

# **Seminar Paper Report on**

**Female Employment Opportunities In Bangladesh Small and Cottage  
Industries Corporation (BSCIC) Industrial Estate: A Study on Tongi  
Industrial Estate.**

## **Submitted to**

**Dr. Muhammad Abu Yusuf  
MDS (R&C)  
BPATC, Savar, Dhaka.**

## **Submitted by**

**Md. Didarul Islam  
Roll: 132  
126<sup>th</sup> Advanced Course on Administration and Development**

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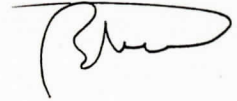


**Bangladesh Pubic Administration Training Centre  
Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Mr. Md. Didarul Islam , Project Director (Deputy Secretary) Ministry of Industries bearing roll no.132 of 126<sup>th</sup> Advanced Course on Administration and Development (ACAD) as conducted the seminar paper title "Female Employment Opportunities In Bangladesh Small And Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) Industrial Estate: A Study On Tongi Industrial Estate" under direct supervision for the partial fulfillment of course.

I wish him every success in life.



Professor Bashir Ahmed  
Department of Government and Politics  
Jahangirnagar University

## ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to understand the present status as well as the expected future scenario for female employment in BSCIC industrial estate. For this purpose both qualitative and quantitative data have been used. Primary data are collected from female employees of industrial unit of BSCIC industrial estate Tongi by using questionnaire and KII of important BSCIC officials and some owners or representative owner. Through questionnaire female workers were asked about their education, nature of employment, salary, work place condition and safety etc.. These female workers were chosen from different types industries of BSCIC, Tongi industrial estate. BSCIC officials were asked about nature of female employment, problems and opportunities of female employment and role of BSCIC in this regard. Firm owners were asked about their experience with female worker or employees in their industrial unit. Secondary data were taken from MIS of BSCIC, different journals and survey report. By analyzing the data this paper identified some barriers in the employment of large amount of female workers. Finally some recommendations are put forth to create more opportunities for female in BSCIC industrial estates so that BSCIC can contribute more in women in empowerment and socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

**Key words:** Female, employment, small and cottage industries, industrial estate,

## INTRODUCTION & LITERATURE REVIEW

Bangladesh is a country of 164 million people, of which 50.6% is male and 49.4% female. (Live Bangladesh population 2019, country meters) Labor force survey, 2016 states that total force (15 year plus) is 6.35 crores, of which 4.35 are male and 2.00 are female. So female work force participation rate is far behind than male in comparison to male-female ratio of population. In 2018, Bangladesh is graduated to lower middle Income country from LDCs. Bangladesh will have to be under observation for five years to get final recognition of status of a developing country, where Bangladesh has to be fulfilled certain criteria, such as minimum per capital income, human resource index, economic risk point etc. For this reason Bangladesh is implementing Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To achieve MDGs and SDGs one important task is employment of huge unemployed people, especially female employment. MDGs-3 is to promote gender equality and empower women and all SDGs-5 also echo same. Employment of female people is very challenging because women are vulnerable group due to lack of education, backward society. For this reason Bangladesh Government has prepared women development policy 2011. About 20.4% of the total labor forces employed in industrial sector (labor force survey,

2011. About 20.4% of the total labor forces employed in industrial sector( labor force survey, 2016).One important area of female employment is small & cottage industry. Because women policy,2011 observes growth of small and cottage industries will enhance opportunities for employment of women and this will empower women and improve their economic conditions

Bangladesh small and cottage industries corporation (BSCIC) playing a great role in promoting medium small & cottage industries under the Ministry of Industries. There are one or more industrial estate in every districts, where industrial plots are being allotted among interested entrepreneurs with all infrastructural facilities such as gas electricity, water etc. BSCIC gives support services to small, medium and cottage industries in Bangladesh in medium, small and cottage industries sector. It was created through an Act of Parliament in 1957 which was later amended in 1992. BSCIC has institutional network all over Bangladesh to provide door step services for entrepreneurs. BSCIC traces its origins to East Pakistan small and Cottage Industries Corporation, which was established through the East Pakistan Small and Cottage Industries Corporation Act, 1957. The act was created by the then Minister for labor, commerce and industry Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of the United Front Government of the East Pakistan. After independence of Bangladesh it was named BSCIC.

