

“Apparel Merchandising” –the Unsurpassed Instance of Contemporary Business Communication

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Abstract

This intangible manuscript aspires to present a research archetype for International Business Communication into Apparel Merchandising, research with special reference to the scenario of Bangladesh Apparel Industries. To widen a prototype, international business communication first is defined, and the opportunities of Bangladesh Apparel Industries as well as Merchandising face in international business are described, as are the methods used to deal with obstacles and foster better global management and intercultural communication. The key issue of emergent Communication Model is emphasized. To systematize international business communication research with reference to Bangladesh Apparel Merchandising, a research schema is accessible involving study of: correct custom of English, the connotations of international business communication terms, and the relationship of English as an international business language to its diverse users. The conducting theories in this research will come from Modern and International aspects. Proper Communication will be the mediator of globalization, and Bangladesh apparel Merchandising must accept this authenticity and covenant with it. So far, they have not yet developed a satisfactory way of doing so. However, appropriate methodologies are available, as presented in the manuscript. Bangladesh apparel Industries have delayed behind European and US companies in coping with the communication problems encouraged by the globalization. This manuscript sets out a methodology for developing the research needed to acquire practical steps to solve the problem. The manuscript offers a model of ways to standardize international business communication research so that Apparel Merchandising can develop ways of coping with the communication problems of globalization.

Key Words: Apparel, Apparel Merchandising, Apparel Industry, Communication, Contemporary Business Communication and International Understanding.

1. Introduction

Business Communication has a unique challenge in case of Apparel Merchandising because this phase faces a lot of demand uncertainly depending on trends like fashion and consumer preferences. With the help of innovative techniques of communication which would make impact on product variety, management of production systems, forecasting and inventory management, the apparel merchandising can meet its supply chain demands for both volatile and non-volatile goods. Systematic business communication management or process comes into prominence when these companies have to distribute their products either to the retailers or directly to the consumers or buyers (local or foreign). Without an interface of International understanding of Business communication, Apparel Merchandising may fall as missing of global value chain which is mismatched the relationship concept between the buyers and manufacturer.

2. Clarities

Apparel: Apparel or Garment is an item of clothing that is worn to people to wrap their bare or unprotected bodies. It can also be entitled attire, a cloth, a dress or garment.

Merchandise: The word “Merchandise” refers as the product engaged in buying and selling in merchandising. Merchandise is in general such kind of product which is selling out or dealing with the foreign buyers. Apparel or Garment is one of the best examples of Merchandise.

Apparel Merchandise: The Apparel Merchandise is the apparel or garments or clothing that is sold out to the foreign buyer (in abroad basically) by the manufacturer or merchandiser in the process of merchandising.

Apparel Merchandising: The term “Apparel Merchandising” is the process of dealing with any product from its sales confirmation, design analysis, raw material sourcing, production and quality control and shipment arrangement to the customer in a specific time frame as per contact. This department is the heart of any business organization. Apparel merchandising usually means planning, development and presentation of merchandise (product or product line) for a target market in respect of prices, assortment, timing, styling etc. Merchandising department is the fundamental center for coordinating development of merchandise, its design, and realization of design and up to delivery of the merchandise to the customer.

Merchandiser: Merchandiser is the individual or person who involves with the process of Merchandising and making relevant business communication or correspondent with the buyers.

Business Communication: Business Communication is fundamentally the sharing of information and the required business aspects between people within an enterprise that is performed for the commercial benefit of the organization. In addition, the business communication can also pass on to how a company contributes to information to promote its product or services to the potential consumers.

