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The Impact of Individual Coping Strategies on Work–Life Balance among Bangladeshi RMG Workers: Examining the Moderating Role of Gender

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Abstract

This study investigates the effects of individual coping strategies on work–life balance (WLB) among ready-made garment (RMG) workers in Bangladesh. Drawing on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the study examines four coping strategies: problem-solving, social support, avoidance, and positive thinking. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from 437 Bangladeshi RMG workers using a structured questionnaire. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) in Smart-PLS 4 was used to analyze the proposed model, while multi-group analysis (MGA) was conducted to assess the moderating role of gender. The findings indicate that problem-solving and social support positively influence work–life balance, whereas avoidance and positive thinking have no

significant effects. The MGA results further show that gender does not significantly moderate the relationships between coping strategies and work–life balance. These findings suggest that active problem-solving and supportive social relationships are more effective than passive or cognitive coping mechanisms in promoting employees' work–life balance. The study extends the application of Conservation of Resources theory to the Bangladeshi RMG industry and provides practical insights for managers and policymakers seeking to enhance employee well-being through effective coping interventions and supportive workplace practices.

Keywords: work–life balance; coping strategies; ready-made garment industry; gender; Bangladesh

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, work–life balance (WLB) has evolved from a personal aspiration into an organizational priority as labor markets have changed rapidly and work–life pressures have increased among dual-earner households and single-parent families [1–3]. Although the concept has existed for many years, balancing professional and personal responsibilities has become increasingly challenging, particularly in the context of working from home. WLB is generally understood as the extent to which individuals perceive harmony among their multiple life roles [4], and it depends on the effective management of inter-role conflict [5]. Employees, organizations, and communities around the world have become well aware of the importance of this construct [6] and have initiated training programs and management practices to facilitate it [7].

The changing dynamics of the workplace have forced many people to give priority to their work commitments over their personal life and community obligations [8]. Organizations function all the time, creating work overload, long working hours, and high involvement in work. These conditions have become growing concerns because they may prevent employees from achieving an appropriate fit within their organizations [9–12]. Such demands frequently create work–family conflict, in which competing work and family roles deplete essential resources, including time, energy, and emotional support [3, 13]. The rapid depletion of these resources can be particularly harmful to employee well-being [14]. A high level of WLB has been associated with important organizational benefits, such as improved employee engagement and reduced turnover [15]. Conversely, poor WLB may reduce job commitment and increase stress [16, 17]. Challenges associated with work–family integration are therefore widely recognized as a major source of occupational stress [2].

Sustainable Development Goal 8 seeks to ensure full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men [21]. A country may be better able to achieve and sustain this goal when its workers attain an appropriate balance between their professional and personal lives, thereby supporting productive and decent employment. The ready-made garment (RMG) sector is an important part of the economy of Bangladesh. As pointed out by Ahmed and Nathan [20], the sector witnessed very fast growth since 2005, with growth rate surpassing 25%. According to the statistics presented by the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association [18], the RMG sector made up 81.49% of the export revenue of Bangladesh in 2024–2025, which is worth USD 48,283.93 million. The RMG sector is presently employing about 4.2 million people, mainly women.

Previous studies concerning RMG workers in Bangladesh have primarily examined employee well-being [22], the relationships among supervisory behavior, compensation and benefits, and work–life balance [23], as well as the determinants of WLB and the factors affecting quality of working life [24]. By contrast, individual initiatives and coping strategies for maintaining WLB have received comparatively limited attention [25, 26]. A recent study by Bari et al. [1] found that Bangladeshi RMG workers often regarded stress as an unavoidable consequence of balancing work and personal life. The authors further suggested that organizational policies and individual strategies could jointly improve WLB within the country's RMG sector.

Accordingly, further research is needed to determine how individual coping strategies influence the WLB of RMG workers in Bangladesh. The limited evidence concerning this relationship represents an important gap in the existing literature.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Conservation of Resources theory. Conservation of Resources (COR) theory is one of the most widely recognized theories of stress. It posits that individuals try to obtain, retain, and defend the resources they view as valuable [27]. Stress can be felt within and among various life roles when those resources are at risk of being depleted or losing them. Inter-role conflict experiences can make individuals struggle with meeting professional and family requirements and hence experience psychological strain. In reaction to actual or perceived resource losses, individuals may distance themselves from their jobs or family responsibilities as a way of protecting what remains of the resources [13]. This study uses the concept of COR theory to provide an explanation on how individual coping mechanisms may assist in resource conservation and WLB.