BSCIC is a prime Government organization entrusted for rapid industrialization of small and cottage industries in the county. BSCIC is to provide facilities to the existing and new entrepreneurs to expand and develop their markets and to stay and sustain in the competitive environment (Robbani, 2011).The major objectives of BSCIC are: (i) Increase of Industrial production and productivity in the SCI sector; (ii) Creation of employment opportunities; (iii) Poverty alleviation; (iv) Balanced regional growth; (v) Ensure optimum utilization of economic and human resources. Functions of BSCIC: (i) Allotment of developed plots in Industrial Estate/Industrial parks having all (ii) Extend credit facilities to the entrepreneurs from its own fund and also through banks and financial institutions; (iii) Promote women entrepreneurship; (iv) Implementation of development projects under Annual Development Programme (ADP); (v) Provide technical and consultancy proposal services for establishing new industrial units quality improvement of SMCI products; (vi) Conduct research, studies and survey in the SMCI sector and conducting training programs;

BSCIC has 76 Industrial Estates (IE) throughout the country , 64 service centre's and 4 Regional offices. Already 5,867 industrial units are established in IEs Another 27 industrial

estate is being implemented and 20 project of industrial estate are under consideration. Total investment in industrial units is 27689.58 crore taka and total employment is about 5.9 lac from start to June ,2019.( Source: MIS Department, BSCIC), As per economic survey, up to June, 2019 in the Bangladesh there are 146 medium 1,26000 are small and 8,57000 are cottage industries, labor force employment in small and cottage industries is 38.79 lac person ,contribution to GDP from small and cottage industry is 3.85%, growth rate of small and cottage industry(manufacturing) is 10.26%.

Tongi industrial estate is one of the oldest industrial estate of BSCIC. This estate was established in 1964 at Tongi of Gazipur Zila. It is established on 89.62 acres of land. There are 214 industrial plots which are distributed among 165 industrial units, of these units 143 are on function or production. As per MIS of 2018, there are almost 61500 people working in the industries of this estate, of which 34500 are male and 27000 are female. Industrial unit in this estate are textile (77), printing & publishing(18), food processing(08), leather and leather product (08), chemical & pharmaceuticals (18), glass ceramic (07), engineering (22), electronic (02) and miscellanies (03).

Economic growth is essential for poverty reduction, but not enough. There is lot of evidence to show that productive employment plays a key role in transforming the benefits of economic growth into poverty reduction. In that regard, women's employment, by reducing dependency on male and making use of potential labor force, can play an important role. While labor is an important factor of production, it is not homogeneous; gender and skill differences constitute important aspects of the heterogeneity of labor. Factors influencing demand and supply of female can be different from those relevant for male, and hence it is important to devote specific attention to gender differences in this respect. In developing countries, women play an important role by contributing to house hold income, adding to the supply of labor for economic activities, and above all by empowering women.

Given the background and context mentioned above, it would be useful to examine how much opportunities of female employment are there in BSCIC industrial estate, how much opportunities have been used and how it can be improved further. In order to do a detailed survey research of female employment opportunities in BSCIC industrial estate, various written books, articles and journals has been consulted. On reading them, researcher has noted that there are certain aspects of study which could have been researched more carefully. Because these researchers did not cover all areas of employment opportunities." For doing household/family work, a large portion of women belong to outside the labor force. Time related underemployment is higher for women than men at national ,rural and urban area."(Asma and Qumrun,2019 ). SME cluster development could be an emerging force of

