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**Article:**

Islam, MS, Amin, M, Feranita, F et al. (1 more author) (2023) Coming to work with an illness: The role of high-involvement work systems and individual competence on presenteeism. *Employee Relations*. ISSN 0142-5455

<https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-10-2022-0491>

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**Coming to work with an illness: The role of high-involvement work systems and individual competence on presenteeism**

Journal:	<i>Employee Relations</i>
Manuscript ID	ER-10-2022-0491.R2
Manuscript Type:	Research Paper
Keywords:	Presenteeism, High-involvement work systems, Competence, Job demands resources model

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**Coming to work with an illness: The role of high-involvement work systems and individual competence on presenteeism**

**Abstract**

**Purpose** - This paper aims to examine the effect of high-involvement work systems (HIWS) on completing work and avoiding distraction as two dimensions of presenteeism. It also investigates competence as a mediator of the effect of HIWS on presenteeism.

**Design/methodology/approach** - Data were collected from 343 Bangladeshi bank employees using an online survey. The partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed to assess the abovementioned linkages.

**Findings** - The findings demonstrate HIWS directly avoid distraction but do not significantly impact the completing work dimension of presenteeism. The findings also indicate that competence mediates the effect of HIWS on completing work but not on avoiding distraction.

**Originality/value**- Drawing on the job demands-resources (JD-R) model, this study empirically demonstrates the **contrasting** role of HIWS in completing work and avoiding distraction related to presenteeism. It also provides a novel perspective on the unexplored mediating mechanism of competence on the relationship between HIWS and presenteeism and offers new directions for HIWS and presenteeism research.

**Keywords** Presenteeism, High-involvement work systems, Competence, Job demands resources model.

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

Presenteeism has become an important concern for practitioners and researchers in occupational health and human resource management because of its relevance to employee health and organizational performance (Cooper and Lu, 2016). Presenteeism is recognized as increasing financial costs to organizations and regarded as negative employee behaviour. The annual cost of presenteeism to the UK economy was recently estimated at £15.1 billion (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021). However, concentrating presenteeism narrowly in terms of productivity loss restricts knowledge advancement in this area (Johns, 2010). Research has shown that attending work while unwell does not result in adverse outcomes when managed appropriately, with work roles and the work environment adapted to enable beneficial rather than harmful health effects (Whysall *et al.*, 2018; Wu and Lu, 2022). Therefore, the emphasis should not be on avoiding presenteeism but on ensuring that attending work is restorative, considering personal factors (like health status) and work environments (Johns, 2010).

Presenteeism is defined as “employees’ ability to focus on work without being distracted by health problems” (Koopman *et al.*, 2002, p. 19). Employees have a choice whether to attend work despite their illness, and the choice between presenteeism and sickness absenteeism is asymmetric (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020). The notion of functional presenteeism is positive because it can represent employees’ purposeful and adaptive behaviour (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020). However, the majority of research in this area has treated presenteeism as an unwelcome behaviour leading to neglect of its adaptive potential (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020). Furthermore, there remains a lack of uniformity in measuring presenteeism, where heavy reliance on frequency metrics limits our knowledge of presenteeism (Ruhle *et al.*, 2020). According to Cooper and Lu (2016), the extant literature on presenteeism has overlooked the underlying psychological process of why people attend work while sick. As a result, less emphasis is placed on work conditions (Whysall *et al.*, 2018) that may be necessary for presentees to recover from illness and return to work. Karanika-Murray and Biron (2020, p. 244) suggest “If managed well and supported with adequate resources, attending work during illness has the potential to benefit health and performance.” Little research conceptualizes presenteeism at the intersection of employees’ health and performance demands, and we know less about what organizational resources can be utilized in overcoming these challenges (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021; Whysall *et al.*, 2018).

Studying the antecedents of presenteeism is essential for several reasons. First, research on the antecedents of presenteeism can provide insights into the factors that contribute to this phenomenon, such as job demands and individual characteristics (Collins and Cartwright,

2012; Ruhle *et al.*, 2020). Second, by identifying the factors contributing to presenteeism, practitioners can develop appropriate interventions and HR policies to support chronically ill workers and manage workplace presenteeism effectively (Nazarov *et al.*, 2019). Third, a clear understanding of the factors that contribute to presenteeism will further enhance the development of measurement tools that accurately capture presenteeism as coping behaviour under resourceful work environments (Gerich, 2019). Finally, research on the antecedents of presenteeism can contribute to return to work and HRM literature by providing insights into how work-related factors affect employee health and well-being (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020; Schloemer-Jarvis *et al.*, 2022).

Job resources can include “a range of psychosocial (job control, social support, rewards, etc.) and organizational characteristics.” (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020, p. 251). Resourceful work environments can support to chronically ill employees who may encounter variations in their symptoms or require regular medical appointments, by providing them with flexible work arrangements, such as adaptable working hours. Such arrangements can enable employees with chronic illnesses to manage their health challenges while also fulfilling job responsibilities (Bergström *et al.*, 2020; Goto *et al.*, 2020; Nazarov *et al.*, 2019; Wu and Lu, 2022). The current study focuses on high-involvement working, which refers to “an ongoing experience of high levels of influence over the decisions that affect the work process, identified through worker perceptions of their jobs and their working environment” (Boxall and Winterton, 2018, p. 30).

