



The impact of work-family balance on manufacturing employees' mental health during pandemic

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Abstract. *Purpose.* The study aimed to measure the impact of manufacturing employees' high work pressure on the urge for their family-life balance, and the impact of high work-life pressure and the urge for family-life balance on manufacturing employees' concern for mental health during COVID-19 pandemic from an emerging economy perspective. *Methodology.* The study has picked 20 items under three different variables such as work-life, family-life, and mental health. The structured questionnaire has been developed based on the literature survey and divided into two parts. The initial part has contained demographic information and the second part has contained measure items of the model. The questionnaire has been designed through Google Docs and distributed via Facebook messenger, E-mail, WhatsApp, IMO, etc. 400 data was collected through the snowball sampling technique and 201 data (response rate 50.25%) was found usable for the research. The exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling were run to test the proposed research framework with the help of MS Excel 2007, SPSS 22.0, and AMOS 23.0. *Finding.* The findings revealed that high work-life pressure had a positive significant impact on the urge for family-life balance and both the high work-life pressure and urge for family-life balance had a positive significant impact on manufacturing employees' concern for mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Originality.* The novelty of this research is the manufacturing employees' context during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Work-Family Balance; mental health; manufacturing employees; COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

The global civilization confronted one of its greatest problems in historical remembrance at the beginning of the year 2020: a pandemic of a widely identified coronavirus. This disease, which produces a severe respiratory illness (COVID-19), expanded quickly over the planet, culminating in a worldwide catastrophe that compelled governments to take drastic steps to halt its proliferation (Liu et al., 2020). As a result, social distance (the avoidance of human contact) remained a primary

goal, resulting in the closing of schools, non-essential stores, as well as travelling among countries. In addition, this has already had a significant consequence on the businesses (like manufacturing and service industries) as well. The pandemic has exacerbated the global supply chain disruptions (Ranney et al., 2020). However, in Bangladesh like the other countries, the manufacturing firms such as garments, agriculture goods, fast-moving consumer goods, and some other manufacturing industries were continuing their production to active the wheel of the national economy (BetterWork, 2020). In such a situation manufacturing employee were facing some troubles in balancing their work and family-life (Adisa et al., 2021). Such balancing pressure may consider as a potential source of mental health concern during the COVID-19 pandemic (Yucel, 2017).

Work-life and family-life are seen to be two distinct spheres that interact in both good and bad ways (Molina, J2021). Furthermore, as earlier researchers have observed, work and family have a mutual relationship (Minnotte et al., 2015; Khan et al., 2018). The autonomy that a person has over his or her profession is referred to as work-life balance. To the mutual advantage of the employee, company, and civilization; a balance is established when a person's claim to a fulfilling life both inside and outside of the job is recognized and acknowledged as the standard (Young, 2018). Overwork leads to a terrible work-family balance, which has negative consequences such as aversion to work, a higher risk of changing employment, discord, lack of physical activity, stress, improper diet, fatigue, sleeplessness, depression, as well as health issues including cancer (Houston, 2005; Abendroth, Den Dulk, 2011). Workloads have a detrimental impact on an employee's health both directly and indirectly (Holland et al., 2019). Employee health is significantly impacted by the stress of sustaining a level of efficiency in the midst of increasing exhaustion over time, along with the greater possibility of meeting additional kinds of job stress. Hence, such extended workloads and long working hours may hamper the work-family balance and causes poor mental health (Young, 2018). Based on the discussion two research questions can arise.

RQ1. How does the high work-life pressure impact employees' urge for family-life balance during the pandemic situation?

RQ2. How do the high work-life pressure and the urge for family-life balance impact employees' concern for mental health conditions during the pandemic situation?

