



## CHALLENGES FOR BANGLADESHI MIGRANT WORKERS IN FINLAND: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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### **Abstracts**

*Migrant workers face numerous problems and difficulties all over the globe. Overseas employees often struggle against a number of challenges to work effectively at their job station. The present research aims to ascertain the underlying factors that have impact on effective working for the Bangladeshi employees in Finland. A survey has been conducted among the Bangladeshi overseas workers in Finland to carry out this study. The results of the principal component analysis revealed four factors: local environment, diplomatic relation, self-efficiency and workplace diversity. Local environment factor has been identified as the most significant one as indicated by the highest variance of over eighteen percent. The Bangladeshi workers need to enhance their skills in local language and cultural competencies. The government and its policy makers can use these four factors while assessing the challenges for the overseas workers.*

**Keywords:** *Bangladeshi Migrant Workers, Effective Working, Finland, International Migration, Overseas Employees.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Migration of people from one residence to another is nothing new. Resettlement of people from one residence to another has been observed as a common practice from the very early stage of human evolution. In the beginning of the human advancement, people used to migrate to new places for the sake of food and safety in which they could live a sustainable and secured life. Progressively the purposes and natures of migration became diverse. Millions of people all over the world are drifting from their own territory of residence to another place for seeking better opportunities in study, employment or in business. In the current large-scale global economy, living and working in the countries other than the native land is a pretty usual phenomenon. An UN global migration statistics reports that around 232 million people, which is 3% of total world population resided as migrants worldwide in 2013 (UNESCO, 2014a).

Bangladesh has a long account in the migration of people. More than five million Bangladeshi people are working overseas (ILO, 2014). The quantity of Bangladeshi migrants is growing steadily in many countries. Remittances sent by Bangladeshi migrants through authorized channels exceeded 14 billion USD in 2013 (Bangladesh Bank, 2014). According to the Statistics Finland (2014), the number of Bangladeshi migrants increased 3.25-fold between the year 2003 and 2013. The working age (aged 15-64) population of Bangladesh in Finland is accounted for 78.2% and many of them are serving in various multinational or local enterprises, or involved in own business (Statistics Finland, 2014, p. 25). Although the rate of immigration has decelerated in recent times due to the economic slump, Finland permits hundreds of students and workers to get in each year (Tanner, 2011). However, the increasing trend of migration from Bangladesh and the resulting benefits are not without its challenges. Bangladeshi people face various problems working in multicultural environment like Finland.

### **2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this research is to identify major challenges faced by the Bangladeshi workers and to reveal ways how the Bangladeshi employees can be more effective at their workstation in Finland. The specific objective of this research is as follows.

- To explore the barriers of effective working in Finland.

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to the United Nations (1990), "Migrant Worker refers to a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national". International migrants



comprise people varying from unskilled to highly skilled professional. Migration plays a vital role in the erosion of usual restrictions between cultures, languages, racial group, and nation-states (UNESCO, 2014b). International migration is caused as raw materials, land and labor in places of origin is consumed into world market economy (Sassen, 1988). Many developing countries including Bangladesh are confronting rapidly changing dynamics of migration. Besides, national migration policies and legislation of Bangladesh are not in standard. Bangladesh and many other developing countries emphasize heavily on migration. The motives behind the migration are mostly because of wage differentials, population pressure, demographic pressure, or environmental degradation (King & Schneider, 1991; Zachariah et. al., 2001) and significantly due to existing poverty, limited employment opportunities, inadequate higher study prospects, political turbulence, unstable economy and armed conflict.

Linkages between countries are largely correlated to the international migration (Jennissen, 2007). According to Kritz & Zlotnik (as cited in Jennissen, 2007), economy, society, policy and linkages between countries are the determinants of migration. Society encompasses not only social but also cultural and demographic components (Fielding, 1993). Researchers discuss international migration from two different perspectives: the initiation of migration and continuation of migration (Massey et al., 1993, 1998; Schoorl, 1995). Network theory of migration suggests that the interpersonal communications, cultural and ideological links that lead globalization further facilitate international migration. According to Esveldt et al (as cited in Jennissen, 2007), migration network can help potential migrants of the same ethnic origin in many ways, by contributing to providing information about educational possibilities and access to social security, or by financing the journey, assisting to find job or accommodation. Apart from intimate one, weak ties in network also play role in migration (Davis et. al., 2002).

