

# The Textile Industry in Bangladesh: Growth Trends, Challenges, and Future Prospects

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## ABSTRACT

The textile industry plays a pivotal role in Bangladesh's economic development by contributing significantly to employment generation, GDP growth, and foreign exchange earnings. This study aims to analyze the current state of the sector, its growth trajectory, and the factors influencing its performance. Using secondary data from relevant sources, a comparative analysis was conducted with tabulated and graphical representations in MS Excel. The findings reveal that, despite its contributions, the sector faces challenges such as fluctuating growth rates, rising global competition, and compliance with sustainability standards. Key factors affecting the industry's performance include low labor costs, the emergence of green factories, foreign direct investment (FDI), and the demand for high-value apparel products. While Bangladesh has set an ambitious target of \$100 billion in textile exports by 2030, achieving this goal requires strategic policy reforms, enhanced infrastructure, and capacity-building initiatives. Robust public and private sector collaboration is essential to meet the evolving expectations of multinational buyers and sustain long-term growth. This study underscores the need for sustainable policies, innovation, and investment in technology to ensure the industry's resilience and competitiveness in the global market.

**Key Words:** Textile Sector, GDP Contribution, Export Growth, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Readymade Garments (RMG), Green Factories, Trade Policy Reforms

## INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh became an independent republic in 1971 and was initially classified as one of the least-developed countries. Although a large portion of the population is still engaged in agriculture, the availability of land per capita is limited, and most farmers operate on small-scale production. This has promoted many people to shift from agriculture to industry, leading the transition from an agriculture-based economy to an industrial one, as a key factor in the country's development. The readymade garments (RMG) sector has been pivotal in all industries. Initially, this sector was modest in scale, starting in the late 1970s with only nine garment factories. Structural reforms in the 1980s facilitated the establishment of export-oriented RMG firms, leading to steady growth from the 1990s. By 2022–23, the sector

comprised 5,162 firms (BGMEA, 2024), becoming a critical driver of Bangladesh's economy through employment generation and foreign exchange earnings.

The RMG sector's dynamic growth has overtaken traditional exports, positioning it as a cornerstone of economic transformation (Mia & Akter, 2019). Export promotion initiatives have allowed Bangladesh to allocate resources to the sectors with comparative advantages, boosting productivity and efficiency. For developing countries, exports are often labor-intensive, relying heavily on unskilled and semi-skilled labor. Expanding exports not only creates employment opportunities but also fosters equitable income distribution. Economists and policymakers widely agree that open economies achieve more substantial growth outcomes than closed ones. Accordingly, many developing nations, including Bangladesh, have actively pursued export promotion strategies to leverage global trade opportunities.

Today, Bangladesh has set an ambitious target to reach \$100 billion in textile exports by 2030 and has secured its position as the world's second-largest textile producer (Mondal *et al.*, 2023; Das *et al.*, 2024). This progress is attributed to the "green revolution" in the textile sector, characterized by adopting environmentally sustainable production practices, including waste management, energy efficiency, green building initiatives, renewable energy, workers' safety and health, and water conservation. These advancements underscore the industry's vital role in driving Bangladesh's economic growth and global competitiveness.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review highlights the pivotal role of the readymade garments (RMG) sector in Bangladesh and its substantial contribution to the national economy. Over the past few decades, the textile industry has emerged as Bangladesh's primary driver of foreign exchange earnings (Islam, 2023; Islam, 2024; Mondal *et al.*, 2024). As a result, Bangladesh has secured its position as the world's second-largest garment exporter (Hasan & Das, 2024; Das *et al.*, 2024; Mondal, 2021). The availability of low-wage labor has fueled the country's growth as one of the fastest-growing garment exporters globally, though it has also been accompanied by challenges such as labor unrest and strikes (Mondal *et al.*, 2023a; Adnan, 2024; Khaled & Ansar, 2024; Ullah, 2024).

The RMG sector began in the late 1970s as a small, non-traditional export industry, generating a modest revenue of \$ 69,000. By FY2002, exports had surged to \$ 4.5 billion (Moon *et al.*, 2023; Akber *et al.*, 2023; Rahman & Chowdhury, 2020). Over the years, the sector experienced rapid expansion, becoming the highest contributor to foreign earnings, employment generation, GDP growth, and improved living standards in Bangladesh (Raihan, 2020; Hossain & Uddin, 2021; Farhana *et al.*, 2022; Mondal *et al.*, 2023). The extraordinary success of the RMG industry over the last two decades has exceeded expectations (Mia & Akter, 2019; Junayed & Akter, 2023; Islam, 2024; Bach *et al.*, 2023). Beyond its economic achievements, the RMG sector has significantly influenced the country's social and economic development.

