

Tracing the Haymarket Legacy: A Spotlight on Employment Relations and Labor Rights among Female Workers in the Ceramic Industry of Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study explores the contemporary landscape of the ceramic industry in Bangladesh, focusing on female workers' experiences with employment relations and labor rights. Inspired by the historic Haymarket affair, it examines the ongoing struggle for fair treatment and dignified working conditions within this sector. By highlighting the complexities and challenges faced by female workers, the research underscores the critical importance of sustained efforts to advance equitable labor practices and improve their welfare in Bangladesh's ceramic industry. Additionally, the study offers policy recommendations to foster better employment relations and labor rights within and beyond the industry.

Keywords: Haymarket massacre · employment relations, · labour rights · female ceramic workers · Bangladesh ceramic industry

Introduction

The Haymarket Affair, also known as the Haymarket Massacre or Haymarket Riot, was a significant event in labor history that occurred on May 4, 1886, in Chicago, Illinois, United States (Avrich, 1984). The incident occurred during a labor demonstration in Haymarket Square, organized to demand an eight-hour workday. The rally began peacefully, with speeches from labor leaders and activists. However, as the gathering was winding down, and only a few hundred people remained, police arrived to disperse the crowd. At that moment, a bomb was thrown into the police ranks, resulting in chaos and violence. During the ensuing confrontation, gunfire erupted, leading to casualties among both the police officers and civilians. The aftermath of the Haymarket Affair was marked by a wave of public outrage and government crackdowns on labor organizations and leftist movements. Several anarchist leaders were arrested

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and subsequently tried in a highly contentious legal proceeding known as the Haymarket trial. The trial resulted in convictions and harsh sentences, including death sentences for seven of the accused, despite a lack of conclusive evidence tying them to the bombing. Four defendants were executed, one committed suicide, and the remaining sentences were commuted (Green, 2007; Messer-Kruse, 2012). The Haymarket Affair had far-reaching implications for labor rights and civil liberties in the United States, sparking debates over the role of government, workers' rights, and the limits of free speech and assembly. It emerged amid industrialization and urbanization, as workers demanded better working conditions, particularly the eight-hour workday and labor welfare. Despite setbacks such as the controversial trial and executions, it galvanized global support for labor rights, influencing laws and fostering international solidarity. Its implications include empowering labor, shaping government regulation and legal precedents, fueling global labor movements, challenging anarchist ideologies, and enduring as a symbol in commemorations of workers' struggles for justice and dignity. This demonstration underscored the urgent need for worker rights, leading to their formal recognition. Since then, numerous international laws and regulations have been enacted to safeguard workers' rights worldwide.

In response to the Haymarket Massacre, May 1st was declared International Workers' Day in 1889, commemorating the events and serving as a global symbol of workers' solidarity and advocacy. May Day, recognized as International Workers' Day and a global symbol of solidarity, is celebrated worldwide every year in various ways, reflecting the diverse labor movements and cultural traditions of different countries. Some common ways in which the day is observed include:

1. Public Demonstrations and Protests

Many countries organize marches, rallies, and demonstrations where workers and labor unions advocate for workers' rights, fair wages, and improved working conditions.

2. Political and Cultural Events

May Day often includes political speeches, cultural performances, and festivals that highlight the achievements and struggles of workers throughout history.

3. Labor Union Activities Trade Unions And Labor

Organizations often hold meetings, conferences, and gatherings to discuss issues affecting workers and plan future actions.

4. Community Events

Communities may organize events such as picnics, parades, and street parties to

celebrate the contributions of workers and promote solidarity among different social groups.

5. Public Holidays

In many countries, May 1st is a public holiday, allowing workers to take the day off to participate in festivities or simply relax with their families.

Overall, May Day serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for workers' rights and social justice, while also providing an opportunity for people to come together in solidarity and celebration.

While May Day continues to be commemorated around the world, questions remain about its legacy in the context of contemporary labor movements and societal challenges. Its ongoing relevance depends on how effectively it adapts to changing circumstances and addresses the evolving needs of workers in the 21st century. In this context, this article commemorates the Haymarket massacre and sheds light on the contemporary landscape of the ceramic industry in Bangladesh, focusing on female workers' employment relations and well-being. A fundamental question arises: Do stakeholders in the ceramic industry leverage Haymarket's legacy to address ongoing challenges related to labor rights and well-being? We explore the situation of female workers in three ceramic factories and draw our conclusion.

