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Implementation of Work-life balance Policies on Workers' performance through the mediating role of Job Satisfaction: A study on Ready-made garments Industry in Bangladesh

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between work-life balance policies (flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provisions) and workers' performance practiced by ready-made garments (RMG) industries in Bangladesh, where job satisfaction acts as a mediating variable. Data were collected from 218 workers employed in the ready-made garments industry in Savar, Bangladesh. A structured questionnaire was circulated for face-to-face data collection. A two-step analytical approach was applied. First, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the measurement model. Second, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized relationships among the latent variables. The results reveal that all dimensions of work-life balance policies (Flexible work policies, Welfare policies, and leave provisions) have significant positive effects on Job satisfaction. In addition, Job satisfaction has a significant impact on workers' performance. However, the implications of Work-Life balance policies do not directly influence Job performance. Instead, Job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between work-life balance policies and workers' job performance. The findings offer important implications for human resource management practices in the garments industry. Top management can enhance workers' performance by implementing work-life balance policies that improve job satisfaction. Such initiatives can contribute to a more motivated and productive workforce. While prior research has mostly explored work-life balance

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among female workers, empirical evidence on ready-made garment workers, regardless of gender, remains limited. This study adds value by proposing a distinct conceptual model that explains how work-life balance policies influence job performance through job satisfaction in the RMG sector. The study is based on self-reported data collected from a specific geographic area, which may be subject to social desirability bias and common method bias. Nevertheless, procedural remedies were applied to minimize these potential limitations.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Context of the Study

Although Work-life balance policies formally exist in Bangladesh's ready-made garments (RMG) sector through labor law provisions, factory compliance requirements, and organizational HR practices, their effectiveness largely depends on their implementation at the workplace level. Policies related to workplace flexibility, working hours, welfare support, maternity benefits, overtime regulation, and leave facilities are recognized under the Bangladesh Labor Act and compliance standards followed by export-oriented garment factories. However, previous studies suggest that the implementation and practical execution of these policies often remain inadequate in many factories, which negatively affects workers' job satisfaction and well-being (Hossain & Shiraz, 2018; Syed et al., 2024). Therefore, this study focuses on employees' perceptions of the implementation of work-life balance policies rather than on their mere existence.

Work-life balance (WLB) is not a new debate; rather, it has received ongoing attention in human resource management due to its influence on employees' well-being and organizational outcomes. Workers' performance can be affected by Work-life balance practices in various ways. Due to globalization, technological advancement, and rising work pressure, it is becoming increasingly difficult for employees to balance work responsibilities and family life (Francis, Lingard, & Gibson, 2004). In modern organizations, especially in labor-intensive industries, maintaining employee performance is a key managerial concern because organizational productivity and sustainability depend heavily on employees' efficiency, commitment, and quality of work.

The phrase "work-life balance" became popular in the late 1960s amid concerns regarding the effects of work on employees' overall well-being. Until the mid-

1970s, employers were mainly concerned with improving working conditions and job design. However, the idea of quality work-life balance gained prominence in the 1980s and gradually expanded to encompass job satisfaction, reward systems, employee involvement, physical working conditions, workplace rights, and employee dignity (Oyewobi et al., 2022). Since then, WLB has become a crucial organizational issue affecting both employees and organizations.

The development and implementation of Work-life balance policies vary across countries, depending on their social, cultural, economic, religious, and legal frameworks (Brough et al., 2008). Work-life balance policies generally include flexible working arrangements, welfare facilities, leave provisions, childcare support, regulated working hours, and employee assistance programs. These policies are intended to reduce work-related stress, improve employee well-being, and create a supportive working environment. Several studies have reported that supportive Work-life balance policies help reduce exhaustion and improve workplace productivity and employee commitment (Beauregard & Henry, 2009).
Employee performance is considered one of the most important indicators of organizational effectiveness, particularly in labor-intensive industries such as the ready-made garments (RMG) sector. Employees' performance directly contributes to organizational productivity, product quality, operational efficiency, and long-term competitiveness. Therefore, organizations continuously seek strategies to improve employees' performance through supportive HR practices, employee motivation, and workplace satisfaction. Previous studies suggest that employees who experience a healthy balance between work and personal life tend to demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Kim, 2014; Krishnan, Loon, & Tan, 2018).

Among different organizational outcomes, job satisfaction is considered one of the most influential determinants of employee performance. Robbins (2003) described job satisfaction as a positive emotional response toward work resulting from employees' evaluation of their job experiences. Previous studies indicate that supportive work environments, welfare facilities, flexible working arrangements, and effective leave provisions positively influence employees' job satisfaction, thereby enhancing their performance (Vrinda & Jacob, 2015). Therefore, job satisfaction may serve as an important mechanism through which the implementation of Work-life balance policies affects employee performance.

1.1 Reason of Interest

The ready-made garments (RMG) industry was selected for this study because it is one of the most significant labor-intensive sectors in Bangladesh and contributes

substantially to the country's economic growth, export earnings, and employment generation. Millions of workers are directly employed in this sector, where maintaining employee productivity and performance is essential for organizational sustainability and international competitiveness. Despite its economic importance, garment workers often experience excessive workloads, long working hours, workplace stress, insufficient welfare facilities, and difficulties balancing work and family responsibilities (Hossain & Shiraz, 2018; Islam et al., 2017). These challenges make the RMG sector an important context for examining the implementation of work-life balance policies and their effects on job satisfaction and employee performance. Previous studies conducted in Bangladesh mainly focused on female workers' Work-life balance problems and working conditions in the garments industry (Alam & Kamal, 2006; Faroque & Mollah, 2018; Alam, 1986; Nusrat & Solaiman, 2016; Asadullah & Talukder, 2019; Islam et al., 2017; Ali, 2017; Ahmed, 2024). Over the past decade, the participation rate of female workers in the garments industry has declined from 56% to 53% (The Daily Star, 2024). Therefore, this study includes both male and female workers to provide a broader understanding of employees' workplace experiences in the RMG sector.

Although Work-life balance policies formally exist in the RMG sector through labor law provisions, factory compliance requirements, and organizational HR practices, their effectiveness largely depends on their implementation at the workplace level. Policies related to leave facilities, welfare support, maternity benefits, regulated working hours, and employee support systems are formally recognized in the Bangladesh Labour Act and compliance standards followed by export-oriented garment factories. However, previous studies indicate that these policies are often inadequately implemented in practice, which negatively affects employees' satisfaction and workplace well-being (Hossain & Shiraz, 2018; Syed, Mahmud, & Karim, 2024). Therefore, this study focuses on employees' perceptions of the implementation of Work-life balance policies rather than merely examining their existence.

1.2 Research Gap:

However, despite growing scholarly attention, several important gaps remain in the existing literature. First, limited studies have examined the implementation of Work-life balance policies rather than merely discussing Work-life balance conditions or policy availability in the Bangladeshi RMG sector. Second, previous studies in Bangladesh mostly concentrated on female workers, while limited attention has been given to both male and female workers within a single framework (Alam & Kamal, 2006; Faroque & Mollah, 2018; Asadullah & Talukder, 2019; Islam et al., 2017). Third, empirical evidence on how flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provisions jointly influence employee

performance through the mediating role of job satisfaction remains scarce in Bangladesh's RMG industry. Therefore, this study attempts to address these research gaps by examining the effects of Work-life balance policy implementation, specifically flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provisions, on workers' performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, in Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry.

