

The Impact of Work Stress, Health and Safety Measures, and Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction Among Remote Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Study of Employees in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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Abstract. This study investigates the factors influencing employee satisfaction while working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Drawing on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, we examine the relationships between work-from-home productivity, work stress, health and safety measures, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. An online questionnaire was distributed to 230 employees aged between 25 and 40 in Ho Chi Minh City, and structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data. The findings indicate that work stress negatively affects job satisfaction and work-from-home productivity, while health and safety measures and work-life balance positively influence job satisfaction. Work-from-home productivity does not directly impact satisfaction but promotes work-life balance. The study highlights the importance of addressing work stress, ensuring a safe and healthy work environment, and promoting work-life balance to enhance job satisfaction among remote workers in Ho Chi Minh City during the pandemic. The findings provide valuable insights for organizations and managers to optimize employee well-being and satisfaction in remote work settings.

Keywords: Work from home, Work Stress, Health and Safety, Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction

1. Introduction

In early 2020, the global spread of COVID-19 brought about unprecedented economic and social upheaval, particularly in the corporate sphere. This crisis has profoundly reshaped how people live, work, and conduct business. Recent years have seen remarkable technological advancements and organizational structure shifts, fundamentally altering the workplace environment. Among these changes, the widespread adoption of remote working practices is a major shift (Messenger & Gschwind, 2016). Remote work offers flexibility, allowing individuals to work without constraints of time, location, communication methods, or information access. While the concept of working from home was already gaining traction, the pandemic accelerated its adoption, transforming it from a choice to a necessity. It is anticipated that the trends toward remote work will persist even after the pandemic, ushering in lasting changes to global employment norms (Irawanto et al., 2021). This transformation has profound implications for businesses, impacting their operational strategies and reshaping the dynamics between employers and employees.

In Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, the work environment has significantly evolved to embrace remote work, reflecting global trends accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift from traditional office setups to remote work allows employees to operate from various locations such as homes, co-working spaces, and satellite offices. In 2020, over 50% of Vietnamese workers reported increased productivity from home, while 8% experienced not productive (Statista, 2023). However, more than 53 percent of all employees said they have been under more stress during the 2020 COVID outbreak, according to a national survey conducted by the payroll, recruitment, and outsourcing agency Adecco Vietnam (Vietnamnews, 2021). Therefore, this study aims to explicitly investigate the impact of remote work on job satisfaction by examining four key factors: work-from-home productivity, work-life balance, health and safety, and work stress. There are some reasons as follows: (1) Previous studies indicate mixed outcomes, with some employees reporting higher productivity due to fewer office distractions and others facing challenges like inadequate home office setups and lack of direct supervision; (2) whether remote work helps in achieving a better work-life balance or it leads to overworking and burnout due to the blurring of boundaries between work and home life; (3) how remote workers' health and safety, and stress (such as workload, communication challenges, and job security concerns) impacts job satisfaction.

The theoretical and practical significance of this research is twofold. Firstly, from a theoretical perspective, it aspires to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by proposing a comprehensive model elucidating the intricate relationships among the aforementioned factors—working from home, work-life balance, health and safety, work stress, and job satisfaction. This model aims to provide a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms shaping job satisfaction in the remote work environment, offering valuable insights for future research endeavors. Secondly, from a practical standpoint, this study seeks to shed light on the pragmatic implications of these factors for organizations and policymakers, particularly in the context of the widespread implementation of work-from-home policies. By highlighting the importance of addressing productivity, promoting a healthy work-life balance, ensuring the well-being and safety of remote workers, and mitigating work-related stress, the study aims to offer actionable recommendations for enhancing job satisfaction in remote work settings. In essence, this research endeavors to contribute both theoretically and practically, offering a comprehensive understanding of remote work environments and providing practical guidance for organizations seeking to optimize job satisfaction among their remote workforce.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, the job demands-resources (JD-R) model has gained prominence among researchers, as highlighted by Bakker & Demerouti (2014). The JD-R model posits that job demands and job resources play crucial roles in determining employee well-being and job outcomes. Job demands, such as workload and time pressure, can lead to stress and burnout, while job resources, such as autonomy and social support, can buffer the negative effects of demands and promote engagement and satisfaction. In the context of the study, remote work may introduce unique job demands, such as technological challenges and blurred boundaries between work and personal life, while also providing opportunities for job resources, such as flexibility and control over one's schedule. Understanding how these demands and resources interact can shed light on their impact on job satisfaction among remote workers in Ho Chi Minh City during the pandemic.