Plenty of earlier researches were conducted on work and family-life conflict (Scherer, Steiber, 2007; Allen, Finkelstein, 2014); work-life balance effect on employees job satisfaction (Haar et al., 2014; Cahill et al., 2015); job commitment (Kim, 2014; Darko-Asumadu, et al., 2018); well-being (Hoffmann-Burdzińska, Rutkowska, 2015; Törnquist Agosti et al., 2017); employee engagement (Shankar, Bhatnagar, 2010; Cahill et al., 2015; Iqbal et al., 2017); mental health (Haar et al., 2014; Kotera et al., 2020). However, the basic gap in the literature was the emerging economy context. In addition, another research gap was no such research was observed based on the manufacturing industry context during the COVID-19 phenomenon. Hence, the key objectives of the study were to measure the impact of manufacturing employees' high work pressure on the urge for their family-life balance, and the impact of high work-life pressure and the urge for family-life balance on manufacturing employees' concern for mental health during COVID-19 pandemic. The following sections of the study are designed as follows. The second section outlines the theoretical background of the research along with the related review of the literature. The third section contains the methodology of the research. After that, the fourth section explains the analysis and discussion of the research findings, and finally, the last section ends with a conclusion including implications and the direction of future research.

Theoretical anchoring and hypothesis development

Work-life pressure and family-life balance in COVID-19

The entire economic consequence of the prolonged COVID-19 issue is yet unknown — and might be years away. Emergency layoffs, interim locks up in the processing of income taxes as well as value-added tax (VAT), including government-guaranteed financing to businesses are among the steps adopted to preserve the economy. In so many nations, governments continue to pay compensation. In some circumstances, such endowments are already established; in others, they were created as a result of wage reductions for top management (Fisher et al., 2020). With minimal resources, families have been compelled to strive to preserve a work and family balance in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak. Both the work-life pressure (WLP) and family-life balance (WLB) have grown increasingly difficult, regardless of the circumstances (Adisa et al., 2021). L. P. Parkes and P. H. Langford describe work and family as a staff's endeavor toward effectively completing WFB duties such that the responsibilities of one domain should not create any harmful influence on the other part of life (Parkes, Langford, 2008). WFB is also linked to work flexibility, which refers to an employee's ability to choose where, when, and how they work (Cooke et al., 2009). Working hours, workplace atmosphere, workloads, reward and incentive scheme, and leave regulations are among the five pillars of WFB. Employees typically confront several tasks, expectations, and obstacles, which can result in role conflict (Uddin, 2021). Most of the research has anticipated a negative work pressure to family balance relation. However, work pressure may have a beneficial impact on family balance and family balance can have a favorable impact on work pressure (Aslam et al., 2011; Brauchli et al., 2011; Yucel, 2017; Calderwood et al., 2021; etc.). Hence a hypothesis can be developed as follows:

H1: In the pandemic situation, manufacturing employees' high work-life pressure has significantly impacted their urge for family-life balance.

Work-life balance and mental health in organization

Mental health entails that everyone who presents with serious issues makes settlements with one another and with oneself, rather than being immobilized by internal struggles and social pressures. It also denotes an individual's ability to operate effectively in a group or a society as a result of their emotions, ideas, and behaviors (Nadinloyi et al., 2013). The theory of WFB and mental health explained that persistent external stress such as work pressure, high workloads, etc. are likely to have a direct impact on family happiness through increasing internal stress. That might have a superior threat to employees' psychological and physical issues (Bodenmann, 2000; Yucel, 2017). The previous study has examined the impact of work pressure and family balance conflict on employees' physical and mental health as well as wellbeing. Identity theory suggested that work-life pressure and family-life balance conflict would have separate effects on employee mental health consequences (Nath, Dwivedi, 2021). This notion is backed up by a lot of evidence from the past findings (Frone et al., 1996; Casper et al., 2011; Madsen, Hammond, 2013; etc.). Based on the discussion two different hypotheses can also be developed as:

H2: In the pandemic situation, manufacturing employees' high work-life pressure has significantly impacted their concern for mental health.

H3: In the pandemic situation, manufacturing employees' urge for family-life balance has significantly impacted their concern for mental health.

The following figure 1 depicted the proposed theoretical model for this research.

