The impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction, organizational pride and commitment: A study in the service industry

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| **ARTICLE INFO** | **ABSTRACT** |
| **DOI:**10.46223/HCMCOUJS. econ.en.12.2.2139.2022Received: January 06th, 2022Revised: February 16th, 2022Accepted: June 08h, 2022*Keywords*: job satisfaction; organizational commitment; organizational pride; service industry; work-life balance | The boundary between work and personal life is narrowing. Many companies recognize the necessity of work-life balance, and the high risk of losing employees if they do not satisfy the flexible needs of their employees. This study was conducted to examine the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction, organizational pride, and organizational commitment of employees who are working in the service industry in Ho Chi Minh City. The study was conducted from April to August 2020 through 02 interviews with 02 groups of experts (managers and staff), and an online survey with 300 respondents who are working in the service industry. The study results show that the work-life balance affects organizational pride, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of employees. In addition, there are at least 02 factors that affect the work-life balance, they are job autonomy and supervisor work-life balance support. |

# 1. Introduction

In the middle 1980s, the term ‘work-life balance’ appeared for the first time in print. However, it just become popular in the early 2000s. In 2005, it appeared around 10,000 times. Since then, its significance in work-related discussions has increased continuously. The challenge with the word ‘balance’ is that it implies equal distribution - something that can be difficult (or impossible) to achieve in areas as time-consuming and complex as work and personal life. The borderline between work and personal life isn’t as separated as it used to be. For example, millennials “don’t mind accessing their work life during their personal life, but they also want to access their personal life during work.” (Grubb, 2017, p. 102).

Large global companies are facing a high turnover risk if they don’t care about employees’ flexibility needs. Clever managers are trying to find a way to help their employees get the best performances. Their strategies include focusing on establishing metrics that actually measure employees’ performance, and don’t just check employees’ working time in the office (Grubb, 2017).

According to Susi (2010, as cited in Bushra & Yasir, 2014), work-life balance is a drive for the satisfaction of employees. Many companies see the need for work-life balance which includes retention of the valuable workforce, reduce employee stress, job satisfaction, work-family conflict, and better life balance.

Especially, professional service companies are characterized by their high dependence on human resources and by a strong imperative to attract, employ and retain talented professionals, while offering cost-effective services to their clients. Professional service companies are currently under pressure because of economic reasons, and also from the emergence of professionals’ individual demands for work-life balance, which challenge traditional ways of organizing both careers and projects (Noury, Gand & Sardas, 2017). Therefore, work-life balance is becoming increasingly important in the service industry.

In 2019, Ho Chi Minh City was at the top of the cities which collected the highest local budget revenue in Vietnam with more than 409,923 billion VND (reaching 102.71% of the estimate) (Online Finance Magazine, 2020). In recent years, Ho Chi Minh City has maintained its superiority in labor productivity, almost 03 times higher than the average labor productivity of the country. Regarding the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), the proportion of services in Ho Chi Minh City’s economy reached 60%, proving that the city’s economy is increasingly developing and relying on services (Sai Gon Giai Phong Online, 2019). The report on the socio-economic situation of Ho Chi Minh City in December 2019 and in 2019 also confirmed this with the proportion of the commercial and service industries reaching 61.2% of the economic structure (Ho Chi Minh City Statistics Office, 2019). In other words, service businesses in Ho Chi Minh City are contributing a large proportion to the economy of Ho Chi Minh City - the city with the leading budget revenue and accounting for a high proportion in the country. It is also the reason why this research is focused on the service industry, in order to study and offer supporting solutions for the industry that is playing an important role in the economy and contributing the largest amount to the local budget.

This study is conducted in order to clarify factors that affect work-life balance, and study the impact of work-balance on job satisfaction, organizational pride, and organizational commitment of employees in the service industry in Ho Chi Minh City. Besides, it also evaluates the differences in work-life balance between groups of employees’ characteristics (such as gender, age, income, marital status, and job positions).

