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AN INNOVATED HRM FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABILITY: MULTIPLE CASE STUDIES IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

In this study researchers have innovated a novel HRM framework by focusing on the Bangladeshi listed and large-scale manufacturing organisations. To execute the smooth HRM processes, these organizations have developed their distinctly customized HRM policies and practices those contain necessary HRM perspectives and themes. Nevertheless, in this study two new perspectives regarding managing grievances management system and employees' rights standards have been addressed and mapped in this framework with each other. Bangladesh Govt. has declared an isolated regulation naming the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 for all the Bangladeshi listed organizations, where various sections and provisions are included and highlighted regarding employee rights and employees' grievance management. Nevertheless, researchers applied multiple case studies method in twelve companies and took in-depth interviews to analyze and map these two perspectives in the HRM framework for sustainability. Collected data have been organized and analyzed by using NVIVO Mac and the connections between the themes are developed by using Amos on high level. Findings revealed that perspective named 'employees' rights' has three themes named UDHR, ILO and BDL and the other perspective named 'grievance management system' has three themes also named 'Turnover', 'Absenteeism' and 'Visible expression of grievances'.

1. Introduction

Several Bangladeshi listed manufacturing companies perceive Human resource management (HRM) as a substantial practice. Researchers have implemented multiple case studies (MCS) method in twelve companies by conducting thorough interviews with the participants to critically analyze the employees' rights' and their grievance management procedures and have collected data by phase 1: preliminary study and phase 2: fieldwork. Khatri et. al, (1999) mentioned that in an organization employees exist as the core assets, but in reality, the literature gaps revealed that behind the rhetoric it exploits the employees since HRM functions indirectly treacherously by control in the name of compliance' that accentuates employees' need and their loyalty in an organization but not employees' grievances or their rights are focused (Willmott, 1993). This is why, in 2013 Dipboye and colleague found that managers sometimes find HRM 'insufficient' while decisions making because of the absence of grievance handling procedures. Therefore, the problem of this study states that inspite of existing separate employee rights guidelines and their grievances control procedures, deprivations exist occur the research questions seek to find this diversity in various companies and intend to introduce the mapped HRM framework.

2. Background and Literature Review

Various incidents around the world as well in Bangladesh drove this study one mile extra and gave a background to observe deeply. These incidents clearly reveal the suppression against their rights and grievances. Event One: Compa and Feinstein (2012) mentioned that Nilsa R. Risuez, employee of German Deutsche-Post gave interview to 'Human-Rights Watch', where she pointed out that no employees have rights to raise flags and are fired in a moment for no reason. The supervisors affront the employees by creating terror of 'losing the job'. Event Two: Greek Cosco shipping company, not only discard 'Labour Union' but also restricted them from toilet breaks by asking them to urinate into the sea (Vassilopoulos, 2014). Event three: At Savar Bangladesh, Rana-plaza that was a multifaceted building collapsed with four manufacturing organisations and 2500 employees leaving a 1124 death-toll. Managers were alerted much earlier regarding the probable collapse by the engineers but they still forced the employees to work with 'life risk' (Siddiqui & Uddin, 2016). Two common factors found here are not focused in many 'HRM policies and practices' of the companies', which are (i) the employees' rights, that is an embedded universal right of a human being or employee as per UDHR and (ii) the grievance control platform as per Fitzpatrick (2006), which needs instant discussion but if delayed then faces forfeiture and difficult to win over. Global benchmarks 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR','International Labour Organization, ILO' and 'Bangladeshi guideline 'Bangladesh Labour Act, BDL' have parameters to protect employee rights.

1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): In 1948, United Nation's General Assembly (GA) adopted UDHR and described it as 'the first global expression of Human Rights' for humankind. As per United Nation's report the World War-II occurrences drove UDHR's establishment. Then, GA enhanced into a core association by embracing the member-states' in an annual meeting (United_Nations, 2015). UN established one 'significant GA-resolution' by 'UDHR' and 'two international-treaties'. The

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966 and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1966 got adopted in 1948 (United_ Nations, 2015). As per Williams (1981), these two covenants got ratified and keyed into force in Bill, in 1976, which became a portion of International Law.

