

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF WORK OVERLOAD, WORK STRESS AND EMPLOYEES' BURNOUT ON EMPLOYEES' MENTAL HEALTH: WORK-LIFE CONFLICT MEDIATING

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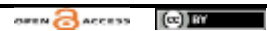
Asinedu Kennedy Nwafili

Dennis Osadebay University, Department of Business Management & Entrepreneurship, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria.

nwafili.asinedu@dou.edu.ng, ORCID: 0009-0001-5966-4114

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- The aim of this study is to assess the impact of work overload, work stress, and employees' burnout on employees' mental health mediated by work-life conflict.

Methodology- The study was a survey design using a quantitative approach. The research instrument was structured questionnaire. 15 out of 20 listed consumer goods were studied with a sample size of 375. A structured questionnaire was administered with the view of gathering primary data for statistical analysis. The data was analyzed using PLS-SEM.

Findings- The findings revealed that work overload and employees' burnout have a direct impact on employees' mental health, while work stress has an indirect impact on employees' mental health. Work-life conflict mediated their relationship, but employees' burnout was not affected by work-life conflict. It was concluded that employees should be given realistic targets to reduce workload, work stress, burnout, and associated work-life imbalance that catalyzes mental health disorders among employees of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

Conclusion- Managers and policy makers should prioritize employees' mental health and wellbeing by reducing stressors that cause work-life conflicts through occupational health and safety policy in order to enjoy work-life balance. Reducing stressors in the workplace will improve employees' mental health and their productivity thereby enhancing work-life balance

Keywords: Work overload, work stress, employees' burnout, work-life conflict employees' mental health, Nigeria.

JEL Codes: M12, J22, 112

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, work demands have increased significantly in all sectors of the economy, particularly in manufacturing sectors, due to global competition and the need to increase output and maximize profit for the shareholders. This has put much job pressure and anxiety on workers, which many now struggle to balance with their family responsibilities (Nwafili, 2024a). This demanding nature of the modern workplace has the capacity to impair employees' mental health and well-being (Pitt et al., 2021). The consumer goods industry in Nigeria marked by intense demand and cutthroat competition are not exempted as they put much pressure on workers in order to meet these expectations (Fanisi, 2024). This pressure on workers may cause them to use up their resources on work domain, with little or none left for the family domain resulting in conflict. This conflict may lead to psychological distress, depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout, impacting on employees' wellbeing (Ugwu, et al, 2024).

With the available finite resources, workers are overburdened with tasks that are difficult to complete within the allotted time (Simon, 2023). This causes stress (Williams et al., 2021) and associated burnout (Yildirimer, 2023). Work overload, work stress, and work burnout are of great concern to workers due to their association with work-life conflict. Work-life conflict occurs when employees fail to perform their roles due to a mismatch of work and family demands (Taufik & Sunaryo, 2021). To maintain emotional and psychological well-being, employees are expected to balance work responsibilities and family responsibilities (Nwafili, 2024b).

The increasing rate mental health disorder faced by workers makes it expedient for appropriate attention by government through occupational health and safety framework (Akinbode et al., 2018). This is important to curtail the escalating mental health issues and to avoid further public health challenges (Agboola et al., 2020). However, emphasis has been shifted from solely treating mental disorders to prioritizing overall mental health and well-being (Gautam et al. 2024). This has become indispensable given the huge amount spent annually to address mental health cases globally which is put at USD 1 Trillion and the workplace stressors endemic in Nigeria (Babatope, et al, 2023). According to the World Health Organization (2024),

around 15% of workers had mental health disorders in 2019, resulting in loss of productivity. Consequently, this study attempts to this scholarly debate with empirical insights from Nigeria to complement international perspectives of these interconnected relationship of these stressors and supports (Nwagbara, 2020)

Although, existing literature investigated the relationship between occupational stress and mental illness in other sectors, which is inadequate (Oginni, et al, 2023), requiring further investigations to cover up consumer goods sector in Nigeria. Likewise, despite the concern of workers regarding work overload, work stress, and burnout, occasioned by work-life conflict, there exists insufficient literature on the interdependency of these variables in the Nigerian context, thereby necessitating this study in order to bring out strategies for promoting employees' well-being and productivity in the manufacturing sector. Therefore, the essence of this research is to investigate the complex relationship between work overload, work stress and employees' burnout as it affects employees' mental health, with the mediating role of work-life conflict in consumer goods firms in Nigeria. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to fill the mentioned literature gap by addressing the interactions under which the requirement to meet certain output level in form of target by most consumer goods firms exacerbate burnout and other mental health related problems (Fanisi, 2024). This has particular importance as work overload often triggers psychological ill-health outcomes such as behaviour stress and burnout which impact negatively on organizational commitment, employees' health and wellbeing (Babatope, et al, 2023). Previous studies have shown that work overload intensify work related problems and stress, yet the role and the extent of work-family conflict on job stress have not been adequately researched (Noordin, et al, 2023). Work-family conflict being an inter-role conflict existing between work role and family role can be categorized as time based, strain based and behaviour based and this was identified as a strong predictor of job stress (Ganewatta & Hiroshima, 2023). This potentially results in burnout and diminished mental wellbeing especially in industrial set up (Khan, et al, 2022). The psychosocial workload comprising various demands and stressors increase the conflict thereby necessitating further research on the psychological implications of these relationships (Akinbode, et al, 2018). Hence, it is imperative to investigate the mediating role of work-family conflict on the relationship between work overload, job stress and employee burnout so as to find solution that reduce negative mental health problems in Nigerian manufacturing sector. This seems to be particularly relevant in the Nigerian context where growing unemployment may facilitate an exploitative industrial environment where employees may be less inclined to address the issue of counterproductive work behaviours arising out of workload and unfairness (Nnaebue et al., 2020). As such, careful investigation of this phenomenon is crucial.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Employees Mental Health (EMH)