Moreover, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, as proposed by Hobfoll (2001), serves as a foundational framework for this research. COR theory complements the JD-R model by emphasizing the importance of resource conservation and acquisition in shaping individuals' responses to stressors. According to COR theory, individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect their resources, whether they be material, psychological, or social. Stress occurs when there is a threat of resource loss or when actual resource loss occurs. In the context of the study, remote workers may experience stress due to the depletion of resources such as social support from colleagues, access to ergonomic workspaces, or opportunities for relaxation and leisure. Health and safety measures implemented during the pandemic may serve as protective resources, helping to mitigate stress and preserve well-being among remote workers. Similarly, efforts to promote work-life balance can be seen as strategies to conserve resources and enhance job satisfaction by preventing resource depletion and facilitating resource acquisition.

By integrating the JD-R model and COR theory, this study can gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between work stress, health and safety measures, work-life balance, work-from-home productivity, and job satisfaction among remote workers in Ho Chi Minh City during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Job satisfaction (JS)

Job satisfaction reflects individuals' perceptions of the alignment between their job expectations and desires (Locke, 1970). When employees feel supported in achieving their work values, job satisfaction tends to rise (Clark, 1996). The most notable advantage of teleworking is that it can lead to increased job satisfaction (Virick et al., 2010). According to academics and businesses alike, the goal of teleworking, or working from home, is to create a new work organization structure that supports and facilitates work-life balance (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020). It is seen as a concerted effort to enhance job satisfaction among remote employees (Kim et al., 2020).

Work From Home Productivity (WFHP)

Amidst the ongoing global pandemic, employee productivity has become increasingly vital for organizational success as companies adopt work-from-home (WFH) approaches. Work-from-home productivity (WFHP) refers to how effectively an employee engages in their tasks remotely and the quality of their output. Factors such as the level of technical proficiency required to complete assignments from home can influence WFHP. Moreover, productive employees typically meet their employer's expectations. Research indicates that WFH arrangements can boost worker productivity (Baker et al., 2007), underscoring the need to examine its impact on job satisfaction (Frolick et al., 1993). Numerous benefits of working from home have been discovered by empirical research, including better job satisfaction, higher job performance, lower intentions to leave, and lower stress levels (Contreras et al., 2020; Fonner & Roloff, 2010; Coenen & Kok, 2014). Organizations have introduced work-from-home policies to provide employees greater flexibility at work and boost productivity (Bowling, 2007; Chidambaram et al., 2024; Berinato, 2014). Numerous studies have demonstrated the

advantages of work-from-home arrangements, such as enhanced output, decreased staff attrition, and elevated job contentment (Baker et al., 2007; Lim & Teo, 2000).

Work-from-home productivity (WFHP) is highly likely to result in job satisfaction, as evidenced by extensive literature in organizational behavior and industrial psychology. Foundational studies in these fields have consistently demonstrated a strong correlation between productivity and job satisfaction. Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985) and Judge et al. (2001) provide compelling evidence that more productive employees tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Furthermore, a wealth of recent research reinforces this connection. For instance, Aruldoss et al. (2021) found that when employees can work efficiently, their job satisfaction increases significantly. This efficiency is often enhanced in work-from-home settings, where employees can better manage their work-life balance, reduce commute stress, and create personalized work environments that boost productivity. Despite some academic claims that the relationship between productivity and satisfaction may be spurious and lacking a clear cause-and-effect link (Bowling, 2007; Peiró et al., 2019), the overwhelming majority of research supports the positive impact of WFHP on job satisfaction. Critics argue that external factors could influence this relationship; however, the consistent findings across numerous studies provide a robust counterargument. The empirical evidence suggests that the benefits of increased productivity facilitated by work-from-home arrangements are closely tied to enhanced job satisfaction.

H1: Work-from-home productivity positively impacts Job satisfaction.

