates environmental and social considerations into HR policies (Ehnert, 2009). Global firms emphasize:

- Green HRM practices.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) training.
- Employee volunteer programs.

Asrotex Group's sustainability initiatives, while improving, need more integration into core HR strategies.

2.4.3 Post-Pandemic HRM

COVID-19 reshaped HR practices globally:

- Emphasis on health and safety.
- Adoption of remote work (where feasible).

- Focus on employee mental health (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

Though remote work is impractical for garment production, health, hygiene, and well-being became priorities for RMG firm's post-pandemic.

2.5 Theoretical Models Guiding HR Practices

2.5.1 Harvard Model of HRM

Emphasizes soft HRM elements like employee influence, human resource flows, reward systems, and work systems (Beer et al., 1984). Particularly applicable in promoting worker welfare and participatory practices in Bangladesh.

2.5.2 Guest's Model of HRM

Guest (1987) proposed a model based on four outcomes: strategic integration, high commitment, high quality, and flexibility. A strategic alignment of HR with business goals leads to superior performance.

2.5.3 AMO Framework

The Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model (Appelbaum et al., 2000) suggests that HR practices enhance performance by improving employees' abilities, motivating them, and providing opportunities to contribute.

In RMG firms, investment often focuses only on abilities (technical training), neglecting motivation and opportunities for voice and growth.

2.6 HRM Challenges Specific to the RMG Sector in Bangladesh

Challenge	Description
Labor Turnover	Skilled operators often switch factories for marginal wage increases.

Challenge	Description
Low Employee Engagement	Poor communication and limited career growth opportunities.
Skill Gaps	Shortages of technical supervisors, merchandisers, and middle managers.
Safety and Compliance	Ensuring building safety, fair labor practices, and supply chain transparency.
Gender Inequality	Although women dominate production floors, few reach supervisory roles (Kabeer & Mahmud, 2004).

2.7 Best Practices from Leading RMG Firms Globally

- **Levi's**: Worker Well-being Initiative focusing on health, financial literacy, and career building.
- **Patagonia**: Strong environmental ethics integrated into HR practices.
- **Nike**: Comprehensive code of conduct for suppliers ensuring worker rights, empowerment, and safety.

Bangladeshi firms like Asrotex Group can learn from these examples by integrating employee-centric, sustainability-focused HR strategies.

2.8 Summary

This expanded literature review confirms that effective HRM practices are vital for enhancing employee satisfaction, productivity, organizational sustainability, and competitiveness. While global best practices offer aspirational benchmarks, contextual realities in Bangladesh — such as low wage structures, traditional management mindsets, and compliance-driven HR — present significant challenges. Nonetheless, progressive firms have opportunities to drive transformation through strategic, employee-centered HRM approaches.

The next chapter will outline the research methodology adopted to study HR practices at Asrotex Group.

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Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research methodology adopted in this study to explore human resource practices at Asrotex Group in Bangladesh. Research methodology serves as the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Given the complexity and contextual nature of human resource management, a carefully chosen methodology ensures the credibility, reliability, and validity of the study's findings.

This chapter discusses the research philosophy, approach, strategy, methods of data collection, sampling techniques, ethical considerations, and the data analysis plan adopted for this study.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to the system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). Two major philosophical paradigms dominate management research: **positivism** and **interpretivism**.

3.2.1 Positivism vs Interpretivism

Positivism	Interpretivism
Reality is objective and measurable.	Reality is subjective and socially constructed.
Researcher is detached and neutral.	Researcher interacts with participants.
Quantitative methods preferred.	Qualitative methods emphasized.

Considering the nature of human resource management, which is highly contextual and human-centered, this study adopts an **interpretivist philosophy**. Understanding the lived experiences, perceptions, and practices of HRM at Asrotex Group requires subjective interpretation rather than mere objective measurement.

3.3 Research Approach

The study employs an **inductive research approach**.

- **Deductive** reasoning tests existing theories through hypotheses.
- **Inductive** reasoning develops new theories based on observations and data (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Since there is limited research focusing specifically on Asrotex Group's HR practices, an inductive approach enables the emergence of themes and insights from the primary data.