Three UDHR articles among 30 articles have emphasized Employees' rights. As per United_ Nations (1945), UDHR's Article-23:1, each employee has work-right (employment, remuneration and compensation package), Article-23:2, each employee can choose his /her work (work environment, culture and job security), Article-23:3, each employee deserves right a just and favourable remuneration (health insurance, children protection, medical aid, social support, safeguard from accidents, provident fund, gratuity, insurances), Article-23:4, each employee has the right to get protection against unemployment (Legal help), Article-23:5, each employee has got right to uniform pay –no discrimination (remuneration, gratuity, provident fund, bonus) , Article-23:6, each employee deserves to be honoured and worthy as a human being (dignity, social status) and Article-23:7, each employee has the right to design or join trade-unions to protect his/her interests (trade union), Article-24, each employee has the right to rest and leisure (maternity leave, leisure hours), Article-25:1, each employee deserves a standard living with satisfactory health and well-being of himself and of his family (suitability insurance, medical aid, family support facilities) and Article-25:2, each employee has the right to singular protection, support and attention for motherhood and childhood the thereby guaranteeing a self-worth (maternity leave, maternity insurance, children protection, self-esteem), and augmented, if obligatory, by other methods of social security.

2) International Labour Organizations (ILO): International Labour Organization (ILO) has certain protocols recognizing various rights of an employee to protect these at workplace, by prearrangement of work-security by implying that employees are 'human-beings' and not mere 'working-tools' (Handbook …, 2012). Shekhar (2012) stated five key-points of ILO, which are 'Trade-Union', 'HRM', 'recruitment and selection', 'HR components', 'industrial relations'. The sole tripartite muster of ILO offers an uniform voice to workforces, managers and governments to safeguard all insights. ILO was originated during WWI, to follow a dream of finding lasting peace by instituting social-justice. ILO became UN's first dedicated organization in 1946 with 'dedicated protocols-conventions and articles' to guard 'manufacturing organizations' employee rights' sanctioned at different times. These ILO protocols are 'P155 (2002): occupational safety and health', 'P147 (1996): the merchant shipping', 'P110 (1982): the plantations', 'P089 (1948): the night work of women', 'P081 (1999): the labour inspection' and 'P029 (2014): the forced labour'. Meanwhile, ILO conventions got accepted and applied at various times with thorough descriptions in distinct articles. As an example, Convention 'Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)' has been openly defined in the Articles 1 to 14.

3) Bangladesh Labour-Law (BDL): Bangladesh Labour Law was endorsed in 1997. Nevertheless, it was improved in 2006 that included 25 Labour Laws 'after prolonged tripartite negotiations'. Number of substances like retirement allowance, reimbursement for both dead and permanently disable employees, employees' provident-fund, chastisement for sexual persecution etc got introduced in this Act (Bangladesh Employers' Federation BEF, 2009). Bangladesh Employers' Federation, BEF formulated the

Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 by working underneath the ILO canopy and made BDL Certain obligatory. In the following Table 01. Gaps concering HRM practices of Bangladesh are discussed.

Table 01. Gaps found concerning ERS in the HRM practices of Bangladesh

HRM components in the Bangladeshi companies	Gaps found concerning Employee rights' (ERS)	Reference
Organizational social capital (OSC) and working conditions	Relationship between HRM and OSC can become stronger if ERS included	(Chuang, Chen, & Chuang, 2013)
HRM Policies and Corporate Ethics in the Framework	HRM policy makers must include all components as well as ERS	(Hiltrop, 1996;Wellsa& Schminkeb, 2001)
Roles of HR Managers and Organizational performance	Managers ignore ERS but emphasized rights' and performances	(Andalib, Darun, & Azizan, 2015; Burke & Cooper, 2006)
Talent Management	Employees insecure at work due to no ERS thus demotivated to explore talents	(Scullion, Collings, Caligiuri, 2010)
Industrial growth with HRM, globalization	Industrial growth creates difficulty to manage ERS because of cultural values	(Dowling & Donnelly, 2013);
Assault, Arrest, Repression, Dismissal, Threatened Trade union	Implementation of ERS is mandatory besides inclusion in polices	(Di Martino, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003)
Conditions, wage, gender discrimination, Job Analysis	ERS overlooked	(Kumar, 2006; Singh, 2008)