High-involvement work processes (HIWPs) are associated with the ways people perform their works in organizations (Boxall *et al.*, 2019) and lead to high-involvement work systems (HIWS) “when implementations of HIWPs are accompanied by companion investments in human capital – for example, in better information and training, higher pay and stronger employee voice” (Boxall *et al.*, 2019, p. 1). Lawler (1986) coined the term ‘high-involvement’ to refer to a management style characterized by commitment and participation. High-involvement work is diametrically opposed to Taylorism, “a process of centralising decision making and problem solving in the hands of management” (Boxall and Macky, 2009, p. 9). The high-involvement work model is an important pathway to improve job quality and influence work processes such as control in designing work tasks (Boxall and Winterton, 2018). A high degree of involvement at work benefits employees by increasing their decision-making authority, facilitating skill development through training, and providing adequate remuneration (Boxall *et al.*, 2019).

The conceptual framework of the high-involvement model incorporates elements of the PIRK model (Lawler, 1986) involving power, information sharing, rewards and knowledge. Implementing greater employee involvement requires higher investment in human capital synergistically, easing access to knowledge, information sharing, and competence development, encouraging greater participation at work, and ensuring employees feel rewarded for doing so (Boxall and Winterton, 2018). Based on the PIRK model, previous studies included a list of practices that promote high levels of employee involvement (Boxall *et al.*, 2015; Riordan *et al.*, 2005; Vandenberg *et al.*, 1999). As suggested by Boxall *et al.* (2019), this study comprehensively captures all four components of the HIWS construct (power/empowerment, information sharing, rewards and knowledge/training).

Working with a high level of involvement allows for more job autonomy, information sharing, training and rewards, each of which represent job resources (Demerouti *et al.*, 2019). Employees' experience of high-involvement working is associated with different employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, citizenship behavior, job insecurity and mental health (Boxall *et al.*, 2019). However, the association between HIWS and employee presenteeism remains unexplored in the extant literature. Drawing on JD-R model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017), the present study aims to address this gap. Employees with greater resources can better deal with work demands and health challenges, so HIWS might equip employees to manage presenteeism more effectively. We further propose that the relationship between HIWS and presenteeism is mediated by competence.

Early versions of the JD-R model focussed on features of work environments (Demerouti *et al.*, 2019). Later versions brought personal resources into the JD-R model, explicitly recognizing the crucial connection between individual and environmental elements affecting human behaviour (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). According to the JD-R model, competence represents personal resources and/or strength that can bolster job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). The dynamic model of presenteeism offered by Johns (2010) highlights the importance of individual factors (e.g., competence) related to presenteeism. Competent employees can mobilize more resources and show greater resilience in the face of deteriorating personal health to keep their health and productivity in a condition of functional presenteeism (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020; Taris and Kompier, 2004). Individuals play a central role in the decision-making of presenteeism (Collins and Cartwright, 2012). Individual competence can promote advantageous conditions that allow employees to assess the existing work

resources and thus determine whether they can continue working despite health problems (Johns, 2010).

Using personal resources (i.e., competence) as mediating factors in the association between HIWS and presenteeism is consistent with the JD-R model (Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2007). It provides a theoretical basis for understanding how job resources can lead to positive work outcomes through individual coping mechanisms (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020). Personal competence can mediate the relationship between HIWS and presenteeism in several ways. First, personal competence embodies the skills and knowledge employees need to perform their duties effectively (Borst *et al.*, 2019; Le Deist and Winterton, 2005). As a result, competent employees are less likely to experience stress and exhaustion, which are key precursors of presenteeism (Johns, 2010; Lohaus and Habermann, 2019). Second, personal competence can enable employees to adapt to new and changing job demands (Katou *et al.*, 2022). HIWS often require employees to take on new roles and responsibilities, which can be stressful and overwhelming if they lack the requisite skills and knowledge (Kilroy *et al.*, 2020; Oppenauer and Van De Voorde, 2018). However, employees with a strong sense of personal competence are more likely to feel confident adapting to these changes (Borst *et al.*, 2019; Riordan *et al.*, 2005; Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2007). Third, personal competence can enable employees to seek out and utilize social support from colleagues and supervisors (Anderson-Butcher *et al.*, 2016). HIWS often involve collaborative decision-making and problem-solving, which can be facilitated by strong social networks and supportive work relationships (Boxall and Winterton, 2018). Employees' social competence enables them to establish and maintain these relationships, reducing the likelihood of becoming distracted by health challenges (Lorente *et al.*, 2008). By enhancing personal competence, HIWS can increase the likelihood of completing work and avoiding distractions caused by presenteeism, enabling employees to cope with job demands, adapt to new situations, and utilize social support.

Our study contributes to the existing literature in several ways. First, this study examines presenteeism with two-dimensional components: accomplishing tasks and avoiding distraction at work (Koopman *et al.*, 2002, p. 19). Such an approach contributes further to understanding presenteeism at the interaction between health and performance demands (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021). Second, this study extends previous research on HIWS by recognizing the vital role of job resources in performing tasks and overcoming health constraints. Third, this study intends to broaden JD-R model of employee presenteeism (Figure 1) by incorporating job and personal resources as potential mechanisms for effectively managing job demands and addressing health-related challenges (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Karanika-Murray *et al.*,



2021). Fourth, this study examines the mediating role of competence, thereby explicating how individual competence can serve as a coping mechanism to facilitate the availability of sufficient resources with HIWS to manage presenteeism effectively in the workplace.

In the remainder of this paper, we hypothesize the effect of HIWS on presenteeism. Following that, we make a case for competence as a critical mediator in this relationship. After presenting the methodology, analysis and findings, we provide a summary discussion, including implications for management, limitations and opportunities for future research.

