Report On

Manufacturing Excellence in Bangladesh's RMG Sector: An Operational Internship Study at *Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd (EGMCL)*

By

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An internship report submitted to the Executive Development Center, Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), Brac University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Post Graduate Diploma in Knitwear Industry Management (PGD-KIM)

Executive Development Center, BIGD

Brac University

March, 2026

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

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Letter of Transmittal

James W. Khakshi

Program Coordinator,

PGD-KIM, BIGD, BRAC University

66 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Internship Report Submission on EPIC Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd (EGMCL)

Dear Sir,

It is my pleasure to submit this internship report on EPIC Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL), prepared in accordance with your esteemed guidance and instructions.

In preparing this report, both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized. The process has been a valuable learning experience, allowing me to acquire significant knowledge and practical insights into the knitwear industry.

I have endeavored to present the report in a clear, concise, and comprehensive manner. All relevant information, findings, and recommendations have been incorporated accordingly.

I sincerely hope this report meets your expectations. I am deeply grateful for your continued mentorship, inspiration, and guidance throughout this academic journey.

Sincerely yours,

_____

Shahriar Ahmed

Student ID: 1000055574

Executive Development Center, BIGD

Brac University

Date: March 15, 2026

Non-Disclosure Agreement

The undersigned student from the Executive Development Center at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University, represents the Second Party in this agreement. First Party, Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd., has developed and entered into this agreement.

The First Party has substantially fulfilled the three-month internship requirements for the Postgraduate Diploma in Knitwear Industry Management on behalf of the Second Party.

During the internship period, the Second Party shall have access to official company information and the opportunity to interact directly with company officials. The Second Party shall prepare an internship report based on the work experience and data collected throughout the duration of the internship.

All information and data obtained during this period shall be used purely for educational purposes, while maintaining strict confidentiality and safeguarding the interests of the First Party.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

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Industry Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

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Md. Rajib Al Mahmud

Senior Manager, Merchandising, EPIC Group

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to thank Almighty Allah for the blessings that have helped me in completing this report.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who shared their knowledge and instructed me in producing this report. I wish to thank BRAC Graduate School for enlightening me throughout my PGD in Knitwear Industry Management.

I would like to thank Mr. James W. Khakshi, Program Coordinator, PGD-KIM, BIGD, BRAC University, for providing me with the correct guidance to complete this report. I would also like to thank Mr. Rajib Al Mahmud, Sr. Manager, Merchandising, for guiding me throughout the program. I am grateful to the entire Merchandising team for helping me complete my assigned tasks and for helping me gain a better understanding of the industry.

Regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools: In the preparation of this report, AI-assisted tools were used solely for the purposes of language improvement and enhancing the clarity of expression. Additionally, AI was utilized to support the online search and literature review process by identifying relevant practices and findings from different countries and sources. All research, analysis, critical thinking, and conclusions presented in this report are entirely my own. The use of AI did not compromise the originality or academic integrity of this work.

Executive Summary

This report presents a structured account of a 70-day industrial internship undertaken at Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL) in partial fulfilment of the Post Graduate Diploma in Knitwear Industry Management (PGD-KIM) at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University. The placement was designed to bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice by providing immersive, rotational exposure across the core functional departments of a leading export-oriented apparel manufacturing facility.

EGMCL is a sister concern of the Epic Group — a vertically integrated, globally operating apparel manufacturing conglomerate with an established presence across multiple continents. The facility specialises in the manufacture and export of 100% finished woven garments, with a product range encompassing trousers, shorts, dungarees, and utility bottoms, primarily serving premier retail markets across Europe and the United States.[5] Underpinned by a skilled and structured workforce, a dedicated merchandising operation, and a compliance-driven manufacturing culture, EGMCL has demonstrated consistent growth in order volume and international buyer portfolio depth over successive operational years.

The internship provided structured rotational exposure across six core functional departments: Human Resources and Administration, Industrial Engineering, Planning, Store and Inventory, Fabric Technical, Commercial, and Marketing and Merchandising. Within each rotation, the author was assigned specific operational tasks — rather than assuming a purely observational role — enabling direct contribution to live departmental processes and generating a quality of experiential learning that passive observation alone could not have produced.

This report serves three interconnected purposes. First, it documents the operational structure, functional responsibilities, and interdepartmental relationships of each department visited during the placement. Second, it provides a candid and reflective account of the specific tasks undertaken, the competencies developed, and the operational insights gained across each rotation. Third, it presents a critical assessment of how the PGD-KIM academic curriculum was applied in practice, alongside evidence-based recommendations for operational improvement identified through direct observation. Taken together, these accounts aim to demonstrate not only what was learned during this placement, but how that learning has substantively advanced the author's professional readiness to contribute meaningfully to Bangladesh's dynamic and evolving ready-made garment industry.

Keywords: Global Apparel Market, Knitwear Industry Management, Export-Import, Seamless, Marketing and Merchandising, HR and Admin, Industrial Engineering, Planning, Fabric Technical, Store and Inventory, Commercial.

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List of Acronyms

NPT	Non-Productive Time
EGMCL	Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd
LC	Letter of Credit
RM	Raw Materials
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
PGCL	Pearl Garments Company Ltd
CIPL	Cosmopolitan Industries Private Ltd
GTL	Green Textile Ltd.
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
HR	Human Resources
AGM	Assistant General Manager
GM	General Manager
AVP	Assistant Vice President
VP	Vice President
3D	3 Dimension
ID	Identification
EPICOM	EPIC
HOD	Head of the Department
IE	Industrial Engineering
SAM	Standard Allowed Minute
WIP	Work in Progress
EFF	Efficiency
SMV	Standard Minute Value
SNLS	Single Needle Lock Stitch
DNLS	Double Needle Lock Stitch

OB	Operation Bulletin
RTGS	Real Time Gross Settlement.
PO	Purchase Order
PP SAMPLE	Pre-Production Sample
QA	Quality Assurance
TT	Telegraphic Transfer
IP	Initial Production
EP	Earn Per Minute
C&F	Clearing and Forwarding

1. Description of the Organization

1.1 Introduction

Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd., a sister concern of the Epic Group, represents a prominent example of sustained institutional growth within the global apparel industry. Established over a decade ago, the organization initially operated as a textile trading enterprise; however, it has since undergone a substantial strategic transformation, evolving into a vertically integrated apparel manufacturing conglomerate with a diversified operational presence spanning multiple regions of the world.[1] This transition reflects a deliberate and forward-looking corporate strategy, one that has repositioned the organization from a conventional trading house into a technologically advanced manufacturing entity capable of competing on an international scale. The company's current standing in the industry is a direct outcome of its sustained investment in infrastructure, human capital, and global supply chain capabilities.

Central to the organization's identity is its guiding philosophy of continuous improvement, encapsulated in its core value of a "Relentless Pursuit of Better" (Epic Group, 2024). This principle permeates every dimension of the company's operations — from production innovation and manufacturing excellence to environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility. Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. has institutionalized this ethos as a strategic driver, ensuring that advancement is not treated as incidental but as a systematic organizational commitment. As a consequence, the company has cultivated a reputation not merely for the scale of its operations, but for the rigor and integrity with which those operations are conducted. It is within this organizational context that the present internship was undertaken, providing a meaningful opportunity to examine the practical application of industry knowledge within a leading apparel manufacturing environment.

1.2 Strategic Transformation and Current Operational Footprint

Having undergone significant structural evolution over the past decade, Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. today operates as a fully integrated, high-capacity apparel manufacturing enterprise with a measurable presence across multiple continents. The organization's current operational profile reflects the cumulative outcome of strategic capital allocation, technological modernization, and a deliberate focus on building scalable manufacturing infrastructure (Epic Group, 2024). Rather than remaining confined to its earlier role in fabric procurement and trade facilitation, the company has repositioned itself as an end-

[1] The organisational background, founding history, and strategic evolution described in this paragraph were gathered through direct observation, internal company documentation, and briefings received during the internship placement at Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL). For general reference on the organisation's history and corporate profile, see Epic Group. (2024). *About Epic Group — sustainable fashion company*. Retrieved March 11, 2026, from https://www.epicgroup.global/corpinfo25v1/

to-end solution provider for global apparel brands — managing everything from raw material sourcing through to finished garment delivery.

At present, the group's manufacturing network comprises 17 facilities, supported by over 400 active production lines and a workforce exceeding 30,000 employees across its international operations (Epic Group, 2024). This infrastructure enables an annual output of approximately 120 million garments, positioning the organization among the more significant volume manufacturers serving the global ready-made garment (RMG) sector. Geographically, its facilities span key sourcing destinations including Bangladesh, Jordan, and Ethiopia, each selected for their strategic value within international apparel supply chains.