The term 'mental health' has been misunderstood for mental health disorder and as such, when people hear mental health, their mind goes to psychiatric illness (Hibaoui & Naji, 2024). However, this misconception has been demystified by scholars who conceptualized it in different perspectives. According to World Health Organization, (2022), mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing that allows individuals to navigate life challenges, maximize their potentials and contribute meaningfully to the society. Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social aspects of life, impacting on individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions, and enhancing stress management, relationships building, and decision making (International Organization of Employees, 2023). It is required of employees to enable them work effectively in a work setting (Fortunisa, & Darmawan, 2022). In other words, employees' mental health does not only affect the individuals but also the organizational output and quality of life (Bajaj, 2023). Mental illness results in low commitment and performance, habitual lateness and absence, and high attrition rate, thereby impacting of overall organizational productivity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Mental health illness manifests in different forms such as inability pay attention, exhaustion, and low passion for the job which negatively affect their performance and general output (Stratton et al, 2022).

However, high rate of mental health crisis within an organization can heightened spending on healthcare and more workplace related accidents (Singh & Bhuvanewari, 2023). It is expected of organizations to look into mental health in workplaces holistically to identify the causes, to enable it solve the problems, as prevention is better than cure. Alternatively, focusing on and promoting mental health is crucial for adaptability, employees' engagement, and facilitating job satisfaction, leading to efficiency and effectiveness in the system (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Organizational support is essential in improving physical and mental health, thereby influencing both employees and the overall organizational performance (Chang, 2024). This has resulted in the designing of frameworks for helping employees overcome workplace related challenges that are pro-mental health in the organization (Bajaj, 2023). This support helps solve employees' mental illness and prevent occurrence, leading to organizational effectiveness (Wang & Sheibani, 2024).

2.1.2. Work Overload (WO) and Employee Mental Health (EMH)

The term "work overload" describes the state in which a person or group is overburdened with more work than they can possibly complete within a given time period (Simon, 2023). It refers to an excessive amount of work completed in the allotted

period or work that is too challenging for staff members (Andriani & Disman, 2023). In the opinion of Matyska (2024), it implies a situation where an individual is assigned more job-related responsibilities, tasks, or projects than he or she can effectively and efficiently handle.

Work overload may result in detrimental effects on workers' health, such as elevated stress levels and burnout, and negatively affect productivity and job satisfaction (Dewi et al., 2021). It is believed that work overload affects the physical, mental, and emotional stress, which impacts the general well-being of employees and organizational performances (Nwafili et al., 2024). Accordingly, Al-Qahtani et al. (2015) found that a productivity-driven approach essentially compromises overall quality and organizational efficacy. Studies have shown that overemphasis on output results in work overload, which in turn causes stress, burnout, absenteeism, and possible turnover (Simon, 2023). Andriani and Disman (2023) noted that the organization, work environment, and task or job demands can all contribute to workload. Also, global competition and the need to gain a competitive advantage may cause work overload as well (Nwafili et al., 2024).

However, some common causes of work overload are unrealistic expectations, constant interruptions, inadequate delegation, poor task management, tight deadlines, and inadequate resources or support (Simon, 2023). Prolonged working hours can lead to stress and burnout, which can have a detrimental influence on effectiveness, interpersonal relationships, and mental and psychological health (Yildirimer, 2023). Additional factors that can contribute to work overload include demands placed on one's job, office politics, lack of support, job insecurity, a poor work-life balance, and lack of acknowledgement, imprecise expectations, poor communication, and a lack of control (Davenport, 2024). Managing overload may not be cost-effective but is very necessary, as the cost of managing psychological trauma or mental health may be devastating. Therefore, organizations are expected to avoid work overload, as it has a significant effect on employees' mental health (Yildirimer, 2023; Singh, 2024). According to Williams et al. (2021), excessive workload can lead to stress, impacting adversely on both physical and mental health.