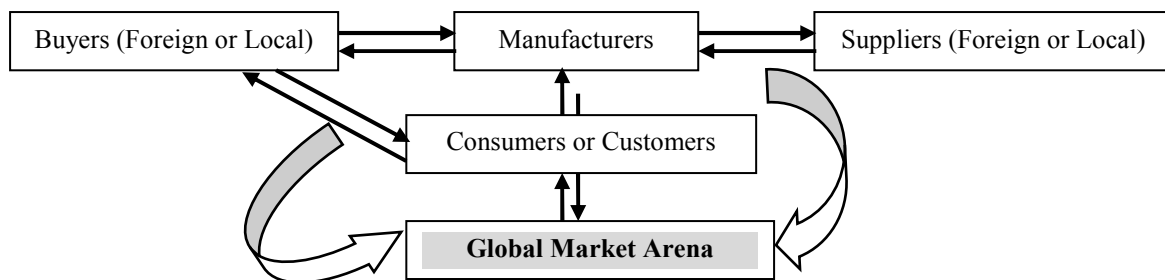
3. Significance

Apparel or Garment Merchandising is the viaduct made by convinced business communication to run the Apparel Industry Business smoothly. The apparel industry of Bangladesh has been the key export division and a main source of foreign exchange for the last 25 years. The industry provides employment to about 3 million workers of whom 90% are women. This sector is entirely export oriented and is composed of over 5000 units - most working for international buyers, some owned by international companies. Most of the garment units are clustered in industrial areas and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in and around Dhaka. In 1978 the Bangladesh government set up EPZs to attract foreign capital and earn export dollars. In 2012 the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) was set up and a blanket ban on trade union activity imposed. The EPZs now employ 70,000 workers, mostly in the garment and shoe-making industries (though most of the garment industry exists outside the EPZs) under apparel Merchandising Processing Unit. [1] [2]

Apparel Merchandising is basically divided into three segments:

- Woven and Denim
- Fine Knits and Heavy Knits (Sweater)
- Non Woven

Diagram 1: Basic Communication Model in Apparel Merchandising



4. Decisive Literature Review

4.1 Scrutiny of Communication

The Communication shortcomings of employees and the importance of communication in business explain why you should work to improve your communication skills. Whatever position you have in business, your performance will be judged largely by whatever position you have in business, your performance will be judged largely by your ability to communicate. If you perform (and communicate) well, you are likely to be rewarded with advancement [3]. So from the bottom level to mediocre and then top level of management in apparel merchandising are always busy with the required communication with the buyers and also their suppliers. The majority of time a manager spends applying the functions of management is spent communicating with others via memo, speaking, listening, or use of the computer [4]. On this occasion the apparel merchandising is the best example for the business communication which is contemporary and that is the email communication with the foreign buyers all the time during the order dealing or development or production period. The success of the communication will depend to a great extent upon how well you adapt to that person. Talking loudly and repeating everything does not necessarily improve the communication [5]. As per the dealing with foreign personal merchandising always stay calm through their medium like e-communication or direct meeting or over phone and taking their successive responds under the target business.

4.2 Scrutiny of Merchandising

The first words of your message also have a major need to gain attention. The reader must be moved to read on. What you do here is a part of your creative effort. But the method you use should assist in presenting the sales message [6]. This way is very common for the apparel merchandiser because they basically do their first impressive communication through profile sending to the foreign buyers and try to ensure them the future business obviously will be up to the mark. Determining how and where to manufacturing apparel product has to become a major concern for most companies. A good sourcing executive must have a working knowledge of manufacturing processes, quality assurance procedures, garment costing, product development, government

quota and important legislation, international cultural and business practices, and international communications [7]. Sourcing can only be success in those cases where communication is successfully done and it may be completed percent.