Haymarket Legacy: Global Labour Rights and Regulations at Present

The Haymarket Affair had significant consequences for employment relations and labour rights, fundamentally influencing worker advocacy and industrial relations worldwide. Here are some of the major implications in the present-day global context:

1. Empowerment of Labour Movements

The Haymarket Affair served as a catalyst for the empowerment of labour movements worldwide. It brought attention to the struggles of workers and inspired solidarity among labour activists, leading to the formation of stronger unions and advocacy groups (Green, 2007; Montgomery, 1986).

2. Advocacy for Eight-Hour Workday

The Haymarket Affair amplified the demand for the eight-hour workday, which was a central issue for the labour movement at the time. The rallying cry for shorter work hours became emblematic of the broader fight for improved working conditions and fair treatment of workers (Foner, 1976).

3. Government Response and Regulation

In the aftermath of the Haymarket Affair, governments responded with increased regulation of labour organizations and demonstrations. This led

to the introduction of labour laws aimed at protecting workers' rights and ensuring safer working conditions (Green, 2007; Montgomery, 1986).

4. Legal Precedents

The legal proceedings following the Haymarket Affair set important precedents for the protection of labour rights and the right to organize. Despite the controversial trial and convictions, it underscored the importance of due process and fair legal treatment for workers accused of participating in labour activism. For example, the Haymarket trial highlighted the need for adequate legal representation and the right to a fair trial, reflecting fundamental principles of justice and fairness within the legal system (Avrich, 1984; Messer-Kruse, 2011).

5. Global Influence

The international reverberations of the Haymarket Affair inspired labour movements around the world. It contributed to the development of international labour standards and conventions aimed at promoting fair working conditions and protecting the rights of workers globally (Foner, 1976; Green, 2007).

6. Challenges to Anarchist Ideologies

The association of the Haymarket Affair with anarchist movements prompted scrutiny and challenges to radical ideologies within the labour movement. It led to debates about the most effective strategies for advancing workers' interests and the role of different political ideologies in achieving labour rights (Montgomery, 1986).

7. Symbolism and Commemoration

The Haymarket Affair remains a powerful symbol of workers' struggle for justice and dignity. It is commemorated annually as a reminder of the ongoing fight for labour rights and social justice, inspiring continued efforts to address inequities in employment relations and uphold the fundamental rights of workers worldwide (Foner, 1976; Avrich, 1984).

Since the Haymarket incident, numerous regulations have been implemented to safeguard and oversee manufacturing industries and the relationships within them (Galvin, 2019). The overarching principle has been adherence to the conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO), aimed at ensuring the rights and prosperity of both industrial actors and factors. Presently, many Labour Standards and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) concerning employment relations are in alignment with equitable labour standards, contributing to sustainable economic development. The United Nations' SDGs prioritize inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full employment, and decent work for all. By upholding labor standards such as fair wages, safe working conditions, and the eradication of child labor, these

goals can foster sustainable economic development while fulfilling social and environmental responsibilities (United Nations, 2015). However, challenges persist, particularly regarding the exploitation of workers by multinational corporations (MNCs) through minimal wage payments, especially in developing countries where labour is readily available at low rates. The Ready-Made Garments (RMG) industry serves as a prominent example of such practices. The literature highlights discrepancies in the enforcement of these regulations at both the national and international levels, indicating a gap between policy intent and practical application.

ILO Core Conventions and Bangladesh Labour Law 2006

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is dedicated to the pursuit of social justice and advocates for a fair globalization that provides opportunities for everyone. In 2008, the ILO adopted the 'Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization', which outlines four strategic objectives within its Decent Work Agenda. These objectives encompass promoting employment opportunities, extending social protection, facilitating social dialogue and tripartism, and preserving fundamental principles and rights at work. Utilizing conventions and recommendations as instruments, the ILO focuses on achieving these objectives by emphasizing fundamental principles and rights at work, as well as improving working conditions and benefits (ILO, 2008). This declaration marks a significant milestone for the organization since the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944 and serves as the foundation for endeavors to promote and realize fair and equitable employment relations through the Decent Work Agenda (ILO, 1944; ILO, 2004).

