

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring the Perception of Job Quality among Banking Professionals: The Case of a Small Island Developing State

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to explore the perception of the Mauritian banking sector (MBS) professionals on job quality with respect to their current jobs using the OECD Framework (2015). It attempts to fill an existing gap in the Job Quality literature by providing empirical evidence on job quality in the banking sector in a small island developing state like Mauritius. Not many, if any, of the studies conducted in the banking sector concentrate on job quality in a small island development state (SIDS) context. This exploratory study therefore made use of the qualitative interpretive research paradigm using semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. The population comprised of banking professionals at supervisory and managerial levels across different banking institutions in the island. Purposive sampling method was adopted using the snowball sampling technique which used the researcher's judgment in locating the type of people who would provide rich information pertaining to job quality. 15 banking professionals agreed to take part in the study. Findings revealed that banking professionals in Mauritius better perceived recognition rather than earnings quality, and the social rather than physical work environment as major determinants of their job quality. They also opined that their job security was however based on their performance and willingness to learn and grow in the organisation. Appropriate recommendations were thus provided in the light of these findings.

Keywords: Job quality, Banking professionals, Mauritius, SIDS

1. Introduction

Job design driven by job quality results in employees deriving genuine delight in the performance of their professional obligations^[1]. Currently, the pressing need to

sustain and improve current levels of job quality becomes a pressing need to counter the economic shock triggered by COVID-19^[2]. In today's economy, driven by globalization and information technology, many organisations

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increasingly rely on their employees for their success. At the same time, securing a job is primarily the only asset which people seek and own and is as well their sole source of income. Possessing a job has become a primary determinant of the individual's overall wellbeing, such that, the job design and the provision of quality jobs have recently been an ongoing concern for both employers and employees across the globe^[3].

The banking sector is the employer to a large number of highly skilled professionals having expertise in business, finance and information technology. According to the ILO Report^[4] on the "Impact of the Financial Crisis on Finance Sector Workers", the banking sector worldwide normally employs a considerably higher proportion of professionals, medium skilled and highly skilled professionals than its average labour force. However, working conditions of employees in the European Banking Sector has deteriorated as a result of cost-cutting strategies implemented by banks affected by the global financial crisis of (2007-2008)^[5]. Consequently, the reputation of the banking sector has been tainted in the talent market whereby concentrated efforts became mandatory to restore the vanished employer of choice status and win back the trust of the talent pool^[6].

Likewise, research findings also show that the banking sector is one among the main growth stimulators in Mauritius which also suffered from the global financial crisis whereby irregular stress phases were felt by the financial services sector during the periods of July 2008 to April 2009 and December 2010 to January 2013^[7]. The World Bank report highlights that the Mauritian financial services sector has contributed to 5.4% to the Mauritian economy growth in 2014^[8]. The report further accentuates that the Mauritian Insurance and Financial services sectors contribute to 9% of the Mauritian GDP and operate with a talent force of over 13,400, representing 2.3% of the country's total manpower in 2013. Consequently, "Mauritius, being a small island state, having only its human capital as main resource, has to make judicious use of this resource to achieve fundamental development and employment goals"^[9]. Therefore, it is important for Mauritius to make optimum use of its human capital resources, especially in the banking sector which is one of the main growth stimulators in the country.

The 2030 Agenda enunciated by the Former Prime Minister in August 2015 is an integral part of national priorities for Mauritius and is a strategic document for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth which includes the commitment to fostering high levels of employment and productivity. More jobs are needed to address the problem of lengthening unemployment which poses a threat to

sustainable economic growth and rising inflation rate. But in the same line, Mauritius also needs better quality and more productive jobs if it is to succeed once again in increasing living standards for its citizens in expanding and integrating the global economy.

1.1 Background, Context and Rationale of the Study

During the past decades, more and more emphasis is being laid on defining and measuring job quality so as to better account for broad wellbeing of the society as well as to assess economic progress. Various frameworks have been developed over the last decade to measure and assess job quality^[10]. For instance, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Job Quality Framework 2015 was approved by the G20 Labour Ministers' meeting in September 2015, during which it was declared that "quality jobs are important as a key driver of greater wellbeing for individuals and society". Subsequently, the G20 Labour Ministers undertook to improve job quality based on three dimensions, which is, "promoting the quality of earnings, reducing labour market insecurity, promoting good working conditions and healthy society". At the same time, the OECD finds that improving job quality does not mean lower job quantity. According to the OECD, countries can combine both high employment levels with good quality jobs. Thus, leaders of the G20 Labour Ministers' meeting are committed towards creating not just more jobs but better jobs.