Migrating people is a great challenge for Bangladesh since observation on the trend of labor migration advocates that the country mostly exports either unskilled or semi-skilled, and a very tiny portion of them is highly skilled. Many countries imposed general restrictions on immigration flows with a few exceptions such as for the professionals who are highly skilled (Beijl, 2000, p. 2). Lack of self-efficiency of these migrants causes negative consequences at the workplace. The upturn of self-efficiency is an essential tool to consider as because self-efficiency can implicitly support the procurement of knowledge and skills (Ford et. al., 2009). According to Bandura (1997, p. 3), “self-efficiency is a belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of actions required to produce given attainments”. Self-efficiency is actually the relevant and affective learning outcome (Kraiger et. al., 1993). The level of knowledge, skills and competencies influence self-efficiency. “Perceived self-efficiency is concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of actions required to deal with prospective situations” (Bandura, 1982, p. 122).

Workplace diversity is another significant issue in the present era of globalizations. Self-efficiency support the application of knowledge gained through diversity education (Nelson et. al., 2012). Researchers suggest that diversity can facilitate creativity and support business performance (Shore et. al., 2009). Some of the major themes of multicultural organization or working environment include social and cultural representation of perspectives, language, life and management styles, eliminating racism and sexism, and the diversity of the workforce (Jackson & Holvino, 1988). Diversity knowledge or education can develop interpersonal skills of the workers in working with and managing a diverse set of employees from their own as well as from other countries and cultures (Egan & Bendick, 2008).

A world top private recruitment firm, Manpower Inc. found out that 20% employers failed to find workers with right skills even during the economic crisis. (McLoughlin et al., 2011, p. 47). These clearly state from the employer’s viewpoint, finding right people for multicultural enterprises is extremely problematic. Instead from the employees’ perspective, it is more problematic to work effectively by facing various challenges at multicultural environment. Discrimination at workplace and cultural differences are two major challenges that the overseas employees face frequently (Herrick, 2007).



## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. Research Design

Only quantitative method has been applied to accomplish the present study. The primary data has been collected through a survey conducted with the Bangladeshi workers working various fields of occupation in Finland.

### 4.2. Sampling

In order to gather primary data from different perspectives, a diverse group of Bangladeshi employees working in different sectors of business in Finland has been identified. The current study was conducted using a simple random probability sampling (Zikmund et. al., 2013). The respondents were reached the questionnaire mainly by using electronic mail. In addition to that, some respondents provided their answers over the mobile phones and Skype. The sample size of this research was 50 that represent around eighty percent of response rate. People selected to serve the current purpose are professionals like researchers, teachers, executives, medical practitioners, engineers as well as super shop and restaurant workers, who are working in various universities, multinational enterprises, small companies, hospitals, super shops and restaurants.

### 4.3. Questionnaire Design

A questionnaire has been designed to conduct the survey. A total of 23 questions including 9 demographic questions have been asked. The questionnaire excluding demographic section is fully structured and closed-ended. A 5-Point Likert scale has been used for 11 questions where the two terminal response categories ‘Not at all Extent’ and ‘To a Large Extent’ were marked as 1 and 5 respectively.

### 4.4. Data Analysis Technique

To carry out this research, several statistical techniques including descriptive technique have been applied to analyze the gathered data. The demographic data has been analyzed using frequency distributions. The factors related to the difficulties at workplaces have been identified by applying factor analysis.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The factors that the employees face at their job stations in Finland have been identified through this study. The following sections present the demographic profile of the respondents, the key factors or components that are responsible for the workplace difficulties and the variables that constitute the principal factors or components.