3. Problem Statement

Marconi et al (2016) described that the export of manufactured goods and the change of productive structure in manufacturing companies brought today's changes in labour management. Vasudevan, Sharma & Kumar (2005) a decade ago also mentioned, due to changes in manufacturing companies changes occurred in employees' consumption patterns in Asia as well as in Bangladesh. Therefore, the moment employees become a tool to earn revenues, treatment towards them changes negatively. At different decades that the labour supply relationship in a manufacturing organization are considered as a demand-orientated approach in which "there is no systematic relation between the growth of manufacturing wages and the supply of labour to that sector" (Libânio & Moro, 2011). This indicates the dangerous notion of overusing employees as a revenue-earning tool. Charles et. al (1984) in 'Michigan HRM Model' supported this notion and emphasized the hard HRM by suggesting that employees should be used as tools with full exploitation (Charles, Tichy, & Devanna, 1984). This reveals the failed ERS in the HRM policies tremendously. Therefore, the problem statement is that, inspite of existing HRM policies besides the parallel BDL guideline that focuses on ERS in the manufacturing companies of Bangladesh, ERS suppression occur with their increased grievances (Bangladesh Employers' Federation BEF, 2009).

4. Research Questions

RQ 1: Has the HRM policy of the listed manufacturing company map ERS (employee rights') protocols (UDHR, ILO, BDL) and grievance management system (GMS)? If not, how can they be mapped?

RQ 2: Why the HRM perspectives need to be mapped with ERS protocols and GMS?

5. Purpose of the Study

Hiltrop (1996) confirmed in the scrutiny of the seminal work that some companies have a culture that clearly makes employees the most important asset. Nevertheless, for some other companies, these are merely empty words and are not translated into practice. Hiltrop (1996) mentioned that there is a need for the researchers and the academicians to address the employees as the 'best assets' and 'human beings' so that they are capable of performing their tasks with freedom, security, and dignity under the tenets of the HRM policies along with ERS. Thus, this study attempts to help the HR managers to preserve employees' rights and respect by mapping the GMS with ERS in the new HRM framework.

6. Research Methods

Researchers used multiple cases studies to collect data as these generate better-grounded theory than single cases (Darun, 2011; Eisenhardt, 1989). Also multiple case studies (MCS) provide a stronger base for the development of a framework (Yin, 2009). Single cases were used as the unit of analysis, which as per Yin (2009) is required as the fundamental component for case studies because here multiple bound systems over time through a detailed step-by-step process using multiple sources of information (observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, documents and reports) has been used to collect data (Stake,1995). MCS utilize the logic of replication and analysis to identify issues and finalize the common themes (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2009). MCS has a format for each case description called 'within case analysis' followed by a thematic analysis across the cases called a 'cross case analysis', with rich context and interpretations (Creswell, 2013). Researchers used purposeful to select the interviewees and the cases based on individuals' understanding to the central idea (Creswell, 2013). Initially, the listed manufacturing companies were extracted from the Dhaka stock markets of Bangladesh which has 146 listed manufacturing companies and then, based on four categories; cases got selected for fieldwork. These categories are:

- Dhaka Base Stock Exchange (Location of the Corporate offices and factories)
- The Upgraded Company Govt. Act 1994 (Age and Year of Public Listing)
- Employee Numbers >500 (number of employees>200 is considered as category A, as per Bangladesh Govt.)
- Usage of Heavy Machineries (manufacturing base)

Marshall and Rossman, (2006) argued that the sampling includes events, participants and artifacts', which during the study, can be changed with researchers' flexibility. Researchers applied the following steps while collecting data those are mentioned in Table 02. In this study, preliminary stage has 5 cases with 16 participants and fieldwork has 12 cases with 87 participants.

Table 02. Research Steps

Research Steps	
Research Case and Research instrument	Select Cases and Participants Consider Quality, Gain Access and Make Rapport Prepare Instrument (questionnaire and interview guide)
Data Collection and Storage	Store Data (voice records, transcripts at NVIVO Mac)
Data Analyzing Procedures	Code and Build Theory (Codes, categories, themes and perspectives)
Data Validation procedures and Triangulation	Justifiability (Task list, Code list, List of scholars' works, LR matching) Transferability (New HRM framework)