1.3 Purpose of the study:

The findings of this study are expected to provide important theoretical and practical implications for HR professionals, factory management, policymakers, and researchers regarding the importance of employee-friendly workplace practices in improving employee satisfaction and organizational performance.
The primary aim of this study is to examine the effects of implementing work-life balance policies on workers' performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, in Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry. Specifically, the study focuses on the implementation of three major dimensions of Work-life balance policy: flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provisions.
To achieve this aim, the study pursues the following objectives:

I. To examine the direct effects of Work-life balance policy implementation on workers' performance.
II. To examine the effects of flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provisions on workers' job satisfaction.
III. To investigate the effect of job satisfaction on workers' performance.
IV. To investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction between Work-life balance policy implementation and workers' performance.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Work-life Balance

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to an individual's ability to manage both professional and personal responsibilities. According to Greenhaus and Allen (2011), WLB is "the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and equally satisfied with his or her work and family roles." Similarly, Clark (2000) defined WLB as "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict." Byrne (2005) further emphasized that achieving WLB means not dividing time equally between work and family, but rather finding an equilibrium between career responsibilities and personal well-being.

Achieving WLB has become a vital organizational goal in modern workplaces. Lockwood (2003) described life as a balancing act where all individuals strive to maintain equilibrium between work and personal life. Quoting Swift (2002), she noted that "juggling competing demands is tiring if not stressful and brings lower productivity, sickness, and absenteeism," making WLB an essential concern for both employees and organizations.

2.2 Work Life Balance Policy and Policy Implementation:

Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to maintain equilibrium between work responsibilities and personal life. In contrast, work-life balance policies are organizational rules and supportive practices designed to help employees manage professional and family responsibilities effectively. These policies may include flexible working arrangements, welfare facilities, leave provisions, childcare support, medical facilities, and regulated working hours. Though work-life balance policies vary across nations, depending on history, religion, culture, economic status, and the nation's legal framework. Work-life balance affects society as a whole and individuals. (Brough, Holt, Bauld, & Ryan, 2008).

However, the existence of policies alone does not guarantee positive employee outcomes unless those policies are properly implemented in the workplace. Policy implementation refers to the extent to which employees experience and benefit from these policies in their daily work environment. In the context of Bangladesh's RMG industry, labor laws and compliance regulations formally recognize several employee welfare and work-life related provisions. However, previous studies indicate inconsistencies in their implementation across factories (Nusrat & Solaiman, 2016; Hossain & Shiraz, 2018). Therefore, this study specifically examines employees' perceptions regarding the implementation of WLB policies and their effects on job satisfaction and employee performance.

2.3 Dimensions of Work-life Balance Policy Implementation

Work-life balance policy implementation refers to the practical application of organizational policies and practices that help employees manage their professional and personal responsibilities. While Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to achieve harmony between work and non-work domains, Work-life balance policies are the organizational mechanisms that facilitate it. However, policies on work-life balance are formally documented, but without effective implementation, employee performance will not be enhanced. Therefore, this study focuses on the implementation of Work-life balance policies rather than merely their formal existence.

Among the various dimensions of Work-life balance policy implementation, flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provision policies are considered particularly important in labor-intensive industries such as the ready-made garments (RMG) sector (Tasnim et al., 2017; Udin, 2023). These dimensions are also closely associated with labor welfare provisions and employee rights recognized under national labor regulations (Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011; Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2006).

2.3.1 Flexible Work Policy Implementation

Flexible work policy implementation refers to organizational practices that provide employees with a degree of flexibility in when, where, and how they work. Such policies are intended to maintain organizational productivity while balancing professional responsibilities with personal and family obligations. Flexible work arrangements may include flexible scheduling, compressed workweeks, shift flexibility, reduced overtime pressure, part-time arrangements, and employee-friendly rostering systems (Robbins & Judge, 2022).

The growing importance of flexible work practices has been attributed to changing workforce expectations and the increasing challenges of balancing work and family life. Fleetwood (2007) argued that flexibility should not be viewed solely as adjustments to working hours, but rather as a broader organizational culture that supports employees' personal and professional needs. Similarly, Anderson et al. (2002) found that flexible work arrangements reduce work–family conflict and improve employees' job-related attitudes and satisfaction. In labor-intensive sectors, where employees frequently face demanding work schedules and long hours, the effective implementation of flexible work policies can reduce stress, improve morale, and increase workplace satisfaction.

In the Bangladeshi RMG sector, flexibility-related issues are particularly relevant, as workers often work overtime and operate under rigid production schedules.

Although the Bangladesh Labour Act (2006, amended 2018) regulates working hours, overtime limits, weekly holidays, and rest intervals, the practical implementation of employee-friendly flexibility measures varies considerably across factories. Consequently, workers' perceptions regarding the implementation of flexible work policies may significantly influence their job satisfaction and workplace behavior.

2.3.2 Welfare Policy Implementation

Welfare policy implementation refers to the practical provision of organizational facilities and services intended to improve employees' physical, psychological, social, and economic well-being. Employee welfare extends beyond monetary compensation and encompasses a wide range of supportive facilities, including medical services, childcare support, insurance benefits, transportation, canteen services, housing assistance, supervisor support, and employee assistance programs (Dessler, 2020).

Employee welfare has long been recognized as a critical component of effective human resource management. According to Srivastava (2004), welfare measures play a significant role in shaping employees' attitudes toward work and enhancing job satisfaction. Similarly, Muruu, Were, and Abok (2016) found that welfare programs contribute positively to employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. In the context of Bangladesh, Nusrat and Solaiman (2016) emphasized that employee welfare is not merely an organizational responsibility but also a crucial factor in promoting workers' well-being, happiness, and human resource development within the garments industry.

The nature and scope of welfare policies differ across organizations and industries. Beloor et al. (2020) observed that welfare facilities may include job security, medical support, insurance coverage, family leave, childcare programs, compensation benefits, and workplace assistance services. These welfare provisions help employees manage personal and family responsibilities while maintaining workplace effectiveness. From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, employees who perceive organizational care and support through welfare initiatives are more likely to reciprocate with positive attitudes, satisfaction, and improved performance.

In Bangladesh, several welfare-related provisions are incorporated within the Bangladesh Labour Act, including health and hygiene facilities, first-aid arrangements, childcare facilities, welfare officers, canteen facilities, and workplace safety requirements. Therefore, welfare policy implementation

represents an important mechanism through which organizations can support employees' Work-life balance and overall well-being.

2.3.3 Leave Provision Policy Implementation

Implementation of leave provision policy refers to the practical application of an organizational policy that allows employees to take authorized breaks from work for personal, family, medical, and social reasons without risking their jobs. To recover from work-related stress and fulfill family responsibilities, leave provisions are among the most important components of the organization's Work-life balance policy. (Begall et al., 2022; Msuya & Kumar, 2022).

Organizations typically provide several forms of leave, including annual leave, casual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, emergency leave, bereavement leave, and festival holidays. These leave arrangements help reduce work–family conflict by contributing to employees' physical and psychological well-being. Armstrong and Taylor (2023) argue that leave policies are essential HRM tools that support employee well-being, organizational commitment, and long-term productivity.

In Bangladesh, leave entitlements are formally recognized under the Bangladesh Labour Act. This act provides for annual leave, casual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, festival holidays, and weekly holidays. However, the practical implementation of these provisions often differs across organizations and industries. Faroque and Mollah (2018) found that leave-related benefits significantly influence job satisfaction among female garment workers, particularly sick leave and festival leave. Similarly, supportive leave arrangements enable employees to address personal and family needs without experiencing excessive workplace stress. Therefore, proper implementation of leave provisions improves overall workplace satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Considering the demanding nature of work in the ready-made garments industry, effective implementation of leave provisions is particularly important for helping employees maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life. Consequently, the implementation of the leave provision policy is a critical dimension of the Work-Life balance policy in the present study.