## Development of hypotheses

### *HIWS and presenteeism*

Presenteeism is a deliberate and adaptive behaviour in the sense that whether employees continue to work despite their health concerns is more dependent on individual decisions (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021). Existing research argues that continuing to attend work might be more beneficial when employees experience common health problems or non-contagious diseases (Chen *et al.*, 2021). First, common health issues may not be sufficiently severe to prevent individuals from working, and second, work can serve as an excellent vehicle for promoting an individual's health and well-being (Whysall *et al.*, 2018). Work characteristics, including social and physical work environments, may help sick employees strengthen their self-esteem, divert focus away from existing health difficulties and improve their employability (Lohaus and Habermann, 2019). Whysall *et al.* (2018) argue that individuals gain a sense of accomplishment through continuing work, whereas worklessness can reduce self-esteem, harming health and well-being.

Managing presenteeism in the workplace entails regular monitoring, identifying high-risk presentees and facilitating resources to maintain a functional state (Chen *et al.*, 2021; Collins and Cartwright, 2012). Biron and Saksvik (2010, p. 81) suggest that "employees with mental health problems who are exposed to a positive psychosocial work environment could find the routine provided by work and a supportive climate to be helpful even though their productivity is impaired while on the job with a mental illness." Continuing to work while ill can be beneficial when employees have a less severe illness, have adequate job resources and do not have excessive job demands (Bergström *et al.*, 2020).

Several previous studies analysed presenteeism using a single-item frequency measure (Ruhle *et al.*, 2020). For instance, respondents were asked how many times in the previous 12 months they continued to work while ill. This approach may underestimate the severity of



presentees' illnesses and performance concerns. Some presentees might not consider that mental illness is a legitimate reason for absence or that working exacerbates illness (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021). To cover presenteeism comprehensively, this study considered two dimensions based on Koopman *et al.* (2002). First, completing work denotes the amount of work completed despite some form of presenteeism impact (Martinez and Ferreira, 2012). Second, avoiding distraction refers to the ability to concentrate on tasks in the face of presenteeism (*ibid.*). Completing work focuses on output of the task, whereas avoiding distraction indicates task processes (*ibid.*). Employees who score higher on completing work and avoiding distraction are affected less by health and performance demands and can deal with the presenteeism (*ibid.*).

The meta-analysis by Miraglia and Johns (2016) shows that the degree of job control affects an individual's health. Work groups with increased authority and responsibility establish norms that encourage less withdrawal behaviour because co-workers will cover absence (Böckerman *et al.*, 2012). When employees have greater resources and support to deploy discretion, employee involvement will decrease absenteeism (Collins and Cartwright, 2012). Goto *et al.* (2020) demonstrate that support from co-workers and supervisors, increased job control and reduced job demands are all highly associated with lower presenteeism risks. Bakker *et al.* (2005) show that job resources (i.e., autonomy, social support, good supervisory relationships and performance feedback) can help to mitigate the effects of work overload on burnout. A job featured with work overload, emotional and physical job demands, and work-home conflict can increase individual exhaustion and cynicism. A higher level of job resources, on the other hand, reduces the detrimental effects of job demands on employee burnout (Bakker *et al.*, 2005).

Continuing to work while ill may have a detrimental effect on individual health if employees are exposed to demanding work situations (i.e., high job demands and low job control). However, resourceful and positive psychosocial work environments that provide adaptation and rehabilitation at work may reduce the adverse health effects of presenteeism (Wu and Lu, 2022). Bergström *et al.* (2020, p. 4711) note that "employees with presenteeism who reported more available job resources in terms of high job control and support or employees reporting lower job demands showed better future general health than a reference group with the same amount of presenteeism but with less job control/support or higher demands at work, respectively."

Jacobs *et al.* (2013, p. 1587) defined a psychosocial work environment as "interpersonal and social interactions that influence behaviour and development in the workplace." (A supportive

psychosocial work environment can help individuals cope with work-related stress and improve their health (Jacobs *et al.*, 2013). Common mental disorders (CMDs) (i.e., anxiety and depression) can result in extended periods of sickness absence (Lau *et al.*, 2016). Employees with CMD can attend work as a coping technique to avoid deteriorating health problems and long-term absences. Lau *et al.* (2016) found patients fully working reported work demands at the same level as partially working patients and that employees with CMD found it easier to adjust their work when it featured greater autonomy and less stringent requirements. Schloemer-Jarvis *et al.* (2022, p. 36) similarly suggest that for people with disabilities, HIWP can be considered a ‘necessity’.

Böckerman *et al.* (2012) showed high-involvement management practices could lower the chances of workplace injury and sickness. HIWPs improve employees’ functional levels and prepare them to cope with increased performance demands and job stress, so they experience less burnout (Kilroy *et al.*, 2020). An organization’s positive psychosocial work factors have a substantial impact on an individual’s decision to continue working despite illness (Janssens *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, HIWS that function as resources may facilitate adjustment to health and performance demands of presentees. Therefore, we propose:

*H1*: High-involvement work systems are positively related (a) to completing work and (b) to avoiding distraction as two dimensions of presenteeism.

### **The mediating role of competence**

Competence is a multifaceted concept denoting an individual’s capacity to understand job tasks, and to execute them successfully in a social context (Le Deist and Winterton, 2005). Extant reviews (e.g., Salman *et al.*, 2020) confirm the multi-dimensional character of competence. This study employs the holistic competence model comprising cognitive, functional and social competence (Le Deist and Winterton, 2005). Cognitive competence refers to underpinning theoretical and procedural knowledge contextualized in work practices. Functional competence indicates task expertise and occupation-specific skills. Social competence is related to behavioural characteristics required to execute tasks successfully (Islam and Amin, 2022).

