

WORKERS' QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE AND PRIVATISATION: INSIGHTS FROM A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

Mehadi Mamun *

* Department of Business Administration, Victorian Institute of Technology, Sydney, Australia
Contact details: Department of Business Administration, Victorian Institute of Technology, 333 Kent Street, NSW 2000, Sydney, Australia



Abstract

How to cite this paper: Mamun, M. (2021). Workers' quality of working life and privatisation: Insights from a developing country. *Corporate Ownership & Control*, 18(4), 231–238.
<https://doi.org/10.22495/cocv18i4art16>

Copyright © 2021 The Author

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

ISSN Online: 1810-3057
ISSN Print: 1727-9232

Received: 17.04.2021
Accepted: 07.09.2021

JEL Classification: J28, J33, J81, O19, O25, P16
DOI: 10.22495/cocv18i4art16

Privatisation affects tens of thousands of workers in Bangladesh, though most research has focused on the relationships between privatisation and profitability of this developing country's privatisation programmes. This study, therefore, is an attempt to shed light on workers who are very vulnerable and examines the impact of privatisation on workers' quality of working life. Employing document analysis and semi-structured face-to-face interviews with privatised and state-owned organisations' workers in Bangladesh, this study finds that workers' compensation, job security, access to trade unions, and leave entitlements in most privatised case study organisations are less than their counterparts in comparable state-owned organisations. These findings aim at contributing to the body of research by empirically investigating the impact of privatisation on workers who are left behind and possess important implications for the privatisation programmes in Bangladesh as it informs that there is a need to reassess the privatisation programmes through greater awareness of the negative effects of privatisation on workers and renew efforts to develop an approach that is sensitive to the Bangladeshi context.

Keywords: Workers, Quality of Working Life, Privatisation, Bangladesh

Authors' individual contribution: The Author is responsible for all the contributions to the paper according to CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) standards.

Declaration of conflicting interests: The Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

1. INTRODUCTION

The deaths of over 1,000 and injury to more than 2,000 workers in the collapse of Rana Plaza in 2013, a privately-owned Bangladeshi garment factory building, at Savar of Dhaka district brought worldwide attention to the working conditions of Bangladeshi factory workers. Since then various international initiatives have been launched which reflect a deepening interest from the global community in the issue. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) launched a US\$25.2 million initiative, funded mainly by the British and Dutch governments and co-sponsored by the Bangladesh government, to improve safety at Bangladeshi garment factories (Butler & Hammadi, 2013).

However, in-depth research into working conditions and, in particular, the quality of working life of Bangladeshi factory workers is relatively

limited. Instead, for many years the focus of international assistance efforts in Bangladesh has been on the promotion of macro and microeconomic reforms designed to improve the efficiency and profitability of the Bangladeshi private sector as this has been seen as key to realising improved economic and social outcomes. For example, major institutional aid agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have focused on economic development through the implementation of larger macro-economic reforms under various structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), which have required the Bangladeshi government to implement a range of prescribed policies and reforms, including the privatisation of state-owned enterprises. It is assumed that these donor-driven interventions will lead to private sector-led economic growth which will in turn decrease levels of poverty and, more broadly,

improve the economic, social, and political environment in Bangladesh. The view of these agencies is closely aligned to core tenets of development theory tied to neo-classical economic theory that argues ownership transfers from state to market will enhance management controls and improve productivity (Vickers, Walters, Johnson, MacGregor, & Yarrow, 1988). In this way, conditional aid has become an important element of the development paradigm and a significant amount of official development assistance (ODA) has been provided in Bangladesh on the condition that the Bangladeshi government privatises its state-owned enterprises.

There is mixed evidence at hand to suggest that the privatisation of state-owned enterprises has yielded significant benefits to Bangladesh in the way of enhanced output, productivity, profitability, employment, and investment in the privatised enterprises. For example, Estrin and Pelletier's (2018) study on developing economies including Bangladesh shows that a move from state to private ownership alone does not automatically yield profits and economic gains. Conversely, Howlader's (2015) study shows that investment, employment, resources utilisation, and profitability have been increased in privatised enterprises than in public enterprises.