2.4 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most studied concepts in organizational behavior and human resource management because of its impact on employee attitudes and

workplace results. According to Robbins (2003), job satisfaction reflects workers' positive emotional responses and attitudes toward their duties and serves as an important outcome of successful work-life balance practices. It shows how fulfilled, valued, and happy employees feel across different parts of their work.
In organizational behavior research, job satisfaction is often seen as an important mechanism by which organizational practices influence employee attitudes and performance outcomes (Organ & Hammer, 1991; Robbins & Judge, 2022). Employees who have good working conditions and supportive policies are more likely to develop positive job attitudes, which then lead to greater commitment, motivation, and performance.

Job satisfaction is considered a crucial factor in how organizational policies impact employee performance. Numerous studies indicate that satisfied employees tend to be more motivated, productive, and committed to organizational objectives. Elements such as job security, work environment, relationships with supervisors, opportunities for career advancement, chances for promotion, team dynamics, and organizational support significantly affect employee satisfaction (Singh & Jain, 2013). Content employees are generally more inclined to exert additional effort and achieve improved performance outcomes.

2.5 Workers' Performance

Employee performance refers to employees' effectiveness in completing organizational tasks and responsibilities efficiently and productively. In organizational behavior and human resource management literature, employee performance is often assessed using various behavioral and operational criteria, such as employees' ability to perform assigned duties effectively, achieve organizational goals, prioritize tasks correctly, accept additional responsibilities, stay updated on relevant knowledge, and demonstrate achievement-focused behavior (Mukururi & Ngari, 2014; Gazi et al., 2022). In labor-intensive sectors such as the ready-made garments (RMG) industry, employee performance is especially critical because workers' productivity and efficiency directly affect organizational output, product quality, operational effectiveness, and competitiveness.

2.6 Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded within the fields of Organizational Behavior and Human Relations in the Behavioral School of Management. Therefore, the theoretical foundation for explaining the relationships among work-life balance (WLB) policy, job satisfaction, and workers' performance is examined using two major theories:

Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) suggests that employees tend to reciprocate positive attitudes and behaviors with the favorable treatment they receive from their organizations. When organizations implement employee-friendly policies with organizational care and support, employees are perceived as more loyal, satisfied, committed, and perform better. Accordingly, effective implementation of work-life balance policy leads to a desirable workplace outcome by ensuring a positive exchange relationship between employers and employees.

In addition, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Herzberg, 1959) supports this perspective by suggesting that hygiene factors, such as certain workplace conditions, policies, and organizational practices, serve to prevent employee dissatisfaction, while motivation factors, such as recognition, achievement, and personal growth, contribute to higher levels of satisfaction. As a result, employees experience lower dissatisfaction and higher job satisfaction when organizations effectively implement Work-life balance policies to create supportive work environments. Consequently, satisfied employees are more likely to demonstrate greater commitment and improved workplace performance.

3.0 Hypotheses Development

The concept of work-life balance has evolved considerably over the past few decades. During the 1980s and early 1990s, many organizations operated with rigid work structures that offered limited support for workers' personal and family responsibilities. However, organizational priorities gradually shifted toward developing employee-friendly policies and practices to help workers balance their professional and family responsibilities (Eikhof et al., 2007). Consequently, implementing work-life balance policies has emerged as a key component of strategic human resource management and long-term organizational sustainability.

3.1 Effects of Work-life Balance Policies on Workers' Performance

Previous research has consistently demonstrated the importance of work-life balance policy in shaping employee performance and organizational outcomes. McCarthy, Darcy, and Grady (2010) observed that poorly designed human resource policies may have a more adverse effect on employees than the absence of policies.

Empirical evidence from different sectors and countries also supports these relationships. In Malaysia, Dousin, Collins, and Kler (2019) found that effective

work-life balance practices improve job satisfaction, thereby enhancing employee performance and productivity in the healthcare sector. Bedeian et al. (1988), Frone et al. (1992), Lambert (2000), Darcy and McCarthy (2007), Grady and McCarthy (2008), and McCarthy and Cleveland (2005) found that supportive work-life balance practices influence the reduction of employee stress and improvement of organizational commitment, productivity, and workplace attitudes. At the organizational level, Bloom et al. (2006) examined the effects of work-life balance practices on organizational performance and reported a positive impact on workers' productivity and efficiency.

Several empirical studies indicate that work-life balance is positively associated with both individual and organizational performance (Harrington & Ladge, 2009; Parkes & Langford, 2008). The implementation of a work-life balance policy has been found to reduce turnover intentions, improve job satisfaction, and enhance employee performance (Cegarra-Leiva et al., 2012; Nelson et al., 1990; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Similarly, Kim (2014) reported that employees who successfully maintain harmony between their professional and personal lives tend to perform better than those who do not.

In Bangladesh. Yang and Islam (2020) reported that family-supportive organizational policies play an important role in promoting work-life balance among public sector employees. Likewise, Uddin et al. (2020) revealed that workplace support designed by supervisors and well- designed work-life balance policies significantly contribute to improved work-life balance among female bankers in Bangladesh. Hossain and Shiraz (2018) found that garment workers, particularly female employees, experience greater work-life balance and job satisfaction when they receive respect, fair performance evaluations, opportunities for participation, and job security. Their study further suggested that supportive practices, such as grievance-handling mechanisms, flexible work schedules, adequate rest periods, and career development opportunities, positively contribute to both job satisfaction and employee performance.

Building on existing literature and theoretical foundations, this study defines work-life balance policy implementation in terms of three key dimensions: flexible work policy, welfare policy, and leave provision. These dimensions are commonly used in previous research on work-life balance practices and employee outcomes (Mukururi & Ngari, 2014; Tasnim et al., 2017; Uddin et al., 2020; Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011). Based on these theoretical and empirical foundations, the following hypotheses are developed.

3.1.1 Effects of Flexible Work Policy Implementation

on Workers' Performance

Implementing a flexible work policy is a key part of work-life balance because it helps employees manage their job duties while meeting personal and family needs. Flexible work options can include adjustable schedules, shift options, part-time roles, less overtime, and employee-friendly work setups. These practices aim to lower work stress and help employees balance work and personal responsibilities without reducing organizational productivity (Fleetwood, 2007; Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011; Mukururi & Ngari, 2014).

From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, employees who perceive organizational support through flexible work arrangements are more likely to reciprocate with positive workplace attitudes and improved performance. Similarly, employee-friendly workplace policies can boost workers' psychological well-being, motivation, and commitment, thereby contributing to higher workplace effectiveness (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Krishnan, Loon, & Tan, 2018).

Previous empirical studies have shown the link between flexible work arrangements and employee performance. Austin, Iheriohanma, and Nwokorie (2020) reported that employee-focused organizational policies have a stronger positive effect on workers' performance than employer-focused policies. Their findings indicate that workplace practices that address employees' personal and family needs lead to improved performance outcomes. Zheng et al. (2023) reported that flexible scheduling practices and supervisor empathy significantly improve employee satisfaction and task performance. Several studies, including those by Brannen and Lewis (2000), Coughlan (2000), and Den Dulk (2001), emphasized employees' preferences for flexible work conditions.

However, the link between flexibility and performance isn't always clear across different situations. Kattenbach, Demerouti, and Nachreiner (2010), in a study conducted in Germany, examined the relationship between flexible work hours and job performance using both self- and colleague ratings. Their results showed that time-related factors, such as working hours, shift schedules, overtime, and time stress, didn't significantly affect job performance. These results imply that flexibility alone may not lead to better performance unless employees feel organizational support and have positive workplace conditions.

In contrast, Kipkoech (2018), in a study of Kenya's hospital industry, found that temporary contracts, work shifts, and part-time working arrangements have significant positive effects on employee performance, although flextime showed a positive but statistically insignificant effect. These findings indicate that certain

forms of workplace flexibility may contribute more strongly to employee performance than others.

Evidence from Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry also highlights the importance of workplace flexibility and employee-friendly working conditions. Ali and Islam (2017) reported that female garment workers often perform their duties in suppressive and unfavorable work environments characterized by physical and psychological pressure. Such conditions negatively affect workers' well-being and workplace performance. Therefore, supportive and flexible workplace practices may play an important role in improving employees' work experiences and performance outcomes in the RMG sector.