### 5.1. Profile of the Respondents

The total number of respondents for this research was 50. Among them, 48 respondents were male and 2 were female. In order to accommodate one of the basic assumptions of the factor analysis, the respondents were selected in specific category. Among the total respondents, 48% respondents fall under the age range 25-29 years. The number of respondents belong to the second (30-34 years) and third (35-39 years) age ranges represents 26% and 16% of the total respondents respectively where as 10% of the respondents fall under the forth age range that is 40-44 years. 58% respondents are unmarried and 42% of total respondents are married. (Table 1)

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

| Age Range | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent | Marital Status | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|
| 25-29     | 24        | 48      | 48            | 48                 | Unmarried      | 29        | 58      |
| 30-34     | 13        | 26      | 26            | 74                 |                |           |         |
| 35-39     | 8         | 16      | 16            | 90                 |                |           |         |
| 40-44     | 5         | 10      | 10            | 100                | Married        | 21        | 42      |
| Total     | 50        | 100     | 100           |                    | Total          | 50        | 100     |

### 5.2. Correlation Matrix Analysis

From the correlation matrix (Table 2), it is discovered that significant correlations exist between several variables. The variable AWL is highly correlated (0.447) with the variable ILL. CD and ILL, AWL and DRBJ, DRBJ and



BAOE, VDDR and BAOE, are also significantly correlated. Apart from these, significantly negative correlation has been seen in between SWE and AWL, as well as SWE and ILL.

**Table 2: Correlation Matrix**

|             | SWE      | RD     | CD      | AWL     | MWE    | ILL    | TIA   | FOTA  | DRBJ    | VDDR    | BAOE  |
|-------------|----------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|-------|-------|---------|---------|-------|
| <b>SWE</b>  | 1.000    |        |         |         |        |        |       |       |         |         |       |
| <b>RD</b>   | -0.253*  | 1.000  |         |         |        |        |       |       |         |         |       |
| <b>CD</b>   | -0.219   | 0.172  | 1.000   |         |        |        |       |       |         |         |       |
| <b>AWL</b>  | -0.359** | 0.153  | 0.101   | 1.000   |        |        |       |       |         |         |       |
| <b>MWE</b>  | -0.136   | -0.009 | 0.054   | 0.309*  | 1.000  |        |       |       |         |         |       |
| <b>ILL</b>  | -0.531** | -0.090 | 0.360** | 0.447** | 0.127  | 1.000  |       |       |         |         |       |
| <b>TIA</b>  | -0.010   | 0.028  | 0.021   | 0.040   | 0.068  | 0.183  | 1.000 |       |         |         |       |
| <b>FOTA</b> | -0.224   | 0.047  | 0.212   | 0.016   | 0.022  | 0.042  | 0.110 | 1.000 |         |         |       |
| <b>DRBJ</b> | 0.110    | -0.205 | 0.033   | 0.341** | 0.251* | -0.044 | 0.105 | 0.076 | 1.000   |         |       |
| <b>VDDR</b> | -0.228   | 0.087  | 0.175   | 0.325*  | 0.066  | 0.170  | 0.000 | 0.080 | 0.264*  | 1.000   |       |
| <b>BAOE</b> | -0.122   | 0.086  | 0.204   | 0.253*  | 0.134  | 0.003  | 0.015 | 0.195 | 0.390** | 0.338** | 1.000 |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)  
\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

### 5.3. Results of the factor analysis

The principal component analysis has been used to determine the factors essential to the Bangladeshi workers in Finland to be effective at their workplaces. In order to measure the relevance of the factor analysis, Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy has been used. The value of KMO (Table 3) was found to be 0.505, which indicates the minimum sampling adequacy and the appropriateness of factor analysis.

**Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

| KMO and Bartlett's Test                          |                    |        |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. |                    | .505   |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity                    | Approx. Chi-Square | 97.928 |
|                                                  | df                 | 55     |
|                                                  | Sig.               | .000   |

Four factors have been emerged to identify the difficulties perfectly (Table 4), which are local environment factor (LEF), diplomatic relation factor (DRF), self-efficiency factor (SEF), and workplace diversity factor (WDF).