This paper argues that a focus on measures to increase profitability is a blunt instrument without taking into account the impacts of privatisation on workers. To explicate the argument, this study examines the impact of privatisation schemes at the human level and seeks to explore the following research question:

RQ1: What is the impact of privatisation on the quality of working life of workers in privatised state-owned enterprises in Bangladesh?

A deeper understanding of the impact of privatisation on workers' quality of working life can provide useful insights and contribute to the broader debate on the role of privatisation programmes in Bangladesh.

Following the introduction, the rest of the paper is organised as follows. The next section provides an overview of relevant literature on privatisation and workers' quality of working life in Bangladesh. The third section outlines the research methodology, while the fourth section provides the research findings. Concluding comments, implications, and future research directions are made in the fifth section.

2. PRIVATISATION AND WORKERS' QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE IN BANGLADESH: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Foreign aid and aid donors have played an important role in Bangladesh's growth story. When aid initially started to flow into Bangladesh after independence, it was primarily used for relief, rehabilitation, and repairing the damage incurred during the nine-month-long liberation war of 1971. However, once the immediate post-war rebuilding phase was over, foreign aid became the essential component to support the development of the country. The inadequacy of domestic resources available to the economy persuaded the Bangladesh government to accept foreign aid in order to sustain some level of development activities. This ushered in a long era

of aid dependence and the share of foreign aid in financing ADP (Annual Development Programme) still remained around 30 percent in 2016 (Khatun, 2018). The dependence on foreign aid has given donors significant leverage over the country's policies. The World Bank and IMF, in particular, have used this leverage to impose a variety of conditions on the Bangladesh governments, which are derived from neo-classical and capitalistic economic philosophy (Chowdhury, 1990; Uddin & Hopper, 2001). A common condition tied to IMF and World Bank assistance in Bangladesh has been the privatisation of state-owned enterprises.

Cook (1986) defines privatisation as the purposeful sale of state-owned enterprises by a government to private proprietors. Under privatisation policy, state-owned enterprises are required to be sold regardless of their relative profitability. In Bangladesh, privatisation programme was started in the mid-1970s following the advice of aid donors to reduce the fiscal burden that public enterprises' losses and their subsidisation imposed on the country (Sobhan, 1982; Uddin & Hopper, 2003; Mamun, 2020). A total of 372 SOEs were privatised by the Bangladesh government from 1975 to 1992. And, after the establishment of the Privatisation Board in 1993, a total of 39 SOEs were also privatised by the Bangladesh government's different ministry and the Privatisation Board (Uddin & Hopper, 2001; Chowdhury, 2008; Privatisation Commission, 2010a, 2010b). The Privatisation Board was dissolved after the establishment of the Privatisation Commission in July 2000 with more financial and administrative power to well run the privatisation programme. The Privatisation Commission privatised 38 state-owned enterprises between its establishment and 2015 (Privatisation Commission, 2010b, 2015). The Bangladesh government merged the Privatisation Commission and Board of Investment into the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority in 2015 to boost industrialisation and investment in the country.

Over the past three decades, international aid agency-directed privatisation has been the topic of widespread research. Major international aid agencies, such as the World Bank and IMF see privatisation as a way to increase investment and efficiency and decrease government expenditure in developing countries (Adam, Cavendish, & Mistry, 1992; Brune, Garrett, & Kogut, 2004; World Bank, 2006, 2016). However, Stiglitz (2003) criticised IMF's SAPs in which rapid privatisation was applied in developing countries, and argued that the subsequent readjustments led to a deteriorating economic situation, increased poverty and social unrest.

As in most developing countries, the value of privatisation to Bangladesh is also highly contested. The World Bank's country assistance strategy (2011, 2016) contended that privatisation in Bangladesh increased business efficiency and output. In a similar vein, Howlader (2015) found that investment, output, and business growth were better in privatised enterprises. However, Estrin and Pelletier (2018) argued that there was no clear link between privatisation and improved financial performance. Howlader (2015) also found that SOEs were better than privatised enterprises for fringe benefits and job security. Likewise, Mamun and Billah (2020) found that workers' compensations in privatised

organisations were less than their counterparts in comparable SOEs. Islam (2015), thus, saw the peril of privatisation programmes that led many enterprises to the edge of collapse after privatisation. The above assessments of the outcomes of privatisation, however, were mostly based on narrow criteria — namely performance — and neglected other issues, such as working conditions, individual rights, and the quality of working life for workers more generally.

