

# Impact of Demographic Variables on QWL among Garment Workers in Dhaka City

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**Abstract**— The quality of work life depends on various socio-demographic factors, such as workers' family life, social life, and the factors related to work environment. Any attempt at improving the outcome of the organization can be successful only if the organization is able to develop a strong quality work life. The present study attempted to measure the Quality of work life of the workers of garment industries in selected workplace along with its significant relationship with demographic variables. The garments were chosen purposively. The respondents were selected by non probability sampling. Data were collected by using a structured, pre-tested questionnaire by face to face interview. Males have the lowest while the females had the highest score for QWL and the score varied significantly with different demographic variables. The mean quality of work life of the garment worker was found to be below average. The management should take the necessary steps to arrest the drift of deteriorating quality of work life in certain human factors.

**Index Terms**— Demographic variables, Quality of work life, respondents, QWL score

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Based on World Fact Book 2017 figures for population, Bangladesh (157,826,578 July, 2017 est.) has the highest population density.[1]. Now in Bangladesh the Readymade Garments industry (RMG) is the leading sector of employment, production and foreign exchange earnings. This sector alone accounts for 83% of total export earnings of the country. About 4.4 million people are working in the garment - manufacturing sector. There are now 4,825 garment factories in Bangladesh, The growth rate of RMG export was over 20% per over the last two decades.[2],[3]. In the financial year 2016-2017 the RMG industry generated US 32 billion dollar, which was 80.7 % of total export earning in exports and 12.36% of the GDP.[3].

Workers working in RMG sectors are one of the main elements of our concern. The relationship between the workers and their work environment determines how the workers are adjusted to their work whereas quality of work life depends on various factors, such as workers' family life, social life, and the factors related to

work environment. So workers can satisfy their needs through their experiences in the organization if there is a good QWL. Also any attempt at improving the performance of the organization can be successful only if the organization is able to develop a strong quality of work life. Only then workers' adjustment to their work situation can be reflected through their perception of QWL.

The term QWL is believed to be first coin by Louis Davis in the first international conference on QWL which held on Arden House, New York in September 1972.[4]. Quality of work life determines the employees' attitude, perceptions and feelings surrounding the work environment and how the work life satisfies the total life aspiration.[5]. Also it is a comprehensive construct that includes job related wellbeing and work experiences those are responsible for rewarding, fulfilling and devoid of stress and other negative personal consequences.[6],[7].

The ILO's Directory of institutions for improving quality of work life (QWL), consider following areas as concerns of QWL

- Hours of work and arrange of working time.

- Work organization and job content.
- Impact of new technologies on working conditions
- Working conditions of women, young workers, older workers and other special categories.
- Work related welfare services and facilities.
- Shop floor participation in the improvement of working conditions.[8].

Quality of work life and productivity are interrelated. There is a dynamic inter action and inter change between people, technology and management in case of QWL and productivity.[9].

Enhancing QWL will result improvement in productivity. At the same time gains from productivity improvements will strengthen QWL.[11]. It relates employees with working environment, human dimensions, technical and economic consideration.[12]. It is a dynamic multi dimensional construct that includes concepts such as job security, reward systems and participation in decision making.[13]. QWL is saving human and environmental values which have been ignored due to technological advancement of the economic growth and productivity.[14],[15].

So, considering the above factors, the present study aims to measure the level of Quality of work life of the workers of garment industries in selected workplace. Attempt is also made to find out if quality of work life has any significant relationship with demographic variables. Very few studies on QWL & demographic variables of garment workers have so far been conducted in Bangladesh. So, the present study is an attempt to investigate the impact of demographic variables on quality of work life (QWL) of the workers in garment industry.

## 2 Methodology :

This was a descriptive of cross-sectional study. The universe of the study was the garment workers working in Dhaka City. Two garments located at Khilgoan Chowdhury para in Dhaka City are

selected as the place of study. A Structured questionnaire was designed to collect information on socio-demographic variables like age, sex, marital status, educational qualification, monthly income and related information about job, like working section, designation of the workers, immediate supervisor at the job, current job experience, etc.