Despite its remarkable success, the RMG sector faces several challenges that hinder sustained growth. Key issues include unskilled labor with low productivity, contamination from medical textile wastes, insufficient backward linkages, inadequate infrastructures, compliance issues, limited access to bank financing, inefficiencies in recycling processes, high interest rates, overdependence on imported raw materials, insufficient training and development facilities, utility crises, declining economic and political stability, inefficiencies among suppliers, and deteriorating product quality (Shahid *et al.*, 2024; Nabi *et al.*, 2024; Rahman & Anwar, 2007; Mia & Akter, 2019; Chowdhury *et al.*, 2014; Akter & Mondal, 2023). Additionally, the withdrawal of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA) quota system has

intensified global competition, posing significant sustainability challenges for the sector (Hasan & Das, 2024). Bangladesh's textile industry is the mainstream of the economy, and it plays a vital role in micro- and macro-level economic development. Investment in this sector in Bangladesh has been very high compared to industry.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THIS SECTOR

Agriculture, energy and petroleum, mining, trade and commerce, food production, textiles, and clothing are critical industries that drive and sustain industrialization. These sectors require a robust foundation to meet global goals and organizational objectives. Modernization is essential for facilitating economic liberalization, promoting exports, expanding trade, and fostering improved business trends. The textile and garments sector is a cornerstone of Bangladesh's economy, driving its economic growth. Since 1990, this sector has become the prime source of foreign earnings. In 2021–22, Bangladesh earned \$ 42.61 billion from the RMG sector, accounting for 81.82% of total export earnings (Bangladesh Bank, 2023). The knitwear segment has contributed the highest share, at 41.8% of export earnings (EPB, 2022). Bangladesh holds the second position globally in textile and garment exports, competing with China, which ranks first (EPB, 2022).

RMG sector comprises approximately 4,650 factories, 95% of which are locally owned, with only 5% under foreign ownership (Mondal et al., 2023a). The sector primarily relies on orders from multinational brands and companies (MBCs), with 60% of buyers from Western and European regions and 40% from the Americas. Around 5 million people are employed in this sector, primarily women. By meeting MBCs' demands and ensuring sustainability, the industry has successfully attracted foreign direct investment (FDI). It is on track to achieve its target of \$100 billion in export earnings by 2030 (BGMEA). Following Bangladesh's independence in 1971, many countries provided aid and donations for its development. However, over time, direct aid shifted to a system of export quotas, fostering the growth of the textile and garments sector and enabling it to generate foreign currency. This transition has sparked debates about whether trade or aid has been more influential in the sector's progress. Further investigation is needed to determine which factor has played a more significant role in shaping the current success of Bangladesh's textile and garments industry.

## DEVELOPMENT OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh's economy, the textile industry is the largest manufacturing sector and the highest contributor to exports. It serves as a primary driver of economic progress, playing a pivotal role in the rapid development of the country's economy. The growth of this sector in Bangladesh can be divided into three distinct phases:

- Textile industry before liberation
- Textile industry after liberation up to 1990
- From 1990 to now

### *Textile Industry before Liberation*

Bangladesh, formerly known as East Pakistan, was established in 1947 and initially thrived in fabric and cotton production. However, from 1947 to 1971, West Pakistan controlled its capital and technical resources. The Liberation War of 1971 devastated the country's economy and infrastructure, claiming the lives of three million people. Before independence, the textile sector in Bangladesh primarily focused on import substitution.

### ***Textile industry after Liberation War (1971-1990)***

In the 1970s, Bangladesh's RMG sector was primarily a micro-business enterprise dominated by tiny tailoring outfits catering to domestic demand (Rasel et al., 2020). In 1972, the Bangladesh Industrial Enterprises (Nationalization) order was enacted, leading to the establishment of Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC), which brought about 85% of jute and textile mills under government ownership (Mondal et al., 2021; Rahman & Anwar, 2007). Bangladesh officially entered the global export-oriented clothing market in 1978 with nine garment factories, earning \$0.069 million in exports (Islam, 2021). Reaz Garments Ltd. pioneered this shift in 1978 by delivering 10,000 woven shirts to France (Swazan & Das, 2021). In 1979, Desh Garments Ltd. joined the export market. In 1980, a joint-venture garment factory was launched by Bangladeshi Trexim Ltd. and South Korean Youngone Corporation (Junaged & Akter, 2023; Mondal et al., 2023). By 1981, approximately 300 small and medium-sized textile companies had been established, and the New Industrial Policy (NIP) emphasized privatization. In 1983, Export Processing Zones (EPZs) were introduced to encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Bangladesh gained a quota-free status under the Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA) in 1985, attracting foreign investors and facilitating joint ventures and foreign-owned textile and garment manufacturing facilities (Swazan & Das, 2021). The introduction of the MFA quota system in 1986 further opened access to global markets, including the USA (Swazan & Das, 2021). Since 1991, Bangladesh's textile factories and RMG exports have experienced dramatic growth, making the sector a cornerstone of the country's economy.