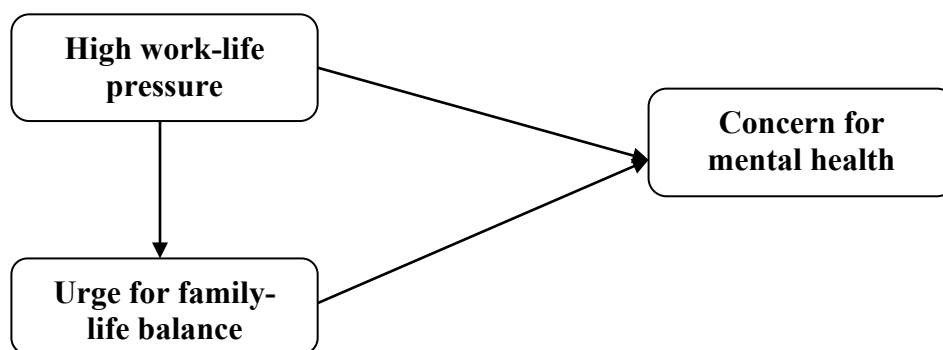


Figure 1. The proposed theoretical model. Source: Authors'

Methodology

Sample and procedure

The study is quantitative in nature and based on primary data. Currently, the textile and garment industries employ the majority of Bangladeshi manufacturers (Khan et al., 2017; Khan, Sharma, 2020). Meanwhile, the country is pursuing a concerted effort to diversify its skills into growing sectors, such as leather, livestock, pharmaceutical, automobile, etc. (Hossain et al., 2018; Bangladesh Economic Review 2021). There are 4.5 million people are working in the textile and garment sectors (Paton, 2021). However, the exact figure of the total population working in the manufacturing industry is unavailable. As a result, the snowball sampling method becomes a feasible choice. It is challenging to contact manufacturing employees from various industries and experiences using methods besides snowball sampling (Khan et al., 2021). The researcher might reach out to prospective respondents using the snowball sampling technique by referring to previous respondents. Because one manufacturing employee can suggest other employees, they may be aware of who is employed in the sector in their local vicinity.

In total 400 respondents have been targeted as a sample through the snowball sampling techniques and 201 (50.25% response rate) are found usable for the study. Due to pandemic situations, the data has been collected with the help of social media platforms (Hossain, Khan, 2021). The determination of sample size has been calculated for unknown population sizes at a 95% confidence level based on the Raosoft calculator (Raosoft, 2022). In addition, the study area has been selected in Dhaka city due to the large gathering of the targeted population (Mottaleb et al., 2020). The structured questionnaire has been designed through Google Docs and distributed via Facebook messenger, E-mail, WhatsApp, IMO, etc. (Newman et al., 2021). After collecting the data only 201 data (50.25% response rate) have found it satisfactory to explore the research. A structured questionnaire has been developed based on the literature survey and divided into two parts. The initial part has contained demographic information and the second part has contained measure items of the model. A five-point Likert scale has developed where "1" denotes strongly disagree and "5" denotes strongly agree (Al Ahad, Khan, 2020).

Measurement scale

The study has picked 20 items under three different variables such as work-life, family-life, and mental health (Yucel, 2017; Young, 2018; Khan et al., 2018; Uddin, 2021; Calderwood et al., 2021). Table 1 depicts all the items and measurement scales for the study. The refined data has been processed through the MS Excel (V, 2007); SPSS (V, 22); and SPSS AMOS (V, 23) software. The research has employed a two-step protocol for this investigation. Before assessing the conceptual model, the study has utilized the exploratory factors analysis (EFA) and the confirmatory factor

analysis (CFA) to measure the reliability and validity of the measurement scale. Finally, the study has applied structural equation modeling (SEM) to investigate the hypotheses and the model fit (Rana et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2021).

