

Factors Associated with Stress Among Social Workers in Public Social Service Institutions in The Southeastern Region of Vietnam

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This study aims to identify several factors associated with stress among social workers working in public social service institutions in the Southeastern region of Vietnam. A quantitative research approach was employed, and data were collected from 436 social workers using standardized measurement scales, including stress (DASS-21), optimism–pessimism, job satisfaction, multidimensional social support, and turnover intention. The collected data were processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The statistical techniques employed in this study included descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and linear regression analysis. The findings indicate that optimism–pessimism, job satisfaction, and perceived social support are negatively associated with stress, whereas turnover intention is positively associated with stress among social workers. Among these factors, perceived social support has the strongest predictive effect ($\beta = -.259$), followed by optimism–pessimism ($\beta = -.242$), turnover intention ($\beta = .221$), and job satisfaction, which has the lowest predictive effect ($\beta = -.170$) on stress levels among social workers. Collectively, these factors explain 42.7% of the variance in stress levels among social workers. Based on these findings, the study proposes practical and policy implications to reduce stress levels among social workers.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a prevalent mental health concern that affects individuals to varying degrees. A large-scale global study involving 2,450,043 participants from 149 countries indicated that levels of emotional stress in the global population have shown a continuous upward trend over time, with significant differences across countries and regions (Piao et al., 2024). Another recent study conducted across 131 countries found that 35.1% of adults reported experiencing stress at the time of the survey, with women showing higher prevalence than men (36.1% compared to 33.6%) (Smith & Wesselbaum, 2025).

Social work is recognized as a profession associated with stress-related health risks (Truter et al., 2017). In the course of their work, social workers

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have to face several challenges arising from the nature of the profession, including working with clients with complex needs, exposure to occupational risks, unfavorable working environments, slow progress in client outcomes, lack of client cooperation, and insufficient facilities and equipment. In addition, social workers must also manage family responsibilities and interpersonal relationships. As a result, social workers are particularly vulnerable to experiencing stress. According to Mihai et al. (2025), social workers experience more stress than other occupational groups. Empirical evidence indicates that occupational stress is closely associated with a wide range of adverse health and work-related outcomes. Prolonged stress not only increases the risk of physical health deterioration and mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression, but also reduces job satisfaction, increases burnout, heightens turnover intention, and contributes to organizational conflicts. These findings highlight the systemic vulnerability of the social work workforce amid increasing occupational stressors (Evans et al., 2006). It is therefore essential to identify factors associated with stress among social workers in public social service institutions in the Southeastern region of Vietnam. This provides a basis for developing effective interventions to mitigate stress and for establishing policy frameworks to protect the mental health of social workers.

Despite the growing body of international research on factors associated with stress among social workers, research in Vietnam remains limited. Existing studies in Vietnam are often descriptive in nature and conducted on a small scale. The Southeastern region of Vietnam is characterized by rapid urbanization and high population density, both of which contribute to an increasing demand for social work services. However, the understanding of the factors associated with stress among social workers in this region remains limited. Addressing this research gap is essential for developing evidence-based interventions and informing policy development aimed at strengthening the social work workforce in Vietnam.

Stress Among Social Workers

Stress is defined as a physiological and/or psychological response of an individual to internal or external stressors, in which the demands of a situation are perceived as exceeding the individual's adaptive capacity, resources, or coping abilities, resulting in changes in emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physiological functioning (American Psychological Association, 2009). In the field of social work, stress is considered a common issue. Recent studies suggest that stress among social workers arises not only from occupational demands but also from personal and social life. According to Mihai et al. (2025), stress among social workers refers to perceived stress that occurs when work and life demands exceed the resources and coping capacities that individuals perceive as available to them.

Optimism–Pessimism

Optimism–pessimism among social workers is understood as the tendency to hold positive expectations or to interpret future outcomes in a negative manner, shaped by both professional experiences and personal life conditions. This psychological attribute functions as a central cognitive–emotional factor that directly influences how individuals appraise stressful situations, select coping strategies, and regulate behavioral responses to occupational stressors. Research indicates that individuals with higher levels of optimism tend to feel less stress, adopt more proactive coping strategies, and maintain better mental health, whereas prolonged pessimism is associated with increased perceived stress, anxiety disorders, and occupational burnout (Carver & Scheier, 2014; Scheier et al., 1994).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction among social workers is understood as an overall cognitive and affective evaluation of one's job, reflecting the extent to which the job fulfills psychological needs, professional values, and personal expectations, as well as contextual factors such as working conditions, professional relationships, and organizational support. This construct is closely associated with occupational stress. Lower levels of job satisfaction are linked to increased perceived stress, burnout, and deteriorating mental health, whereas higher levels of job satisfaction act as a buffer against the adverse effects of chronic occupational stressors (Spector, 1997; Kim & Stoner, 2008).

