

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION OF MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP POWER BASES IN THE NATIONALISED COMMERCIAL BANKS OF BANGLADESH : AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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A B S T R A C T

The problems of job performance in the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) of Bangladesh arise from both physical and managerial sources. While most of the branch offices of the these banks are poorly equipped to handle business activities, absence of efficient leadership qualities are also generally observed among other managerial aspects of effective job performance. Despite the emergence of a significant number of banks and other financial institutions in the private sector, the nationalised commercial banks offer the lion share of banking services of the country because of their large countrywide operational network. The success of the banking industry of Bangladesh therefore depends largely on the success of these NCBs. The success of the NCBs depends on the job performance of their employees at the operational level, which in turn, depends on the managerial ability of their superiors. The leadership quality of the managers at the NCBs of Bangladesh is therefore seen as an essential ingredient for the success of these banks. This research paper attempts to explore the effect of one important aspect leadership---the managers' use of social power---on their ability to manage their subordinates. A sample of randomly selected employees of the three NCBs of the country were asked to give their opinions about their respective superiors on their (superiors') use of the various items of the five bases of social power. Three bases of

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social power used by the managers of the NCBs of Bangladesh were found to have significant bearings on the employee perception of the leadership quality of their managers through factor analysis and multiple regression.*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Problems of the job performance in the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) of Bangladesh are multi-faceted. These problems can be generally classified into two categories, physical and managerial. Many of these problems are clearly visible in the manner the people operate in handling day-to-day activities. While the private-sector and international banks of the country are using automated systems and databases for handling customer transactions and other business activities, most branches of the NCBs have still adhered to the traditional ledger operated system of dealing business activities thereby retarding the process of operations. The physical environment in the NCBs is significantly poor compared to their counterparts in the private sector. The employees have to work using substandard, outdated, and dilapidated furniture and equipment. Compared to the volume of customers served by these public-sector banks, floor space available to them is simply incompatible, causing long queues during rush hours. Such conditions create serious physical stress on the employees thereby affecting job performance.

The managerial aspect of job performance in the NCBs, and so to say in any other organisations, is largely ingrained in the leadership approach of the managers toward their subordinates---the manager's ability and intention to influence the subordinates to perform their job responsibilities along the desired directions. Jahangir (2003) pointed out the dismal financial performance of the NCBs over the last two decades and noted that over the years, NCBs' poor performance has been related

* The terms leader, manager, supervisor, and superior have been used interchangeably while the terms follower, subordinate, and employee have been used interchangeably, throughout the body of the paper.

to managers' inefficiency in decision-making. While the other functions of management---planning, organising, and controlling---cannot be ignored, the author particularly stressed on the inefficient use of social power by the managers of these banks. Whether NCBs continue to gradually decline in their financial performance will largely be determined by the quality of leadership at the managerial level. Thus, it is our belief that now is the time for the top management of the NCBs to identify the level of efficiency of managers' use of power and its relationships to employees' organisational outcomes (such as commitment, turnover, burnout, and job satisfaction).

While developments in the physical facilities for the NCBs of Bangladesh would require long periods for implementation and huge long-term investment, bringing in positive managerial changes would call for identification of the problems in the management and positive behavioural changes on the part of the managers to resolve these problems.

With the increase of complexity and diversity in managing organisational affairs, combined with rapid changes in the external environment and embedded with uncertainties, leadership today is viewed as something different or something of 'higher order or capability' than management (Byars, 1987). Organisational leader is an individual who is able to influence the attitudes and opinions of others with in the organisation; a manager is merely able to influence their actions and decisions. Managers imply that an employee has been placed in an organisational position of legitimate authority over others; here management is institutional (Bass, 1998). Quality of leadership is, arguably, central to the survival and success of groups and organisations.

Leaders in organisations bring out powerful emotions that can spur people on to accomplish things they did not think they were capable of doing (Ciampa, 1992). In an attempt to distinguish between managers and leaders, Goetsch & Davis, (1997) revealed that managers administer and do things right whereas leaders innovate and do the right things. Nonetheless, a social leader is interpreted as someone who sets direction in an effort and influences people to follow that direction. Organisational

leadership is concerned with creating and articulating a bright and compelling vision for the organisation (Mannan, 2001).