# 2. Theoretical basis

## 2.1. Service industry

In advanced societies, there are organizations that facilitate the production and distribution of goods and organizations that add value to lives through a variety of intangibles they provide. Outputs of this latter group are called services which can be defined as economic activities that produce form, place, time, or psychological utilities; they are intangible. It is created and consumed simultaneously or nearly simultaneously (Haksever & Render, 2013). Many definitions of service are available, but all contain a common theme of intangibility and simultaneous consumption (Bordoloi, Fitzsimmons, & Fitzsimmons, 2019).

Although some services may result in physical goods, the invariable importance in all services is the transformation of the customer’s mind, body, assets, or information. These transformations are achieved by a series of purposeful acts, that is, through a process. A customer connects with the service organization when his or her mind, body, assets, or information is processed. This is generally known as a “service encounter.” Whether the customer is satisfied or not with the service experience, depends on the outcome of the service encounter. A service encounter involves not only service employees and the customer, but also other customers, physical evidence, and the service delivery system. It must be emphasized that a service encounter may occur practically at any time and any place. Most customers equate service failures or quality problems with the organization that is responsible for the service (Haksever & Render, 2013).

## 2.2. Concepts and hypotheses

Work-life balance is considered a measure of the quality of life as assessed by the life index of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Finding a suitable balance between work and daily living is a challenge that all employees face. Families are particularly affected. The ability to successfully combine work, personal life, and family commitments are important for the happiness of all members of a household (OECD, 2017). Work-life balance describes how much an employee feels balanced between work and non-work roles (Guest, 2002, as cited in Tavassoli & Sune, 2018). According to Grubb (2017), there are many definitions for work-life balance, although most are similar to this one: “the amount of time you spend doing your job compared with the amount of time you spend with your family and doing things you enjoy.” Kelliher, [Richardson](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Richardson%2C+Julia), and [Boiarintseva](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Boiarintseva%2C+Galina) (2018) believe that “work‐life balance” refers to the relationship between work and non‐work figures of individuals’ lives, where achieving a satisfactory work‐life balance is normally understood as restricting one side to have more time for the other. Some scholars have understood balance as inferring an equal distribution of time, energy, and commitment to work and non‐work roles (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003; Kelliher et al., 2018). The Word Spy (2002, as cited in Tariq, Aslam, Siddique, & Tanveer, 2011) defined work-life balance as “A state of equilibrium in which the demands of both a person’s job and personal life are equal”. Doherty and Manfredi (2006, as cited in Tariq et al., 2011) believe that work-life balance is based on the premise that everyone should have complete life in which a suitable amount of time is given to family interests and personal interests. This research uses the viewpoint of Greenhaus et al. (2003) as the concept of work-life balance.

Job autonomy has been identified in previous work-life research as a work-related condition that allows individuals attaining to greater happiness and reduce suffering. Similarly, many researchers support the importance of job autonomy in promoting employee positive outcomes (Boyar et al., 2008, as cited in Haar, Sune, Russo, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2018). Job autonomy relates to an employee’s ability to use discretion over how the work is done without restrictions or unnecessary monitoring (Thompson & Prottas, 2006, as cited in Haar et al., 2018). It is also the concept that is used in this research.

According to Vera et al. (2016, as cited in Haar et al., 2018), job autonomy is an important resource that can help individuals accomplish their preferred level of work-life balance. Job autonomy allows employees to have flexibility in managing their work and time. This freedom helps to balance time spent on the job with leisure activities or family (Mas-Machuca, Berbegal-Mirabent, & Alegre, 2016). In particular, in the service industry where employees often communicate and flexibly handle customer requests, job autonomy is an important factor in managing and handling tasks quickly and efficiently. Based on the foregoing, this study suggests that:

*H1: Job autonomy is positively related to work-life balance*

According to Maertz et al. (2007, as cited in Haar et al., 2018), supervisor work-life balance support is defined as the employees’ beliefs concerning the degree to which their supervisor cares about their well-being and values their contribution to the company. Because supervisors have responsibility for directing and evaluating subordinates’ performance, employees would view their supervisor’s favorable or unfavorable orientation toward them as indicative of the company’s support (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). In this research, supervisor work-life balance support is focused on employees’ beliefs about supervisors’ influence in supporting employees’ work-life balance.