Work Stress (WS)

Work stress refers to a state that affects emotions and cognitive abilities. When resources in the workplace fail to meet job requirements, individuals may experience heightened stress levels, leading to pessimism and dissatisfaction. Factors such as role ambiguity, excessive workload, conflicting roles, and time constraints associated with working from home can exacerbate work stress in the present scenario. Consequently, these stressors can significantly diminish both productivity and job satisfaction, as demonstrated by Kim et al. (2020). Research by Hsu et al. (2019) and Chao et al. (2015) further underscores the detrimental impact that work-related stress can have on job satisfaction. When companies require remote employees to work continuously for extended periods, this often leads to employees logging more hours than they would in a traditional office setting. Such extended periods of work inevitably result in fatigue, which, as Allison et al. (2022) have shown, leads to a marked reduction in productivity. This prolonged overwork not only hinders productivity but also exacerbates employee exhaustion, severely impacting job satisfaction. Hoang and Knabe (2021) emphasize that extended work periods can lead to burnout, further compounding the negative effects on both productivity and job satisfaction.

H2: Work stress negatively affects Work-from-home Productivity

H3: Work stress negatively affects Job Satisfaction.

Health and Safety (HS)

During the pandemic, maintaining physical and mental health and reducing the risk of viral transmission are essential components of health and safety. According to scholars, industry professionals, and health experts, implementing measures to curb virus spread and support mental health is paramount (Tokazhanov et al., 2021). Efficient safety measures include implementing cutting-edge technologies that minimize human contact, like motion sensors and touchless technology, as well as creating self-cleaning zones and choosing materials for indoor spaces that prevent the spread of viruses. Additionally, strategies like creating outdoor spaces such as balconies during lockdowns to provide fresh air and access to shared areas with adequate safety protocols promote mental and physical health (Amerio et al., 2020; Tleuken et al., 2021). Concerns for health and safety drive employees to opt for remote work amidst the pandemic. In the realm of remote work, employees are inclined to excel in their tasks to showcase efficiency and maintain their work-from-home arrangements. Enhanced safety and health measures correlate with increased job satisfaction.

Employee performance is thought to be greatly influenced by their work environment. Positive work environments can inspire workers to put in more effort and have an effect on morale and output. The suitability of the workspace at home is one of the most significant factors influencing the performance of remote work (Nakrošienė et al., 2019). Workers who work remotely from home demonstrate that they require a high-quality workspace that is comparable to one in a traditional office, complete with equipment, seclusion, and a calming atmosphere (Fan Ng, 2010). Therefore, implementing comprehensive safety and health measures can significantly enhance work-from-home productivity. Ensuring that employees have a safe and healthy work environment, free from physical hazards and equipped with ergonomic support, can reduce the risk of injury and illness. Additionally, promoting mental well-being through stress management resources and a supportive work culture helps employees maintain focus and efficiency. When employees feel secure and healthy, they are more likely to be productive, as their physical and psychological needs are met.

Positive work outcomes are more likely to occur in employees who are happy with their workplace. Employee performance will be positively impacted by the elements that make up a positive work environment (Awada et al., 2022). A strong emphasis on safety and health not only protects employees but also boosts job satisfaction. When employees perceive that their well-being is a priority, it fosters a sense of loyalty and commitment to the organization. Providing a safe work environment and promoting health initiatives, such as mental health support and wellness programs, can enhance employees' overall job satisfaction. Satisfied employees are more engaged, motivated, and likely to exhibit higher levels of job performance, leading to positive outcomes for both the individual and the organization

H4: Safety and health positively impact Work-from-home productivity.

H5: Safety and health positively impact Job satisfaction

Work-life balance (WLB)

Work-life balance is defined as an individual's ability to effectively manage and harmonize work and personal commitments (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Achieving this balance involves adjusting the interplay between professional and personal spheres to enhance psychological health and overall job satisfaction (Irawanto et al., 2021). The growing importance of work-life balance is increasingly evident as the needs and expectations of successive generations evolve. This shift highlights a rising societal conflict between work demands and personal life, which significantly diminishes the quality of life (Prasetyaningtyas et al., 2021). The concept of work-life balance, as described by Jyothi and Jyothi (2012), refers to achieving an equilibrium between one's personal and professional lives. This balance is crucial for fostering a sense of well-being and job satisfaction. Balancing work and personal life reduces stress, prevents burnout, and enhances overall well-being, leading to greater job satisfaction. Research by Jackson and Fransman (2018) supports this, demonstrating a positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. When employees can effectively balance their work responsibilities with their personal lives, they experience higher satisfaction in their jobs.