The quality of worklife questionnaire was the bangle version of Sinha and Sayeed's inventory developed by Haque. The inventory had 85 items. Each item had a 7- point scale ranging from 1 to 7 either in question or statement or quotation.[16].

The respondents were interviewed face to face by the researcher. Before going for the study, pre - testing was carried out on 10 cases, to finalize the procedure and to evaluate the effectiveness of the research instruments.

Data management and analysis were done with the help of statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS). Percentages, means and standard deviation were calculated and to test the significance chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), student's t test, ANOVA were applied.

## 3 Results / analysis of the data :

A cross-sectional study, conducted among 110 workers in two selected garments in Dhaka city, to assess the quality of work life of garment workers and the impact of demographic variables on QWL.

Analysis showed that 69.1% (76) of the respondents were female. Irrespective of gender 86.4% of the participants were less than 30 years of age.

The mean age of male and female participants were found to be 27.09( $\pm$ 6.28) and 21.54( $\pm$ 3.70) years respectively. [Table and fig 1] Most of the study participants (60.9%) worked in sewing section followed by those who worked in knitting (20.9%) and finishing (18.2%) sections. The males participants were from knitting

(67.6%) and finishing (32.4%) while the female participants were from the sewing (88.2%) and finishing (11.8%) sections.

The minimum income was Taka 1800.00 and the maximum Taka 10000. Male respondents had higher (Tk4376.47±1717.30) income than that of female respondents (Tk3080.26±819.43). Those working in the knitting section were better paid (4860.87±1903.76) [Tab 2] than other sections. Most of the respondents education level were up to primary level. Workers with primary (35.5%) and secondary (30.9%) education level had current job length up to 3 years but with illiteracy (25.5%) and HSC and above (8.2%) educational level had current job length less than 1 year. The difference was statistically significant. [Tab-3]

In the present study the score for quality of work life (QWL) of the respondents varied from 244 to 352. Males have the lowest QWL score while the females had the highest score for QWL. The mean score of QWL for females (292.36±25.819) was not significantly different ( $p=0.656$ ) from that for males (289.79±31.855).

The mean score for QWL was significantly higher ( $p<0.001$ ) among respondents who worked in the knitting section (300.52±31.11) than those who worked in sewing (296.48±24.24) and finishing (264.80±17.44) sections. [Tab-4] In reference to the level of education, the mean of the score of QWL was lowest among those who were illiterate (273.14±19.828) and was highest among those who attained HSC or higher educational level (318.89±32.266). Moreover it was found that the mean score for QWL increased with increasing level of education ( $p<0.001$ ). [Tab-5]

Unmarried workers showed the lowest score for QWL (276.14±18.486), where as the married workers had higher score for QWL (300.06±28.996) which provided significant relationship between the marital status with the mean score of QWL. The mean score of QWL was lowest among those who were paid below tk. 2000 per month (279.43±19.595) and was highest among those who were paid above tk. 5000 per month (321.88±33.138)

Moreover it was found that the mean score for QWL increased with increasing level of monthly income ( $p<0.001$ ). [Tab-6]

In this study, workers having current work experience less than 1 year had the highest QWL score (292.65±22.809) The mean score of QWL was found statistically significant among the respondents with different designations. Most of the workers were Helper (58) followed by Operators (22). Among the workers, Fiddler man (340.00±4.243) had the highest mean score for QWL meanwhile Poly packer had the lowest score for QWL (253.40±9.099).

#### 4 Discussion :

The present study was a cross sectional study conducted to assess the quality of work life (QWL) among garment workers along with socio-demographic variables. 110 workers were interviewed in non-probability purposive sampling method to see the impact of demographic variables on quality of work life.