Work–life balance. WLB does not simply entail an equal share of the time and effort of the individuals between professional and personal realms. Instead, the concept has evolved over theoretical development and empirical findings [29, 30]. Clark [28] defined WLB as a state where there is a lack of role conflict, role-related stress, satisfaction, and good performance in both areas of work and non-work. It is usually defined as a lack of significant conflict between work and family responsibilities [31, 32]. Broadly, WLB entails minimizing the conflicts of role and achieving proper balance of responsibilities related to the profession and personal.

WLB is a dynamic process where individuals effectively set and maintain appropriate boundaries between their professional and personal responsibilities. The process is influenced by many factors such as individual behavior, leadership styles, organizational culture, and psychological states [34]. Accordingly, WLB may be understood as a state in which

individuals experience minimal conflict or tension between their personal and professional responsibilities, enabling them to perform effectively and experience satisfaction in both domains.

Coping strategies. Coping strategies are cognitive and behavioral efforts used to manage demands and reduce stress [37, 38]. They include the methods, techniques, and actions individuals employ to manage demands that are perceived as exceeding their available resources or capacities. Pienaar [35] also described coping as the ability to function effectively in stressful working environments.

The literature identifies a wide range of coping strategies, which are generally classified as adaptive or maladaptive [37, 39]. Adaptive strategies include seeking social and emotional support, addressing problems directly, and attempting to modify or remove the source of stress. By contrast, maladaptive responses may include denial, emotional venting, substance use, and motivational disengagement [39]. Baumstarck et al. [36] identified four coping strategies—problem-solving, avoidance, positive thinking, and social support—that are consistent with established theoretical models of coping.

Individual coping strategies and work–life balance. Most research on coping has examined the mechanisms workers use to manage stressful situations in their professional and personal lives [42]. However, comparatively limited attention has been given to the relationship between individual coping strategies and WLB [26]. Zheng et al. [26] found that although organizational WLB initiatives can support employees' overall well-being, individual coping strategies may play an even more important role. Amazue and Onyishi [40] similarly reported a significant relationship between coping strategies and WLB. Tamzid and Hossen [41] also found that coping strategies were significantly associated with work–life balance.

Drawing on these findings and the four coping dimensions identified by Baumstarck et al. [36], the present study proposes that individual coping strategies significantly influence workers' WLB. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: Problem-solving as an individual coping strategy significantly influences workers' WLB.

H2: Social support as an individual coping strategy significantly influences workers' WLB.

H3: Avoidance as an individual coping strategy significantly influences workers' WLB.

H4: Positive thinking as an individual coping strategy significantly influences workers' WLB.

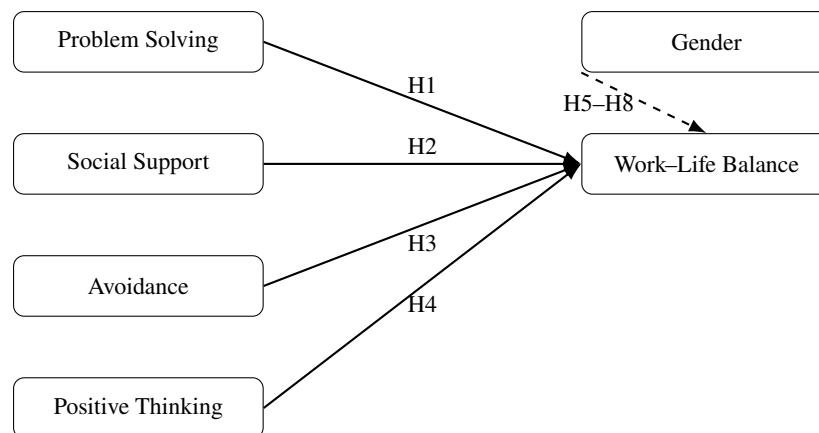


Figure 1. *Conceptual framework/research model*

The moderating effect of gender. Gender may influence the relationships among coping strategies and WLB. Women may select occupations that allow them to maintain a more satisfactory balance between professional and personal responsibilities [43]. Previous evidence also suggests that women and men perceive WLB and workplace practices differently. Female RMG workers tend to derive greater well-being from family-friendly workplace practices and report higher life satisfaction than their male counterparts, despite experiencing less favorable working conditions [44, 45].