Together with job autonomy, Haar et al. (2018) identified supervisor support as an important resource that can shape an individual’s capacity to achieve work-life balance. Employees can achieve greater work-life balance when they can count on supervisor support and job autonomy. Employees enjoying higher job autonomy and having supportive supervisors are more balanced and experience a higher sense of harmony between their personal life and work (Tavassoli & Sune, 2018).

Given the mentioned considerations, this study proposes that:

*H2: Supervisor work-life balance support is positively related to work-life balance*

Haslam (2004, as cited in Nilawati, Umar, Kusdi, & Zainul, 2019) supposed that organizational pride refers to positive feelings of a person toward the group gained from others’ judgment on the status of the group. Besides, according to Guthier and Rhein (2011, as cited in Nilawati et al., 2019), organizational pride includes two types, they are attitudinal and emotional. The emotional type is the pride felt by individuals which comes from the success of an activity related to the organization. After that, because this type is in the form of emotion, it is temporary, whereas the attitudinal type refers to the pride felt by individuals in their organization that relates to the general perception of the organization. Attitudinal leads to individual cognition so that organizational pride can last long (Nilawati et al., 2019). Organizational pride in this research is a type of attitudinal.

Employee work-life balance is positively related to organizational pride. Employees that feel comfortable in their jobs and have an effective work-life balance are proud to work for their companies (Mas-Machuca et al., 2016). With the above statements, this study suggests that:

*H3:**Work-life balance is positively related to organizational pride*

Job satisfaction has been defined by Locke (1976, as cited in Ali & Akhter, 2009) as “… a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences”. Edwin A. Locke’s Range of Affect Theory (1976, as cited in Ali & Akhter, 2009) is arguably the most famous job satisfaction model. The main premise of this theory is that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one has in a job and what one wants in a job. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), when people speak of employee attitudes, they usually mean job satisfaction, a positive feeling about a job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics. A person with low satisfaction holds negative feelings, while a person with high job satisfaction holds positive feelings about the work. This study uses Robbins and Judge’s definition of job satisfaction in our research.

Research on organizational pride has shown the impact of pride on job satisfaction (Arnett et al., 2002, as cited in Mas-Machuca et al., 2016). Organizational pride would increase employees’ job satisfaction (Mas-Machuca et al., 2016). Employees who feel proud of their work in the company will also feel satisfaction in the job (Nilawati et al., 2019). Together with the above considerations, this study supposes:

*H4: Organizational pride is positively related to job satisfaction*

The relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction is significant (Tavassoli & Sune, 2018). There is a significant effect on job satisfaction from work-life balance. This means that the employees who get a higher work balance will increase job satisfaction (Nilawati et al., 2019). Agree with the above statements, this study suggests that:

*H5: Work-life balance is positively related to job satisfaction*

An employee who has organizational commitment identifies his/her organization and its goals and desires to be a member continuously. Belief in an organization’s values and emotional attachment to it is the benchmark for employee commitment. Employees who are committed will be less likely to engage in withdrawing their work even if they are disappointed because they have a feeling of organizational loyalty or attachment. They are even willing to sacrifice for the organization in case they are not currently happy with their work if their commitment is enough (Robbins & Judge, 2017).

In light of current and previous findings, work-life balance and job satisfaction are important for developing and enhancing organizational commitment (Azeem & Akhtar, 2014). Arif and Farooqi (2014) supposed that there was a positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. These two hypotheses have been concluded to have high impacts in previous research and this study wants to test them again within this research.