Quality of work life is the way by which members of an organization are able to satisfy their important personal needs through their experience in the organization. In an organization, a good level of quality of work life (QWL) is necessary to attract and retain employees. Demographic factors of the employees are impact to the work life balance of the employees. [17],[18],[19].

In this study, the overall score for quality of work life (QWL) of the respondents varied from 244 to 352. Among the garment workers majority are females (69.1%) where male are 30.9% Males have the lowest QWL score while the females had the highest score for QWL and the result is significant with other studies. [5],[9],[20],[21].

Here the age of the workers ranged between 15 to 37 and the mean age is 23.25 (±5.29) years. Majority of garment workers are young within 25 years of age. So the result is significant and correlates with other studies done in Bangladesh. [5],[9],[20],[21],[22].

The highest score of QWL was enjoyed by the age group 30 to 40

years and the lowest score by the age group less than 20 years. This means the older age group had better score for quality of work life though it was not statistically significant.[5],[21].

A study in Nigeria showed significant relationship between Quality of Work Life and gender, age, institution type and years of work experience but there was no relationship with educational qualification. [5].

Another study in Tamil Nadu, India concluded a moderate level of Quality of Work Life among the faculty members of an engineering college. Demographic variables namely age, gender, marital status, income, experience and number of children has a significant influence on Quality of Work Life.[23].

Regarding marital status married persons are more in number than single (un married, divorced) person which is not significant.[20],[21],[23]. But married workers had higher score for QWL, where as the unmarried workers had the lowest score for QWL which showed that there was a significant relationship between the marital status with the mean score of QWL.[23]. In India, another study showed significant relation between the demographic variables such as age, period of service, income and education of employees with QWL but gender had no specific relation with their QWL.[24].

In the present study, regarding educational status of the workers majority has primary level of education and the result is significant statistically. This is quite consistent with our social context as educational status is not so important for working in this occupation. The mean of the total score of QWL was lowest among those who were illiterate and was highest among those who had attained HSC or higher level of education. This result correlates with other studies.[21],[22],[24].

Another research conducted in Singapore showed that the level of quality of work life is medium. No significant relation between gender and quality of work life was found, but relationships between quality of work life and age, work experience and income were approved.[25].

In this study, more workers are found in between tk.2000 to tk. 5000 income group per month and is statistically significant. This

is also fact that they works hard but paid less. So, within this income they have to maintain their livelihood. The mean of the total score of QWL was lowest among those who were paid below tk. 2000 per month and was highest among those who were paid above tk. 5000 per month. Moreover it was found that the mean score for QWL increased with increasing level of monthly income. This finding is also correlates with other studies.[21],[22].

Regarding working section sewing section had the highest number of employees, followed by knitting and finishing section. May be sewing section is the entry level of working in garments. This result is just significant and correlates with other studies.[21].

In case of designation, in the present study Fidderman had the highest mean score for QWL whereas Poly packer had the lowest score for QWL.[9],[22].

Another study in Azarbayejan Iran, showed that there was a significant difference in Quality of Work Life among faculties with respect to age, sex and years of experience.[26].

In India, another study revealed that male employees are more satisfied than female employees and there are no significance relationship between demographic characteristics of employees and QWL.[27].

Regarding current job experience majority has experience of 1 to 3 years and respondents with current work experience less than 1 year had the highest QWL score. The result is significant statistically.[9],[20],[22]. It is may be due to fact that the workers are commonly of young age and has little experience.

## 5 CONCLUSION :

In this study it was observed that quality of work is not equal to that of quality of life. Here Quality of work life did not differ significantly according to age, designation and current job experience of the garment workers. Gender, working section, educational status, marital status and monthly income had significant impact on QWL and mean quality of work life was below average. The management should take the necessary steps to arrest the drift of deteriorating quality of work life in certain human factors like age, designation and current job experience, which are the

basic factors to express the workers desire.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS:

Quality of Work Life increases work related benefits which increases the efficiency and efficacy of an organization. It gives a balance between the work life and family life. In a developing country like Bangladesh, management should give more emphasis on Quality of Work Life of the employees. Moreover the demographic profile of the respondents must be considered and given importance. The demographic variable has a significant influence over the Quality of Work Life. So policies to strengthen the Quality of Work Life of the employees should be adopted depending on workers demographic variables. A good Quality of Work Life leads satisfactory outcome of an organization towards its goal.