H6: Work-Life Balance positively impacts Job Satisfaction.

During the global pandemic, working from home has allowed employees to reclaim time previously spent commuting. This reclaimed time can be more effectively allocated to work tasks and personal matters, better balancing professional and personal responsibilities. Additionally, the literature on work-from-home productivity (WFHP) and work-life balance (WLB) consistently shows that employees appreciate the ability to safeguard their health during the pandemic while maintaining their job performance and job security. Research indicates that flexible work schedules and remote working arrangements contribute significantly to employee satisfaction, productivity, and a healthy work-life balance (Darko-Asumadu et al., 2018; Darcy et al., 2012; Dolcos & Daley, 2009).

H7: Work-from-home productivity positively impacts Work-life balance.

3. Research Methodology

The study consists of five key factors including work-life balance, job satisfaction, job stress, health and safety, and work-from-home productivity. We used multiple scale items adapted from previous studies to measure the constructs of the five factors mentioned above. The survey was translated literally from English to Vietnamese by a qualified native translator. We then went on to develop a questionnaire and asked experts to evaluate its relevance and content validity. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was used to rate each item. The survey process includes two stages. Initially, we did a pilot, inviting 45 people to participate in interviews to measure the suitability of the survey and revise the content of some questions. Next, we conducted an official online survey via Facebook and Gmail to appropriate audiences. Using this sampling method limits the generalizability of the findings. However, these limitations were mitigated by distributing the survey across various social media groups, which included participants from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. We received a total of 264 responses, but only 230 were accepted for data analysis after a rigorous screening process, aimed at eliminating low-quality surveys. To determine an effective and appropriate sample size, the internet-based a priori Sample Size Calculator was used for structural equation models. Based on analysis of statistical power level 0.95, expected probability 0.05, predicted effect size 0.3, number of latent constructs, and number of observations, the results indicate a the minimum sample needed to detect an effect was 200 responses, while the minimum sample size needed for the model structure was 148 responses. Therefore, we determined that our sample size of 230 was sufficient for structural equation models and of sufficient statistical significance to identify any meaningful effects. Following Anderson & Gerbing (1988), we present a two-step modeling procedure: through testing, we first evaluate the validity and reliability of the measurement model. We also examined the structural model to study the relationship between theoretical ideas and model fit.

Table 1. Measurement items

Factors	Original questions	References
Job Satisfaction (JS)	JS1: “I am satisfied with my current job.”	(Kowalski et al., 2022)
	JS2: “I am satisfied with my current co-workers.”	
	JS3: “I am satisfied and feel happy with my current boss.”	
	JS4: “I am satisfied with my current salary.”	
Work Stress (WS)	WS1: “I feel like giving up on work while working from home.”	(Kowalski et al., 2022)
	WS2: “I feel many things are beyond my control and ability while working from home.”	
	WS3: “I feel overwhelmed by completing work while working from home.”	
Work From Home Productivity (WFHP)	WFHP1: “I am very productive while working from home.”	(Kowalski et al., 2022)
	WFHP2: “I feel that the quality of the work I carry out while working from home is better.”	
	WFHP3: “Working from home is personally beneficial for me at work.”	
	WFHP4: “Working from home motivates me to work better.”	
Work-life balance (WLB)	WLB1: “I have adequate time to spend with the family even if I work in the organization or at home.”	(Kowalski et al., 2022)
	WLB2: “I can maintain my work and family with a proper schedule even if I work in the organization or at home.”	
	WLB3: “I am not missing important social occasions even if I work in the organization or at home.”	
	HS1: “My home is well protected against virus propagation.”	

Health and Safety (HS)	HS2: "My home environment keeps my mental well-being in a good state."	(Tleuken et al., 2022)
	HS3: "My home environment keeps my physical well-being in a good state."	

4. Research Results and Discussion

Table 2 illustrates the gender and age distribution of the 230 respondents. Females comprise the majority at 54.3%, while males account for 45.03%. The highest proportion of individuals engaged in remote work falls within the age range of 25 to 30 years old, constituting 62.2% of the sample, followed by the age group of 31 to 35 years old at 20.90%. Conversely, the age group of 36 to 40 exhibits the lowest percentage at 17%. These findings suggest that companies may consider selecting employees aged between 25 and 30 years old, as they demonstrate efficiency in remote work settings.

Table 2. Respondents' profile

Measure	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	125	54.3%
	Male	105	45.7%
Age	25 to 30 years	143	62.2%
	31 to 35 years	48	20.9%
	36 to 40 years	39	17.0%

The measurement model underwent a rigorous evaluation to ensure the validity and reliability of the construct measures (Hair et al., 2023). Firstly, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR). The results, presented in Table 5, indicate that both Cronbach's alpha and CR scores surpass the 0.7 cutoff value, affirming strong internal consistency reliability across constructs. Consequently, all observed variables were retained for analysis. Secondly, convergent validity was evaluated through the average variance extracted (AVE) and outer factor loadings of the indicators. All outer loading values exceeded 0.7, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. Additionally, the AVE values surpassed 0.5, indicating that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. Thirdly, to ensure discriminant validity, the square root of each construct's AVE was compared to its correlation with other constructs. The results demonstrated that the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its correlation with other constructs, thereby confirming discriminant validity. Moreover, Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) values were found to be below the 0.85 threshold, further supporting discriminant validity. Tables 3 and 4 present detailed evidence of the discriminant validity assessment (Henseler et al., 2015), highlighting the robustness of the measurement model.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion.

	HS	JS	WFHP	WLB	WS
HS	0.813				
JS	0.486	0.789			
WFHP	0.602	0.426	0.799		
WLB	0.494	0.466	0.415	0.803	
WS	-0.063	-0.203	-0.181	0.011	0.798

Table 4. HTMT ratio analysis.

	HS	JS	WFHP	WLB	WS
HS					
JS	0.622				

WFHP	0.774	0.529			
WLB	0.675	0.609	0.536		
WS	0.111	0.270	0.236	0.118	

Table 5. Outer loadings, AVE, CR, and Cronbach's Alpha.

Constructs	Measurement	Outerloadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.838	0.796	0.806	0.623
	JS2	0.772			
	JS3	0.834			
	JS4	0.705			
Work Stress	WS1	0.774	0.714	0.717	0.636
	WS2	0.827			
	WS3	0.792			
Work From Home Productivity	WFHP1	0.770	0.811	0.812	0.638
	WFHP2	0.809			
	WFHP3	0.818			
	WFHP4	0.796			
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.860	0.724	0.742	0.645
	WLB2	0.825			
	WLB3	0.719			
Health and Safety	HS1	0.798	0.743	0.751	0.661
	HS2	0.873			
	HS3	0.764			

First, we assessed the potential for construct collinearity. Our analysis revealed that collinearity between constructs did not present a significant issue, as all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values remained below the threshold of 2. Then, we employed P-values to determine the statistical significance of our hypotheses through bootstrapping with 1000 samples. Figure 1 illustrates the primary model parameters derived during the structural evaluation process.

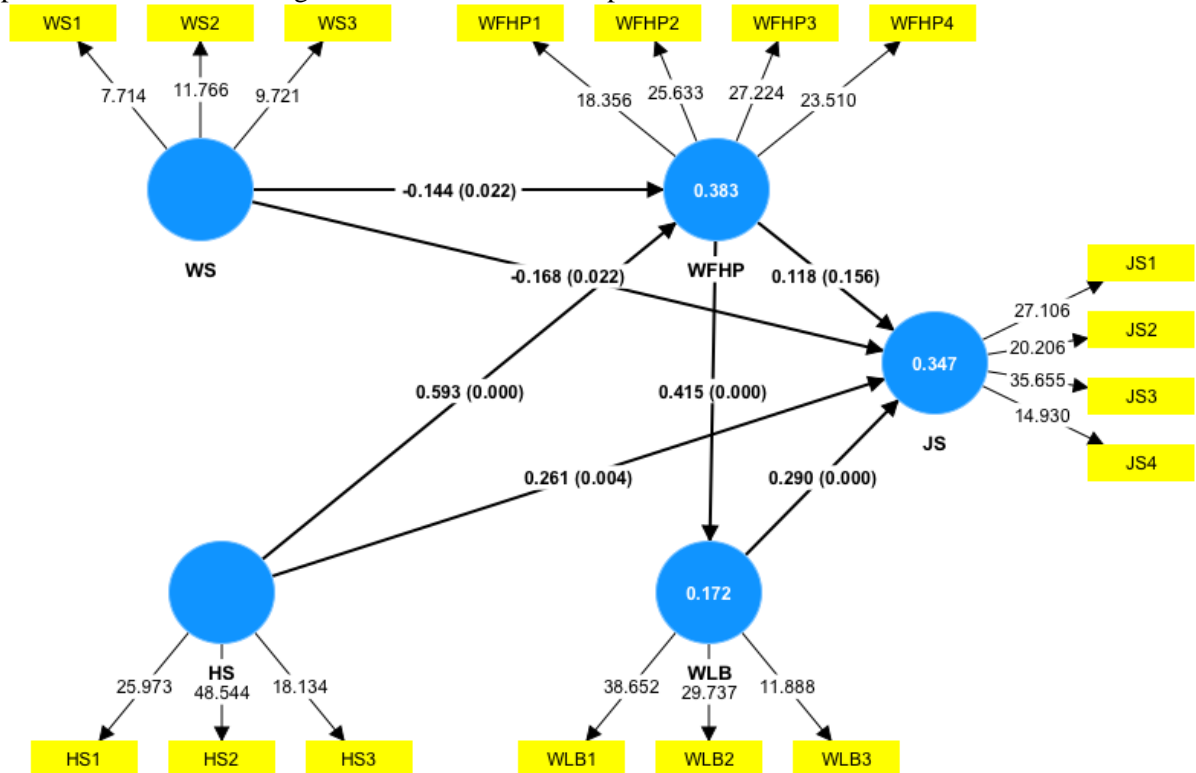


Fig. 1: The results of a structural equation model

First, there is no significant relationship between work-at-home productivity and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.118$, $p = 0.156$). The result is different from Kowalski et al. (2022). Remote work can lead to a sense of isolation and a lack of social interaction among employees. In Ho Chi Minh City, where workplace culture often emphasizes teamwork and interpersonal connections, the absence of face-to-face interaction may result in reduced job satisfaction, regardless of productivity levels. In some cases, employees in Ho Chi Minh City may face technological challenges and limitations in their work-from-home setups. Such challenges can hinder productivity despite employees' efforts to work remotely effectively. Additionally, frustrations arising from technological limitations may contribute to decreased job satisfaction, even if productivity remains unaffected. Besides, the absence of tangible feedback and acknowledgment for their efforts can lead to decreased job satisfaction, regardless of productivity levels achieved while working from home.

Second, there is a negative correlation between work stress and work-from-home productivity ($\beta = -0.144$, $p = 0.022$). This implies that they will not be productive at work if they are under too much stress. This finding is completely consistent with Kowalski et al. (2022). In Ho Chi Minh City, where the workforce faces various stressors such as adapting to remote work setups, navigating economic uncertainties, and managing personal and family responsibilities amidst the pandemic, it's understandable that increased stress levels could impact productivity negatively. Factors such as technological challenges, limited access to resources, and the blurring of boundaries between work and home life may contribute to this negative correlation.

The hypothesis (H3) suggests a negative relationship between work stress and job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.168$, $p = 0.022$), consistent with Limanta et al. (2023). Amidst the pandemic, Vietnamese workplaces have faced heightened demands, such as transitioning to remote work, adapting to new protocols, and coping with economic uncertainties. These factors contribute to increased stress levels among employees, compounded by pandemic-related uncertainties like health concerns and job security. Remote work arrangements and social distancing measures exacerbate feelings of isolation and lack of social support, further intensifying stress. Additionally, the blurring of boundaries between work and home life, coupled with rising demands, increases the risk of burnout characterized by emotional exhaustion and reduced professional efficacy. Such burnout negatively impacts job satisfaction. Furthermore, limited access to resources and support systems during the pandemic, such as mental health services and childcare, hinders employees' ability to effectively cope with stress, ultimately influencing their satisfaction with their jobs.

Next, the positive relationship between health and safety measures and work-from-home productivity ($\beta = 0.593$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that when employees feel safe and secure in their work environment, they are more likely to be productive while working from home. This finding is consistent with Tleuken et al. (2022). Given the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic, ensuring health and safety measures in the workplace, whether physical or virtual, is crucial for maintaining employee well-being and productivity. In Ho Chi Minh City, where remote work arrangements have become more common, providing resources for employees to create a safe and conducive work environment at home can significantly enhance productivity.