*H6: Work-life balance is positively related to organizational commitment*

*H7: Job satisfaction is positively related to organizational commitment*

One of the research objectives that this study sets out is to evaluate the differences in work-life balance between groups of employees’ characteristics. This study tests some common characteristics such as gender, age, income, marital status, and job positions. By testing the differences in the above characteristics, this study can suggest some relevant solutions to improve the work-life balance for each group in the service industry in Ho Chi Minh City.

*H8: The differences in work-life balance between groups of employees’ characteristics (gender, age, income, marital status, and job positions)*

Work-life balance

Supervisor work-life
balance support

Job autonomy

Job satisfaction

Organizational commitment

Organizational
pride

H4 (+)

H7 (+)

H1 (+)

H2 (+)

H3 (+)

H5 (+)

H6 (+)

Testing the differences:

* Gender
* Age
* Income
* Marital status
* Job positions

H8

**Figure 1.** Research model

# 3. Methodology

Based on previous studies, this study builds research hypothesis, research model, and scales for variables in the model (with 05 statements to measure for 01 variable).

The first qualitative research was carried out through online group interviews using the Zoom application with 02 groups of employees (06 people) and managers (06 people) at different positions and genders who were working in the service industry (with different businesses) in Ho Chi Minh City. This qualitative research aimed to adjust and reinforce the research model and scales, to decide on the official research model and scales. The interview with the managers’ group was organized first, with 06 managers at different positions, from team leader to CEO, who were working in different businesses (consulting, inspection, hotel, tourism, finance, and event), with seniority in the service industry from 05 years to more than 20 years. The main purpose of the managers’ group interview is to get opinions on the hypotheses that have been proposed and to remove/add variables to the model. Next, the employees’ group interview was conducted with 06 employees who were employees at service companies in different businesses (tourism, aviation, healthcare, finance, education, and telecommunications). The main purpose of this interview is to evaluate the clarity, and ease to understand of the scales. The first qualitative research helps to reinforce the model research and calibrate the scales, as a basis to build the questionnaire for the quantitative survey.

Next, the quantitative research by online questionnaire survey was carried out with Google Forms application. Respondents were managers (team managers and above) and employees who were working in the service industry in Ho Chi Minh City. The main content of the questionnaire had 30 questions (representing 30 scales which measured 06 variables of the research model), using a 5-point Likert scale (from *1 - strongly disagree* to *5 - strongly agree*); and individual information which was used for testing the differences. While carrying out the survey for this study, Vietnam was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. For the safety and comfort of respondents, a questionnaire survey link was sent to them via chat apps, social media apps, or email. Data were processed by IBM SPSS 25 and SmartPLS 3.2.9 software.

The second qualitative research was conducted through an online group interview using the Zoom application with a group of experts (06 people) who were managers at service companies in Ho Chi Minh City (who were invited for the first qualitative research) to discuss the research results, as a basis to reinforce and complete the conclusion of this research.

# 4. Result and discussion

## 4.1. Result

The quantitative survey result has obtained 300 responses from respondents who are managers and employees at 265 service companies in Ho Chi Minh City, including the following businesses: training, healthcare, banking, insurance, telecommunications, tourism, hotel, advertising, consulting, transportation, event, ... Descriptive statistics information is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of descriptive statistics of the survey sample

| **Characteristics** | **Classification** | **Quantity** | **Ratio** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex** | Female | 186 | 62.00% |
| Male | 114 | 38.00% |
| **Age** | Under 30 years old | 51 | 17.00% |
| From 30 to 44 years old | 213 | 71.00% |
| 45 years old and up | 36 | 12.00% |
| **Income** | Under 10 million VND/month | 79 | 26.33% |
| From 10 to 32 million VND/month | 168 | 56.00% |
| Over 32 - 80 million VND/month | 43 | 14.33% |
| Over 80 million VND/month | 10 | 3.33% |
| **Marital status** | Single | 95 | 31.67% |
| Married | 198 | 66.00% |
| Divorced | 7 | 2.33% |
| **Current position** | Staff | 136 | 45.33% |
| Team manager | 51 | 17.00% |
| Middle manager | 87 | 29.00% |
| Senior manager | 26 | 8.67% |