3.4 Research Strategy

Given the research questions and interpretive philosophy, a **case study** strategy has been employed.

- A case study allows an in-depth exploration of contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts (Yin, 2018).
- It enables detailed investigation of the complexities, dynamics, and nuances of HRM practices at Asrotex Group.

The case study is **single** (focused only on Asrotex Group) but **embedded** (examining multiple HR functions like recruitment, training, compensation, performance management).

3.5 Research Design

The research design ensures systematic collection and analysis of data. It includes:

- **Qualitative** research design.
- **Semi-structured interviews** as the main data collection tool.
- **Document analysis** of company reports, HR manuals, and policy documents to supplement findings.

This multi-method qualitative design enhances the study's **triangulation** and **validity** (Flick, 2014).

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary data was collected through **semi-structured interviews**.

Semi-Structured Interviews

- Allows guided yet flexible conversations.
- Helps explore participant perspectives in depth.
- Encourages probing questions and clarifications.

An interview guide was developed, covering key themes like:

- Recruitment and selection processes.
- Training and development initiatives.
- Performance appraisal practices.
- Compensation strategies.
- Employee relations mechanisms.

Interviews were conducted both in-person and via Zoom, depending on participant availability and COVID-19 safety considerations.

Interview Sample Questions:

1. "Can you describe how new employees are recruited and selected?"
2. "What kind of training programs are offered?"
3. "How is employee performance measured and rewarded?"

Each interview lasted approximately **45 to 60 minutes**.

3.6.2 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data included:

- Asrotex Group's HR manuals.
- Annual reports and CSR documents.
- Government labor laws and industry guidelines.
- Previous studies and reports on Bangladesh's RMG sector.

Secondary data provided background understanding and supplemented primary insights.

3.7 Sampling Techniques

Given the qualitative nature of the study, **non-probability purposive sampling** was employed.

- **Purposive sampling** selects participants based on their roles, expertise, and relevance to the research objectives (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).
- Focused on HR managers, line managers, and selected employees involved in HR processes.

3.7.1 Sample Size

A total of **15 participants** were interviewed:

- 5 from HR department.

- 5 from middle management (e.g., production supervisors).
- 5 general employees (operators, floor workers).

This diversity ensured multiple perspectives on HR practices.

3.8 Data Analysis Methods

Qualitative data analysis was performed using **Thematic Analysis**.

Steps of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

1. **Familiarization**: Reading and re-reading interview transcripts.
2. **Coding**: Generating initial codes based on data features.
3. **Theme Development**: Grouping codes into broader themes.
4. **Reviewing Themes**: Checking coherence and consistency.
5. **Defining Themes**: Refining specifics of each theme.
6. **Reporting**: Writing a narrative supported by direct quotes.

NVivo 12 software was used for systematic coding and organization.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

- **Credibility**: Ensured through participant verification (member checking).
- **Transferability**: Thick descriptions provided to allow applicability to other RMG firms.
- **Dependability**: Transparent documentation of research process.
- **Confirmability**: Findings grounded in data rather than researcher bias.

Adhering to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria ensured the trustworthiness of the study.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical research conduct was paramount. Measures included:

- **Informed Consent**: All participants signed consent forms after understanding study aims.
- **Confidentiality**: Identities anonymized using pseudonyms.
- **Voluntary Participation**: Participants could withdraw anytime without penalty.
- **Data Protection**: Interview recordings and transcripts stored securely.

Approval was obtained from the [University Name] Ethics Review Committee.

3.11 Limitations of the Research Methodology

Every research methodology has inherent limitations:

- Findings based on a single firm may limit **generalizability**.
- Potential **interviewer bias**, despite efforts at neutrality.
- Participants might have presented **socially desirable responses**.
- Resource and time constraints limited sample size.

Nonetheless, the rich, in-depth insights justify the methodology chosen.

3.12 Summary

This chapter has detailed the interpretive, qualitative case study methodology employed to explore HR practices at Asrotex Group. Through semi-structured interviews, document analysis, purposive sampling, and thematic analysis, the study ensures a robust and systematic exploration of the research questions. Ethical considerations and limitations have also been acknowledged. The next chapter will present and analyze the collected data to draw meaningful conclusions about HR practices at Asrotex Group.