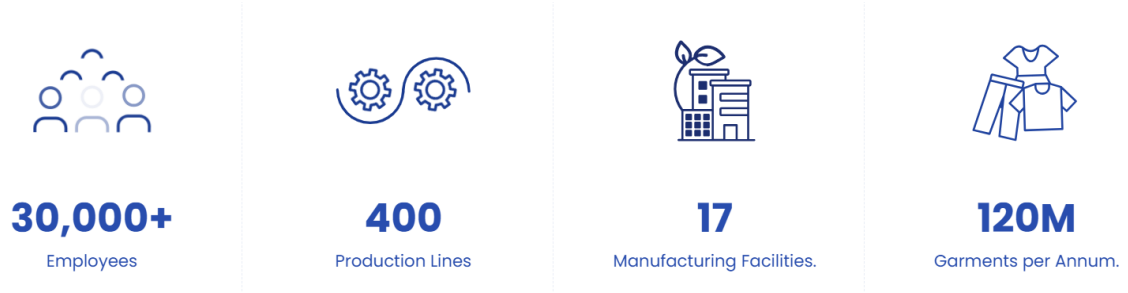

Figure 1: Company overview

Bangladesh constitutes a particularly critical node within this global network, housing four of the group's manufacturing plants: EGMCL in Adamjee Export Processing Zone (EPZ), Narayanganj; PGCL in Savar; CIPL in Ashulia; and GTL in Mymensingh (Epic Group, 2024). Operating within one of the world's foremost garment-exporting nations, these facilities benefit from Bangladesh's established RMG ecosystem, skilled labour pool, and preferential trade arrangements with key export markets (Rahman & Hossain, 2022). Among these plants, EGMCL serves as the specific focus of this internship report. The sections that follow present a detailed operational analysis of EGMCL, anchored by a structured SWOT assessment informed by direct observation and primary data collected during the internship placement.

Figure 2: EGMCL Overview

1.3 Mission, Vision and Corporate Philosophy

Vision

Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. envisions becoming a globally recognised leader in sustainable apparel manufacturing and sourcing, distinguished by its commitment to world-class innovation, uncompromising quality, and consistent delivery reliability. [2] The company aspires to redefine prevailing industry benchmarks across three intersecting domains: environmental responsibility, social impact, and ethical governance — premised on the conviction that enduring commercial success cannot be decoupled from responsible and transparent business conduct.

To realise this vision, the organization has embedded several forward-looking priorities within its strategic framework, including the systematic adoption of advanced manufacturing technologies, the cultivation of creative product development capabilities, and the pursuit of measurable environmental targets — most notably, the progressive reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per garment produced (Epic Group, 2024). Such ambitions align with the broader industry transition towards science-based sustainability commitments, which contemporary scholarship increasingly identifies as indispensable for maintaining competitiveness and social licence within global apparel supply chains (Amed et al., 2020). Beyond environmental objectives, the vision further encompasses the empowerment of employees and communities across its international operations, reflecting the organization's orientation towards inclusive and equitable value creation for all stakeholders.

Mission

The mission of Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. is grounded in the relentless pursuit of continuous improvement across every dimension of its operations, guided by the organisational philosophy that "tomorrow's better will always beat yesterday's best" (Epic Group, 2024). This guiding principle translates into a clearly defined operational strategy, one that prioritises the ongoing enhancement of processes, technologies, and performance standards as non-negotiable institutional obligations rather than aspirational targets.

In practical terms, the company's mission is pursued through five interconnected strategic commitments. First, it invests substantially in advanced manufacturing excellence and digital transformation, recognizing that technological capability is a foundational prerequisite for sustained competitiveness in the modern apparel sector (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Second, it embeds environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles at every stage of its value chain, ensuring that sustainability is treated as a structural business imperative rather than a peripheral concern. Third, it fosters an organizational culture defined by empowerment,

[2] The vision statement and its constituent strategic commitments described here were sourced directly from organisational materials reviewed during the internship placement at Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL). For general reference on the organisation's stated vision and corporate direction, see Epic Group. (2024). *About Epic Group — sustainable fashion company*. Retrieved March 11, 2026, from https://www.epicgroup.global/corpinfo25v1/

diversity, occupational safety, and worker welfare — values that are increasingly regarded as determinants of long-term supply chain resilience (Amed et al., 2020). Fourth, the organization cultivates transparent and collaborative long-term partnerships with global apparel brands, anchoring its commercial relationships in mutual accountability and shared value. Fifth and most broadly, it seeks to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship and social accountability, positioning itself as a responsible corporate actor whose operations contribute meaningfully to a more equitable and sustainable global industry.

1.4 Global Operations and Market Presence

EGMCL operates as part of a geographically dispersed manufacturing and commercial network, with production facilities strategically located across Bangladesh, Jordan, Ethiopia, India, and Sri Lanka, and complementary commercial infrastructure — including sales offices, design studios, and third-party logistics (3PL) warehouses — positioned in Hong Kong, the UAE, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Epic Group, 2024). This dual-layer operational structure, spanning both manufacturing and market-facing functions, enables the organization to maintain proximity to its key sourcing regions while simultaneously sustaining responsive commercial relationships with buyers across major consumption markets. Central to this network is a dedicated design studio in New York, which serves as the organization's primary hub for global fashion innovation — translating emerging creative concepts into technically producible garments and ensuring that design-to-production timelines remain

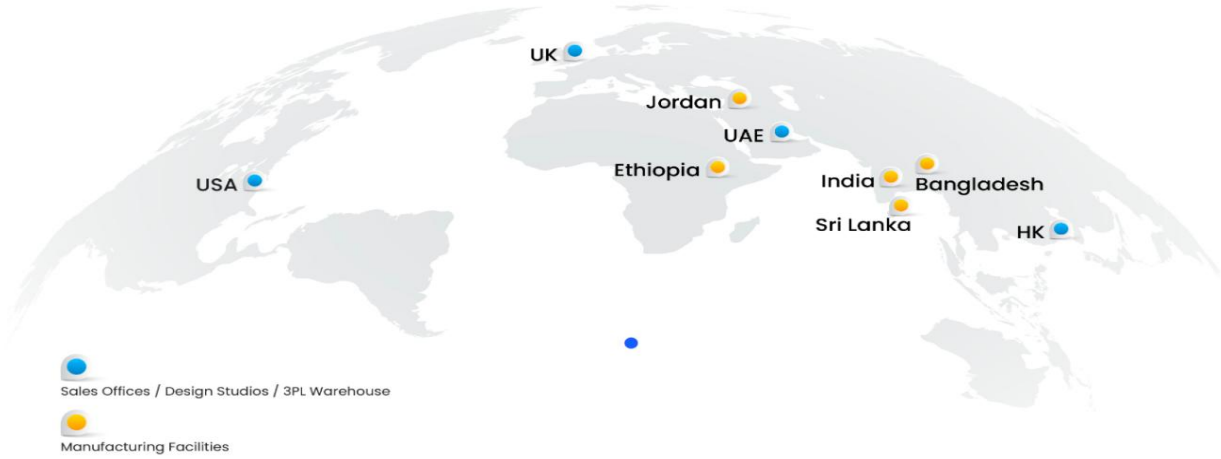

Figure 3: Global Presence

aligned with the accelerated cycles characteristic of contemporary apparel retail (Bruce & Daly, 2011).

The combined effect of this geographically integrated model — encompassing speed, manufacturing efficiency, technological capability, and design responsiveness — positions the organisation to address fast-evolving fashion trends and client requirements with a degree of agility that single-location manufacturers are structurally unable to replicate (McKinsey & Company, 2023). This operational agility is further reflected in the calibre of EGMCL's buyer

relationships, which include internationally recognised retail and lifestyle brands such as Tesco, Sainsbury's, Amazon, Walmart, Levi's, Uniqlo, and Nautica (Epic Group, 2024). These long-term partnerships are sustained not merely through competitive pricing or production capacity, but through demonstrated commitments to transparency, accountability, delivery reliability, and professional integrity — qualities that are increasingly regarded as foundational to durable buyer-supplier relationships within global apparel supply chains (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

Figure 4: International Buyers

1.5 Product Portfolio

EGMCL’s manufacturing portfolio is centered on woven and denim bottom-wear, offering a focused range of garment categories designed to serve international apparel buyers across varied consumer demographics and end-use contexts (Epic Group, 2024)

Figure 5: Product Category & Ranges

Denim Bottoms

The core category encompasses classic five-pocket jeans in straight, slim, and relaxed fits; fashion-oriented distressed and ripped denim styles; wide-leg and baggy trousers; and denim mini skirts. The facility accommodates varying fabric weights and finishing treatments — including enzyme washes, stone washes, and chemical distressing — across all styles.

Woven and Twill Trousers

This category includes straight-fit chino trousers in cotton-blend twill fabrics and plaid flannel lounge pants, catering to casual, semi-formal, and leisurewear market segments respectively.