**Table 4: Factors influencing the Bangladeshi workers working in Finland effectively**

| Factor | Name of the Factor               | Rotation Sums of Squared Loading |               |              |
|--------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|        |                                  | Eigen Values                     | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1      | Local Environment Factor (LEF)   | 2.006                            | 18.238        | 18.238       |
| 2      | Diplomatic Relation Factor (DRF) | 1.958                            | 17.802        | 36.040       |
| 3      | Self-efficiency Factor (SCF)     | 1.366                            | 12.418        | 48.458       |
| 4      | Workplace Diversity Factor (WDF) | 1.252                            | 11.378        | 59.835       |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis (Appendix 2)



The Eigenvalues denote the total variance explained by each factor. The above table displays that the Eigenvalue of local environment factor is 2.006, which indicates that the variance explained by the first factor is 18.238%. The diplomatic relation factor and, self-efficiency factor can explain the variance 17.802% and 12.418% respectively. And the variance explained by the final variable workplace diversity factor is 11.378%. The consequences of the factor analysis reveals that these four factors collectively produce approximately 60% variance in the data set. The total variance explained each of the four factors with initial Eigenvalues is exhibited in the appendix part (Appendix 2).

**Table 5: Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

| Variable  | Component                     |                                 |                             |                                 |
|-----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
|           | F1 (Local Environment Factor) | F2 (Diplomatic Relation Factor) | F3 (Self-efficiency Factor) | F4 (Workplace Diversity Factor) |
| 01 (SWE)  | <b>-.732</b>                  | -.018                           | -.237                       | .299                            |
| 02 (RD)   | .120                          | -.014                           | .187                        | <b>-.712</b>                    |
| 03 (CD)   | .314                          | .088                            | <b>.558</b>                 | -.172                           |
| 04 (AWL)  | <b>.632</b>                   | <b>.535</b>                     | -.152                       | -.050                           |
| 05 (MWE)  | .332                          | .400                            | -.179                       | .239                            |
| 06 (ILL)  | <b>.873</b>                   | -.045                           | .137                        | .172                            |
| 07 (TIA)  | .166                          | -.052                           | .395                        | <b>.558</b>                     |
| 08 (FOTA) | -.031                         | .102                            | <b>.785</b>                 | .045                            |
| 09 (DRBJ) | -.096                         | <b>.790</b>                     | -.004                       | .361                            |
| 10 (VDDR) | .208                          | <b>.585</b>                     | .113                        | -.261                           |
| 11 (BAOE) | -.072                         | <b>.723</b>                     | .324                        | -.159                           |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

The local environment factor has three elements that are satisfaction with workplace environment (SWE), assigned workload (AWL) and inefficiency in local language (ILL). The associated factor loading of third element or variable (ILL) is 0.873, which implies that it is highly correlated with the first factor (LEF). The first variable SWE of local environment factor is negatively correlated by -0.732. The remained factor AWL has the associated factor loading of 0.632.

There are four elements in diplomatic relation factor (DRF), which are assigned workload (AWL), impact of the diplomatic relation on the job benefits (DRBJ), variation in difficulties faced while having diplomatic relation or not (VDDR) and impact of bilateral agreement regarding overseas employee (BAOE). The DRBJ element has the highest correlation with the determinants of diplomatic relation factor as indicated by its factor loading of 0.790. The associated loading for the first variable AWL is 0.535. This factor is also correlated with local environment factor as well. The other two elements represent the associated loading by 0.585 and 0.723 respectively.

The two elements of self-efficiency factor (SEF) are compensation discrimination (CD) and field-oriented training in advance (FOTA). The FOTA variable is highly correlated with the difficulties that are faced by the Bangladeshi workers, which has a loading of 0.785. The associated factor loading for the other variable is 0.558.