Table 1. ILO Core Conventions on Labour Rights and Well-Being at Work

Area	ILO Conventions
Fundamental rights	
1. Freedom of association & collective bargaining	C087: Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 C098: Right to Organize & Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949
2. Non-discrimination & equal remuneration	C100: Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 C111: Discrimination (Employment & Occupation) Convention, 1958
3. Free from child labour	C138: Minimum Age Convention, 1973 C182: Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999
4. Freedom from forced & compulsory labour	C029: Forced Labour Convention, 1930 C105: Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957
Well-being rights at work	
1. Job security	C158: Termination of Employment Convention 1982
2. Minimum wage and regularity of payment	C131: Minimum Wage Fixing Convention 1970 C095: Protection of Wages Convention 1949
3. Working hours & leave	C 001: Hours of Work Convention 1919
4. Maternity & childcare benefits	C183: Maternity Protection Convention 2000
5. Social security (medical care, sickness, injury, old age)	C102: Social Security (Minimum Standard) Convention 1952
6. Health & safety at work	C 155: Occupational Safety and Health Convention 1981
7. Leisure & rest during work	C0 14: Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention 1921

The enactment of the 'Bangladesh Labour Law 2006' on October 11, 2006, marked a significant step in response to calls from various stakeholders for an improved regulatory framework for trade unions and the resolution of inconsistencies within existing labour laws. This legislation reflects many of the labour rights advocated by the International Labour Organization (ILO), encompassing entitlements such as the issuance of appointment letters, fair remuneration, regular leave and holidays, maternity and childcare benefits, access to healthcare services, workplace safety standards, transportation and meal allowances, bonuses, additional perks, pension schemes, and group insurance coverage. Notably, it formally recognized workers' right to form trade unions. Section 176 of the law expressly guarantees each worker the right to establish or join a trade union and to align with an association of their choice. Furthermore, the legislation allows for the formation of trade union federations and permits affiliations with international organizations and workers' confederations. Additionally, Section 195 explicitly prohibits employers or employer associations from terminating employees for their union involvement or from attempting to dissuade them, through incentives or threats, from engaging in or organizing workers' associations.

Table 2. Key Features of Bangladesh Labour Law 2006

Areas	Provisions / Limitations
Fundamental rights	
1. Freedom of association & collective bargaining (Section 176)	• Minimum membership requirement of 30 percent workers of the total permanently employed workers for approval of unions • Restriction on temporary workers from joining a union. • Provision of joining only one trade union for each worker • Only one union in each factory
2. Non-discrimination & equal remuneration	• No discrimination at work in terms of wage and employment conditions (Equal treatment: Section 16) • Minimum age of employment is 18 years.
3. Free from child labour	• Prohibition of employment of children and adolescents (Section 34-44)
4. Freedom from forced and compulsory labor	• No specific provision or definitions are available in BLA, 2006 • Forced and compulsory labour is prohibited under Article 34 of the Bangladesh Constitution
Well-being rights at work	
1. Job security	• Provision for appointment letter and identity card (Section 5) • Absence of rationing facilities • Job termination laws for workers are weak (Section 22)
2. Minimum wage and regularity of payment	• Provision of Minimum Wage Board (Section 138) • Payment date is within seven days after the end of the last day of the wage period • Overtime works up to 10 pm
3. Working hours and leave (Section 100-119)	• Working hours 8 hours a day, 48 hours a week, in exceptional cases 60 hours. • One-day weekly holiday and one-day annual leave for every eighteen days of work
4. Maternity and childcare benefits (Section 45-50)	• Maternity leave for 16 weeks with full payment • No maternity benefits for the workers who already have two children
5. Social security (medical care, sickness, injury, old age)	• No clear provision for job protection and old age benefits • Provisions for First aid, Canteen, Daycare centers, and Housing facilities (Section 89-99)
6. Health and safety at work (Section 51-88)	• BLA 2006 covers OSH extensively and focuses on two areas of protection: • Occupational accidents, hazards, and diseases; and • Safety equipment and facilities
7. Leisure and rest during work	• BBangladesh's labour law includes provisions for rest intervals or meal breaks (BLA 2006, Section 101)

Source: BLA (2006)

The “Labour Law of 2006” encompasses mechanisms such as the arbitration council and labour court to address industrial disputes. Despite these provisions, there are specific deficiencies in this legislation, particularly regarding the implementation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1947 (No. 87). However, a recent amendment has introduced provisions pertaining to the right to collective bargaining and workers’ participation in the company’s profits.