7. Findings

Besides the existing perspectives of HRM framework, researchers introduced two distinct perspectives by mapping them and by re-designing a single HRM-framework. It is drawn below:
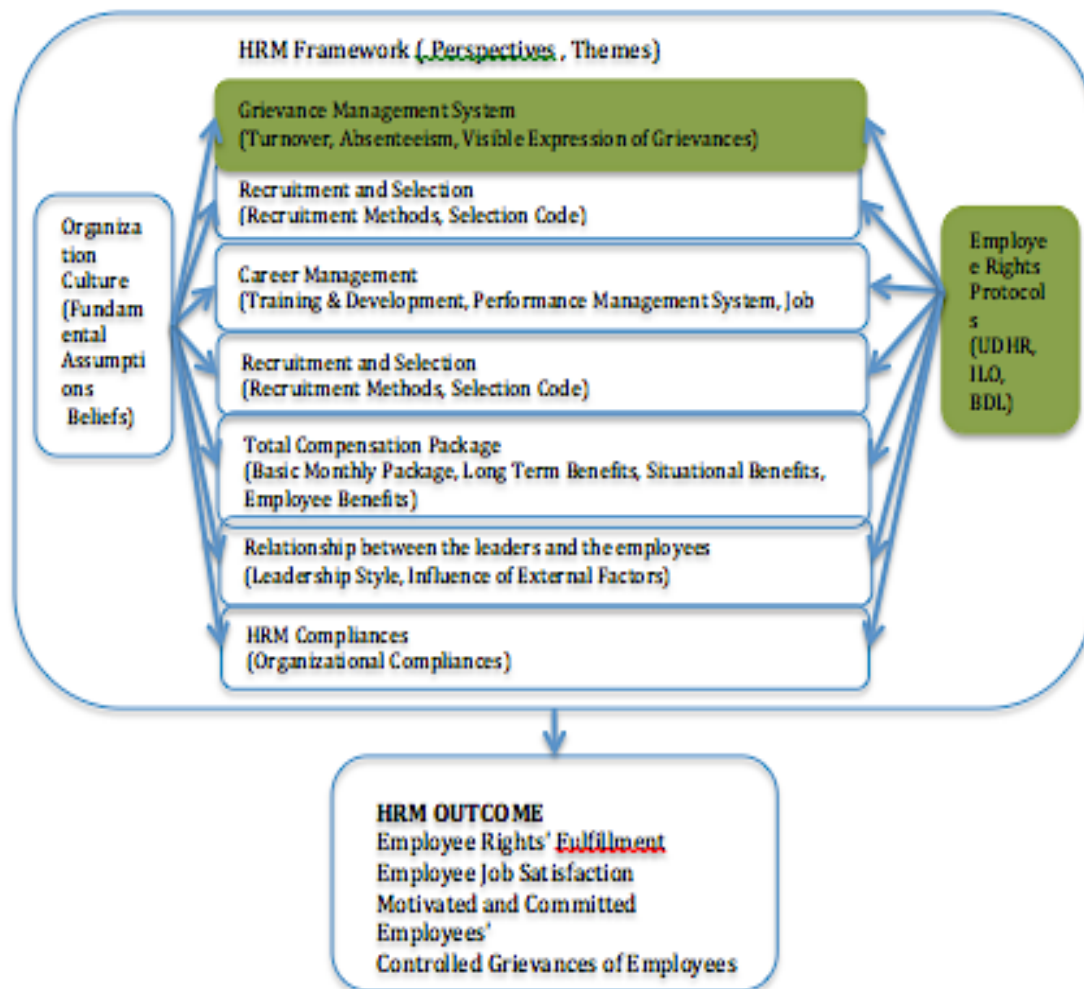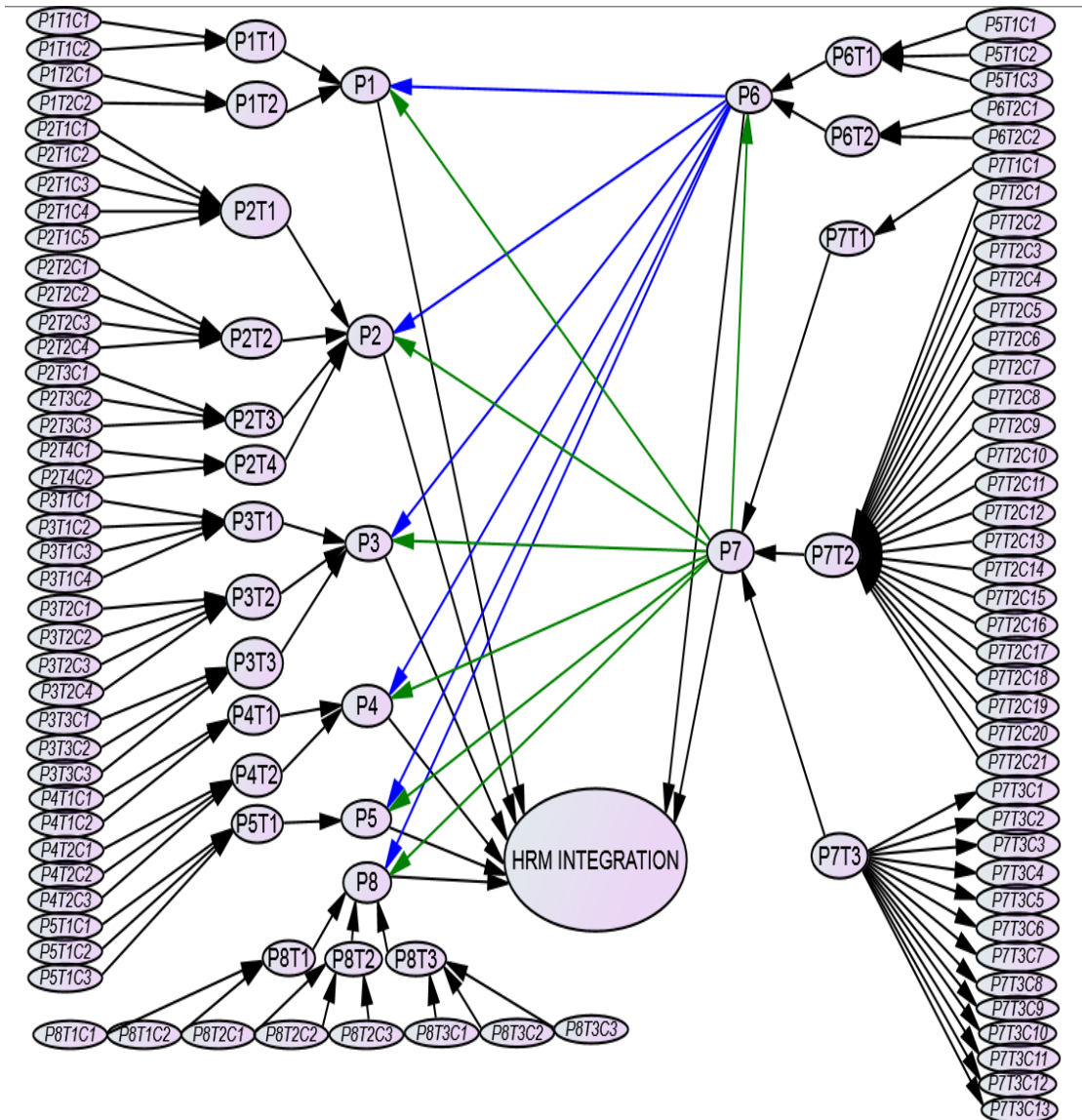
Figure 01. HRM Framework and Connections, Source : (Andalib & Darun, 2018)