Therefore, the dominant interpretation of the effectiveness of privatisation programmes in Bangladesh has almost always emphasised financial performance and profitability, usually by comparing pre- and post-privatisation data. Less attention has been given to the impact of privatisation on workers. Hence, there is scope to improve our understanding of the impact of privatisation on workers more directly through examining the impact on workers' quality of working life in privatised factories.

Quality of working life (QWL)

The term “quality of working life (QWL)” was first introduced by Louis Davis in the late 1960s to emphasise the human dimensions of work (Hian & Einstein, 1990). QWL refers to the favourable conditions and environments of a workplace that support and promote employee satisfaction and well-being (Beaudoin & Edgar, 2003). Martel and Dupuis (2006) argued that quality of working life is reliant on the extent to which an employee feels empowered, valued, rewarded, motivated, and consulted. Employees with high QWL have a high level of job satisfaction, job performance, and a lower level of absenteeism, grievances, and quits (Newaz, Ali, & Akhter, 2007; Janes & Wisnom, 2011).

Mirvis and Lawler (1984) described the basic components of a good QWL as a safe work environment, equal employment opportunities, equitable wages, opportunities for advancement, protection of individual rights, and opportunities to learn and grow. Van Laar, Edwards, and Easton (2007) used six key factors to describe most of the variation in an individuals' QWL as career satisfaction, working environment, home-work interface, general well-being, control at work, and stress at work.

Despite differences in terminology and conception, there are some common factors found in the QWL definitions. Researchers, such as Walton (1975), Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel, and Lee (2001), and Van Laar et al. (2007) have developed models to measure QWL that have been broadly recognised (Timossi, Pedroso, Francisco, & Pilatti, 2008; Edwards, Van Laar, Easton, & Kinman, 2009; Ferreira, Vasconcelos, Goulart, Ituassu, & Christino, 2014). Walton (1975) identified eight major conceptual areas to cover the basic aspects of QWL. The criteria and sub-criteria of Walton's model for assessing QWL are presented in Table A.1 (see Appendix).

Walton's QWL model (1975) is one of the most accepted and used by the researchers of QWL. Timossi et al. (2008) evaluated Walton's model for assessing QWL as inclusive and detailed. Researchers (Roos, 2012; Talebi, PakdelBonab, Zemestani, & Aghdami, 2012; Ferreira et al., 2014) replicated Walton's QWL model (1975) with a broad range of employee groups and in different countries, such as Brazil, Iran, and South Africa. The QWL measure of

Sirgy et al. (2001) exhibits validity, though it has not been replicated with different employees groups. The work-related quality of life (WRQoL) scale developed by Van Laar et al. (2007) for assessing QWL can be used in healthcare settings worldwide, though it also has not been replicated in other areas.

This study, therefore, used Walton's QWL model (1975) to measure workers' QWL as the model was wide-ranging and could be replicated with a broad range of employee groups in different countries. In this study, Walton's QWL model was slightly simplified without changing the criteria and the objectives of Walton's model to apply in workers with lower schooling levels to obtain reliable results through more clarified terms. For example, technical terms were changed to simpler and more usual terms, without changing their meaning. Pilot interviews were also conducted to increase the questionnaire's reliability and appropriateness and to avoid workplace sensitivity.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The study was exploratory in nature and informed by the findings of five in-depth case studies of privatised organisations in Bangladesh. The five case study organisations were of varying size, spanned different industries, and were based in different geographical districts of Bangladesh. This assortment offered the scope for comparing the impact of privatisation on workers' QWL across different industries and sizes. The case study research method was the preferred research method because the focus was on a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context, and multiple cases within the same study increased the possibility of finding similar results and the development of similar results over multiple cases informed more robust findings (Yin, 2003; Noor, 2008).

The study used semi-structured face-to-face interviews with factory workers and analysed documents of relevant secondary source materials for multiple data collection. An indirectly structured interview allowed themes to emerge as participants constructed their own meanings from situations through the conversation (McMurray, Pace, & Scott, 2004), and document analysis was often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation (the combination of more than one method in the study of the same phenomenon) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Thus, multiple sources of data enhanced this study's validity and reliability.