An Empirical Investigation: Employment Relations and Labour Rights Scenario of Female Workers in Three Ceramic Factories in Bangladesh

During the days of the Haymarket Square massacre in Chicago, women played a prominent role as labour union organizers. Additionally, women were active participants in the workforce, both in formal waged workplaces and in various household and community activities. The involvement of women in labor movements is significantly shaped by the life stories of Haymarket labor organizers, such as Lucy Parsons, an anarchist labor activist who devoted her adult life to pursuing social justice (Cravey & Cravey, 2008). This motivated the authors to conduct a project investigating the conditions of women workers in the ceramic industry. This research purposively selected three ceramic factories in Bangladesh representing three production types: floor tiles, sanitary ware, and tableware. The ceramic industry was chosen because it remains a relatively unexplored area in employment relations and women’s labor welfare. Most existing research in this area has focused on the apparel industry (Hossain et al., 2013; Hossain, 2013). The project, titled “Employment Relations and Wellbeing of Female Workers in the Ceramic Industries of Bangladesh,” employed international labor regulations, sociological perspectives, and labor-related theories to investigate the current state of employment relations and well-being among ceramic workers. Utilizing qualitative methods, the research collected in-depth data from 36 female workers employed in these ceramic factories.

Data and Methods

The research project employed various methods to collect data, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the employment relations and well-being of female workers in three ceramic factories in Bangladesh. These methods included:

- Review of published documents.
- Direct observation
- In-depth face-to-face interviews.
- Focus group discussions.
- Home visits

1. Review of Published Documents

This involved gathering data from various sources, such as annual reports, brochures, and archival resources, as well as secondary data from websites like the Bangladesh Ceramic Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BCMEA), Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, and Bangladesh Bank.

2. Direct Observation

The researcher observed interactions between workers and managers within the ceramic factory environment during the production process, utilizing an overt yet non-participant observation technique to gain initial insights into employment dynamics and worker well-being.

3. In-depth Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with female workers from the three ceramic factories to delve deeper into their experiences, perspectives, and understandings of employment relations and wellbeing.

4. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Structured discussions were held with groups of workers and factory managers/administrative staff from each ceramic factory, allowing for dynamic interactions and the exploration of diverse perspectives.

5. Home Visits

Researchers visited the homes of interviewed respondents to observe their living conditions, social dynamics, and daily routines, as well as to engage in further discussions to gain insights into their circumstances.

Table 3: Distribution of Interview Respondents

Factory Types	Number of		
	Respondents	FGDs	Home visits
1. Floor tiles	15	2	15
2. Sanitary ware	11	2	11
3. Tableware	10	2	10
Total	36	6	36

Study Findings

The ceramic industry in Bangladesh represents an emerging source of employment for the working class. This sector offers a fresh avenue for those aspiring to secure employment and improve their livelihoods, as both domestic and international markets rely heavily on ceramic products for modern living standards. With approximately 600 operational ceramic factories in Bangladesh,

contributing significantly to export earnings, the industry plays a pivotal role in the country's economic landscape. Despite its importance, challenges persist, particularly concerning the workforce composition. Women constitute a significant portion of the workforce, especially in tableware factories, yet they often face barriers such as illiteracy, lack of awareness, and limited control over working conditions, resulting in unequal profit distribution. Women's labour market participation is influenced by various socio-economic factors, while industry-specific challenges and theoretical perspectives, such as Social Exchange Theory, shape employment dynamics. Enhancing relationships and fostering equitable exchanges between employers and workers can increase profitability and sustainability in the ceramic industry.

Employment Relations & Female Workers' Wellbeing in Three Ceramic Factories

To provide insight into the socioeconomic conditions of female workers in ceramic factories, we present quotes from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

One worker shared her living situation, stating,

"I have rented a small room with a corridor for Tk. 3000. I live in that room along with my three children and husband. My husband has some mental problems. We five people sleep in the small room, and the cow lives in the corridor. World Vision has provided my daughter with a cow, which they used to determine our poverty level. Although it's a gift, feeding the cow is another burden for us. With the scanty amount of wages, will we manage food for the cow or for us? Renting a slightly larger house is urgent, but unaffordable with the small income I earn from the factory. If we spend more money on accommodation, I wouldn't be able to manage other family expenses."