H01: There is no positive significant impact of work overload on employees' mental health.

2.1.3. Work Stress (WS) and Employee Mental Health (EMH)

Job stress, occupational stress, and work stress are often used to describe the same situation (Aziz, 2024). Stress occurs when employees feel consumed by job demands that are above their ability to cope, leading to physical and emotional strain (International Labour Organization, 2016). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), cited in Maulik (2017), when demands and pressures from the workplace surpass a person's knowledge, skills, and ability to cope, stress results. This implies that the mismatch between job responsibilities and an employee's knowledge and skills is referred to as work stress. That means that employees with limited knowledge and skills will likely face stress in their workplaces. Abdou et al. (2024) describes work stress as an unfavorable experience encountered by employees when they lack the necessary skills and abilities to handle job pressure efficiently and effectively. Stress can impair a person's overall performance, productivity, and well-being, both physically and mentally (Aziz, 2024). Various workplace conditions can cause emotions of pressure, tension, and emotional strain, which are characteristics of job stress (Fortes et al., 2020). Employees that struggle to finish tasks due to time constraints, heavy workloads, and other constraints experience stress (Khan & Khurshid, 2017). Lou et al. (2021) stated that work stress can be categorized broadly into two types: challenge stress (positive) and hindrance stress (positive). The key stressors identified by Magesa and Mtey (2024) include overwhelming workload, adjusting to new work environments, and work-life balance challenges. Other stressors are conflicting roles, unclear expectations, unmanageable workload, poor working conditions, and strained interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Niere et al., 2023).

Workplace stress is prevalent and can negatively affect employees' mental and physical well-being (Hasin et al., 2023). Chen et al. (2022) found a negative relationship between work stress and employees' performance and a positive relationship between work stress and employees' health.

H02: There is no positive significant impact of work stress on employees' mental health.

2.1.4. Employee Burnout (EB) and Employee Mental Health (EMH)

Burnout is a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by prolonged workplace stress, leading to feelings of frustration and isolation (Farshchi & Aghighi, 2022). It involves exhaustion, impaired functioning, and emotional detachment (Abdul-Aziz & Ong, 2024). According to the World Health Organization (2019), burnout is a condition of psychological, emotional, and physical exhaustion that is caused by prolonged stress at the workplace that has not been properly managed. It is a prolonged response to ongoing job stress (Gabriel & Aguinis, 2022), and it impairs an employee's job performance (Jaber & Al-Zoubi, 2012). Intense work demands in a globalized market can cause job burnout (Zeng & Hu 2024). Kumareswaran (2023) identified three key signs of burnout, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Burnout may trigger or worsen mental health challenges, particularly for vulnerable individuals (Adanaqué-Bravo, et al., 2023). Hasin et al. (2023) posited that a positive and significant relationship exists between burnout and employees' mental health.

H03: There is no positive significant impact of work burnout on employees’ mental health.

2.1.5. Relationship between Work Overload (WO), Work Stress (WS), Employees’ Burnout (EB), and Work-Life Conflict (WLC)

Work-life conflict refers to role incompatibility (Nwafili, 2024a). It arises when work duties clash with family obligations (Chaudhry et al., 2011). Hou and Jiang (2023) define it as the incompatibility of work and personal life demands, making it hard to balance both. A mismatch of work and family demands, hindering the performance of both, is referred to as work-family conflict (Taufik & Sunaryo, 2021). It occurs as a result of interference between work responsibilities and household responsibilities (Pitt et al., 2021).

As stated by Simon (2023), the fallout of work overload is work stress, employees’ burnout, absenteeism, and turnover, highlighting a connection between excessive workload, stress, and employee burnout. Work overload is linked to increased work-family conflict (Bas & Guney, 2022); work-family conflict is linked to work stress (Abraham, 2024); and there is a positive correlation between work-family conflict and employee burnout (Wu et al., 2018). When employees juggle work and family roles, they may experience tension, stress, and emotional fatigue (Ilies et al., 2015). This can be especially challenging if they face difficulties in either domain (Bachtiar & Yulianti, 2023).

These relationships is hypothesized thus;

H04: Work-Life Conflict does not mediate the relationship between work overload and employees’ mental health

H05: Work-Life Conflict does not mediate the relationship between work stress and employees’ mental health

H06: Work-Life Conflict does not mediate the relationship between employee burnout and employees’ mental health

2.1.6. Relationship between Work-Life Conflict (WLC) and Employees’ Mental Health (EMH)

Mental health refers to a person’s overall emotional and psychological state (Ling, 2023). Mental health, according to WHO (2022), is defined as a condition that enables people to handle life’s challenges, reach their potentials, and engage productively in society. Mental health disorders stem from feeling unable to handle life’s demands due to limited personal resources (Kamalulil et al., 2021). The personal resources in this context could be time, space, energy, material and financial resources. The triggers of mental health disorders are high work demands, improvement in technology, and domain integration (Singh, 2024). Meaningful employment fosters mental well-being, enhancing self-esteem and social interactions (WHO, 2024). Mental health disorders have the ability to reduce employees’ performances and increase absenteeism and stress levels at work (Randall, 2023).

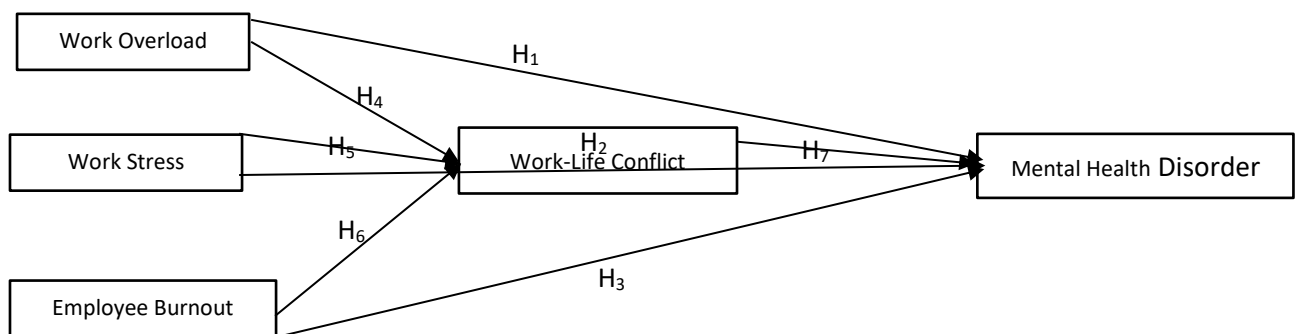
Taking up conflicting tasks leads to inter-role conflict, which results in psychological tension (Gisler et al., 2018). Zhou, Da, Guo, and Zhang (2018) found a negative correlation between work-family conflict and employees’ mental health, suggesting a positive relationship between work-family conflict and employees’ mental health disorder. According to Frone (2000), work-life conflict is linked to increased risk of mood disorders, anxiety, and substance dependency. Work-life conflict has a negative effect on employees’ effectiveness (Nwafili, 2024a), employees’ well-being (Siddiqui, 2013), and employees’ job satisfaction (Wen et al., 2024) and has exacerbated employees’ mental health challenges (Pitt et al., 2021).

H07: There is no positive significant impact of work-life conflict on employees’ mental health.

2.1.7. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of variables attempts to show the link between the independent variables (work overload, work stress, and work burnout) and the dependent variable (employees’ mental health) with work-life conflict mediating, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



2.1.8. Theoretical Underpinning—Resource Drain Theory

The resource drain theory suggests that using scarce resources (time, energy, attention, etc.) in one role domain (work) can deplete them for another role domain (family), causing tension and work-life imbalance (Nwafili et al., 2024). It refers to the transferability of resources from one domain to another (Edwards & Rothboard, 2000). Resource drain occurs when limited resources are diverted from one role domain to another, depleting what is available and potentially causing stress, fatigue, and burnout (Morris & Madsen, 2007). Work-life imbalance, otherwise known as work-family conflict, can be avoided through the adoption of boundary management strategies [behavioral or temporal strategies] (Nwafili, 2024b). This theory is suitable for this study because work overload, work stress, and work burnout deplete the family resources, causing work-family conflict or imbalance, which is capable of affecting employees’ performance (Nwafili, 2024a), employees’ job satisfaction (Nwafili et al., 2024), and employees’ mental health (Pitt et al., 2021).

2.2. Empirical Review

Andriani and Disman's (2023) study examined the impact of job stress and overload on worker performance among 235 healthcare professionals. Using SPSS version 25 and PROCESS version 3.5 as statistical tools, the moderation categorical model was tested using path analysis based on ordinary least squares (OLS), regression, and the bootstrap method. The results showed that polychronicity and a conducive work environment effectively mitigated the effects of work overload, suggesting that staff quality enhancement and a positive work environment can reduce stress.

Andriani and Disman (2023) looked at how job stress and overload affected worker performance, as well as how polychronicity and the workplace environment affected these impacts. 235 healthcare professionals made up the study’s sample size. The outcome demonstrated that the impact of work overload on employee performance through job stress was successfully mitigated by polychronicity and the work environment. Enhancing staff quality and creating a positive work environment are two ways to lessen work-related stress.

The study by Luo et al. (2021) examined the relationship between work stress and employees' physical and mental health using a grounded theory approach. A semi-structured interview with 15 state-owned company workers, coded in a three-level process using NVIVO 11, found that challenge/hindrance stressors significantly impact their physical and mental health, with self-efficacy and organizational support playing a moderating role. The research found that challenging stress led to positive attitudes and behaviors, while hindrance stress resulted in negative emotional experiences, affecting both physically and mentally.

According to a study by Gabriel and Aguinis (2022) on how to avoid and address employee burnout and establish healthier work environments both during and after crises, burnout was discovered to be a serious problem brought on by ongoing work-related stress that impairs performance, creativity, and innovation. During international catastrophes like the COVID-19 pandemic, it was very common. Organizations should offer stress management interventions, promote active work, foster social support, involve employees in decision-making, and apply excellent performance management to prevent burnout. In times of crisis and beyond, these suggestions support long-term workplace well-being.

Pitt et al. (2021) conducted a study on the mental health consequences of work-life and life-work conflicts among postdoctoral trainees in STEM. According to the study, postdocs were more likely to have work-to-life conflict than life-to-work conflict. When 215 trainees were surveyed, it was found that most postdocs had work-life conflicts, which were associated with poor mental health outcomes. The results may impact initiatives to increase participation and diversify STEM professions.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used a survey research design and quantitative approach, allowing for data collection from a diverse population sample and statistical analysis (Udoh & Chinedum, 2014). The study was conducted in Lagos State, Nigeria, focusing on the corporate headquarters of selected consumer goods firms. The study is concerned with Nigeria’s consumer goods sector, selecting 15 out of the 20 listed firms due to resource constraints. The survey targeted all staff levels, as they are impacted by the study’s variables. The table below shows the details of the selected firms for this study.

Table 1: List of Selected Consumer Goods Firms

S/N	Company	Date Incorporated
1.	BUA FOODS PLC	April 13, 2005
2.	CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	January 9, 1965
3.	DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC [CG+]	January 4, 2005
4.	DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC [DIP]	October 21, 1961
5.	GUINNESS NIG PLC [CG+]	April 29, 1950
6.	HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC [BLS][CG+]	July 9, 1985

7.	INTERNATIONAL BREWERIES PLC. [BLS]	December 22, 1971
8.	NASCON ALLIED INDUSTRIES PLC	April 30, 1973
9.	NESTLE NIGERIA PLC. [CG+]	September 25, 1969
10.	NIGERIAN BREW. PLC. [CG+]	November 16, 1946
11.	NIGERIAN ENAMELWARE PLC.	May 21, 1960
12.	P Z CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC. [CG+]	April 12, 1948
13.	UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC. [CG+]	November 4, 1923
14.	UNION DICON SALT PLC. [DWL]	November 12, 1991
15.	VITAFOAM NIG PLC.	April 8, 1962

Source: Adapted from the Nigerian Exchange.

A sample of 375 employees was selected from the 15 firms, with a convenient and manageable size of 25 staff members chosen from each company (Bryman, 2016). Given the diverse nature of the sample, a stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation from all selected firms.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 375 staff and management of the listed consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The questionnaire, divided into three sections, employed a 5-point Likert scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree). While Section A captured respondents’ biographic information, Section B and Section C captured independent variables (work overload, work stress, and burnout) and the dependent variable (employees’ mental health), respectively.

Content validity was used to ensure the instrument accurately measured its intended constructs (Olannye, 2017). Reliability was assessed through a pilot study using Cronbach’s Alpha, with values of 0.7746 and above considered acceptable (Sekaran, 2003). Data analysis was carried out using PLS-SEM.

Model Specification (PLS-SEM Framework)

This study adopts a variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. The constructs in the model are represented as;

Exogenous (Independent Variables) - Work Overload (WO); Work Stress (WS); Employee Burnout (EB)

Endogenous (Dependent Variable) - Employees’ Mental Health (EMH)

Mediating Variable - Work-Life Conflict (WLC)

Table 2: Construct Operationalization Table

Construct	Code	No. of Items	Measurement Type	Source Adaptation
Work Overload	WO	5	Reflective	Adapted from role overload scales
Work Stress	WS	5	Reflective	Job stress scales
Employee Burnout	EB	5	Reflective	Burnout literature (e.g., emotional exhaustion)
Work-Life Conflict	WLC	5	Reflective	Work-family conflict scales
Employees’ Mental Health	EMH	5	Reflective	Psychological well-being scales

Structural Model Equation

$$EMH = \beta_1 WO + \beta_2 WS + \beta_3 EB + \beta_4 WLC + \mu$$

$$WLC = \beta_5 WO + \beta_6 WS + \beta_7 EB + \mu$$

$$WLC = EMH$$

4. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Questionnaire totalling 375 was administered on employees of affected firms, out of which 301 was returned, which represents 80.3%, and considered effective for the data analysis.