Table 1. Measurement items of work-life balance and mental health

Variables	Item code	Item name	Sources
Work-life balance	A-1	I face a huge workload in pandemic.	Khan et al., 2018; Uddin, 2021; Calderwood et al., 2021
	A-2	Communication with bosses is difficult	
	A-3	I spend long working hours	
	A-4	It was tough to balance between work and current salary level	
	A-5	I strive to earn my regular salary	
	A-6	Job life in general is tough during pandemic	
Family-life balance	A-7	I cannot maintain religious activities properly	Khan et al., 2018; Uddin, 2021; Calderwood et al., 2021
	A-8	I cannot maintain good relations with friends and acquaintances	
	A-9	I have spent less free time and relaxation	
	A-10	I face some trouble in taking community service	
	A-11	I am out of my family for their safety	
	A-12	It is difficult to maintain personal relationship during pandemic	
	A-13	I spend less time for relaxation	
	A-14	I cannot maintain community activities and volunteering properly	
Mental health	B-1	I cannot maintain a positive mental health	Yucel, 2017; Young, 2018
	B-2	I cannot handle stressful situations in an appropriate manner	
	B-3	I am not able to adapt to change.	
	B-4	I am not able to stay focused under pressure.	
	B-5	I am not able to handle unpleasant feelings	
	B-6	I am not able to achieve goals despite obstacles	

Source: Authors' compilation

Results

Demographic information

Table 1 depicts the summary of demographic information of the survey participants. Most of the respondents are male (67.6%) and female (29.4%). After that majority of the participants were found junior level and middle level; as literature supports that most of the technical and front-line jobs were done by those two levels (Griffin, 2021).

The study calculated 50.2% are junior or bottom level and 39.3% are from middle-level employees. Nevertheless, to understand the real fact the study captured little data from top-level (10.4%) as well. In the case of education level, 53.2% of the employees are having a master's level of education and 18.4% are having a bachelor's level. However, 28.4% of the respondents are having up to higher secondary level or below education standard.

Table 2. Respondents' demographic information summary

Variables	Category	Frequency (<i>n</i> = 201)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative percent
Gender	Male	142	67.6	67.6
	Female	59	29.4	100.0
Hierarchy	Junior level	101	50.2	50.2
	Middle level	79	39.3	89.5
	Top level	21	10.4	100.0
Education	Up to HSC	57	28.4	28.4
	Bachelor's degree	37	18.4	46.8
	Master and above	107	53.2	100.0

Source: Authors' calculation

Exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis

To develop the proposed model the study initially tested the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify the construct validity. The EFA was run with varimax rotation and only 13 items were found suitable with good factors loading of above 0.60 among the selected 20 items for the proposed model (Hair et al., 2010). Those 13 items contained three distinct factors such as employees' work-life, family-life, and mental health (Chen, Paulraj, 2004). The 75.859% of the variance was explained by the EFA. To confirm the model the study tested confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and all the factors generated from EFA were retained with a good factor loading of above 0.70.

Table 3. Model fit summary of confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling

χ^2	<i>df</i>	Sig.	χ^2/df	NFI	CFI	AGFI	GFI	TLI	RMSEA
82.912	59	.022	1.405	.945	.983	.879	.921	.978	.052

Source: Authors' SPSS AMOS output.

Table 4. Summary of confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling outcomes

Variables	Item Code	EFA				CFA	
		Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained (%)	α	Factor loading	CR
Work-life	A-1	.906	4.721	36.313	.931	.990	.956
	A-2	.862				.760	
	A-3	.923				.920	
	A-4	.870				.830	
	A-5	.840				.790	
Family-life	A-11	.908	3.089	23.759	.884	.870	.906
	A-12	.872				.860	
	A-13	.838				.800	
	A-14	.789				.720	
Mental Health	B-1	.800	2.205	16.961	.875	.760	.923
	B-2	.917				.950	
	B-3	.872				.850	
	B-4	.812				.700	

Note: Composite reliability = CR; Cronbach's alpha = α ; * — Source: Authors'

The model summary (see Table 3) explained that the entire model fit indicators such χ^2/df , NFI, CFI, AGFI, GFI, TLI, RMSEA were passed the threshold level suggested and applied by (Hair et al., 2010; Khan et al., 2019; Rana et al., 2020; etc.). Table 4 illustrated the entire output summary of EFA and CFA analysis including the item codes, factor loading, Composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, Eigenvalue, and Variance explained (%).