To select cases, the study focused on 38 state-owned enterprises which were privatised by the Privatisation Commission between its establishment in 2000 and its amalgamation into the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority in 2015. Of the 38 privatised organisations, 20 (52.6%) were closed, 14 (36.8%) were fully operational, 3 (8%) had changed businesses, and 1 (2.6%) was partly operational. This study focused on the 14 organisations, which were fully operational after privatisation and belonged to 7 industries. Table 1 presents the names of the 7 industries from which the 14 organisations were derived.

Table 1. Fully operational privatised SOEs and their industries

<i>Industries</i>	<i>Fully operational privatised SOEs</i>
Chemical industry	4 organisations
Food industry	3 organisations
Textile industry	2 organisations
Steel industry	2 organisations
Jute industry	1 organisation
Forest industry	1 organisation
Fisheries industry	1 organisation

Source: Privatisation Commission (2010b, 2015).

Of the seven industries, the five case study organisations (jute mill, sugar mill, textile mill, paper mill, and fishing net factory) came from the five different industries and were of varying sizes. Workers' QWL at the five privatised case study organisations were compared with the workers' QWL at five state-owned organisations that were belonged to the same industries and size to know the impacts of privatisation on workers' quality of working life in privatised SOEs and to explore relationships in the data between relative levels of QWL and industry, size and type of ownership.

In total 100 interviews were conducted across the five privatised organisations (20 interviews from each organisation), and the same number of interviews were conducted in five state-owned organisations. The interviews were conducted in 2015 and 2016. Interviewees from each organisation were selected through proportional stratified random sampling from a list of staff to avoid bias and sampling errors. Workers of an organisation were first divided into two strata, such as permanent workers (male and female) and casual workers (male and female). After dividing workers into two strata, proportional stratified random sampling was conducted to obtain potential interviewees' names. For example, all male permanent workers' names were entered into a computer program to obtain potential interviewees' names randomly from the male permanent workers, and it was ensured that the proportion of this category in the whole sample was the same as the proportion in the staff list. This method facilitated an in-depth understanding of all kinds of workers' views.

Staff list and relevant documents from each organisation were collected after obtaining written consent from the authority to participate in this study. All interviews were conducted outside of the workplace and after office hours to conceal the identity of the interviewees from owners to protect them from any repercussions of participating in this study. Furthermore, no identifiable information of the interviewees was collected during the interview to provide maximum protection of their anonymity. For the same reason, oral rather than written consent was sought from the interviewees. The interviews were conducted in Bengali and the translations were done by the researcher, who was a native Bengali speaker and lived in Australia. The researcher's Bengali background assisted him in recognising, understanding, and interpreting some of the more subtle points from the interviews. The interviews were also audio recorded with the participants' permission.

4. CROSS-CASE FINDINGS

The five privatised and five state-owned organisations' documents relating to wages, benefits, leave, promotions, and other QWL aspects were analysed. The analytic procedure entailed finding, selecting, and synthesising data contained in documents. All audio recorded semi-structured interviews were transcribed and then translated from Bengali into English, and the interviews were transcribed and translated as true and as faithful to the participant's words as possible. All transcribed data were read several times and it captured sufficient detail of what the participants conveyed in their interviews. After analysing the documents and interviews, the findings were brought together to compare and create a platform for writing conclusions. According to Yin (2003), cross-case analysis was a technique that was particularly useful in the analysis of multiple case studies, and such an analysis was generally easier to follow and more robust. The findings of the five case studies were analysed and synthesised according to the following eight major conceptual areas of Walton's QWL model.

After analysing the documents and interviews, it was found that permanent workers' minimum wages in three privatised organisations (the textile mill, sugar mill, and fishing net factory) were less than those at the comparable state-owned organisations. In one case (the jute mill), minimum wages were aligned to the minimum monthly wage rate at the state-owned jute mill. And, in another case (the paper mill), permanent workers received a higher minimum wage than their counterparts at the comparable state-owned paper mill. In most cases, floor workers reported that their wages were not enough to support their families, and a large number of the floor workers relied on financial assistance from other family members to buy basic necessities. One of the workers, for example, said: *"It is very tough to support my family with this income. I have to borrow money for schooling my children and looking after my family"*.