Leaders are almost always using authoritative roles. Authority is often seen as the possession of powers based on formal role (Heifetz, 1994). Organisational leaders have authority as a virtue of their positions. Leaders may have formal authority, but they rely in large part on informal authority as well. This is derived from their personal qualities and actions. They may be trusted, respected for their expertise, or followed because of their ability to persuade. As such, if they fail to deliver the goods, to meet people's expectations, they run the risk of authority being removed and given to another.

Organisational leadership literature indicates various approaches to the study of leadership: trait, behavioural, contingency and charismatic. While a detailed discussion of these approaches is outside the purview of this paper, a very brief overview may be worthwhile. The trait approach focuses on the leader's personal characteristics that part effective and ineffective leaders (Stogdill, 1948; Ghiselli, 1971). The behavioural approach, on the other hand focuses on the patterns of leaders behaviour leadership styles that enable leaders to effectively influence others. The contingency approach focuses on match between leader behaviour and situational characteristics (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988; Vroom & Jago, 1988). Charismatic leaders transform employees to be effective by achieving organisational goals by creating favourable organisational culture, organisational values, needs, beliefs and inspirations (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001). Yet another approach to identifying leadership quality is found in the work of Fayol (translation, 1930) where organisational leaders were proposed to develop different proportions of three types of skills (technical, conceptual, and human) as they moved along the organisational hierarchy.

The social power approach to leadership postulated by French & Raven (F & R, 1959) is based on the leader's ability to exert influence; that is, the ability to change the attitudes or behaviour of individuals or groups. Such ability relies on the leader's experience and expertise (expert power), capacity to reward and punish (reward and expert powers), position in the organisational hierarchy (legitimate power), and the

ability to instil a sense of belongingness to the organisation and transform the organisation for the better (referent power).

The different approaches to determining leadership quality are somewhat interlinked and to some extent, overlapping in terms of their features and characteristics. For example, a democratic leader is likely to use more human skills, and exert more reward and referent powers. Likewise leaders using technical and conceptual skills are expected to use their expert power while autocratic leaders would rely strongly on coercive power. The identification of the attributes that contribute to the overall quality of a leader thus becomes extremely difficult if not impossible because of so many factors involved.

This study addresses two major research objectives:

Identify the key items that constitute leadership power bases in the specific context of the NCBs of Bangladesh.

Assess how the power bases explain employee perception of leader quality.

The paper also attempts to formulate a strategic vision to enable managers and policymakers, both at the government and the institutional levels to ensure higher level of leadership quality.

1.1 Background

Although concepts of influence and power have commanded much attention and pragmatic interest in the literature on leadership and behaviour in organisations, little research has been conducted on this subject (Jahangir, 2003; Mossholder, Bennett, Kemery, & Wesolowski, 1998). Despite the centrality of power to managerial or leadership processes, little is known about managers' use of power and its relationship with the organisational outcomes of the employees (such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction, burn-out, turnover). When managers use power on the employees, employees make perceptions on the managers based on their use of power. It has been suggested that these perceptions then become the critical indicators behind the employees' organisational outcomes (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; Jahangir, 2003; Rahim & Manger, 1996).

The notion of power can be traced to the 1950s when Dahl (1957) argued that power is the ability to overcome resistance in achieving a desired result. Rahim (1989) elaborated on desired results, and proposed that power is the ability of one party to change or control the behaviour, attitudes, opinions, objectives, needs, and values of another party.

French and Raven (F & R, 1959) first proposed a theoretical framework that has received much attention in studies of social power. They identified five bases of social power (coercive, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent) that have been the subject of numerous organisational studies.

Coercive power is based on subordinates' perceptions that a superior has the ability to punish them if they fail to conform to his or her influence attempt.

Reward power is based on the perception of subordinates that a superior can reward them for desired behaviour.

Legitimate power is based on the belief of subordinates that a superior has the right to prescribe and control their behaviour.

Expert power is based on subordinates' belief that a superior has job experience and special knowledge or expertise in a given area.

Referent power is based on subordinates' desires to identify with a superior because of their admiration or personal liking of the superior.

Numerous studies on power, particularly in relation to organisational outcomes have been carried out employing French and Raven's power framework (Cobb, 1980; Rahim, Antonioni, & Psenicka, 2001). In these researches, French and Raven's framework has been used in relation to employee outcomes and focuses particularly on employees' job satisfaction.

