

The Garment Industry in Bangladesh: A Human Rights Challenge

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Introduction

Child labor, gender disparity, low wages, and hazardous working conditions are just some of the human rights issues that plague Bangladesh's textile industry. Being the world's number two garment exporter presents considerable challenges for the business regarding adopting sustainable measures shown in Figure 1 (Habib et al., 2022; Stanwick and Stanwick, 2015). Ready-made garments (RMGs) in Bangladesh are dependent on a high-functioning supply chain if the industry is to continue and expand (Billah et al., 2023). There is a critical need for significant progress in the industry's sustainability performance (Saha et al., 2022). Workers' rights have been routinely violated in Bangladesh's garment sector (Akhter et al., 2019; Barua and Ansary, 2016; Choudhury and Rahman, 2017), and this is especially true for women. Feminization and increased labor vulnerability have followed the industry's expansion, with gendered language playing a significant role (Hossain et al., 2013).

The expansion of the industry has been linked to rising living standards. However, managing the interplay between these two phenomena is crucial to advance the garment industry (Hossain and Alam, 2021). The industry's sustainability issues are further aggravated by the hindrances to adopting environmentally friendly methods (Rahman et al., 2019). The industry's export-oriented character and economic importance underline the necessity to address the socio-business factors of garment workers in Bangladesh (Ahmed et al., 2013). A comprehensive framework is required to overcome the sustainability issues plaguing the garment industry's supply chain management model (Shahriar et al., 2014).

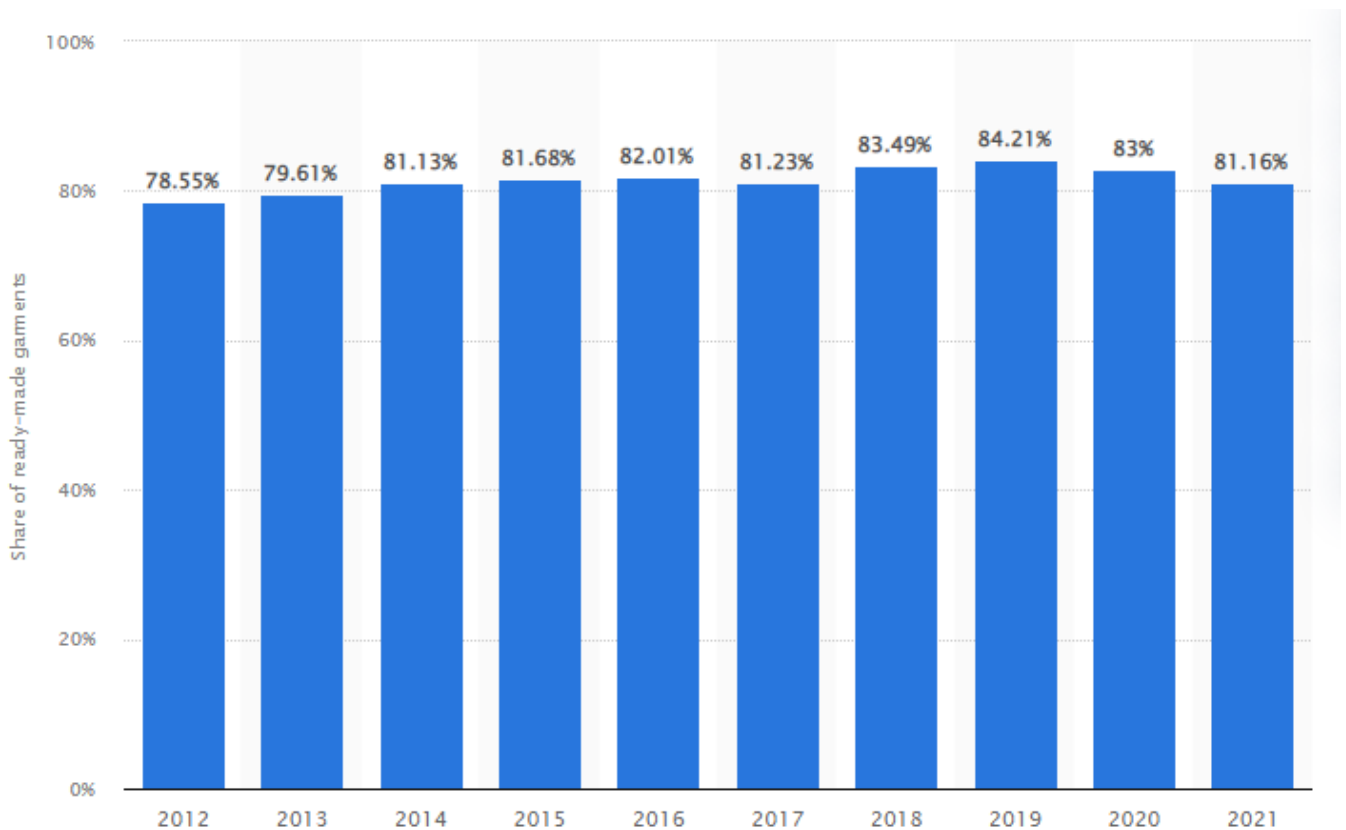


Figure 1 Bangladesh's share of total ready-made garment (RMG) exports from 2012 to 2021 (Ganbold, 2022)