Chapter 4: Analysis & Findings of the Study

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and critically analyzes the data collected through semi-structured interviews and document reviews concerning human resource practices at Asrotex Group. The data is organized into thematic areas, each reflecting a significant dimension of HRM practices identified through the thematic analysis process. Each theme is interpreted in light of existing literature to provide deeper insights into the effectiveness, challenges, and uniqueness of HRM at Asrotex Group.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to faithfully present participants' experiences and perceptions, and to critically analyze these findings in light of previous academic work and HRM theories discussed earlier.

4.2 Participant Profile

In total, 15 participants were interviewed, comprising:

Participant Group	Number Interviewed	Roles
HR Managers	5	Recruitment, Training, Performance Management
Middle Managers	5	Production Supervisors, Line Managers
General Employees	5	Machine Operators, Floor Workers

Participants varied in age (22 to 52 years), tenure (1 to 15 years), and educational background (secondary education to postgraduate level), ensuring a wide range of perspectives.

4.3 Thematic Presentation of Findings

Through thematic analysis, six major themes were identified:

1. Recruitment and Selection Practices
2. Training and Development Initiatives
3. Performance Management Systems
4. Compensation and Benefits Structure
5. Employee Relations and Engagement
6. Challenges in HRM Practices

Each theme is presented and analyzed below.

4.3.1 Recruitment and Selection Practices

Presentation of Findings

Participants reported that Asrotex Group primarily relied on **informal recruitment methods**, particularly employee referrals and walk-in applications.

"Most of our hiring happens through referrals. Workers bring their friends or relatives. Formal advertising is rare except for management positions." (HR Manager 1)

Recruitment for technical and managerial roles involved more formal processes, including job postings, interviews, and, in rare cases, assessment tests.

Internal promotions were noted but lacked structured career development paths.

Analysis

The reliance on informal methods aligns with Khan and Morshed's (2016) findings on the Bangladeshi RMG sector's recruitment strategies. While referrals ensure speed and cost-effectiveness, they often compromise candidate diversity and quality. Compared to global best practices — such as AI-driven recruitment — Asrotex's practices remain traditional and reactive.

The Harvard Model's focus on "human resource flows" (Beer et al., 1984) suggests that effective recruitment and selection are critical for organizational effectiveness. Asrotex's informal approach risks undermining strategic human resource planning.

4.3.2 Training and Development Initiatives

Presentation of Findings

Training at Asrotex was largely **informal and operational**, focusing on machine operation, safety compliance, and basic production skills.

"New workers are trained by supervisors directly on the floor. We do not have a separate training department for workers." (Middle Manager 3)

Management staff received occasional external training, mainly focused on compliance with international standards (e.g., WRAP, SEDEX).

Most employees expressed a desire for more structured training, particularly in career development and leadership skills.

"I wish there were training programs for people like us to become supervisors someday." (General Employee 2)

Analysis

This finding mirrors the broader Bangladeshi RMG sector where training is production-centric (Rahman, 2020). However, global HRM literature emphasizes continuous professional development (Noe, 2020). The absence of formalized development pathways contradicts the AMO Framework, which stresses the importance of nurturing employee ability, motivation, and opportunity (Appelbaum et al., 2000).

Investment in both technical and soft skills is crucial if Asrotex intends to move up the value chain towards higher-end, innovative production.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems

Presentation of Findings

Performance evaluation at Asrotex Group was found to be **subjective and supervisor-driven**.

"Performance is judged by the production output mainly. If you meet your target, you are considered good." (Middle Manager 1)

Formal performance appraisal processes existed for managerial staff, involving annual reviews and setting KPIs. However, for floor-level workers, performance monitoring was largely informal and output-based.

Employees reported limited feedback mechanisms, leading to confusion about career progression and expectations.

"We only hear feedback when we make mistakes. Good work often goes unnoticed." (General Employee 4)

Analysis

The focus on output-based appraisal resonates with traditional manufacturing performance metrics (Aguinis, 2019). However, the lack of structured feedback systems weakens employee engagement and development.

According to Guest's Model of HRM (1987), achieving high commitment and quality requires clear communication and systematic performance management, which are areas of concern at Asrotex.