One of the most influential models for investigating various dimensions of the job environment was developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980). One key feature of this approach is its ability to measure some of the most important dimensions that can be commonly identified in a workplace at the individual employee level (Griffin & McMahan, 1994;

Harvey, Billings, & Nilan, 1985; Idaszak & Drasgow, 1987). On the basis of extensive research conducted to refine their measures, Hackman and Oldham (1980) identified five "core" dimensions for evaluating the immediate work environment. They found that these core dimensions were correlated significantly with job satisfaction and employee motivation. Key among the underlying characteristics are the meaningfulness of the work (to what extent the individual perceives the work as significant and important), responsibility for the job (how far the individual feels personally accountable for the outcomes of the work), and the extent to which the employee has knowledge about the results of his or her efforts.

Research has supported the belief that there is a significant relationship between the manager's use of power and employees' job satisfaction; that is, change in one seem to change the other (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; Carson et al., 1999; Rahim & Afza, 1993; Rahim, Antonioni, & Psenicka, 2001). Yet, little investigation has been carried out on the relationship of employers' use of power in relation to employees' outcomes in the organisations (Lusch, 1976; Ward, 2001). Among the earlier researchers Burke and Wilcox (1971), and Slocum (1970) conducted studies using French and Raven's (1959) power bases in relation to employee outcome. Their researches investigated the relationship between supervisor' power bases: (1) satisfaction with supervisor's supervision and (2) employee satisfaction with their jobs. The results of these studies show that there is positive relationship between expert and referent power, and job satisfaction and supervision whereas coercive power is negatively related. They also found legitimate power and expert power were not significantly related to employees' job satisfaction.

It has been revealed that managers' use of power (in particular expert, referent, and reward power) is positively related to job satisfaction (Busch, 1980; Dunne, Stahl, & Melhart, 1978; Greene & Podsakoff, 1981); however, all these studies noted that coercive power is negatively related to job satisfaction.

From the literature review, it was postulated that employee perception of the manager's use of power is related to the employees' organisational

commitment, job satisfaction, burnout, and turnover (Carlson, Carlson, & Wadsworth, 2000; Jahangir, 2003; Mossholder et al., 1998). For almost a decade, the notion that employees' perception of managers' use of power is a crucial variable related to organisational outcomes has been widely acknowledged in the West (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; Carlson, Carlson, & Wadsworth, 2000; Rahim & Manger, 1996). However, in the context of Nationalised Commercial Banks (NCBs) of Bangladesh such relationship has not been investigated. Limited research has focused on employees' perception of managers' use of power in regard to employees in NCBs (Haq, 1991; Rahim & Magner, 1996). Jahangir (2003) has conducted a study on NCBs managers' use of power and procedural justice, and their relationships with employees' organisational outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment and job satisfaction); but there is no published research evidence where only managers' use of power has been investigated in relation to employees' job satisfaction in case of NCBs of Bangladesh. This paper is an extension of the work of Jahangir (2003) attempting to explore the extent to which the various bases of power impact the employee perception of leader quality at the nationalised commercial banks of Bangladesh.

1.2 Hypotheses

It is proposed that employee perception of the manager's use of power is important in the context of their relationships with employees' job satisfaction. Moreover, employees' perceived quality of their managers in terms of their exercise of the different bases of power could be proposed to be significant in achieving higher job satisfaction on the part of the employees.

A leader can bring about significant transformation in the organisation by his ability to communicate among the subordinates their value and importance for the success of the organisation. Such charismatic approach to leading helps the employees develop a sense of belonging to the organisation and identify themselves with the organisation. Thus we propose:

H₁: The higher the leader's ability to exert referent power, the greater will be the employee perception of leader quality.

The supervisor's possession of expertise in the relevant area and the use of such expertise allow the employees to learn their jobs more satisfactorily and perform their job responsibilities more efficiently and effectively. Such expert guidance can also be expected to develop among the subordinates a feeling of respect and regard for their superiors. Thus:

H₂: The higher the leader's use of expert power, the greater will be the employee perception of leader quality.

The supervisor's ability to use punishment as a tool for getting the subordinates perform their job responsibilities is highly likely to create an atmosphere fear, anxiety and develop a disliking for the supervisor. Hence it is proposed:

H₃: The lower the leader's use of coercive power, the higher will be the employee perception of leader quality.

The leader/superior in an organisation are expected to enjoy certain rights to exercise authorities (within bounds) by virtue of his position the organisation. If such right does not coexist with the leader's position, or if such rights are not acknowledged by the subordinates, the leaders ability to lead will be significantly impaired. Thus we propose:

H₄: The higher the leader's ability to use legitimate power, the greater will be the employee perception of leader quality.