Key Sustainability Issues in the Garment Industry

Sustainability is a concept that stresses the management of existing requirements without sacrificing the capacity of future invention to satisfy their own requirements. Profits, planet, and people might be considered the three pillars of this idea (Amran et al., 2013). Relying on natural resource renewal rates while consuming them sustains environmental integrity and the stability of Earth's systems. To ensure economic sustainability, human communities must safeguard their financial systems and ensure that all members can access reliable support. Good leaders who balance the scales and ensure people get what they deserve are essential to achieving social sustainability, which strives to make universal human privileges and basic requirements achievable for everyone (Amran et al., 2013).

The phrase "sustainable development" was coined in the 1987 Brundtland report (Shrestha, 2019), which stressed providing for current needs without sacrificing future generations' capacity to do the same. This paper links the ideas of sustainable development and sustainability to emphasize the significance of responsible business practices and the protection of the environment for future generations (Shrestha, 2019). At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, the UN proposed a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have since

elevated sustainability to the forefront of international policymaking (Seidou et al., 2020).

There has been a recent uptick in the number of public sustainability pledges businesses make. These include initiatives to cut waste, increase the use of renewable energy, and provide financial support to groups trying to create a greener future. This indicates the increasing recognition of the significance of sustainability in CSR and the incorporation of sustainability into company goals (Price et al., 2011). Corporate strategy and sustainability are inextricably linked, as shown by research showing that governance structure and strategic corporate social responsibility affect the quality of sustainability reporting (Amran et al., 2013).

To achieve long-term success, sustainable development must consider more than only environmental factors, such as economic growth and stakeholder input (Vencato et al., 2014). Additionally, the circular economy is gaining traction in the corporate sector as an integral part of the shift to a more sustainable future (Jones and Comfort, 2017). This exemplifies the dynamic character of sustainability as a social negotiation process, highlighting the need for ongoing adaptation and creativity (Knox-Hayes et al., 2020). Concerns about the human rights and working conditions in Bangladesh's garment industry have been at the center of concerns about the country's long-term economic and social viability. Gender inequality, exploitation of women workers, underage labor, low salaries, and bad working conditions are just some of the human rights abuses that Peter and Sarah Stanwick brought to light (Akhter et al., 2019). Women make up the bulk of the workforce. Since they tend to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and have less formal education, they are more susceptible to exploitation in the workplace. These women sometimes get far lower earnings than their male colleagues and are required to work long hours, often at the expense of their health. Young, single women are sometimes hired by the business so that they may focus on their careers without being distracted by family obligations (Akhter et al., 2019).

Overcrowding, a lack of fire safety precautions, insufficient facilities, and exposure to harmful chemicals have all been cited as contributing factors to the bad working circumstances in the garment sector (Barua and Ansary, 2016). As a result of the tragedies at Tazreen Fashion and Rana Plaza, international organizations, governments, and merchants have attempted to improve workplace safety and conditions. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) collaborated with the government of Bangladesh to create regulations and legislation, provided credit facilities to warehouses so they could upgrade their facilities, and played a significant role in executing plans to enhance safety conditions (Barua and Ansary, 2016).

It is widely accepted that Bangladesh's garment manufacturing is crucial to economic development and creating jobs, especially for women (Wadud and Huda, 2016). However, the industry's fast rise has also prompted worries about the exploitation and vulnerability of its workforce, mainly female workers. Economic choices and gendered discourses of work have been linked to the feminization of the labor force in the sector, which in turn enhances the vulnerability of female workers (Hossain et al., 2013).

Research on workplace safety, health, and occupational risks, as well as the effect of macroenvironmental variables on the garment industry's export competitiveness, has been conducted as part of the effort to address the difficulties in the sector (Akhter et al., 2017; Islam and Pattak, 2017; Syed and Mahmud, 2022). The garment industry in Bangladesh has been studied extensively because of its apparent connection to the country's overall economic expansion and its success in combating poverty (Hossain and Alam, 2021).