Shorts

Tailored chino shorts and casual woven shorts are produced in lightweight cotton and cotton-blend fabrics, serving both men's and women's retail programmes with varied waistband and hem finish specifications.

Cargo and Utility Trousers

Multi-pocket cargo trousers constructed from durable mid-weight twill fabrics serve functional and outdoor lifestyle markets, where construction integrity and garment longevity are the primary buyer requirements.

Dungarees and Bib Overalls

Full-length and short-style denim bib overalls are produced for adult markets, featuring adjustable strapping, bib pocket detailing, and riveted hardware assembly.

1.6 Organizational Structure and Governance Framework

EGMCL operates through a structured departmental framework designed to ensure seamless coordination and end-to-end operational efficiency across the apparel manufacturing value chain. Consistent with best practices in vertically integrated garment manufacturing, the organisation's departments function interdependently in a sequential flow — from creative conception and material procurement through to production execution, quality assurance, and final delivery (Christopher, 2016).[3] This structure is broadly divided into two functional clusters**:** core production departments**,** which directly drive garment output, and support and governance units, which enable, regulate, and sustain those core operations (Table 1).

[3] The specific departmental framework and sequential operational flow described here in reference to EGMCL were observed directly during the internship placement and corroborated through internal organisational documentation. Christopher (2016) is cited here solely to support the broader principle that vertically integrated manufacturing organisations characteristically operate through interdependent, sequentially structured departmental flows — a well-established supply chain management concept that EGMCL's operational structure visibly reflects in practice. Christopher does not reference EGMCL specifically. For general organisational reference, see Epic Group. (2024). *About Epic Group — sustainable fashion company*. Retrieved March 11, 2026, from https://www.epicgroup.global/corpinfo25v1/

Table 1: Departmental Structure and Functional Roles at EGMCL

Department	Role and Operational Position
Design and Development	Initiates the production cycle by leading creative product conceptualization, trend research, and technical design — utilizing 3D modelling software and digital fabric libraries to translate buyer concepts into technically feasible garment specifications for Merchandising and Sample development.
Merchandising	Serves as the central commercial coordinating function, managing buyer relationships, order planning, costing, and negotiation from initial inquiry through to shipment — bridging Design and Development with Procurement and Planning to ensure both commercial viability and timeline adherence.
Sample	Develops prototypes and pre-production samples based on approved designs, managing fit approvals and technical revisions before feeding confirmed samples forward to Planning and Production for bulk authorization.
Planning	Translates confirmed orders into executable production schedules through capacity allocation, line planning, and lead-time optimisation via ERP systems — coordinating closely across Procurement, Cutting, Sewing, and Finishing to maintain smooth operational flow.
Procurement	Sources fabrics, trims, and accessories through established mill partnerships, balancing quality standards, sustainability requirements, and cost efficiency — supplying materials to Cutting and Warehouse against Planning timelines.
Cutting	Converts incoming fabrics into precision garment components using CAD-guided and automated cutting systems designed to minimize material waste, delivering cut panels directly to the Sewing lines.
Sewing	Assembles cut components into finished garments through structured operator lines with integrated quality checkpoints at key construction stages, passing completed assemblies forward to Finishing.
Finishing	Prepares garments for shipment through washing, pressing, quality inspection, packaging, and final presentation — coordinating with Warehouse for storage and outbound dispatch scheduling.
Warehouse and Logistics	Manages end-to-end inventory control, material handling, export documentation, and third-party logistics (3PL) coordination — functioning as the final operational link between the factory and the buyer.
Commercial & Finance	Oversees sales contract management, pricing, compliance documentation, financial reporting, and cost analysis — providing financial governance across all procurement, production, and commercial functions.
Audit and Sustainability	Conducts internal audits, compliance monitoring, ESG programme implementation, and environmental reporting — performing a cross-functional oversight role spanning all departments from Procurement to HR.
Human Resources (HR) and Administration	Manages recruitment, onboarding, training, worker welfare, labour compliance, facility administration, and security — providing the foundational human capital and administrative support upon which all operational departments depend.

Source: Observed during internship placement at EGMCL (2026); adapted from Christopher (2016)

The core production departments — Design and Development, Merchandising, Sample, Planning, Procurement, Cutting, Sewing, and Finishing — operate in a logical sequential order that mirrors the apparel product development and manufacturing lifecycle (Tyler et al., 2006). Each department receives inputs from the preceding function and delivers outputs to the next, creating a tightly integrated operational flow that minimizes lead times and reduces the risk of production bottlenecks.

The support and governance cluster — comprising Warehouse and Logistics, Commercial and Finance, Audit and Sustainability, and HR and Administration — performs an enabling and regulatory role across the entire value chain. Rather than operating in isolation, these units are embedded within the broader production system, providing the financial oversight, compliance assurance, talent management, and logistical infrastructure without which core manufacturing operations could not function sustainably or at scale (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010).

1.6.1 Hierarchical Structure and Career Progression

The organizational hierarchy follows a clear, progressive career path that promotes accountability, professional development, and structured decision-making. It reflects a typical management ladder in a large-scale manufacturing environment, starting from entry-level trainee positions and advancing to senior leadership roles.The progression is illustrated below as a simple vertical flowchart:

Figure 6: Organizational Hierarchy at EGMCL

Each tier of this hierarchy carries distinct functional responsibilities that collectively sustain the organisation's operational and strategic objectives. At the entry level, the Management Trainee (MT) programme serves as the primary talent pipeline, recruiting fresh graduates and high-potential candidates into a structured rotational scheme that provides cross-departmental exposure and foundational competency development. Progression to Executive and Senior

Executive levels requires the demonstration of independent operational capability, consistent task ownership, and measurable contribution to team deliverables.

Mid-level positions — spanning Assistant Manager, Manager, and Senior Manager — are characterized by supervisory responsibility, departmental goal ownership, process improvement leadership, and cross-functional coordination. At this tier, individuals are expected to translate strategic directives into executable operational plans while simultaneously developing the leadership competencies required for advancement (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Senior leadership roles — encompassing AGM, GM, AVP, and VP — carry responsibility for strategic oversight, policy formulation, multi-site operational management, and alignment with the organization's broader sustainability agenda and global business objectives. [4]

This structured progression model serves multiple institutional functions simultaneously: it supports talent retention by providing clear advancement pathways, facilitates succession planning by developing internal leadership pipelines, and reinforces organizational accountability by maintaining unambiguous lines of authority at every level (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

1.6.2 People, Compliance, and Sustainability Governance

People development and ethical governance constitute foundational pillars of EGMCL's operational philosophy. The organization maintains a deliberate focus on workforce empowerment, leadership development, diversity and inclusion, and worker representation — recognising that human capital investment is intrinsically linked to long-term manufacturing excellence and organisational sustainability (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Strict compliance protocols, occupational safety standards, and a culture of ethical transparency are upheld across all operational levels, reflecting the organisation's commitment to responsible business conduct.

Sustainability and corporate governance are further embedded within what Epic Group (2024) terms a "Beyond Governance" approach — a framework that extends conventional compliance obligations to encompass proactive environmental stewardship, resource efficiency optimization, and active community engagement. This orientation aligns with contemporary ESG frameworks, which scholars increasingly identify as central to the long-term legitimacy and competitiveness of global apparel manufacturers (Amed et al., 2020).

[4] The senior leadership role descriptions and organisational governance objectives referenced here were gathered through direct observation, internal briefings, and organisational documentation reviewed during the internship placement at Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL). Armstrong & Taylor (2020) is cited to support the broader principle of hierarchical leadership development applicable at mid-level positions and does not reference EGMCL specifically. For general organisational reference, see Epic Group. (2024). *About Epic Group — sustainable fashion company*. Retrieved March 11, 2026, from https://www.epicgroup.global/corpinfo25v1/

Figure 7: Certifications and Audit

Chapter 2: Description About Task Accomplishment

This chapter presents the practical implementation stage of the internship, outlining the rotational schedule and the operational responsibilities carried out across six key departments within the organization. Over a period of 70 days, the program offered comprehensive exposure to the diverse functions essential for managing a contemporary Woven manufacturing business. This included administrative activities at the Head Office (HQ) and process-oriented tasks aimed at enhancing efficiency at the factory unit (EGMCL).

2.1 HR and Administration Department

The Human Resources and Administration Department functions as the organisational foundation upon which EGMCL's entire workforce operation is built. In a manufacturing environment employing thousands of individuals across diverse functional roles, the HR department's ability to attract, deploy, and retain skilled labour and qualified professionals is not merely an administrative concern — it is a direct determinant of production continuity and competitive capability (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

Departmental Overview and Key Functions

The department's most strategically critical function is the continuous supply of skilled human capital across all levels of the organization — from shop-floor operators and technical staff through to mid-level managers and senior professionals. Without a reliable pipeline of competent personnel, even the most advanced manufacturing infrastructure cannot perform to its intended capacity (Boxall & Purcell, 2016).