The fourth and final factor – workplace diversity factor- is the result of two variables. They are racial discrimination and training on intercultural awareness. The first element racial discrimination (RD) is negatively correlated with the difficulties faced and it represents the loading by -0.712. The other element TIA has the factor loading of 0.558. (Table 8)

Without having sound knowledge about the local environment, many educated people from middle or lower middle class families move to European countries only for the aspiration of becoming financially sound within a short period of time. As a result, numerous realistic stories of suffering emerge over time. Most of the migrants to Middle East are not aware of where they are going, how much money they need to spend, what type of work they have to do, and other social and cultural information about the country of destination whereas the migrants to Finland though are conscious of some of the factors, they are in lack of social and cultural issues, are almost ignorant about the type of job and most importantly the skills and competencies required for the job.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary concern that has been addressed in this research was the difficulties faced by the Bangladeshi employees working in Finland. The current study findings recognized four major factors: local environment (LEF), diplomatic relation (DRF), self-efficiency (SEF), and workplace diversity (CRF). Among these factors, local environment factor and diplomatic relation factor comprise a total of seven variables. The findings of the current research have broad-based implications for the Bangladeshi workers to identify the problems and act accordingly. The Bangladesh-born overseas employees in Finland can develop several strategies to better perform with favourable working condition. One of the key strategies would be to enhance the knowledge in various cultural issues and to give emphasize on learning the local language. Another broad strategic benefit for the Bangladeshi workers in Finland would be to increase self-efficiency that can be improved by obtaining field-oriented training in advance. With the help of the findings of the present study, the government can undertake necessary actions in which the overseas employees can be assured the minimum level of assistance provided from the government side. The outcomes of this research may enable the Bangladeshi workers to be more effective at their own workplaces in Finland by developing their existing skills and competencies along with fulfilling the other requirements of the local culture and business environment. Apart from these implications, government agencies and policy entities can use these four resulting factors as the determining factors while assessing the opportunities and threats for the overseas employees.

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### Appendix 1: Acronyms and Descriptions of the Variables and Factors

| Variable Number | Variable Code | Description of the variable                                             |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01              | SWE           | Satisfaction with Work Place Environment                                |
| 02              | RD            | Racial Discrimination                                                   |
| 03              | CD            | Compensation Discrimination                                             |
| 04              | AWL           | Assigned Work Load                                                      |
| 05              | MWE           | Multicultural Working Environment                                       |
| 06              | ILL           | Inefficiency in Local Language                                          |
| 07              | TIA           | Training on Intercultural Awareness                                     |
| 08              | FOTA          | Field-oriented Training in Advance                                      |
| 09              | DRBJ          | Impact of Diplomatic Relation on the Job Benefits                       |
| 10              | VDDR          | Variation in Difficulties Faced while Having Diplomatic Relation or Not |
| 11              | BAOE          | Impact of Bilateral Agreement regarding Overseas Employee               |

| Factor | Description of Factors     |
|--------|----------------------------|
| LEF    | Local Environment Factor   |
| DRF    | Diplomatic Relation Factor |
| SEF    | Self-efficiency Factor     |
| WDF    | Workplace Diversity Factor |

### Appendix 2: Total variance Explained

| Component | Total Variance Explained |               |              |                                   |               |              |
|-----------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|           | Initial Eigenvalues      |               |              | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings |               |              |
|           | Total                    | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total                             | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1         | 2.609                    | 23.714        | 23.714       | 2.006                             | 18.238        | 18.238       |
| 2         | 1.606                    | 14.597        | 38.311       | 1.958                             | 17.802        | 36.040       |
| 3         | 1.252                    | 11.380        | 49.691       | 1.366                             | 12.418        | 48.458       |
| 4         | 1.116                    | 10.144        | 59.835       | 1.252                             | 11.378        | 59.835       |
| 5         | .980                     | 8.911         | 68.746       |                                   |               |              |
| 6         | .880                     | 8.002         | 76.748       |                                   |               |              |
| 7         | .799                     | 7.260         | 84.007       |                                   |               |              |
| 8         | .606                     | 5.508         | 89.516       |                                   |               |              |
| 9         | .554                     | 5.035         | 94.551       |                                   |               |              |
| 10        | .389                     | 3.536         | 98.087       |                                   |               |              |
| 11        | .210                     | 1.913         | 100.000      |                                   |               |              |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.