The industry's involvement in the economic growth of Bangladesh has been a topic of empirical investigation, emphasizing its contribution to the country's GDP, export profits, and employment creation (Majumder and Ferdous, 2020; Hossain and Alam, 2021). Concern for the plight of garment workers has led to examining the industry's socio-business factors, such as human resource management practices and labor relations (Sarker et al., 2016; Ahmed et al., 2013). It is clear from Nazila Fathi's report that considerable improvements and measures have been implemented in the Bangladeshi textile sector to increase sustainability and worker safety. According to the International Labor Organization, there has been an encouraging trend toward protecting workers' health and safety as many workshops have begun to implement these measures. However, problems still exist, especially for smaller and medium-sized manufacturers that need help adapting to the new regulations and standards, which may result in the loss of licenses and the eventual collapse of the business.

The garment sector in Bangladesh has been the focus of sustainability measures, with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) creating the Partnership for Cleaner Textile (PaCT) program in 2013 to address sustainability concerns. Through water and energy saving and establishing a \$200 million Green Transformation Fund, the PaCT initiative sought to save expenditures. Bangladesh is now the world's second-largest garment exporter, thanks to a 79% rise in annual revenue from the garment sector due to the country's emphasis on sustainability and safety (Stanwick, and Stanwick, 2015). However, problems still exist, such as those involving the supply chain, retailers' requests for cheaper pricing, and businesses' attempts to increase profits by cutting costs elsewhere (such as employee pay or infrastructure investment). Long-term measures are needed to improve circumstances for garment workers since corrupt practices driven by political considerations impede the adoption of new legislation to do so.

The complexity of the supply chain, the price demands from retailers, and the need for more significant margins via cost-cutting measures all work against the industry's efforts to adopt sustainable improvements (Habib et al., 2022; Choudhury and Rahman, 2017). In addition, political corruption undermines efforts to implement new laws that would enhance workers' living and working circumstances (Rahman and Rahman, 2020; Rahman et al., 2019). There is a need for concentrated, long-term measures to improve events for garment workers (Zulman et al., 2017; Mostafa and Klepper, 2018), emphasizing resolving systemic concerns and adopting sustainable practices.

UN Sustainable Development Goals and Implementation Challenges

Supply chains and sustainable procurement need to be defined before the implications of sustainability on the garment industry's supply networks can be understood. Everything that goes into making and delivering an article of clothing, from the procurement of raw materials to the final stages of distribution and sale, is part of the supply chain in the garment business. Integrating ecologically and morally responsible methods into the sourcing and procurement process is at the heart of sustainable procurement, also known as sustainable supply chain management (SCM) (Shen et al., 2017).

The supply chains of fast fashion companies in the garment sector must ensure sustainability and ethical sourcing are top priorities. Examples include encouraging recycling and dealing with suppliers that treat their workers fairly. Throughout the supply chain, it is the role of the supply chain team to apply sustainable practices such as eliminating waste, lowering carbon emissions, and protecting workers' rights (Shen et al., 2017).

Global Best Practices in Ethical Sourcing

Several companies in the fashion industry have adopted worldwide best practices in ethical sourcing. Patagonia, Everlane, Levi's, and Polo RL are examples of industry leaders implementing sustainable policies and initiatives across their supply chains. These efforts aim to increase ethical sourcing, sustainable design practices, and CSR (Rai et al., 2020). Patagonia is a pioneer in the fashion business, and as such, the brand has pioneered various sustainability efforts in its supply chain. The company's supply chain is made more transparent via programs like the Footprint Chronicles. From raw material procurement to product distribution, this initiative shows clients the full scope of Patagonia's environmental and social effects (Kozar and Connell, 2013). This openness is consistent with responsible purchasing policies since it increases trust and responsibility.

Patagonia is committed to ecologically responsible sourcing (Su et al., 2019) by using materials derived from sustainable sources, including organic cotton and recycled polyester. To promote circularity and waste reduction in the garment sector (Wang et al., 2019), the firm supports recycling via its Worn Wear program, which encourages consumers to mend and reuse existing clothes rather than purchase new things. Patagonia has also instituted fair labor policies throughout its supplier chain in addition to these efforts. Modest salaries, safe working conditions, and the freedom to organize and bargain collectively are all part of the company's Code of Conduct (Achabou, 2020) for its suppliers. This dedication to fair labor practices is in line with ethical sourcing guidelines and benefits the lives of garment workers.

Patagonia's sustainability efforts reflect the increasing demand for sustainable and ethically sourced

goods, further proving the company's dedication to responsible sourcing and ethical methods. In its quest for sustainability and ethical sourcing, the firm has served as an example for other businesses in the garment sector by advocating for transparency, ecologically responsible sourcing, and fair labor methods. Several enterprises have used blockchain-enabled traceability systems to address social, environmental, and sustainability problems in the textile and apparel sectors (Ahmed and MacCarthy, 2021).

Learn more about how different companies in the fashion industry are implementing ethical sourcing procedures with help from the Ethical Fashion Report. It highlights the scope of environmental and social repercussions from global garment manufacturing and consumption (Su et al., 2022) and, as a result, the growing necessity of sustainable sourcing in today's economic climate.