Source: IBM SPSS 25 test result

Descriptive statistics of quantitative variables and standard deviation analysis data showed the heterogeneity in respondents’ evaluations of survey contents. Respondents have their own viewpoints; there are marked differences of opinion in evaluating each statement. However, overall, most respondents agree with the statements relating to the variables in the model.

The result of testing the reliability of the scales through Cronbach’s Alpha test showed that the scales have high reliability. According to DeVellis (2016), Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient from 0.7 or more is at an acceptable threshold, Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient from 0.8 to 0.9 achieves good reliability, and Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient from 0.9 and above is very good. The Job Autonomy (JA) scale has the lowest Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient, reaching 0.742. The remaining scales have Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient higher than 0.8. From the original 30 observed variables, the observation variable JA2 of the scale of “Autonomy at work*”*is removed to ensure good reliability, and the remaining 29 variables are kept.

Composite Reliability (CR) analysis was also carried out to check internally consistent reliability levels. CR which is ranged from 0.7 to 0.95 represents the reliability level from acceptable to good (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). The result showed that the scales have good internal consistency (from 0.845 to 0.935), similar to the previous Cronbach’s Alpha test result.

The evaluation of the convergent value and discriminant value of the scales is done through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) for the scales with the extraction method as Principal axis factoring and the rotation method as Promax. The analysis result after removing the observed variable SS1 of the scale of “Supervisor work-life balance support” (due to the loading factor less than 0.5, unsatisfactory) showed that the scales achieve convergent and discriminant validity.

Simultaneous convergence was also evaluated by measuring Average Variance Extracted (AVE). According to Hair et al. (2019), the convergence value is assessed by measuring the AVE over all the indices related to a particular structure. The rule for an accepted AVE is 0.5 or higher. That means the AVE must be at least 0.5 for the scale to converge. And the AVE analysis results of the scales in the study are all higher than 0.5, showing that the scales have reached the correct level of convergence.

Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) provided convincing evidence that Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) assessment method (based on comparing the square roots of AVEs) does not really reach the accuracy of the scale distinction and proposed alternative assessment method widely accepted in the research world: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) index. And the HTMT must be lower than 0.9 for the scale to achieve the discriminant accuracy level. According to the results of HTMT calculation from SmartPLS, all values ​​are satisfied (less than 0.9). Thus, the result showed that all scales achieved discriminant accuracy.

According to Hair et al. (2019), the evaluation of collinearity involves calculating the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for each indicator included in the formal measurement structure. The higher the VIF is, the greater the degree of alignment is, and VIF values ​​above 3 are likely to indicate a problem (the model may experience multicollinearity), and above 5 are a definite indicator of high collinearity among the indices. With the VIF values ​​all less than 3, in which the largest value is 1.197, the result is showed that there is no multicollinearity in each component structure model.

Bootstrapping test was used to assess the statistical significance and the level of impact of regression coefficients. According to the results of path coefficients, total indirect effect, and total effects, the P-value of the impact of each pair of variables is equal to 0 or 0.001, except 1 pair has the P-value of 0.005. P-value is less than or equal to 0.05, and the impact level is statistically significant (Nguyen & Vu, 2020). Thus, all pairs of direct, indirect, and total effects in the model (Figure 2) are statistically significant. The conclusion is that the research hypotheses H1to H7 from our original research model are all meaningful.

Besides, Q2 value of a particular endogenous variable higher than 0 indicates an acceptable predictive accuracy for that construct (Hair et al., 2019). The value of Q2 coefficient of 04 endogenous variables in the model is more than 0 (from 0.138 to 0.397) showing that all endogenous variables in the model have acceptable accuracy, proving the predictive power of the model paradigm.