1) Additional Perspective (P7): International Employee Rights Standards (IERS)

This perspective appeared to answer the proposition seven. In this research, from both preliminary and fieldwork data, researcher understand that in Bangladesh, certain companies addressed the Bangladesh Labour Law in parallel to HRM policies-practices. However, the ILO guided these employee rights as well, but not all the protocols of the ILO were included in the BDL guideline book. UDHR, ILO and BDL were the three themes, which helped to organize and form the perspective 'Employee Rights." In this research in various cases UDHR, ILO or BDL was rated as implemented (++) or partially implemented (++). Based on these ratings cases were either seen as integrated or non-integrated or hybrid. From this research, cases 6 and 11 were found integrated; cases 1, 5 and 12 were found hybrid and other cases 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 were found non-integrated.

i) UDHR: As described in Chapter 2, UDHR has three articles that define employee rights, which are Article 23, Article 24 and Article 25. While, doing MCS the researchers observe if these are included or partially included in the HRM policies and practices of the company. From evidences, cases 6, 11 and

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12 were found included fully. Talent management manager from case 6 said, *"We implement employees' rights values and of course we are driven by UDHR guideline* on this matter." From evidences, cases 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 were found partially included UDHR. The assistant HR manager from case 2 said, *"We do not follow UDHR protocols separately but we do follow BDL protocols which are needed."*

ii) ILO protocols: The ILO had particular protocols and conventions, created and ratified at different times, which were designed to protect the employees' rights in the manufacturing industry. These protocols were P155, P147, P110, P089, P081 and P029 etc (ILO_Geneva_Rev, 2012). All these protocols and conventions were thoroughly described in the Articles of UDHR and ILO. For example, discrimination (Employment and Occupation) is a ILO convention which is clearly prescribed in the Articles 1 to 14. Cases 1, 5 and 11 were seen to have ILO inclusion. HR executive from case 1 said, *"We have Trade Unions for our factory labours"* Similarly, corporate affairs executive from case 3 said, *"Certain rules that we have I think it has been taken from ILO."* Nevertheless, cases 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 had partially included ILO. HR head from case 8 said, *"We follow Bangladesh Labour Code, it is a shadow of ILO. "*From case 8, the factory supervisor said, *"We have SOP guideline under ILO."*

iii)BD Labour Act, 2006: Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 was promulgated on 11th October'2006 as per section 354, Bangladesh constitution, that introduced 25 labour laws after prolonged tripartite negotiation that addressed issues of retirement benefit, compensation for death and permanent disability, provident fund, chastisement for sexual harassment (Bangladesh Employers' Federation BEF, 2009). BDL laws consolidated legislations and provisions from the earlier 50 labour laws. Cases 1, 5, 6, 11 and 12 had included BDL sections. From case 11 the managing director said, *"Of course we follow because we are under govt."* The Factory Head from case 11 said, *"Yes, our labours are satisfied with the BDL code and trainings."* Nevertheless, cases 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 had partially included BDL. Assistant HR manager from case 2 said, *"We follow BDL where the net profit's 5% are allocated to the employees as per BDL Company bonus guideline"* In the following Table 03. Cases have been scrutinized and the Themes of International Employee Rights' Standards, which are UDHR, ILO and BDL are cross checked.

Table 03. Cross case analysis of Additional IERS Perspective

Additional Perspective as P7: International Employee Rights Standards			
Themes	**UDHR**	**ILO**	**BDL**	**Outcome**
Categories	Articles	Conventions	Sections	
Case 1	+	++	++	Hybrid
	Partially-Included	Included	Included	
Case 2	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 3	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 4	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 5	+	++	++	Hybrid
	Partially_Included	Included	Included	
Case 6	++	++	++	Integrated

	Included	Included	Included	
Case 7	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 8	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 9	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 10	+	+	+	Non-Integrated
	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	Partially-Included	
Case 11	++	++	++	Integrated
	Included	Included	Included	
Case 12	++	++	++	Hybrid
	Included	Partially-Included	Included	

In this table 3, ++ stands for 'highly implemented', + stands for 'partially implemented' for all sections of UDHR, ILO and BDL. Cases are distinguished as integrated, partially integrated or non-integrated. Source : (Andalib & Darun, 2018)

2) Additional Perspective (P8): Grievance Management System (GMS)

GMS perspective has been derived from three themes; 'turnover', 'absenteeism' and 'visible expression of grievances'. These are rated as High (++) or Low (+). The outcomes of the cases are either active, hybrid or inactive.

i)Turnover: Here, cases 1, 5 and 11 are active; cases 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are inactive and cases 4 and 12 are hybrid cases. Research results show that employees' turnover intention has a negative correlation with industrial relations as per Yuan (2014) on the other hand, strong positive relation has been found between corporate ethical values with turnover (Kaur & Sharma, 2016). The two categorized codes found in this theme are 'Lacking in Performance pay & Employee Benefits' and 'Lacking in Corporate Ethics'. Cases 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 12 have strongly existent turnover. The assistant HR manager from case 2 said, *"Employees leave when they get job offer with higher salary in other company."* Similarly, Factory engineer from case 9 said, *"We have lots of primitive machineries and lots of manual works to be done, so employees become get seriously ill and leave."* On the other hand, cases 1, 5, 6, 10 and 11 have weakly existent turnover. The HR MD from case 1said, *"It is rare for employees to leave because we have a big brand name"*. The assistant HR manager from case 1 said, *"Sometimes, employees leave because they go abroad for higher study"* HR manager from case 11 said, *"We are a govt. company so hardly anyone leaves the job"*.