Perceived Social Support

In this study, perceived social support is conceptualized as individuals' subjective evaluation of the availability and sufficiency of support within their social network, including family, friends, colleagues, and significant others (Zimet et al., 1988; Cohen & Wills, 1985). It is widely regarded as an important psychological resource that protects against stress, with higher levels of perceived support associated with less stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Recent studies indicate that stress and negative psychological outcomes among social workers, including burnout, anxiety, and depression, are reduced with increased levels of social support. These include support from colleagues and supervisors, as well as self-care programs and mindfulness practices that provide clear psychological and social benefits (Maddock, 2024).

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention among social workers is defined as a psychological state reflecting an individual's desire, thoughts, or plans to leave their current social work position in the near future, and is considered an important antecedent for predicting actual turnover behavior (Kim & Stoner, 2008). Turnover intention is not only a consequence of occupational stress but may also contribute to stress in social work practice. The development of intentions or plans to leave one's job is often accompanied by psychological instability, internal conflict, and reduced

professional commitment, thereby increasing psychological stress in both work processes and individuals' mental well-being (Kim & Stoner, 2008). Although numerous studies have examined factors associated with stress, most have focused on individual factors rather than their combined effects. In particular, there is a lack of research examining the simultaneous effects of four factors: optimism–pessimism, job satisfaction, perceived social support, and turnover intention on stress among social workers in Vietnam. In response to this gap, the present study examines empirical evidence concerning the factors associated with stress among social workers, specifically optimism–pessimism, job satisfaction, perceived social support, and turnover intention (see Figure 1 for the research model). The expected findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective stress reduction strategies for social workers.

Based on the theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1. Optimism–pessimism is negatively associated with stress among social workers.

H2. Job satisfaction is negatively associated with stress among social workers.

H3. Perceived social support is negatively associated with stress among social workers.

H4. Turnover intention is positively associated with stress among social workers

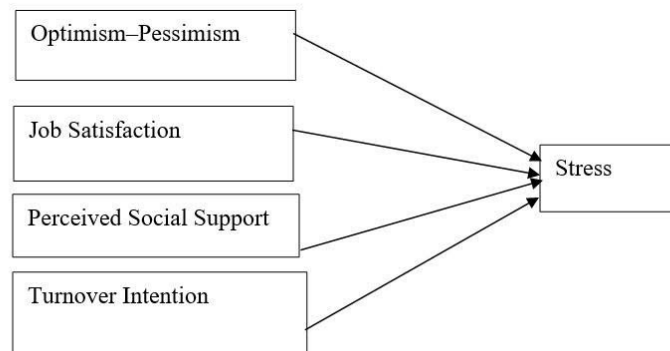


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional descriptive design. Data were collected at a single point in time using a self-administered questionnaire completed by the study participants. After data cleaning and coding, the data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 with appropriate statistical techniques.

Participants

The study surveyed 436 social workers currently employed at public social service institutions using a convenience sampling method. Following Hair et al. (2018), the sample size was determined using the 5:1 participant to observed variable rule commonly applied in multivariate statistical analysis. With 31 observed variables, the minimum required sample size under the 5:1 ratio was 155 participants. Therefore, the sample size in this study ($N = 436$) exceeded the recommended threshold, ensuring the reliability and stability of the analytical model as well as the generalizability of the findings. Eligible participants were social workers employed at public social service institutions in the Southeastern region of Vietnam who were able to complete the questionnaire and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The specific information about the research participants is as follows:

Table 1: Characteristics of the distribution of study participants.

Characteristics		<i>n</i>	%
Province or City	Ho Chi Minh City	267	61.3
	Ba Ria – Vung Tau	34	7.8
	Dong Nai	32	7.3
	Binh Duong	32	7.3
	Binh Phuoc	71	16.3
Gender	Male	167	38.3
	Femail	269	61.7
Education level	Other levels	36	8.3
	Intermediate	125	28.7
	College	72	16.5
	University and above	203	46.5
Trained Major	Social work	184	42.1
	Psychology	31	7.1
	Sociology	50	11.5
	Healthcare	87	20.0
	Education	54	12.4
	Others	30	6.9
Years of service	< 5 years	103	23.6
	5 - < 10 years	155	35.5
	10 - < 15 years	118	27.1
	15 years or more	60	13.8
Target group/audience	Children	78	17.9
	Elderly people	65	14.9
	People with disabilities	111	25.5
	Drug addicts	90	20.6
	People with mental illnesses	92	21.1