Overall, the existing research indicates that effectively implementing flexible work policies can help employees better manage work and personal responsibilities, reduce workplace stress, and improve organizational performance. Accordingly, the present study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Implementation of the flexible work policy positively influences workers' performance.

3.1.2 Effects of Welfare Policy Implementation on Workers' Performance

Implementing welfare policies is a key part of work-life balance because it aims to enhance employees' physical, psychological, social, and economic well-being. Organizations offer these policies through various facilities and support mechanisms, such as medical services, housing assistance, transportation options, insurance coverage, childcare support, and employee assistance programs. These efforts are designed to foster a supportive work environment that helps employees perform their duties effectively while maintaining their overall well-being (Srivastava, 2004; Nusrat & Solaiman, 2016; Beloor et al., 2020).

From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, employees who perceive organizational care and support through welfare initiatives are more likely to reciprocate with positive workplace attitudes and better performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Similarly, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory indicates that welfare-related organizational practices serve as hygiene factors that reduce dissatisfaction and foster favorable working conditions (Herzberg, 1959). As a result, employees who receive sufficient welfare support tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation, commitment, and workplace productivity (Srivastava, 2004; Nusrat & Solaiman, 2016).

In today's competitive and technology-driven work environment, maintaining Work-life balance has become increasingly difficult. Therefore, implementing welfare policies is an important organizational strategy for supporting employees, retaining valuable workers, and improving organizational effectiveness. Previous empirical studies have consistently shown a positive link between employee welfare programs and job performance. Keitany (2014), in a study conducted at a pipeline company in Kenya, found that employee welfare initiatives significantly impact workers' performance. Similarly, Oludayo (2015) reported that welfare-related efforts such as medical facilities, housing support, and employee incentives contribute to increased job efficiency and workplace effectiveness.

Patro (2015) further described employee welfare as a multidimensional concept that includes workers' physical, mental, emotional, and moral well-being. According to this view, welfare support directly affects employees' ability to perform effectively by enhancing their overall quality of work life and decreasing workplace-related stress.

Evidence from Bangladesh also highlights the importance of welfare-related practices in improving employee outcomes. Previous studies conducted in the ready-made garments industry suggest that employee welfare facilities positively impact workers' productivity, workplace satisfaction, and organizational sustainability (Islam et al., 2018; Alam et al., 2020). Given the labor-intensive nature of the RMG sector, welfare support may play a particularly crucial role in boosting employees' performance and long-term organizational effectiveness.
Overall, the existing literature indicates that successfully implementing welfare policies fosters a supportive workplace environment that enhances employees' well-being and boosts their performance. Therefore, the present study proposes the following hypothesis:
H2: Implementation of welfare policy positively influences workers' performance.

3.1.3 Effects of Leave Provision Implementation on Workers' Performance

Implementing leave provisions is essential for work-life balance policies because it allows employees to manage personal, family, and health responsibilities while remaining dedicated to their jobs. These provisions typically include annual leave, sick leave, maternity, paternity, bereavement, emergency, and vacation leave. Such policies provide employees with opportunities to rest, recover, and spend time with their families, which enhances their physical and mental well-being (Faroque & Mollah, 2018).

At the international level, employee leave entitlements are recognized under the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132), which recommends that workers should be entitled to paid annual leave to promote their well-being and productivity. Similarly, the Bangladesh Labour Act (2006) provides workers with various forms of leave, including annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, festival holidays, and other leave-related benefits. These provisions are intended to protect employees' welfare and support a healthy balance between work and personal life.

From a theoretical perspective, implementing leave policies can enhance employee performance by reducing work-related stress, preventing burnout, and improving employees' physical and mental health. Employees who can take leave when needed are more likely to return to work refreshed, motivated, and committed to their organizational roles (Begall et al., 2022; Msuya & Kumar, 2022; Akom et al., 2021).

Previous empirical studies have consistently shown a positive link between leave policies and employee performance. Begall et al. (2020) found that family-supportive leave arrangements help employees balance work and family responsibilities, encourage greater effort at work, and increase employees' willingness to take on additional responsibilities. Similarly, Akom et al. (2021), in a study conducted in Ghana's banking sector, reported that leave provisions positively influence employees' job performance. Msuya and Kumar (2022) further argued that emergency leave, parental leave, bereavement leave, and sick leave help improve employees' physical and mental well-being by reducing family-related stress and strengthening commitment to the workplace.

Evidence from Bangladesh also underscores the importance of leave-related benefits in enhancing employee outcomes. Faroque and Mollah (2018), in a study of married female workers in the ready-made garments industry, found that sick leave, festival holidays, and casual leave were among the most influential factors affecting employees' job satisfaction. Since job satisfaction and employee performance are closely linked, these findings suggest that effectively implementing leave provisions may also boost workplace performance.

Overall, the literature suggests that implementing leave policies supports employees' well-being, reduces workplace stress, and boosts organizational commitment, all of which may positively impact workers' performance. Therefore, the present study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Implementation of leave provisions positively influences workers' performance.

3.2 Effects of Flexible Work Policies Implementation on Job Satisfaction

Implementing flexible work policies has become a key topic in human resource management because it helps employees balance their work responsibilities with personal and family life. Flexible work policies typically include adaptable working hours, compressed schedules, shift flexibility, part-time options, and supportive scheduling practices (Albion, 2004). These policies aim to reduce work-related stress and help employees maintain a healthier balance between work and non-work duties.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Exchange Theory suggests that when organizations provide supportive, employee-friendly workplace practices, employees perceive organizational support and respond with positive attitudes and job satisfaction (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Similarly, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory explains that supportive organizational policies and favorable working conditions reduce dissatisfaction and improve employees' psychological well-being.

Previous empirical studies have consistently shown a positive link between flexible working arrangements and job satisfaction. Fleetwood (2007) argued that flexible work practices foster a friendly organizational culture rather than just regulate working hours. Anderson et al. (2002) and Galinsky et al. (1996) found that flexible workplace practices reduce work-family conflict and enhance job-related outcomes. Davidescu et al. (2020) reported that work flexibility notably boosts employees' job satisfaction among Romanian employees. Similarly, Clutterbuck (2003) suggested that employee-friendly flexible work practices lead to higher employee satisfaction and organizational profitability. Jang, Park, and Zippay (2011) further revealed that flexible work conditions and Work-life balance practices positively impact employees' job satisfaction and mental well-being.

In Bangladesh's RMG sector, employees often face heavy workloads, strict work hours, pressure to work overtime, and challenges in balancing work and family life. Therefore, effectively applying flexible work policies could improve workers' job satisfaction and the workplace environment. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Flexible work policies positively influence job satisfaction.

3.3 Effects of Welfare Policies Implementation on Job

Satisfaction

Welfare policy implementation is a key topic in human resource management and industrial psychology because employee welfare facilities greatly impact workers' well-being, motivation, and job satisfaction. Welfare policies typically include medical services, childcare assistance, compensation, insurance benefits, family support, overtime options, and employee assistance programs. These policies aim to enhance employees' physical and mental health, which ultimately boosts organizational productivity and sustainability.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Exchange Theory indicates that employees reciprocate organizational care and support with positive attitudes and constructive workplace behavior (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Likewise, Herzberg's Motivation–Hygiene Theory states that organizational welfare facilities and supportive working conditions act as hygiene factors that decrease dissatisfaction and enhance employees' job satisfaction.