However, it has been much observed that focus tends to be laid on how to spawn more and more jobs rather than quality jobs. For instance, Cazes et al.^[10] clearly point out that despite the growing interest by international institutions in job quality, many tend to focus mainly on parameters which aim towards the progress on the quantity of jobs being generated in the labour market. The focus should be more on parameters aiming at improving quality of jobs rather than quantity of jobs in the labour market.

Similarly, an attractive picture of the MBS is depicted through the Mauritius Banker's Association^[11] where emphasis is laid by banks on the need to attract skilled, motivated and diverse people who are familiar with the local market conditions. The MBS is positioned as a workplace where people further develop their talent and skills and enjoy a challenging and high rewarding career in a working environment that is fast-paced, exciting and empowering. However, despite being a considerable employment provider, research in job quality in the MBS has been very limited.

In the same line, the MBS, though positioned as a

workplace where people can reach their full potential, has undergone very scant research in terms of its quality of jobs it provides. Banking institutions in Mauritius tend to adopt branding as a strategic way to achieve their organisational objectives^[12]. Yet, the main focus is on branding their services and products rather than branding the quality of jobs which they offer to employees. There has been an attempt to study employer branding and talent retention in the MBS^[12]. Nonetheless, it is to be noted that the key respondents to the study of Maheshwari et al.^[12] was limited to only HR practitioners in the banking sector and did not cover other categories of job positions requiring high skilled professionals such as branch manager, regional manager, relationship executives, divisional heads, among others. It is acknowledged that there are presently no studies and empirical research carried out in Mauritius which pertain to investigating job quality as perceived by banking professionals.

In order to shed more light on job quality in the MBS, this study therefore aims at investigating into the perceptions of banking professionals as far as job quality in the MBS is concerned. It thus intends to explore the perceptions of the MBS professionals on job quality by using the OECD Framework. It thus tries to elucidate the factors which banking professionals observe as affecting their perception of job quality.

1.2 Job Quality

As such, job quality in any organisation affects both the employer and the employee. For instance, SastreGalés^[13] argues that job quality has a direct impact on the employee's wellbeing and their attitudes and satisfaction level towards their job. The perception of employees on the quality of their jobs directly influences their commitment to their jobs. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to employers to have a deep insight on how their human resources perceive the quality of their jobs which, in turn, helps them in talent acquisition and retention. Jobs are a core aspect of most people's lives^[14] where an individual spends a significant part of his time at work. A survey carried out by the OECD^[3] reveals that, on an average, a person from an OECD country spends thirty-seven hours a week at work which accounts for a relatively larger share of their lives spent at their workplace. Thus, a job is perceived as one of the primary determinants of one's quality of life. Nevertheless, merely holding a job does not necessarily lead to overall wellbeing as compared to holding quality jobs which is a key driver of increased productivity, labour force performance as well as economic perfor-

mance.

It is known that quality employment has an impact on health, life expectancy and life chances, while it is evident that unemployment has a moderate effect on physical and mental health. There is equally strong evidence by Coats and Lekhi^[15] who argue that "if we care about the capabilities of individuals to choose a life that they value then we should care about job quality". Traditionally, job quality was mainly associated with earnings and job security. However, job quality presently goes beyond, such that many aspects of a job now matter to an individual, for example, the working environment, employee wellbeing, among others. Exploring extant literature in the field, Osterman^[16] advocated compensation, diversity in the substance of work, control and stress intensification and the employment contract as the major determinants of Job Quality. On their part, Green, Tarek, Agnes, Greet, Gijs, Isabella and Maija^[17] defined job quality as being a "set of features that help to meet jobholders' needs from work". And, put in the words of Iskander and Lowe^[18], Job Quality encapsulates material and intrinsic benefits for workers including compensation, the degree of work intensification, the employment contract, task diversity, and the level of autonomy^[19,20,16]. It is therefore essential for employers to identify the determinants which contribute to job quality as perceived by an individual and work towards producing quality jobs.