Sustainable sourcing techniques in the garment business are heavily influenced by customer behavior. According to research, Consumers generally support sustainable fashion (Byrd and Su, 2020), but they need to be made aware of the industry's commitment to social and environmental responsibility. The need to inform customers and increase awareness of sustainable and ethical sourcing processes is even more pressing.

The garment sector invests in sustainable value generation via innovative industrial supply chains and ethical sourcing. Environmentally responsible consumer garment purchasing, and disposal practices are essential (Sandberg, 2017; Urga et al., 2015), as is embracing circularity and digitalization for sustainability. There has been a change toward ethically focused ideals in product components, purpose, communication strategies, and sourcing procedures, and the rise of the ethical retailer reflects this trend (Rudolph et al., 2023) in the fashion and clothing sector. An increasing focus on ethics in the fashion industry is reflected in this development.

Case Study: Rana Plaza Collapse

Better safety standards and transparency in the garment business were brought into sharp focus by the 2013 collapse of the Rana Plaza plant in Bangladesh. At the time of its failure, several international clothing retailers, including Benetton, Cato Fashions, The Children's Place, El Corte Ingles, Joe Fresh, Kik, Mango, Matalan, and Primark, had placed orders with Rana Plaza (Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 2021).

Primark has embraced various sustainability methods in its supply chain, including ethical sourcing, responsible production, and transparency (Primark, 2022). The company's Code of Conduct specifies, among other things, that suppliers should provide their employees with a living wage, safe working conditions, and the opportunity to join and participate in bargaining units. Primark's recycling program, which encourages consumers to give their worn goods to charity, also promotes recycling and uses materials sourced from sustainable sources, including organic cotton and recycled polyester (Primark, 2022).

Primark has also launched a transparency program that provides consumers with information about the company's goods' social and environmental impacts. The corporation has also set up a Sustainability Board to monitor its sustainability efforts and ensure they align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (BBC News, 2013). CEO Paul Marchant was instrumental in helping Primark recover from the PR damage created by the Rana Plaza disaster. To analyze the situation and speak with impacted workers and their families, Marchant rushed to Bangladesh. He also promised to improve working conditions in the company's supply chain and set up a compensation fund for the victims and their relatives (Sandberg, 2017).

Marchant's actions in the face of the crisis reflected his dedication to ethical and sustainable sourcing methods in the fashion business. However, Primark's sustainability efforts must be enhanced, especially in terms of openness and ethical production. More dedication to ethical manufacturing techniques, such as lowering water use and carbon emissions, and more transparency in the company's supply chain would benefit the business (Guardian, 2013).

Recommendations

The following are some suggestions for how the clothing industry might become more environmentally friendly and avoid more tragedies like the one at Rana Plaza:

- Supply chain openness could be improved by giving customers more information about where products come from and how they get to stores. Customers can assess a company's commitment to sustainability and make more well-informed purchasing choices.
- Companies should invest in sustainable technology to increase efficiency, decrease waste, and commit to responsible production practices, including lowering water use and carbon emissions.
- To encourage sustainable practices, HR departments should be given more authority and responsibility, especially in the apparel business. Human resources may ensure that workers are taught sustainable practices and integrated into the company's culture (Shen et al., 2017).
- Companies should partner with suppliers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies to provide long-term solutions and better circumstances for garment workers.
- The garment business can be more sustainable, and future tragedies like Rana Plaza may be avoided if the abovementioned suggestions are implemented. Enterprises must adhere to sustainability policies and collaborate to make the fashion industry eco-friendlier and more moral (Rudolph et al., 2023).

Role of HR in Driving Sustainability in the Garment

Industry

Human Resources (HR) is crucial in developing and implementing sustainable practices within the clothing sector. Human resources contribute in many ways, including:

- Human resources may help create a sustainable corporate culture by increasing employee understanding of sustainability problems. The relevance of environmental and social responsibility in the clothing sector is emphasized via the organization of training sessions, workshops, and seminars (Jackson, 2019).
- Human resources may lead in developing and implementing sustainable initiatives by collaborating with sustainability specialists and industry leaders. As part of this process, businesses should look at current best practices, establish goals to cut waste, energy usage, and GHG emissions, and track their success in achieving these objectives (Rogers and Shiu, 2015).
- Human Resources collaborate closely with supply chain departments to maintain open communication across the supply chain. Auditing suppliers, checking in to ensure they adhere to fair labor practices and environmental standards, and offering guidance to help them improve are all part of this process (Carter and Rogers, 2008).
- Human Resources may lead the company's efforts to recycle and source materials sustainably. This requires working with suppliers to encourage sustainable sourcing practices and creating rules and processes for recycling fabrics and materials (Bocken et al., 2016).
- Human resource managers may collaborate with business moguls by joining groups like the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC). By working together, HR is better able to learn about sustainable fashion's newest trends, and the firm is better able to establish itself as an industry leader (Eccles et al., 2014).