### ***Textile Industry after Liberation War (1991- present)***

Between 1991 and 2000, Bangladesh's RMG sector experienced remarkable growth in the number of factories and employment opportunities. The Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA) quota system initially facilitated this growth by granting Bangladesh preferential access to foreign markets. However, it also acted as a trade restriction. Before the system's termination in 2005, RMG export growth averaged 19% annually (Alam et al., 2017; Mondal et al., 2023). After the MFA's abolition, export growth accelerated to 21%, showcasing the sector's resilience and competitive advantage (EPB, 2023). The Generalized System of Preference (GSP) further bolstered the RMG sector by enabling tariff-free exports to the European Union, whereas competing countries faced a 12.5% tariff on similar products (Hasan et al., 2022; Islam, 2021; Swazan & Das, 2021). These favorable conditions allow Bangladesh to maximize its trade potential, leveraging its abundant labor force to establish a strong position in international markets.

By 2022–23, the number of RMG factories in Bangladesh had grown to around 5,000, employing approximately 4.5 million workers, 85–90% of whom were women. Additionally, 10.12 million people are indirectly connected to the sector, with over 12 million more employed in supporting industries. During this period, 84.58% of Bangladesh's foreign income was generated by the RMG sector, with the United States and the European Union as its primary markets (EPB, 2023). The RMG industry has played a pivotal role in Bangladesh's economy by creating millions of jobs and driving substantial GDP growth. It has also contributed to generating foreign exchange, diversifying product offerings, expanding global markets, and fostering essential forward and backward linkages. It has become a foundation of the country's economic development and a critical player in international trade.

## **IMPORTANT MATTERS RELATED TO THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH**

Several factors have contributed to the textile sector's growth and increased contribution in Bangladesh. However, certain events have also hindered its progress, pushing the industry

in the opposite direction of positive growth. The table below highlights key aspects influencing the textile industry in Bangladesh.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Matters</b>
1970-1980	Initial stages of growth
1982-1985	Thriving days
1985	Initial quota restriction
1985-1990	The Knitwear sector developed significantly
1993	Child labor problem and new law of child labor
2003	Withdrawal of Canadian quota restriction
2005	Phase out of Export - quota system (Multi-Fiber Agreement)
2006	Protest by garments labor
2007-2008	Stable growth
2008- 2012	Continuous progress
2012	Tazreen Fashion Factory fire
2013	Rana Plaza collapse
2013	Generalized System of Preference (GSP) is suspended
2016	Holey Artisan Attack
2018	Implementing sustainability
2020	Corona pandemic effect

Source: Adopted from the BTMC and BGMEA, Bangladesh database, and authors' compilation.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This descriptive study relies on secondary data from publications, research articles, official documents, the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). Yearly time series data on textiles and garments from 1983–84 to 2022–23 have been collected to examine the industry's current state. A descriptive trend analysis approach has been employed, with findings presented in figures or tables and visualized through line diagrams, pie charts, and bar charts. Additionally, a five-year projection has been forecasted using the  $R^2$  statistical method.

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

The journey of Bangladesh's readymade garments (RMG) industry began in 1978 when Reaz Garments made its first Export to the USA, earning \$69,000. A significant milestone followed in 1979 with the establishment of Desh Garments Ltd., the country's first fully export-oriented company in the sector. Since then, the RMG industry has witnessed consistent growth and upward momentum. However, the following sections outline Bangladesh's textile sector's current trends and state.

### ***Number of textile and garment factories in Bangladesh***

Figure 1 depicts the number of textile and garment factories in Bangladesh from 1983–84 to 2022–23. The data reveals a steady increase in factories until 2012–13. However, a decline occurred in 2013–14, followed by a resumption of growth through 2022–23. The negative growth trend in 2013–14 is primarily attributed to the Tazreen Fashion fire, the Rana Plaza collapse, and the Generalized System of Preference (GSP) suspension. Additional factors such as utility crises reduced buyer orders, and stringent safety inspections by regulatory bodies had been likely to contribute to the decline. Despite these setbacks, the  $R^2$  value of 0.8412 (as

shown in Figure 1) suggests that the trend from 2013–14 to 2022–23 will likely improve, provided external conditions remain stable.

Number of textile and garments factories in Bangladesh with five years forecasting

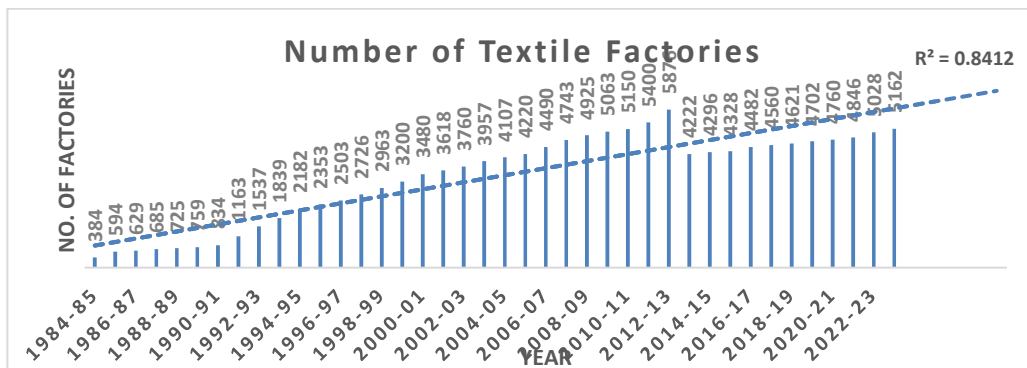


Figure1: Number of textile and garments factories in Bangladesh with five years forecasting  
Source: Authors' compilation from the BGMEA, BB, and EPB, Bangladesh