Fifth, the finding of a positive relationship between health and safety measures and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.261$, $p = 0.004$) underscores the significance of a safe work environment for employee well-being. This suggests that employees in Ho Chi Minh City consider a safe work environment as essential to their job satisfaction. This result aligns with Tleuken et al. (2022). Ensuring health and safety in the workplace is crucial for fostering a positive work environment and promoting employee satisfaction. In Ho Chi Minh City, where workplaces may face various challenges related to the pandemic and occupational safety, prioritizing health and safety measures can help enhance job satisfaction among employees.

Sixth, work-life balance is positively related to job satisfaction ($\beta=0.290$, $p=0.000$), highlighting the significance of achieving a healthy equilibrium between professional obligations and personal life

among employees. This suggests that employees in Ho Chi Minh City consider work-life balance to be crucial for their overall job satisfaction. This result is consistent with Kowalski et al. (2022) and Limanta et al. (2023). Ho Chi Minh City, like many other urban areas, presents various challenges related to work pressures, long hours, and commuting times. Employees in this context value the ability to prioritize personal time and commitments alongside their professional responsibilities. When employees feel they have sufficient time to attend to family, hobbies, and personal interests, they are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction.

Ultimately, the correlation between employees' work-at-home productivity and work-life balance is positive ($\beta = 0.415$, $p = 0.000$), indicating the significance of remote work arrangements in promoting a healthy balance between work and personal obligations. This suggests that when employees in Ho Chi Minh City are productive while working from home, they are better able to allocate time for family and personal matters. This result aligns with Kowalski et al. (2022). Remote work offers employees in Ho Chi Minh City the flexibility to manage their work schedules and allocate time for personal commitments, contributing to improved work-life balance. By being productive in their remote work tasks, employees can effectively fulfill their professional duties while still having time to attend to family responsibilities, pursue personal interests, and maintain overall well-being.

Table 6. Results of a structural equation model

Hypotheses	Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values	f square	Support
H1: WFHP \rightarrow JS	0.118	1.418	0.156	0.013	Rejected
H2: WS \rightarrow WFHP	-0.144	2.292	0.022	0.033	Accepted
H3: WS \rightarrow JS	-0.168	2.299	0.022	0.042	Accepted
H4: HS \rightarrow WFHP	0.593	9.030	0.000	0.568	Accepted
H5: HS \rightarrow JS	0.261	2.866	0.004	0.059	Accepted
H6: WLB \rightarrow JS	0.290	4.490	0.000	0.094	Accepted
H7: WFHP \rightarrow WLB	0.415	4.806	0.000	0.208	Accepted

The effect size (f^2) indicates the significant influence of the exogenous construct on the endogenous construct; values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively. The f^2 values for each combination of endogenous and exogenous construct are also shown in Table 7. When an exogenous latent construct's effect size exceeds 0.02, it is considered to have an effect.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing job satisfaction among remote workers in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research findings underscore the critical imperative of proactively addressing work stressors, fostering a safe and healthy work environment, and promoting work-life balance to optimize employee well-being and satisfaction within the remote work paradigm. For organizations and managers in Ho Chi Minh City, it is paramount to integrate these insights into the design and implementation of remote work policies and practices. This necessitates adopting a multifaceted approach, including regular check-ins to monitor employee well-being, providing access to mental health resources and support networks, and offering flexibility in work schedules to accommodate personal responsibilities. Additionally, investing in technology infrastructure to facilitate seamless communication and collaboration among remote teams can further enhance productivity and morale. By prioritizing these factors, businesses can cultivate a culture of care and resilience that not only nurtures individual growth but also drives organizational success in the evolving landscape of remote work. However, the study also has some limitations, such as the relatively small sample size and the cross-sectional nature of the data, which prevent causal inferences. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and explore the potential moderating effects of individual differences (e.g., personality traits, job characteristics) on the relationship between remote work and employee outcomes. Additionally, qualitative studies could provide a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and experiences of remote workers in Ho Chi Minh City during the pandemic. Despite these limitations, this study makes a valuable contribution to the growing body of research on

remote work and employee well-being, and its findings can inform evidence-based practices for supporting remote workers in Vietnam and beyond.

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