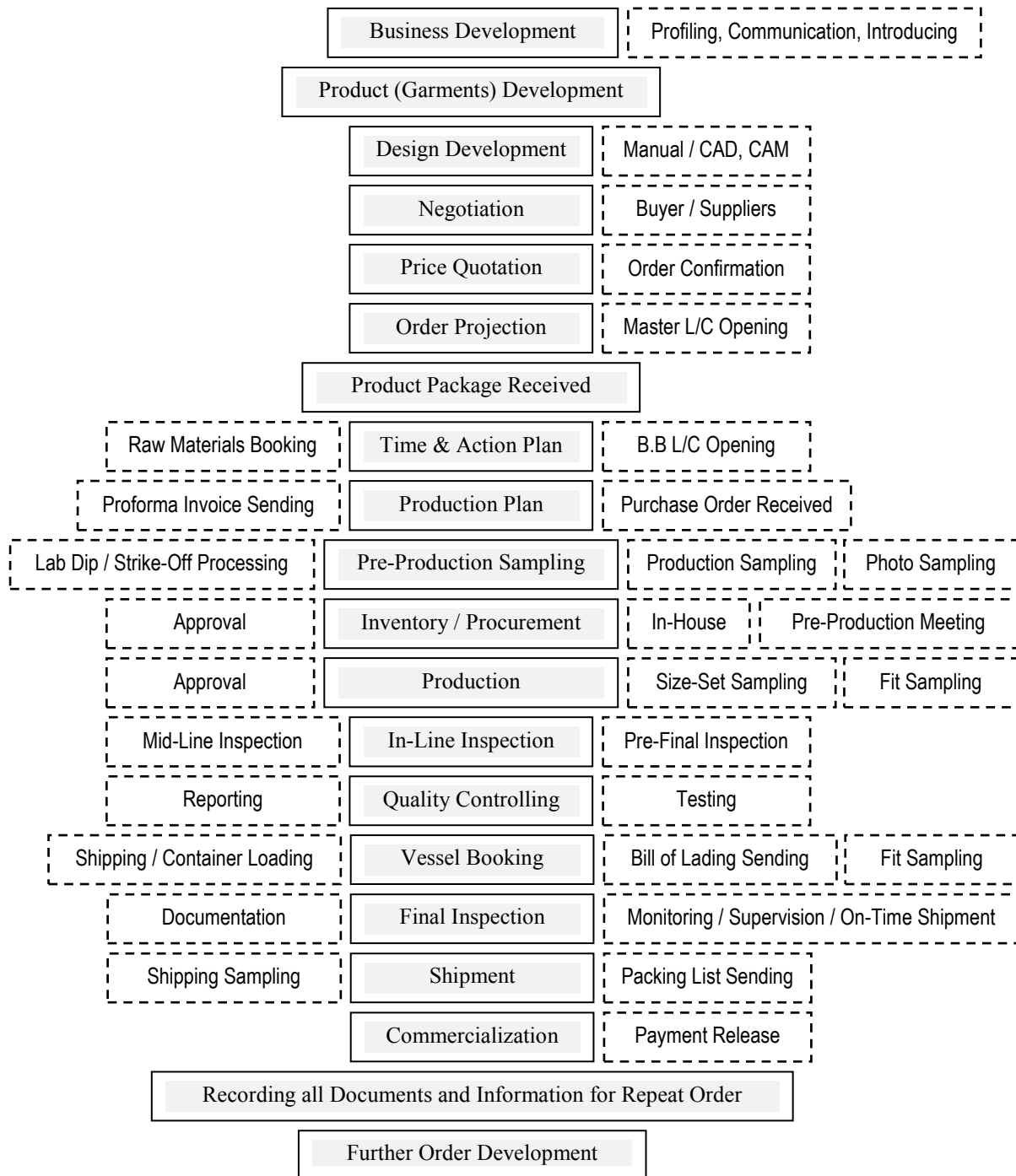
4.3 Scrutiny of Global Prospect

One of the simplest principles is the customer-supplier relationship (AT&T, 1988). This relationship should be viewed from two perspectives – external and internal. To delight the external customer, there must be harmony among all internal process steps, so that everyone is treated as internal customer and supplier [8]. So the harmony of relationship is directly motivated by the right way of business communication which is must be needed in Apparel Merchandising. The information technology (IT) revolution is having a broad impact on industries and this has important strategic implications [9]. E-Communication means again business communication is the fundamental issue here. Buyers are seeking their expected manufacturer through e-commerce and communicating with then and finalizing the order up to the mark. So without communication (through electric medium) it could be very vital to rectify or manage the business for both of them. Area of most promise could be a unit or department with a cooperative supervisor, where production is down, absenteeism in up, or where quality is a current concern [10]. As we know cooperation is one of the finest concerns in terms of business communication. So the proper communication, by which proper understanding, can only ensure the desire quality and higher productivity.

5. Apparel Merchandising according to Communications

Apparel merchandising is a critical function in every fashion business through international communication. It determines for an apparel company every season's direction, look, range, lines and offerings. Apparel merchandisers study and interpret forecasts and trends to decide colors, textures, fabrics, silhouettes, embellishments, accessories, and, soon, which are then creatively translated by designers into alluring wearable products. Apparel merchandisers are also responsible for product development, taking the company into newer realms of fashion offerings. They interact with buyers with an effective communication and promote the company's offerings. Without doubt, the success of any apparel business owes itself as much to the brilliance and competence of its merchandising function. Successful apparel merchandising as well as communication inspires consumers to see the possibilities in their products. An apparel merchandiser's job is to connect fashion products with buyers through right skill and step of communication. Apparel merchandising sits at the intersection of fashion and business.