Beyond talent acquisition, the department manages a comprehensive range of operational responsibilities. These include employee onboarding and induction, personnel record maintenance, daily attendance monitoring, leave administration, and the end-to-end processing of monthly payroll — encompassing basic salary, overtime, bonuses, and statutory deductions. Compensation management extends further to cover insurance, banking coordination for salary disbursement, and the administration of employee allowances and statutory benefits. The department additionally coordinates training and development programmes, employee

engagement activities, expatriate documentation support, and the organisation of cultural and recreational events that contribute to a cohesive and motivated workplace environment (Retrieved March 11,2026)[5]

Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

The HR rotation covered four core functions, each building logically on the previous one and collectively providing a complete view of how workforce administration operates in a large-scale manufacturing environment.

Recruitment and Talent Acquisition

Recruitment was the most engaging part of this rotation — and the one that left the strongest impression. Being involved in filtering resumes and scheduling interviews made it immediately clear how much judgement goes into matching a candidate to a role. It was not simply about qualifications on paper; it was about reading between the lines of a profile and asking whether this person genuinely fits what the department needs right now. Sitting in on the process alongside the HR team and the relevant Head of Department gave me a real appreciation for how consequential these decisions are — the wrong hire costs the organisation far more than the time spent getting the right one (Boxall & Purcell, 2016).

Onboarding and Induction

Following recruitment, I supported the onboarding of newly joined employees — helping with joining formalities, ID card issuance, and personnel record entry into EPICOM. What struck me was how deliberate and structured the process was. EGMCL treats induction not as paperwork, but as the organisation's first opportunity to make a new employee feel they belong — and that, as Armstrong and Taylor (2020) note, directly shapes how quickly and confidently a new hire becomes a productive team member.

Attendance Monitoring

Once onboarding was complete, I was assigned responsibility for maintaining daily attendance records across staff levels — cross-checking entries, flagging discrepancies, and ensuring the data was clean before it moved forward into payroll. It sounds straightforward, but one wrong entry can create a salary error that damages trust between an employee and the organisation. Doing this carefully, day after day, made me understand why data discipline at this stage matters so much (Epic Group, 2024).

Payroll Preparation

The most technically involved task was preparing salary sheets using EPICOM. Once attendance data was verified and imported, the system generated each employee's salary breakdown — basic pay, overtime, deductions, and bonuses. I prepared the full salary sheet for a designated department independently, submitted it for HR approval, and had it confirmed as

[5] This information was gathered through direct observation and internal documentation reviewed during the internship placement at Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL). For general reference on the organisation's HR and operational framework, see Epic Group. (2024). *About Epic Group — sustainable fashion company*. Retrieved March 11, 2026, from https://www.epicgroup.global/corpinfo25v1/

accurate. Completing that task correctly, on a live system with real employee data, was genuinely satisfying — it felt less like a training exercise and more like actual work that mattered (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

Although time constraints meant training coordination and benefits administration were observed rather than practised directly, the four tasks completed gave me a thorough and connected understanding of how HR keeps an organisation's workforce running — quietly, precisely, and without interruption.

Observations and Learning

This placement generated several professional insights that would not have been accessible through classroom learning alone. Perhaps the most significant realisation was how consequential payroll accuracy is to employee trust and workplace morale. Even minor errors in salary calculation can erode confidence in management and trigger disengagement — a dynamic well supported in HR management literature (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Working directly within the payroll cycle made this risk tangible rather than theoretical.

The use of EPICOM also demonstrated how digital HR systems transform what would otherwise be a labour-intensive, error-prone process into a structured and auditable workflow. This aligns with broader industry evidence suggesting that HRMS adoption in manufacturing organisations significantly improves data accuracy, processing efficiency, and compliance outcomes (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2013). Additionally, observing the recruitment process reinforced how critical the HOD consultation stage is — it bridges the gap between HR's procedural knowledge and the department's technical requirements, ensuring that hiring decisions reflect genuine operational needs rather than credentials alone. Overall, this rotation deepened my appreciation for HR not as a back-office function, but as a strategic enabler of organisational performance.

2.2 Department of Industrial Engineering

Following the completion of my rotation in the HR and Administration Department, I transitioned into the Industrial Engineering (IE) team — arguably one of the most technically intensive and operationally influential departments within any garment manufacturing facility. The IE department sits at the intersection of production efficiency, workforce optimisation, and cost management, making it a critical function in determining whether a factory meets its shipment targets without compromising quality standards (Barnes, 2008).

Departmental Overview

The Industrial Engineering Department at EGMCL is responsible for designing, measuring, and continuously improving the production processes that underpin the facility's manufacturing output. Its scope extends well beyond day-to-day floor supervision — the department is fundamentally concerned with how work is structured, how time and motion are measured, and how resources are allocated to maximise productive efficiency across every sewing line (Groover, 2020).

Core departmental responsibilities include conducting time and motion studies to establish operation cycle time standards, developing Standard Minute Values (SMV) for individual sewing operations, and preparing Operation Bulletins (OB) that define workflow sequences, machine requirements, and manpower utilisation for each style. The department designs ergonomic workstation configurations and efficient machine layouts, sets up and balances production lines to minimise bottlenecks, and monitors Work-In-Progress (WIP) levels to ensure smooth production flow. It maintains operator skill matrices to support workforce planning, designs performance-based incentive schemes, estimates thread consumption for costing purposes, and measures overall factory capacity to support order planning and scheduling (Epic Group, 2024). Critically, the IE team works in close collaboration with the Production, Planning, and Quality departments — ensuring that efficiency improvements are implemented cohesively and that performance targets are collectively owned rather than siloed within a single function.

Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

The IE rotation provided some of the most technically enriching experiences of the entire internship period, with direct involvement in three core IE functions.

Non-Productive Time (NPT) Analysis The first assignment involved observing and recording Non-Productive Time on the production floor — defined as any period during which an operator is present and clocked in but not engaged in value-adding production activity. Common NPT causes include machine setup delays, material starvation, thread breakage, and waiting time between bundles. I was tasked with identifying and logging NPT incidents during active production hours, categorising each occurrence by type and duration. This seemingly straightforward exercise quickly revealed how significantly accumulated downtime can erode daily output targets — even when individual incidents appear minor in isolation.

Figure 8: SMV Calculating Watch

Standard Minute Value (SMV) Study The second task involved conducting an independent time study to calculate SMV for selected sewing operations. Using a stopwatch, I timed operators completing full stitching sequences and recorded the data required to compute the standard time using the established formula:

SMV = Basic Minute + Bundle Allowance + Machine Allowance + Personal Fatigue Allowance

This exercise provided a practical understanding of how SMV functions as the foundational unit of measurement for production planning, efficiency tracking, and garment costing (Groover, 2020).

Operation Bulletin (OB) Familiarisation The third area of involvement was studying a live Operation Bulletin for a five-pocket denim pant with bartack reinforcement and chain-stitch construction. The style comprised 42 sewing operations with a total SMV of 7.85 minutes, configured across 32 operators utilising SNLS, DNLS, chain stitch, bartack, button attach, and buttonhole machines. While the theoretical output was calculated at 168 pieces per hour, the balanced line target was set at 130 pieces per hour — corresponding to a planned efficiency of 77.38%. Analysing this OB illustrated how line balancing decisions directly translate engineering calculations into practical production realities.

Observations and Learning

This rotation substantially deepened my technical understanding of garment manufacturing in ways that classroom instruction alone could not replicate. The NPT exercise was particularly instructive — it made visible a category of operational loss that is easy to overlook yet consistently damaging to productivity. Research in manufacturing efficiency consistently identifies unplanned downtime as one of the primary causes of output shortfalls in apparel production environments (Barnes, 2008), and experiencing this firsthand gave that finding genuine practical meaning.

The SMV study reinforced how precision in time measurement directly impacts downstream functions including costing, capacity planning, and buyer pricing — a chain of dependencies that underscores why IE accuracy carries commercial as well as operational consequences. Perhaps most valuably, observing the OB in a live production context demonstrated how industrial engineering translates abstract efficiency principles into concrete operational instructions that dozens of operators follow simultaneously. This experience made it clear that the IE department does not merely support production — it architecturally defines how production functions, and its influence on a factory's competitiveness is both profound and largely invisible to those outside the function.

2.3 Planning Department

Upon completing my rotation in the Industrial Engineering Department, I transitioned into the Planning Department — a function that, from the outside, can appear largely administrative but reveals itself on closer examination to be one of the most operationally consequential departments within the entire facility. If IE defines how production works, Planning determines whether it happens at all — on time, in the right sequence, and with the right materials in place (Christopher, 2016).