1.3 Parameters and Determinants of Job Quality

Organisations are presently operating in a fast evolving and unstable environment driven by fierce competition. Employers therefore have to make the most of their available human resources by emphasizing on quality and productive jobs in order to be competitive in the labour market. On a macro level, job quality does not only influence the overall wellbeing of an individual but it also has a significant impact on the overall labour market such that quality jobs directly influence the decisions of employees on whether to continue working for an organisation or whether to quit and how much effort should be put into the organisation^[13]. As such, the author highlights seven main job values which can influence the quality of jobs and impact the labour market. These include Income, Hours of Work, Job Security, Workplace Relationships, Job Content, Career Prospects and Personal Development among which it has been found that Job Security and Job Content are the two most important determinants of job quality as reported by workers and which seem to remain so over the years. Moreover, according to Kalleberg,

Reskin and Hudson ^[21], who classify “bad jobs” as those with low level of job security, the level of job insecurity a job entails often lead to uncertainty among workers which substantially lead workers to continue striving to constantly be productive so as not to lose their job.

Another pivotal study by Handel ^[22] lays emphasis on four major dimensions of job quality and their relative indicators which subsequently allow employers to measure the overall job satisfaction and to better identify the determinants of the organisational turnover at micro level. These dimensions and their relative indicators are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

| JOB QUALITY | Dimensions | Indicators |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | Dimension 1: Employees’ perceptions of material rewards | Pay |
| | | Job Security |
| | | Promotion |
| | Dimension 2: Intrinsic rewards | Interesting Jobs |
| | | Job Autonomy |
| | Dimension 3: Other working conditions | Stress |
| | | Work load |
| | | Physical effort |
| | | Danger |
| | Dimension 4: Quality of interpersonal relations in the workplace | Management-employee relations |

Figure 1. The four dimensions of Job Quality (Adapted from Handel, 2005)

However, in a study on perceptions of job quality in the tourism industry, Weaver ^[23] argues that there is no predetermined list of attributes of job quality and emphasises is study on the “multi-dimensional nature of job quality”. In line with Handel ^[22] and Weaver ^[23] Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman ^[24] also point out that both extrinsic rewards (such as salary) and intrinsic rewards (such as job content and job security) are essential in the assessment of perceptions of employees on the quality of their jobs.

Nevertheless, the importance which an either extrinsic or intrinsic reward holds for an employee depends solely on the employee’s personal preferences. For instance, Weaver ^[23] argues that some employees would prefer both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards while few others would rather prefer only one of these.

According to OECD ^[3], poor job quality is a major policy concern in emerging economies. While not easy to measure because of limited data availability, job quality in key emerging economies is analysed along three dimensions in line with the OECD’s Job Quality Framework comprising of: earnings quality (a combination of average earnings and inequality); labour market security (capturing both the risk of unemployment and the risk of extreme low pay); and the quality of the working environment (measured as the incidence of job strain or very long working hours). The OECD framework is used to measure and assess the quality of jobs in 45 OECD countries based on these three dimensions which are considered as crucial for overall well-being of a worker. Earnings Quality, Labour Market Security and Quality of Working Environment are three dimensions of job quality which are complementary to each other ^[10] and should be considered altogether along with the number of jobs that exist in the organisation when assessing quality of jobs. The OECD Job Quality Framework provides subsequent indicators for each of the three dimensions of job quality as depicted in Figure 2.

The above comparable measures of job quality have been developed by the OECD ^[3] by looking at the individual experience of people at work. These measures focus on actual outcomes for workers in the three broad areas: Earnings quality (i.e. how employment contribute to the material living standards of the individual); Labour Market Security (i.e. how high is the risk of becoming unemployed and the economic consequences of being laid off); and the quality of the Working Environment (i.e. how much pressure the work involves, how much control does the individual has over tasks he performs, work timings, workplace relationships, opportunities for learning and work-life balance).

It has also been highly recommended that the quality of the working environment needs to be provided high importance in the design of macro policies to recuperate from the global pandemic to reinforce the 2030 sustainable development goals ^[25].