Data Collection Instruments

Stress: Stress was measured using the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales – 21 items (DASS-21), with the stress subscale consisting of 7 items. The DASS-21 was originally developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995) and later validated for use in the Vietnamese context by Tran et al. (2013). Participants rated each item on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (did not apply to me at all) to 3 (applied to me very much or most of the time). The total score was calculated by summing the item scores and multiplying by two, yielding a score range from 0 to 42. The levels of stress were classified as follows: normal (≤ 14), mild (> 14 to ≤ 18), moderate (> 18 to ≤ 25), severe (> 25 to ≤ 33), and extremely severe (≥ 34).

Optimism–Pessimism: Optimism–pessimism was measured using the Life Orientation Test – Revised (LOT-R), developed by Scheier, Carver, and Bridges (1994). The scale consists of 10 items, including 6 scored items (3 measuring optimism and 3 measuring pessimism) and 4 filler items. The Vietnamese version of the scale was first translated and applied by Tuong & Van (2012). Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Scoring is conducted as follows: filler items are not scored; optimism items are scored from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), while pessimism items are reverse-scored. The total score ranges from 0 to 24, where a score of 0 indicates extreme pessimism and a score of 24 indicates extreme optimism. A score of approximately 15 reflects a slightly optimistic orientation.

Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction was measured using a single-item overall question rated on a scale from 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). The use of a single-item measure to assess overall job satisfaction has been demonstrated to have acceptable reliability and validity in previous studies (Wanous et al., 1997; Dolbier et al., 2005), particularly when the objective is to capture global job satisfaction rather than specific facets of the job.

Perceived Social Support: Perceived social support was measured using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), developed by Zimet et al. (1988). The scale consists of 12 items assessing perceived support from family, friends, and significant others. In this study, perceived social support refers to the extent to which individuals perceive the availability of supportive resources within their social environment. Participants rated their level of agreement with each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The total score ranges from 0 to 48, with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived social support. The MSPSS has been translated and validated in Vietnam by Pham et al. (2023).

Turnover Intention: Turnover intention was measured using a single-item question requiring participants to self-assess their readiness to leave their current job in order to seek alternative employment. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (no intention to change)

to 4 (definite intention to change), with higher scores indicating stronger turnover intention. The use of a single-item measure to assess turnover intention has been acknowledged in organizational behavior research as a direct and efficient approach when the objective is to capture overall behavioral tendencies (Hom & Kinicki, 2001). This approach is consistent with Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, which suggests that behavioral intention can be assessed using direct indicators of individuals' readiness to act in the future.

RESULTS

Reliability Analysis of the Scales

Cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were conducted to examine the internal consistency of the scales and the adequacy of the observed variables for subsequent analysis. The results are presented in Table 2.

Variable	Observed Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor Loadings
Stress	7 items: S1–S7	$\alpha = .878$ ($N = 7$) (Corrected item–total correlation: .553–.729)	.665– .821
Optimism–Pessimism	6 items: OP1–OP3, PS1–PS3	$\alpha = .759$ ($N = 6$) (Corrected item–total correlation: .451–.566)	.705– .902
Perceived Social Support	12 items: OS1–OS4, FaS1–FaS4, FrS1–FrS4	$\alpha = .884$ ($N = 12$) (Corrected item–total correlation: .507–.692)	.525– .853

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that all three scales—stress, optimism–pessimism, and perceived social support—achieved acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained for all scales surpassed the recommended 0.60 threshold. In addition, all observed variables demonstrated corrected item–total correlations greater than 0.30. These findings suggest that the scales are reliable and that no observed variables were removed during the reliability assessment stage (Cristóbal et al., 2007; Hair et al., 2010).

To examine the underlying factor structure and verify the suitability of the observed variables for the measurement model, EFA (Exploratory factor analysis) was carried out using PCA with Varimax rotation. Factor loadings indicate the extent to which each observed variable is associated with its corresponding latent construct. According to Hair et al. (2010), acceptable thresholds for factor loadings depend on sample size; for samples larger than 350 observations, factor loadings of 0.30 may be

considered acceptable. However, to ensure a more robust and stable factor structure, this study adopted a more stringent threshold. Specifically, a cutoff value of 0.50 was applied. The results presented in Table 2 show that all observed variables for the stress, optimism–pessimism, and perceived social support scales had factor loadings greater than 0.50, and were therefore retained for subsequent analyses. These findings provide evidence of satisfactory convergent validity of the measurement scales.

