

Job Satisfaction of the Social Work Workforce in Hanoi, Vietnam

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ABSTRACT: Job satisfaction is an important aspect of social workers' professional experience and is relevant to workforce development and retention. However, evidence on job satisfaction among social workers in Vietnam remains limited. This study aimed to examine job satisfaction among the social work workforce in Hanoi across different dimensions of their professional experience. Using a cross-sectional design, data were collected from 351 social workers in Hanoi through a structured questionnaire measuring six dimensions of job satisfaction. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, and descriptive statistics were used to examine the mean scores across dimensions. The findings showed that, on a six-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," mean scores ranged from 3.13 to 3.50. Opportunities and rewards had the highest mean score, whereas operating rules and procedures had the lowest. Overall, these findings suggest that job satisfaction among social workers in Hanoi requires further attention, particularly regarding supervision, benefits, operating procedures, career advancement, and recognition. Strengthening these organizational conditions may contribute to a more supportive work environment and support the development and retention of the social work workforce in Vietnam.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; social work workforce, social workers, workforce development.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, job satisfaction has increasingly received attention due to the high turnover rate among social workers (Li et al., 2026). Job satisfaction is closely associated with occupational health and the retention of the social work workforce. Recent evidence indicates that working conditions, workplace support from organizational leaders and supervisors, and autonomy (Zhang et al., 2024; empowerment (Alboroto et al., 2025) are associated with job satisfaction and social workers' intention to remain in the profession. Lazăr et al. (2025) found that trust in colleagues, unpaid overtime hours, and perceived workload explained 20% of the variance in social workers' job satisfaction. Vinokur-Kaplan et al. (1994) also indicated that organizational conditions such as salary, benefits, safety, physical conditions, and job security, among others, affect social workers' job satisfaction, motivation, and intention to seek a new job.

In Vietnam, evidence on social workers' job satisfaction remains relatively limited. A study by Nam et al. (2023) found that job satisfaction was associated with the level of anxiety among social workers. However, the survey participants were only social workers working in hospitals, and the data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, the findings do not fully reflect the occupational experiences of social workers in other service areas or under normal working conditions. In addition, evidence on the different aspects of social workers' job satisfaction remains limited. Therefore, further research is needed to comprehensively examine the different aspects of social workers' job satisfaction across different service contexts, thereby providing evidence for improving working environments and developing the social work workforce.

The present research

In this context, our research aims to address the following critical question: What is the current state of job satisfaction among social work workforce in Hanoi, Vietnam, across different dimensions of the professional experience, including opportunities and rewards, supervision, fringe benefits, operating rules and procedures, coworkers, and the nature of the work performed?

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Study design and population

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in Hanoi, Vietnam, from February to March 2026. Data were collected using an online questionnaire with a combined purposive and snowball sampling method. The study participants were social workers working at social work service-providing organizations in Hanoi. The inclusion criteria were: (i) managers, social workers, public employees, civil servants, and employees working at social work service-providing facilities operated by the State, non-governmental organizations (NGOs, INGOs), shelters, residential homes operated by religious organizations/charitable funds, schools/educational centers, hospitals/medical centers, private organizations (companies/social service centers, counseling centers, etc.), and social work collaborators (if they participated regularly and met the required length of work experience); (ii) having worked at the organization for at least one year to ensure that participants had sufficient experience to assess recruitment, training, utilization, compensation, and career development policies; (iii) being able to read, understand, and complete the questionnaire in Vietnamese; and (iv) voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study after being fully informed about the study objectives, content, and principles of information confidentiality. The exclusion criteria were: (i) not meeting one or more of the above inclusion criteria; (ii) being in the probationary period or having worked at the organization for less than 12 months; (iii) being on maternity leave, long-term sick leave, unpaid leave, or temporarily suspended from work during the survey period; (iv) not agreeing to participate in the study or withdrawing from the study at any time; (v) not completing the questionnaire or having more than 20% of the questions left unanswered; and (vi) social workers being absent during the study period.

A total of 375 questionnaires were collected, of which 351 were valid, yielding an effective response rate of 93.6%.

2.2. Instruments

The aspects of job satisfaction examined in this study were partly derived from Spector's (1997) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The original scale was applied to human service organizations, but the generalizability of its measurement components allows the scale to be flexibly applied across various fields and types of organizations (Schmidt, 2004). Spector's (1997) original scale consisted of nine component scales to assess employees' job satisfaction. Subsequently, Schmidt (2004) removed one of Spector's component scales (satisfaction with communication) and combined the scales measuring satisfaction with pay, promotion, and contingent rewards into a single scale called "satisfaction with opportunities and rewards." In this study, we used Schmidt's (2004) revised six-component scale. The scale used in this study consisted of 30 observed variables, comprising six components: (i) Opportunities and rewards (11 items); (ii) Supervision (4 items); (iii) Fringe benefits (4 items); Operating procedures (4 items); Coworkers (3 items); and Nature of work (4 items). The items were designed in both directions (positive and negative).

This instrument used a six-point Likert scale, in which 1 corresponded to "strongly disagree" and 6 corresponded to "strongly agree." The mean scores of the items were used to calculate the score for each subscale; higher scores reflected higher job satisfaction, while lower scores indicated lower job satisfaction. Items marked with * were reverse-coded and were scored in the opposite direction.

Schmidt (2004) assessed the reliability of this scale using Cronbach's Alpha, with values for the subscales ranging from 0.68 to 0.90. This indicated that all subscales had acceptable reliability.

2.3. Statistical analysis

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 22.0. A total of 351 valid questionnaires were included in the analysis after completing the data cleaning process. Data checking procedures included detecting and handling missing values, checking for outliers, and assessing the statistical assumptions required for parametric analyses. The following analyses were conducted in this study:

Cronbach's Alpha reliability testing was conducted for each component as well as for the entire scale. Observed variables that did not meet the reliability criteria were considered for removal before conducting subsequent analyses. The scale was considered reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was greater than 0.6. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the entire scale was $0.903 > 0.6$. Thus, the scale demonstrated reliability. Therefore, the JSS can be used to assess the level of job satisfaction among the social work workforce in this study.

Table 1. Reliability of the subscales and overall scale of job satisfaction among the social work workforce in Hanoi in 2026

TT	Subscale	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Opportunities and rewards	0.828
2	Supervision	0.659
3	Fringe benefits	0.608
4	Operating rules and procedures	0.812
5	Coworkers	0.708
6	The nature of work performed	0.742
Cronbach's Alpha for the overall scale		0,903

Descriptive statistical analysis: frequency statistics were used to provide an overall assessment of the personal and occupational characteristics of the study sample, such as gender, age, religion, marital status, educational level, field of training, length of service, etc.; descriptive statistics of the mean and standard deviation were used to assess the current level of job satisfaction among social workers.

The interpretation of the mean scores was performed using the equal-interval method between the levels of the scale, with the interval calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Interval} = (\text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum})/n = (6 - 1)/6 = 0.83$$

Therefore, the value ranges were as follows:

- 1.00–1.83 (rounded to 1): Strongly disagree
- 1.84–2.66 (rounded to 2): Disagree
- 2.67–3.49 (rounded to 3): Slightly disagree
- 3.50–4.32 (rounded to 4): Slightly agree
- 4.33–5.15 (rounded to 5): Agree
- 5.16–6.00 (rounded to 6): Strongly agree

2.4. Ethical considerations

During the pre-survey phase, a pre-survey was carried out in order to ascertain whether the questionnaire was operational based on the survey's real findings, whether any of the entries were unclear or poorly articulated, and to promptly address any concerns. Additionally, received standardized pre-survey training to ensure they fully understood the study's content and objectives, and were proficient with the questionnaire and procedures.

During the formal survey phase, investigators approached several social work service-providing agencies in Hanoi to ensure diversity in the types and fields of service provision. After receiving approval from the agency leaders, investigators sent the Google Form survey link to several social workers working at those agencies. The first participants were encouraged to share the survey questionnaire with their colleagues in the same agency, organization, or other public agencies within their professional networks.

Before the survey was conducted, all participants were provided with full information about the research objectives, research content, data collection methods, participants' rights and responsibilities, as well as their right to refuse or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences or disadvantages.

Investigators only collected data after receiving participants' consent. Consent was provided through an informed consent form or direct verbal confirmation from the participants.

This study was approved and assigned by Hanoi Metropolitan University under Decision No. 890/QĐ-DHĐHN dated May 20th, 2025.

III. RESULTS

3.1 Participants

Table 2. Characteristics of the study group (n = 351)

Characteristic	variable	n	%
Gender	Male	134	38.2
	Female	217	61.8
Age group	20-30	145	41.3
	31-40	155	44.2
	41-50	47	13.4
	51-65	4	1.1
Marital status	Single	92	26.2
	Married	249	70.9
	Divorced	9	2.6

	Widowed	1	0.3
Education level	College degree	46	13.1
	Bachelor's degree	245	69.8
	Postgraduate degree	60	17.1
Field of study	Social work	224	63.8
	Psychology	30	8.5
	Sociology	34	9.7
	Public Health	41	11.7
	Other	22	6.3
Years of work experience	From 1 to under 3 years	46	13.1
	From 3 to under 5 years	74	21.1
	From 5 to under 10 years	161	45.9
	Over 10 years	70	19.9
Characteristics		M	SD
Age		33.3	6.56

Table 2 presents the demographic and occupational characteristics of the 351 participants (61.8% were female, and the mean age was 33.3 years). Regarding age, the 31–40 age group accounted for the highest proportion (44.2%), the 20–30 age group (41.3%), the 41–50 age group (13.4%), and the 51–65 age group (only 1.1%). This result shows that the majority of the study participants belonged to the young and middle-aged groups, who constitute the main workforce in the social work field. We believe that this result can be explained by the formal emergence of the social work profession in Vietnam. An important milestone in social work education and training in Vietnam was the promulgation of the Framework Program for Higher and College Education in Social Work by the Ministry of Education and Training (2004). This provided a legal basis for facilitating the strong development of social work education and training, making a practical contribution to the development of the social work profession in Vietnam (Hoa & Minh, 2012: 5). After more than 20 years of development, the workforce with formal training in social work is currently concentrated mainly in the 31–40 age group.

Regarding marital status, 70.9% of the participants were married, 26.2% were single, 2.6% were divorced or separated, and 0.3% were widowed. This structure is relatively consistent with the age characteristics of the study sample, as the majority of participants belonged to the 31–40 age group, who are at a stage of stability in family life.

Regarding educational attainment, 69.8% of the participants had a bachelor's degree, 17.1% had a postgraduate degree, and 13.1% had an intermediate or college-level qualification. This indicates that the educational attainment of the majority of the surveyed participants was relatively high, consistent with the human resource requirements of social work service-providing facilities.

Regarding field of study, 63.8% had been trained in social work, 11.7% were from Public Health, 9.7% were from Sociology, 8.5% were from Psychology, and 6.3% were from other fields of study. This indicates that the social work workforce in the study was mainly trained in the relevant field, while there was also participation from personnel from related fields.

Regarding work experience, the group with 5 to less than 10 years of experience accounted for the highest proportion (45.9%), followed by the group with 3 to less than 5 years (21.1%), the group with more than 10 years of experience (19.9%), and the group with 1 to less than 3 years (13.1%). In general, the work experience structure of the study sample created favorable conditions for assessing activities in the process of human resource development, such as training, supervision, and continuous professional development.

Regarding employment status, 40.7% of the participants worked under fixed-term employment contracts, 31.6% were public employees, 27.4% worked under indefinite-term employment contracts, and only 0.3% belonged to other forms of employment. The results show that the study sample worked under various forms of employment, reflecting the diversity of employment relationships among the surveyed participants.

3.2 Self-assessment of job satisfaction among the social work workforce in Hanoi

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics on job satisfaction among the social work workforce at social work service-providing facilities in Hanoi.

Table 3: Self-assessment of job satisfaction among the social work workforce in Hanoi in 2026 (n = 351)

No.	Items	M	SD
	Opportunities and rewards	3.50	0.21
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	3.78	0.74
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job*.	3.15	0.81
3	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	2.79	0.93
4	Raises are too few and far between*.	3.13	0.73
5	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	2.91	0.94
6	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated*.	3.23	0.75
7	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me*.	4.13	0.93
8	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	4.07	0.79
9	Có ít phần thưởng cho những người làm việc ở đây*. There are few rewards for those who work here*.	4.25	0.91
10	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be*.	4.18	0.92
11	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	2.91	0.94
	Supervision	3.18	0.36
12	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	2.86	0.93
13	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates*.	2.92	0.79
14	I like my supervisor.	2.78	0.92
15	My supervisor is unfair to me*.	4.18	0.92
	Fringe benefits	3.24	0.43
16	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	3.66	0.83
17	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	2.76	0.92
18	The benefit package we have is equitable.	3.66	0.81
19	There are benefits we do not have which we should have*.	2.88	0.77
	Operating rules and procedures	3.13	0.42
20	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult*.	2.85	0.79
21	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	3.82	0.85
22	I have too much to do at work*.	2.92	0.76
23	I have too much paperwork*.	2.94	0.79
	Coworkers	3.38	0.41
24	I enjoy my coworkers.	4.00	0.81
25	I like the people I work with.	3.02	0.99
26	There is too much bickering and fighting at work*.	3.11	0.83
	The nature of work performed	3.43	0.37
27	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless*.	3.07	0.84
28	I like doing the things I do at work.	2.80	0.99
29	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	3.88	0.76
30	My job is enjoyable.	3.98	0.79

* Negatively worded items

The results in Table 3 show that the mean scores of the subscales ranged from 3.13 to 3.50, indicating that the participants' self-assessments were concentrated around the levels of "slightly disagree" and "slightly agree." The "Opportunities and rewards" subscale reached the level of "slightly agree," indicating that participants tended to relatively agree with aspects related to salary, promotion opportunities, and recognition at work. The remaining five subscales all fell within the range of 2.67–3.49, corresponding to the level of "slightly disagree," among which "Operating procedures" was the aspect with the lowest mean score (M = 3.13). Overall, the level of job satisfaction among the social workers participating in the survey remained relatively low, indicating the need to continue improving working conditions and the work environment to enhance employees' job satisfaction.

Regarding opportunities and rewards: The results show that the mean scores of the variables ranged from 2.79 to 4.25, corresponding to the levels of "slightly disagree" to "agree." Among them, the variable "There are few rewards for those who work here" had the highest mean score (M = 4.25), while the two variables with the lowest and equal mean scores were "Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted" and "I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases" (M = 2.91). Overall, the results

show that aspects related to recognition of performance and promotion opportunities were rated relatively more positively than other aspects of the job.

Regarding supervision: The results show that the mean scores of the four variables ranged from 2.78 to 4.18, corresponding to the levels of “slightly disagree” to “slightly agree.” The variable with the highest mean score was “My supervisor is unfair to me” ($M = 4.18$), while “I like my supervisor” had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.78$); the other two variables were “My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates” ($M = 2.92$) and “My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job” ($M = 2.86$). Overall, the results show that social workers’ assessments of aspects related to supervisors were not particularly positive, especially regarding fairness in relationships with supervisors; at the same time, the ratings of managerial competence and closeness had not reached the level of “agree.” These findings suggest that relationships with supervisors and management quality are aspects that need attention in the development of the social work workforce, particularly fairness, attention to employees, and managerial competence.

Regarding fringe benefits: The results show that the mean scores of the four variables ranged from 2.76 to 3.66, corresponding to the levels of “slightly disagree” to “slightly agree.” Among them, the two variables with the highest mean scores were “I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive” and “The benefit package we have is equitable” (both $M = 3.66$), followed by “There are benefits we do not have which we should have” ($M = 2.88$), while the lowest was “The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer” ($M = 2.76$). Thus, the notable finding here is not a high level of satisfaction with benefits, but rather a relatively cautious assessment of the adequacy of benefits and their comparability with those provided by other organizations, while perceptions of the fairness of benefits were more positive.

Regarding operating rules and procedures : The results show that the mean scores of the four variables ranged from 2.85 to 3.82, corresponding to the levels of “slightly disagree” to “slightly agree.” The variable with the highest mean score was “My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape” ($M = 3.82$), while the other three variables were all at the level of “slightly disagree,” including “Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult” ($M = 2.85$), “I have too much to do at work” ($M = 2.92$), and “I have too much paperwork” ($M = 2.94$). Thus, the results show that employees did not clearly agree that procedures, workload, and paperwork were major obstacles to performing their work, while tending to rate administrative procedures as less obstructive than the other aspects.

Regarding coworkers: The results show that the mean scores of the three variables ranged from 3.02 to 4.00, corresponding to the levels of “slightly disagree” to “slightly agree.” The variable with the highest mean score was “I enjoy my coworkers” ($M = 4.00$), while “I like the people I work with” had a mean score of $M = 3.02$, and “There is too much bickering and fighting at work” had a mean score of $M = 3.11$. The results show that coworker relationships are a relatively positive aspect of the working environment of social workers, most clearly reflected in the degree to which they like their coworkers. At the same time, the score for the variable reflecting fighting and arguing does not indicate clear agreement that conflicts occur frequently in the workplace.

Regarding the nature of the work performed: The results show that the mean scores of the four variables ranged from 2.80 to 3.98, corresponding to the levels of “slightly disagree” to “slightly agree.” The variable with the highest mean score was “My job is enjoyable” ($M = 3.98$), followed by “I feel a sense of pride in doing my job” ($M = 3.88$), while “I like doing the things I do at work” had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.80$), and “I sometimes feel my job is meaningless” had a mean score of $M = 3.07$. The results show that the nature of the work is a relatively positive aspect, as reflected most clearly in feelings of pride and positive evaluations of the work; however, the level of liking for the work was not particularly clear.

IV. DISCUSSION

First, social workers’ assessment of their level of job satisfaction was not high, with most aspects rated at the level of “slightly disagree,” and only “opportunities and rewards” reaching the level of “slightly agree.” This result shows that social workers’ job satisfaction depends not only on the work itself but is also associated with the organizational conditions surrounding professional practice, including mechanisms for recognition, direct supervision, benefits, and the way the organization operates. In addition, the mean scores across the subscales did not differ substantially, indicating that no single aspect created a clear advantage in terms of job satisfaction, while operating procedures were the aspect with the lowest rating. This finding suggests that improving social workers’ job satisfaction should be approached at the organizational level rather than focusing only on individual factors.

Second, regarding opportunities and rewards, the results show that social workers had the highest mean score among the six subscales. However, the distribution of scores across the contents of this subscale was not uniform. Higher ratings were concentrated on perceptions of salary and rewards, while aspects related to recognition of contributions and promotion opportunities were less favorable. This shows that, for social workers, receiving commensurate compensation does not necessarily mean that they clearly perceive a career

development pathway within the organization. The salary factor in the study by Tang & Luo (2022) was also identified as the main cause of the high turnover tendency, occupational instability, and decline in professional identity among social workers. In particular, Cho (2026) found that poor job quality, especially low salaries, remains a persistent concern in the social work sector, contributing to high employee turnover and recruitment difficulties. However, motivation theorists have pointed out that, in addition to material incentives, non-material incentives (such as a sense of mission and professional responsibility) also affect employees' work motivation through complex and diverse mechanisms (as cited by Yang et al., 2025). For the development of the social work workforce, these findings emphasize the need to establish mechanisms for recognizing contributions, transparent promotion criteria, and opportunities for career development alongside salary policies. This may help limit the serious brain drain occurring in the social work sector, along with the difficulties employees often experience due to a perceived lack of autonomy and low levels of job satisfaction (Yang et al., 2025).

Third, regarding supervision, this was one of the aspects that social workers rated with a low mean score in the study. The results particularly show that aspects related to competence, attention, and relationships with supervisors have not created a clearly positive perception. In the Vietnamese context, supervision for social workers is often associated with the role of superiors or direct managers, including guidance, task assignment, monitoring, and evaluation of work performance. Therefore, the results regarding the supervision aspect in this study can be understood more broadly as social workers' assessment of the management and support provided by their direct superiors. In the social work field in particular, leaders play an important role not only in coordinating resources and achieving organizational goals but also in creating a supportive, fair, and professionally developmental work environment. Therefore, leaders need to have competencies in collaboration, networking, and shared learning (Hussain et al., 2022). In addition, transformational leadership style is associated with improving the organizational environment to support innovation efforts, while also being closely linked to value congruence with the social work profession (Aarons et al., 2012).

Fourth, regarding fringe benefits, social workers' perceptions of the fairness of benefits tended to be higher than their perceptions of the adequacy of benefits. This suggests that, in employees' assessments, the issue is not only whether the organization provides benefits but also whether the benefits package is considered appropriate to their contributions and professional position. Therefore, in the development of the social work workforce, fringe benefits are an aspect that needs to be considered alongside salary, particularly in policies for maintaining and stabilizing the workforce. This finding is consistent with studies showing that benefits beyond salary are a component of job quality and are associated with job satisfaction, turnover intention, and employee retention in the social work field (Gómez-García et al., 2017; Li, Zeng & Mo., 2026). The results suggest that social work organizations need to pay more adequate attention to the fringe benefits system alongside salary. Agencies and organizations providing social work services can periodically review the existing benefits package, the accessibility of benefits for different groups of employees, and the appropriateness between positions, job characteristics, and the benefits received. This approach helps human resource policies focus not only on income but also on job quality and the ability to retain the social work workforce.