entrepreneurship development, employment generation and poverty alleviation for any least developed country like Bangladesh. SME located in different clusters of Bangladesh are contributing in generating employment (Begum and Abdin 2015). Manufacturing sectors like garments, leather, publishing, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and cottage industry and service sector like IT, catering, and restaurants, nursing, teaching, office administration, tourism, banking and fashion design have substantial potential to generate employment for women ( Raihan and Bidisha, 2018). Small and cottage industry not only giving the employment for women but also empower women ( Azid et al.2001). Lukewarm integration into the global economy in South Asia has led to an economic structure that does not match the countries' comparative advantage, with their vast supplies of relatively unskilled labor. Greater openness and integration into global market in labor intensive sectors such as apparel and garments could have an enormous impact on employment in the region and on female employment especially since these sectors trend to be intensive in female labor.

Women's employment in Bangladesh: Conundrums amidst progress article worked on women's work participation rate, growth in women's employment, discrimination in wages compared to men labor force, effect of higher education in job compared to man labor force, effect of higher education in job compared to other countries. Sector wise composition of labor in SAARC countries Rahman et al (2010) in an ILO Asia Pacific Working paper series examines recent trends in women's labor force participation in Bangladesh. This study also shows in contrast to India, there is increase in labor force participation along with economic growth Since 1990s. Bangladesh has observed a considerable amount of increase in female employment in labor-intensive export oriented industries, namely the readymade garments sector, poultry firm etc. There are some studies regarding challenges relating to gender differentiation in wages and other aspects like health and safety in work place, working hours and labor participation rate. There are many study on women's education and empowerment. But there are very few study on female employment in small & cottage industries. In Bangladesh medium, small & cottage industry playing a big role in the employment, so there should have been more study on the female or women's employment in MSCIs sector. So to fill up the gaps in the study of female employment in small & cottage industries this study has been conducted.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In order to do a detailed research about employment of female in industry the researcher has noted that there are very few work on employment opportunities and challenges in industrial estate, especially in small and cottage industrial estate. Since small

and cottage industry has more scope to employ female workers in their factories, so the researcher thought that further study could have been made on female employment opportunities in BSCIC industrial estate. There are almost no literature on the relationship of female employment and small & cottage industry. So it would be interesting to research what are the pattern and volume of female worker in industrial estate of BSCIC, challenges of such employment and opportunities of more female employment. Because as per labor force survey, 2013 women have higher employment in rural employment (20.1%) than men (11.3%). Another ILO publication (2017) finds the current global labor force participation rate for women is close to 49%. For male it is 75%. In Bangladesh it is 33% and 79.8% respectively. So we should search how medium, small and cottage industry can contribute to reduce this gender gap in employment.

## **OBJECTIVES**

BSCIC has made long Journey with its mandated activities to expand the industrial base since 1957 through promoting small and cottage industries. In the industrial estate of BSCIC plots are given to establish small and cottage industries through which employment of huge male and female is targeted, because these industrial will be labour intensive. The study to be conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To find out pattern and quantity of female employment in BSCIC industrial estate.
2. To identify the challenges of female employment in BSCIC industrial estate.
3. To explore, how female employment can be improved in BSCIC industrial estate.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study has been conducted to know the answer of the following research questions:

1. What is the volume and pattern of the female employment in BSCIC industrial estate?
2. What are the challenges in the employment of female in these estates?
3. How female employment opportunities in BSCIC industrial estate will be improved?