Previous empirical studies have consistently identified welfare policy implementation as a key factor influencing job satisfaction and organizational growth. Srivastava (2004) and Muruu, Were, and Abok (2016) emphasized that employee welfare programs positively affect employees' attitudes and workplace satisfaction. In developing countries like Bangladesh, welfare policies are seen as essential for maintaining the sustainability of the garment industry. Nusrat and Solaiman (2016) pointed out that employee welfare contributes to workers' well-being, happiness, satisfaction, and human resource development, all of which are vital for organizational sustainability and industrial growth.

The components of welfare policies vary based on organizational structure, economic conditions, culture, and industry type. Beloor et al. (2020) reported that welfare facilities differ across sectors and may include job security, medical and insurance benefits, annual leave, family leave, childcare support, compensation, and sick leave benefits. Sirgy et al. (2001) further argued that employees view organizational policies that support their work-life responsibilities positively, thereby enhancing their job satisfaction.

In Bangladesh's RMG sector, workers often face financial strain, workplace stress, insufficient welfare support, and limited employee facilities. Therefore, effectively implementing welfare policies could boost workers' job satisfaction and overall workplace well-being. Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H5: Welfare policies positively influence job satisfaction.

3.4 Effects of Leave Provisions Implementation on Job Satisfaction

Implementing leave policies is vital for work-life balance initiatives because it helps employees handle personal, family, and health responsibilities alongside their job duties. In most industries, employees are eligible for various types of leave under labor laws and organizational policies. These options usually include annual leave, casual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, emergency leave, and holiday festivals. Properly enforcing leave policies allows employees to recover from work-related stress, maintain mental health, and achieve a healthier work-life balance (Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2006; Begall et al., 2022; Msuya & Kumar, 2022)

Under the Bangladesh Labour Act, employees are entitled to various types of leave, including earned leave, casual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, and other workplace benefits. From a theoretical standpoint, supportive leave policies decrease employees' work-family conflict and lead to higher levels of satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Previous studies have shown a strong link between leave facilities and employees' job satisfaction. Alam (1986), in a study among female garment workers in Bangladesh, found that employees' overall job satisfaction related to workplace benefits and employment conditions, although many workers still felt unhappy with their jobs. Faroque and Mollah (2018) further explored the relationship between leave provisions and job satisfaction among married female workers in Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry. Their results indicated that sick leave and festival leave had powerful positive effects on job satisfaction, while casual leave had a moderate effect, and weekly holidays did not have a significant impact.

Although several studies have examined work-life balance challenges and job satisfaction in Bangladesh's garments industry, most previous research primarily focused on female workers and looked at isolated aspects of workplace conditions rather than the overall implementation of leave policies within a comprehensive work-life balance framework (Ali & Islam, 2017; Hossain & Shiraz, 2018). In labor-intensive industries such as the RMG sector, employees frequently face heavy workloads, long hours, and difficulties balancing family responsibilities. Therefore, effectively implementing leave policies can positively impact workers' job satisfaction and the overall workplace environment.
Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Leave Provisions positively influence job satisfaction.

3.5 Effects of Job Satisfaction on Workers' Performance

Identifying the factors that influence employee performance remains a vital concern for both researchers and practitioners. In previous studies, the relationship between these two variables has also been emphasized. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) argued that supportive organizational policies foster trust-based relationships between employers and employees, which are subsequently rewarded through higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Krishnan, Loon, and Tan (2018) reported that employees who receive organizational support for their work-life balance needs feel an obligation to behave positively and perform well. Based on these theoretical arguments, this study proposes that the effective implementation of work-life balance policies contributes to job satisfaction, thereby enhancing workers' performance.

Similarly, the well-known idea in organizational psychology that "a satisfied worker is a productive worker" emphasizes the expected link between employee satisfaction and workplace performance (Joo & Lee, 2017). From a theoretical point of view, Herzberg's Motivation–Hygiene Theory suggests that employees who experience good workplace conditions and higher satisfaction levels are more likely to show greater motivation and better performance. Social Exchange Theory also explains that employees who see positive treatment from their organization tend to reciprocate with increased effort and productive behavior.

Previous empirical studies consistently support the positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Perera et al. (2014), in a study of factory employees in Sri Lanka's apparel sector, reported a significant positive effect of job satisfaction on job performance. Similar findings were reported by Kumari and Raghuramapatruni (2024), who examined employees from banking, ceramics, milk powder, insurance, and newspaper industries. Their study found that professional and managerial employees generally demonstrated higher levels of both job satisfaction and performance, whereas employees with lower satisfaction levels exhibited comparatively lower performance.

Evidence from Bangladesh also supports this relationship. Alam and Kamal (2006) investigated overall job satisfaction among female garment workers and emphasized the importance of workplace conditions in shaping employee attitudes. Syed and Mahmud (2022) found that supportive supervision, a good working environment, hygienic canteen facilities, medical services, salary structure, timely

payments, and increment policies significantly influence job satisfaction among garment workers in Bangladesh. Similarly, Gazi et al. (2022) reported a strong relationship between employee job satisfaction and job performance in Bangladesh's sugar industry and concluded that job-related factors have a greater impact on performance than employees' personal characteristics. Furthermore, Alam et al. (2020) found that both job satisfaction and job motivation significantly contribute to the productivity of female workers in the Bangladeshi RMG sector.

Overall, the existing research indicates that satisfied employees tend to show higher commitment, motivation, efficiency, and workplace performance. In labor-intensive industries like the RMG sector, where organizational productivity relies heavily on employees' effort and engagement, job satisfaction may be vital to improving workers' performance. Therefore, the current study presents the following hypothesis:

H7: Job Satisfaction will positively impact Workers' Performance.

3.6 Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

In the context of implementing work-life balance policies, job satisfaction is especially important because employee-friendly workplace practices can enhance employees' overall work experiences and psychological well-being. When employees effectively manage their professional and family responsibilities, they tend to experience less stress and greater satisfaction with their jobs (Singh & Jain, 2013; Vrinda and Jacob, 2015). As a result, job satisfaction may serve as an intermediary mechanism through which the implementation of work-life balance policies influences employee performance. Subsequent research continues to support these findings.

Previous international studies also confirmed that Work-life balance practices positively influence job satisfaction and employee performance (Dousin, Collins, & Kler, 2019; Udin, 2023; Gunawan, Sudarmiatin, & Churiyah, 2024). Similarly, Evidence from international studies further supports the mediating role of job satisfaction. Perera et al. (2023) suggest that job satisfaction indirectly shapes the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention, emphasizing the interconnected nature of organizational outcomes.

Udin (2023), in a study conducted in Indonesia's plywood manufacturing industry, examined the relationship between Work-life balance and employee performance, with affective commitment and job satisfaction mediating the relationship. The findings revealed that Work-life balance significantly enhances job satisfaction,

which in turn improves employee performance. Similarly, Gunawan, Sudarmiatin, and Churiyah (2024), in a study of Indonesia's coal mining industry, found that Work-life balance positively influences job satisfaction, and that job satisfaction, in turn, positively affects employee performance. Their study also demonstrated that Work-life balance has a significant indirect effect on employee performance through job satisfaction as a mediating variable.

Grounded in Social Exchange Theory and Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, previous studies consistently indicate that organizations that offer flexible, employee-supportive workplace policies achieve the highest levels of employee satisfaction, commitment, retention, and productivity (Pattanayak, 2024).

Several studies conducted in Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry have emphasized the importance of Work-life balance and employee satisfaction. Previous researchers have examined various aspects of Work-life balance among garment workers, especially female employees, and reported that supportive workplace practices enhance well-being and workplace outcomes (Makhdum, Hossain, & Chowdhury, 2024; Ara, 2021; Asadullah & Talukder, 2019; Hossain & Shiraz, 2018). Islam et al. (2017) argued that female workers are often vulnerable to workplace exploitation due to gender-based inequalities and submissive working conditions. However, Asadullah and Talukder (2019) found that female workers experience higher life satisfaction and lower levels of depression when organizations provide supportive supervisors, childcare facilities, and a Work-life balance-focused management approach. These results suggest that supportive workplace policies boost employee satisfaction and improve overall workplace experiences.