HIWS may relate to employee outcomes through an indirect pathway. For example, the cognitive mediating pathway derives from the principle that HIWS “allow organizations to take greater advantage of the skills and abilities their employees already have” (Vandenberg *et al.*, 1999, p. 304). High-involvement employees are equipped with adequate competence because

they have an opportunity to undertake tasks with discretion and utilize existing work opportunities (Boxall *et al.*, 2015).

Competence includes personal resources, individual attributes connected with resilience and the capacity to be activated by the work environment (Miraglia and Johns, 2016; Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2007). Competence is related to employee presenteeism, which is “aimed at facilitating adaptation to work in the face of compromised health” (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020, p. 245). Employees are not just passive recipients of their health concerns, but may proactively adapt work activities to balance job demands and address health concerns (Collins and Cartwright, 2012; Taris and Kompier, 2004). To some extent, employees can control their work settings via cognitive interpretation and deliberate behaviour (Demerouti *et al.*, 2019).

Presenteeism can vary depending on individual capability (Johns, 2010). For instance, an individual’s competence to cope with stressful circumstances, and increased work demands is crucial when assessing problematic situations such as job-related illness (Lu *et al.*, 2014). According to the JD-R model, individuals with a high level of personal resources stay optimistic in the face of unpredictable circumstances (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Personal resources mitigate the negative effects of job demands on stress and amplify the positive benefits of job demands on motivation (Taris and Kompier, 2004). For example, Lorente *et al.* (2008) found that teachers’ emotional and mental competencies serve as personal resources helping them avoid burnout and increasing job engagement.

Research has underlined a combination of individual competence and flexible work resources to explain circumstances in which presentees can adjust to work and reduce health and performance demands (Bergström *et al.*, 2020; Collins and Cartwright, 2012; Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020; Miraglia and Johns, 2016). Specifically, HIWS facilitate greater job resources that improve employee competence. Accordingly, the acquired cognitive, functional and social competence helps employees continue working and avoid distractions caused by health problems. Therefore, we propose:

*H2: Competence will mediate the positive relationship between high-involvement work systems and (a) completing work and (b) avoiding distraction as two dimensions of presenteeism.*

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

## Methodology

### *Participants and procedure*

The banking sector in Bangladesh comprises 61 scheduled banks, classified into three categories: private commercial banks (PCBs); specialized banks (SBs); and state-owned commercial banks (SCBs). Either private entities or individuals own the 52 PCBs, while the Government of Bangladesh owns the SCBs. The Government also controls the three SBs catering for specific needs, such as agricultural or industrial development (Bangladesh Bank, 2021).

Data were collected from November 2020 to February 2021 through an online survey distributed via email. A sample of Bangladeshi bank employees was selected from a network of employees who had participated in education programmes of the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM). All Bangladeshi banks are affiliated to the BIBM, a national institute that conducts research and educates bankers (BIBM, 2021). The survey questionnaire was in English. A Bengali-translation of the questionnaire was also provided using back-translation techniques. The questionnaire was installed on Survey Monkey with an information page explaining the research purpose, survey participation, and possible benefits. Participation in the survey was voluntary and solely for academic purposes. After piloting with a sample of 45 individuals, the research instrument was slightly modified in both English and Bengali based on respondents' feedback. In the first phase of data collection (November-December 2020), 2,356 bank employees were contacted to participate in the online survey and a reminder message was sent in the second phase (January-February 2021). Of the total 426 responses received, after excluding incomplete responses, 343 remained for further analysis representing a response rate of 14.5%.

### *Measures*

The study used valid and reliable measures drawn from existing literature. All scale items were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

*HIWS*: Four dimensions of HIWS were measured using the scale proposed by Riordan *et al.* (2005). This scale had three items focussing on empowerment (Cronbach alpha of 0.87), six items focussing on information sharing (Cronbach alpha of 0.86), five items relating to rewards (Cronbach alpha of 0.85), and four items relating to training (Cronbach alpha of 0.89). The sample items included "I have enough freedom over how I do my job" (empowerment), "The channels for employee communication with top management are effective" (information

sharing), “Generally, this organization rewards employees who make an extra effort” (rewards), and “I receive sufficient training to do my job” (training).

*Competence:* Overall competence was classified into cognitive, functional, and social competence. First, we measured cognitive competence using a four-item scale developed by Colakoglu (2011). One sample item was “I know exactly what kinds of tasks or projects motivate me”. The scale reported a Cronbach alpha of 0.76. Second, employees evaluated functional competence by an adapted six-item scale developed by Colakoglu (2011), which had a Cronbach alpha of 0.87. One sample item was “I have job-related knowledge and skills that I can easily apply or transfer to other employment settings”. Third, we measured social competence using an adapted five-item scale developed by Anderson-Butcher *et al.* (2016), which had a Cronbach alpha of 0.90. One sample item was “I assist my colleagues working in the bank”.

*Presenteeism:* We measured two dimensions of presenteeism using Koopman *et al.* (2002). The scale had three items relating to completing work and three focusing on avoiding distraction. The reliability score (i.e., Cronbach alpha) ranged between 0.780 and 0.815 (Martinez and Ferreira, 2012). The sample item included, ‘Despite having my health problem, I was able to finish hard tasks in my work’ (completing work), ‘My health problem distracted me from taking pleasure in my work’ (avoiding distraction).

Common method bias (CMB) can occur in survey research when researchers collect all data using the same method at a single point in time (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012). We performed Harman’s single factor test to evaluate the proportion of the variance in our data explained by one factor. The results show 23.06% total variance explained by one factor. As the single factor explains less than 50% variance, the result suggests CMB is not a serious concern of this study.