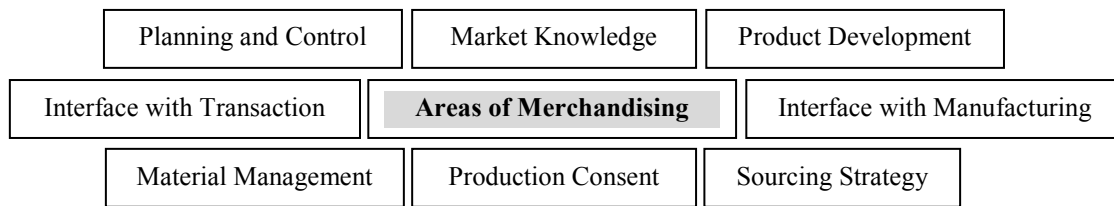
Diagram 2: The stepladder of apparel merchandising through inside and outside business communication



6. Contained by Communication Segment in Apparel Merchandising

Apparel merchandisers possess a passion for fashion, intuitive flair for judging environmental trends, uncanny ability to anticipate consumer demand qualitatively, and creative imagination to envision products, strong communications skills to convey direction and look. If these qualities are your characteristics, then you may be cut for a promising fashion merchandising career.

Diagram 3: Areas of apparel merchandising where business communication is exposed



A stated reduction from an original or regular price is a common form of price promotion. However, The strategy is legitimate only if the promoted items are offered at regular price for a sufficient period of time. That ‘sufficient period of time’ varies by the communication only [11]. The apparel business communication in general relates the following:

- Business environment and appreciated opportunities
- Frequent fashion change
- Complex channels of distribution and sales
- Growing complexity of line and product development
- Increasing emphasis on Quick Response relationship between buyer-vendor-customer.

7. Elements of Apparel Business Management

This communication will help the prospective apparel merchandisers to understand the fashion business and management in which they have to function, so that they can become successful merchandisers.

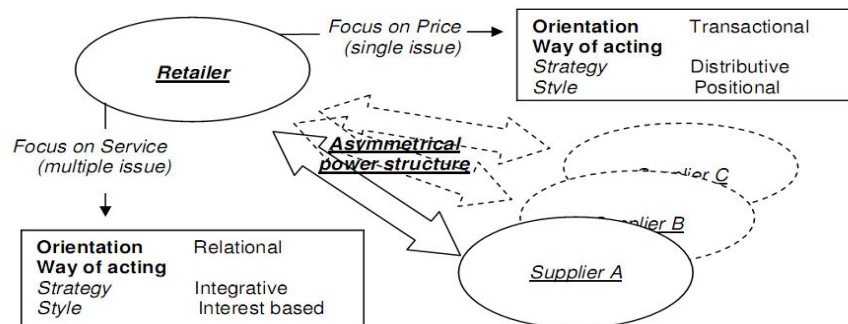


Figure 1: Negotiation (through communication) process and Relational / Transactional Orientation in Buyer (Retail) Seller (Supplier) Relationship within the Network in Clothing and Textiles [12]

This move will provide consumers with an opportunity to expand their understanding of the various nuances of the fashion business environment, basic management principles, managing finances & human resources. The perfect communication aims to develop the behavioral skills in the fields of verbal expression, active listening, appropriate body language, written analysis and visual presentation in the current multicultural commercial environment. It also aims to develop computing skills in the fields of computer aided documentation and presentation in current business environment and to make buyers or consumers familiarize with basic applications in graphic software for visual communications in various medium/sources/ways.

8. Advanced Merchandising based on Contemporary Communication

Apparel Merchandising is a comprehensive set of backend and frontend functions to promote sale of fashion products to the consumer. It covers a broad range of activities including product, trend, consumer and market research, product development, coordination of manufacturing and marketing, pricing and costing, and effective selling. The merchandiser has to develop a broad base of skills and knowledge related to product sourcing, new product development and an overview and understanding of both the macro and micro aspects of the global and local markets in which the business activities take place under the obligation of Contemporary Business Communication.