Previous studies also show a positive link between job satisfaction and employee performance. Haque and Islam (2015) and Amin and Rubel (2020) found that satisfied employees tend to be more productive and perform better at work.
Additionally, mediation studies in Bangladesh have emphasized the role of job satisfaction as a key factor linking organizational practices to employee outcomes across different sectors. For instance, Ullah et al. (2024) used job satisfaction as a mediator to explain the indirect relationship between compensation, organizational commitment, and work output.

Collectively, the existing literature indicates that implementing Work-life balance policies may not directly enhance employee performance unless employees view these practices positively and experience job satisfaction. Therefore, job satisfaction is likely to serve as a key mediating mechanism through which the implementation of flexible work policies, welfare policies, and leave provisions

impacts workers' performance. Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H8: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between the implementation of flexible work policies and workers' performance.

H9: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between the implementation of welfare policies and workers' performance.

H10: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between the implementation of leave provisions and workers' performance.

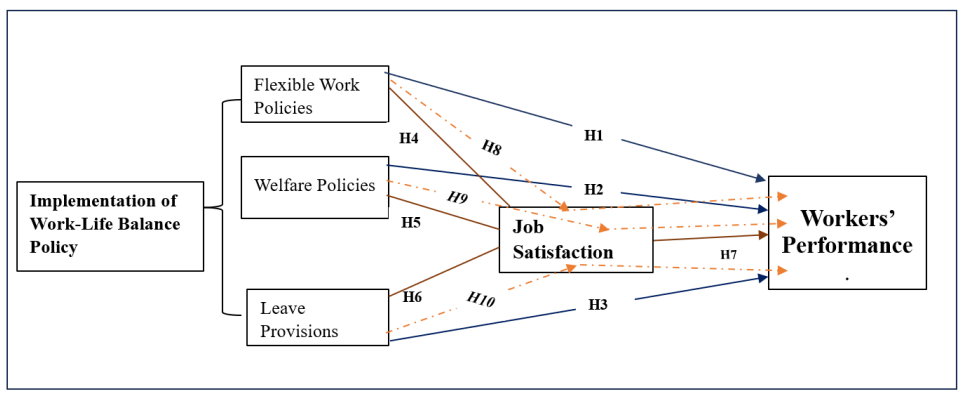


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The target population for this study included workers employed in ready-made garments (RMG) factories in Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to assess respondents' perceptions of work-life balance policy implementation, job satisfaction, and workers' performance. A non-probability sampling method was used for this study. First, convenience sampling was applied to identify and reach out to accessible respondents working in various garment factories. This approach allowed access to workers from different factories and occupational backgrounds within the RMG sector. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed among garment workers. After screening for incomplete, missing, and inconsistent responses, 218 questionnaires were retained for final analysis, yielding a response rate of 87.2 percent. The final sample size was deemed sufficient for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis, as indicated by statistical power analysis using G*Power software (Faul et al., 2007). Similar sample sizes have also been used in previous studies examining Work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee performance (Gunawan, Sudarmiatin, & Churiyah, 2024; Ara, 2021).

All study variables were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The Likert scale was chosen because it is commonly used in behavioral and social science research to reliably and systematically measure respondents' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions.

Table 1: Profile of the Surveyed Individuals

Age	Less than 21	21–35	35–50	50–65
Percentage (%)	16.8	45.8	29.9	7.5

Gender	Male	Female
Percentage (%)	32.7	67.3

Marital Status	Married	Unmarried	Divorced	Widow
Percentage (%)	71.0	14.0	10.3	4.7

Education	Less than SSC	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Bachelor	Masters
Percentage (%)	55.1	30.8	8.4	3.7	1.9

Current Job Position	Production Level	Low-Mid Level	Manager Level	Top-Level Manager
Percentage (%)	76.6	14.0	7.5	1.9

Work Experience	Less than 3 years	3–7 years	7–11 years	11–15 years	15 years and above
Percentage (%)	28.0	43.9	13.1	3.7	11.3

Source: Authors' Calculation.

4.2 Measures:

The study assessed five constructs: Flexible Work Policy Implementation, Welfare Policy Implementation, Leave Provision Implementation, Job Satisfaction, and Workers' Performance. Measurement items were adapted from previously validated scales used in research on Work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee performance (Mukururi & Ngari, 2014; Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011; Tasnim et al., 2017; Uddin et al., 2020). All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

The implementation of the Flexible Work Policy was evaluated using items related to workplace flexibility, work schedules, and work arrangement practices. Welfare Policy Implementation was assessed using items that reflect employee welfare facilities and organizational support mechanisms. Leave Provision Implementation was measured by employees' perceptions of the availability and use of leave facilities. Job Satisfaction was gauged by employees' overall contentment with their jobs and workplace experiences. Workers' Performance was evaluated using items related to task completion, efficiency, responsibility, and achievement-driven behavior.

Table 2. Measurement items

Constructs		Items	Sources
Flexible Work Policies (FP)	FP1	Conflicts in scheduling between family events and work.	(Mukururi & Ngari, 2014)
	FP2	Labor intensity (24 /7 a week).	
	FP3	Daily and weekly working hours.	
	FP5	Excessive demands of the clients.	

Welfare Policies	WP1	Medical bills for my children/ family members	(Oyewobi, Oke, Adeneye, Jimoh, & Windapo, 2020)
	WP2	Day care facility	
	WP3	Supervisor's support for personal or family issues that affect work.	
	WP7	Overtime duty bill.	
Leave Provisions	LP2	Pregnancy leaves	(Oyewobi, Oke, Adeneye, Jimoh, & Windapo, 2020)
	LP3	Medical leave	
	LP4	Leave from duties when not feeling well	
	LP5	Emergency leave to take care of family emergencies	
Workers' Job Satisfaction	WJS1	Tasks are assigned to help me grow.	(Mukururi & Ngari, 2014)
	WJS2	Opportunity to do my best every day	
	WJS3	Supervisor encourages workers' development	
	WJS6	Enjoyment of serving clients	
	WJS7	Feeling proud of the employer's brand	
	WJS10	Satisfaction with working for the current Employer	
Workers' Performance	P2	Mind setup to achieve success	(Mukururi & Ngari, 2014)
	P3	Ability to set priorities	
	P4	Ability to carry out work efficiently	
	P8	Getting facilities to job-related knowledge up-to-date	
	P11	Having extra responsibilities	

4.3 Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with Smart PLS 4.0 software. PLS-SEM is a variance-based

structural equation modeling method that allows for the simultaneous evaluation of both measurement and structural models (Hair et al., 2020). This method is especially useful for examining complex relationships among latent constructs, testing mediating effects, and predicting key outcome variables.

The analysis was performed in two phases. First, the measurement model was assessed by reviewing indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Second, the structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes, and bootstrapping procedures to test the proposed hypotheses.

5.0 Result and Discussion

5.1 Measurement model assessment

The measurement model was assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) within the PLS-SEM framework. Previous research has indicated that PLS-SEM is effective for both developing and confirming theories (Oyewobi et al., 2020). Consistent with prior studies in similar settings, CFA was employed to evaluate the measurement model's reliability and validity (Islam et al., 2018). Convergent validity was examined through factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As noted by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Hair et al. (2019), factor loadings should ideally exceed 0.60, CR values should be above 0.70, and AVE values should be greater than 0.50.