**Data analysis and Results**

Descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS v.24 showed approximately 67% of respondents were affiliated to PCBs, approximately 29% of respondents were associated with SCBs, and only 4% of participants were affiliated to SBs. Around 90% of respondents were male, which reflects the demography of the Bangladeshi banking sector. Sobhani *et al.* (2021) found that males represented about 85% of respondents in their study. Approximately 53% of respondents were aged 25-34, and 39% were aged 35-44. Regarding job experience, 34% of respondents had more than 10 years, followed by 24% with 1-3 years, 17% with 7-9 years, 14% with 4-6 years and 11% with less than 1 year. Finally, 87% of the participants in this study had a master’s degree, compared to just 11% with a bachelor’s degree.

The current study used partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) as the primary data analysis tool (Ringle *et al.*, 2015). PLS-SEM is suitable for hierarchical component models (HCM) with higher and lower order constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2019). To assess HCM, we used the disjoint two-stage technique (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2019). The reliability and validity of the first-order measurement model were examined in isolation from higher-order constructs. Then latent scores of first-order components were saved to evaluate the measurement model with higher-order constructs (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2019). Mihail and Kloutsiniotis (2016) used a similar two-stage approach to establish HCM with reflective-formative constructs. Our proposed model included reflective-formative hierarchical constructs, so it was suitable to use the PLS-SEM composite factoring approach to assess the model (Becker *et al.*, 2012; Sarstedt *et al.*, 2019).

We used reflective and formative approaches to develop two multi-dimensional constructs, HIWS and competence, based on theory. HIWS comprise four components (empowerment, information sharing, rewards, and training) (Boxall *et al.*, 2019), while competence includes cognitive, functional, and social dimensions (Le Deist and Winterton, 2005). To specify and estimate second-order constructs, we used HCM, which allows us to match the level of abstraction of the predictor and criterion variables in the conceptual model (Becker *et al.*, 2012). In the two-stage approach, we used a reflective-formative model II, which posits that the first-order constructs do not share a common cause and are reflectively measured, meaning they are measured by multiple indicators that reflect the underlying construct. We combined these first-order constructs to form a more general, second-order construct that fully captures the underlying construct being measured (Becker *et al.*, 2012).

In our study, we used the reflective-formative HCM approach because the nature of the second-order constructs is formative, which means they combine several dimensions into a general concept. In contrast, the first-order constructs are reflectively measured. The second-order constructs serve as mediators for subsequent endogenous variables. Using these methods, we developed more accurate and nuanced constructs that allowed us better to understand the relationships between variables in our model.

#### *Evaluation of measurement model (first-order)*

Dimensions of HIWS (i.e., empowerment, information sharing, rewards and training), competence (i.e., cognitive competence, functional competence and social competence) and presenteeism (i.e., completing work and avoiding distraction) are presented as reflective first-order constructs. The reflective measurement model is evaluated based on its reliability



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(internal consistency and indicator reliability) and validity (convergent and discriminant validity) (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The outer loadings of the items associated with each construct should be more than 0.7 to ensure indicator reliability. Composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach Alpha scores should be more than 0.7 to assure internal consistency reliability. If the average variance extracted (AVE) is more than 0.5, convergent validity is confirmed (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Loadings of all the items met the threshold. However, two items of information sharing had loadings less than 0.4; therefore, they were removed. Table 1 presents an assessment of the reflective measurement model in the first stage, showing CR and AVE values meeting the threshold. We used the Fornell-Larker criterion to determine discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2014). The square root of the AVE for each construct should be greater than the correlation values for another construct in the measurement model (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Table 2 reveals that the measurement model has acceptable discriminant validity.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

[Insert Table 2 about here]

*Evaluation of measurement model (second-order)*

HIWS and competence formed reflective-formative second-order constructs. Four dimensions of HIWS were measured by respective reflective indicators, while their relationship with HIWS was considered formative. Likewise, three dimensions of competence were operationalized by reflective indicators, while their association with competence indicated formative. Therefore, the second-order measurement model included two formative (i.e., HIWS and competence) and two reflective (i.e., completing work and avoiding distraction) constructs. We used the latent variable scores of first-order constructs (empowerment, information sharing, rewards, training, cognitive competence, functional competence and social competence) obtained from stage one to create and evaluate the second-order measurement model. In the second stage of evaluation, multicollinearity, outer weights, and their level of significance were assessed (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Table 3 summarizes the second-order measurement model, demonstrating that variance inflation factors (VIFs) remained less than 3.3 and outer weights of second-order constructs were significant. Hair *et al.* (2014) suggested retaining all formative indicators regardless of their statistical significance “as formative measurement theory requires that the measures fully capture the entire domain of a construct” (p. 113). Excluding one dimension of a higher-order construct is equivalent to deleting one part of the construct.