Involving two pairs of relations ‘job autonomy is positively related to work-life balance’ (hypothesis H1) and ‘supervisor work-life balance support is positively related to work-life balance (hypothesis H2), Bootstrapping test result showed that these two pairs of relationships are significant. This result is similar to previous studies by Mas-Machuca et al. (2016), Haar et al. (2018), Tavassoli and Sune (2018). When employees can enhance their job autonomy, it will be easier to balance their work-life. Similarly, when employees receive more support from managers for work-life balance, they themselves will also have a better work-life balance.

Table 2

Results of testing hypotheses

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Hypothesis** | **Relation pair** | **Original Sample** | **Standard Deviation** | **T Statistics** | **P Values** | **Result** |
| H1 | Job autonomy 🡪 Work-life balance | 0.204 | 0.050 | 4.040 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H2 | Supervisor work-life balance support 🡪 Work-life balance | 0.392 | 0.047 | 8.257 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H3 | Work-life balance 🡪 Organizational pride | 0.405 | 0.048 | 8.353 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H4 | Organizational pride 🡪 Job satisfaction | 0.682 | 0.037 | 18.387 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H5 | Work-life balance 🡪 Job satisfaction | 0.130 | 0.046 | 2.831 | 0.005 | Accepted |
| H6 | Work-life balance 🡪 Organizational commitment | 0.161 | 0.041 | 3.915 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H7 | Job satisfaction 🡪 Organizational commitment | 0.654 | 0.035 | 18,767 | 0.000 | Accepted |

Source: SmartPLS 3.2.9 test result

Other analyses show more clearly the influence of these two relations pairs (hypotheses H1and H2). The coefficient of determination (R2) of the variable “work-life balance”reachesaverage showing that two variables “job autonomy” and “supervisor work-life balance support” impact the variable “work-life balance”. The result of the analysis regression coefficient assessing the direct impact of Bootstrapping test showed that the variable “supervisor work-life balance support” affects the variable “work-life balance” more than the impact of the variable “job autonomy”. Similarly, compare the value of the coefficient f2of the two affect pairs of “job autonomy” to “work-life balance” and “supervisor work-life balance support” to “work-life balance” to see the impact of the variable “job autonomy” on the variable “work-life balance” is quite little, while the variable “supervisor work-life balance support” impacts quite much to the variable “work-life balance”. It makes perfect sense in the service industry, where service business activities take place continues to be able to meet the requirements of different customers, at different times. Most related departments arrange for employees to rotate overtime or work in shifts, under the general coordination of the manager. Therefore, the reasonable arrangement and assignment of managers will greatly support employees in work-life balance.

The remaining relation pairs in the research model are also proven to be significant through Bootstrapping test results.  With hypothesis H3, the result is consistent with previous research by Mas-Machuca et al. (2016), Nilawati et al. (2019). Employees are prouder of the company they work for when they feel they can balance their work and life better. About hypothesis H5, the result is consistent with previous research by Mas-Machuca et al. (2016), Tavassoli and Sune (2018), Nilawati et al. (2019), Azeem and Akhtar (2014). When employees improve their work-life balance, they will be more satisfied with their jobs. Regarding hypothesis H6, the results are similar to the research of Azeem and Akhtar (2014). Employees will be more committed and engaged with the organization when their work-life balance is improved. And with hypothesis H4, the results are similar to the research of Mas-Machuca et al. (2016), Nilawati et al. (2019). Employees with more pride in the company they work for are more satisfied with their jobs. Besides, regarding hypothesis H7, the results are consistent with the research of Azeem and Akhtar (2014). Employees, who are more satisfied with their work, increase their engagement with the company.