Conclusion

The garment business in Bangladesh is plagued by ethical, legal, and societal problems. Long-term solutions need overcoming obstacles such as politics, corruption, economic development, and severe poverty. Companies may enhance industry working conditions and environmental practices by implementing global ethical sourcing best practices. Human resources plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the garment industry by facilitating the creation of a sustainable corporate culture, the formulation and implementation of sustainable policies, and the preservation of supply chain transparency.

Task 2: Report

Introduction

When determining the future of education, the EdTech business is in a prime position at the crossroads of technological and academic progress. The world's environmental and socioeconomic concerns have far-reaching effects, and this dynamic industry is not immune to them. This research examines the implications of climate change, resource scarcity, population increase, and biodiversity loss on EdTech, including the associated difficulties of obtaining funding, implementing environmentally friendly manufacturing and design, accommodating the requirements of regulators, and the critical need for sustainability reporting. By dissecting these elements, we learn how the sector may promote growth and improve the educational system in the long run.

Global Warming and Edtech Industry

While the EdTech sector has been at the forefront of developing innovative digital education solutions, it is not immune to the environmental threats presented by climate change. Increased energy consumption from data centers, technological waste, and the carbon impact of producing and using digital products are all problems the industry faces as it continues to expand into the digital sphere. The move from brick-and-mortar classrooms to online learning has been hailed as a way to cut down on the carbon footprint associated with teaching and learning (Smith and Andersen, 2018). Sustainability objectives are compatible with a decreased need for transportation, physical textbooks, and paper-based materials. Cloud-based solutions, improved data storage, and promotion of appropriate e-waste management are ways EdTech can make a difference.

Scarcity of Resources

The EdTech sector is caught in the web of resource scarcity because it relies on electronic equipment and infrastructure. Smith and Andersen (2018) point out that the electronic technology business has to embrace circular economy concepts since the creation and disposal of these devices use up limited resources. The education technology industry may reduce its impact on global resource scarcity by participating in refurbishing and recycling programs (Smith and Andersen, 2018). By extending the useful life of electronics via refurbishment, we can put less strain on the environment and save money. The environmental toll that the electronics sector causes may be reduced with proper e-waste recycling initiatives.

Growth in Population

As the world's population rises, so does the need for education, giving rise to an unprecedented opportunity for the education technology sector. Although there will be difficulties in expanding service delivery to meet rising demand, there will be possibilities to increase diversity and

accessibility, especially in rapidly populating areas (UNESCO, 2022).

The EdTech sector must sustainably grow its services to meet rising demand (UNESCO, 2021). Innovative solutions that put accessibility and inclusion first are needed to meet this need. To ensure that all students, no matter where they live, have access to quality education, EdTech firms may look into forming partnerships, collaborating with other organizations, and developing new forms of technology.

The Decline of Biodiversity

As a result of its dependence on electronic devices, the EdTech sector indirectly harms biodiversity by causing the degradation of habitats and the depletion of natural resources. However, by adopting sustainable sourcing methods and contributing to environmental education projects, the business may become a champion for biodiversity protection (Smith and Andersen, 2018). By using ethical techniques to source their electronics, EdTech firms may help protect biodiversity (Smith and Andersen, 2018). Working with vendors whose production methods are both ethical and ecologically sound is essential. By favoring suppliers dedicated to decreasing their ecological footprint, the sector may help to limit habitat loss connected with resource exploitation.

Table 1 Key Sustainability Considerations in EdTech

Sustainability Aspect	Impact on Edtech	Mitigation Strategies
Global Warming	• Rising data center energy use • Growing digital device carbon impact.	Decreasing the carbon footprint of physical education infrastructure
Scarcity of Resources	The Making and Breaking of Electronic Gadgets	Use the ideas of the “circular economy” (reusing and recycling).
Population Growth	Rising interest in learning	Scalability, accessibility, and inclusion must all be considered in rapidly developing areas.
Loss of Biodiversity	Indirect impact through electronic device reliance	• Encourage environmentally responsible methods of obtaining electrical parts • Support programs that teach people about the environment

(Source: Self-Created)

Financing Challenges for Sustainable Development in EdTech

Despite its revolutionary educational impact, the EdTech sector must overcome unique funding obstacles to achieve long-term growth. To effectively close the funding gap and guarantee that technology-driven education is accessible to everyone, it is essential to have a firm grasp of these obstacles.

Disparities in Technology and Education Resources

Significant geographical differences in the availability of technology and educational materials present a problem for the EdTech business when it comes to securing funding. Adopting technology-driven educational solutions in underserved areas is difficult due to insufficient infrastructure, obsolete equipment, and poor internet access (Barr, 2020). Large expenditures in infrastructure building, technology supply, and connection improvement are needed to close these gaps. The cost of these measures is a significant barrier for EdTech firms and schools working to make education more accessible for all students (Barr, 2020).