Table 3. Measurement of construct validity

Constructs	Items	Ladings	CR	AVE
Flexibility Policies (FP)	FP1	0.625		
	FP2	0.940	0.860	0.618
	FP3	0.934		
	FP5	0.570		
Welfare Policies	WP1	0.856		
	WP2	0.752	0.906	0.706
	WP3	0.871		

	WP7	0.876		
Leave Provisions	LP2	0.883		
	LP3	0.861	0.859	0.620
	LP4	0.405		
	LP5	0.891		
Employee Job Satisfaction	WJS1	0.857		
	WJS2	0.862	0.904	0.612
	WJS3	0.787		
	WJS6	0.750		
	WJS7	0.686		
	WJS10	0.740		
Workers' Performance	P2	0.831		
	P3	0.879	0.894	0.628
	P4	0.689		
	P8	0.788		
	P11	0.763		

As shown in Table 3, most factor loadings surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.60. Two items, LP4 (0.405) and FP5 (0.570), had relatively lower loadings; however, the overall construct reliability and validity remained acceptable. All constructs achieved Composite Reliability (CR) values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability. Additionally, all AVE values exceeded 0.50, demonstrating adequate convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, the measurement model showed satisfactory reliability and convergent validity.

Table 4. Discriminant validity analysis (Fornell-Larker)

Constructs	Flexibility Policies	Job Satisfaction	Leave Provisions	Welfare Policies	Workers' Performance

Flexibility Policies	**0.786**				
Job Satisfaction	0.551	**0.782**			
Leave Provisions	0.599	0.463	**0.787**		
Welfare Policies	0.403	0.425	0.336	**0.840**	
Workers' Performance	0.531	0.781	0.452	0.372	**0.792**

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, as shown in Table 4. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct should be higher than its correlations with other constructs. The results show that the square root of AVE for each construct was greater than the inter-construct correlations, confirming the Fornell-Larcker criterion and supporting the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

A relatively high correlation was observed between Job Satisfaction and Workers' Performance. Specifically, the inter-construct correlation between these two was 0.781, while the square root of AVE for Job Satisfaction was 0.782. Although the difference is small, the Fornell–Larcker criterion remains satisfied because the square root of AVE is higher than the correlation. This finding is reasonable, as previous studies have consistently shown a strong positive link between job satisfaction and job performance in organizational and behavioral research (Judge et al., 2001; Riketta, 2008). Therefore, despite the high correlation, the results still indicate discriminant validity among the study constructs.

5.2 The Structural Model:

The diagrammatic analysis of the structural model of hypothesis testing results is illustrated by Figure 2:

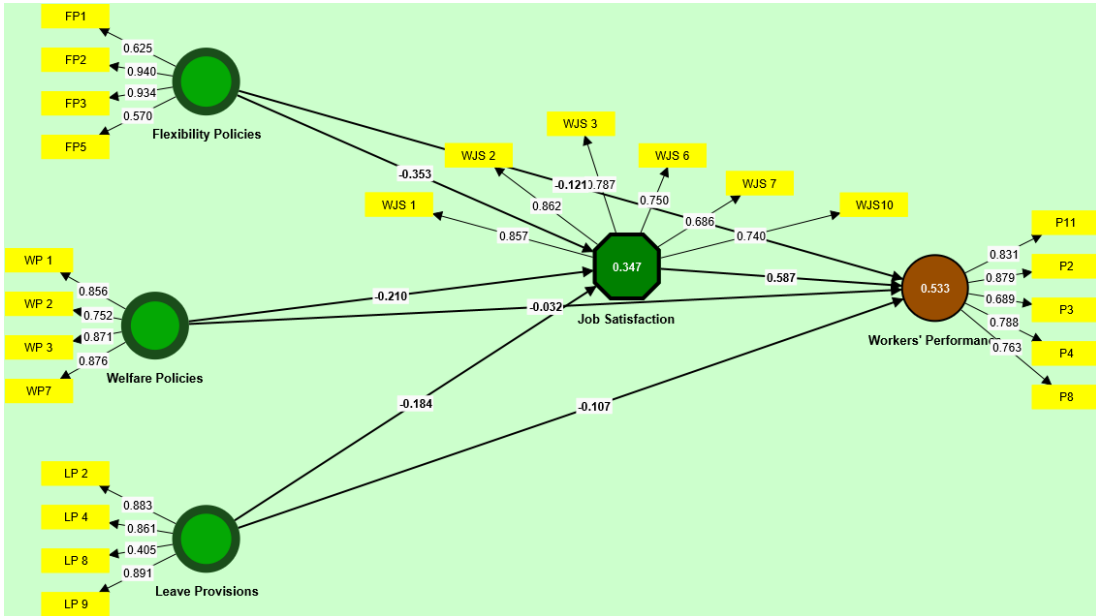


Figure 2. Structural measurement model

The structural model depicts the connections among the dimensions of Work-life balance policy implementation (Flexible Work Policy Implementation, Welfare Policy Implementation, and Leave Provision Implementation), Job Satisfaction, and Workers' Performance. It also explores the mediating role of Job Satisfaction in the link between Work-life balance policy implementation and Workers' Performance.

The R^2 value for Job Satisfaction (JS) is 0.347, indicating that 34.7% of the variation in JS is explained collectively by Flexible Work Policy Implementation (FP), Welfare Policy Implementation (WP), and Leave Provision Implementation (LP). The path coefficients of FP, WP, and LP on JS are -0.353, -0.210, and -0.184, respectively. These relationships imply that workers' perceptions of how existing Work-life balance policies are implemented may affect their job satisfaction. Similar concerns about Work-life balance practices in the Bangladeshi garments industry have been reported by Hossain and Shiraz (2018).

The R^2 value for Workers' Performance (P) is 0.533, indicating that 53.3% of the variance in Workers' Performance is explained by Job Satisfaction (JS), Flexible Work Policy Implementation (FP), Welfare Policy Implementation (WP), and Leave Provision Implementation (LP). The path coefficient of Job Satisfaction on Workers' Performance is 0.587, while the coefficients of FP, WP, and LP on Workers'

Performance are -0.121, 0.032, and 0.107, respectively.

5.3 Summary of Hypotheses

Table 5: Direct Relationships and Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypotheses	Direct Relationships	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
H1:	Flexibility Policies -> Workers' Performance	-0.121	-0.12	0.066	1.837	0.066
H2:	Welfare Policies -> Workers' Performance	-0.032	-0.031	0.043	0.739	0.46
H3:	Leave Provisions -> Workers' Performance	-0.107	-0.111	0.061	1.749	0.08
H4:	Flexibility Policies -> Job Satisfaction	-0.353	-0.355	0.064	5.52	0
H5:	Welfare Policies -> Job Satisfaction	-0.21	-0.21	0.053	4	0
H6:	Leave Provisions -> Job Satisfaction	-0.184	-0.19	0.075	2.462	0.014
H7:	Job Satisfaction -> Workers' Performance	0.587	0.589	0.071	8.25	0

Note: **p<0.01, *p< 0.05.
This table shows the results of hypothesis testing for the direct effects of the dimensions of Work-life balance Policy Implementation, specifically Flexible Work Policy Implementation (FP), Welfare Policy Implementation (WP), and Leave Provision Implementation (LP), on Job Satisfaction (JS) and Workers' Performance (P) in the ready-made garments (RMG) industry of Bangladesh. The corresponding path coefficients (β), t-statistics, p-values, and decisions for each hypothesis are also included.

The structural model shows that Flexible Work Policy Implementation (β = –0.121, p = 0.066), Welfare Policy Implementation (β = –0.032, p = 0.460), and Leave

Provision Implementation (β = –0.107, p = 0.080) do not show significant direct effects on Workers' Performance. These non-significant relationships indicate that implementing work-life balance policies does not directly improve workers' performance. Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 are rejected.