Model validation through structural equation modeling

Table 4 summarized the proposed model result and Figure 2 depicted the standardized route coefficients for the structural equation modeling (SEM) output by SPSS (AMOS).

Table 5. Hypotheses testing with result (SEM)

Relationship	Coefficient	<i>p</i> -value	Results
H1: High work-life pressure has a significant impact on the urge for family-life balance	(+) .123	.029	(Supported)
H2: High work-life pressure has a significant impact on the concern for mental health	(+) .151	.049	(Supported)
H3: Urge for family-life balance has a significant impact on the concern for mental health	(+) .368	.003	(Supported)

Notes: Parameter estimation significant at $p < 0.05$; Source: Authors'

Discussion

In *H1*, the study result demonstrated that high work-life pressure has a significant impact on manufacturing employees' urge for family-life balance during the COVID-19 pandemic. That means during the COVID-19 period manufacturing employees perceived that the high amount of work-life pressure positively impacted their urge for family-life balance. The study outcomes supported the earlier study of (Aslam et al., 2011; Brauchli et al., 2011; Yucel, 2017; Calderwood et al., 2021). This particular outcome strongly supported that both the employees and organization need to make some strategies in managing work and family-life for the betterment of mutual interest (Hilbrecht, Lero, 2014; Khan et al., 2018).

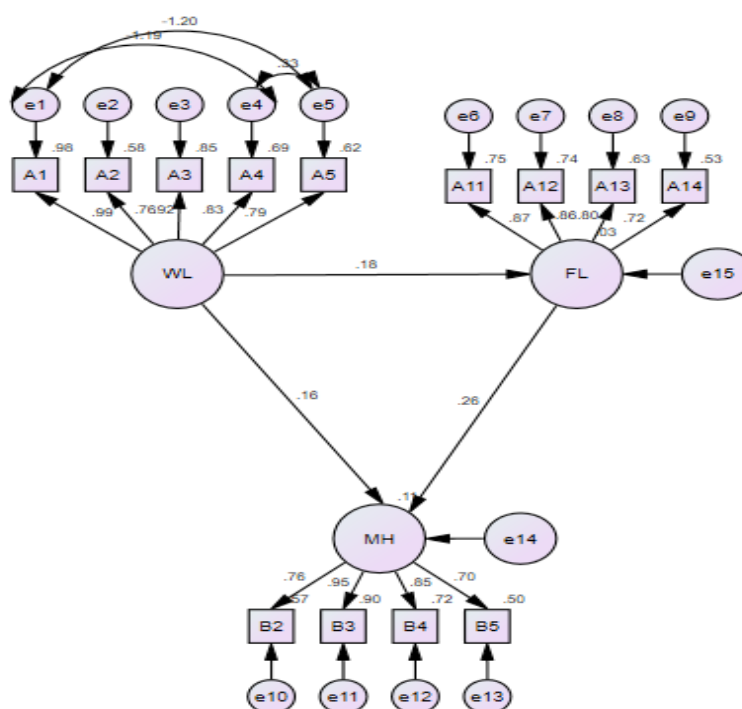


Figure 2: SEM Flowchart of the Proposed Model. Source: Authors' SPSS AMOS output

In *H2*, the hypothesis was developed as high work-life pressure has a significant impact on manufacturing employees' concern for mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. This relationship was also supported by the SEM finding. The outcome revealed that during the COVID-19 period manufacturing employees' high amount of work-life pressure positively impacted their concern in mental health. If the employees tolerate a high amount of work-life pressure, they feel very much concerned about their mental health during the pandemic. This particular outcome also matched with the earlier outcomes of (Huxley et al., 2015; Ruppanner et al., 2019). Based on this outcome the organization may craft new HR strategies for the mental wellbeing of their employees.