Departmental Overview

The Planning Department at EGMCL serves as the central coordinating function responsible for translating buyer orders into executable production schedules. Operating at the interface between merchandising, procurement, production, and quality, the department ensures that every order progresses through the manufacturing pipeline in a controlled and timely manner — minimising idle time, preventing material shortfalls, and protecting shipment deadlines (Slack et al., 2019).

The department's responsibilities span three interconnected planning domains**.** Sample planning governs the development and approval of all pre-production samples — including initial development samples, buyer fit approvals, size sets, and pre-production confirmations — ensuring that design intent is technically validated before bulk cutting commences. Material planning tracks the procurement and inward movement of fabrics, trims, and accessories, coordinating closely with the Procurement and Warehouse departments to ensure that all required inputs arrive within the production-ready window. Production planning encompasses capacity allocation, line scheduling, and lead-time management — translating confirmed orders and available resources into realistic daily and weekly output targets aligned with shipment deadlines (Epic Group, 2024). Underpinning all three domains is close collaboration with the Merchandising team, which serves as the primary conduit for buyer requirements, critical path timelines, and order-specific constraints.

Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility assigned during this rotation was the preparation of a size set sample plan — a document that schedules the development, measurement, and approval of garment samples across the full size range required by the buyer prior to bulk production authorisation.

The task began with a review of an existing sample plan from a previous order, which provided a working understanding of how planning sequences are structured, what information fields are required, and how inter-departmental timelines are mapped against buyer deadlines. Following this orientation, relevant order information was gathered — including buyer specifications, size range requirements, approval timelines, and critical path constraints — with guidance from the Planning Executive overseeing the order.

Using this information, a new size set plan was independently drafted, sequencing each sample development stage against realistic lead times. The draft was subsequently reviewed by the responsible executive, who provided corrections and final confirmation. Once approved, the finalised plan was distributed to all concerned departments via email as directed by the sample planning team. This end-to-end involvement — from information gathering through drafting, review, and communication — provided a complete view of how a single planning document functions as a coordination instrument across multiple departments simultaneously.

Observations and Learning

This rotation produced a significant shift in how I understood the role of planning within a manufacturing organisation. Before joining this department, planning appeared to be primarily a scheduling exercise — a matter of filling in dates on a timeline. In practice, it became clear that effective planning is a dynamic and judgement-intensive function that requires constant recalibration in response to changing buyer requirements, material delays, and production floor realities (Slack et al., 2019).

The size set sample planning task specifically illustrated how consequential upstream planning decisions are for downstream production outcomes. A delay in size set approval, for instance, directly compresses the bulk production window — creating pressure on cutting, sewing, and finishing that cascades through the entire order cycle. This interdependency reinforces what supply chain scholars describe as the "bullwhip effect," wherein disruptions at early stages of the production process are amplified as they move downstream (Christopher, 2016). Beyond the technical learning, this rotation also developed my appreciation for structured communication — the act of distributing a confirmed plan to all relevant departments is not merely procedural, but serves as a formal alignment mechanism that synchronises expectations and accountabilities across the organisation. Planning, as this experience made evident, is not the steering wheel of the factory in a metaphorical sense alone — it is the function without which coordinated large-scale manufacturing would be practically impossible.

2.4 Store, Inventory, and Fabric Technical Department

Transitioning from the Planning Department, the next rotation was within the Store and Inventory function — a department that, despite rarely receiving the same visibility as production or merchandising, is quietly foundational to everything that happens on the factory floor. Without accurate inventory control and timely material availability, even the most precisely engineered production schedule collapses (Wild, 2002). This rotation also extended into the Fabric Technical sub-department, which operates in close coordination with the store function and carries direct responsibility for material quality assurance prior to production release.The store department takes in all incoming raw materials and accessories from suppliers.

Departmental Overview

The Store Department at EGMCL manages the complete lifecycle of physical materials within the facility — from the receipt of incoming raw materials and accessories through to their secure storage, controlled issuance to production departments, and the dispatch of finished goods. The department operates across five distinct store categories: the General Store**,** Grey Fabric Store**,** Dyes, Chemicals and Auxiliaries Store**,** Finished Goods Store, and Accessories Store — each serving a specific point within the production value chain (Epic Group, 2024).

Core departmental responsibilities include receiving and logging all inbound materials into the inventory management system, conducting quality checks at the point of receipt and rejecting

non-conforming goods, grading and shade-sorting textile materials to prevent mismatching during production, issuing equipment and materials against approved requisitions aligned with daily production requirements, and maintaining sufficient stock levels to prevent production stoppages. A daily stock report documenting receipts, issuances, and closing balances is prepared at the end of each shift, providing real-time visibility of inventory status to relevant departments (Epic Group, 2024).

The Fabric Technical sub-department operates as a specialised quality function within this broader store structure. Its primary mandate is to inspect every incoming fabric roll, conduct performance testing, and produce documented quality reports that serve as the basis for production clearance decisions. Tests routinely performed include tensile strength, colorfastness, shrinkage, and rip resistance assessments — each evaluating a different dimension of fabric suitability for garment production (Kadolph, 2010).

Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

The tasks assigned during this rotation spanned both inventory operations and fabric quality assessment, providing a well-rounded exposure to the department's dual function.

Within the store function, daily responsibilities included assisting with the receipt and logging of incoming materials, verifying quantities against purchase orders, and supporting the preparation of daily inventory reports. This required careful attention to detail, as discrepancies between physical stock and system records — if left unresolved — can trigger material shortfalls mid-production.

The more technically demanding work occurred within the Fabric Technical department**,** where active participation in roll-wise fabric inspection was undertaken. Using the 4-point inspection system — the industry-standard grading method for evaluating fabric defects by severity and frequency — flagged rolls were systematically examined for surface damage, dye inconsistencies, and structural irregularities, with each defect recorded and converted into a numerical grade. Findings were compiled into formal inspection reports submitted to the fabric technologist for review.

A particularly instructive exercise involved shade sorting within a single colour lot comprising approximately 102 fabric rolls. Despite originating from the same dye batch, subtle tonal variations were visible across rolls. A fabric swatch was cut from each roll and evaluated under D65 standardised daylight lighting conditions, after which the rolls were classified into four distinct shade groups to prevent colour mismatching during cutting and assembly. Additionally, the leading edge of each roll was examined for bow and skew — distortions in fabric grain alignment that, if undetected, can cause garment panels to twist or pucker after washing.

Observations and Learning

This rotation produced some of the most practically applicable learning of the entire internship. The fabric inspection work, in particular, illustrated how quality control in an RMG facility is not a single checkpoint but a layered system of interdependent evaluations — each designed to catch a different category of risk before it reaches the production floor (Kadolph, 2010). The shade sorting exercise was especially revealing: the assumption that rolls within a single dye lot are uniformly consistent proved to be unreliable in practice, and the consequences of skipping this step — mismatched panels in finished garments, buyer claims, and potential shipment rejections — are entirely avoidable with rigorous pre-production checks.

The inventory management side of the rotation reinforced how material traceability underpins production reliability. When every transaction — receipt, issuance, and return — is accurately recorded, production planners can make informed scheduling decisions with confidence. When records are inconsistent, the downstream effects compound quickly (Wild, 2002). More broadly, this rotation demonstrated that the store and fabric technical functions are not passive holding areas but active quality and control mechanisms that shape the conditions under which manufacturing either succeeds or fails.

2.5 Commercial Department

After completing my rotation in the Store and Inventory Department, I moved into the Commercial Department — a function that sits at the critical intersection of finance, logistics, and international trade compliance. Where most factory departments focus inward on production processes, the Commercial Department faces outward simultaneously in two directions: managing the inward flow of raw material payments and overseeing the outward movement of finished goods to international buyers (Branch, 2009). It was immediately apparent that this department operates under a distinctly different kind of pressure — one defined not by production targets but by documentation deadlines, banking windows, and shipping schedules that wait for no one.

Departmental Overview

The Commercial Department at EGMCL operates across two locations with clearly delineated responsibilities. The factory-based commercial team manages export documentation, shipment coordination, and customs compliance — ensuring that finished garments are cleared and dispatched within the contractual timeframes agreed with international buyers. The head office commercial team handles upstream financial transactions, including the management of sales contracts, Letters of Credit (LC), and bank transfer arrangements such as Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) payments to raw material suppliers (Epic Group, 2024).

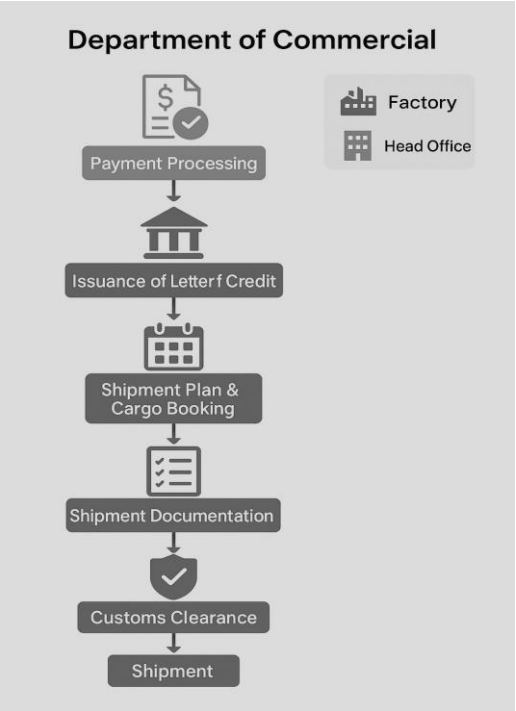

Figure 9: Commercial working procedure

This structural division reflects the operational reality that commercial management in garment manufacturing involves two simultaneous and equally time-sensitive flows: materials flowing into the facility against payment obligations, and finished goods flowing out against shipment commitments. Both flows are governed by internationally recognised trade finance instruments and export compliance frameworks, making accuracy and timeliness non-negotiable (Branch, 2009). The department works in close coordination with Merchandising, Production, Quality Assurance, and Logistics to ensure that every shipment departure is preceded by complete documentation, confirmed production sign-off, and verified cargo readiness.

Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

The rotation within this department involved direct participation in two core commercial processes, both of which provided exposure to the documentary and coordinative demands of international garment trade.

Letter of Credit (LC) Processing The first area of involvement was observing and supporting the LC establishment process for raw material procurement. An LC is a formal payment instrument issued by the buyer's bank guaranteeing payment to the supplier upon presentation of compliant shipping documents — a mechanism widely used in international apparel trade to mitigate counterparty risk (Branch, 2009). The process involved collating supplier invoices and banking details, preparing the required documentation package, submitting it for finance director approval, and processing the LC through the banking platform for verification before forwarding to the relevant merchandiser. What became practically clear during this exercise was how sequentially dependent each step is — a single missing document halts the entire process, with direct consequences for material delivery timelines.

Shipment Planning and Cargo Booking The second task involved supporting the cargo booking process for outbound shipments. This required liaising with merchandisers to obtain confirmed shipment dates and purchase order details, verifying production completion status

for each order, and entering shipment quantities and estimated cargo weights into the logistics planning system. For orders destined for Walmart, bookings were managed through the buyer's proprietary portal, Retail Link — a system that imposes its own submission protocols and deadlines independent of internal workflows. Each booking required cross-verification of production sign-off, quality clearance, and document readiness before a reservation could be confirmed.

Observations and Learning

This rotation offered a perspective on garment manufacturing that no amount of production floor experience could provide alone. The most significant realisation was that commercial management is fundamentally an exercise in simultaneous coordination under time pressure — managing vendor payment schedules on one side while racing against shipping deadlines on the other, with documentation accuracy as the thread connecting both (Seyoum, 2009).

The LC process illustrated how international trade finance transforms what appears to be a straightforward supplier payment into a multi-party, multi-stage documentary exercise governed by internationally standardised rules. A missed condition or incorrectly worded document can result in the bank refusing payment — creating supplier disputes and material delays that cascade directly into production. The cargo booking experience reinforced a related lesson: that logistics reliability is only as strong as the information feeding into it. Incorrect quantities, premature bookings, or missed quality sign-offs translate directly into warehouse congestion, demurrage costs, or missed vessel departures — outcomes that damage buyer relationships and erode commercial credibility. More broadly, this department demonstrated that behind every on-time shipment is an invisible architecture of coordinated decisions, each dependent on the one before it.

2.6 Marketing and Merchandising of EGMCL and Process Flow

The Merchandising Department rotation proved to be among the most comprehensive of the entire internship, offering exposure to the full commercial and operational arc of a garment order — from initial buyer inquiry through to final shipment documentation. If any single department can be said to hold the entire production cycle together, it is Merchandising: the function responsible for translating buyer requirements into factory reality while simultaneously managing cost, quality, timeline, and communication across every department involved (Goworek, 2007). The complexity of this role only becomes fully apparent when experienced from the inside.

Departmental Overview

The Merchandising Department at EGMCL is structured into five dedicated buyer teams, each aligned to a major international account — Walmart, Amazon, Uniqlo, Kiabi, and Dunnes. Within each team, responsibilities are distributed across three core phases of the order lifecycle: development**,** which covers design accuracy and sample approvals; bulk production coordination**,** which manages the transition from approved samples into full-scale

manufacturing; and shipment execution**,** which oversees final inspection, documentation, and dispatch (Epic Group, 2024).

The end-to-end merchandising process follows a defined sequential workflow. Upon receipt of a buyer's purchase order and technical specification pack, the team initiates prototype sample development for construction and design verification. Costing is then conducted — encompassing material, labour, and capacity inputs — to support competitive price negotiation with the buyer. Once commercial terms are agreed and the official order is confirmed, a structured sample approval sequence follows: proto, fit, size set, and pre-production (PP) samples are developed and submitted for buyer sign-off before bulk production is authorised. Concurrently, all required trims and accessories — including labels, threads, zippers, buttons, and interlinings — are sourced, booked, and verified for quality, quantity, shade, and specification compliance upon arrival. Production lines are then launched against approved samples, with daily output and quality inspection reports monitored against the shipment timeline. Final inspection, cargo booking, and the preparation of a complete shipping document package — including packing lists, invoices, test reports, and inspection certificates — conclude the cycle, with payment settled through LC or telegraphic transfer (TT) as contractually agreed (Epic Group, 2024).

Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

Active involvement during this rotation spanned four distinct merchandising functions, each corresponding to a different stage of the order management process.

Fabric Sourcing and Supplier Evaluation When new orders were received from Walmart and Amazon, the immediate priority was identifying and evaluating suitable fabric suppliers. This involved contacting multiple mills, obtaining quotations, and assessing each supplier's capability against the order's quality and delivery requirements — drawing on fabric technical data to support the evaluation. Following a structured review with the supervising manager, a preferred supplier was selected for both sample development and bulk production. This process reinforced that sourcing decisions are fundamentally risk management decisions: the wrong supplier creates quality failures or delivery delays; the right one enables everything downstream to proceed without disruption (Goworek, 2007).

Fabric and Trims Quantity Booking Material requirement calculations were undertaken based on the buyer's purchase order sheet, computing total fabric consumption by multiplying per-garment usage against the full order quantity. This figure was submitted to the supplier alongside the fabric reference to generate a proforma invoice. Trim requirements — including thread, buttons, zippers, interlining, labels, and pocketing — were calculated and booked simultaneously, with quantities calibrated carefully to avoid both production-halting shortfalls and capital-tying overstock.

Raw Material Payment Coordination A practical task involved coordinating the settlement of outstanding supplier invoices for sample materials. This required collating the relevant documentation, liaising with the internal finance team, tracking the bank processing timeline, and confirming receipt of payment with the supplier. The exercise demonstrated how payment coordination — though procedurally straightforward in normal circumstances — carries significant operational risk when deadlines are tight and communication between parties is imprecise.

Logistics and Supply Chain Monitoring Exposure to the inward logistics process illustrated the complexity of in-housing raw materials within BEPZA (Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority) regulatory requirements. Completing the full procurement cycle — including sales contract sign-back, export permit (EP), import permit (IP) clearance, and cost-and-freight (C&F) coordination — within compressed timelines requires proactive supply chain monitoring at every stage (Christopher, 2016).

Observations and Learning

This rotation generated the broadest set of professional insights of the entire internship, precisely because merchandising touches every other department simultaneously. The most fundamental learning was that effective merchandising is not about managing tasks sequentially — it is about managing interdependencies concurrently. A delay in fabric approval affects the PP sample timeline; a late PP sample compresses the bulk production window; a compressed production window creates pressure on quality sign-off; and a rushed quality process risks shipment rejection. Each decision ripples forward with consequences that grow in severity the further downstream they travel (Christopher, 2016).

The sourcing experience specifically illustrated why supplier selection carries disproportionate strategic weight relative to the attention it sometimes receives. As Goworek (2007) notes, sourcing decisions in apparel manufacturing are rarely reversible mid-season — once a supplier is committed, the organisation inherits both their capabilities and their limitations for the duration of that order. The payment coordination task, meanwhile, offered a grounded appreciation for how financial and operational functions are more tightly coupled in practice than organisational charts suggest. A delayed payment is not merely a finance issue — it is a potential production issue, a relationship issue, and ultimately a shipment issue. Merchandising, as this rotation made clear, is the department where all of those connections become most visible — and most consequential.

Chapter 3: Critical assessment of internship work

A critical assessment, in the context of an internship report, is a structured analytical reflection that moves beyond mere description of what was observed or experienced. Rather than simply recounting tasks performed, it evaluates the quality, effectiveness, and limitations of those experiences — connecting practical observations to established academic frameworks and professional standards (Moon, 2004).

In this report, the critical assessment serves three interconnected purposes. First, it examines how the theoretical knowledge acquired through the PGD-KIM academic curriculum was applied — and at times tested — within a live manufacturing environment. Second, it identifies specific operational gaps and inefficiencies observed across EGMCL's departmental functions, translating those observations into evidence-based recommendations for improvement. Third, it reflects honestly on the author's own professional development — acknowledging not only what was learned, but how that learning has reoriented the author's understanding of the industry and their readiness to contribute to it.

Critically assessing an internship experience is therefore not an exercise in criticism for its own sake, but a disciplined intellectual process through which experiential learning is converted into professional judgement — the defining competency that distinguishes a reflective practitioner from a passive observer (Schön, 1983).

3.1 Applying Classroom Knowledge to Real Work

Finishing courses in communication, analytical skills, and HR in my first term really boosted my confidence. Then in the second term, I got to dive into different departments—industrial engineering, quality management, production, and merchandising. Some courses stood out because they actually let me apply what I learned in class to real situations. For example:

3.1.1 HR Skills and Competencies (KIM 101)

During my internship, I saw how that foundation of trust and legal practice actually matters to how everything else operates. Learning about class leadership made more sense when I saw it happening. One supervisor would set clear daily targets, explain why they mattered, and actually listen when someone on the line had a better way to do something. When people feel trusted like that, they care more about their work. A sustainability decision affects sourcing, which affects quality, which affects communication with buyers. I saw this play out in real situations, like how waste reduction programs weren't just environmental; they also saved costs. Communication came up constantly. Feedback channels, open conversations between departments, transparency about goals these things made the workplace actually function well. It improved how I understood customer needs and supplier relationships too.

Seeing all of this together, compliance, leadership, sustainability, communication. Showed me what good business practices actually look like in action. It's not theoretical; it's how a company survives and grows.

3.1.2 Communication Skills (KIM 103)

Communication matters in the apparel industry—a lot. It's how deals get made, how information flows between teams, how customers and suppliers actually understand what you need. I learned that quickly during my internship. The KIM103 Communication Skills course gave me a real education in how to talk to different people in different ways. I learned about internal communication—how to present information to colleagues and navigate the hierarchy and external communication with clients and partners. But it was one thing learning it in class; it was another actually using it. During my placement, I had to present findings to the IE team, write emails to clarify production issues, and sit in on calls with buyers. I wasn't great at all of it at first. A production manager needs different information than a buyer. A colleague on the line needs directness; a client needs professionalism. In today's industry, especially with everything being international, this skill is non-negotiable. Teams are spread across countries, dealing with cultural differences, managing expectations across time zones. I saw how a simple miscommunication could delay an order or create confusion on the line. On the flip side, when communication worked well, everything moved smoother. I'm still developing this skill, but I know it's going to be essential as I move forward in this industry.

3.1.3 Industrial Engineering (KIM 202)

The PGD-KIM program gave me a solid grounding in Industrial Engineering and showed me how to apply it in real situations. The patterns I'd studied suddenly clicked when I was analyzing actual NPT and SMV data. Walking through production areas, I noticed how small timing adjustments rippled through the entire workflow—something I might have missed without that theoretical foundation. Direct experience changed how I think about manufacturing.

As the industry adopts data analytics and automation, companies need people who understand both the principles and the practical reality. My combination of coursework and hands-on experience positions me to help implement changes that actually make a measurable difference.

3.1.4 Quality Management (KIM 204)

Quality management course that fundamentally changed how I understood fabric testing. What made it special was recognizing the exact same procedures I'd seen in our factory lab reflected in the course material—it validated that what seemed like routine testing actually had solid theoretical grounding behind it. Each one taught me something different about how to conduct reliable tests and spot potential issues that might slip past a quick inspection. Around the same time, I was assigned to research our factory's sustainability efforts, which opened my eyes to just how much work goes into reducing environmental impact-everything from selecting eco-friendly materials to cutting down waste and rethinking how products are made. What I realized is that sustainability isn't just nice to have anymore. Customers increasingly care about where their clothes come from and how they're made, which means companies that ignore this are putting themselves at a disadvantage. For someone working in garment manufacturing, staying

current with sustainability practices isn't optional—it's becoming part of the job. When we align what we do with sustainable principles, we're not just helping the environment; we're building a stronger business that appeals to the market we're competing in.

3.2 Recommendations for industry improvement

Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) industry has undergone remarkable expansion over the past two decades, establishing itself as the world's second-largest apparel exporter and a critical node in global fashion supply chains (Rahman & Hossain, 2022). Despite this growth trajectory, significant opportunities for operational improvement persist at the facility level — particularly in areas of risk management, inventory control, production efficiency, material utilisation, and financial optimisation. The following five recommendations are grounded in direct observations made during the internship placement at EGMCL and are supported by relevant academic and industry literature.

3.2.1 Buyer Credit Insurance and Commercial Risk Mitigation

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed a structural vulnerability within the global garment industry that EGMCL experienced firsthand — the sudden cancellation of confirmed orders that had already entered the production pipeline, resulting in significant financial losses and idle capacity (Amed et al., 2020). This risk, while dramatically amplified during the pandemic, is not exclusive to crisis periods; geopolitical disruptions, buyer insolvency, and sudden market contractions can trigger comparable outcomes under normal trading conditions.

To mitigate this exposure, it is recommended that EGMCL formally incorporate buyer credit insurance into its commercial risk management framework. Credit insurance provides contractual financial protection against order cancellations, buyer default, and non-payment — effectively transferring a portion of commercial risk from the manufacturer to the insurer (Seyoum, 2009). For a facility operating at EGMCL's order volume and buyer diversity, this instrument would provide not only financial protection but also greater confidence in committing production capacity to forward orders. The relatively modest cost of insurance premiums is substantially outweighed by the financial exposure that a single large-scale cancellation can generate, particularly when raw materials have already been procured and production lines allocated.

3.2.2 Warehouse Stock Management

One of the most immediately observable inefficiencies encountered during the internship was the systemic disconnect between procurement decisions and existing warehouse inventory. Walking through EGMCL's warehouse, it was evident that significant quantities of fabrics, trims, and accessories — many of which remained commercially viable for repeat or similar

orders — had been sitting idle for extended periods, occupying storage space and tying up capital without generating productive value.

The root cause was clear: merchandising teams were calculating material requirements for incoming orders without first referencing what was already available in stock. The consequence was duplicate procurement — ordering materials the facility already held — a pattern that inflates raw material costs, creates storage congestion, and reduces working capital efficiency (Wild, 2002). This is not an uncommon problem in high-volume manufacturing environments where order velocity is high and cross-departmental communication is inconsistent, but it is an entirely preventable one.

The recommended solution is twofold. First, a mandatory pre-procurement stock check should be institutionalised as a standard step in the material planning workflow — ensuring that existing inventory is always the first reference point before new orders are placed with suppliers. Second, EGMCL should invest in a real-time digital inventory tracking system that provides all relevant departments — particularly Merchandising and Procurement — with live visibility of warehouse stock levels, material specifications, and quantity availability. Such systems are now widely accessible and cost-effective, and their implementation consistently demonstrates measurable reductions in duplicate purchasing and inventory carrying costs (Wild, 2002).

3.2.3 Industrial Engineering Workforce Expansion

During the IE rotation, a recurring constraint became apparent: the department was consistently operating below its functional capacity due to an identified manpower shortage. The IE team is responsible for time studies, NPT analysis, line balancing, OB preparation, and continuous efficiency improvement — functions that require dedicated personnel with sufficient time to conduct rigorous floor-level observation and analysis. When the team is understaffed, these functions are either delayed or performed less thoroughly than their operational importance demands (Barnes, 2008).

The practical consequence is a measurable gap between EGMCL's production efficiency targets and its actual output performance. IE theories and methodologies are only as effective as the personnel available to implement and monitor them on the production floor. It is therefore recommended that EGMCL undertake a targeted expansion of its IE department workforce — recruiting additional qualified industrial engineers and work-study officers to ensure that efficiency improvement initiatives are implemented rigorously and consistently across all active production lines. The return on this investment, in the form of improved efficiency, reduced NPT, and better line balancing outcomes, would demonstrably exceed the cost of the additional headcount within a relatively short operational timeframe (Groover, 2020).

3.2.4 Fabric Utilisation and Marker Efficiency Improvement

Fabric consistently represents the single largest cost component in garment manufacturing — typically accounting for between 60% and 70% of total product cost — making even marginal improvements in material utilisation directly impactful on profitability (Kadolph, 2010). At EGMCL, two specific areas of fabric waste were identified during the internship that present clear opportunities for improvement.

The first is marker efficiency — the degree to which pattern pieces are optimally arranged on fabric during the cutting process to minimise wastage between panels. Comparative observation suggested that EGMCL's marker efficiency was performing below the standard achieved by comparable facilities in the region, indicating that improvements in CAD marker planning could yield meaningful material savings without any compromise to garment quality or construction integrity.

The second area concerns head-end trimming — the practice of cutting and discarding the leading edge of each fabric roll during inspection. While this practice is necessary to ensure that defective or unrepresentative fabric is excluded from production, the trimming allowance currently applied at EGMCL appeared more generous than technically required. A systematic review of head-end trimming standards — calibrated to the minimum length necessary for reliable quality assessment — could recover a meaningful volume of usable fabric across the facility's annual cutting output. Collectively, these two improvements represent low-cost, high -return opportunities that compound significantly at production scale (Kadolph, 2010).

3.2.5 Payment Term Improvement

International raw material payments at EGMCL are predominantly settled through Letters of Credit (LC) — a standard trade finance instrument in which payment is released to the supplier upon presentation of compliant shipping documents within a pre-agreed settlement window (Branch, 2009). Under sight LC terms — the most common arrangement — payment is disbursed almost immediately upon document presentation, leaving EGMCL with minimal float period between material receipt and cash outflow.

A strategic review of LC payment terms presents an opportunity to improve EGMCL's working capital position without materially affecting supplier relationships. By negotiating deferred payment terms — such as LC at 30, 60, or 90 days usance — where commercially viable and where supplier relationships permit, EGMCL could retain funds within its accounts for an extended period before settlement is required. During this window, the retained capital generates bank interest earnings that currently go entirely unrealised under sight LC arrangements (Seyoum, 2009). While individually modest, these interest earnings aggregate meaningfully across the volume of LC transactions EGMCL processes annually, contributing to improved financial performance without requiring any change to operational processes or supplier pricing structures.

3.3 Learning for self-improvement

The PGD-KIM programme, taken together with the 70-day internship at EGMCL, represents the most professionally formative experience of my career to date. Prior to enrolling, my understanding of garment manufacturing was largely confined to a single functional perspective — leaving the interconnected disciplines of industrial engineering, production planning, quality assurance, HR management, and trade compliance either entirely unfamiliar or only superficially understood. What this programme systematically dismantled was the assumption that expertise in one area is sufficient preparation for a career in an industry as operationally complex and cross-functionally demanding as apparel manufacturing (Goworek, 2007).

3.3.1 Cross-Functional Professional Literacy

Perhaps the most significant personal development outcome of this programme was the acquisition of cross-functional professional literacy — the ability to engage meaningfully with colleagues, supervisors, and industry professionals across departments that previously felt entirely foreign. Before this programme, sitting in a meeting with an IE engineer, a planning executive, and a compliance officer simultaneously would have been professionally disorienting. By the end of the internship, I could follow, contribute to, and critically evaluate the conversations happening in each of those rooms.

This shift matters more than it might initially appear. In garment manufacturing, decisions rarely stay within departmental boundaries — a fabric sourcing choice affects planning timelines; a planning decision affects IE efficiency targets; an IE efficiency gap affects commercial commitments to buyers. Professionals who can only operate within their own functional silo are structurally limited in their ability to identify problems, propose solutions, or lead cross-departmental initiatives (Christopher, 2016). This programme has meaningfully expanded the professional range from which I can operate.

3.3.2 Communication and Professional Conduct

Communication emerged as one of the most consistently tested competencies throughout the internship — and one of the areas where personal growth was most tangible. Early in the placement, there was a natural tendency to default to passive observation rather than active engagement. Over time, and with the confidence that comes from genuine task involvement, that tendency reversed. Presenting findings to the IE team, coordinating with suppliers on payment timelines, drafting formal planning documents for cross-departmental distribution, and participating in buyer-related discussions each demanded a different register of professional communication — and navigating those differences in real time was a form of learning that no classroom simulation can fully replicate (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

Written communication similarly improved across the placement period. The discipline of preparing accurate, formally structured documents — payroll sheets, inventory reports, size set plans, and inspection records — reinforced that professional writing in a manufacturing

environment is not about eloquence; it is about precision, clarity, and the elimination of ambiguity that could cause downstream errors.

3.3.3 Sustainability as a Professional Imperative

One of the most enduring intellectual shifts produced by this programme was a reconceptualisation of sustainability — from a peripheral corporate responsibility concern to a core operational and commercial imperative. Prior to the programme, sustainability in the context of garment manufacturing seemed largely synonymous with environmental compliance — something managed by a dedicated department with little bearing on day-to-day production decisions. The internship fundamentally revised that understanding.

At EGMCL, sustainability considerations are visibly embedded across the value chain — from the responsible sourcing criteria applied in procurement, through the waste reduction targets pursued in cutting and finishing, to the ESG governance frameworks that inform senior leadership decisions (Epic Group, 2024). Scholars increasingly identify this integration as not merely ethically desirable but commercially necessary — as international buyers, particularly those serving European markets, apply progressively stricter sustainability requirements to their supplier base (Amed et al., 2020). For a professional aspiring to work in merchandising, understanding sustainability not as a compliance checkbox but as a buyer relationship variable — one that directly affects order allocation decisions — is a competency that will only grow in importance as the industry evolves.

3.3.4 Multi-Stakeholder Coordination and Adaptability

A practical competency that the internship developed with particular clarity was the ability to manage simultaneous relationships across multiple stakeholder groups — buyers, suppliers, internal departments, and banking institutions — each operating on different timelines, priorities, and communication expectations. In the Merchandising rotation alone, a single working day could require coordinating a supplier quotation, updating a planning executive on material arrival timelines, preparing a cargo booking submission for a buyer portal, and following up with the finance team on an outstanding LC. Managing these concurrent demands without losing precision or composure is a skill that develops through practice rather than instruction (Slack et al., 2019).

The broader lesson from this experience was one of professional adaptability — the recognition that the apparel industry is not a static environment in which a fixed set of skills guarantees continued relevance. Market demands shift, buyer requirements evolve, sustainability standards tighten, and digital tools transform operational processes at an accelerating pace (McKinsey & Company, 2023). The most valuable professional disposition this programme has cultivated is not any single technical competency, but the habit of continuous learning — the willingness to encounter unfamiliar functions, engage with them seriously, and extract transferable understanding from every experience. That habit, more than any specific skill, is what I believe will determine long-term professional contribution in this industry.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

The 70-day industrial attachment at Epic Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (EGMCL) represented a defining transition in my professional development — from theoretical understanding to applied, industry-grounded competency. Undertaken as a core requirement of the Post Graduate Diploma in Knitwear Industry Management (PGD-KIM) at BRAC University, this placement provided an immersive exposure to the operational realities of one of Bangladesh's vertically integrated, export-oriented apparel manufacturing facilities.

Rotating across seven functional departments — Human Resources and Administration, Industrial Engineering, Planning, Store and Inventory, Commercial, Store and Fabric Technical, and Merchandising — offered a rare opportunity to observe and participate in the full production lifecycle of an international garment order, from buyer inquiry and sample development through to shipment execution and payment settlement. What became increasingly evident across each rotation was that no department operates in isolation. Every decision made in merchandising carries consequences for planning; every delay in procurement reverberates through production; every compromise in quality assurance creates commercial risk downstream. The interdependency of these functions is not an abstract management principle — it is the daily operational reality of high-volume apparel manufacturing, and understanding it experientially is fundamentally different from understanding it academically (Christopher, 2016).

Beyond technical exposure, this internship sharpened several professional competencies that are directly transferable to industry practice: precision in documentation, structured communication across functional teams, analytical application of industrial engineering tools such as SMV calculation and NPT analysis, and an appreciation for the commercial and compliance frameworks that govern international garment trade. Working within EGMCL's BEPZA-regulated environment also provided insight into the regulatory and logistical dimensions of export manufacturing that are rarely covered in academic curricula.

The apparel industry demands professionals who can think across functions, act under time pressure, and maintain quality consciousness at every stage of the value chain (Goworek, 2007). This placement did not simply supplement academic learning — it reoriented it, grounding theoretical frameworks in operational context and making clear where knowledge ends and professional judgement begins. As Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector continues to navigate the twin imperatives of sustainability and competitiveness in global markets (Rahman & Hossain, 2022), the insights gained from this internship provide a meaningful foundation from which to contribute to that ongoing evolution.

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