In three cases (the jute mill, textile mill, and fishing net factory), yearly pay increases were not given or were less than those offered by the state-owned organisations. In two cases (the textile mill and fishing net factory), permanent workers had no access to a retirement savings plan. In three cases, permanent workers had access to a provident fund (a retirement savings programme). However, those three organisations' contributions to the provident funds were less than the state-owned organisations' contributions. One of the workers described his anxiety as follows: *"I feel very stressed thinking about my retirement days. I haven't made a plan yet, but I feel lots of worries. I can't save for those days"*.

Of the five case study organisations, only one paid a production bonus to its permanent workers. None of the state-owned organisations provided workers with that benefit. Three privatised organisations, like state-owned organisations, paid permanent workers two religious festival bonuses each year, each being equivalent to one month's basic wage. One privatised organisation (the textile mill) had not paid a festival bonus, while another (the fishing net factory) paid a reduced bonus. One of the workers made the following comments

about his festival celebration: *“With sorrow and happiness, I celebrate the Eid festival. My officers love me a lot and sometimes someone helps me by giving a dress for my child or someone gives some money. This way I somehow manage our festival”*.

In three cases, permanent workers’ attendance bonuses were the same as their counterparts at the state-owned organisations. In two cases (the textile mill and fishing net factory), workers received no attendance bonuses. State-owned organisations’ permanent workers were given allowances for healthcare, accommodation, transport, and tiffin, but those were not the case at the five privatised factories.

Casual workers’ daily wages in all privatised case study organisations were worse off than casuals working in similar state-owned organisations. In most cases, casual workers were only paid a daily wage and none of the other benefits were paid to permanent workers. However, casuals working at most of the state-owned factories were paid an attendance bonus. One of the casual workers at a privatised factory described his miserable living conditions as follows: *“I spend all of my wages on my family’s basic necessities. I just live from hand to mouth”*.

For the health and safety at work issue, the study found that all the five privatised case study factories and four of the five state-owned factories failed to provide workers with protective equipment. However, documents from most of those organisations mentioned the provision of safety gear as a key component of their employees’ health and safety policies. On average 40% of the workers at the five privatised factories and 50% of the workers at the state-owned factories described their workplaces as unhealthy.

All the floor workers worked a regular eight-hour day. Overtime depended on demand for products but typically meant that employees stayed other two-to-four hours each day. In three case study organisations, like all five state-owned organisations, overtime was paid at twice the hourly rate. However, in two privatised organisations, overtime was equivalent to the routine hourly remuneration. Most workers, regardless of employer, described their workload as tolerable.

To develop staff capacities, most of the privatised organisations took better initiatives. For example, at three factories (the jute mill, sugar mill, and paper mill), workers had opportunities to perform a variety of tasks to improve their capacities and skills, while none of the state-owned organisations’ workers were given such opportunities. Most of the interviewees, regardless of employer, reported that their work had importance to them and their colleagues, and they were satisfied with the responsibilities they held, and their work was fairly assessed. However, none of the case study organisations and state-owned organisations gave floor workers any opportunities to make decisions at work.

For the workers’ job security and growth, the study found that permanent workers at the state-owned factories felt secure in their jobs. By contrast, an average of 67% of permanent workers at the five privatised organisations felt insecure about their jobs. Every interviewee, from

each of the factories, received practical training when first employed and that their supervisors encouraged them to further develop their skills and abilities. All the interviewees who were permanent workers at the privatised factories, and most of the permanents at the state-owned factories, were given fair opportunities for professional growth and promotion. Across the board, however, casual workers reported having less chance of getting ahead professionally and felt insecure about their jobs. For example, one of the casual workers said: *“I am working here for more than four years, but still waiting to be permanent”*.

Workers’ reports around social integration disclosed that the permanent workers at four privatised organisations and five state-owned organisations did not feel discriminated against at the workplace based on race, religion, age, gender, or marital status. However, female casual workers at one privatised organisation were discriminated against on the basis of gender as they received less pay than male colleagues for the same type of work. This was despite published statements by their employer promising to treat employees equally. Across the board, the workers’ relationships with colleagues and bosses at work were good, and their colleagues helped each other when needed.