## **RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

Bangladesh is a small county, but its population is huge. So for socio-economic development employment of people is a must, especially employment of female or women should be given more attention. 'Women' is the pillar of the society, because a earning women can help her family which in turn helps the society as well as the country. By conducting this study we

will try to find out pattern & quantity of women employment in industrial estate, whether female are lagging behind than male? We will try to find out the avenues and area there employment can be increased. This will ultimately help the empowerment of women, and poverty reduction, which is one of major initiatives of the Bangladesh Government to achieve sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is also hoped that Ministry of Industries to formulate policies about project of BSCIC.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To discuss the conceptual framework let us define some concepts relating to the problem under study. According to Collins English Dictionary a female is “someone who is female is a women or a girl”. Employment means the fact of someone being paid to work for a company or organization (Cambridge English Dictionary). Industrial Estate means an area of land developed as a site for factories and other industrial business. In other words, “ An industrial estate is a place where required facilities and factory accommodation are provided by the government to the entrepreneurs to establish their industries” (Your Article Liabrary, Dr, Sinha). Small Industry (Manufacturing) is an industry in which the value/ replacement cost of durable resources other than land and factory building is in between (75 lac to 15 crore) taka and employment generation is 31-120 persons. (Industry Policy 2016). Small Industry (Service) is an industry in which the value/ replacement cost of durable resources other than land and factory building is in between (10 lac to 02 crore) taka and employment generation is 16-50 persons. (Industry Policy 2016)

Cottage Industry (Manufacturing) means an industry where family members are involved part-time or full time in production or service-oriented activities. It can employment of maximum 15 person. (Industry Policy 2016). Medium Industries (Manufacturing) means an industry where the value/replacement cost of durable resources other than land and factory building is between 15 crore to 50 crore taka and employment generation of 121 to 300 person. In case of labor intensive medium industry it may be 1,000 person (Industry Policy 2016). Medium Industries (Service) means an industry where the value/replacement cost of durable resources other than land and factory building is between 02 crore to 30 crore taka and employment generation of 51 to 120 person. (Industry Policy 2016)

There are number of ways we can employ staff in small and cottage industries, some of them are: (i) Full time and part time employees; (ii) Casual employees; (iii) Fixed term and contract and (iv) Apprentices and trainee. As per Labour Act, 2006 a full-time employees

work on a regular basis for 8 hours a day or 48 hours a week on an average . An employee's actual hours of work are agreed between the employer and the employee, and/ or are set by an award or registered agreement.

They are entitled to public holiday pay if the holiday falls on a day they would usually work. Part-time employees usually work less than 48 hours per week and generally have regular hours. Their wage rate is similar to full-time employees on a proportionate basis. But their total salary is usually less than full-time employees, because they work less hours than full-time employees. Casual employees are employed on an irregular basis according to production or business needs, and they have no expectation of long service life and have no sick or annual leave pay. We can employ some one on a fixed term or contract basis for an agreed length of time or to perform a specific task; to work on a particular project or to replace an employee on leave. Apprentices and trainees may be suitable are sometimes employed through a tripartite contract among a registered training provider, the employee and the employer. Usually during apprentice period employee gets less salary then a regular full time employee. After success completion of apprentice or training they get permanent employment. All the employees appointed under above category may be male or female, skilled or semi skilled or unskilled.

BSCIC does not employ any employee or worker required for an industrial unit. It is rather the industrial unit who employs their employee as per their need. BSCIC and ministry can only play as supportive role. The organizational relationship among ministry, BSCIC, industrial estate and industrial unit is shown by a diagram below:

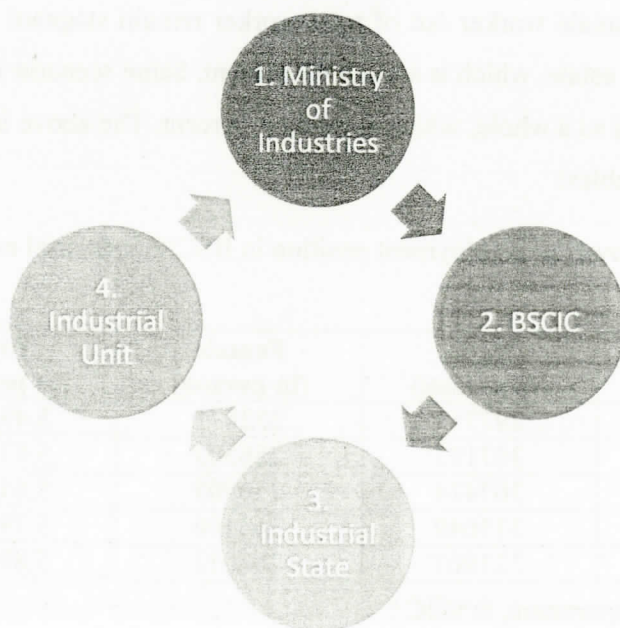


Figure-1: Organization Cycle- Developed by author

## METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative study with quantitative data. So for collecting primary data questionnaires is given to the female employees (respondents). They are the focal group. Because their educational level is not high they were given a brief questionnaire so that they can answer easily. According to Babbie(1989) questionnaires are the most appropriate method for searching answers of sensitive subjects particularly on study that deal with anonymity to avoid reluctance from respondents. In Bangladesh gender issue is always a sensitive issue. This questionnaire contains some questions where answers are yes or no pattern and some questions are to be answered in a short sentence. Moreover, interview were taken from the key informant. For this purpose a consultation meeting were held with top BSCIC officials. This meeting were held to know about role of BSCIC about employment situation and policy of all industrial estate. Another meeting were held with tongi estate officers and owners of enterprise to investigate infrastructural facilities, types and nature of industrial unit and employment situation of this estate. Secondary data has been collected from MIS of the estate, publication of the BSCIC and other organizations. Some table and graph used to present the data. While collecting data from secondary source accurate and reliable data are tried to collect. However, there were time and fund limitation while conducting this study.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

By analyzing the primary and secondary data it is seen that employment of female is increasing at a very slow pace in every year with increase of male employment. But percentage of female worker out of total worker remain stagnant over the last five year in Tongi industrial estate, which is around 43 percent. Same scenario is also seen for the BSCIC industrial estates as a whole, which around 45 percent. The above information came from the following two tables:

Table- 1: Manpower or employment position in BSCIC industrial estate (from beginning of BSCIC)

| Financial Year | Male (in person) | Female (in person) | Total (in person) | (%) of Female |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2014-2015      | 297757           | 252075             | 5,49,832          | 45.85         |
| 2015-2016      | 307193           | 256503             | 5,63,696          | 45.50         |
| 2016-2017      | 307414           | 256905             | 5,64,319          | 45.52         |
| 2017-2018      | 315649           | 263406             | 5,79,055          | 45.49         |
| 2018-2019      | 321967           | 268012             | 5,89,979          | 45.43         |

Source: MIS Department, BSCIC

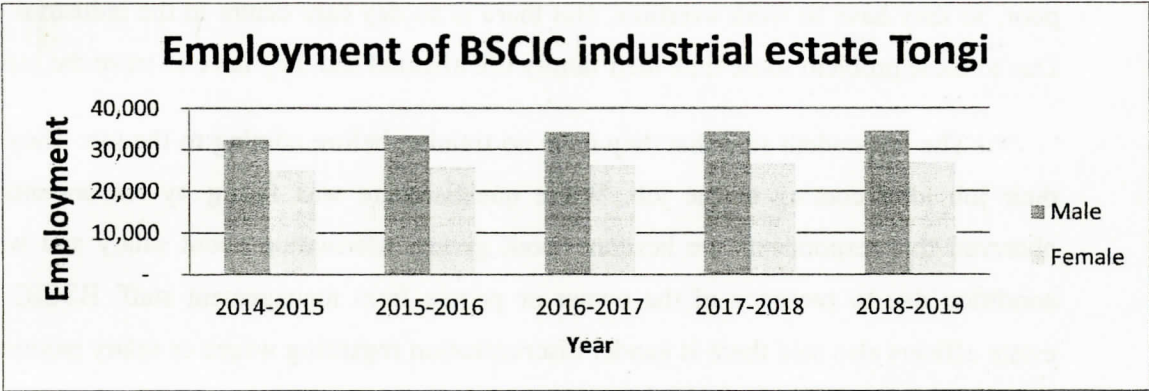
Graphical Presentation of above data:



Table- 2: Employment in BSCIC Industrial estate, Tongi (from beginning of BSCIC)

| Financial Year | Male (in person) | Female (in person) | Total (in person) | (%) of female |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2014-2015      | 32,435           | 25,080             | 57,515            | 43.61         |
| 2015-2016      | 33,500           | 25,840             | 59,340            | 43.55         |
| 2016-2017      | 34,300           | 26,400             | 60,700            | 43.49         |
| 2017-2018      | 34,400           | 26,600             | 61,000            | 43.61         |
| 2018-2019      | 34,500           | 27,000             | 61,500            | 43.90         |

Source: MIS Department, BSCIC



During interview some employers said among the female workers majority are full time basis. They also told that female workers usually come without any work experience or training. So the female worker starts their career as apprentice or trainee worker. However BSCIC Tongi estate officers said they have no statistics about number of permanent, part-time, apprentice and trainee workers. During the discussion employers said in their firm most of the female employees are production worker, but at managerial level employment percentage of female is around five percent. One entrepreneur who is an owner of a

pharmaceutical company said most of the female workers are weak and suffering from malnutrition. The employers also said they paid salaries to male and female workers on the basis of their skill level. A survey conducted by BIDS at BSCIC in 2017 also depicts the same picture.

Table- 3: Average salaries (taka) and experience of workers (years) at BSCIC industrial estates:

| Types of worker | Male                           |                              | Female                         |                              |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                 | Average monthly salaries (Tk.) | Average years of experiences | Average monthly salaries (Tk.) | Average years of experiences |
| Apprentice      | 4,278.95                       | 0.66                         | 3,714.29                       | 0.07                         |
| Unskilled       | 5,084.75                       | 0.58                         | 4,476.92                       | 0.56                         |
| Semi-skilled    | 6,839.81                       | 2.36                         | 6,091.27                       | 2.13                         |
| Skilled         | 9,934.26                       | 6.43                         | 8,096.94                       | 5.15                         |
| N               | 991                            | 991                          | 470                            |                              |

Source: BIDS Survey 2017

From the questionnaire filled up by female employees it is seen that overage age of the respondents are 15 to 25 years, out of 15 respondents 11 are skilled 2 semi skilled and rest 2 are apprentice. Except apprentice all are permanent workers. From answer in questionnaire it is seen that most of the respondents said working condition is good, but few female worker is not happy about work safety and hygiene facility. All the respondents said their salary is poor, so they have to work overtime. But there is no day care centre in the industrial estate. Due to these problem some time their family life affected and they have to leave the job.

The respondent said that they have no training before coming to the job. They learnt their job after coming to the job. While questionnaire was filling by respondents, it is observed that respondents are hesitant about giving information about salary and working condition due to presence of the owner or people from management staff. BSCIC Tongi estate officers also said there is gender discrimination regarding wages or salary payment and work condition is not good enough in many industrial unit. From answers in questionnaire it is seen educational qualification of 11 workers out of 15 were below Secondary School Certificate (SSC) level. One top BSCIC official thinks that lack of education, religion and backward society, low salary and lack of safety are the main problems in employment of female in BSCIC industrial estates. He also mention that huge unemployment of male also is a big challenge for female employment, because still in our society male gets priority than female for employment except in special fields.