For the two variables “job satisfaction” and “turnover intention,” each was measured using a single-item indicator. As these constructs consist of only one observed variable, internal consistency reliability tests such as Cronbach’s alpha and exploratory factor analysis were not applicable. Therefore, these variables were included directly in subsequent statistical analyses.

Normality Assessment

The normality of the data was assessed using skewness and kurtosis statistics to examine the suitability of the data for parametric statistical analyses. According to George and Mallery (2019), data are considered approximately normally distributed when skewness and kurtosis values fall within the range of -2 to $+2$.

Table 3 Results of Normality Assessment

Variable	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Stress Level	1.07	0.68	0.342	−0.61
Optimism–Pessimism	2.53	0.68	−0.63	0.801
Job Satisfaction	6.99	1.55	−0.208	0.084
Perceived Social Support	2.63	0.65	−0.724	1.117
Turnover Intention	1.24	1.33	0.710	−0.740

The results presented in Table 3 indicate that skewness values ranged from -0.724 to 0.710 , while kurtosis values ranged from -0.740 to 0.801 . All values fall within the acceptable range, suggesting that the data can be considered approximately normally distributed.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the data satisfy the assumption of normality, allowing for the use of parametric statistical analyses, including correlation analysis and regression analysis in the research model.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the factors and stress levels. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Correlations between Factors and Stress

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Stress	1.07	0.68	1				
2. Optimism–Pessimism	2.53	0.68	-.495**	1			
3. Job Satisfaction	6.99	1.55	-.400**	.309**	1		
4. Perceived Social Support	2.63	0.65	-.516**	.458**	.306**	1	
5. Turnover Intention	1.24	1.33	.479**	-.369**	-.344**	-.426**	1

Note: ** with $p < .01$, $N = 436$.

The results of the correlation analysis indicate that stress is negatively and significantly associated with optimism–pessimism ($r = -.495$, $p < .01$), job satisfaction ($r = -.400$, $p < .01$), and perceived social support ($r = -.516$, $p < .01$), while it is positively and significantly associated with turnover intention ($r = .479$, $p < .01$). These findings suggest that higher levels of optimism, job satisfaction, and perceived social support are associated with lower levels of stress, whereas higher turnover intention is associated with higher levels of stress.

Hypothesis Testing

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictors of stress in accordance with hypotheses H1 to H4. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Results of Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Stress

Variable	B	S.E.	β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
H1. Optimism–pessimism is negatively associated with stress among social workers	-0.089	0.016	-.243	-5.711	< .001	.735	1.360
H2. Job satisfaction is negatively associated with stress among social workers	-0.135	0.032	-.170	-4.238	< .001	.830	1.205
H3. Perceived social support is negatively associated with stress among social workers	-0.035	0.006	-.259	-5.961	< .001	.703	1.423
H4. Turnover intention is positively associated with stress among social workers	0.205	0.039	.221	5.219	< .001	.744	1.344

Model statistics: $R^2 = .427$; Adjusted $R^2 = .422$; $F(4,431) = 80.451$, $p < .001$

The overall model was statistically significant and explained 42.7% of the variance in stress levels ($R^2 = .427$; Adjusted $R^2 = .422$; $F(4, 431) = 80.451$; $p < .001$). These results indicate that the model demonstrates a moderate level of fit, with the set of independent variables providing significant predictive power for stress among social workers.

Examining individual predictors, optimism–pessimism, job satisfaction, and perceived social support were found to be negatively and significantly associated with stress among social workers, with the following coefficients: ($B = -.089$; $SE = .016$; $\beta = -.243$; $t = -5.711$; $p < .001$), ($B = -.135$; $SE = .032$; $\beta = -.170$; $t = -4.238$; $p < .001$), and ($B = -.035$; $SE = .006$; $\beta = -.259$; $t = -5.961$; $p < .001$), respectively. These findings suggest that higher levels of optimism, job satisfaction, and perceived social support are associated with lower levels of stress.

Turnover intention was positively and significantly associated with stress among social workers ($B = .205$; $SE = .039$; $\beta = .221$; $t = 5.129$; $p < .001$), indicating that stronger turnover intention is associated with higher levels of stress.

Overall, the results show that all factors serve as significant independent predictors of stress among social workers. Among these, perceived social support has the strongest predictive effect ($\beta = -.259$), followed by optimism–pessimism ($\beta = -.243$), turnover intention ($\beta = .221$), and job satisfaction, which has the weakest predictive effect ($\beta = -.170$) on stress levels among social workers.