Table 2: Socio-Economic Attributes of Participating Employees

Participants’ Bio-Data	Responses	Rate (%)
Gender		
Male	185	61.5
Female	116	38.5
Total	301	100

Age		
25 Years Old and Below	38	12.6
26 – 35 years Old	60	20.0
36 -45 Years Old	92	30.6
46- 55 years Old	85	28.2
56 years Old and Above	26	8.6
Total	301	100
Marital Status		
Single	97	32.2
Married	187	62.1
Divorced/Widowed	17	5.7
Total	301	100
No of Children		
None	23	7.6
1	65	21.6
2	86	28.6
3	72	23.9
4	30	10.0
5 and Above	25	8.3
Total	301	100
Qualifications		
O’Level	28	9.3
ND/Equivalent	65	21.6
B.Sc./Equivalent	197	65.4
Post Graduate	11	3.7
Total	301	100
Years of Work Experience		
Less than 10 Years	65	21.6
10 – 15 Years	107	35.5
16 – 20 Years	95	31.6
Above 20 Years	34	11.3
Total	301	100
Employment Status		
Full Time	263	87.4
Casual	38	12.6
Total	301	100
Position		
Rank and File	65	21.6
Supervisory	185	61.5
Managerial	51	16.9
Total	301	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The above table shows gender to comprise of male numbering 185 (61.5%) and female, 116, (38.5%), implying a male dominated industry probably due to the indicators or constructs of this study; the age bracket include, 25 years old and below, 38 (12.6%), 26-35 Years old, 60(20%), 36-45 Years old, 92(30.6%), 46-55 Years old, 85 (28.2%), and 56 Years old and above, 26 (8.6%), meaning the industry is dominated by young population. The marital status of the respondents as represented in table 2 unveiled single and unmarried to be 97(32.2%), married, 187 (62.1%), and divorced/widowed, 17 (5.7%). Workers with families are mostly affected by work-life conflict and mental health issue as they care about their family unlike the singles. Hence, about 67.8% of the respondents are more adversely affected by the constructs in the model.Regarding the number of children, 23 (7.6%) are yet to have children, 65 (21.6%) had 1 child, 86 (28.6%) had 2 children each, 72 (23.9%) had 3 children, 30(10%) had 4 children (8.3%) and 25 (8.3%) had 5 and above children. The more the number of children, the more the family responsibility and the more the individuals will be influenced by the constructs.Furthermore, the education qualifications of the respondents showed workers with O’level to 28 (9.3%), ND and equivalent are 65 (21.6%), B.Sc and equivalent, 197 (65.4%), post graduates, 11 (3.7%).The implication is that 91.7% of the respondents are competent to provide answers to questionnaire questions. On years of experience, workers with less than 10 years experience are 65 (21.6%), 10-15 years, 107 (35.5%), 16-20 years , 95(31.6%) and above 20 years are 34 (11.3). It is expected that the experienced will be less affected by the model’s constructs, having put in years in the performance of similar duties. Majority of the respondents are full time workers, 263 (87.4%), while the casuals are 38 (12.6%). The full times knows more about the

organization and can competently respond to the research questions. Again, concerning the positions in the organization, the rank and files are 65 (21.6%), those on supervisory positions are 185 (61.5%) and those on managerial positions are 51(16.9).

5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Five hypothetical constructs were examined in the structural equation model shown in figure 1 above – work overload, work stress, employee burnout, work-life conflict and mental health disorder. This model has strong empirical support and data driven, providing understanding of the interconnectivity and evaluation measurement of the variables.

Mental health disorder which is central to the model is directly affected by work overload, and employees' burnout, and indirectly affected by work overload, and work stress with work-life conflict intervening. In this model, employees' burnout has direct effect on mental health disorder with a coefficient of 0.303, implying that mental health disorder can be caused by burnout. Employees' that are having much burnout are susceptible to mental illness. Conversely, work-life conflict is not impacted by employees' burnout as revealed by the recorded 0.006 coefficient in the model. This suggests that in the observed data, burnout is not closely tied to the perception of imbalance between professional and personal life but rather stems from other stress-inducing sources intrinsic to the work environment.

Work overload shows a dual influence. It directly predicts mental health disorder with a path coefficient of 0.143, while also influencing work-life conflict with a stronger coefficient of 0.295. The impact of work-life conflict on mental health disorder is significant with a coefficient of 0.554, thereby creating an indirect relationship of 0.163 on work overload, work-life conflict and mental health disorder, resulting to a coefficient of 0.306 work overload effect on mental health disorder. The implication of this model is that the trauma involved in maintaining equilibrium between work and non-work roles outweighs that of the impact of work overload on emotional exhaustion.

Work stress follows a distinct path, having no direct impact on mental health disorders but exhibiting a pronounced indirect effect through work-life conflict. With a coefficient of 0.699 linking work stress to work-life conflict and 0.554 from work-life conflict to mental health disorder, the resulting indirect effect is 0.387. This constitutes the highest total effect on mental health disorder among all exogenous variables in the model. The implication is that work-related stress triggers a perception of conflict between personal and work domains, and this conflict, rather than stress alone, becomes the channel through which mental health deteriorates. The implication of this model is that the trauma involved in maintaining equilibrium between work and non-work roles outweighs that of the impact of work overload on emotional exhaustion.