These findings suggest that the effectiveness of individual coping strategies in promoting WLB may differ according to gender. They therefore provide a theoretical basis for examining gender as a moderator of the relationships between coping strategies and WLB. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5: Gender moderates the relationship between problem-solving as an individual coping strategy and workers' WLB.

H6: Gender moderates the relationship between social support as an individual coping strategy and workers' WLB.

H7: Gender moderates the relationship between avoidance as an individual coping strategy and workers' WLB.

H8: Gender moderates the relationship between positive thinking as an individual coping strategy and workers' WLB.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research design. This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships between four individual coping strategies—problem-solving, social support, avoidance, and positive thinking—and work–life balance (WLB) among ready-made garment (RMG) workers in Bangladesh. Guided by Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the proposed model assessed the direct effects of these coping strategies on WLB and the moderating role of gender using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

Population and sampling. The target population comprised employees who had worked in the Bangladeshi RMG sector for at least one year. A total of 437 responses were collected between July 2025 and January 2026. According to Hair et al. [46], samples of approximately 100–150 observations may be sufficient to estimate a structural equation model containing five or fewer constructs. They also recommend using a sample size equivalent to approximately five to ten times the number of measurement items. The present study included 32 items across five constructs; therefore, the sample of 437 respondents was considered adequate for PLS-SEM analysis.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	144	32.9%
	Female	293	67.1%
	Total	437	100.0%
Age	Below 30 years	157	36.0%
	30–39 years	218	49.8%
	40–49 years	49	11.1%
	50 years or above	14	3.1%
	Total	437	100.0%
Education level	No formal education	6	1.3%
	Primary education	149	34.1%
	SSC or equivalent	204	46.6%
	HSC or equivalent	79	18.0%
	Total	437	100.0%
Length of service	Below 5 years	258	59.1%
	5–10 years	151	34.6%
	10 years or above	28	6.3%
	Total	437	100.0%
Marital status	Unmarried	102	23.3%
	Married	335	76.7%
	Widowed	0	0.0%
	Divorced	0	0.0%
	Total	437	100.0%

Ethical considerations. Despite the lack of an ethics review committee at the institution where the authors are affiliated, the research followed the ethical guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary and all participants provided written informed consent prior to the survey. Furthermore, respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality of their responses, and were free to leave the study at any point without any negative consequences.

Measurement instruments. All variables were assessed with previously validated multi-item scales, modified for the particular context of the Bangladesh RMG industry. PS coping strategy was assessed with four items, SS coping strategy with eight items, AV coping strategy with ten items, and PT coping strategy with six items. The scales were adopted from Baumstarck et al. [36]. Work–life balance was measured with four items suggested by Brough et al. [29] and represented employees' perceptions of their capacity to reconcile work and personal demands successfully.

All items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Negative wording items were reverse-coded prior to data analysis.

Data analysis. The analysis of data was done using SmartPLS 4 software adopting the two-stage PLS-SEM method advocated by Hair et al. [46]. Stage one entailed an assessment of the measurement model to ascertain the reliability and validity of the constructs. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR), while convergent validity was examined through the average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT).

In the second stage, the structural model was assessed to evaluate the hypothesized relationships. The significance of

the path coefficients was examined using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples and a two-tailed 95% confidence level. Multi-group analysis (MGA) was subsequently performed to determine whether the relationships between the four coping strategies and WLB differed significantly between male and female respondents.

4. RESULTS

4.1. MEASUREMENT MODEL ASSESSMENT

Table 2 presents the results of the reliability and validity assessment for all constructs. Item loadings are above 7.00 but some of them are below 7.00 but very close to it, that's why have been not been excluded [46]. The scores for items WLB 2 have been reversed.