### Number of Workers in the Textile and Garments Sector

Figure 2 shows that approximately 5 million workers are employed in Bangladesh's textile and garments sector. The overall trend in workforce numbers has been upward, with significant growth over the years. Although the number of factories in the sector drastically declined in 2013–14, the number of workers did not decrease proportionally. This discrepancy may be attributed to the closure of smaller factories employing fewer workers while larger factories continued to drive the industry's growth. The  $R^2$  value of 0.9696 (as shown in Figure 2) indicates a strong correlation and suggests that this upward trend in workforce numbers will continue significantly over the next five years.

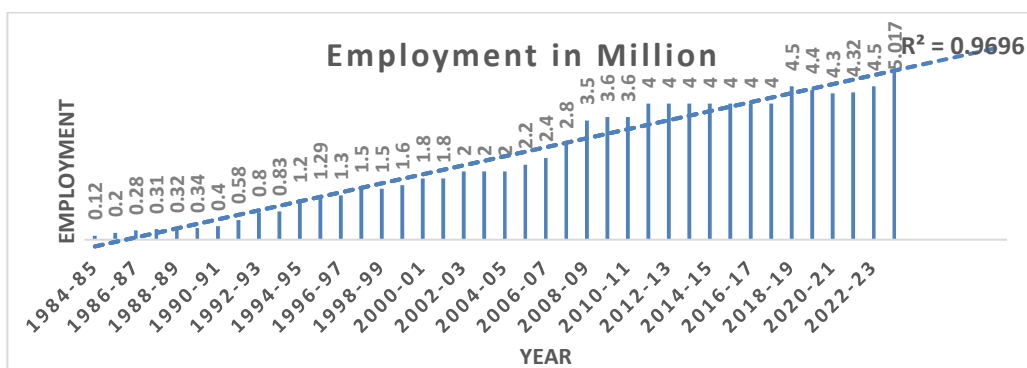


Figure 2: Growth curve of Employment in the textile sector in Bangladesh  
Source: Authors' compilation from the BGMEA and other sources.

### Sectoral Contributions of Textile and Garments to Total Export

The contribution of the textile and garments sector to Bangladesh's export earnings has grown remarkably over the years, firmly establishing itself as the country's primary export-earning industry. In 1984–85, the sector accounted for 12.44% of export earnings, which has risen dramatically to 84.58% in 2021–22 (see Figure 3). Notably, since 2013–14, this contribution has

consistently remained above 80%, highlighting Bangladesh's firm reliance on the textile and garments industry for foreign currency earnings. Based on the  $R^2$  value of 0.7082 (see Figure 3), this study predicts that the upward trend in RMG exports will likely continue significantly over the next five years, provided current conditions remain stable.

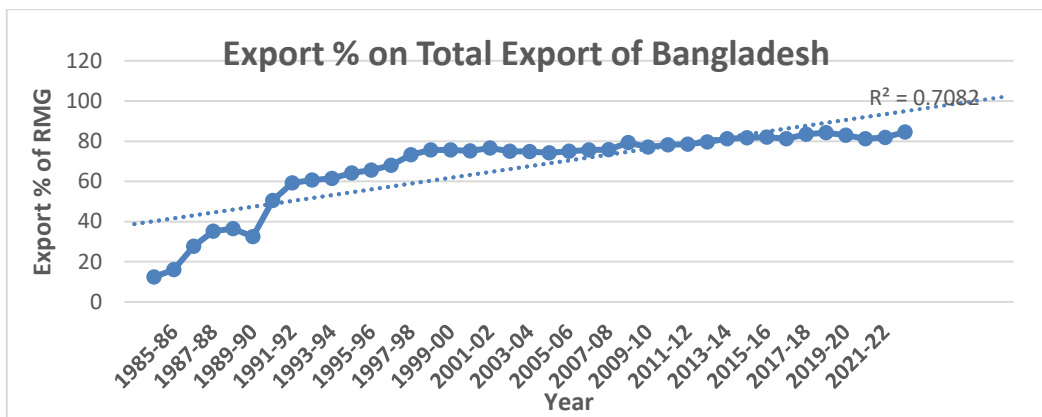


Figure 3: Textile and garments export % on total Export

Source: Authors' compilation from the EPB, Bangladesh

### Comparison of Export, Import, and Value Addition

A higher percentage of exports positively impacts foreign trade by contributing to a trade surplus when exports exceed imports. Bangladesh's textile and garments sector significantly boosts the country's export revenue. Figure 4 illustrates that the value addition percentage of this sector consistently remained higher than the import percentage until 2018–19. However, in 2019–20, the value addition percentage declined, falling below the import trend.