Another worker expressed deep grievance, saying,

"We are unable to meet our basic requirements with the income we earn. Commodity prices are skyrocketing, but our salaries remain fixed. When I joined here ten years ago, the wage was 8 taka per piece, and it is still 8 Taka now. After a month's work, I only earn 8000 Taka. Three or four years ago, we could afford meat or fish at least once a week, but now we can't even afford it once a month."

Referring to the constant decrease in wages, another worker lamented,

"Previously, we got 10 taka per piece of production, but after a change in ownership, we now get eight taka per piece. This is clearly unjust to the

workers. We can only afford rice with vegetables or potato dishes, but we can't even taste any protein. This has severe detrimental effects on individuals, leading to mental and physical health issues."

Another worker, who lives in a distant place, continues her job despite challenges. She shared,

"My husband is a mental patient, and I am the mother of five children. My children go to school because the government provides free education with extra funding. I walk for almost an hour to reach the factory, starting work at 7 am and continuing until 7 pm. I return home at 7 pm, so I work almost 12 hours a day."

These accounts shed light on the struggles faced by female workers in the ceramic industry, highlighting challenges such as low wages, high living expenses, and long working hours, which significantly impact their well-being.

Key Insights from the Study

When delving deeper, the study underscores that employment relations and workers' well-being within Bangladesh's ceramic industries fall significantly below both local and international standards, notably beneath women's expectations and capabilities. The principal findings are succinctly outlined as follows:

1. Female Workers' Rights in the Ceramic Industry: Systematic Denial of Labor Rights

The findings highlighted significant loopholes and challenges related to the implementation of labour standards and the protection of worker well-being. In the case of the right to work, the research revealed that female workers in the ceramic factory, particularly those on temporary contracts, face systematic denial of labour rights. Employment contracts, essential for job security, are often absent for lower-ranking workers, leaving them vulnerable to unjust dismissal. Moreover, the lack of awareness among female workers about their entitlements and management negligence contributes to their inability to access benefits like maternity leave and social security provisions, leading to financial insecurity and compromising their overall well-being.

Regarding workers' rights, the study highlighted challenging working conditions and inadequate safety standards in ceramic factories. Workers, especially women, are required to work long hours in extreme temperatures without adequate safety equipment and facilities. The prevalence of workplace discrimination persists, with female workers being disproportionately allocated to lower-paid manual tasks, while technical roles are predominantly

assigned to their male counterparts. This discriminatory practice denies female workers opportunities for permanent employment, further adding to their job dissatisfaction and well-being concerns, creating an environment of inequality and unfair treatment. Considering the rights through work, the research uncovered significant wage and benefit disparities between male and female workers. Female workers, often employed on temporary contracts, receive wages below subsistence levels, making it difficult for them to meet their basic needs and maintain a decent standard of living.

The absence of social security benefits, such as pensions, gratuities, and provident funds, further exacerbates their financial insecurity and job dissatisfaction, leaving them vulnerable to economic hardships and inadequate support during critical life events. Additionally, the limited opportunities for collective bargaining and the lack of significant trade unionism at the factory level leave female workers with little voice and representation in negotiating for better working conditions and fair treatment. This lack of social dialogue contributes to a sense of powerlessness and undermines their ability to advocate for their rights and well-being. Overall, the study highlights the urgent need to address the rights and well-being of female workers in the ceramic industry. Implementing and enforcing labour standards, providing equal opportunities for female workers, and ensuring fair wages and social security benefits can significantly enhance their job security, improve working conditions, and promote overall well-being. Empowering female workers through increased awareness of their entitlements and fostering a culture of gender equality and inclusivity can create a supportive work environment that values and respects all employees, ultimately leading to greater job satisfaction and productivity.

2. Organizational Justice in the Ceramic Industry: Some Positive Aspects Exist but Need Considerable Improvements

Organizational justice (OJ), comprising distributive, procedural, and interactive justice, is crucial for establishing a fair and equitable work environment. These dimensions have significant implications for employees' well-being, including job satisfaction, gender equality, skills development, empowerment, and organizational commitment. In terms of distributive justice, the ceramic industry in Bangladesh encounters challenges in achieving equity and equality for female workers. Often employed as temporary contract workers, female workers receive lower wages and fewer opportunities for career advancement than their male counterparts. Gender-based discrimination in wage and non-wage benefits undermines equality and hinders the overall well-being of female workers. However, positive aspects, such as the provision of essential resources and training based on individual needs, contribute to skills development and enhance the well-being of female workers.

