

## **Abstract**

Today's globalized business world characterized with huge challenges stemming from increasing level of uncertainties, competition and concerns for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) calls for strategic rethinking by business managers (McKinsey, 2009; Pearce & Robins, 2015). This is especially the case for highly labour-intensive manufacturing industries such as Readymade Garments (RMG) that are facing the highest level of strategic challenges to cope with the turbulent competitive environment.

The current study focuses on the strategic management practices in the RMG industry of two South Asian countries: Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In both countries, RMG/apparel is the leading export earnings and employment industry and has demonstrated resilient success through economic ups and downs during the last three decades. But there is still a considerable gap in research literature discussing the strategic management practices and CSR aspects of companies within it and how these have impacted on the success of these companies/ industries in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka (Bandara & Naranpanwa, 2015; Rahman & Sidduqui, 2015).

Based on data collected through interviews with senior executives of leading RMG/ apparel manufacturers in both countries, the authors explore strategic management practices along with the influence of CSR on the success of the RMG industry in a comparative manner.

**Keywords:** Strategic Management practice, competitive environment, Readymade Garments Industry, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh.