

## A Comparative Analysis of Quality of Work Life among the Employees of Local Private and Foreign Commercial Banks in Bangladesh

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*About four decades have passed since the phrase "Quality of Work Life (QWL)" was first introduced. But in Bangladesh it is still a new concept to emerge. No initiative was taken to identify whether there is any significant difference among the employees of the local private commercial banks and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh. Thus the study aims to make a comparative learning of the existing QWL between the employees of the local private and foreign commercial banks through quantitative survey on 50 local and 50 foreign bank's employees. The study reveals that a significant difference exists between the local private and foreign commercial bank's employees perception over QWL and in the following factors of QWL; adequate and fair compensation, work and total life space, opportunity to develop human capacities, flexible work schedule and job assignment, and employee relations.*

**Keywords:** Quality of work life, local private commercial banks, foreign commercial banks, Bangladesh.

**Field of Research:** Human Resource Management.

### 1. Introduction

Quality of work life (QWL) is a philosophy, a set of principles, which holds that people are the most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution and they should be treated with dignity and respect (Straw & Heckscher 1984). QWL encompasses mode of wages payment, working conditions, working time, health hazards issue, financial and non-financial benefits and management behavior towards employees (Islam & Siengthai 2009). According to Gadon (1984), QWL programs have two objectives: (a) to enhance productivity and (b) to increase the satisfaction of employees. Thus QWL provides healthier, satisfied and productive employees, which in turn provides efficient and profitable organization (Sadique 2003).

The reason behind choosing banking sector for this study is that it plays an important role in our economy. After the liberation war, the government of Bangladesh put in a constant effort to booster our country's banking sector. Banks have grown so extensively that it now plays a significant part in the economy. With the opening up of the economy of Bangladesh, dramatic change has been observed in the banking sector

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of Bangladesh. Such institutions play a critical role in capital formation and stimulate the level of industrialization, poverty alleviation and human development (Newaz, Ali & Akhter 2007). That's why; Kashem, Abul and Ullah (2005) mentioned that healthy banking system and healthy economies seem to go together.

Financial sector reform in Bangladesh started in 1976 with privatization of the banks (Ahmad & Khanal 2007) and a rapid expansion of private banks has taken place from the mid 1990s till present (Rahman, Gurung & Saha 2006). This rapid expansion of private banking business occurred along with customized services (Islam & Saha n.d.). At present there are 10 foreign commercial banks and 30 are local private commercial banks. The banking sector of Bangladesh employs more than 110,000 people (Ahmad & Khanal 2007). This has brought higher employment opportunities, increase in income level, and changes in consumption pattern and consequently there emerges a competitive environment in the country. Specifically, the expansion of foreign commercial banks and local private commercial banks has provided a QWL to both the employees who are working there and giving services to the customers. The employees of foreign commercial banks and local private commercial banks are contributing to banking business and export growth, supplies, employment generation, productivity and skill development of the country. Long working hours, excessive work pressure and handling demanding and unique customers in banks has become a take-for-granted phenomenon in the banking sector. There are many cases that suggest that work-life balance assists in retention, productivity and the recruitment of good staff (Evans & Vernon 2007). It can be presumed that the employees of foreign banks enjoy better compensation packages, healthy working environment, sound management policies, more structured job design, career development prospect compared to the local private commercial banks. The scenario has emerged an important issue, "to compare the QWL among the employees of local and foreign private commercial banks in Bangladesh".

This scenario has created an urge to the bank policy makers to identify the underlying situations and reasons and brought them into consideration the QWL issue. Due to the importance of this industry, it is a necessity to evaluate the QWL of the employees in foreign commercial banks and local private commercial banks. Because if employees feel that quality of working life is not balanced, they may leave the job and seek a better QWL. It has been further envisaged that employees in foreign commercial banks and local private commercial banks play the key role in manipulating their services through implementing policy that has appeal to our society. In such situation, QWL of the employees in the private commercial banks of Bangladesh becomes an important issue that has to be taken care of in order to achieve ultimate goals of the banking sector of Bangladesh.

Given that banking sector is growing day by day and difference is apparent in many local private and foreign commercial banks, this study aims to compare the QWL among the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

The research problem will be addressed through these research questions,

1. Is there any significant difference between the QWL among the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh?
2. Is the QWL of the employees of foreign commercial banks better than the employees of local private commercial banks?

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3. What are the aspects of QWL that led to a better QWL of the employees in the local private and foreign commercial banks of Bangladesh?
4. What are the problem areas of QWL in the concerned local private and foreign commercial banks of Bangladesh?

To answer these questions, a quantitative approach has been taken through conducting structured questionnaire survey. The sample is selected from three local private and three foreign commercial banks. In-depth statistical data analysis tools have been applied on the collected data for hypothesis testing. Then the results are discussed and some suggestions are made at the end of the paper.

### **2. Objectives of the Study**

The study purports to explore and gain better understanding of QWL in the local private and foreign commercial banks of Bangladesh. The contribution of this study is to examine any differences in the employee perception of QWL in local private and foreign commercial banks. By understanding their perspectives, the bank management can derive ways to improve employee productivity. By conducting this study, the findings should help both management and employees of the banks to understand QWL, the emerging issue in human resource management. Specifically, the four objectives are to,

- explore whether there is any significant difference among local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception over QWL issues;
- investigate which factors affect overall perception of QWL of local private and foreign commercial bank employees;
- examine the problem areas of QWL in the private commercial banks in Bangladesh;
- make suggestions to bank management on devising policies on QWL.

### **3. Literature Review**

#### **3.1 QWL and its Dimensions**

The evolution of QWL began in late 1960s emphasizing the human dimensions of work that was focused on the quality of the relationship between the worker and the working environment (Rose et al 2006). QWL is a concept of behavioral scientist, and the term was first introduced by Davis at the Forty-Third American Assembly on the Changing World of Work at Columbia University's Arden House. The selected participants assembled there concluded in their final remarks that "improving the place, the organization, and the nature of work can lead to better work performance and a better quality of life in the society". (Gadon 1984, Wyatt & Wah 2001, Sadique 2003, Rose et al. 2006, Islam & Siengthai 2009). Since the phrase was found the method of defining QWL varied and encompassed several different perspectives (Loscocco & Roschelle 1991).

It is difficult to best conceptualize the QWL elements (Seashore 1975). Walton (1975) proposed eight major conceptual categories relating to QWL as (1) adequate and fair compensation, (2) safe and healthy working conditions, (3) immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, (4) opportunity for continued growth and security, (5) social integration in the work organization, (6) constitutionalism in the work organization, (7) work and total life space and (8) social relevance of work life. According to Gadon (1984), QWL efforts include the areas of personal and professional

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development, work redesign, team building, work scheduling, and total organizational change. The key elements of QWL include job security, job satisfaction, better reward system, employee benefits, employee involvement and organizational performance (Havlovic 1991). Arts, Kerksta and Zee (2001) focused on the following factors: job satisfaction, involvement in work performance, motivation, efficiency, productivity, health, safety and welfare at work, stress, work load, burn-out etc. According to Royuela, Tamayo and Suriñach (2007), European Commission (EC) proposed ten dimensions for QWL, which are (1) intrinsic job quality, (2) skills, life-long learning and career development, (3) gender equality (4) health and safety at work, (5) flexibility and security, (6) inclusion and access to the labor market, (7) inclusion and access to the labor market, (8) social dialogue and worker involvement, (9) diversity and non-discrimination, and (10) overall work performance. Skinner and Ivancevich (2008) urged that QWL is associated with adequate and fair compensation, safe & healthy working conditions, opportunities to develop human capacities, opportunities for continuous growth and job security, more flexible work scheduling and job assignment, careful attention to job design and workflow, better union-management cooperation, and less structural supervision and development of effective work teams. According to Sadique (2003), a high QWL exists when democratic management practices are prevailing in an organization and all the managers, employees, workers, union leaders share organizational responsibility. QWL is defined as the favorable condition and environment of employees benefit, employees' welfare and management attitudes towards operational workers as well as employees in general (Islam & Siengthai 2009).

### **3.2 Importance of QWL**

Walton (1975) mentioned, "dissatisfaction with working life is a problem which affects almost all workers at one time or another, regardless of position or status. The frustration, boredom, and anger common to employees disenchanted with their work life can be costly to both individual and organization." Thus, QWL stimulates the employee job satisfaction (Ruzevicius 2007) and is essential for improving organizational and operational productivity (Sink & Tuttle 1989). Because, QWL programs can improve employee morale and organizational effectiveness (Hanlon & Gladstein 1984). Pay, benefits, supervisory style - these extrinsic determinants of QWL play a major role for job satisfaction (Lewis et al 2001). Moreover, QWL has direct impact on human outcomes and it significantly reduces absenteeism, minor accidents, grievances, and quits (Havlovic 1991). It is found that employee turnover can be minimized with better QWL (Newaz, Ali & Akhter 2007). Thus it can be said that QWL can develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for the economic health of the organization (Kanagalakshmi & Devei 2003). In fact, individual's quality of working life directly influences the quality of life value (Ruzevicius 2007) as the factors of QWL could be defined as physical and psychological results of the work which affect the employee (Arts, Kerksta & Zee 2001).

### **3.3 Past Researches on QWL in Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh, there were not much direct studies on QWL. Moreover most of the researches did not explore the QWL among the employees of local and foreign private commercial banks. As according to Uddin, Islam and Ullah (2006), with QWL being a relatively new concept, most of the work done in this area is rather theoretical, dealing mainly with its proper identity, its dimension and its measuring methods. Most studies focus on the relationship of QWL with some of the result variables such as performance,

productivity, job satisfaction, etc (Joshi 2007). Hoque and Rahman (1999) found that QWL is important for job performance, job satisfaction, labor turnover, labor management relations which play a crucial role in determining the overall well being of any industrial organization. They found in their study that workers of the private sector textile mills perceived significantly higher QWL than the workers of the public sector textile mills. Tabassum, Rahman and Jahan (2010) found in their study that the male employees perceived higher QWL than their female colleagues. Islam and Siengthai (2009) found that QWL has impact on the organizational performance of the garments enterprises of DEPZ. Sadique (2003) conducted a study on the employees of sugar mills and explored a significant difference between the white collar and blue collar employees' QWL. Hossain and Islam (1999) found a positive relationship between QWL and job satisfaction among government hospital nurses in Bangladesh. Uddin, Islam and Ullah (2006) also found a positive relationship between QWL and job satisfaction. Elias and Saha (1995) found in their research that female workers' quality of working life was significantly lower than that of their male counterparts in the tobacco industry. Wadud (1996) found that QWL was notably higher among the private sector women employees than their counterparts in the public sector. Kumar and Shanubhogue (1996) analyzed and compared the existing and expected QWL in universities and found a considerable gap.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Development of the Measuring Instruments

According to Loscocco and Roschelle (1991), the most common assessment of QWL is the individual attitudes. This is because individual work attitudes are important indicators of QWL. The ways that people respond to their jobs have consequences for their personal happiness and the effectiveness of their work organizations (Rose et al 2006). Thus a structured questionnaire was designed based on the literature review for achieving the objectives of the study as questionnaire survey is arguably the most common technique in management research (Veal 2005). The following eight components of QWL are considered for the study.

- Adequate and fair compensation
- Work and total life space
- Opportunity for continuous growth and job security
- Opportunity to develop human capacities
- Safe & healthy working environment
- Flexible Work Schedule and job assignment
- Attention to job design
- Employee relations

As indicated in the literature review, several authors and researchers (Walton 1975, Havlovic 1991, Sadique 2003, Royuela, Tamayo & Suriñach 2007, Islam & Siengthai 2009) considered the above mentioned components or factors as the determinants of QWL.

The questionnaire used in the survey consisted of two sections. The first section, including 49 statements, was designed to measure the perception by bank employees on QWL issues. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on each

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statement from “1” as “strongly disagree” to “5” as “strongly agree”. The last section was the demographic information of respondents namely; gender, age, marital status, number of children, education level, income level, position, years of service in the respective bank and in bank industry. To increase reliability and to assure appropriateness of the data collection instrument, the questionnaire was subject to a pilot test conducted with 10 employees working in private commercial banks in Bangladesh. The English language of the questionnaire was reviewed. Some statements were subject to a refinement on language proficiency and to avoid workplace and cultural sensitivity.

### **4.2 Data Collection**

Primary Data has been collected by visiting the local and foreign private commercial banks premises and distributing the questionnaires for obtaining the responses. In total, six banks were considered for the survey based on convenience sampling method, of which three were local private commercial banks and the rests are foreign private commercial banks. The respective branches of the banks were also selected based on the convenience. The simple random sampling method was, then, adopted for the selection of respondent for the study. In total the sample consists of 100 respondents. The sample has equal number of respondents from each category, 50 from local private bank employees and the rest of the 50 members represent the foreign private commercial banks.

### **4.3 Statistical Tools of Data Analysis**

The study is based on the data collected to measure the employee perception and satisfaction for assessing their QWL. Perception of the employee has been judged through 5-point ‘Likert scale’ that is a numerical and more specifically, interval-scaled data. The corresponding probability distribution of this numerical data point will be a continuous distribution but as the data has informed us about the perception of the employee through ranking, the parent distribution may not be the normal distribution. The pre-assumption has been further confirmed by illustration of the Probability-Probability plot (P-P plot) of the collected dataset.

The key aspects of QWL have been considered in the study based on theoretical research and historical background and factor analysis has been used afterwards for data reduction. The correlation analysis has suggested about the feature and strength of inherent relationship between these aspects and QWL. For this perception measuring study, Spearman Rank correlation has been applied providing test results free from parametric assumption. Then, central value and dispersion of the measurement on attitude and behavior has been estimated from the data set to compare the situations. The distribution of QWL for the employees of local and foreign banks has been compared along the aggregate case with box-plot diagram which can depict the disparity. Finally, test of hypothesis has been performed to declare about the existence of significant difference between median of two independent samples – local and foreign bank employees. The normality assumption is a precondition of the parametric test of difference between two independent samples. Therefore a non-parametric analysis – ‘Mann-Whitney test’ has been applied in this special case.

#### **4.4 Limitations of Methodology**

Several limitations of this study should be considered. First of all, the estimated results may not represent the population as no clear image can be observed about the feature and size of the population. Making inference from such a kind of population, convenient sampling approach has been performed. Secondly, the data were collected only from the Dhaka city branches of the banks. Thus the results may not symbolize the actual perception of the bank employees regarding QWL in context of entire employee of Bangladesh. Third, the ratio of local and foreign private commercial banks respondents in this study may not reflect the definite local and foreign private commercial banks participation in the bank labor force.

#### **5. Hypotheses Development**

The hypotheses are developed based on the literature review and objectives of the study. The null hypothesis is stated below.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception of QWL of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

The H<sub>0</sub> is broken down in some sub-hypotheses. These are stated below in the form of null hypotheses.

**H<sub>0.1</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about adequate and fair compensation of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.2</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about work and total life space of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.3</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about opportunity for continuous growth and job security of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.4</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about opportunity to develop human capacities of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.5</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about safe & healthy working environment of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.6</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about flexible work schedule and job assignment of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.7</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about attention to job design of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

**H<sub>0.8</sub>:** There is no difference between the median perception about employee relations of the employees of local private and foreign commercial banks in Bangladesh.

## 6. Data Analysis and Discussion

### 6.1 Profile of the Respondents

In total 100 valid responses are considered for the study which were received in mid-August 2010. Respondents were full-time employees in the private commercial banks of Bangladesh. A summary of the demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1. Male and female constituted 68.6% and 31.4% respectively; 39.6% were aged between 21 to 30 years and 43.8% respondents aged between 31 to 40 years. More than half of the respondents (74.1%) were married. About 21% respondents obtained bachelor degree, 75% completed Master's degree, and the rest were PhD holders. In terms of job position, more than half of the respondents (54.5%) were from entry level jobs and more than one third of the respondents (38%) belonged to the mid-level job positions.

**Table 1: Profile of the Respondents**

Characteristics	Respondents (%)
Sex	
Male	68.6
Female	31.4
Age	
21-30	39.6
31-40	43.8
Above 40	16.5
Marital Status	
Single	26.9
Married	73.1
Education	
Bachelor degree	21.5
Masters degree	75.6
PhD	2.9
Job Position	
Entry level	54.5
Mid level	38.0
Top level	7.4

### 6.2 Internal Consistency Analysis and Factor Analysis

Cronbach alpha reliability test is conducted within each dimensions of QWL. A Cronbach alpha of 0.60 or higher is the minimum acceptable level for a study that has

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been carried out for the first time. The dimensions ‘adequate and fair compensation’, ‘work and total life space’, ‘opportunity to develop human capacities’, ‘safe and healthy working environment’, ‘flexible work schedule and job assignment’, and ‘attention to job design’ were found as internally consistent as the value of Cronbach alpha was greater than 0.60. To decide whether to continue with the rest of the dimensions, principal component analysis was conducted with varimax rotation. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity were pursued to test the fitness of the data. The KMO value that is greater than 0.5 has been accepted in this case. Two statements were deleted from the dimension ‘opportunity for continuous growth and job security’ based on the communalities value. The communality value that is greater than 0.40 has been accepted for the study. After the reduction work, the remaining 45 statements constitute eight dimensions. In descending order of factor means the factors derived are shown in the Table 2.

**Table 2: Dimensions of QWL with the factor mean**

Factor 7	Attention to job design	3.545
Factor 8	Employee relations	3.431
Factor 5	Safe & healthy working environment	3.428
Factor 1	Adequate and fair compensation	3.408
Factor 4	Opportunity to develop human capacities	3.383
Factor 3	Opportunity for continuous growth and job security	3.364
Factor 6	Flexible Work Schedule and job assignment	3.324
Factor 2	Work and total life space	3.309

### 6.3 Correlation between QWL and its dimensions

The objective of the study was to examine the existence, feature and extent of the linear relationship exists between QWL and its different dimensions. Table 3 shows value of the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient between QWL and its dimensions and the corresponding p-values.

**Table 3: Analysis of Spearman’s Correlation between QWL and its Dimension**

Dimensions of Quality of Work Life	Quality of Work Life	
	Spearman Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level (2 tailed)
Adequate and fair compensation	0.676**	0.00
Work and total life space	0.768**	0.00
Opportunity for continuous growth and job security	0.809**	0.00
Opportunity to develop human capacities	0.812**	0.00
Safe & healthy working environment	0.851**	0.00
Flexible Work Schedule and job assignment	0.782**	0.00
Attention to job design	0.719**	0.00
Employee relations	0.812**	0.00

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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This rank analysis has been conducted as it is appropriate for perception measuring study as well as gives the flexibility of distribution-free test results. Performing this special analysis, results has revealed that in all cases a very strong positive linear relationship exists between QWL and the corresponding dimensions that is statistically significant at just 1% level of significance.

### 6.4 Features of QWL Dimensions: A Comparison

A clear distinguish can be observed between the QWL of local and foreign commercial banks employees in this specific territory through observation the centre and dispersion of the two cases.

**Table 4: Contrast of Dimensions of Quality of Work Life: Descriptive Measures**

Dimensions of Quality of Work life	Median		Standard Deviation	
	Local Private Banks	Foreign Private Banks	Local Private Banks	Foreign Private Banks
Adequate and fair compensation	3.5000	3.6250	0.46443	0.54478
Work and total life space	3.3330	3.6670	0.48314	0.54597
Opportunity for continuous growth & job security	3.5000	3.5200	0.51212	0.64817
Opportunity to develop human capacities	3.5000	3.8330	0.45860	0.64422
Safe & healthy working environment	3.4290	3.5710	0.54254	0.59082
Flexible Work Schedule and job assignment	3.3330	3.5835	0.51231	0.57307
Attention to job design	3.6000	3.6500	0.58771	0.52324
Employee relations	3.4000	3.6000	0.40736	0.79057

Table 4 illustrates that for all the 8 dimensions, median satisfaction of employee of foreign bank is greater than their counter part i.e. employees of local private bank. Though none of the difference is radically high, an inherent inequity is obvious. The median response of the employee- both in local and foreign private bank also offers the feature that – the level of satisfaction slightly slides above the actual satisfactory line.

The variation of the two variables also offers another characteristic – the fluctuation in statement of local bank employee is less than the foreign bank employees except the issue on attention to job design. So, the insight and views of local bank employee are more homogeneous than that of the foreign bank employees.

### 6.5 Comparison of the Distribution of QWL

The estimated results has revealed that, the middle-most level of QWL for foreign bank employee are greater than that of the local bank employee (see Table 5) though the most frequent response of the employees follow the reverse pattern. Again, the distribution pattern of QWL of foreign bank employee is more spread and diverse compare to the local bank employee QWL as both standard deviation and range gain greater value for the formers.

The distribution of both QWL for local private bank and the foreign bank employee has appeared as negatively skewed i.e. skewed to the left and also the kurtosis, in both

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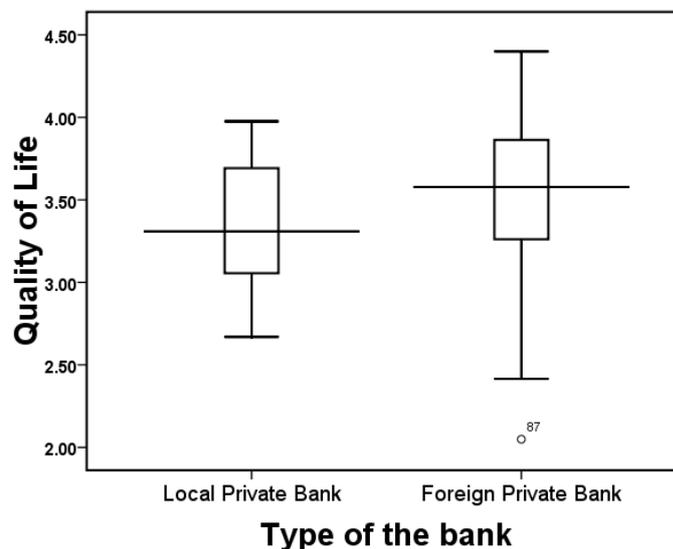
cases, is found as positive implying the distribution is long-tailed. The QWL of all employee shows an amalgamate result of both of them.

**Table 5: Comparison of QWL among Local Private and Foreign Commercial Employees: Descriptive Measures**

	Local Private Banks	Foreign Private Banks	All banks
Median	3.3088	3.5777	3.4710
Mode	3.79	2.05 <sup>a</sup>	3.79
Standard Deviation	0.35824	0.50938	0.44794
Range	1.31	2.35	2.35
Skewness	-0.006	-0.533	-0.176
Kurtosis	0.665	0.470	0.099

The Box-plot diagram also suggests these dissimilarities of the distributions (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Box-plot Diagram for QWL among local bank employee and foreign bank employee**



The Box-plot diagram also suggests these dissimilarities of the distributions (see Figure 1). The frequencies of local bank employees' perception are mostly distributed above the median whereas those of foreign bank employees are almost equally distributed above and below the median line. The median QWL for foreign bank is clearly sited higher than the median QWL for local private bank employee.

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### 6.6 Testing the Difference in QWL of Local Private Bank Employee and Foreign Commercial Bank Employee

Mann-Whitney U Test results indicates (see Table 6), at 10% significance level, median response of local private bank employee significantly varies from that of foreign bank employees for the dimensions of QWL; Adequate and fair compensation, Work and total life space, Opportunity to develop human capacities, Flexible Work Schedule and job assignment and Employee relations. As a whole, median QWL of local private bank employee is also significantly different from that of foreign bank employees at just 5% level.

**Table 6: Testing the Difference in QWL of Local Private and Foreign Commercial Banks: Nonparametric Approach**

	Bank wise ranking			Test Statistics			Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
	Type of the Bank	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	
Adequate and fair compensation	Local Private Banks	44.98	2249.00	974.00	2249.00	-1.910	.056
	Foreign Private Banks	56.02	2801.00				
Work and total life space	Local Private Banks	43.67	2183.50	908.50	2183.50	-2.368	.018
	Foreign Private Banks	57.33	2866.50				
Opportunity for continuous growth and job security	Local Private Banks	49.28	2464.00	1189.00	2464.00	-4.24	.671
	Foreign Private Banks	51.72	2586.00				
Opportunity to develop human capacities	Local Private Banks	42.54	2127.00	852.00	2127.00	-2.758	.006
	Foreign Private Banks	58.46	2923.00				
Safe & healthy working environment	Local Private Banks	47.74	2387.00	1112.00	2387.00	-9.955	.340
	Foreign Private Banks	53.26	2663.00				
Flexible Work Schedule and job assignment	Local Private Banks	44.02	2201.00	926.00	2201.00	-2.244	.025
	Foreign Private Banks	56.98	2849.00				
Attention to job design	Local Private Banks	47.28	2364.00	1089.00	2364.00	-1.117	.264
	Foreign Private Banks	53.72	2686.00				
Employee relations	Local Private Banks	45.43	2271.50	996.50	2271.50	-1.760	.078
	Foreign Private Banks	55.57	2778.50				
Quality of Work Life (QWL)	Local Private Banks	43.98	2199.00	924.00	2199.00	-2.247	.025
	Foreign Private Banks	57.02	2851.00				

\*\* Median Difference is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed).

\* Median Difference is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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The null hypothesis on the issue of adequate and fair compensation has been considered that there is no median difference between the perception of the employees of local private and foreign bank employees regarding this topic. Considering the level of significance as 10%, the result of Mann-Whitney U Test has showed that the  $H_{0.1}$  is rejected as the p-value is just 5.6%. Thus there is a significant difference between the two types of employees' perception regarding the adequacy and fairness of compensation provided by their banks. In table 4, a slightly greater median value of foreign bank employees (3.6250) than that of the local private bank employees (3.5000) have indicated that more satisfaction about the adequacy and fairness of the compensation of the former. It has been further proved by the test result that the difference is significant at 10% level.

The null hypothesis in case of work and total life space,  $H_{0.2}$  is rejected as the p-value is only 1.8% according to the result of Mann-Whitney U Test, considering the level of significance as 10%. Thus there is a significant difference between the two types of employees' perception regarding the work and total life space provided by their banks. In table 4, a slightly greater median value of foreign bank employees (3.6670) than that of the local private bank employees (3.3333) have indicated that more satisfaction about the work and total life space of the former.

In case of opportunity to develop human capacities, the null hypothesis,  $H_{0.4}$  is rejected as the p-value is only 0.6%, considering the level of significance as 10% according to the Mann-Whitney U Test result. From table 4, it can be found that the median value of foreign bank employees (3.8330) is slightly greater than the local private bank employees (3.5000). Thus it can be inferred that there is a significant difference between the local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception regarding the opportunity provided by the banks to develop human capacities.

The null hypothesis  $H_{0.6}$  is rejected as the p-value is 2.5%, considering the level of significance as 10% according to the Mann-Whitney U Test result. From table 4, it is clear that the median value of foreign bank employees (3.5835) is slightly greater than the local private bank employees (3.3330). Thus it can be said that there is a significant difference between the local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception regarding the flexible work schedule and assignment of the employees.

According to the Mann-Whitney U Test result, the p-value is 7.8% for employee relations, considering the level of significance as 10%. Thus the null hypothesis  $H_{0.8}$  is rejected, which indicates that there is a significant difference between the local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception regarding the employee relations in the banks. Combining this result with table 4, it can be said that there is a significant difference between the local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception regarding the employee relations, as the median value of foreign bank employees (3.6000) is slightly greater than the local private bank employees (3.4000).

From the Mann-Whitney U Test result and median value, it can be inferred that there is a significant difference between the local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception regarding overall QWL. The p-value for overall QWL is 2.5% considering the level of significance as 10%. Thus the null hypothesis  $H_0$  is rejected. Table 5 indicates the median value of foreign bank employees (3.5777) is slightly greater than the local private bank employees (3.3088).

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The other null hypotheses of the study,  $H_{0.3}$ ,  $H_{0.5}$ , and  $H_{0.7}$  cannot be rejected, as the p-values are greater than the considered level of significance 10%. Thus it cannot be determined whether there is any difference between the local private and foreign commercial bank employees' perception regarding opportunity for continuous growth and job security, safe & healthy working environment, and attention to job design.

### **7. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research Direction**

This study provides valuable implications for the banks that have growing interest in ensuring QWL for attracting and retaining quality human resources. The study revealed significant differences in overall QWL and the determinants of QWL i.e. compensation, work and life space, development of human capacities, safe & healthy working environment, flexibility in work schedule and job assignment, and employee relations. So the local private commercial banks should try to eliminate these differences to improve the overall QWL among the employees.

Firstly the local private commercial banks should become more conscious in ensuring adequacy and fairness in compensation, as compensation can strongly influence the employee job satisfaction (Kleimen 2005). As family life can influence the work life both in positive and negative way (Sumer & Knight 2001) the banks should pay special attention to the employees' work and life space. The banks will be able to increase its QWL among the employees by providing more flexibility in the work assignments, working hour and balancing the work loads. Several authors (Mathis & Jackson 2005, Khan 2008) emphasized that flexibility in work schedule can enhance the employee motivation, which in turn can increase productivity. The banks should emphasize on developing human capacities by focusing on training programs, skill development programs, and by providing authority and power to the employees. Several authors have mentioned authority and empowerment can significantly improve employee motivation (Fisher, Schoenfeldt & Shaw 2004, Mathis & Jackson 2005). Besides, skill development programs not only ensure increased employee productivity but also it can have impact on employee job satisfaction as it can increase the chances of job promotion and performance based incentives. At the same time developing a trustworthy and healthy relationship between the management and employees will facilitate the local private commercial banks to ensure improved QWL among the employees.

A large number of employees in local private and foreign commercial banks of Bangladesh are playing a significant role for economic growth by contributing their knowledge, skills and efforts. So the aspects of QWL can have a significant impact on job satisfaction and employee productivity. Organizations must not underestimate the impact of satisfaction related to pay (Tremblay, Sire & Balkin 1998). To recruit and retain good employees and to enhance employee and organization productivity, work and life should have proper space to balance (Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein 2001). It is also evident that employees with flexible work schedule and job assignment were more satisfied with their jobs, more likely to want to remain on the job, and showed more initiative than workers with no access to these policies (Hill et al 2001). Organizations should also give sufficient attention to workers' physical and mental health (Lowe 2003). In fact, employee relationship can increase satisfaction and related outcomes of the employees (Campion 1993).

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So transforming the workplace proactively using a combination of well designed QWL initiatives for the employees will yield competitive advantage as it will increase employee job satisfaction. This in turn will motivate the employees to perform in superior way, leading the organizations and their stakeholders to a better future by yielding the expected outcome.

Although there are notable contributions from this study especially for employee retention strategies, the results of this study need to be viewed and acknowledged in lights of its limitations. First, the sample size was considerably low. Moreover, only few banks have been included in this study. Thus the findings cannot be generalized. Therefore, future research should be conducted on a larger scale by considering more private commercial banks to authenticate the differences between the local and foreign commercial bank employees' perceptions about QWL. Furthermore, to enhance the development of QWL initiatives in the HRM arena, it is necessary to focus on refining the current QWL issues.

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