[Insert Table 3 about here]



### *Evaluation of structural model*

To evaluate the model's predictive capability, a blindfolding procedure was employed, resulting in cross-validated redundancy values ( $Q^2$ ) greater than zero. This finding provides evidence in support of the predictive accuracy of the hypothesized model. The standardized root mean square residuals (SRMR) were calculated by computing the difference between the predicted correlation and the observed correlation. As suggested by Henseler *et al.* (2016), SRMR serves as a robust goodness-of-fit measure for PLS-SEM to identify potential errors in the model specification. The obtained SRMR values for the analysed models are 0.058, which fall within an acceptable range, indicating that the model fits the data well (Hu and Bentler, 1999). An acceptable measurement model in the first and second stages allowed to assess the structural model. Bootstrapping with 5,000 re-samples was performed to evaluate the significance of path coefficients. Bootstrapping is a nonparametric technique utilized in PLS-SEM to examine the statistical significance of various results such as path coefficients (Ringle *et al.*, 2015). Table 4 shows the results of the hypothesis test. First, HIWS do not significantly relate to completing work (H1a,  $\beta = -0.064$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ,  $CI = [-0.166, 0.042]$ ); thus, H1a is not supported. HIWS are positively associated with avoiding distraction (H1b,  $\beta = 0.180$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ,  $CI = [0.030, 0.190]$ ). Therefore, H1b is accepted. The mediation test was based on the product of co-efficient approach (Hayes and Scharkow 2013). We also checked the confidence intervals (CI) to determine the presence of a significant mediating effect. HIWS significantly enhance competence ( $\beta = 0.370$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ,  $CI = [0.230, 0.521]$ ). Competence significantly relates to completing work ( $\beta = 0.260$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ,  $CI = [0.077, 0.433]$ ) but does not significantly associate with avoiding distraction ( $\beta = 0.048$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ,  $CI = [-0.075, 0.173]$ ). The results suggest competence mediates the relationship between HIWS and completing work (H2a,  $\beta = 0.096$  [ $0.370 \times 0.260$ ],  $P < 0.01$ ,  $CI = [0.030, 0.190]$ ). However, the indirect effect of HIWS on avoiding distraction through competence remains insignificant (H2b,  $\beta = 0.018$  [ $0.370 \times 0.048$ ],  $P > 0.05$ ,  $CI = [-0.029, 0.069]$ ). Therefore, H2a is supported, but H2b is not. Finally, the proposed model included age, gender, job experience and educational qualifications as control variables. The results showed that age has a significant impact on avoiding distraction ( $\beta = 0.157$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $CI = [0.016, 0.299]$ ) and gender has a significant influence on competence ( $\beta = -0.116$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $CI = [-0.202, -0.032]$ ). However, neither job experience nor educational qualifications are significantly related to outcome variables (competence, completing work and avoiding distraction).

[Insert Table 4 about here]

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**Discussion**

Drawing on the JD-R model, the present study examined the effect of HIWS on completing work and avoiding distraction as two dimensions of presenteeism and the mediating role of competence in this relationship. The results demonstrate that HIWS are significantly related to avoiding distraction but not to completing work. The results also indicate that competence mediates the effect of HIWS on completing work but not on avoiding distraction. Van Esch et al. (2018) similarly found employees’ competencies mediated the link between high performance work practices and firm performance.

The present study makes several contributions to the literature. First, by focusing on completing work and avoiding distraction dimensions of presenteeism, this study extends understanding of two-dimensional aspects of presenteeism, which is centred on an individual’s health and performance demands (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020; Whysall *et al.*, 2018). Most previous studies relied on a single-item scale to assess presenteeism that may exclude key work-related characteristics (Ruhle *et al.*, 2020). We argue that a conducive psychosocial work environment fostering increased autonomy and decision-making control can assist employees in dealing with the consequences of health difficulties and performance demands, facilitating improved work adaptation. Specifically, our model emphasizes facilitating job resources through HIWS that might help presentees to adjust to work conditions and overcome health issues (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021). Thus, the present study responds to Karanika-Murray and Biron’s (2020) call to revisit presenteeism as adaptive behavior, particularly in the case of non-contagious health conditions.

Second, we contribute to the HIWS literature by demonstrating that HIWS, as job resources, are positively and significantly related to avoiding distraction. This is consistent with extant studies that facilitating job resources help presentees in adjusting to work conditions and overcome health issues (Bergström *et al.*, 2020; Goto *et al.*, 2020). This study also found that HIWS are not significantly related to completing work dimension of presenteeism. First, the insignificant relationship might be due to higher work demands of Bangladeshi bank employees that increase the possibility of working on days when they are sick (Islam *et al.*, 2021). Employees “will be inclined to do everything they can to meet these demands so that their performance remains at the desired level”, when they are under pressure to finish their tasks by the deadline (Demerouti *et al.*, 2009, p. 52). Second, extant literature shows mixed relationships between job control and presenteeism (Gerich, 2019; Janssens *et al.*, 2016; Miraglia and Johns, 2016; Ruhle *et al.*, 2020). High-involvement employees may have the

resources to deal with job stress and avoid distractions in the workplace. However, the job resources may not provide sufficient arrangements to help employees complete workplace tasks while overcoming their health concerns. Third, HIWS are designed to enhance employee skills, knowledge, and motivation but do not directly address factors related to work completion, such as time management, workload distribution, or task prioritization (Oppenauer and Van De Voorde, 2018). Thus, HIWS may indirectly affect completing work by improving employees' capacity to cope with these challenges.

Third, this study provides a novel perspective on the relationship between HIWS and two dimensions of presenteeism by identifying competence as a mediator using the JD-R model. We found that competence mediates the effect of HIWS on completing work. As previously mentioned, HIWS are directly related to avoiding distraction, but not to completing work dimension of presenteeism. These findings contribute to the implications of JD-R model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Job resources help employees customize work practices and concentrate at work, avoiding distractions caused by health issues (Taris and Kompier, 2004). Our model presents competence as a personal resource that can be used similarly to job resources to fulfil work tasks. The integration of personal resources (competence) to job resources (HIWS) can considerably boost employees' ability to accomplish tasks despite health concerns and performance demands (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). This study comprehensively captures competence by encompassing cognitive, functional and social dimensions that reflect individuals' capabilities closely connected with job performance (Le Deist and Winterton, 2005). Thus, the present study contributes to presenteeism literature by suggesting essential job and personal resources that help employees overcome health challenges and deal with performance demands (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020).