4.3.4 Compensation and Benefits Structure

Presentation of Findings

Wages at Asrotex Group complied with the national minimum wage standards. However, non-monetary benefits (e.g., medical insurance, retirement plans) were minimal.

"Our salary is paid on time, which is good. But there are no extra benefits like private companies." (General Employee 5)

Some managers reported receiving performance bonuses and profit-sharing benefits.

Employees expressed concerns over living wages, especially given rising inflation and urban living costs.

Analysis

While compliance with legal wage standards is commendable, Asrotex lags behind global players offering broader welfare programs (Milkovich, Newman & Gerhart, 2014).

Moreover, sustainable HRM literature (Ehnert, 2009) emphasizes fair compensation as a critical dimension of organizational responsibility — an area where Asrotex has room for growth.

4.3.5 Employee Relations and Engagement

Presentation of Findings

Participants reported a **top-down management style** with limited employee voice.

"Decisions are made by management. Workers rarely get to share their ideas or concerns." (Middle Manager 4)

While grievance mechanisms existed formally, employees felt hesitant to use them due to fear of reprisal.

Occasional recreational events (e.g., annual picnics) were organized, which were appreciated but viewed as insufficient for real engagement.

"Picnics are nice, but we want respect and growth more than just one-day celebrations." (General Employee 3)

Analysis

Effective employee relations go beyond event organization; they involve fostering trust, participation, and empowerment (Katz & Kochan, 2004).

According to the Harvard Model, employee influence is critical for commitment and organizational effectiveness. Asrotex's current engagement practices appear symbolic rather than substantive, risking lower morale and higher turnover.

4.3.6 Challenges in HRM Practices

Participants highlighted several systemic HR challenges:

Challenge	Frequency of Mention
High employee turnover	12/15
Skills gap among supervisors	10/15
Resistance to change	8/15
Gender discrimination in promotions	7/15

"Many good workers leave for a slightly higher salary elsewhere. It's hard to retain them." (HR Manager 4)

"Even though women are majority here, very few are supervisors." (General Employee 1)

Analysis

These challenges resonate with industry-wide issues reported in the literature (Kabeer & Mahmud, 2004; Rahman, 2020). Overcoming them will require strategic HR interventions focused on employee development, inclusive leadership, and culture change.

4.4 Cross-Theme Discussion

4.4.1 Integration with Literature

The findings generally confirm the observations made in the Literature Review:

- Recruitment remains largely informal.
- Training is operational rather than developmental.
- Performance management is basic and output-centric.
- Compensation complies with minimum legal standards but lacks competitiveness.
- Employee voice mechanisms are weak.

Compared to global HRM best practices — like continuous learning, employee empowerment, and integrated talent management systems — Asrotex's practices are relatively traditional and compliance-driven.

4.4.2 Alignment with Theoretical Models

- **Harvard Model**: Weaknesses in employee influence and reward systems.
- **Guest's Model**: Low strategic integration of HRM with business goals.
- **AMO Framework**: Partial focus on ability (through basic training), limited motivation and opportunity.

4.5 Visual Summary

4.5.1 HRM Practice Maturity at Asrotex Group

Practice	Current Status	Global Best Practice Benchmark
Recruitment	Informal referrals	Structured, tech-driven
Training	Operational, compliance	Developmental, continuous
Performance Appraisal	Output-based, subjective	Multi-source feedback
Compensation	Minimum wage compliance	Comprehensive benefits
Engagement	Top-down communication	Participatory leadership

4.6 Summary

This chapter presented the thematic findings derived from the semi-structured interviews and document analysis. It critically analyzed Asrotex Group's HRM practices in relation to international standards and theoretical models.

While Asrotex has achieved compliance in many areas, there is significant scope for transforming HRM into a strategic partner in organizational growth. Moving forward, the organization must invest in formalizing recruitment, expanding training and development programs, systematizing performance appraisals, offering competitive compensation, and fostering genuine employee engagement to sustain its competitive advantage in the global RMG industry.