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**Table 1 : Distribution Of Respondents By Age And Gender**

Age group	Gender		Total	Significance
	Male	Female		
<20 years	3 8.8%	31 40.8%	34 30.9%	$\chi^2=35.40$ , df 2; p<0.001
20-29 years	17 50.0%	44 57.9%	61 55.5 %	
30-40 years	14 41.2%	1 1.3%	15 13.6%	
Total	34 (30.9%)	76 (69.1%)	110 100.0%	
Mean ( $\pm$ SD)	27.09( $\pm$ 6.28)	21.54( $\pm$ 3.70)	23.25( $\pm$ 5.29)	F=33.56, p<0.001
Minimum	18	15	15	
Maximum	37	36	37	

**Table II: Monthly income of respondents by Work section and Gender**

Work section	Gender		Overall	
	Male (n=34)	Female (n=76)	(Mean±SD)	Minimum Maximum
Knitting	4860.87 (±1903.76)	0	4860.87 (±1903.76)	3000 10000
Sewing	0	3091.04 (±846.87)	3091.04 (±846.87)	1800 4800
Finishing	3363.64 (±300.91)	3000.00 (±608.28)	3200.00 (±487.74)	2100 4000
Total	4376.47 (±1717.30)	3080.26 (±819.43)	3480.91 (±1310.33)	1800 10000
Minimum Maximum	3000 10000	1800 4800		
Significance	F=6.619, p=0.015	F=0.097, p=0.757	F=22.589, p<0.001	

**Table III: Distribution Of Respondents By Educational Status And Current Job Experience**

Educational status	Current job experience (years)			Total	Significance
	Less than 1 year	1 to 3 years	More than 3 years		
Illiterate	14 32.6 %	13 22.0%	1 12.5%	28 25.5%	Pearson Chi-Square value=18.843 df=6 p<0.004
Primary	20 46.5%	18 30.5%	1 12.5%	39 35.5%	
Secondary	7 16.3%	24 40.7%	3 37.5%	34 30.9%	
HSC and above	2 4.7%	4 6.8%	3 37.5%	9 8.2%	
Total	43 100%	59 100%	8 100%	110 100%	

**Table IV :Total QWL Scores Of The Respondents  
 By Work Section And Gender**

Work section	Scores for QWL			
	Gender		Both sex	
	Male (n=34)	Female (n=76)	(Mean±SD)	Minimum Maximum
Knitting	300.52±31.11	0	300.52±31.11	244 352
Sewing	0	296.48±24.24	296.48±24.24	247 338
Finishing	267.36±20.03	261.67±14.16	264.80±17.44	248 296
Total	289.79±31.85	292.36±25.82	291.56±27.70	244 352
Minimum	244	247	F=14.454, p<0.001	
Maximum	352	338		
Significance	F=10.346, p=0.003	F=17.619, p<0.001		

**Table V: Total Score Quality Of Working Life  
 With Educational Status**

Educational status	N	Total scores for QWL				Significance
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	
Illiterate	28	273.14	19.828	248	322	F=10.673 p<0.001
Primary	39	290.15	24.652	247	332	
Secondary	34	301.12	25.934	260	338	
HSC and above	9	318.89	32.266	244	352	
Total	110	291.56	27.700	244	352	

**Table VI: Total score Quality of Working life with income group**

Income group	N	Total scores for QWL				Significance
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	
Below 2000	7	279.43	19.595	253	301	F=6.165 p<0.001
2000 to 5000	95	289.91	26.297	247	338	
Above 5000	8	321.88	33.138	244	352	
Total	110	291.56	27.700	244	352	

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