Specifically, all direct and indirect relation pairs play a certain role in contributing to the influence of the above relation pairs (hypothesis H3, H4, H5, H6, and H7).  R2of the model of variables affecting variables “job satisfaction” and “organizational commitment” is relatively high, showing that the related variables in the model have a significant impact on these two variables. R2of “organizational pride” is quite low, showing the service industry impact of “work-life balance” is not much to this variable. However, the Bootstrapping test showed better results. The regression coefficient analysis to evaluate the direct impact of Bootstrapping test shows that the pair of “organizational pride - job satisfaction” and the pair of “job satisfaction - organizational commitment” have the largest impact in the research model. On the direct impact, the variable “work-life balance” impact “organizational pride” more than “job satisfaction” and “organizational commitment”. However, comparing the regression coefficient to evaluate the total impact (including direct impact and indirect impact), the variable “work-life balance” still impacts quite much on “job satisfaction” and “organizational commitment”. This result has obviously the contribution of the variable “organizational pride”
(in both 02 impacts of “work-life balance” on “job satisfaction” and “work-life balance” on “organizational commitment”) and the variable “job satisfaction” (in the impact of “Work-life balance” on “organizational commitment”) as an intermediate variable. In addition, the value of f2of each relation pair shows that the variable “work-life balance” has little impact on “job satisfaction” and “organizational commitment”, but has a high impact on “organizational pride. In particular, the value of f2of the pair “organizational pride - Job satisfaction” and the pair “Job satisfaction - organizational commitment” is very large. It proves the importance of the variable “organizational pride” to “job satisfaction” and “job satisfaction” to “organizational commitment”.



**Figure 2.** Path coefficients, R2 and P-values

Source: SmartPLS 3.2.9 test result

Regarding to hypothesis H8, to test the differences in work-life balance between groups of employees’ characteristics (gender, age, income, marital status, and job positions) in the service industry in Ho Chi Minh City, the one-way analysis of variance (One-way ANOVA) was used. Levene test results of each group of characteristics have a sig. results more than 0.05, which means we can continue to test ANOVA. The results of the ANOVA test of each group of characteristics also have a sig. results more than 0.05, the hypothesis H0 is accepted. In other words, we can conclude that there is no difference in work-life balance between groups of employee’s characteristics who are working in the service industry in Ho Chi Minh City.

## 4.2. Discussion

Results showed that work-life balance has a major impact on employees’ organizational pride. When employees achieve work-life balance, they will have a more positive attitude and be prouder of the company they are working for. Besides organizational pride, work-life balance also has a certain impact on employees’ job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Employees who have a work-life balance will be more satisfied with the position they are taking, and also be more loyal and engaging to their company. It is also suitable for the service industry, where customers identify the behaviors of each employee with the image of the company. In addition, with the specific nature of work, employees need flexibility and initiative to meet customers’ diverse requirements. The more work-life balance employees achieve, the more helpful it is in strengthening employees’ pride in the company they are working for, thereby being more satisfied and more engaging with the job and the company.

Finally, related to the hypothesis H8, the results of a one-way analysis of variance to test the differences in work-life balance in characteristics groups (gender, age, income, marital status, and job positions) of employees who are working in service companies in Ho Chi Minh City all show no difference. However, according to experts in the service industry (through the second quantitative study), there is still a certain difference in work-life balance between male and female employees (group of gender characteristics), especially those who are married (group of marital status characteristics). After getting married, female employees have more concerned for their families and children. So, working overtime or working in the shift will affect pretty much their work-life balance. Managers need to pay attention to these employees in order to have reasonable arrangements and assignments, to ensure the spirit and performance of female employees.

# 5. Conclusions & implications

The research accomplished the main targets and tested the differences in work-life balance between characteristics groups. Based on analyzing research results, this study proposes some recommendations to develop relevant human resource policies to assist employees to achieve work-life balance, which increases their job satisfaction, organizational pride, and organizational commitment.