If the leader can reward subordinates for carrying out orders or meeting performance requirements, the subordinates will view the leader favourably and will be motivated to work more efficiently. Thus:

H₅: The higher the leader's ability to use reward power, the greater will be the employee perception of leader quality.

2.0 RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Secondary research

Secondary research was first carried out to explore the various bases of social power, previous studies conducted to determine the effect of the manager's use of social power on employees' job satisfaction and their perception of leader quality, and similar researches conducted in the

specific context of the nationalised commercial banks of Bangladesh. The original work of French and Raven (F&R, 1959) was studied to grasp the conceptual basis of social power. The dissertation paper of Jahangir (2003) was reviewed to learn about his findings on the employee perception of the manager's use of power in the NCBs in affecting employee job satisfaction. The work of Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) was then studied to review and assess the applicability of the scale items developed by him in measuring the use of social power bases, which served as the framework for Jahangir's (2003) survey.

2.2 Questionnaire design and pre-testing

The "Managers' Use of Power (MUP) questionnaire" developed by Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) served as the basis for developing the scale items for independent (power bases) variables. All the scale items in the MUP questionnaire were retained for the independent variables. Scale items for the dependent variable were derived from the questionnaire developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980). As our study was restricted to determining the effect of the managers' use of power bases on their leadership quality, the items specifically relevant to leadership quality were used to elicit employee responses on the quality of their respective leaders. A number of studies have provided the evidence of reliability of the scale ranging from 0.60 to 0.75 (Mossholder, Bennett, Kemery, & Wesolowski, 1998). The respondents were to respond to the questions under each power base and the overall leader quality on a five point Likert scale with a higher score indicating that a supervisor has a larger power base and vice versa. Closed-ended demographic questions were included to obtain descriptive statistics about the respondents, which would help in a more in-depth interpretation of the responses. These questions were largely dichotomous and multiple choice in nature.

As the scale items had already been used in previous surveys, pre-testing of the questionnaire was limited to only few randomly selected

respondents to ensure the preciseness, conciseness, objectivity, and understandability of the questions.

2.3 Sampling and data collection

The population for the research would be all the employees working in the three NCBs of Bangladesh (Sonali, Janata, and Agrani) who have to perform their job responsibilities under a supervisor/manager. The nature of the survey made the respondents internally homogeneous as they all work under the authority of their supervisors, but externally heterogeneous in terms of their positions, ranks, income, responsibilities and so on. This justified the use of stratified random sampling for collecting the data for the study.

Altogether 600 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the employees of the three NCBs of which 345 responses were received. The respondents being educated were asked to fill in the questionnaire by themselves and seek help from the data collectors when they had problems conceiving any questions.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were tabulated on the computer and the final analysis was performed on statistical software. Two types of analyses were primarily carried out:

Factor analysis to check the grouping of the responses into the hypothesised power bases.

Correlations and Regression analysis to find out if and to what extent the power bases explained the employee perception of leader quality.

3.0 ANALYSES

The data gathered for the study were analysed with several data analysis techniques. Frequency distributions were analysed first to obtain descriptive statistics. The measures of leadership power bases were factor analysed next. Since we used previously tested scale items for

extracting the respondents' opinions, we expected the data reduction techniques to identify five separate bases of power as envisaged by French and Raven (F&R 1959) – reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, and referent power.

The initial factor structure derived from varimax rotation converged into the five factors as expected. One item of reward power superficially loaded with the items indicating expert power and was hence removed from the analysis. 19 out of the 20 items could be retained for the final factor structure, which resulted in five distinct factors and explained 63.27% of the cumulative variation. The scale items indicating the overall employee-perception of the leadership quality were then factor analysed, which confirmed that the items were grouped into one factor, and hence served as the dependent variable for the study. Appendix A shows the scale items used to constitute the dependent variable.

The five factors were put through multiple regression to test the hypotheses and their predictability in measuring leader quality. Three of the factors – expert power, coercive power, and referent power – were found to be significant at the 5% significance level. The other two factors namely legitimate power and reward power came out to be extremely insignificant in explaining the employee perception of leader quality. The items associated with these three factors are summarised in Table 1. These three factors explained 62.52% of the cumulative variation in the data.