The *H3* was developed as the urge for family-life balance has a significant impact on manufacturing employees' concern for mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic and once again the study outcome revealed a positive significant relationship between these two variables. That means if the employees undergo the urge for family-life balance they sense very much concern for their mental health during the pandemic. This particular outcome was also supported with the earlier outcomes of (Schulz, Sherwood, 2008; Panelo, 2010). Hence such outcome urged that the manufacturing employees need to learn and adapt the urge for family-life for the betterment of their own mental wellbeing and organizations have less chance to interfere with such issues.

Conclusion

The study concludes with limitations, implications, and future directions of the research. The key limitations of the study were data collection challenges. During the pandemic, social distancing was a must and many of the employees were not those much technology oriented. Another important issue was research funding. Due to such constraints, the study could not go for mass data collection across the country. However, owing to such limitations the research has some implications. In the case of theoretical perspectives, the work-life pressure; family-life balance, and mental health can be categorized under the organizational behavior, employee psychology, and occupational health and safety theories under management and human resource management (HRM) domain. Hence, such research outcomes will vivid the earlier related outcomes of (Panelo, 2010; Hilbrecht, Lero, 2014; Ruppner et al., 2019; etc.). In addition, the work-life balance theory can be connected with the mental health wellbeing of manufacturing employees. On the other hand, the practical implications of the study could be in developing and crafting the HR strategy and policymaking in occupational safety and health as well as employee psychology in a natural catastrophe like the COVID-19 pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). Additionally, employees may face stress from two potential sources: organization and individual (Griffin, 2021).

In the case of work-family balance, the employee will be able to address and solve such issues for their betterment in both family-life balance and work-life pressure. Future research can be developed with more variables such as job satisfaction, intention to stay, organizational commitment, etc. The relationship between WFB and job satisfaction, intention to stay, organizational commitment will be tested with meditation and moderation of mental health conditions. Such research can be conducted on service employees apart from the manufacturing ones. Few demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, etc. can be applied as a mediating effect to the proposed and validated research model.

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Вклад баланса между работой и семьей в психическое здоровье производственных работников во время пандемии

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Аннотация. *Цель.* Исследование было направлено на измерение вклада высокой рабочей нагрузки производственных рабочих в их стремление к балансу между семьей и личной жизнью, а также вклада высокой рабочей нагрузки и стремления к балансу между семейной и личной жизнью в заботу производственных сотрудников о психическом здоровье во время пандемии COVID-19 с точки зрения развивающейся экономики. *Методология.* Структурированная анкета была разработана на основе обзора литературы и разделена на две части. Первая часть содержала демографическую информацию, а вторая часть содержала элементы измерения модели. Анкета была разработана с помощью Google Docs и распространена через мессенджер Facebook, электронную почту, WhatsApp, IMO и т. д. Всего были собраны методом снежного кома 400 заполненных анкет, из них 201 анкета (коэффициент отклика 50,25%) были признаны пригодными для дальнейшей обработки. Эксплораторный факторный анализ, подтверждающий факторный анализ и моделирование структурными уравнениями были проведены для проверки предложенной исследовательской структурной модели с помощью MS Excel 2007, SPSS 22.0 и AMOS 23.0. *Результаты.* Результаты показали, что высокая рабочая и жизненная нагрузка оказалась значимо положительно связана со стремлением работника к установлению баланса между семьей и личной жизнью. Кроме того, высокая нагрузка на работе и в личной жизни, а также стремление к балансу между семьей и личной жизнью значимо положительно связаны с озабоченностью промышленных работников своим психическим здоровьем во время пандемии COVID-19. *Оригинальность.* Новизной данного исследования является контекст производственных сотрудников во время пандемии COVID-19.

Ключевые слова: баланс между работой и семьей; баланс между работой и личной жизнью; душевное здоровье; производственные работники; COVID-19 пандемия.