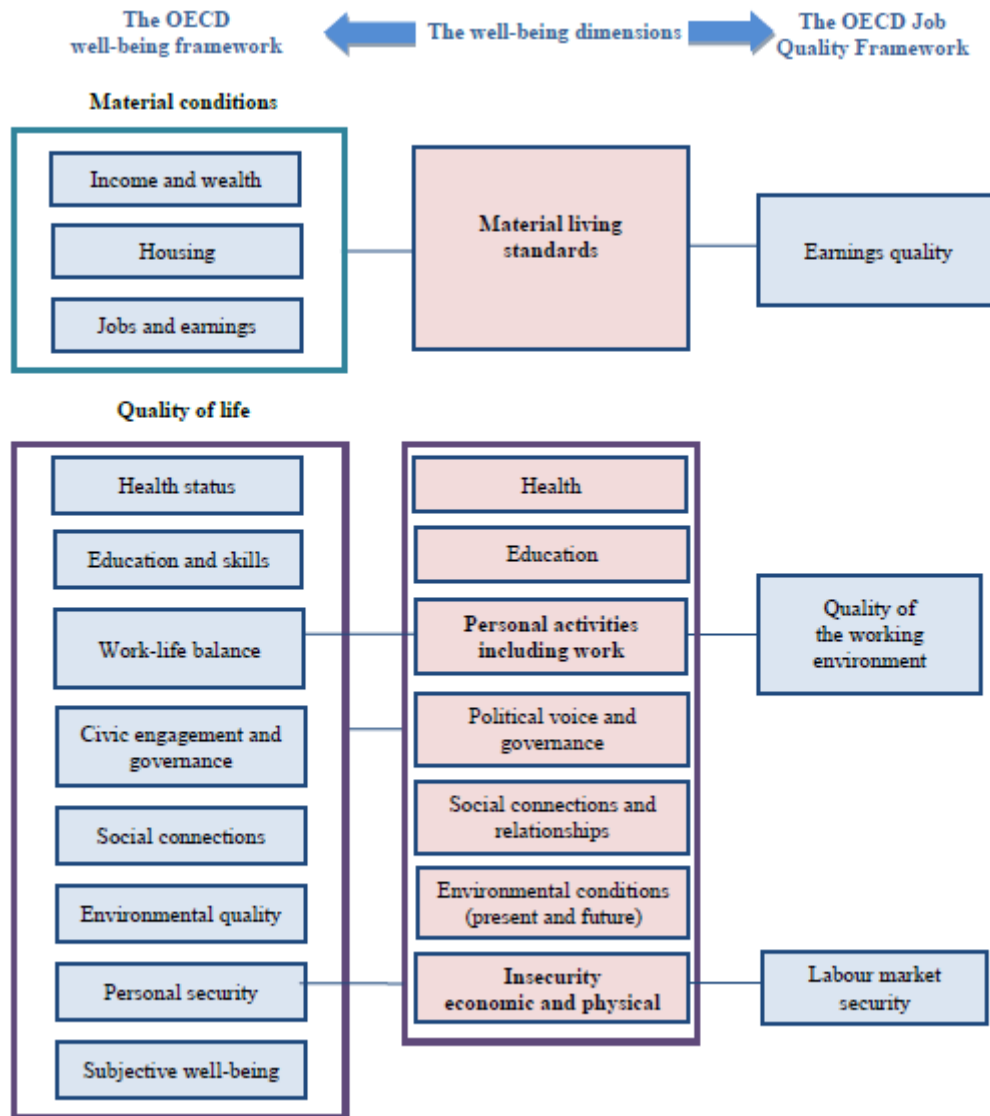


Figure 2. OECD well-being and job quality framework^[10]

1.4 Job Quality in the Banking Sector

Working conditions of employees in the European banking sector have deteriorated as a result of cost-cutting strategies implemented by banks plagued by the global financial crisis^[5]. Consequently, the reputation of the banking sector has been tainted in the talent market, whereby concentrated efforts became mandatory to restore the vanished employer of choice status and win back the trust of the talent pool^[6]. Similar to other competitive sectors, the banking industry requires talent for it to be competitive and realize its core purpose which is that of serving customers. Ineffective and poor strategic talent relationship management has been found to be the core driver of the global financial crisis^[12], thereby calling for the necessity to provide quality jobs to match the prerequisite talent

portfolio to suit the professions in the banking sector^[26].