High Initial Costs of Technology Implementation

The high upfront expenses of introducing technology into classrooms, especially in impoverished regions, provide a significant funding obstacle for long-term EdTech growth. This involves spending on hardware, software, and the requisite technological infrastructure (Barr, 2020). It may be difficult for schools and organizations in low-income areas to make the necessary initial expenditures to implement EdTech solutions.

Sustaining Edtech Initiatives

Partnerships between the public sector and the business sector (sometimes known as “public-private partnerships” or “PPPs”) may be an effective strategy for overcoming financial obstacles. Sustainable EdTech initiatives may be implemented by establishing PPPs due to pooling resources, skills, and money (World Bank, 2021). Alliances between governments, educational institutions, and commercial EdTech businesses may help spread the cost and provide access to technology-driven education for all students.

Support from charitable organizations and foundations is an excellent funding source for educational and technological endeavors. Giving organizations may target particular initiatives with their support money, such as content creation, teacher professional development, and gadget distribution for underserved kids (UNESCO, 2020). Building connections with charitable institutions links financial

assistance with the social impact aims of sustainable EdTech development. Promoting government incentives and policies encouraging long-term EdTech efforts may significantly reduce costs. Governments may encourage eco-friendly and inclusive practices in education by providing tax incentives, grants, and subsidies to EdTech businesses and educational institutions (World Bank, 2021). These rewards can encourage private companies to fund long-term EdTech improvements.

Engaging with industry experts and practitioners is crucial for gaining insights into these financing difficulties and possible solutions. Professionals in the EdTech industry were interviewed, surveyed, and discussed the effects of different finance strategies on sustainable development projects. Experts in the field stress the need to work together for reasons other than money. A more long-lasting and welcoming EdTech ecosystem may be developed via philanthropy-driven initiatives backed by public-private partnerships and government incentives. The financial world can be understood, and practical solutions may be designed thanks to the combined efforts of financial strategists, educators, and technological experts.

Sustainability in EdTech Production and Design

As a leader in educational technology, the EdTech sector is beginning to appreciate the importance of eco-friendly manufacturing and design in cultivating environmental responsibility. There has been a paradigm shift toward recycling electronic trash and cutting down on energy use as a result of the meeting point of technology progress and ecological consciousness.

Reducing Electronic Waste

For EdTech to be produced sustainably, the industry must shift away from its current focus on constant gadget replacement. Modular learning systems are only one example of the creative approaches the business is looking at. Because individual parts may be easily swapped out without having to replace the whole device, this technology has the potential to significantly cut down on electronic waste (Cohen, 2020). In addition, there has been a rise in the use of responsible design principles in the educational technology sector. The lifetime of educational technology may be increased by designing devices with durability in mind, using robust materials, and making repairs simple. The concepts of a circular economy which stress the value of long-lasting products that can be repaired and maintained align with this move toward responsible design (Cohen, 2020).

Sustainable Computing and the Integration of Renewable Energy

The term “sustainable production” is increasingly being used in the development of educational platform software as well as hardware. Developing software that uses less power is becoming more

critical in the fight against climate change and removing the industry's total energy consumption results from code optimization, removing resource-intensive features, and using algorithms emphasizing energy efficiency (Ren et al., 2019).

Renewable energy sources greatly aid sustainable manufacturing in the infrastructure powering EdTech services. The carbon footprint of EdTech platforms' digital operations may be significantly reduced by switching to renewable energy sources for data centers and server farms (Ren et al., 2019).

Principles of a Circular Economy

Circular economy ideas play a crucial role in EdTech sustainability projects. Refurbishing programs have become more popular to help people get more use out of their electronics. EdTech firms increasingly invest in refurbishing facilities where equipment may be improved, mended, and redistributed, leading to a more circular and resource-efficient model (Loonen et al., 2019).

Another essential component of environmentally friendly manufacturing in the EdTech sector is responsible e-waste management. Take-back schemes, in which old electronics are collected and repurposed in an eco-friendly manner, keep potentially dangerous products out of landfills and boost resource recovery (Loonen et al., 2019).

Future Obstacles and Potentials

While the EdTech sector has made great efforts to incorporate sustainability into production and design, difficulties still exist. The environmental effect of device production, the complexity of global supply networks, and the necessity for constant innovation all provide continuing issues. Opportunities for creativity and cooperation may be found in the face of these difficulties. The EdTech industry may improve its environmental performance in several ways, including doing RandD on new, more sustainable materials, forming collaborations with suppliers dedicated to ethical and environmentally friendly practices, and campaigning for industry-wide standards.