TABLE 1
FACTOR ANALYSIS WITH VARIMAX ROTATION

Scale items	Factor 1 Expert power	Factor 2 Coercive power	Factor 3 Referent power
My supervisor can provide me with sound job related advice.	0.852	0.026	0.200
My supervisor can provide me with needed technical knowledge.	0.814	0.059	0.304
My supervisor can give me good technical suggestions.	0.809	0.085	0.237
My supervisor can share with me his/her considerable experience and training.	0.675	0.132	0.078
My supervisor can make my work difficult for me.	0.074	0.868	0.000
My supervisor can make things unpleasant here.	0.100	0.865	0.128
My supervisor can make being at work distasteful.	-0.023	0.823	0.094
My supervisor can give me undesirable job assignments.	0.110	0.730	-0.092
My supervisor can make me feel personally accepted.	0.054	-0.018	0.788
My supervisor can make me feel like he/she approves of me.	0.261	-0.019	0.705
My supervisor can make me feel important.	0.199	0.191	0.680
My supervisor can make me feel valued.	0.435	-0.079	0.552
My supervisor can make me recognise that I have tasks to accomplish.	0.430	0.055	0.462
	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Factor 1	3.01	23.17	23.17
Factor 2	2.79	21.45	44.62
Factor 3	2.33	17.90	62.52

The three factors (see Appendix B) found significant in the regression analysis were almost entirely identical to their counterparts in the original leadership power bases. Expert power is based on the belief or understanding that the leader has specific knowledge or relevant expertise that the follower (subordinate) does not. Expertise plays a crucial role in achieving subordinate compliance and respect. A manager who knows what to do and how to do it in a particular situation is more likely to be a more effective leader than the manager with inferior knowledge and expertise in handling different situations. This is particularly true with organisations like banks where knowledge and experience in specialised areas of finance, accounting, and economics are vital for managerial success.

The second factor derived from the analysis is congruent with F&R (1959) notion of coercive power, the belief in the leader's ability to punish the subordinates. Managers sometimes need to wield their ability to use punitive actions to get their subordinates to perform their responsibilities, while some managers instinctively believe that the fear of punishment will compel the subordinates to comply with their directions and orders. The need for using coercive power may sometimes become evident if the managers do not have enough authority to reward the subordinates, or do not have enough legitimate power to exercise on their subordinates.

Referent power is based on the desire of the subordinates to be like or to identify with the leader. Such power is demonstrated in the charismatic and transformational approach of the leader/manager while dealing with his/her subordinates and its effectiveness can be measured from the subordinates' personal feeling of importance and value to the organisation, and their feeling of acceptance and approval by the leader. Referent power may be inherent in the leader or the leader may apply this power as an alternative to coercive power believing that too much fear of punishment can de-motivate employees and actually cause their output to fall.

TABLE 2
SCALE RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT

Variables	Alpha	Standardised Item Alpha
Leader quality	0.7169	0.7173
Expert power	0.8473	0.8470
Coercive power	0.8474	0.8467
Referent power	0.7462	0.7461

Each of the three factors was assessed for reliability using coefficient α . The reliability coefficients exceeded the value of 0.7 for each factor (see Table 2), which is consistent with the recommendation of Nunnally (1978). Table 3 shows the summary statistics as well as the correlation matrix for the variables included in the study. The multiple-item construct for power bases were further factor analysed for testing the validity of the measures. In each case, the items always loaded on each case only, lending support to their validity. The correlation between one scale and another is considerably lower than each scale's coefficient α , which provides support for discriminant validity (Gaski & Nevin, 1985). Nomological validity is supported by the directions of the signs of the coefficients.

TABLE 3
CORRELATION MATRIX^A

Variables	1	2	3	4	\bar{x}	s
(1) Leader quality (3)	1.00				2.48	1.05
(2) Expert power (4)	0.53	1.00			2.79	1.06
(3) Coercive power (4)	-0.01	0.17	1.00		2.56	0.98
(4) Referent power (5)	0.61	0.58	0.11	1.00	2.57	0.87

^a All correlations are significant at $p < 0.05$, Figures in parentheses represent number of items measuring each construct.