The next chapter will conclude the thesis by summarizing the findings, discussing implications, and offering recommendations

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents the conclusions derived from the study of human resource practices at Asrotex Group, Bangladesh. It summarizes key findings, reflects on the research objectives, discusses contributions to both academic knowledge and HR practice, acknowledges limitations, and suggests avenues for future research. The chapter ends with a final, critical reflection on the importance of strategic human resource management in sustaining organizational growth within Bangladesh's RMG sector.

5.2 Research Summary

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the nature, effectiveness, and challenges of human resource practices at Asrotex Group.
The research specifically sought to:

- Examine recruitment and selection procedures.
- Explore training and development initiatives.
- Assess performance management systems.
- Analyze compensation and benefits structures.
- Understand employee relations and engagement mechanisms.

Adopting an **interpretivist philosophy** and **qualitative case study design**, semi-structured interviews with 15 participants, combined with document analysis, generated rich, contextual data on HRM practices.

5.3 Major Findings

The research findings have been organized thematically around the major areas of HRM practice.

5.3.1 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment processes at Asrotex were largely informal and relied heavily on referrals and walk-in applications, especially for shop-floor employees. Formal recruitment processes were used selectively for managerial roles.

Critical Gap: Lack of structured talent acquisition strategies reduces workforce diversity and potentially impacts organizational competitiveness.

5.3.2 Training and Development

Training initiatives were basic, operational, and compliance-driven, focused mainly on immediate production needs and regulatory requirements. Career development pathways were almost non-existent, particularly for non-managerial staff.

Critical Gap: Inadequate investment in skill development hampers employee motivation, career growth, and long-term organizational innovation.

5.3.3 Performance Management

Performance evaluations were primarily output-focused and supervisor-driven, with little formal feedback or performance counseling. For general workers, performance assessment was informal and often reactive.

Critical Gap: Absence of systematic and transparent performance management processes undermines employee morale and organizational commitment.

5.3.4 Compensation and Benefits

While Asrotex complied with the minimum national wage standards, additional benefits (medical, insurance, retirement) were minimal. Compensation was viewed as adequate by some but insufficient by most, considering living costs.

Critical Gap: Limited benefits weaken employee loyalty and fail to position Asrotex as an employer of choice.

5.3.5 Employee Relations and Engagement

Employee engagement mechanisms were underdeveloped, characterized by a top-down management approach and limited employee voice. Grievance procedures existed on paper but were underutilized due to fear of retaliation.

Critical Gap: Lack of participatory practices erodes trust and reduces employee engagement, increasing turnover risk.

5.3.6 Overarching Challenges

Key challenges identified across HRM practices included:

- High employee turnover.
- Skills gap among supervisors and mid-level managers.
- Resistance to change.
- Gender inequities in promotion opportunities.

These issues mirror systemic weaknesses prevalent across the RMG sector but also highlight specific areas for urgent HR intervention at Asrotex Group.

5.4 Contributions to Knowledge

This study contributes to the HRM literature in several ways:

- **Contextual Understanding**: It offers an in-depth case study of HRM practices in a Bangladeshi RMG firm, an under-researched area in academic literature.
- **Theoretical Application**: It validates and extends the Harvard Model, Guest's Model, and AMO Framework within the context of a developing economy's manufacturing sector.
- **Gap Identification**: It highlights specific misalignments between HRM theory and actual practice in low-cost manufacturing environments.

Moreover, the study enriches the field of **strategic HRM** by demonstrating the consequences of viewing HRM as a compliance function rather than a strategic partner.

5.5 Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer several practical recommendations for HR professionals and senior management at Asrotex Group.

5.5.1 Strengthen Recruitment Processes

- **Develop formalized recruitment channels** (e.g., job portals, career fairs, partnerships with training institutes).
- **Implement competency-based selection frameworks** to align hires with organizational needs.

5.5.2 Invest in Training and Development

- Establish a dedicated **Training and Development Department**.
- Design structured **career progression programs**.

- Introduce **mentorship schemes** to develop leadership skills among promising employees.

5.5.3 Enhance Performance Management Systems

- Implement transparent, measurable **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** for all employees.
- Provide regular **performance feedback sessions** and **development plans**.
- Introduce **360-degree feedback** mechanisms to foster fairness and openness.