The findings on the organisations’ constitutionalism revealed that the workers at four-of-the-five privatised organisations were not allowed to form trade unions. However, all the five state-owned organisations valued workers’ freedom of expression and allowed employees to form trade unions. In four cases, where trade unions were banned, some workers at those factories were unaware of unions and their rights to form trade unions. So in most cases, the workers were helpless and had to follow set protocols when trying to inform management of their problems or solve disputes. This meant that in reality they were effectively at the mercy of management and had to rely on their sympathy in cases of unfair action.

In three privatised organisations (the sugar mill, textile mill, and fishing net factory), permanent workers received less leave than their counterparts at the state-owned organisations. Yet most of the workers reported that they were satisfied with the schedule of work and rest, and their work did not interfere with their family life. In fact, workers had to accept the amount of leave because of their desperate financial conditions and the tough job market in Bangladesh. Some of the floor workers were not aware of their full leave entitlements on sick leave, casual leave, and annual leave because they were poor and lacking in education, they were not careful about their rights and ready to work regardless of the conditions. Casual workers of the privatised and state-owned organisations had no entitlement to paid leave.

The study also found that most permanent workers from the privatised and state-owned organisations were satisfied with the organisations’ human resource policies under which they worked, though casual workers felt the opposite, citing a long and unsuccessful struggle to become permanent. Regardless of that, most permanent and casual workers across the board said that the quality of products and services that their organisations

provided were good and they were proud of their work. Additionally, they said that their factories were viewed favourably in the community on account of the jobs they provided to needy people and their contribution to development locally and nationally.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to examine the impact of privatisation on workers' quality of working life. The research finds that workers' compensation, job security, access to trade unions, and leave entitlements in most privatised case study organisations are less than their counterparts in comparable state-owned organisations. Though most privatised organisations have taken slightly better initiatives to develop staff capacities, workers' health and safety at work, social integration, and social relevance of working life are not significantly different to those in the state-owned organisations. The study also finds that industry type and organisational size of the privatised organisations have not affected workers' quality of working life. For example, workers' minimum monthly wages were less, yearly increments were less (or absent), and the amount of leave was less at the privatised sugar mill, textile mill, and fishing net factory compared with similar state-owned enterprises.

Though the findings of this study are applicable to the related organisations and employees, common findings and patterns from the case study organisations' interviews and documents suggest that the findings of this study can be applied and generalised across other privatised organisations' workers quality of working life. Moreover, the findings of this study are in line with the study of Stiglitz (2003), who argued that international aid agency-directed privatisation failed to address workers' issues and achieve desired outcomes of aid in developing countries. Likewise, the findings of this study are in line with the studies of Mamun and Billah (2020) and Howlader (2015), who found that

workers' compensation, fringe benefits, and job security in SOEs were better than their counterparts in comparable privatised enterprises in Bangladesh.

The findings, therefore, have important implications for privatisation programmes in Bangladesh as they raise issues associated with the uncritical application of privatisation schemes. In particular, it questions the assumption that private ownership *prima facie* leads to improved profits and, by extension, improved workers' conditions. This study argues that there is a need to place greater emphasis on a more context-sensitive approach to privatisation programmes in Bangladesh. International institutional donors, therefore, can gain a better understanding of the challenges of privatisation programmes from this study and should review their policies on the extensive privatisation of SOEs. Bangladeshi policymakers should also be highly cautious when selecting state-owned enterprises for privatisation as most of the privatised organisations are shut down and workers' interests are not preserved in most of the privatised organisations that are in operation.

Given that privatisation has become a key instrument of international institutional aid donors, and its consequences affect millions across the developing world, the need to unveil the human face of privatisation policies has never been more prescient and this study is an attempt to look at the human face of privatisation in Bangladesh. However, this study possesses some limitations as the study is exploratory in nature, and it concentrates mainly on the "what" but not the "why". Further studies, therefore, can be to take different approaches in data collection and find out the reasons for the inferior workers' quality of working life in privatised organisations and closure of more than half of the privatised organisations after privatisation in Bangladesh. An avenue of further research can also be to compare the findings of this study with the experiences of workers in privatised firms in other developing countries.