The aftermaths of the global financial crisis such as scarcity of labour market, the need to constantly innovate in a growing competitive market and the quest for talented workers have forced banking institutions to redesign their employment strategies^[27] so as to retain the best skilled talents in order to achieve their organisational objectives. Using the Job Characteristic Model which proposes that positive perceptions of the job characteristics will allow employees to produce positive work outcomes^[28], Salami and Ajitoni^[29] have endeavoured to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, motivation, pay and job characteristics to predict burnout level of bank employees in Nigeria. It was reported that high emotional intelligence among the bank employees enables them to better cope with unfavourable job characteristics. In the

same line, the study has reported that bank employees in Nigeria with high levels of achievement motivation are likely to better cope with unfavourable job characteristics and therefore experience less burnout. Likewise, employees who are well paid and have a decent salary tend to be more proactive and can easily handle stressful situations and hence experience less burnout, such that the negative relationship between job characteristics and burnout is weaker among employees with higher pay and vice versa. Chovwen^[30] has endeavoured to study the influence of emotional intelligence, leadership styles, job characteristics (as proposed in the Job Characteristic Model) on the perception of occupational stress among commercial bankers in Nigeria and in doing so, it is reported that bankers with high emotional intelligence levels and working under autocratic leaders do not tend to develop occupational stress being given their high levels of emotional intelligence stimulates coping techniques that allows bankers to deal with negative working situations as they crop up. Moreover, the study revealed that favourable job characteristics help in the reduction of job stress. However, subcomponents of job characteristics such as task responsibilities, task completion and feedback help in determining the effect of stress on bankers. This is in line with the study of Armstrong and Griffin^[31] which reports that job stress arises when job responsibilities are not well defined or when directives or guidelines from superiors are inconsistent and incoherent. Moreover, according to Kunte, Gupta, Bhattacharya and Neelam^[32], it is found that most employees of the banking sector, irrespective of their grades, experience high levels of stress mainly due to role overload.

In another study on turnover intentions among banking employees in Taiwanese retail banks, Chen, Lin and Lien^[33] applied the Job Characteristic Theory of Hackman and Oldham^[34] to create a research model which considers job stress as a mediating factor to forecast turnover intentions among banking employees. Chen et al.^[33] identified seven job characteristics (Co-worker support, Supervisor support, Autonomy, Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Role Overload, Fairness of Reward) which could have an effect on turnover intentions among Taiwanese banking employees. The findings have shown that out of the seven job characteristics, three of them (Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Role Overload) are positively related to job stress, that is, when Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Role Overload go beyond their coping capabilities, retail banking employees perceive a higher levels of job stress. In turn, such perception of high levels of job stress is directly linked to high levels of turnover intentions.

2. Methodology

This study employed the qualitative interpretive research paradigm^[35] to analyse the perceptions of banking professionals on the dimensions of job quality as laid down by the OECD. It attempts to gain an in-depth understanding on the perception banking professionals have on the three parameters, namely earnings quality, job security and work environment.

While most of the recent studies attempting to investigate job quality for the banking sector have adopted the quantitative approach^[29,36,37], this present study adopts the qualitative approach based on the arguments of Bowe and Streeter^[38] who advocate that questionnaires based on quantitative approach with close-ended questions do present certain limitations as far as in-depth analysis of perceptions of job quality is concerned.

The study thus relied on the use of semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with open ended questions which provided an opportunity for the researcher to explore, in an in depth manner, how Mauritian banking sector professionals perceived the quality of their jobs. Purposive sampling was used, which, according to Chein^[39], is the most common type of non-probability sampling used in qualitative research. This sampling method is used when the researcher desires to learn, understand and achieve deeper insight of the subject under study and hence selects a sample which shall allow him/her to achieve these^[40]. Further, the snowball technique was used to recruit participants, who comprised of banking professionals at supervisory and managerial levels. They had both supervisory and organisational responsibilities which, in turn, would make them more apt in understanding the banking sector, thus providing deeper insights on their perceptions of job quality. 15 participants agreed to take part in the study, all working in registered banks of the Mauritius Bankers Association. Interviews were recorded with the permission of the respondents and each interview lasted around 45 minutes to 1 hour. Participants were allowed to converse in French, English or Mauritian Creole languages so as to ensure that they could easily communicate their thoughts. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were ensured.

As far as data analysis is concerned, Yin^[41] cautions qualitative researchers to indulge in their analysis “iteratively and gradually” (p. 128) in response to the how and why of the study by their own thinking and analytical skills. As such, in order to get the exact sequence and wordings of the “naturally occurring” talk, recordings were played again and again^[42] and transcripts were typed in word format. Based on Saldana^[43], thematic analysis

was used to identify, analyse and report patterns (themes) within the data collected, providing a rich, detailed and complex account of what was said by See Griffiths, Ryan and Foster ^[44]. Data was then coded under broad themes, in line with the OECD framework of job quality, as put forward by banking professionals. Themes, sub themes and emerging themes are portrayed in the Table 1.