The trend persisted from 2020 to 21, with imports surpassing value addition. Encouragingly, in 2022–23, the value addition percentage rebounded, matching the import percentage. This convergence is a positive indicator of the sector's performance. Based on historical trends, the value addition in the coming year is anticipated to surpass the import percentage, signaling continued progress in the industry.

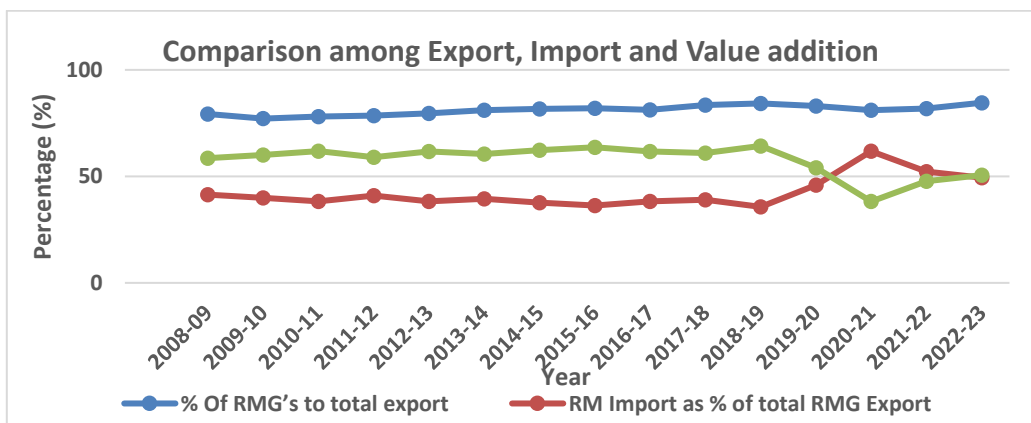


Figure 4: Comparison of Export, Import, and Value Addition

Source: Export Promotion Bureau and Bangladesh Bank.



## Bangladesh's Apparel Export to the World

The primary export products of Bangladesh's textile and garments sector are woven and knitwear items. Figure 5 demonstrates that from the industry's inception until 2022–23, the Export of woven and knitwear products has consistently increased in alignment with the overall growth of total exports. While woven products have traditionally dominated total exports compared to knitwear, both categories experienced a noticeable decline in 2019–20 due to the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this setback, the overall trend indicates steady growth in the Export of these products.

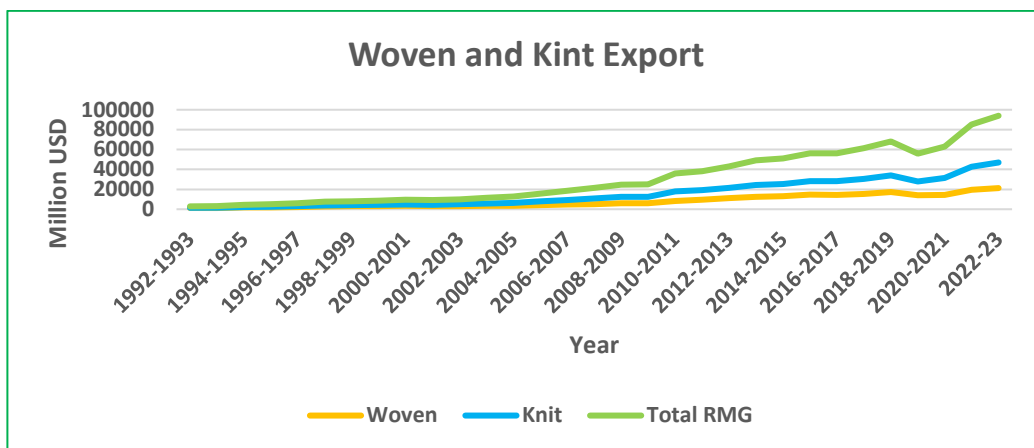


Figure 5: Bangladesh's Apparel Export to the World

Source: Authors' compilation from the EPB, Bangladesh

## Main Apparel Items Exported from Bangladesh

Bangladesh's primary exported apparel items include trousers, T-shirts, sweaters, formal shirts and blouses, and underwear. As depicted in the graph, the export trends for all these items show a consistent upward trajectory, except for a decline in 2019–20 and 2020–21, attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. The highest export volume was recorded in 2022–23, with trousers, T-shirts, and knitted shirts emerging as the most dominant categories.