4.0 RESULTS

The hypotheses for the study were tested using multiple regression. All five extracted factors were first fed through the analysis to test their significance in predicting employee perception of leader quality. Two bases of power, namely reward power and legitimate power were found to be highly insignificant in predicting leader quality, and were therefore removed from the analysis. The final regression model, run with the remaining three factors was significant with an overall $F_{3,341}$ value of 84.12 ($p < 0.000$) and explained 42% of the variation in the dependent variable as indicated by the adjusted R^2 value. Table 4 presents the results of the regression analysis. Considering the fact that the study was kept strictly confined to employee perception of leader quality based on leadership power bases, the results are very satisfying.

The three bases of power retained for the final model were all significant in explaining leader quality and the directions of relationships were as hypothesised. Referent power had the greatest impact on leader quality as indicated by the standardised β values. This is of course of no surprise that subordinates would value superiors who also value them and appreciate their contribution to the organisation. The exertion of referent power motivates the subordinates to perform better and encourages them to emulate their leaders when it comes to leading their own subordinates.

TABLE 4
REGRESSION RESULTS DEPENDENT VARIABLE: LEADER QUALITY^A

Variables	<i>b</i>	Std. Error	β	<i>t</i>	Significance <i>p</i> <
(Constant)	.581	.172		3.382	.001
Expert power	.279	.051	.280	5.491	.000
Coercive power	-.113	.045	-.105	-2.525	.012
Referent power	.548	.061	.456	9.021	.000

^a $R^2 = 0.425$; Adj $R^2 = 0.420$; $F_{3,341} = 84.12$, $p < 0.000$

Expert power had the next greatest effect on leader quality. Banking operations involve high degree of specialised conceptual and technical skills in every sphere of activities, be it handling deposits, managing loan and equity, offering special financial products, or dealing international trade. A good proportion of such skills come from the academic knowledge and training of the employees but the practical application of such skills is largely inherited from the guidance and directions from the experience and expertise of the superiors.

The use of coercive power had the least and a negative impact on the employee perception of leader quality. The coercive attitude of a leader can create an atmosphere of paranoia among the subordinates. Such an atmosphere can lead to poor superior-subordinate relationships and result in a serious deterioration in employees' job performance.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide insights to researchers who might be interested in conducting research works in the specific area, and address important policy issues for the government and the management of the NCBs. The results may also be important to other developing countries where similar operating environment as Bangladesh exists.

Further research in this particular area is needed, particularly in refining the scale items to fit more accurately to the circumstances of Bangladesh. Additional surveys may also be carried out to explore the reasons why certain bases of power are more significant than others and why certain power bases are not viewed significant by the employees of the NCBs of Bangladesh. Exploring the bounds of exercising each power base can be another avenue for conducting researches. Findings of such works can help concerned authorities of the NCBs to reshape and revitalise the organisation structures of the banks, improve employee satisfaction, performance and thereby provide superior customer services. Private banks, financial institutions, and even non-financial organisations can also replicate the model in their respective organisations to find out how their managers use power bases in securing employee compliance.

Theoretically, the model presented in this paper identifies the bases of social power used by the managers of the NCBs of Bangladesh that are

perceived to be significant in explaining their leadership quality. Despite the perceptual nature of the dimensions rather than objective, the three power bases found significant from the study robustly explained the leadership quality of the managers in the NCBs of Bangladesh. The model can help the government and the NCB managements plan and implement changes in the authority-responsibility structure in these banks so the managers can exercise their power more effectively and yet yield higher satisfaction and performance from the employees.

The results of this study must be viewed by the NCB management, as an overall evaluation of their use of power and such use of power is important for employee performance. In today's dynamic work environment, management of human resources calls for more than just leading by instinct and the leader must modify his/her own behaviour toward the subordinates in order to ensure favourable behaviour from them in return.

The mean scores on the different bases of power obtained from the study as depicted in Table 3 tell one important thing about the use of power by the managers of the NCBs of Bangladesh; on a scale of 5, all of the factors rated below 3, the neutral point, indicating negative valence. This would suggest the need for significant improvement in the use of social power. Expert power with a mean score of 2.79 rated highest among the three found significant. Employees view their managers' use of knowledge and expertise most favourably. Needless to reiterate at this point the importance of high levels of conceptual and technical skills of the managers for the success of the banking industry. The use of referent power and coercive power were rated alike at mean scores of 2.57 and 2.56 respectively. Compared to the desirability of these two bases of power, the degree of the use of coercive power is within the tolerable limit (below 3) while the use of referent power needs to be consciously improved by the managers to achieve favourable response from the subordinates.