Fifth, regarding operating procedures, this was the aspect with the lowest mean score, indicating that it is one of the areas that should be prioritized in improving the working environment. This finding is also consistent with Munro (2004), who argued that the emphasis on outputs and administrative paperwork has overlooked the subtle interpersonal skills that are essential for effective social work practice. Similarly, Pascoe et al. (2023), in analyzing 39 qualitative studies on social workers' experiences with bureaucracy and bureaucratic systems, found that standardized management processes, risk management, and increased accountability have increased requirements for paperwork, procedures, and compliance with processes. These requirements may change how social workers allocate their time and perform their professional work. Thus, social work service-providing agencies need to continue reviewing administrative procedures, workload allocation, and the extent of paperwork to ensure that management requirements do not reduce the time devoted to direct professional activities with clients. At the same time, survey data could be combined with the number of case files, time spent on administrative tasks, and caseload/client volume to provide a more objective assessment of workload pressures.

Sixth, regarding coworkers, this was one of the relatively favorable aspects of the working environment, particularly in terms of perceptions of liking among coworkers. This finding is consistent with Clossey et al. (2018), who, using multiple regression analysis, found that organizational culture and relationships with coworkers predicted 29% of the variance in job satisfaction. Thus, it can be seen that building a supportive working environment and strengthening coworker relationships are important components in organizing and retaining the workforce. Edwards & Solomon (2023) also continued to consider coworker support as a component of the organizational environment associated with job satisfaction. In terms of practical implications, social work organizations can focus on maintaining a collaborative working environment, increasing opportunities for professional exchange among coworkers, and addressing disagreements within teams at an early stage, thereby supporting learning and professional development. However, given the current

scores, there is insufficient basis to conclude that coworker conflict is a prominent issue in the study sample. A limitation of this group of variables is that it consists of only three indicators and primarily reflects subjective assessments; future research could add aspects such as coworker support, knowledge sharing, interprofessional collaboration, and team conflict to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the social relational environment in the workplace.

Seventh, regarding the nature of the work performed, the mean score was among the higher scores across the six subscales, indicating that this was one of the relatively prominent aspects in social workers' assessments. The aspects related to feelings of pride and the interesting nature of the work had higher mean scores than the aspect reflecting the extent to which they liked the tasks being performed. This shows that different aspects of the experience of work are not completely identical: social workers may perceive their work as valuable and a source of pride, but this does not necessarily mean that they always like the specific tasks involved in their daily work. This finding is consistent with studies showing that the meaning and intrinsic characteristics of work are important components of social workers' occupational experiences, alongside factors related to the organizational environment.

V. CONCLUSION

This study shows that job satisfaction among social workers in Hanoi was assessed at different levels across the aspects, with the nature of the work and opportunities and rewards having higher mean scores, while aspects related to organizational management and operations had lower mean scores. These results show that social workers' job satisfaction is not only associated with the characteristics of the work but is also significantly influenced by the organizational environment, quality of management, benefits policies, and opportunities for career development. These findings provide additional empirical evidence for the development and improvement of social work workforce development policies in Hanoi, Vietnam. Specifically, social work service-providing organizations need to focus on improving working conditions, strengthening fair management and supervision, improving benefits policies, recognition mechanisms, and promotion opportunities for social workers. Future studies should expand research to different types of facilities and areas, while also using longitudinal designs or mixed methods to clarify the factors affecting job satisfaction and the retention of the social work workforce.

Limitations of study:

First, this was a cross-sectional descriptive study design; therefore, the results only reflect job satisfaction at the time of the survey and do not allow causal relationships to be determined between working conditions and job satisfaction.

Second, overrepresentation of women in the study group – when conducting further research on job satisfaction, particular attention should be paid to equal gender representation; this will allow for the generalization of the results obtained; lack of a priori power analysis prior to data collection – this was due to organizational constraints.

Third, the scope of the study focused on Hanoi; therefore, the generalizability of the results to social workers in other localities or different types of organizations should be considered. However, focusing on a specific area allows the study to examine the organizational context relatively consistently and provides valuable practical evidence for the development of the social work workforce in the locality.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Ethical Committee approval

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-2931-9281>

Topic: Social work

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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