Impact of Regulations and International Codes on Sustainability in EdTech

Regarding environmental responsibility, the EdTech sector, which lies at the interface of technology and education, has many difficulties and possibilities. Compliance with international rules and laws is critical for protecting students' personal information and promoting sustainable practices in the EdTech industry.

Ethical Sourcing and Data Privacy

By conforming to international rules of ethical sourcing and data protection, EdTech firms may improve their long-term viability. An adequate foundation for dealing with the environmental impact of activities is provided by ecological management certifications like ISO 14001 (ISO, n.d.). Responsible data management and user privacy are ensured by adhering to data protection standards such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (European Commission, 2018). When it comes to electronics, adopting ethical sourcing procedures means conducting a thorough supply chain audit to guarantee safe working conditions and little environmental impact. Sustainability is enhanced when these regulations and certifications are followed since they align with the business's best practices and ethical standards (European Commission, 2018).

Impact of Regulations

A deliberate strategy is required to persuade EdTech management to embrace and prioritize compliance with rules. It is convincing to emphasize the actual gains from complying with regulations. First, maintaining regulatory compliance reduces the likelihood of adverse legal and public relations outcomes. For example, fines and brand harm may result from a company's failure to comply with data privacy laws (European Commission, 2018).

Second, there is a financial benefit to embracing international standards and accreditations. Reduced resource consumption and waste production are two ways in which effective environmental management by ISO 14001 may benefit operating expenses (ISO, n.d.). Furthermore, robust and resilient supply chains may be built via ethical sourcing procedures, reducing the financial risks associated with dishonest suppliers.

Finally, EdTech firms benefit from an improved public image due to their adherence to regulations. In an age when customers and investors value environmental and ethical behaviors, being a responsible corporate citizen resonates favorably. Investors increasingly consider environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations when making investment choices (European Commission, 2018). Investors with a social conscience might be attracted to a company committed to sustainability by following international norms.

Importance of Sustainability Reporting in EdTech

To demonstrate its dedication to social and environmental responsibility, the EdTech sector relies heavily on sustainability reporting. Critical insights into the sustainability practices and the effect of the EdTech business may be uncovered by a rigorous analysis of a recent sustainability report, such as one from a significant participant in the field.

Impact of Carbon Emissions on the Environment

Carbon footprint calculations play a significant role in sustainability reports for EdTech companies. The growing importance of digital infrastructure makes it crucial to measure and lessen its environmental impact. All necessary sources of carbon emissions, including data centers, offices, and transportation, should be accounted for in the report. To reduce emissions and lessen adverse effects on the environment, this information is crucial (Cohen, 2021).

The Circular Economy and Electronic Waste Management

Sustainability reports also often include the need to handle electronic waste properly. As electronic equipment becomes obsolete more quickly, it is more important than ever to dispose of its remnants properly. The report has to include measures like device refurbishing programs and take-back schemes that aim to reduce technological waste. A dedication to sustainability may be shown in adopting a circular economy model in which products are created with longevity, repairability, and recycling in mind (Loonen et al., 2019).

Initiatives for Digital Inclusion that Reduce the Economic Divide

Sustainability reporting should shed light on projects supporting digital inclusion beyond environmental issues. Businesses in the field of educational technology should level the playing field for students from all walks of life. Access to educational resources, particularly in underprivileged populations, should be included in the report. A feeling of social responsibility is fostered, and progress is made toward a more equal educational system (Jensen et al., 2020).

The ROI of sustainability activities should be highlighted in sustainability reports and data presentations. To do so, it is necessary to demonstrate the value sustainable practices provide to the company's bottom line. Reducing carbon emissions and adopting circular economy concepts, for instance, may cut down on energy costs and the cost of disposing of technological trash, respectively. EdTech businesses may win over investors and convince the public of the practicality of their environmental and social activities if they highlight the financial advantages of sustainability (Vanclay et al., 2015).

Conclusion

Finally, the EdTech sector emerges as a revolutionary force that can tackle intractable environmental and social concerns while driving educational accessibility and innovation. The industry may lead in sustainable practices by proactively addressing challenges, including climate change, resource depletion, and regulatory compliance. In addition to ensuring the industry's long-term viability, EdTech makes significant contributions to larger aims of environmental protection and social inclusion by adopting novel designs, circular economy concepts, and effective reporting methods. The education technology sector is well-positioned to pioneer the transition toward this sustainable future.