The use of legitimate and reward powers did not emerge to be significant in the eyes of the subordinates. The plausible reason could be the hierarchical structure of governance of the public sector enterprises in Bangladesh. Managers are entitled to very little opportunity to influence

the employees with respect to their legitimate duties and responsibilities. Reward system in the NCBs also follows a very hierarchical structure where more emphasis is placed on seniority rather than the manager's individual judgement of the merits of the subordinates. The absence of financial incentives for better performance is also worth noticing. In the absence adequate legitimate, and reward powers, the only tools that the managers have to use to ensure subordinate compliance are their expertise, charisma, and to some extent, coercion.

The results of this study can be tied to any reform plans to revitalise the NCBs of Bangladesh, be it under government control or under private management. Within the existing structure of governance, highest priority has to be given to the improvement of the managers' ability to influence subordinates by means of the exercise of referent power followed by expert power as indicated by their respective beta (β) values. Lessening the use of coercive power will also experience significant improvement in leadership quality. For a longer-term benefit, policymakers may contemplate how the significance in the managers' use of legitimate and reward power can be enhanced to make leadership in the NCBs more fruitful.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Leadership is a behavioural phenomenon, and substantial enhancement in leadership quality can be accomplished by conscious effort of the managers in dealing with the subordinates. Unlike other improvement schemes like technical and infrastructural developments, which require huge monetary investments and take long time to implement, improvement in leadership can be achieved by a mere change in attitude of the managers towards the positive direction. There should be concerted endeavour on the part of both policymakers and management of the NCBs of Bangladesh to consider this human aspect of management.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Dependent variable	Scale items
(Employee perception of leader quality)	The degree of respect and fair treatment I receive from my boss
	The amount of support and guidance I receive from my supervisor
	The overall quality of supervision I receive in my job

APPENDIX B

Factors (Power bases)	Scale items
Expert power	My supervisor can provide me with sound job related advice. My supervisor can provide me with needed technical knowledge. My supervisor can give me good technical suggestions. My supervisor can share with me his/her considerable experience and training.
Coercive power	My supervisor can make my work difficult for me. My supervisor can make things unpleasant here. My supervisor can make being at work distasteful. My supervisor can give me undesirable job assignments.
Referent power	My supervisor can make me feel personally accepted. My supervisor can make me feel like he/she approves of me. My supervisor can make me feel important. My supervisor can make me feel valued. My supervisor can make me recognise that I have tasks to accomplish.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE ON LEADERSHIP POWER BASES IN THE NATIONALISED
COMMERCIAL BANKS OF BANGLADESH.

Sl.		Strongly agree	4	3	2	1	Strongly disagree
1.	My supervisor can increase my pay level.	5	4	3	2	1	
2.	My supervisor can influence my getting a pay rise.	5	4	3	2	1	
3.	My supervisor can provide me with special benefits.	5	4	3	2	1	
4.	My supervisor can influence my getting a promotion.	5	4	3	2	1	
5.	My supervisor can give me undesirable job assignments.	5	4	3	2	1	
6.	My supervisor can make my work difficult for me.	5	4	3	2	1	
7.	My supervisor can make things unpleasant here.	5	4	3	2	1	
8.	My supervisor can make being at work distasteful.	5	4	3	2	1	
9.	My supervisor can make me feel that I have commitments to meet.	5	4	3	2	1	
10	My supervisor can make me feel like I should satisfy my job requirements.	5	4	3	2	1	
11	My supervisor can give me the feeling that I have responsibilities to fulfil.	5	4	3	2	1	
12	My supervisor can make me recognize that I have tasks to accomplish.	5	4	3	2	1	
13	My supervisor can give me good technical suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1	
14	My supervisor can share with me his/her considerable experience and training.	5	4	3	2	1	
15	My supervisor can provide me with sound job related advice.	5	4	3	2	1	
16	My supervisor can provide me with needed technical knowledge.	5	4	3	2	1	
17	My supervisor can make me feel valued.	5	4	3	2	1	
18	My supervisor can make me feel like he/she approves of me.	5	4	3	2	1	
19	My supervisor can make me feel personally accepted.	5	4	3	2	1	
20	My supervisor can make me feel important.	5	4	3	2	1	
21	The degree of fair treatment I receive from my boss is good.	5	4	3	2	1	
22	The amount of support and guidance I receive from my supervisor is adequate.	5	4	3	2	1	
23	The overall quality of supervision I receive in my work is satisfactory.	5	4	3	2	1	

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