Table 1. Themes, Sub Themes and Emerging Themes

| Sr. No | Broad Themes | Sub Themes | Emerging Themes |
|--------|------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Earnings Quality | (i) Salary (ii) Performance Bonus | (a) Recognition of effort and good work |
| 2. | Job Security | | (a) Closely linked to performance |
| 3. | Work Environment | (i) Physical (ii) Social | (a) Support received from superiors |

3. Results

3.1 Earnings Quality

When asked about their earnings, respondents claimed that the banking sector was “the best sector in terms of remuneration” and that banks “have the capacity to pay a lot” (R 10, R12) in terms of salary. While Respondent 1 was “quite happy”, Respondent 2 indicated that he “ was not underpaid”. However, few respondents also argued that their salaries “could have been more” (R3, R8, R5, R6).

At the same time, interviews revealed that respondents acknowledged that effort and performance were important determinants of their earnings. As put forward by some of them:

“can’t complain when you are in the banking sector. Because the more effort that you put in, the more reward you are going to get.” (R6)

“the more effort you put in or if you go the extra mile to carry out certain projects, at the end of the day you are remunerated for that” (R3)

“And I should say that the performance bonus here is quite impressive ... And with the performance bonus that we have here, we may get till 5 months salary as bonus. It may as well be 7 times more,.... it all depends on the performance ...”

“...but performance bonus is actually the plus point.” (R4)

Intrinsic Rewards

The conversations also revealed that for few respondents, rather than earnings, intrinsic rewards mattered more to them. As argued by R8 and R6 respectively, they valued

recognition:

“...think what is more important than the salary part of it would be the working environment, like working somewhere where I can feel comfortable, where I feel appreciated by my superiors, etc.”

“So, for me the level of recognition is more important than that.”

3.2 Job Security

Respondents had divergent views as far as Job Security, as a job quality parameter was concerned. While varying levels of job security were perceived by few respondents, others however linked their job security to their performance at work. Few respondents claimed that their jobs were “very secured”. (R9) or “much secured” (R3), others found theirs to be “pretty high” (R1), or even really high” (R7).

As far as R5 was concerned, he emphasized:

“going elsewhere which is not really secured, at least here you know that the job is a secured one.”

However, while one respondent clearly mentioned that, “no organisation in the banking sector can offer job security” (R12).

When probed further, many of the participants responded that job security in the banking sector was directly linked to their performance, highlighting that even though the job security is perceived as being high, the latter is also linked to one’s performance:

For example,

“It [job security] refers to your performance at the end of the day... So, if you don’t deliver you have to go, it’s as simple as that.” (R10)

“... the day you stop performing of course you will start getting more pressure ... if you fail, obviously they are going to sack you.” (R5)

“ if we commit any major mistake then of course they might terminate our job. In that way we are at risk.” (R9)

“So, to ensure you have job security today, you need to be somebody who is keeping on learning, re-learning and delivering your best performance.” (R12)

3.3 Working Environment

Respondents agreed that their working environments were yet another factor contributing to their job quality. They provided their opinion on both the physical working environment, in terms of infrastructure and equipment and the social working environment in terms of relationships with their superiors.

“I think it would be the working environment, maybe for someone else it might be different, like it might be the

salary. But for me, I would say that it is the working environment which is very important in one's job and as well as the most important factor which leads to well-being. For me, I might consider a job even if that would mean getting a bit less of salary but where the working environment is actually good" (R15)

However, it was observed that greater emphasis was put on the social working environment as a parameter of job quality.

3.3.1 The Physical Work Environment

While few respondents found that their physical work environment had "room for improvement" (R5) or "not the best" (R15), the majority of interviewees found their physical environment to be "really very good... the best so far." (R3), "well off in terms of equipment" (R9), "a very modern environment" (R12), and even "state-of-the-art infrastructure" (R2).

3.3.2 The Social Work Environment

Few respondents argued that "lack of adequate support from your superior makes your work more difficult." (R15) and "my previous Branch Manager who was not open at all to his employees. He was not someone you could easily go to and talk. So, the atmosphere at work was not a good one" (R7).

These show the importance which respondents attach to their social work environment as further depicted below:

"... for me, I would say that it is the working environment which is very important in one's job and as well as the most important factor which leads to well-being". (R15)

A "combination of how your superiors handle things and how you are able to cope with your superior" was considered to be yet another parameter as depicted by R12.