REFERENCES

1. Adam, C., Cavendish, W., & Mistry, P. S. (1992). *Adjusting privatization — Case studies from developing countries*. London, England: J. Currey.
2. Beaudoin, L. E., & Edgar, L. (2003). Hassles: Their importance to nurses' quality of work life. *Nursing Economics*, 21(3), 106-113.
3. Brune, N., Garrett, G., & Kogut, B. (2004). The International Monetary Fund and the global spread of privatization. *IMF Staff Papers*, 51(2). Retrieved from <https://www.imf.org/External/Pubs/FT/staffp/2004/02/pdf/brune.pdf>
4. Butler, S., & Hammadi, S. (2013, October 23). Rana Plaza factory disaster: Victims still waiting for compensation. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/23/rana-plaza-factory-disaster-compensation-bangladesh>
5. Chowdhury, J. A. (1990). *Privatization in Bangladesh* (Working Paper Series No. 92). The Hague, The Netherlands: The Institute of Social Studies.
6. Chowdhury, M. A. S. (2008). *An overview on privatization program*. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Privatization Commission.
7. Cook, P. (1986). *Liberalisation in the context of industrial development in LDCs* (Manchester Discussion Papers in Development Studies No. 8602, University of Manchester). <https://doi.org/10.22004/ag.econ.232631>
8. Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
9. Edwards, J. A., Van Laar, D., Easton, S., & Kinman, G. (2009). The work-related quality of life scale for higher education employees. *Quality in Higher Education*, 15(3), 207-219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13538320903343057>
10. Estrin, S., & Pelletier, A. (2018). Privatization in developing countries: What are the lessons of recent experience? *The World Bank Research Observer*, 33(1), 65-102. <https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/lkx007>
11. Ferreira, C. A. A., Vasconcelos, F. C. W., Goulart, I. B., Ituassu, C. T., & Christino, J. M. M. (2014). Quality of life at work: The mental health workers perception of a public psychiatric hospital in Brazil. *Asian Journal of Business and Management Sciences*, 3(7), 47-57. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/27736110>
12. Hian, C. C., & Einstein, W. O. (1990). Quality of work life (QWL): What can unions do? *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 55(2), 17-22.