Table 2. Item loadings, reliability and convergent validity

Construct	Items	Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
AV	AV 1	0.707	0.894	0.910	0.904	0.488
	AV 2	0.688				
	AV 3	0.672				
	AV 4	0.731				
	AV 5	0.851				
	AV 6	0.670				
	AV 7	0.804				
	AV 8	0.704				
	AV 9	0.733				
	AV 10	0.745				
PS	PS 1	0.944	0.935	0.940	0.953	0.836
	PS 2	0.913				
	PS 3	0.904				
	PS 4	0.896				
SS	SS 1	0.917	0.959	0.963	0.965	0.776
	SS 2	0.855				
	SS 3	0.872				
	SS 4	0.864				
	SS 5	0.917				
	SS 6	0.872				
	SS 7	0.866				
	SS 8	0.881				
PT	PT 1	0.680	0.889	0.902	0.915	0.643
	PT 2	0.746				
	PT 3	0.874				
	PT 4	0.844				
	PT 5	0.849				
	PT 6	0.801				
WLB	WLB 1	0.914	0.889	0.890	0.924	0.752
	WLB 2 R	0.876				
	WLB 3	0.807				
	WLB 4	0.868				

Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) values for all constructs were found to exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, thereby demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency [46, 47]. The convergent validity was measured by using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). According to results, it is observed that all constructs have exceeded the 0.50 threshold except the construct avoidance (AVE = 0.488), which is a little below the cut-off point. However, it can be considered as acceptable within the framework of an exploratory study provided that the reliability of constructs is well measured [48].

The discriminant validity of the constructs was tested on the basis of Fornell-Larcker criterion and heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). According to Table 3, the square root of AVE of all constructs has been more than the correlation between the constructs. Additionally, all HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85 [49], providing further evidence of discriminant validity and confirming that the constructs are empirically distinct.

Collectively, this proves that there is great reliability and validity of the model and provides a strong basis for moving forward with the structural model analysis.

Table 3. *Discriminant validity*

(Fornell and Larcker Criterion)						(HTMT)					
	AV	PS	PT	SS	WLB		AV	PS	PT	SS	WLB
AV	0.699					AV					
PS	0.279	0.914				PS	0.276				
PT	0.232	0.809	0.802			PT	0.244	0.816			
SS	0.376	0.865	0.781	0.881		SS	0.374	0.821	0.830		
WLB	0.233	0.686	0.667	0.690	0.867	WLB	0.206	0.749	0.739	0.742	

4.2. STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT

The hypotheses were tested with the help of bootstrapping analysis for the structural model. The results have been presented in the following table 4.

It can be seen that problem-solving (PS) has a significant positive effect on work-life balance ($\beta = 0.309$, $t = 1.990$, $p = 0.047$) that supports hypothesis H1. This means that the workers of RMGs who use problem-solving as coping strategy are more able to balance their life and job.

Similarly, social support (SS) has a significant positive effect on work-life balance ($\beta = 0.240$, $t = 2.115$, $p = 0.035$), which supports H2. It can be understood from the above result that taking the support from family, colleagues, or friends helps the employees to manage their work-life balance.

However, the variable of avoidance (AV) does not have any significant association with work-life balance ($\beta = 0.009$, $t = 0.071$, $p = 0.944$). Thus, H3 is not confirmed by the study. The result implies that avoidance does not affect the work-life balance among Bangladeshi RMG workers significantly.

Moreover, the positive thinking (PT) also has a positive but insignificant relationship with work-life balance ($\beta = 0.205$, $t = 1.192$, $p = 0.233$). Thus, H4 is not accepted by the findings. Although the relationship is positive, the evidence suggests that positive thinking alone is insufficient to significantly enhance work-life balance in the study context.

Overall, the structural model demonstrates that among the four coping strategies examined, only problem-solving and social support significantly improve work-life balance, whereas avoidance and positive thinking do not have statistically significant effects.

Table 4. *Results of the structural model*

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
H1	PS → WLB	0.309	0.284	0.186	1.990	0.047
H2	SS → WLB	0.240	0.249	0.215	2.115	0.035
H3	AV → WLB	0.009	0.035	0.132	0.071	0.944
H4	PT → WLB	0.205	0.206	0.172	1.192	0.233

4.3. MODERATION ANALYSIS

A multi-group analysis (MGA) was conducted to examine whether gender moderates the relationships between individual coping strategies and work-life balance. The results are summarized in Table 5.