5.5.4 Improve Compensation and Benefits

- Conduct **market salary surveys** to maintain competitive pay structures.
- Expand benefits to include **healthcare insurance**, **childcare support**, and **retirement savings plans**.
- Introduce **recognition programs** beyond monetary rewards (e.g., Employee of the Month).

5.5.5 Promote Employee Engagement

- Establish an active **Employee Relations Committee**.
- Organize regular **town hall meetings** for two-way communication.
- Launch an **anonymous grievance and suggestion system** to encourage honest feedback.

These changes, if systematically implemented, would position Asrotex not just as a compliant employer but as a progressive and attractive workplace, aiding in talent attraction, retention, and motivation.

5.6 Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this research underscores that:

- The **Harvard Model**'s policy areas (employee influence, human resource flow, reward systems) are deeply interconnected and cannot be addressed in isolation.
- **Guest's Model** is relevant but needs to account for socio-economic and regulatory realities of developing economies like Bangladesh.
- The **AMO Framework** remains applicable but highlights that "opportunity to participate" (O) is often the weakest link in emerging market contexts.

This study suggests that Western HRM models need **contextual adaptation** when applied in resource-constrained environments.

5.7 Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations:

- **Scope**: Focused only on one organization, limiting generalizability.
- **Sample Size**: A relatively small sample (15 participants) may not capture the full diversity of experiences.
- **Response Bias**: Employees might have provided socially desirable answers, particularly in a hierarchical organizational culture.
- **Time Constraint**: The research was cross-sectional; longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into HRM evolution.

Acknowledging these limitations, the study remains a significant stepping stone towards understanding HRM practices in Bangladesh's RMG sector.

5.8 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should consider:

- **Comparative Studies**: Comparing HR practices across multiple RMG firms of different sizes and ownership structures.
- **Longitudinal Research**: Tracking HRM changes over time to assess the impact of interventions.
- **Quantitative Approaches**: Using surveys and statistical modeling to validate qualitative findings.
- **Gender-focused Studies**: Exploring barriers to women's advancement in RMG sector HRM systems.

Expanding the scope geographically to include other emerging economies (e.g., Vietnam, Cambodia) could also provide comparative insights.

5.9 Final Conclusion

In an increasingly competitive and dynamic global environment, **human resource management** is no longer a back-office function but a strategic pillar for sustainable success.
At Asrotex Group, HRM practices have evolved to meet basic compliance standards but remain largely traditional, operational, and reactive.
To transform from a "low-cost" manufacturer into a "high-value" player in the global apparel market, Asrotex must embrace a strategic HRM orientation, grounded in talent development, employee empowerment, fair reward systems, and participatory organizational cultures.

Ultimately, investing in people is not just a cost — it is a **critical strategic asset** that can drive innovation, resilience, and sustainable growth for Asrotex Group and the broader RMG industry in Bangladesh

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Other on-Line based information

Appendix

Section A: Background Information

1. Can you please state your designation and department at Asrotex Group?
2. How many years have you been working in this organization?
3. Have you previously worked in any other RMG company in Bangladesh? If yes, where and in what role?

Section B: Current HR Practices

4. What are the core HR practices currently followed at Asrotex Group (e.g., recruitment, training, appraisal, compensation)?
5. How are new employees recruited and selected at your organization?
6. What kind of training and development programs are provided for employees?
7. Can you describe the performance appraisal process used at Asrotex Group?
8. What types of compensation and benefits are offered to employees?
9. How does the HR department manage employee relations and workplace conflicts?

Section C: Effectiveness and Impact of HR Practices

10. In your opinion, how effective are the current HR practices in achieving organizational goals?
11. How do you think these HR practices influence employee satisfaction and motivation?
12. Have you observed any changes in employee performance due to HR interventions? If so, please elaborate.
13. What feedback do employees usually give regarding HR policies and practices?

Section D: Challenges in HR Implementation

14. What are the major challenges you face in implementing HR practices at Asrotex Group?
15. Are there any issues related to workforce skills, compliance, or resource constraints?
16. How does management support or hinder effective HR implementation?
17. What improvements would you suggest to make HR practices more effective?

Section E: Closing

18. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding HR practices in this organization?
19. Do you have any suggestions for future improvements in HR management within the RMG sector of Bangladesh?

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