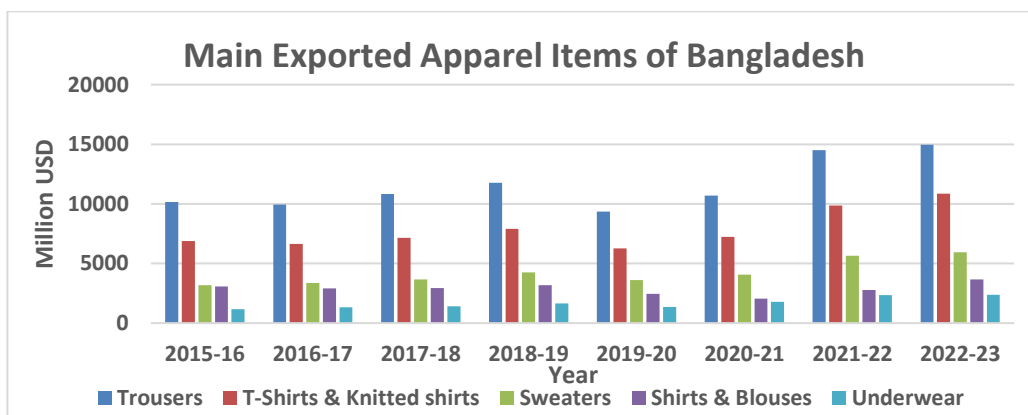


Figure 6: Main exported apparel items of Bangladesh from 2015-16 to 2022-23

Source: Authors' compilation from the EPB, Bangladesh



### Contribution of FDI Inflow to Textile Sector in Bangladesh

Industrial development in developing countries is often closely tied to foreign direct investment (FDI), and Bangladesh is no exception. FDI has played a significant role in driving the country's foreign trade and economic growth. From 2001 to 2018, FDI steadily increased, but there was a notable decline in 2019 and 2020 (see Figure 7), likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, from 2021 to 2023, FDI growth resumed, and the overall trend suggests it will continue to rise over the next five years, as indicated by the  $R^2$  value of 0.77 (see Figure 7). According to the Bangladesh Bank (BB), the manufacturing sector receives 41.8% of the total FDI inflow in the country, with the textile and clothing sector experiencing substantial growth, capturing 19.7% of the net FDI inflow in 2023 (see Figure 8). Although foreign direct investment was previously the second-highest in other sectors, it now plays a crucial role in the textile industry.

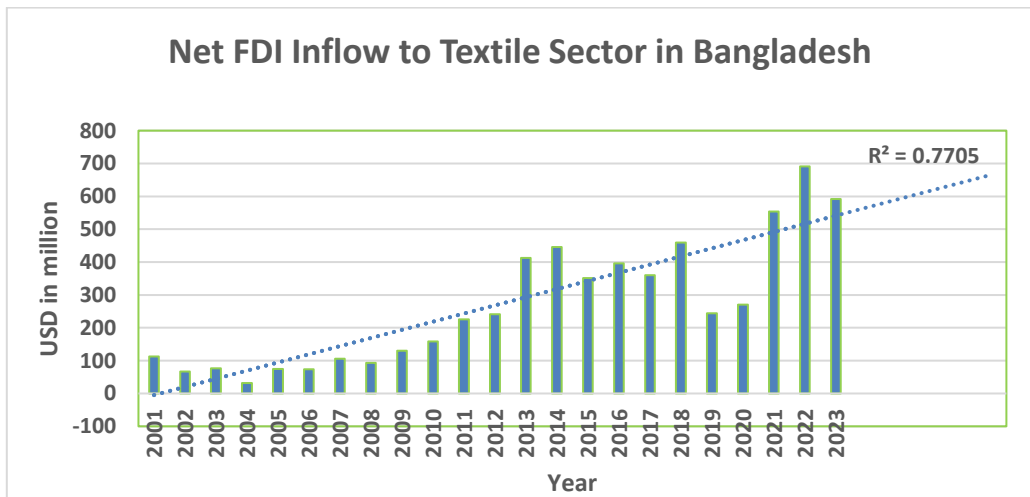


Figure 7: Gross FDI inflow (USD in millions) to the textile sector in Bangladesh (2001-2023)  
Source: FIED Management Cell, Statistics Department, Bangladesh Bank