### Implications for management

The current study offers several implications for managers. First, Boxall and Winterton (2018) noted that implementing high-involvement work could systematically yield improved employee outcomes more than individual involvement practices. Employees can experience the shared consequences when organizations simultaneously invest in human capital in the form of training and rewards, provide better access to information resources, and provide employees with greater autonomy and decision-making control. As a result, managerial commitment is required to deploy HIWS properly (Boxall *et al.*, 2019). Management should create a conducive work environment and provide adequate facilities to enhance employees'

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feelings about active participation in their jobs. This suggests organizations should devote more resources to creating and implementing HIWS.

Second, managers should consider various types of presenteeism (i.e., functional and dysfunctional), which rely on the severity of health problems and performance demands (Whysall *et al.*, 2018). Dysfunctional presenteeism entails high hazards that organizations should try to eradicate (Chen *et al.*, 2021). Extra attention should be paid to employees who encounter ill-health conditions and are at risk of dysfunctional presenteeism. In functional presenteeism, presentees can continue working without stressing health problems. Third, management must create suitable psychosocial work environments that encourage presentees to show up for work while reducing health and performance demands (Collins and Cartwright, 2012). Our findings suggest that the implementation of HIWS might be beneficial in overcoming employees' health and performance demands (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2021). Specifically, given the positive effect of HIWS on avoiding distraction, managers should recognize that HIWS can enhance employees' ability to concentrate at work without being distracted by health problems. This finding is important for the Bangladeshi context, where employees suffer from presenteeism due to insufficient job resources and tend to leave their organization (Haque, 2021).

Fourth, our findings regarding the mediating role of competence suggest that management should not depend on HIWS alone to provide employees with resources to cope with greater job demands and minimize their feelings of unwellness. Rather, management should find ways to increase employees' personal resources (i.e., competence). Organization should encourage employees utilizing individual competence to support work adaptation and deal with work demands. Three types of competence (i.e., cognitive, functional and social) can be used to guide managers how to effectively balance employees' working and health limits. Finally, managers should recognize individual competence and high-involvement work resources for an effective management of presenteeism in the workplace.

**Limitations and future research**

This study has several limitations and suggests directions for future researchers. First, this study relied on self-reported and cross-sectional data. We initiated some measures (i.e., ensuring confidentiality in survey response) to reduce the possibility of CMB in our data. The present study emphasizes employees' perceptions of work practices, and their work demands and health concerns, we believe that the use of self-reported measures of HIWS and presenteeism is valid. Future studies could use triangulated measures and a longitudinal approach. Second,

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3 this study was conducted in the banking sector of Bangladesh and could usefully be replicated  
4 in other contexts. Third, this study found the association between HIWS and completing work  
5 dimension of presenteeism to be insignificant. Future research could examine the curvilinearity  
6 of the relationship between HIWS and presenteeism. As Gerich (2019) noted that job control  
7 can reduce presenteeism only to a degree, and sickness presenteeism is more visible among  
8 employees with insufficient or excessive job control. In contrast, a moderate to low amount of  
9 job control, defined as an employee's authority over scheduling decisions, location, or method,  
10 is associated with decreased sickness presenteeism (Gerich, 2019). Therefore, additional  
11 research is required to determine whether a low, moderate, or high level of HIWS relates to  
12 presenteeism. Presenteeism should also be studied in terms of the environment under which  
13 employees can function (i.e., continuing work without taxing personal health problems)  
14 (Karanika-Murray and Biron, 2020).  
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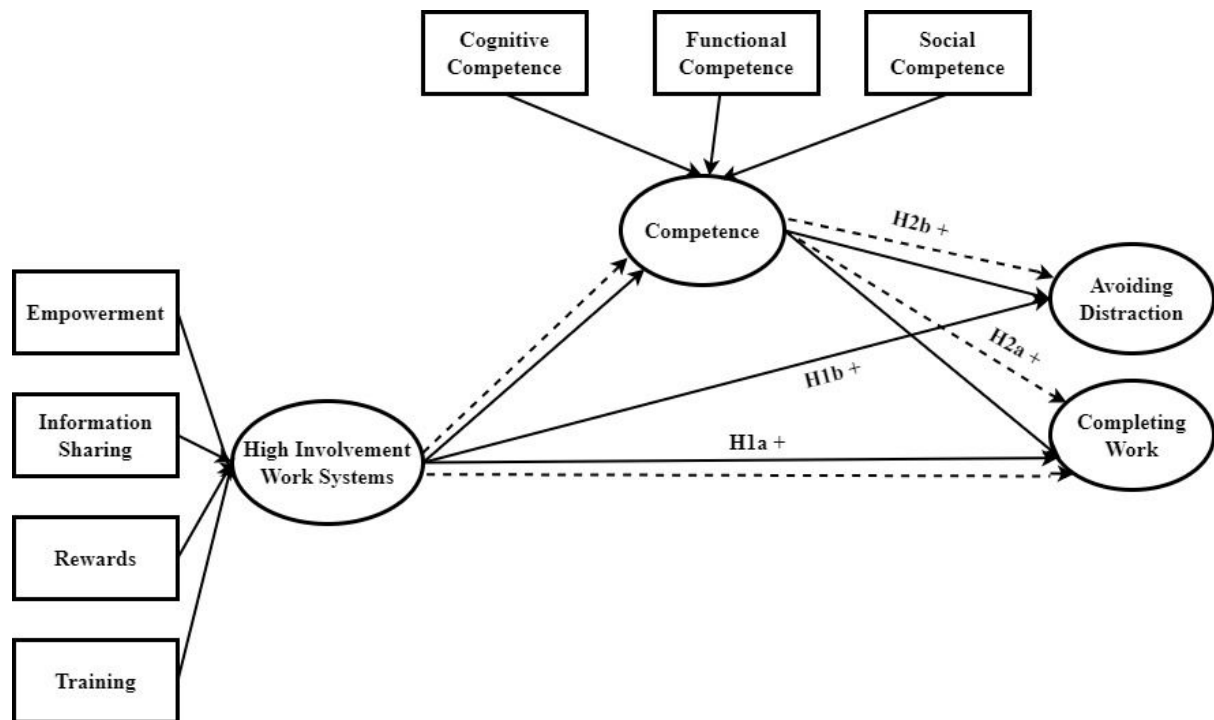