Regarding procedural justice, decision control, and process control play critical roles in empowering employees and fostering organizational commitment. However, the temporary nature of female workers' positions limits their decision-making and their ability to voice concerns and advocate for improved well-being outcomes. The lack of representation and voice for female workers raises concerns about their job security and overall well-being, as they fear potential job loss if they raise objections or seek better treatment. In the ceramic industry, positive interpersonal relationships between female workers and employers foster unity, cooperation, and loyalty. Employers' efforts to treat female workers with dignity and respect contribute to a harmonious work environment and shared commitment to organizational goals. Furthermore, clear and transparent communication of decisions enhances employee satisfaction and organizational success.

The well-being consequences of organizational justice are multifaceted. While female workers in the industry express contentment with their jobs, this satisfaction often stems from a need to survive rather than a genuine passion for their work. Additionally, female workers' empowerment and willingness to raise their voices are limited by the temporary nature of their positions, hindering their ability to advocate for their rights. In summary, while the ceramic industry in Bangladesh demonstrates some positive aspects of organizational justice, there are clear areas that require attention and improvement. Addressing gender-based discrimination, expanding opportunities for female workers' career advancement, and ensuring their representation and voice in decision-making processes are crucial steps toward creating a truly fair and equitable work environment. By fostering a culture of inclusivity, transparency, and respect, the ceramic industry can enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, ultimately leading to greater productivity and success for all stakeholders involved.

3. Women's Well-being in the Ceramic Factories of Bangladesh: Below Potential

The well-being of women workers in the intricate ceramic industry is influenced by a range of factors that shape their daily experiences. The physical environment and safety climate hold significance, with the tableware factory standing out for its comprehensive safety measures. Challenges such as the proper use of safety equipment persist due to adverse conditions. Ergonomic workplace design, lighting, ventilation, and noise control impact health and job satisfaction, while differing factory provisions highlight workers' adaptability.

Within workplace culture, regulations and surveillance mechanisms foster a harmonious atmosphere that resonates among management and workers. However, wage and benefit concerns, limited facilities, and the balance between

work and life underscore the complex landscape. In the context of health, work evaluations, and societal context, the well-being of women workers takes on intricate dimensions. Physical and mental health concerns pose multifaceted challenges, underscoring the industry's potential for improvement. Mental health emerges as significant, but financial concerns often eclipse it. Injuries, although less frequent, are relevant and require prompt intervention. Work evaluations encompass job satisfaction, the meaning of work, and emotional resilience. Home, community, and society also influence well-being, with various factors interconnected to shape experiences. This comprehensive exploration emphasizes the need for a holistic approach, from safety measures to fostering supportive cultures, in paving the way for an inclusive and thriving future.

In the ceramic industry, numerous positive factors contribute to the well-being of women workers. The implementation of safety measures and facilities, as observed in the tableware factory, underscores a commitment to safeguarding their physical health. Moreover, workers' acclimatization to their varied environments demonstrates their resilience and adaptability, indicating a level of contentment with their roles. The positive cultural atmosphere cultivated by clear regulations and surveillance mechanisms fosters a harmonious workplace, where both management and workers share a sense of mutual respect and commitment.

However, certain negative aspects cast shadows on the well-being of women workers in the ceramic industry. Inadequate compensation and financial challenges underscore the persistent struggle they face to achieve financial security. The absence of key facilities, such as daycare services and designated canteen areas, exacerbates the issue, while the challenges of achieving work-life balance due to financial constraints remain a significant concern. Mental health challenges, including stress and anxiety, pose hurdles to their overall well-being. Moreover, the presence of health risks, ranging from physical injuries to respiratory disorders, adds further complexity to their well-being landscape. Despite these challenges, women workers exhibit remarkable commitment, driven by financial necessity and a desire to support their families. This reveals the intricate balancing act they perform between their work and personal lives, highlighting the need for comprehensive solutions that address both the positive and negative aspects of their well-being.