The moderation analysis reveals that gender does not significantly moderate the relationship between problem-solving and work-life balance (difference = 0.072, two-tailed $p = 0.850$). Therefore, H5 is not supported. This finding suggests that the positive influence of problem-solving on work-life balance is comparable for both male and female RMG workers.

Similarly, no significant moderating effect of gender is observed in the relationship between social support and work-life balance (difference = 0.017, two-tailed $p = 0.971$). Thus, H6 is not supported, indicating that male and female workers benefit similarly from social support in managing work-life balance.

For the relationship between avoidance and work-life balance, the multi-group analysis indicates the largest difference between male and female workers (difference = 0.478). Since the two-tailed significance level ($p = 0.063$) is higher than 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected based on the two-tailed test. The findings, however, suggest that there could be a slight gender difference in problem-solving, which should be further investigated in future studies.

In addition, gender does not moderate the effect of positive thinking on work-life balance (difference = -0.035; two-tailed $p = 0.910$). As such, the hypothesis is rejected since the effect of positive thinking on work-life balance is consistent across gender categories.

To conclude, gender is not a moderator for the effect of problem-solving, social support, avoidance, and positive thinking on work-life balance according to the results of multi-group analysis. Although avoidance has a slight gender difference, it cannot be proven with the help of two-tailed significance criterion.

Table 5. *Moderation effect*

Hypothesis	Relationship	Difference (Group_Female - Group_Male)	1-tailed (Group_Female vs Group_Male) p value	2-tailed (Group_Female vs Group_Male) p value	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
H5	PS ->WLB	0.072	0.425	0.850	1.990	0.047
H6	SS ->WLB	0.017	0.485	0.971	2.115	0.035
H7	AV ->WLB	0.478	0.031	0.063	0.071	0.944
H8	PT ->WLB	-0.035	0.545	0.910	1.192	0.233

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of four coping strategies, namely problem-solving, social support, avoidance and positive thinking, on work-life balance (WLB) amongst the RMG workers in Bangladesh and also to examine if there is any moderating effect of gender on the relationship between these variables. Using the conservation of resources (COR) theory, it has been found that problem-solving and social support positively affect WLB; however, avoidance and positive thinking have no such effect. Also, there is no moderating effect of gender on the relationship between these variables.

As per the results, problem-solving directly impacts WLB positively, thus supporting H1. The results are in line with the COR theory which states that people use adaptive coping strategies to conserve resources in order to deal with stress in an efficient manner [27]. Workers who can identify the problem and take necessary actions do not suffer from any loss of resources, live with family members who also work, and balance both domains. These findings are supported by other studies which state that adaptive coping strategies improve employee well-being and work-life balance [26, 38]. In the RMG industry of Bangladesh where the workers often have long working hours, pressure in terms of production and deadlines, problem-solving helps them to balance their professional and personal life.

Similarly, social support also positively impacts WLB significantly, hence proving H2. It refers to the support provided by supervisors, colleagues, friends and family members which are resources during stress to cope with and recover the lost energy. Emotionally supportive help, instrumental support and advice help employees to minimize work-family conflict. The findings support previous studies that have reported the role of workplace and family support in improving work-life balance [15, 50]. Due to the relatively strenuous nature of garment employment, supportive relations are especially useful for aiding workers balance work and family obligations.

In contrast, avoidance coping does not significantly affect WLB, which results in the rejection of H3. While such avoidance may provide some relief from emotional discomfort in the short term, it does not address the underlying stress right now. From the COR perspective, avoidance is a process that neither provides nor fosters resource gain or conservation but instead enables environmental and personal threat to build up and continues depriving the employee of resources. These results fit with avoidance being classified as a maladaptive coping skill [37, 39]. In the RMG sector where most workers have little to no control over workload and working conditions, trying to avoid workplace problems usually fails to improve their work-life balance.

Consequently, there is a positive relationship between positive thinking and the concept of WLB; however, positive thinking falls short when it comes to importance in relation to WLB; thus, H4 is rejected. Even though optimism helps to build emotional toughness, positive thinking cannot solve the practical difficulties associated with workload. Based on COR theory, psychological resources exert their effects most effectively when they are complemented by sufficiently available external resources. Consequently, even if employees act positively, due to a lack of change in working conditions, their work-life balance may not improve enough. It seems that behavioral ways of coping are generally stronger when using strategies, like problem solving and social support; compared to solely cognitive ones in challenging workplaces.