The direct relationship in this model aligns with the proposition that mismanaged stress, when encroaches into personal life domain causes psychological trauma and escalated mental health issues. All the variables in the model have different indicators with high outer loading, implying a very strong measurement. For employee burnout, indicators X11 through X15 all have loadings above 0.973, with X11 and X12 each loading at 0.991 and 0.987, respectively. These items are clearly capturing core symptoms or expressions of burnout, with minimal error or redundancy. The indicators weight indicated an even contribution between 0.197 to 0.205 and preventing the domineering of any item.

Work overload evaluated using five indicators (X1-X5), each with outer loading exceeding 0.979, led by X1 which is 0.992. This means that workload factors are very strong, impacting greatly on the model. This results from the nature of job performed, the different roles performed as well as the urgency and complex nature of jobs. The even distribution shows a balanced scale.

Work stress was measured using the indicators; X6 to X10 with their contributions ranging between 0.979 and 0.994. The underlying stress was revealed in this model through a well-defined construct. This high loading suggests that the major stressors like time pressure or emotional strain was thoroughly captured.

Employees burnout was reliably captured through the indicators X11 to X15. The outer loading indicated a contribution ranging between 0.991-0.987, with 0.991 topping the weight load and causing much burnout on employees. Variables of burnout were adequately captured in the model, accounting for the high loading of the constructs.

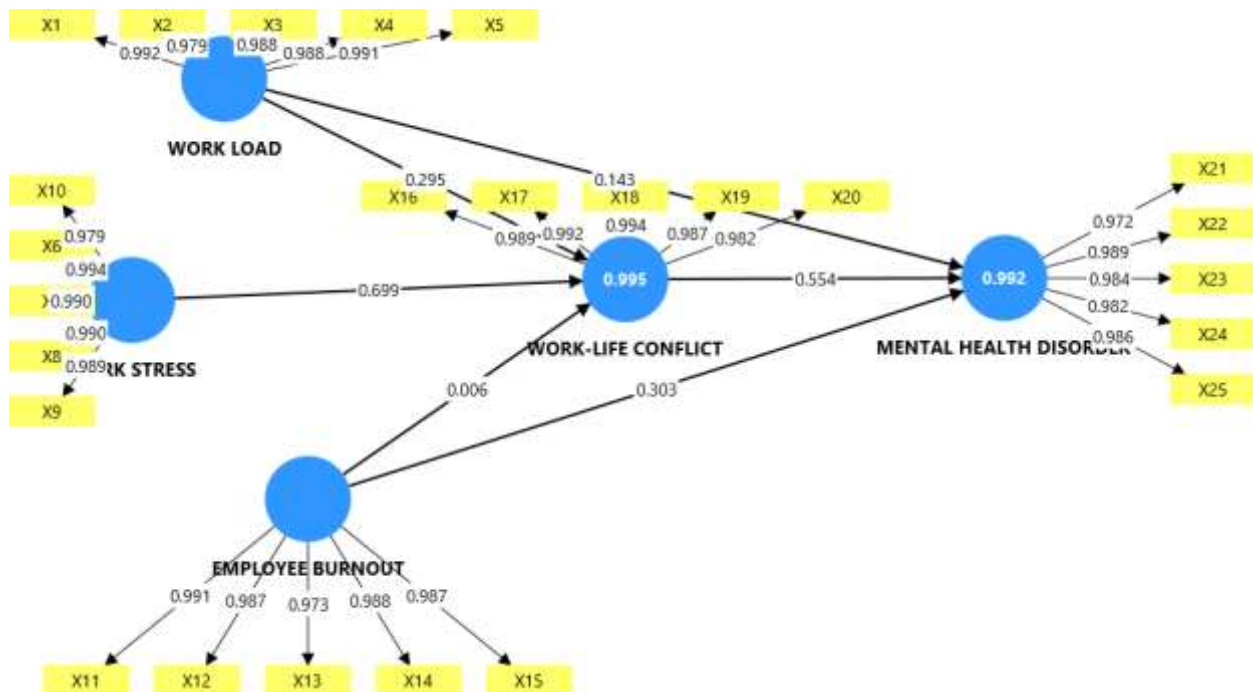
Indicators, X16- X20 assessed work-life conflict with loadings exceeding 0.982. The construct, X18 tops with 0.994 due to incongruence between work demand and family demand, a situation whereby work roles spills into family roles thereby depleting the family resources.