ii)Absenteeism: Organizations' employees got frustrated for various reasons related to their company at work and stays reluctant to even get counseled and stays absent at work or in fulfilling the work targets and sometimes takes leave often. The three categorized codes of turnover are: Leave of Absence (LoA), Not meeting work targets (nMT) and Late Arrival (LA). Cases 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9 had strongly existent absenteeism. From case 7, HR executive said, *"when employees are frustrated they often take sick leaves"*. From case 8 the HR head said, *"Sometimes, we find employees who do not complete their targets."* On the otherhand, case 1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 12 had weakly existent absenteeism. HR director from case 4 said, *"We check who are regularity at work to understand employees' motivation."*

iii) Visible expression of grievance: As per Brian (2004), disputes between the employees and the management of the organization reveals visible expression of grievances. Three themes are 'protests','file complaints' and 'suppression of employee union'. Since 2011, a "new global cycle of protests" developed in Bangladesh, characterized by public outrage, fury, and resentment (Hallberg & Ossewaarde, 2016). Employees when faced with adverse situations express each vignette of filing complaints against the management (Cleyman et al., 1995). Management's failure increases group voice (Danilovich, 2016). Cases 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9 had strongly existing visible expression of grievances. Factory supervisor from case 8 said, *"Labours complain when SOP's are not working properly."* From case 7, HR executive said, *"Many times we have complaint about many necessities like regarding drinking water, latrines, food canteen, medical facilities and once we had to protest for claim for one of our fellow workers' accident cases"*. On the other hand, he cases 1, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12 had weakly existing visible expression of grievances. From case 1 HR Head said, *"We do pamper our employees with benefits and but we cannot make everyone happy also."* In the following Table 04. Cases have been scrutinized and the Themes of Grievance Management System Perspective, which are Turnover, Absenteeism and Visible Expression of Grievances are observed.

Table 04. Cross case analysis of Additional Perspective Grievance Management System

Additional Perspective as P8 : Grievance Management System								
Themes	**Turnover**		**Absenteeism**			**Visible Expression of Grievances**			**Outcome**
Categories	LEPB	LCE	LoA	nMT	LA	PR	FC	SEU	
Case 1	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Active
	Weakly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			
Case 2	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	Inactive
	Strongly_Existent		Strongly_Existent			Strongly_Existent			
Case 3	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	Inactive
	Strongly_Existent		Strongly_Existent			Strongly_Existent			
Case 4	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	Hybrid
	Strongly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			
Case 5	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Active
	Weakly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			
Case 6	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Active
	Weakly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			
Case 7	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	Inactive
	Strongly_Existent		Strongly_Existent			Strongly_Existent			
Case 8	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	Inactive
	Strongly_Existent		Strongly_Existent			Strongly_Existent			
Case 9	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	Inactive
	Strongly_Existent		Strongly_Existent			Strongly_Existent			
Case 10	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Inactive
	Weakly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			
Case 11	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Active

	Weakly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			
Case 12	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	Hybrid
	Strongly_Existent		Weakly_Existent			Weakly_Existent			

In Table 4, Lacking in performance pay & in Employee benefits stands for =LEPB, Lacking in Corporate Ethics stands for=LCE, Leave of absence stands for = LoA, Not meeting the targets stands for nMT, Late Arrival stands for LA, Protests stand for = 'PR', File Complaints Stand for = FC, Suppression of employee union stands for = SEU. Here, '++= stands for 'High', '+=stands for 'Low'. In this table, Grievances Management System for each case has been measured as Active or Inactive or Hybrid. Source : (Andalib & Darun, 2018)

8. Conclusion

Researchers renovated the HRM framework with eight perspectives including and mapping two distinct perspectives, which are the International Employee Rights Standards (IERS) and Grievance Management System (GMS). Study shows that few companies have GMS and IERS as separate, non-aligned guidelines. This innovation focuses on employees' rights by solving their grievances, which entrusted on HR managers to comply. This modification will lead the company to have a sustainable state because the moment employees' rights and grievances are managed, their motivation and commitment to work-environment increases whereas entire decision-making process advances. Companies stability and sustainability also leads to the social change by triggering a better life style for his or her family and to the society. This remodelled HRM framework thus creates impact of sustainability all throughout.

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