But there are opportunities for more female employment in BSCIC industrial estates. Because it seen that in Tongi industrial estate about 77 garments, appeals and textile sector. These are women oriented industry. Besides these some of the printing and packaging, chemical, pharmaceuticals, food processing and light engineering industries female employment is higher than male. One employer said since transportation facilities are getting better towards BSCIC industrial estate, it will encourage female worker to get a job in this estate. The Economic Survey Report, 2018 (page-98) stated that in the financial year 2017-2018 (up to February, 2018) BSCIC under its infrastructure has trained 8350 entrepreneur, technician, manager etc- through its small and cottage industries training institute (SCITI), Design centre, 15 skilled development training centre and 64 industrial service centre (named Shilpa Sohayok Kendra). BSCIC officer also said regarding allotment of industrial plot in BSCIC industrial estate 10% of the plots are reserved for women entrepreneurs.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Since female employment percentage is stage anent for the last five years, it implies that BSCIC is not conscious at female employment in the industrial unit. Although BSCIC has a research wing, but it has no research about stagnancy in female employment. BSCIC has no programme for owners of the industrial units for upgrading safe and hygienic working condition. BSCIC industrial estate officers has no concern about how to increase female employment although they prepare Management Information System (MIS) of male and female employment. There are several problems come out from the study which should be eliminated to improve female employment in BSCIC industrial estate. To eliminate the problem and to increase the female work force participation some suggestions are mentioned below:

1. BSCIC should monitor safe work conditions in the industrial unit of industrial estates. It should encourage owners of the industrial unit to give facilities like separate wash room for female, Day Care centre for mother employee.
2. In every industrial estate there should be a training centre to give effective vocational and other trainings to workers with special care to female. These training should be relevant to their work.
3. BSCIC should formulate a wage policy for the industrial unit where it will be ensured that wages cannot be discriminated on the basis of gender i.e there should not be discrimination of wages or salaries of female workers with their male counterparts.
4. BSCIC should introduce awareness programmes so that female workers access their information about Government aids and policies regarding their jobs.

5. BSCIC should encourage female entrepreneur to recruit more female employees.
6. Motivate employers to give standard salaries so female workers can enhance their living standard and their socio economic condition. For this during employment higher educational level should be given preference.

## CONCLUSION

To become a developed country, industry sector's contribution to GDP must be at least 40%. In industry sector, medium, small and cottage industry have to play an important role. One of its role is to employ female work force in production. Because female labor force participation rate in Bangladesh is far behind than male labor force participation rate. BSCIC is one of the pioneer agency to promote and develop small and cottage industries. So it is the time to develop BSCIC and its industrial estates in an organized way. Female worker employment in BSCIC industrial estate is observing some obstacles. An efforts should be made to minimize these obstacles and to create employment opportunities for female along with men.

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[www.smallbusiness.wa.gob.aus.types](http://www.smallbusiness.wa.gob.aus.types) of employment

## Appendix

### QUESTIONNAIRE

(This is only for research purpose. Your identity will not be disclosed)

Respondent: Employee/Worker of the industrial unit

Name of the  
employee(Optional):.....Age  
e.....

Designation;.....Name of  
Industry:.....

Educational Qualification: .....

(In case of multiple choice questions place a check mark on box for your answer)

1. What type of employee you are? ☐ Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Others
2. In your factory between male and female employee which type is higher?  
☐ Male ☐ Female
3. Among female worker which type of following is higher?  
☐ Skilled ☐ Semi-skilled ☐ Unskilled
4. What is length of your work experience? Have you got any training?

Ans.

.....  
.....

5. Are there any wage or salary discrimination between male and female employees?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Do you think there are more opportunities for female employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. In your opinion what are causes of less employment of female employee/worker?

Ans.:.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

8. How long you have to work per day? Ans.....hours

9. Are there any overtime wages or salaries for extra time work? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. In your opinion what is the condition of following items?

A) Fire safety Measure ☐ Bad ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Very Good ☐ Excellent

b) Hygiene Condition ☐ Bad ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Very Good ☐ Excellent

11. Do you get your Salary in due time? Ans. Yes/No, If answer is No, how much time does it remain arrear? Ans. ....

12. Do BSCIC estate officers playing their role to solve your problem? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. What are the positions in your firm/company where more female can be employed?

Ans.

.....  
.....

14. What are your suggestions to increase female employment?

Ans.

.....  
.....

.....  
.....