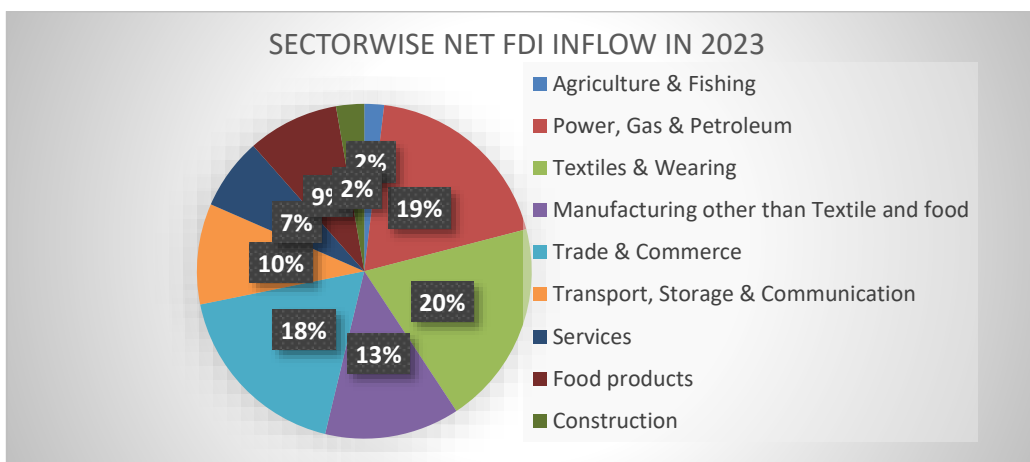


Figure -8: Sector-wise net FDI inflow for the year 2023  
Source: Authors' compilation from the data of Bangladesh Bank

### Average Monthly Basic Wages of Garment Workers in March 2020 to March 2021



Figure 9: Average monthly basic wages of garment workers.

The global average monthly wage for workers is estimated at \$200, while Bangladesh offers one of the lowest wages, around \$95 per month. These relatively low wages provide a competitive advantage, allowing the country to produce low-cost and high-quality products, which drives growth in the textile and garment sector. However, factories in Bangladesh occasionally experience labor strikes and other movements that can disrupt the industry's progress. Ensuring regular payments at a standard wage rate could mitigate such labor unrest and contribute to the sector's stability and continued growth.

### Bangladesh Apparel Export to Major Importing Countries (in million USD)

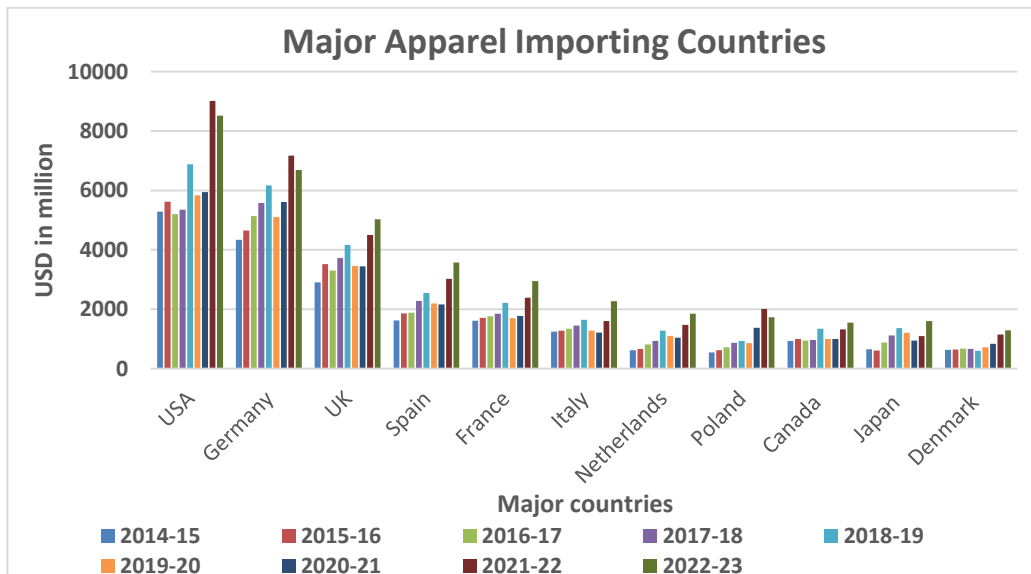


Figure -10: Source: BKMEA and EPB database

The data reveals that the primary export destinations for Bangladesh's RMG and textile products, in terms of value, include the USA, Germany, the UK, Spain, and France, followed by Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Canada, Japan, and Denmark. In the years 2021-22 and 2022-23, the highest export growth was observed compared to previous years, except for the USA and Germany (see

Figure 10). Additionally, the USA is the top importer of apparel from Bangladesh, while Germany and the UK are the second and third largest importers, respectively.

## USAGE OF ENERGY BY THE TEXTILE AND GARMENTS

This industry plays a crucial role in industrial development, particularly in developing nations, where energy consumption is significant (Farhana et al., 2022). Economic growth in these regions is closely tied to rising energy demands. Bangladesh, a leading exporter of readymade garments (RMG), exemplifies this trend, with its factories consuming substantial energy (Habib et al., 2016). Energy uses in the textile sector is dominated by electricity to provide power for machinery and office facilities, whereas fossil fuels are primarily used for heating and boilers.