Furthermore, Flexible Work Policy Implementation (β = –0.353, p = 0.000), Welfare Policy Implementation (β = –0.210, p = 0.000), and Leave Provision Implementation (β = –0.184, p = 0.014) have significant negative impacts on Job Satisfaction. These negative coefficients imply that workers may see the current implementation of Work-life balance policies as insufficient compared to their expectations, leading to lower job satisfaction. Supporting this, Syed, Mahmud, and Karim (2024) found that 97% of garment workers said they would be more satisfied if the welfare provisions in the Bangladesh Labour Act were properly enforced in their factories. The results show that the direct links between the dimensions of Work-life balance Policy Implementation and Job Satisfaction are statistically significant but negative. Therefore, H4, H5, and H6 are rejected.

In contrast, the results show that Job Satisfaction has a strong and meaningful positive impact on Workers' Performance (β = 0.587, p = 0.000). This finding confirms Job Satisfaction as a key factor in employee performance and supports its central role within the proposed structural model. Previous studies have consistently shown a positive link between job satisfaction and employee performance across various sectors, including the ready-made garments industry (Singh & Jain, 2013; Vrinda & Jacob, 2015; Khatun & Shamsuzzaman, 2017).

This pattern aligns with previous research in human resource management and organizational behavior, indicating that implementing Work-life balance policies helps create a supportive work environment (Vrinda & Jacob, 2015). This environment influences employee performance indirectly through attitudinal outcomes like job satisfaction, rather than through direct effects alone.

5.4 Explanation of Hypotheses Rejection:

The findings revealed that the implementation of the flexible work policy, welfare policy, and leave provision does not have significant direct effects on Workers' performance. Consequently H1,H2 and H3 rejected.

One possible explanation is that workers' performance in the RMG sector is largely determined by production targets, close supervision, attendance requirements, and output-based performance expectations rather than by the existence of work-life balance policies alone. In many garment factories, workers continue to work under

high production pressure and strict deadlines. Therefore, even when flexible work arrangements, welfare facilities, or leave provisions are available, they may not immediately translate into higher performance levels.

Another explanation relates to the implementation gap of work-life balance policy implementation and job satisfaction, suggesting that workers may perceive existing policies as inadequate or inconsistently implemented. Previous studies in Bangladesh have reported that garment workers frequently experience dissatisfaction with welfare facilities, workplace support, and working conditions despite the existence of labor regulations and organizational policies (Hossain & Shiraz, 2018; Syed, Mahmud, & Karim, 2024). As a result, workers may not experience sufficient benefits from these policies to directly improve their performance.

Table 6: Indirect Relationships and Mediation Effects

Hypotheses	**Indirect Relationships**	**Original sample (O)**	**Sample mean (M)**	**Standard deviation (STDEV)**	**T statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	**P values**	**Decision**	**Mediation effects**
H8:	Flexibility Policies -> Job Satisfaction -> Workers' Performance	-0.208	-0.209	0.047	4.371	0	Mediation exists	**Full Mediation**
H9:	Leave Provisions -> Job Satisfaction -> Workers' Performance	-0.108	-0.111	0.045	2.407	0.016	Mediation exists	**Full Mediation**
H10:	Welfare Policies -> Job Satisfaction -> Workers' Performance	-0.123	-0.124	0.036	3.419	0.001	Mediation exists	**Full Mediation**

Note: **p<0.01, *p< 0.05.

The mediation analysis shows a clear pattern in the relationship between Work-life balance Policy Implementation and Workers' Performance. The results indicate that all three aspects of Work-life balance Policy Implementation, Flexible Work

Policy Implementation, Welfare Policy Implementation, and Leave Provision Implementation affect Workers' Performance mainly through Job Satisfaction, rather than through direct effects alone.

The indirect effect of Flexible Work Policy Implementation on Workers' Performance through Job Satisfaction is statistically significant ($\beta = –0.208$, $p = 0.000$). This result indicates that employees' dissatisfaction with the current implementation of flexibility policies decreases their Job Satisfaction, which in turn lowers their performance. Since the direct effect of Flexible Work Policy Implementation on Workers' Performance is not significant, Job Satisfaction fully mediates this relationship.

Similarly, Leave Provision Implementation has a significant indirect impact on Workers' Performance through Job Satisfaction ($\beta = –0.108$, $p = 0.016$). The results suggest that employees' perceptions of the adequacy of leave provisions affect their Job Satisfaction, which, in turn, influences their performance. Since the direct effect of Leave Provision Implementation on Workers' Performance is not significant, the mediating role of Job Satisfaction can be considered a full mediation.

Similarly, Welfare Policy Implementation influences Workers' Performance indirectly through Job Satisfaction. The indirect effect is statistically significant ($\beta = –0.123$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that when welfare provisions do not meet employees' expectations, Job Satisfaction decreases, thereby lowering performance. Because the direct link between Welfare Policy Implementation and Workers' Performance is not significant, Job Satisfaction fully mediates this relationship. So, H8, H9 and H10 are accepted.

Overall, the findings indicate that the dimensions of Work-life balance Policy Implementation do not directly improve Workers' Performance; instead, their effects are channeled through Job Satisfaction. Similar results have been documented in prior research, in which Job Satisfaction was shown to mediate the relationship between Work-life balance and employee performance (Gunawan, Sudarmiatin, & Churiyah, 2024).

6. Conclusion

This study examined the impact of Work-life balance Policy Implementation on Workers' Performance, with Job Satisfaction serving as a mediating factor, in Bangladesh's ready-made garments (RMG) industry. Specifically, it explored three aspects of the policy: Flexible Work Policy Implementation, Welfare Policy

Implementation, and Leave Provision Implementation. Unlike many previous studies that mainly focused on female workers, this research included responses from both male and female garment workers to offer a broader perspective of workplace experiences in the Bangladeshi RMG sector.

The findings showed that Flexible Work Policy Implementation, Welfare Policy Implementation, and Leave Provision Implementation are significantly related to Job Satisfaction; however, these relationships were negative, suggesting that workers may see current Work-life balance practices as inadequate compared to their expectations. In contrast, Job Satisfaction had a strong and significant positive effect on Workers' Performance. Additionally, the direct effects of Flexible Work Policy Implementation, Welfare Policy Implementation, and Leave Provision Implementation on Workers' Performance were not significant. The mediation analysis confirmed that Job Satisfaction fully mediates the relationships between the three aspects of Work-life balance, Policy Implementation, and Workers' Performance. Therefore, the results suggest that the implementation of work-life balance policies impacts workers' performance mainly through Job Satisfaction rather than through direct effects.

The findings add to the existing literature by expanding the understanding of Work-life balance Policy Implementation in labor-intensive industries. The study shows that simply having work-life balance policies may not be enough to improve employee performance unless workers see those policies as effective and supportive. The results also support the key ideas of Social Exchange Theory and Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, indicating that supportive workplace practices influence employee attitudes, which then impact workplace outcomes.
The study provides several managerial implications for factory owners, human resource managers, and policymakers in the RMG sector. First, organizations should focus on effectively implementing work-life balance policies rather than just keeping them as formal practices. Second, management should enhance welfare facilities, employee support systems, and leave benefits to boost workers' satisfaction. Third, organizations should create more employee-friendly and family-supportive workplace practices, including better supervisor support, transparent policy execution, and clearer communication about employee welfare. These efforts may increase workers' job satisfaction and ultimately improve organizational performance.

6.1: Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations. The research was conducted solely among garment workers in Savar, which may limit the extent to

which the findings apply to other industrial areas in Bangladesh. The study used a cross-sectional design and depended on self-reported responses, which could be affected by common-method bias. Additionally, the sample was mostly male respondents, with fewer female workers.

Future research can address these limitations by using larger, more geographically diverse samples from various industrial zones in Bangladesh. Researchers might also explore additional aspects of work-life balance policy implementation, organizational support, leadership practices, and employee well-being. Longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into how work-life balance policies impact employee attitudes and performance over time. Additionally, future studies may compare male and female workers separately to identify potential gender-based differences in perceptions of Work-life balance policy implementation and workplace outcomes.

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