Determinants Influencing the Shift from Overtime Culture to Work-Life Balance in the Future Career and Life Aspirations of University Students in Ho Chi Minh City

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Abstract: **In the current economic context, in Vietnam the economy is developing very rapidly, young labor sources tend to switch from heavy work to a lighter work direction, balancing life and importantly still maintaining quality when working. This research explores the shift from over-time work towards a more balanced work-life approach among young individuals. Also several aspects, factors affecting and influencing work, the increasing awareness of mental health. Through a review of key studies, it also identifies critical gaps, including the limited understanding of cultural and societal influences on work-life balance perceptions. The research seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of work-life balance dynamics, providing insights for organizations to foster a supportive environment for a healthy, engaged, and sustainable workforce.**

Keywords: **over-time work; work-life balance; well-being; future career; life orientation.**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research context

In recent years in Ho Chi Minh City. There have been many changes in the working culture of young people, from the culture of working overtime to the balance between personal life and work, which is also a major concern of all workers today. Due to the rapid development of the economy, workers have to keep up, which means they also have to work overtime to meet market demand. Navigo's search also found that employers have witnessed a wave of job cuts, because the economy is declining, employers have stopped recruiting new employees. However, young people now attach great importance to mental health and quality of life. This trend not only reflects changes in personal priorities but also shows the transformation of organizations. Students are looking for a working environment that can satisfy their mental health and balance between personal life and work.

1.1.1. The component of overtime culture and its current relevance

Overtime culture is considered a standard of dedication and devotion. Especially in a strongly developed economic region like Ho Chi Minh City, this work culture appears in almost all fields. But the source of young workers are increasingly changing the work culture. Students are aware of the importance of mental health and family life. And they prioritize work-family balance.

1.1.2. The shift towards work-life balance

The culture of overtime work is gradually shifting to a culture of work-life balance that is gradually forming in the minds of young workers. Many students and workers are gradually shifting their work culture to ensure the quality of their health and family life. Always keep your mind relaxed to bring the best quality of work. This transition is driven by many factors

such as the awareness of mental health and life, the emergence of remote working technology, the impact of the covid-19 epidemic, for students today, work is not only to earn income but they also want it to bring joy, personal satisfaction and family happiness. This shift not only shows the development of thinking of young people in Vietnam but also in many other countries.

1.1.3. The impact of university students on future work culture

Current workplace culture is increasingly being improved and upgraded by university students in Ho Chi Minh City. From the culture of working overtime, university students are gradually changing to a balance between work and life, bringing many new perspectives. Financial opportunities, suitable working environment, ideal needs for progress are what university students are currently looking for to create conditions for them to develop comprehensively. And along with this change, companies must think about how they recruit, benefit programs, and promote the development of more flexible working environments that allow for a balance between work and life. And it is this new mindset of working to live that has replaced the old mindset of 'living to work' that is laying the foundation for a sustainable working culture.

1.2. Reasons for choosing the topic

The study from overtime work culture to a work culture that balances life and work is necessary for many important reasons. This change shows a significant development in the thinking and future orientation of today's youth. According to the study of Pham, et al. (2023), Vietnamese youth increasingly value and prioritize personal values and quality of life, not focusing too much on career achievements as before. They will become the key workforce in the future. In addition, this study also shows that companies are constantly improving the working environment. In the current fierce competition to retain key factors. This change in working culture not only brings high performance but also enhances employee engagement and satisfaction. Moreover, Ho Chi Minh City is the dynamic economic center of Vietnam, this research is meaningful to promote appropriate policies for individuals and businesses.

1.3. Research objectives

The research objective of the paper is to explore the factors affecting the psychological transition from overtime work to work-life balance and overtime work. The analysis aims to clarify the needs and desires of students through surveys and interviews. According to Dinh & Nguyen's research (2023), Vietnamese students are increasingly aware of the importance of maintaining a balance between work and life. To create opportunities for businesses to change to meet the needs of new employees. These measures not only increase work efficiency but also reduce burnout and improve employee satisfaction (Tran et al., 2024).

1.4. Scope of the study

The scope of the study focuses on 3rd and 4th year students studying in Ho Chi Minh City from many different universities to bring the most positive results. The study will show the attitudes and perceptions of students towards work-life balance. The study will also find solutions to these attitudes that affect their future career paths.

1.5. Significance of the topic

This study is very important in the current rapidly changing work environment. Exploring the shift from shift work culture to work-life balance. According to HRM Asia, many young employees in Vietnam increasingly appreciate work-life balance and are willing to quit their jobs if it affects their health and personal life. Understanding and solving these challenges will help shape the future work culture. With these benefits, the study has contributed a lot to raising awareness about health and quality of life of students.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. General information

In recent past decades, rapid urbanization and economic have fostered competitive work environment and increased demand of work efficiency. In large cities with highly specialized industries such as information technology, finance, and media, overtime work has been become a popular phenomenon. In addition, living in the modern socio-economic context, the tendency of working overtime has become a common problem, especially in urban areas where the speed of living and working is fast and continuous. Many workers, principally young citizens entering the workforce, accept overtime to adapt

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job requirements and demonstrate their capabilities in an increasingly competitive labor market. However, there are more and more researches show that younger generations, specifically those living in cities, are shifting from prioritizing work to seeking and enjoying work-life balance. This fluctuation reflects changes in individual values and the evolution of labor policies in developed and developing nations.

With the rising awareness of mental health, spirituality, and personal development, a new wave of change is gradually forming in the attitudes of the younger generation living in urban areas. Millennials and Gen Z - those who born and raised in the digital age - are looking for ways to have more time for themselves instead of completely focus on their careers as previous generations (Gen X, Gen Y). This represents a clear shift in the values and priorities of modern workers, mainly in the context of high pressures on time and space of urban life. Additionally, it is also a result of several factors such as community, culture, and technology are quickly changing in modern life.

Therefore, research on "Factors effect to the tendency from over-time work to work-life balance in city's young generation" is necessary to better understand the shift in working habits of young people. It could help to identify the factors driving this trend and might provide a basis to build reasonable labor policies that are suitable for the new needs of workers. In the next follow part of the literature review, our group will delve into various studies that have been conducted on over-time work, changing view on work-life balance, as well as the factors that influence this change to young people.

2.2. Over-time work: then and now

Many previous studies have shown that working overtime has a major impact on both mental health and physical health of employees. According to Spark et al. (2011), while over-time work can boost short-term productivity, long-term effects on health and job satisfaction are often negative, leading to burnout, stress, insomnia, and decreased overall performance.

"Over-time work refers to the practice of working beyond the standard or contractual hours, often driven by workplace demands or individual ambition to increase productivity or earnings" (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). They have also highlighted that in large cities where the work environment is highly competitive, working overtime often becomes a cultural norm and businesses in those cities often encourage their staff to work overtime as a way to maximize productivity.

According to Piszczek (2020), as digital tools blur the lines between work and personal life, over-time work has become more prevalent, with employees often working beyond standard hours due to constant connectivity. This study concentrated to the way that digital technology and the 24/7 connection ability have risen workload and overtime, especially in urban areas.

"Recent studies continue to show the detrimental effects of prolonged over-time work, with extended hours contributing to increased risks of mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression" (Wong et al., 2021). This study examines the impact of working overtime on worker's mental health, particularly in high-intensity work fields.

Another research of Giurge & Bohns (2021) "The shift to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in over-time work, as the boundaries between work and home became increasingly blurred". Research points that because of the huge impact of historical pandemic and global financial crisis, people must have to work, to survive, to avoid unemployment.

2.3. Tendency of work-life balance

"There's no such thing as work-life balance. There are work-life choices, and you make theme, and they have consequences", stated by Jack Welsh, former General Electrics CEO and all-round business guru. According to Welsh work-life balance is a fictitious concept if you want to be at the top of your game.

"Work-life balance is the degree to which individuals are able to achieve a satisfying level of involvement or 'fit' between the various roles in their life, especially between their job and personal life" - Parkes and Langford (2020).

The definition of a study of Soomro, Breitenecker, & Shah (2018) views work-life balance as the poise between fulfilling work commitments and managing non-work activities, which contributes to personal health and job satisfaction.

Gregory and Milner (2021) has shown that "Work-life balance can be defined as the equilibrium between work and other life domains, which allows individuals to meet their personal goals and maintain overall well-being."

Recently research of Silva & Lima (2019) emphasizes the tendency among young generation in big cities, focusing on achieving work-life balance as a key factor for personal and development.

Technology has played an important role in driving this shift. The development of remote working tools and constant connection ability has made it possible for employees to get work done without having to be physically in the office for long hours. This has decreased the pressure of overtime and provided employees with the opportunity to manage their time more effectively. According to Piszczek (2020) "technology has enabled flexible working, giving employees more control over their schedules."

Otherwise, social and cultural trends have changed, creating a new foundation for the younger generation in their approach to work. There is an increasing public discussion of mental health, burnout, and the need for a healthy life outside of work. This has prompted individuals to reconsider how they allocate their time and energy between work and personal life. As McDowall & Kinman (2017) noted, "work-life balance is no longer just a theoretical concept but has become an essential element of overall employee health and long-term performance."

2.4. Factors effect

2.4.1. Individual factors

Firstly, generational traits in younger generations, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, have different expectations of work than previous generations. They value personal values, mental health, and time for themselves and their families over working long hours to advance their careers. These values lead them to seek a better work-life balance.

Secondly, the pressure to work overtime often leads to negative consequences for mental and physical health, such as stress, burnout, and even long-term health problems. Awareness of these harmful effects is making the younger generation want to move away from the culture of working overtime.

Thirdly, personal motivation and life values have a strong impact on the choice between working overtime and maintaining work-life balance. People who are motivated by financial goals may prioritize working overtime, while those are more focused on life values and happiness will focus on work-life balance.

2.4.2. Organizational factors

Workplace policies and environment, including benefits, flexible working hours, and mental health support, play an essential role in enabling employees to maintain a work-life balance. Businesses that offer supportive policies such as remote work or reduced hours can help employees transition from overtime to work-life balance more easily. Research of Kossek and Distelberg (2009) has emphasizes the role of flexible working policies and family support in helping employees achieve work-life balance.

Corporate culture can create pressure to work overtime or encourage work-life, Companies with cultures that value dedication and overtime often make it hard for employees to maintain balance. Conversely, companies that value sustainable employee development and respect for personal life facilitate this shift.

As mentioned above, technology and remote work have changed the way how people approach their work. This also contributed to the move of tendency of work.

2.4.3. Social factors

Social pressure, especially from friends, family, and co-workers, might influence the decision to work overtime or maintain a work-life balance. In some cultures, working overtime is seen as a sign of dedication and success, while in others, balance and self-care are more valued. A book of Hochschild (1997) called "The time bind: When work becomes home and home becomes work.", he studied the social pressures that make it difficult for workers to avoid working overtime, and shows the linh between culture and individual decision about working hours.

2.5. Gaps in research

Although there are several studies have analyzed the impact of organizational factors (flexible work policies, corporate culture) and social factors (peer pressure, family, and urban culture), most of these studies often separate these two groups of factors. There are currently few studies that specifically explore the relationship between organizational and social factors

in influencing the shift from overtime to work-life balance, especially in large cities with complex work environments and social pressures. There is no specific research model that synthesizes both of these factors and analyzes their interrelationship in the modern urban context. For example, in a study of Sharma (2020) - "City life and work-life balance: The changing dynamics.", this is a study about urban culture, however, it has not yet analyzed the relationship with organizational factors.

In recent time, technology and work-from-home have changed the way people work, making it easier for employees to maintain a work-life balance. However, most research on the impact of technology on work-life balance has concentrated on developed countries. Developing countries, especially large urban cities, have different work environments, with their own challenges in terms of technological infrastructure and work culture. Also, there is little research exploring the impact of technology and remote work in big cities in developing countries, where the combination of work-from-home and social culture factors might have different effects. For instance, remote work in several cities such as New York or London might be different from cities like Ho Chi Minh city or Mumbai, where technological infrastructure and work culture may greatly influence the effectiveness of remote work. "Employee adjustment and well-being in the are of COVID-19: Implications for human resource management" - [Carnevale & Hatak (2020)], this study identified impacts of remote work, but has just focused on developed nations.

Many studies have analyzed the difference in priorities and values between generations, could be mentioned Millennials and Gen Z versue Baby Boomers. But, these studies often compare these generations in a broad context, with little focus on differences between generations within the same organization or industry. The question is: in a multi-generational workplace, how might work policies and cultures affect the work-life balance of different generations differently?

There is a lack of specific study on the influence of laws and social policies such as leave, maximum working hours, and health insurance, etc on this shift, particularly in large cities where governments policies can have a direct impact on work culture. Additionally, although "work-life balance" is a widely studied, there is no consistent measure for assessing it. Some studies use indicators such as working hours, while others use indicators related to life satisfaction or mental health. This leads to inconsistencies in comparing result and summarizing studies. Greenhaus and Allen (2011) - "Work-family balance: A review and extension of the literature", this study has shown many different measurement, but, has not given a consistent measurement to measure work-life balance.

III.   METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Model and Hypotheses

The study concentrates on finding out which factors account for the gradual transition of overtime culture (OVT) in Ho Chi Minh City among university students orientation into work-life balance (WLB) issues. The research model is based on one primary dependent variable: Evolution from overtime culture to work-life balance, supported by four independent variables: Personal Factors, Social Factors, Technological Factors, and Organizational Factors. However, it is a special point with these variables that the influence of Personal Factors on the Evolution is direct, but does not occur in isolation because it is also impacted by three remaining factors. Therefore, the model will created with the hypotheses as the following.
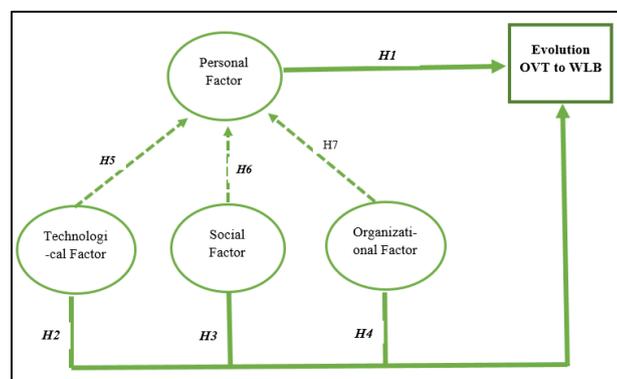
Source: by authors

Figure 3.1. -The research model of the relationship between variables and hypotheses in the evolution from Overtime to Work-life balance.

In this research model – hypothesis, Personal Factors are predicted to have a significant effect on the transition from overtime culture to work-life balance among modern young generation in general, and also college students in particular.

H1: Personal Factors including some demographic factors (gender, age, place to live and study, major,…) and other such as part-time work experiences, expected income, which make the change most impact.

H2: Technological factors include the power of the internet, communications, machinery and equipment, and the development of application tools and software that help people exchange and connect anytime, anywhere quickly and easily, thereby causing the characters of many jobs to change, leading to new working methods and mindset. Most prominent for this change is the increase in remote works or online working

H3: Social factors are about social influences such as the influence of friends or people of the same generation (gen Z), colleagues, media on concepts about work and life.

H4: Influence from Organizational Factors such as policies and regulations on working/rest hours on Personal Factors predisposes an individual towards a WLB adjustment.

H5 – H6 – H7: Technological, social and organizational factors of a business all have a significant impact on individual thoughts and actions, leading to personal behavior and decisions, or will form one's own outlook on life. each person, which will lead to future directions.

Depending on model of research and prediction for every hypothesis, the initial formula built to present hypothesized relationships

$$E = a + b_1 Personal + b_2 Social + b_3 Technology + b_4 Organization + \mathcal{E}$$

- *a*: *intercept, represents the mean value of the dependent variable when all independent variables are zero*

-*b1 - b2 - b3 - b4*: *the regression coefficients, representing each independent variable on the dependent variable.*

- *$\mathcal{E}$*: *is random error*

3.2. Research Methodology

To examine the relations in the proposed model, both the quantitative and qualitative approach was applied. These approaches made it possible to measure and carry out a statistical analysis of the factors that lead to a change in orientation regarding work-life balance among University students in Ho Chi Minh City in a straightforward and organized manner.

In addition, the data was also collected for research in both directions: Primary and Secondary method. With Primary method, a direct survey was conducted of over 100 students studying at some universities in Ho Chi Minh City with questions designed by the research team in accordance with the research problem. With Secondary method, conduct research and analyze results based on the research question scale extracted from other available scientific reports having content related to the research topic.

3.2.1. Measurement scales

The following scale was adjusted from established research reports from many resources of different authors to assess the impact of each factor on the transition from an overtime culture to work-life balance in college students in some places over the world. Items are categorized by factor and measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree").

Table 1. Research measurement scales

Factors (variables)	Encode	Observed Variables	Ref.
Evolution OVT to WLB	E1	I prefer jobs that offer flexible working hours	Wong et al. (2020)
	E2	I believe maintaining work-life balance is more important than overtime work	Clark (2000)
	E3	I value companies that promote work-life balance policies	Haar et al. (2019)
	E4	I would choose a job with better work-life balance over higher salary	Nam (2014)

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Factors (variables)	Encode	Observed Variables	Ref.
Personal Factor	PF1	I have clear boundaries between work and personal life	Greenhaus & Allen (2011)
	PF2	I am confident in my ability to manage work and personal commitments	Haar (2013)
	PF3	I prioritize my health and well-being over work demands	Wayne et al. (2017)
	PF4	I can effectively organize my time for both work and personal activities	Adams et al. (2016)
	PF5	I believe personal growth is as important as career development	Kim & Cho (2020)
Technology Factor	TF1	Technology helps me work more efficiently	Day et al. (2019)
	TF2	Digital tools allow me to better manage my work-life balance	Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013)
	TF3	Remote working technologies improve my work-life flexibility	Grant et al. (2013)
	TF4	I effectively use digital tools to organize my work schedule	Fenner & Renn (2010)
Organization Factor	OF1	I value organizations that have clear work-life balance policies	Thompson et al. (2011)
	OF2	Organizational support for work-life balance affects my job choices	Eisenberger et al. (2013)
	OF3	I consider company work-life policies when choosing employers	Beauregard & Henry (2009)
	OF4	Flexible organizational policies are important for my career choices	Kossek et al. (2011)
Social Factor	SF1	My family supports my pursuit of work-life balance	Michel et al. (2011)
	SF2	My friends value maintaining work-life balance	Lu et al. (2016)
	SF3	Society's changing attitudes influence my view on overtime work	Lewis et al. (2007)
	SF4	Social media influences my perception of work-life balance	Yang et al. (2018)
	SF5	My cultural background shapes my work-life balance preferences	Cho et al. (2020)

Source: by authors

3.2.2. Sample and Data collection

A structured questionnaire was employed and in this regard data were collected from students in Ho Chi Minh and its environs using Google Forms. The participants were however unable to be randomly selected as time and access proved to be a large barrier thus a convenience sampling technique was applied. The number of valid responses obtained was hence a large enough sample for statistical analysis was accomplished.

This is a questionnaire used for direct surveys to conduct research according to Primary method, data was collected from more than 100 students in Ho Chi Minh City and via Google Forms link and some were asked directly. However, participants could not be randomly selected as time and accessibility proved to be a major barrier, so a convenience sampling technique was applied. The number of valid responses obtained was 100 samples- large enough for statistical analysis to be completed.

Table 2. Data Collection Results

Characteristics	Factors	Frequency	Percentages
Gender	Male	50	50%
	Female	45	45%
	Other	5	5%
Academic Year	3rd year	40	40%
	4th year	30	30%
	Graduated under 1 year	30	30%
Working experiences	Never	20	20%
	Under 6 months	25	25%

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	6-12 months	20	20%
	Over 12 months	35	35%
Working trends in the next 5 years	Increase working hours to develop career	20	20%
	Reduce working hours to balance life	40	40%
	Flexible time, focus on efficiency	30	30%
	No specific direction	10	10%
	Increase working hours to develop career	20	20%

Source: by authors

3.3. Data Analysis Methods

3.3.1. Data analysis

The data was analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 for the following statistical tests.

To test the hypotheses, we will use the following statistical methods:

• Descriptive statistics: Calculate mean, standard deviation, frequency to describe data.

• Correlation test: Test the relationship between quantitative variables (for example, Pearson correlation).

• Analysis of Variance : Compare the means of the dependent variable between different groups (for example, compare differences in Work-life Balance priorities between men and women).

• Linear regression: Predict the value of the dependent variable based on the independent variables.

3.3.2. Specific steps to analyst

• Data entry: Enter data into statistical software (SPSS, Excel, SmartPLS,...).

• Check data: Check the reasonableness and consistency of data.

• Descriptive analysis: Calculate descriptive statistics.

• Hypothesis testing: Choose an appropriate statistical method and perform testing.

• Present results: Present results in tables, graphs and text.

IV. RESULT

4.1. Result

According to the database and analytical results from survey conduction, the figures show that there are not much differences in level of the influence of every factor to the evolution. However, when discuss of the relationship between 4 independent variables (4 impacted factors), there are clear difference about the effect of Personal factors to evaluation score with coefficient approximately 0.4, display the strongest direct effect; while Technological factor has the coefficient nearly 0.27, Social and Organizational factors both have coefficient around 0.2 each. This results reflect for four main Hypothesis in the model (H1-H2-H3-H4). In the analysis for the relationship between each factor or the impact of three remain factors Social, Technological and Organizational on Personal factor (H4-H5-H6-H7), Social factor are the most influence with coefficient ≈ 0.3, but not too much different with three other factors (coefficient approximately 0.25).

Table 3: Presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations for the variables in the research model.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluation level	5.06	0.68	1.00				
Personal	4.92	0.75	0.73	1.00			
Social	5.00	0.82	0.55	0.52	1.00		
Technological	5.50	0.65	0.64	0.58	0.41	1.00	
Organizational	4.80	0.80	0.54	0.50	0.45	0.44	1.00

Source: by authors

T4: Description of statistics and correlation matrix (N=100)

With the formulas according to model for hypothesized relationships

$$E = a + b1Personal + b2Social + b3Technology + b_4Organization + \mathcal{E}$$

We collect the results for the regression analysis, shown in the following table:

Table 4: Description of multiple regression results for evaluation from overtime culture to work-life balance.

Variables	b	SE	β	t-value	p-value
Constant (a)	0.452	0.238		3.274	<.001
Personal	0.400	0.046	0.440	8.690	<.001
Technological	0.270	0.048	0.324	5.625	<.001
Social	0.200	0.042	0.241	4.545	<.001
Organiztional	0.202	0.044	0.262	4.651	<.001

Source: by authors

4.2. Result of the calculation

$R^2 = 0.0823$

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.815$. That mean the overall model express about 82% of the Variance in evaluation level. In result conclusion, the key correlations for the results display the strong positive correlation between Personal Factor and Evolution level, while as moderate positive correlations among Social, Technology, and Organization factors ($r \approx 0.4$-0.5) and Technological Factor shows the strongest correlation among the three external factors.

V.   DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Discussion result

With the research model and the relationship between every variables that shown by the hypothesis, from the results collected, we can predict how much the evolution is effected and more analyzes of university students' behavior and attitudes toward future orientation follow this research model.

Personal Factor:

The Personal factor is stated to be the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.440$, $p < 0.001$), showing a significant influence on evolution. This is clearly found in the practical situations and in the proof when most collected surveys show that students who choose a job with time and life balance elements often have more job options or hobbies during their free time, most of which comes from personal needs and desires. This point emphasizes the important role of personal characteristics and attitudes in shaping work-life balance orientation.

Technological Factor:

The Technology factor is the second strongest influence ($\beta = 0.324$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a more significant impact than the first hypothesized. This indicates that developments in technology and the ability to embrace in the digital world will play an important role in facilitating the change or evolution from OVT to WLB of university students. Now that technology is penetrating in every area and fields of life, it is not difficult to be aware that it is an inseparable factor, especially for the young in general or university students in particular today (Generation Z). The ability to grasp information, trends, work or study mostly requires or is related to technology. In the future, when Artificial Intelligence (AI) era develops further, they will be the generation that directly absorbs and continue to develop them, and the way that the future workforce choose to use technology will also be associated with the characteristics of the new world: fast, convenient, creative and high performance.

Social and Organizational Factors:

Both Social ($\beta = 0.241$, $p < 0.001$) and Organizational ($\beta = 0.262$, $p < 0.001$) factors have similar levels of influence on the evaluation process. Although these factors show less impact than the Personal and Technology factors, their significant coefficients show that they are still important determinants in the transformation process, especially after Covid-19 pandemic. While collecting the survey, many responses showed that university students employment decision-making

largely come from social norms, and for students currently in studying the third year or higher, they said that they are quite influenced by people of the same generation, while some who used to have the part-time jobs say that their company's superiors and managers will partly decide whether they want to spend much time at the company or not. Moreover, the organization policy will be one of the factors for choosing future job, just after income or promotion.

5.2. Implication

The findings of this research provide valuable insights for various related stakeholders, including undergraduates, employers, students, and policy makers. By understanding these factors that affect the shift from overtime work to work-life balance, this study paper can highlight several actionable steps that can be taken to create more supportive environment for students when as they transition into the workforce. These implications not only address practical applications but also contribute to theoretical frameworks and pave the way for future research. Our group outline some key implications of this research in both theoretical and practical in following parts:

5.2.1. Theoretical implication

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on work-life balance, especially by discovering a transitional phase often overlooked in existing previous research. While the majority of documents about the balance between working professionals and individuals with family responsibilities, this study highlights university students, which is a group often overlooked in work-life balance studies, as a unique demographic navigating competing demands of academic commitments, part-time work, and personal development.

This research would expand existing theories of work-life balance by introducing the role of contextual factors such as family expectations, peer influence, and cultural norms, which significantly shape young people's behavior towards work and life priorities. Moreover, this study bridges gaps in the literature by showing how these factors interact with students' academic environments and work experiences to impact their perception of overtime work and balance.

Additionally, it proposes a conceptual framework that outline the evolution from overtime work habits during students life to a more balanced approach in their future careers. This framework can be applied in the near future research to examine similar transitions in other contexts, such as rural areas, other metropolitan cities, or even across different cultures. It may also contribute to the understanding of how personal motivation and career aspirations can act as mediators between external pressure (e.g societal expectation) and work-life balance outcomes.

Through the combination of these knowledge of socio-cultural theories and career development models, the future researchers can use this as an additional document to investigate more factors, namely technological advancement, economic conditions, etc, that might impact work-life balance. Finally, it underscores the consideration of longitudinal research to capture the energetic nature of this balance as students transition through different life stages.

5.2.2. Practical implication

Besides the aforementioned theoretical implications, this study hold remarkable practical value for university students, educational institutions, employers, and others.

For universities, the results highlight the importance of integrating work-life balance education into academic practices. Career counseling services can create incorporate workshops and modules on time management, prioritization, and stress management to help students develop skills essential for balancing academic performance, work, and personal responsibilities. Universities should also foster experiential learning opportunities, such as internships or part-time jobs, to expose students to professional environments that emphasize balance and happiness.

Employers can leverage these discoveries to create more supportive work environments for young professionals, especially recent graduates. Introducing flexible work arrangements, such as opt for remote work ore capped overtime hours, can help to attract attention and retain talented individuals. Otherwise, onboarding programs should involve training sessions on setting healthy work boundaries and achieving balance, aligning company policies with well-being of staff. Employers can also collaborate with educational organizations to design internship programs that emphasize a healthy approach to work rather than maintaining a culture of excessive overtime.

For students, the research paper underscores the need to cultivate self-awareness and discipline in managing competitive demands. Practical strategies such as setting obvious objectives, practicing mindfulness, and seeking mentor-ship can empower students to make intellectual decisions about their work and personal lives. Peer support programs and student-led initiatives can also provide a platform for sharing experiences and fostering a balanced approach to life.

From a policy perspective, findings suggest that policymakers could implement regulations to protect young workers, such as setting limits on overtime hours for interns or entry-level employees. Enhancing awareness campaigns that promote mental health and work-life balance among students and young professionals could also have a widespread impact. In addition, government-funded programs can encourage business to adopt employee-friendly practices that support balance, ultimately promoting a healthier and more sustainable workforce.

By addressing these practical implications, stakeholders can work together to ensure that students transition smoothly into other professional roles while maintaining their well-being and productivity.

5.3. Limitation, future research

5.3.1. Limitation of the study

Due to the use of a convenience sampling method, the result may nor fully reflect the thoughts and perspectives of all university students in Ho Chi Minh City, especially those from different socio-economic backgrounds.

This study only focuses on students in Ho Chi Minh City, so its findings may not be applicable to students in rural areas, smaller provinces, or other cities across Vietnam.

Relying to self-reported survey answers may not provide 100% accurate results, as responses could be influenced by personal biases or the tendency to answer in ways perceived as favorable to the teachers.

Although te study touches on the role of technology in balancing work and life, it does not adequately explore the differences between students with unequal access to technology.

The study mainly analyzes individual, organizational, societal, and technological factors, without delving deeply into the impacts of economic, legal, or cultural factors.

5.3.2. Suggestions for future research

Expand survey scope by conducting research on students from over provinces in Vietnam, including those with unique social condition.

Compare students in Ho Chi Minh City with those in other regions to examine differences in perceptions and trend regarding work-life balance.

Investigate in greater depth the role of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence or automatic, in shaping students' approaches to work and work-life balance.

5.4. Conclusion

This study highlight the shift in students' work culture from embracing overtime work to prioritizing work-life balance. This transformation is driven by various factors, including increased awareness of mental health importance, technological advancements, and the gradual evolution of organizational and societal values.

The findings underscore the importance of fostering a supportive work environment. For organizations, this involves promoting initiatives around mental health, flexible work, and cultural development, emphasizing the significance of a balanced work-life culture.

<div align="center">REFERENCES</div>

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