Employees’ work-life balance is an equal balance of time, energy, and commitment to their roles at work and in life. Based on the research results, companies in the service industry can refer to some solutions to assist their employees to achieve a work-life balance, thereby increasing employees’ job satisfaction, organizational pride, and organizational commitment.

Supervisor work-life balance support demonstrates employees’ belief in their managers’ influences in assisting them to achieve work-life balance. It has quite a huge impact on employees’ work-life balance, so managers need to pay attention and prioritize to improve. Employees highly appreciate their supervisors’ help when they have their own urgent problems. The understanding of the supervisor is a great comfort and encouragement to each employee. Besides, the role of the supervisor is very important in helping employees balance - work-life. Each level of manager ought to set clear goals, set priorities in work, and have a reasonable, scientific, and specific work assignment for employees in his/her department, in order to help employees to understand their roles, rights, and responsibilities so that they can be more proactive in their work. It is especially important in the service industry because this is a working environment where employees need to have their own initiative in contacting and working with customers, partners, suppliers, and colleagues, ... In addition, supervisors should respect and listen to employees’ contributions to absorb and adjust unreasonable assignments. It will be helpful for improving job performance and reducing the time to process unnecessary tasks. Furthermore, supervisors need to emphasize the importance of work-life balance so that employees can improve their awareness and be more proactive in arranging and balancing time for their work and life. Supervisors are willing to support and help employees when they have an urgent family problem or create a flexible way of job handling procedures, working time, and work sharing among employees in the same department, it also helps employees have a better work-life balance.

Beside supervisor work-life balance support, although employees’ job autonomy has a small impact, it also affects their work-life balance. Job autonomy refers to the ability to freely use employees own way to work without unnecessary supervision or restriction. In order to achieve job autonomy, employees want to arrange assigned tasks themselves. Employees should be provided necessary resources to ensure good performance on their assigned work. Furthermore, they also want to play a role in deciding what directly affects their work. The fact that supervisors confidently delegate authority, set boundaries for employees to actively decide and solve their work, or allow employees to participate in work decisions that affect themselves also helps improve employees’ job autonomy. In addition, employees need to be well aware of the job characteristics, their rights and responsibilities, and relevant regulations in doing their work so that they can be proactive and flexible in handling their jobs and solving problems within the scope of assigned work. For problems that are inadequate or unreasonable at work, employees should be encouraged to present and propose necessary adjustments to their supervisors in order to improve their individual and their team’s performance.

Next to the two groups of solutions mentioned above, leadership can also encourage and guide employees to implement some solutions to balance their work-life better: planning a reasonable and specific schedule of work and activities; focusing on solving work efficiently and quickly during working hours, in order of priority and deadline, avoiding to prolong or take it home; avoiding mixing work and personal affairs (unless absolutely necessary), distracting and reducing performance; spending appropriate and moderate time for personal activities, such as exercising, studying, meeting relatives/friends; entertaining, …

Besides enhancing work-life balance to improve employees’ organizational pride, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, the impact on organizational pride also contributes to increased employees’ job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Similarly, improving employees’ job satisfaction also contributes significantly to increasing employees’ organizational commitment. These are the factors that leadership should pay attention to improve to build and develop quality and sustainable human resources.

In addition, leadership also needs to pay attention and build policies to support married female employees. Assigning fixed-time and fewer overtime jobs will help these employees balance their work and life better, thereby helping them have a better working spirit and achieve higher performance.

There are likely still other factors that have a significant impact on work-life balance that the research has not addressed. Further research can expand the study on the factors affecting work-life balance to identify other factors that have significant impacts (e.g., work needs, family needs, etc.), from which there will be broader recommendations to improve employees’ work-life balance. Besides, further research can also expand the scope of research in other regions of the country to have broader analytical data, and compare regional cultural differences; expand the research area to have a more comprehensive view and assessment of the whole market, from which there are comparisons of differences in different industries; or expand the research direction in the opposite direction on the impact of job satisfaction, organizational pride and organizational commitment on work-life balance.

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