4. Potential of Women Workers in (Re)Shaping the Employment Relations

The potential of women workers to play a transformative role in (re)shaping employment relations within the ceramic industry of Bangladesh is an awe-inspiring testament to their resilience, adaptability, and creativity. During home visits, I immersed myself in their lives and witnessed their remarkable

psychological, physical, and cognitive capabilities. Even in the face of the daunting challenges posed by poverty, these women exhibited a profound depth of thinking, understanding, and responsiveness that transcended their circumstances. Their fervent enthusiasm and whole-hearted engagement during interviews and focus group discussions illuminated a powerful desire to contribute significantly to the evolution of employment relations within their sector.

However, certain obstacles obstruct the realization of this potential. Evident violations of labour regulations and the absence of collective action underscore the challenges confronting women workers within the industry. To unlock their potential, structural shifts in employment relations and an empowered role of the state in safeguarding labour rights are indispensable prerequisites. The trajectory forward necessitates concerted efforts among workers, management, and state authorities to reshape the contours of employment relations, ensure adherence to labour regulations, and champion equitable practices. Recognizing and nurturing the untapped potential of women workers can pave the way for the ceramic industry to stride towards greater equity, productivity, and inclusivity. As these women become catalysts for reshaping employment dynamics, they are not only fueling the industry's growth but also paving the path towards a more progressive, gender-equitable society. Their journey symbolizes a triumphant fusion of determination and potential, standing as a beacon that illuminates a trajectory towards a brighter, more inclusive future for the ceramic industry and beyond. The above argument strongly supports the idea that stakeholders and policymakers should take proactive roles in establishing sound industrial relationships, protecting labour rights, and enhancing the well-being of ceramic workers, particularly female workers.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

In tracing the Haymarket Legacy and its reverberations in contemporary labour movements, our study delves into the specific context of employment relations and labour rights within the ceramic industry of Bangladesh. By examining the experiences of female workers in this sector, we uncover a complex landscape marked by challenges and opportunities. Drawing parallels between historical struggles for labor rights and present-day realities, we illuminate the enduring importance of fair labor practices and worker empowerment. Through our exploration, we emphasize the urgent need for policy interventions aimed at strengthening labour laws, promoting transparency and recognition for good practices, enhancing workplace education and awareness, and prioritizing health and safety measures. Our findings underscore the significance of engaging with the historical context of labour rights movements, such as the Haymarket Affair, to inform contemporary efforts aimed at reshaping employment relations and advancing worker rights. By recognizing and

honoring the legacy of past struggles, we can inspire collective action and solidarity in pursuit of a fairer, more just society. In the end, our study underscores the imperative for policymakers, stakeholders, and sociologists to collaborate to address the challenges faced by female workers in Bangladesh's ceramic industry. We propose the following policy recommendations:

A. Strengthen the Implementation of Labour Laws

Enhance enforcement mechanisms for existing labour laws, such as the Labour Law 2006, to ensure employers comply with provisions related to holidays, medical leave, festival leave, and maternity leave. Conduct regular factory inspections by dedicated labour law enforcement representatives to monitor and ensure adherence to legal requirements.

B. Transparency and Recognition for Good Practices

Implement mandatory reporting by factory management on their compliance with labour laws, and establish a system of recognition and rewards for employers who prioritize good working conditions and fair treatment for workers.

C. Workplace Education and Awareness

1. Introduce skill development programs within factories to raise awareness among both employers and workers about labour laws, workers' rights, and responsibilities.
2. Foster understanding about the significance of compliance with labour laws to ensure a fair and conducive working environment.

D. Strengthen Trade Union Activities

1. Facilitate the development of collective bargaining skills among factory workers.
2. Promote trade union activities and provide education about the role of trade unions in safeguarding workers' rights.

E. Prioritize Health and Safety

1. Implement and enforce proper health and safety standards within ceramic factories, ensuring the well-being and safety of workers.
2. Provide necessary training and resources to the workers to enable them to work in a safe and healthy environment.

The ongoing discourse on the implementation of national and international regulations in export-oriented industries underscores the need to reshape employment relations and raise the standards of employment practices in

Bangladesh. The focus should be on empowering employment relations that prioritize workers' well-being and rights. By addressing the outlined policy recommendations, the nation can move towards a more equitable and supportive work environment for all, fostering sustainable development and growth, and fulfilling the 2041 goal.

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