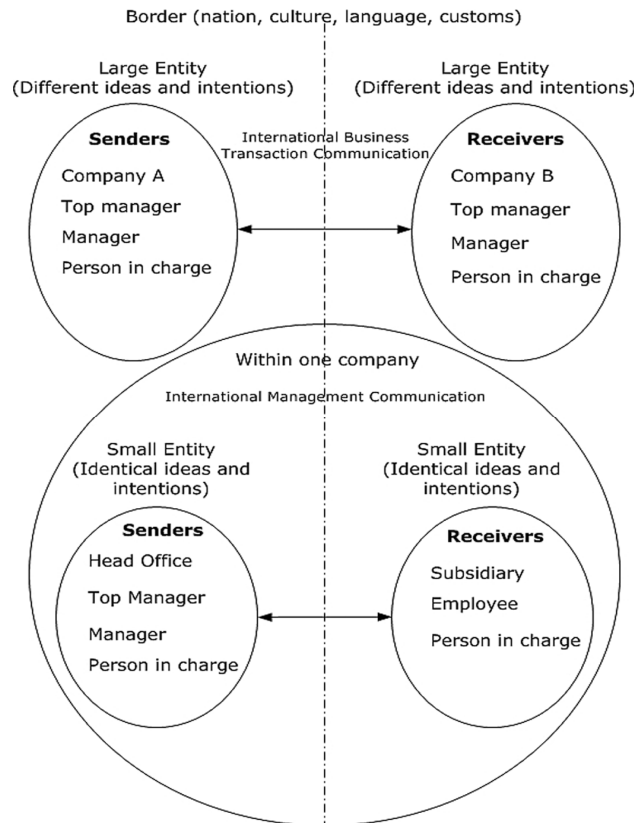


Figure 2: International Business Communication Paradigm and Corporate communication Model [13]

9. Communication Consequence the Apparel Supply Chain

The supply chain stimulates apparel industry and apparel merchandising to manage their various activities under a new paradigm of business communication under supply chain management. Increasing market competition forces apparel companies become efficient in managing their supply chain by reducing inventory, yet maintain the super-responsiveness to volatile market demand. Effective supply chain management, cutting across functional silos and organizations boundaries have provided integrated solution to this challenge

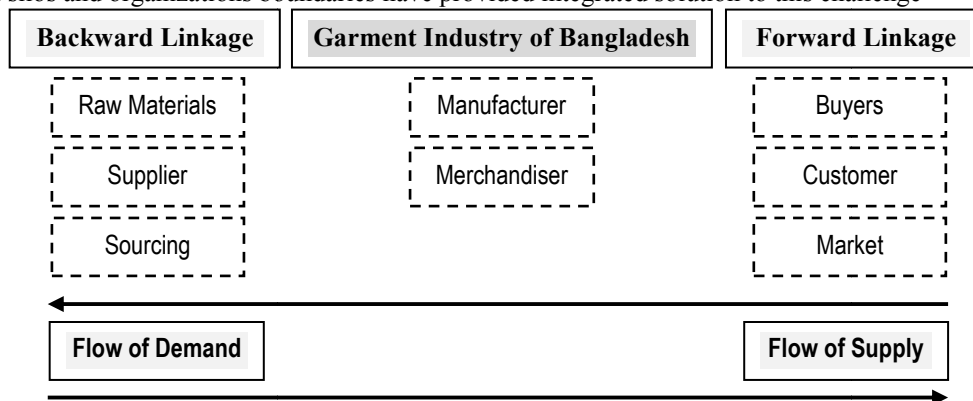


Diagram 4: Basic Diagram for Supply Chain in Garment Industry under Communication Paradigm

10. Communication Needed Zone in Apparel Merchandising

The study of the relation between apparel retailer and subjects operating at the various stages of the textiles / apparel pipeline can be addressed by proposing a reading of this interaction that draws on the concepts of communication approaches (styles and strategies) such as:

- Business development (Primary to regular).
- Apparel marketing and forecasting.
- Design or Product development.
- Communicating and corresponding with buyers and suppliers.
- Due to time constrains, need to be more serious about the lead time.
- Complete planning (Including time and action plan).
- Sourcing of raw-materials and managing.
- Negotiating with all of the respective.
- Sample development and approval.
- Pricing, scheduling and supervision.
- Monitoring the order as well as production.
- Responsibilities and accountabilities based on documentations.
- Commercial aspects.
- Order dealing and controlling properly.
- Inventory, booking and procurement.
- Quality assuring through controlling team.
- Reporting to all of the respective as per needed.
- Monitoring entire departments all the time like pattern, marker, CAD/CAM, cutting, sewing, printing, embroidery, washing, testing, finishing, shipment etc.
- Product finalization and do ready to ship out.
- Inspection and sorting.
- Shipping and vessel scheduling, loading and conforming sailing date.
- Post shipment analysis, reporting to the authority and payment release from buyers.
- Keeping and maintaining the order records for further or repeat order.
- New order development or processing.