Mental health, being the endogenous variable was captured in the model using the indicators, X21- X25, meaning five items were considered with each loading more than 0.972, an indication that mental health disorder factors, such as anxiety, depression, strain, emotional exhaustion, and frequent unaccomplished tasks (Low performance). The loading of X22 being depression tops the chart with 0.989 and weight of 0.204, implying a serious implicit mental health disorder symptom.

The relationship existing among the constructs are very high, ranging between 0.979-0.997, suggesting a possible conceptual overlap especially work stress and work-life conflict: 0.997.

Descriptive stats show standardized latent variables with mild negative skew and platy kurtosis. Non-normal distributions are confirmed (Cramér-von Mises $p < 0.001$), making PLS-SEM a good fit.

Figure 2: Partial Least Square Structural Equation Model



6. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the structural equation model, it can be concluded that work overload and burnout directly impact employees’ mental health. On the other hand, work stress does not have a direct impact on employees’ mental health but influences work-life balance, which in turn impacts employees’ mental health. Work-life conflict mediated the relationship between work overload, work stress, and employees’ mental health but does not mediate between burnout and employees’ mental health. Employees’ burnout wasn’t as a result of imbalance between work and family responsibilities but resulted from work-related strains. In as much as the employees are expected to perform optimally, realistic targets should be given to them to reduce work overload, stress, and burnout, which often result in work-life imbalance and employees’ mental health disorders.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended;

1. Appropriate remuneration of the employees to cushion the impact of work overload, stress and burnout within the organization.
2. Occupational health and safety policy framework should be strengthened to reduce psychological distress associated with work overload, stress, and burnout so as to improve productivity.
3. Encouraging flex hours, time management, weekend off, annual leave and remote working (tele-working) to reduce work-life conflict and to enhance work-life balance.

8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The limitation includes focusing on consumer goods industry instead of the entire manufacturing industry. Further research should expand the scope to make it broader.

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APPENDIX 1: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: Assessing The Impact of Work Overload, Work Stress and Employees’ Burnout On Employees’ Mental Health: Work-Life Conflict Mediating

Instructions: Please read the questions below and respond appropriately. All responses shall be treated with utmost confidentiality since it is purely for academic purposes.

PART I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please check the box that corresponds to your personal information.

Variable	Category	Check
Gender	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	25 years old and below	<input type="checkbox"/>
	26 – 35 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>
	36 – 45 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>
	46 – 55 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>
	56 years old and above	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marital Status	Single	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Married	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Divorced/Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
No of Children	Nil	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5 and Above	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational Qualifications	ND/NCE	<input type="checkbox"/>
	HND/B.Sc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Post Graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Years of Work Experience	Less than 10 Years	<input type="checkbox"/>

	10- 15 Years	[]
	16-20 Years	[]
	Above 20 years	[]
Employment Status	Full Time	[]
	Casual	[]
Position	Rank and File	[]
	Supervisory	[]
	Managerial	[]

PART II: ASSESSMENT OF VARIABLES

Scale	Verbal Interpretation	Description
5	Strongly Agree (SA)	The statement is always true/observable.
4	Agree (A)	The statement is often true/observable.
3	Neutral (N)	The statement is neither true nor false/observable.
2	Disagree (D)	The statement is often false/unobservable.
1	Strongly Disagree (SD)	The statement is always false/unobservable.

A. WORK OVERLOAD (WO)

S/N	Items	5	4	3	2	1
1.	I am required to work very fast to complete my tasks	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2.	I have too many responsibilities at work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3.	I often have insufficient time to complete my work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4.	My workload is excessive	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5.	I am frequently required to work beyond normal hours	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

B. WORK STRESS (WS)

S/N	Items	5	4	3	2	1
5.	I feel stressed because of my job demands	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6.	My job makes me feel emotionally drained	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7.	I feel pressure to meet unrealistic deadlines	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
8.	I find it difficult to relax after work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
9.	My job causes me anxiety	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
10.	I find it difficult to relax after work					

C. EMPLOYEES' BURNOUT (EB)

S/N	Items	5	4	3	2	1
11.	I feel exhausted at the end of the workday	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
12.	I feel emotionally drained from my work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
13.	I feel less motivated to go to work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
14.	I feel detached from my job	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
15.	I feel frustrated by my work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

D. WORK-LIFE CONFLICT (MEDIATOR) (WLC)

S/N	Items	5	4	3	2	1
16	My work interferes with my personal life	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
17.	I have little time for family due to work demands	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
18.	My job makes it difficult to fulfill personal responsibilities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
19.	I often think about work even during personal time	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
20.	My work negatively affects my social life	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

E. EMPLOYEES' MENTAL HEALTH (EMH)

S/N	Items	5	4	3	2	1
21.	I feel mentally exhausted due to my work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
22.	I experience frequent mood swings because of work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
23.	I feel anxious or depressed due to work-related issues	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
24.	I find it difficult to concentrate because of work stress	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
25.	My mental health has declined due to my job	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]