The multi-group analysis additionally reveals that gender is not a significant moderator between coping strategies and WLB. It indicates that effective coping strategies benefit male and female RMG workers almost identically. One potential reason is that employees in garment supply chains face similar labor conditions, production targets and organizational pressures regardless of what other factors: gender, race, class – they fulfil. Thus, it is possible that coping strategies are more effective depending on the domain of work/social situation than being a male or female. Although avoidance showed a marginal difference between male and female workers, the difference was not statistically significant, indicating that gender does not substantially change the relationship between coping strategies and work-life balance.

In conclusion, this study shows that active coping strategies associated with problem solving and social support have more impact on work-life balance improvement compared to passive coping strategies. This finding supports the core proposition of the COR theory according to which employees capable of acquiring and protecting personal and social resources manage to maintain work-life balance successfully.

6. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The present study adds to the literature in two aspects. First, the use of the COR theory is extended to the case of Bangladesh RMG industry workers. It is shown that different coping strategies contribute to work-life balance to various extents. Problem solving and social support represent valuable personal and social resources that help employees to deal with the competing demands; however, mere avoidance and positive thinking are not enough. Finally, the results suggest that personal coping resources serve as good complements for organizational work-life balance activities.

From the practical perspective, organizations are advised to develop problem solving skills of their employees through time management, decision making, and conflict resolution training. In addition, supportive relations should be developed by managers through promotion of teamwork and effective communication. Since avoidance and positive thinking strategies do not significantly influence work-life balance, organizations are encouraged to not focus on motivational programs only, but to implement measures to change working conditions through workload and working hours balancing. Finally, as gender does not play a significant role in moderating these relationships, such interventions can be applied to employees of both genders.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Even though the current study brings some valuable insights, there are some limitations of this study.

First of all, the research design of the study is cross-sectional, which prevents establishment of causal relationships between variables. Future researchers should conduct longitudinal research to explore the dynamics of coping strategies and work-life balance evolution over time and the effects of the change in coping behavior on employee well-being.

Second, the current study was conducted only among Bangladeshi RMG employees. Even though such approach brings some practical relevance, it might not be possible to generalize the findings to the employees from other sectors of economy and even different countries. Future studies should replicate the proposed model in manufacturing industries, service organizations, healthcare organizations, financial organizations, and governmental organizations.

Third, the present study examined only four individual coping strategies. Future research could incorporate additional coping dimensions such as emotional regulation, resilience, mindfulness, religious coping, emotional intelligence, proactive coping, or psychological capital to develop a more comprehensive understanding of employee coping behavior.

Fourth, gender was investigated as the only moderating variable. Future researchers may examine whether age, marital status, educational level, organizational tenure, income level, family size, supervisory support, organizational support, or leadership style moderate the relationship between coping strategies and work–life balance.

Finally, future studies may investigate mediating mechanisms linking coping strategies with important organizational outcomes such as job stress, burnout, job satisfaction, employee engagement, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and job performance. Such research would further strengthen the understanding of how coping resources influence employee well-being within demanding work environments.

8. CONCLUSION

This research focused on the individual coping strategies between work–life balance of Bangladeshi RMG workers and gender as a moderating influence. Results show that work–life balance is enhanced by problem solving and social support, but not affected by avoidance and positive thinking. Further, these relationships were resistant to both gender. This finding provides evidence for COR theory, suggesting that coping strategies able to protect and create personal and social resources are more work-life balance-promoting than passive forms of coping.

There is a need to combine employees' personal coping capabilities with the supporting practices within organizations for any improvement in work–life balance. RMG firms can strengthen employee well-being at the same time they improve long-term organizational performance by investing in problem-solving skills, creating supportive work environments and becoming more employee-friendly through supporting policies. The study contributes to the understanding of work–life balance practices and mechanisms in a key industry in Bangladesh, particularly the role of individual coping strategies and psychological help-seeking tendencies and provides an important framework for future research extending the findings to other similar occupational groups.

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