Appendix

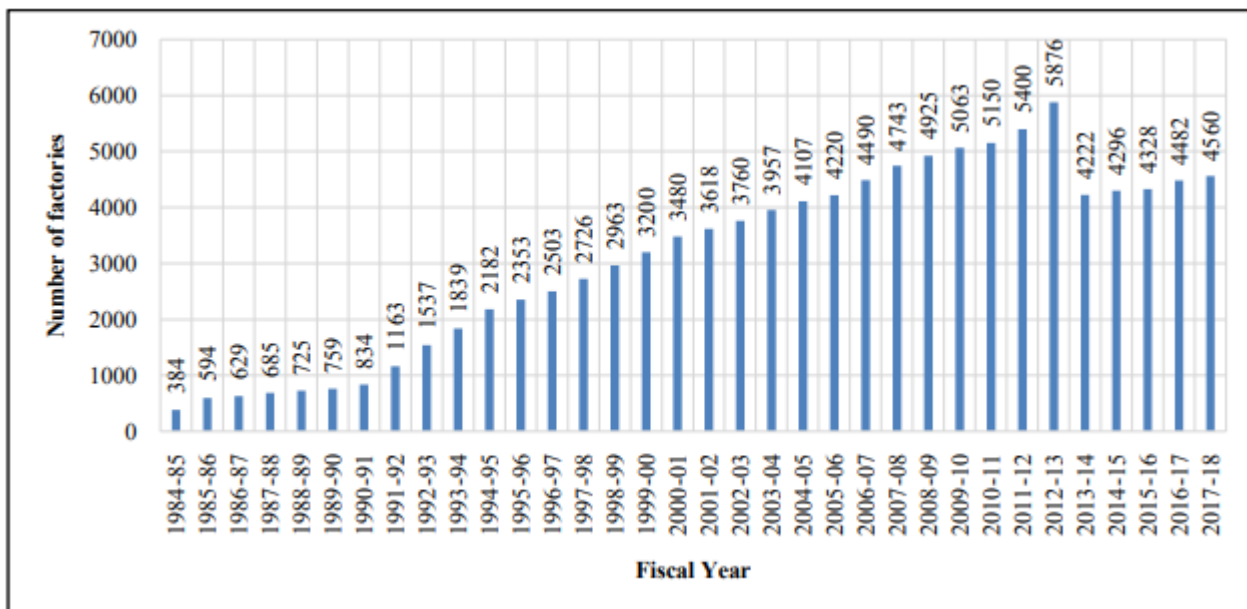


Figure 2 Number of Garment Factories in Bangladesh (Mia and Akter,2019)

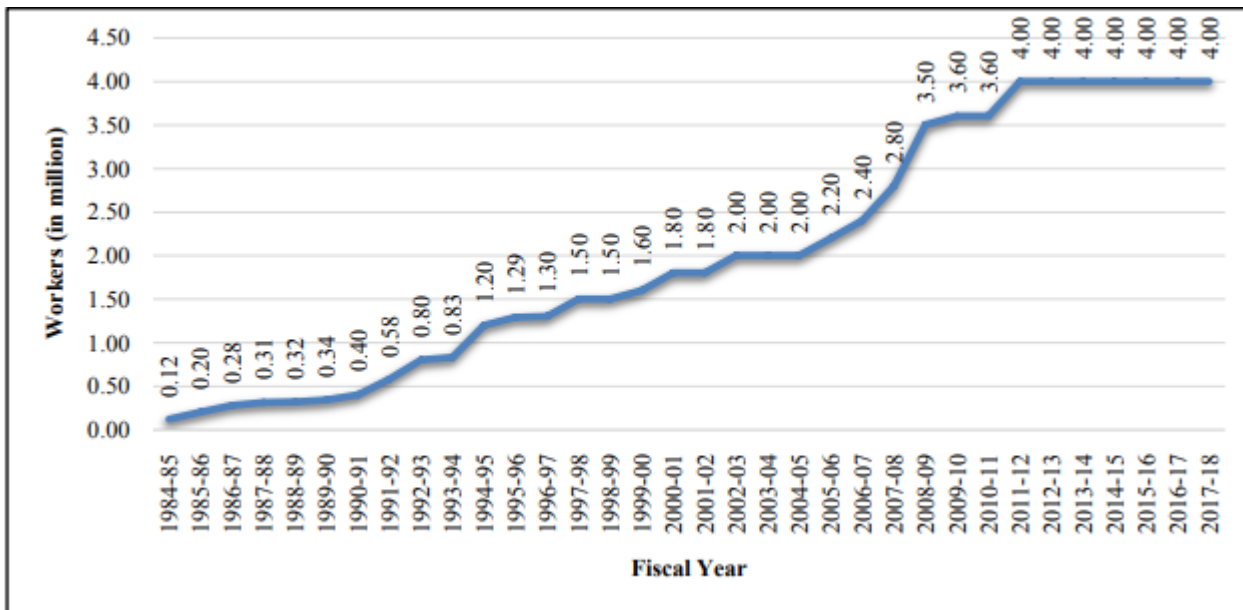


Figure 3 Number of Workers in Ready-made Garment factories in Bangladesh (Mia and Akter, 2019)