11. Communication Styles Versus Strategies and Buyer-seller Relationship in Merchandising

In a Business like Apparel Merchandising, to business setting the buyer-supplier relationship finds one of its greatest expressions in communicating activities, which contribute to giving content to the history of the interaction and endowing its fundamental characters with meaning. Communication is a naturally significant component of this interaction, as is known from case analyses of buyer-supplier relations that have long been available in business-to-business marketing. The theme of communication can be examined from various different perspectives, among which two are of special importance, namely the question of management of information and that of the knowledge that the buyer and the supplier each acquire concerning the other player and more generally concerning the market [14].

		Result of the negotiation (strategy)	
		Distributive	Integrative
Attitude of the negotiators (style)	Position-based	hard	Coherence between attitudes and results
		soft	Greater gain despite attitudes
	Principles-based		Distributed gain despite attitudes
			Coherence between attitudes and results

Figure 3: The relation between communication styles and negotiation strategies [15]

As a consequence the extent of equilibrium and information transfer in the context of the relation become important in forming judgments and play a role in choice of certain forms of behavior. Moreover, the interplay between communication and relation can take on extremely rich connotations, one can distinguish state variables and control variables, the former being linked to aspects of a system that are not subject to short term choices, while the latter are dependent on choices made by the subject who performs the task of controlling the system in terms of value or modes of operation.

Communication – Factors need to consider in apparel Merchandising

- a) Cost
- b) Capacity
- c) Minimum Order Quantity
- d) Infrastructure
- e) Political and Economic Environment
- f) Equipments
- g) Staff Skill
- h) Distance
- i) Lead Time
- j) Quality

12. Methodology

In this explore, Qualitative Scheme has been used. In the Qualitative Method we can come across out how people feel or what they consider about a particular problem, which are very relevant in this explore. Mainly the Descriptive Explore approach has been used but in the exploratory phase of the research, in-depth interviews have been conducted with the Buyers / Suppliers / Manufacturers (as well as Owners) and the relevant bodies and association in order to obtain the influential variables and to get a clear perspective of Apparel Business Communication and Merchandising Management in the apparel sector.

The investigation of this explore is stand on Secondary Data specially, together with online databases, digital libraries, books, journals, conference papers, etc. Far-reaching Business Communication of Bangladesh Apparel Industry study papers of academicians and practitioners are progressed from distinguished international journals, namely International Journal of Marketing Studies (Canada) Business and Management (Canada), SAGE Journal of Clothing Technology, PROQUEST, IJSCM, IEEE, ACM, JSTOR, EMERALD, Science Direct, etc. The relevance of Apparel Merchandising and the Contemporary Business Communication on Apparel Industry was developed based on the scrutiny of literature.

13. Conclusion

Apparel Merchandising is one of the prevalent operational business linkages in Bangladesh as well as all over the world now a day. Its accomplishment influences positively and directly by the appropriate feed of business communication. Each and every steps of apparel merchandising like profiling or new order development to shipment then payment release is derived as a significant endeavor of outstanding and victorious business communication. Manufacturer communicates with the buyer or unswervingly to the consumer to establish their certain goal means the ultimate product like apparel or garment satisfactory through numerous positions of employees into their both institutions. The manufacturers or the employees under the companies are also communicating with their individual suppliers to finalize the order as well as end product. So during apparel merchandising, if we noticeably scrutinize then we effortlessly can find out that there are two customs of communication are working here such as Intra and Inter business communication. Sometimes it relates buyer to manufacturer, sometimes manufacturer to supplier and most of the time within each and everyone engaged with the business. As an award, Apparel Sector is the number one sector in Bangladesh and the Apparel Merchandising is the most anticipated job for this generation. Globally it steps a lot; statically we all know. So based on the study of this Manuscript it can articulate undoubtedly that the “Apparel Merchandising”- is the Unsurpassed Instance of Contemporary Business Communication.

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