And as far as R2 was concerned,

"I have got what I need to make things work. I have got the support of my boss, I have got the support of the CEO, the support of the Board ..."

"We have an open door policy, two-way communication with the team members and the direct supervisor." (R3)

4. Discussions

4.1 Earnings Quality

In line with the study of Cazes et al. ^[10], earnings quality has been considered as an important dimension while

assessing the perception of the banking professionals on their job quality. However, contrary to what was expected, salary per se, as earnings for banking professionals, did not seem to be one of the major factors affecting their perception of job quality. Few of them even confessed that their salary could have been more than what it actually was and they expressed great satisfaction with respect to their yearly performance bonus. However, rather than earnings, what mattered also for them in terms of earnings quality was the recognition they received at work from their superior. In other words, rather than financial earnings, recognition as a nonfinancial earning better influenced the perception of job quality among banking professionals in Mauritius.

This finding tends to rhyme with the findings of Weaver ^[23], which revealed that some employees would actually prefer intrinsic rewards, such as job security, over extrinsic reward, such as salary, as far as one's job is concerned. It is thus recommended that banks devise ways and means to formally recognise the efforts of their employees. For example, through a dedicated space on the bank's website, an email from their superiors, a departmental gathering to showcase their good work among others.

4.2 Job Security

The OECD ^[3] highlights that possessing a job is primarily the only asset which people seek and is an important determinant of well-being, which in turn affects the perception of job quality. Kalleberg et al. ^[21], for example, classified "bad jobs" as those with low level of job security. However, although Vander Elst, Richter, Sverke, Näswall, De Guyer and De Witte ^[45], argue that perceived uncertainty about one's job leads to poorer performance at work ^[46,47], Koen, Low and Van Vanien ^[48] opined that there might be circumstances where job insecurity encourages better job performance.

This is also supported by Kalleberg et al. ^[21] who advocate that the level of job insecurity a job entails often leads to uncertainty among employees which substantially lead workers to continue striving to constantly be productive so as not to lose their jobs.

In the current study, while few respondents interviewed straightforwardly admitted that they had a considerable amount of job security, few of them argued that such security was dependent on their job performance and continuous learning. It can therefore be deduced that since banking professionals link their job security to their job performances, it relatively has a lesser influence of their perception of job quality. They are aware that the better they perform, the higher will be their job security. It is thus recommended that incentives for continuous learning

and growth, in terms of training, are provided to banking professionals. This will help them to continuously improve their performance on the job which will in turn give them their job security assurance.

4.3 Work Environment

The quality of the working environment, according to OECD^[3], is an important dimension of job quality. More so, as underpinned in the pivotal study of Eurofound^[49], a good social environment at work enables employees to cope with high levels of work intensity. As such, the physical as well as the social working environment has a significant effect on the employee's satisfaction level, which in turn would affect their perception of job quality. Interviews revealed that while the majority of respondents did not complain much about the physical work environment, except for limited space and software to do their jobs, few of them highlighted some dissatisfaction with respect to their social environment. More specifically with respect to the lack of support from their superiors. They argued that such lack of support had a negative bearing on the perception of their job quality.

It is thus recommended that banking professionals are encouraged to voice out their views and consideration be given to their suggestions for new ways of working. This would not only make them feel valued but would also make them perceive the well needed support from their superiors, thus positively influencing their perception on job quality.

5. Conclusions

The main aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of banking professionals on job quality in the Mauritian banking sector using the OECD framework. The qualitative stance was adopted and data gathered through 15 semi structured interviews. Although earnings quality, job security and work environment influenced the perception of job quality among banking professionals, other related parameters emerged after enquiry. Recognition for good work was preferred as an influence of job quality rather than earnings quality per se. Banking professionals also acknowledged that their job security was directly linked to their job performances and the social work environment had a greater impact on their perception of job quality as compared to the physical work environment.

While all elements of a qualitative research have been embedded in the current study, the researchers draw attention to few limitations as well. The research was limited to 10 banks only out of the 20 registered banks with the

Mauritius Banker's Association because of reasons out of the control of the researchers. More so, the research focused on the perceptions of banking professionals at managerial level, given the dynamism of the banking sector in Mauritius, it is proposed that further research could consider enlarging the sample size across banks to include front line employees and middle-level employees as well.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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