Figure 1: Research model proposing direct (solid lines) and indirect (dotted lines) relationships

Construct/item	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Empowerment		0.828	0.897	0.743
Emp1	0.877			
Emp2	0.876			
Emp3	0.833			
Information Sharing		0.786	0.852	0.594
Info1	0.844			
Info2	0.636			
Info3	0.703			
Info4	0.875			
Rewards		0.866	0.899	0.641
Rew1	0.774			
Rew2	0.817			
Rew3	0.732			
Rew4	0.856			
Rew5	0.818			
Training		0.833	0.880	0.647
Tr1	0.814			
Tr2	0.720			
Tr3	0.888			
Tr4	0.788			
Cognitive Competence		0.850	0.899	0.690
CogC1	0.770			
CogC2	0.853			
CogC3	0.872			
CogC4	0.826			
Functional Competence		0.870	0.902	0.606
FunC1	0.781			
FunC2	0.813			
FunC3	0.766			
FunC4	0.826			
FunC5	0.774			
FunC6	0.704			
Social Competence		0.919	0.939	0.754
SocC1	0.838			
SocC2	0.865			
SocC3	0.864			
SocC4	0.908			
SocC5	0.865			
Completing Work		0.852	0.910	0.771
PR2	0.828			
PR5	0.887			
PR6	0.918			
Avoiding Distraction		0.795	0.878	0.706
PR1_R	0.769			
PR3_R	0.886			
PR4_R	0.862			

Table 1: Measurement model first-order Note: CR= Composite reliability, AVE= Average variance extracted



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Avoiding Distraction	0.840								
2. Cognitive Competence	0.101	0.831							
3. Completing Work	-0.142	0.192	0.878						
4. Empowerment	0.175	0.255	-0.036	0.862					
5. Functional Competence	0.144	0.812	0.244	0.247	0.778				
6. Information Sharing	0.176	0.38	0.068	0.474	0.38	0.771			
7. Rewards	0.026	0.184	0.003	0.361	0.193	0.533	0.801		
8. Social Competence	0.112	0.551	0.195	0.214	0.596	0.223	0.068	0.869	
9. Training	0.138	0.177	-0.009	0.415	0.235	0.516	0.567	0.004	0.805

Table 2: Fornell-Larcker criteria

Formative construct/ Dimensions	Weights	t-values	VIF
Competence			
Cognitive Competence	0.287	1.362	2.991
Functional Competence	0.674	2.965*	3.232
Social Competence	0.120	0.672	1.584
High-involvement work systems			
Empowerment	0.314	1.848*	1.364
Information Sharing	0.879	6.280*	1.692
Rewards	-0.235	1.315	1.675
Training	0.086	0.403	1.684

Table 3: Measurement model assessment second-order. Note: \* P< 0.05, VIF: Variance inflation factor

Hypothesis	Path coefficients	t-values	Confidence interval	Accepted
H1a: HIWS -> Completing Work	-0.064	1.004	[-0.166, 0.042]	No
H1b: HIWS -> Avoiding Distraction	0.180	2.427**	[0.004, 0.349]	Yes
H2a: HIWS -> Competence -> Completing Work	0.096	2.824**	[0.030, 0.190]	Yes
H2a: HIWS -> Competence -> Avoiding Distraction	0.018	0.595	[-0.029, 0.069]	No
<i>Control Variables</i>				
Age-> Completing Work	0.111	1.463	[-0.013, 0.235]	No
Age-> Avoiding Distraction	0.157	1.850*	[0.006, 0.290]	Yes
Age-> Competence	0.097	1.334	[-0.026, 0.213]	No
Education-> Completing Work	-0.060	0.918	[-0.166, 0.050]	No
Education-> Avoiding Distraction	0.013	0.199	[-0.093, 0.115]	No
Education -> Competence	-0.033	0.446	[-0.156, 0.089]	No
Gender-> Completing Work	0.054	1.025	[-0.038, 0.137]	No
Gender -> Avoiding Distraction	0.020	0.368	[-0.070, 0.107]	No
Gender -> Competence	-0.116	2.243*	[-0.202, -0.032]	Yes
Work Experience-> Completing Work	-0.050	0.609	[-0.184, 0.081]	No
Work Experience -> Avoiding Distraction	-0.086	1.045	[-0.221, 0.049]	No
Work Experience -> Competence	0.045	0.576	[-0.085, 0.171]	No

Table 4: Results of hypothesis testing. Note: \*  $P < 0.05$ , \*\*  $P < 0.01$