In Bangladesh, industrial energy consumption is particularly high (Habib et al., 2016), contributing to challenges like fossil fuel depletion and greenhouse gas emissions, which raise critical environmental and sustainability issues. Globally, the textile industry is one of the largest polluters of clean water after agriculture. Wash processing is especially problematic due to its high freshwater use and harmful wastewater discharge (Mamun et al., 2022; Hussain & Wahab, 2018). The sector also significantly contributes to air pollution, further degrading environmental health. Such unsustainable practices threaten the environment and the industry's long-term viability.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEXTILE

Bangladesh faces environmental issues like climate change, inefficiency, groundwater depletion, etc. Besides this, global policy leaders, civil society organizations, and environmental watchdogs are very vocal with the big international brands regarding the ecological impacts. They want to get textile and garment products with minimum environmental impact. Now, 53 green garment factories are in Bangladesh, which represents Bangladesh is home to a substantial number of the world's top 100 green garment factories, and it has 203 LEED green garment factories certified by the US Green Building Council (BGMEA report, 2022). However, BGMEA is working for sustainable textiles and garments, and therefore, BGMEA has taken many initiatives like SDG alignment, decarbonization, green button, UN fashion industry climate change charter, green policy, water policy, Partnership for Cleaner Textile (PaCT), waste policy, etc. Recently, environmental issues have gained importance, and BGMEA is focusing on the circular economy. Under this, BGMEA calls to use materials made in Bangladesh, promoting energy sustainability and conserving water.

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PRESENT SCENARIO

The current scenario of Bangladesh's textile sector is undoubtedly positive. The low wage rate in the competitive market, green factories, and the country's favorable geographical location have helped Bangladesh become the highest textile exporter globally and the second largest. The sector plays a momentous role in employment generation, foreign currency earnings, GDP growth, and attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), among other areas. The sector's development was initially driven by key events such as the Rana Plaza collapse, the Tazreen Fashion fire, and the suspension of quota-free status, which served as turning points for the industry. These incidents and pollution concerns led buyers and policymakers to impose numerous regulations and compliance requirements on the textile and garment sectors. By adhering to these regulations and compliance standards, the RMG sector has recovered and continued its positive growth trajectory in a relatively short time.

However, the sector faced a significant setback during the Covid-19 pandemic (2019-2021), impacting growth. Despite this, the textile industry has shown impressive recovery and development from 2021 to 2023, and this upward trend is expected to continue in the future. It may encounter several challenges to sustain and further enhance the current growth of Bangladesh's textile and garment sector. These include labor strikes, unskilled labor, workers' safety and rights, utility and facility shortages, delivery and demand-side challenges, management and coordination issues, political unrest, competition from neighboring countries, and power shortages. To address these potential challenges, the textile and garment industry must implement robust policies related to worker training, safety, standard wage rates, supply chain management, buyers' demand, compliance, environmental concerns, and sustainability reporting. Additionally, the government should provide favorable regulations, adequate utilities and power, infrastructure, security, and administrative support to ensure the sector's continued growth.

Historically, Bangladeshi textile exports have added more value than imports, except during the pandemic. After a positive trend in value addition in 2022-23, the sector reached a break-even point, and it is anticipated that exports will continue to add value in the coming years. Furthermore, the textile and garment industry is a key strength in Bangladesh's exports, with trousers and shirts being the main export items. The USA, Germany, and the UK are the top importers of Bangladeshi textile products, solidifying Bangladesh's position as the second-largest textile exporter globally. In recent years, Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in LEED-certified factories, green buildings, green production practices, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and environmental policies. Bottom of Form

## CONCLUSION

The textile and garment sector has become a key driver of Employment, particularly for women, income generation, foreign exchange earnings, and overall economic development in Bangladesh. The sector's contribution to GDP, mainly through exports, is expected to grow significantly. Comprehensive trade policy reforms are essential to fully harness the potential of the garment industry and drive further economic growth. These reforms should address existing barriers and create a favorable environment for the sector's continued expansion.

This study explores the contributions and growth trends of Bangladesh's textile and garment sector. However, the fluctuating growth trends indicate the need for a more sustainable approach. It is also necessary to reconsider traditional trade policies and adopt more innovative strategies. The textile and garment sector should be prioritized in Bangladesh's short-term plans and long-term development frameworks to ensure sustainable growth. This entails integrating textile-related concerns into every phase of the development planning process. By doing so, Bangladesh can focus on becoming a middle-income economy, improving living standards, and achieving its broader development goals. Therefore, future studies should examine the current state of sustainable growth and the future requirements of this sector to ensure the sustainability of Bangladesh's textile industry.

To enhance productivity and efficiency in the RMG sector, it is crucial to implement capacity-building and retraining programs for both employers and workers. Developing multi-modal transport systems and establishing reliable infrastructure, including consistent energy supply through public-private partnerships, are essential for sustainable growth. Furthermore, RMG owners must prioritize workers' welfare, safety, and health, while buyers should support supply chain efficiency by investing in backward linkages. In the same vein, regulators, the government, society, and buyers should also support the sector through favorable policies to help it thrive.

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