13. Howlader, M. H. U. (2015). *Privatization in Bangladesh: An evaluative study* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh). Retrieved from <http://repository.library.du.ac.bd:8080/handle/123456789/1418>
14. Islam, M. R. (2015). Privatising government owned enterprises. *The Daily Star*. Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/24th-anniversary-the-daily-star-part-1/privatising-government-owned-enterprises-73282>
15. Janes, P., & Wisnom, M. (2011). Changes in tourism industry quality of work life practices. *Journal of Tourism Insights*, 1(1), Article 13. <https://doi.org/10.9707/2328-0824.1013>
16. Khatun, F. (2018). *Can Bangladesh do without foreign aid?* [PowerPoint presentation]. Retrieved from <https://cpd.org.bd/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Can-Bangladesh-do-without-Foreign-Aid.pdf>
17. Mamun, M. (2020). Public enterprise reform: A review of policies and privatisation in Bangladesh. *Business and Economic Research*, 10(4), 37-49. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ber.v10i4.17728>
18. Mamun, M., & Billah, M. (2020). Privatisation and workers' compensation in privatised state-owned enterprises in Bangladesh. *Business Management and Strategy*, 12(1), 16-28. <https://doi.org/10.5296/bms.v12i1.18070>
19. Martel, J.-P., & Dupuis, G. (2006). Quality of work life: Theoretical and methodological problems, and presentation of a new model and measuring instrument. *Social Indicators Research*, 77(2), 333-368. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-004-5368-4>
20. McMurray, A. J., Pace, R. W., & Scott, D. (2004). *Research: A commonsense approach*. Southbank, Australia: Thomson Learning.
21. Mirvis, P. H., & Lawler, E. E., III. (1984). Accounting for the quality of work life. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 5(3), 197-212. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030050304>
22. Newaz, M. K., Ali, T., & Akhter, I. (2007). Employee perception regarding turnover decision — In context of Bangladesh banking sector. *BRAC University Journal*, 4(2), 67-74. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10361/388>
23. Noor, K. B. M. (2008). Case study: A strategic research methodology. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 11(5), 1602-1604. Retrieved from <https://thescpib.com/html/10.3844/ajassp.2008.1602.1604>
24. Privatisation Commission. (2010a). *Privatization in Bangladesh opportunities and potentials*. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Privatization Commission.
25. Privatisation Commission. (2010b). *Study report of privatized SOEs*. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Privatization Commission.
26. Privatisation Commission. (2015). *Achievement in the privatization*. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Privatization Commission.
27. Roos, J. H. (2012). *Quality of work life in health services: Magnetism and mentorship* (Department of Health Studies, The University of South Africa).
28. Sirgy, M. J., Efraty, D., Siegel, P., & Lee, D.-J. (2001). A new measure of quality of work life (QWL) based on need satisfaction and spillover theories. *Social Indicators Research*, 55(3), 241-302. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010986923468>
29. Sobhan, R. (1982). *The crisis of external dependence — The political economy of foreign aid to Bangladesh*. London, England: Zed Publishing.
30. Stiglitz, J. E. (2003). *Globalization and its discontents*. New York, NY: WW Norton & Company.
31. Talebi, B., PakdelBonab, M., Zemestani, G., & Aghdami, N. (2012). Investigating the relationship between the employee's quality of work life (QWL) and their effectiveness in banking. *European Journal of Experimental Biology*, 2(5), 1839-1842. Retrieved from <https://www.imedpub.com/articles/investigating-the-relationship-between-the-employees-quality-of-work-life-qwl-and-their-effectiveness-in-banking.pdf>
32. Timossi, L., Pedroso, B., Francisco, A., & Pilatti, L. (2008). Evaluation of quality of work life: An adaptation from the Walton's QWL model. Paper presented at the *XIV International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management*. Retrieved from http://www.abepro.org.br/biblioteca/enegep2008_TI_ST_072_509_12395.pdf
33. Uddin, S., & Hopper, T. (2001). A Bangladeshi soap opera: Privatisation, accounting, and regimes of control in a less developed country. *Accounting, Organizations and Society, Oxford*, 26(7-8), 643-672. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682\(01\)00019-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682(01)00019-8)
34. Uddin, S., & Hopper, T. (2003). Accounting for privatisation in Bangladesh: Testing World Bank claims. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 14(7), 739-774. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1045-2354\(02\)00188-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1045-2354(02)00188-0)
35. Van Laar, D., Edwards, J. A., & Easton, S. (2007). The work-related quality of life scale for healthcare workers. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 60(3), 325-333. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04409.x>
36. Vickers, J., Walters, A., Johnson, M. B., MacGregor, I., & Yarrow, G. (1988). Privatisation in Britain. In P. W. MacAvoy, W. T. Stanbury, G. Yarrow, & R. J. Zeckhauser (Eds.), *Privatisation and state-owned enterprises: Lessons from the United States, Great Britain and Canada* (RSEP, Vol. 6, pp. 209-246). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-7429-9_5
37. Walton, R. E. (1975). Criteria for quality of working life. In L. E. Davis, & A. B. Cherns (Eds.), *The quality of working life* (pp. 91-104). New York, NY: The Free Press.
38. World Bank. (2006). *Bangladesh country assistance strategy 2006*. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/206331468013242168/Bangladesh-Country-assistance-strategy>
39. World Bank. (2011). *Bangladesh country assistance strategy 2011*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
40. World Bank. (2016). *Country partnership framework for Bangladesh for the period FY16-20*. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24134>
41. Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

APPENDIX

Table A.1. Criteria and sub-criteria of Walton’s model for assessing QWL

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Sub-criteria</i>
Adequate and fair compensation	Fair remuneration, wage balance, allotment of productivity profits, and extra benefits.
Health and safety at work	Working hours, workload, process technology, salubrity, and protection equipment.
Development of staff capacities	Autonomy, importance of the task, polyvalence, performance evaluation, and conferred responsibility.
Chance of growth and security	Professional growth, trainings, encouragement for learning, and job security.
Social integration	Discrimination, interpersonal relationship, team’s compromise, and ideas’ valorisation.
Constitutionalism	Worker’s right, freedom of expression, norms and rules, and respect to individualities.
Work and the total life space	Influence on the family routine, possibility of leisure, and time of work and rest.
Social relevance of working life	Proud of the work, institutional image, community integration, qualities of the products/ services, and human resources policy.

Source: Walton (1975).