DISCUSSION

This study identified several factors associated with stress among social workers. Specifically, turnover intention was positively associated with stress, whereas optimism–pessimism, job satisfaction, and perceived social support served as protective factors. The findings indicate that the regression model demonstrated a moderate level of explanatory power, with nearly half of the variance in stress levels accounted for by these factors. Overall, these results highlight the central role of both individual psychological characteristics and social resources in shaping stress experiences among social workers.

H1. Optimism–Pessimism is Negatively Associated with Stress among Social Workers

The results of this study support Hypothesis 1, indicating that optimism–pessimism is negatively associated with stress among social workers. This finding is consistent with the study by Segerstrom et al. (1998), which demonstrated that higher levels of optimism are associated with more adaptive coping strategies and reduced subjective stress responses. At the physiological level, Puig-Perez et al. (2015) showed that optimism is associated with more effective regulation of stress responses, whereas pessimism is linked to negative appraisals of stressful situations. More recent evidence further reinforces this moderating role, indicating

that optimism mitigates the adverse psychological effects of stress related to COVID-19 (Puig-Pérez et al., 2024).

H2. Job Satisfaction is Negatively Associated with Stress among Social Workers

The results also support Hypothesis 2, indicating that job satisfaction functions as a protective factor against stress, such that higher levels of job satisfaction are associated with lower levels of stress. This finding is consistent with the seminal meta-analysis by Faragher, Cass, and Cooper (2005), which reported a strong negative relationship between job satisfaction and stress, anxiety, and depression, suggesting that higher levels of satisfaction are associated with reduced psychological stress responses. More recent studies further support this relationship. Tran et al. (2024) found that job dissatisfaction is significantly associated with psychological distress, which comprises core components such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

H3. Perceived Social Support is Negatively Associated with Stress among Social Workers

The results provide support for Hypothesis 3, suggesting that perceived social support functions as a protective factor against stress, whereby individuals with higher perceived social support tend to report lower levels of stress. This finding is consistent with the study by Inoue et al. (2022), which demonstrated that increased support from colleagues is associated with a significant reduction in psychological distress among workers over a one-year period. Similarly, among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, perceived social support was found to be negatively associated with work stress, with resilience acting as a mediator in this relationship (Karadaş & Duran, 2022). Another study also showed that social support reduces the negative effects of stress on depressive and anxiety symptoms, particularly when the level of support is perceived as high (Wang et al., 2014).

Among the three protective factors identified in this study, perceived social support emerged as the strongest protective factor, followed by optimism–pessimism, and finally job satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model and the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which emphasize the central role of social and personal resources in protecting individuals from occupational stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). Accordingly, perceived social support, as a fundamental external resource, exerts the strongest protective effect, followed by optimism–pessimism as an internal resource. In contrast, job satisfaction primarily reflects an evaluative outcome of work experiences, and therefore, its protective role is more indirect and secondary in nature.

H4. Turnover Intention is Positively Associated with Stress among Social Workers

The results support Hypothesis 4, indicating that turnover intention is a significant risk factor associated with stress among social workers. This

finding aligns with the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which suggests that the formation of intentions to leave one's job increases perceived threats to personal resources—such as income, professional status, and psychological stability—thereby intensifying internal psychological stress (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Empirical studies in the healthcare and social service sectors have similarly shown that turnover intention is associated with psychological distress, anxiety, and prolonged negative emotional states (Xiao et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2025). Hebles, Trincado-Muñoz, and Ortega (2022) further argue that turnover intention is not only a consequence of stress but also contributes to the maintenance of psychological strain by undermining psychological safety and perceived control over work.

The findings of this study extend and reinforce existing theoretical frameworks of occupational stress by demonstrating the independent predictive roles of personal resources (optimism–pessimism), occupational resources (job satisfaction), social resources (perceived social support), and life demands (turnover intention) in relation to stress among social workers. These results support the applicability of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model in the context of social work, highlighting that multi-level resources (personal, social, and organizational) function as protective factors, whereas demands arising from personal life contribute to increased stress. At the same time, this study contributes to the development of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by clarifying the mechanisms through which resources are mobilized to mitigate stress, as well as how resource loss or instability in career orientation can exacerbate psychological strain. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes by elucidating the protective roles of personal, occupational, and social resources while integrating turnover intention as an important predictive variable in the occupational stress model. In doing so, the study advances an ecological approach to stress research, particularly in the context of contemporary social work characterized by dynamic changes and multidimensional pressures.

The findings suggest that stress reduction interventions for social workers should be implemented using a multi-level approach, targeting personal, social, and organizational resources simultaneously. At the organizational level, institutions should prioritize the development of supportive environments through professional supervision models, peer support systems, psychological support groups, and organizational cultures that strengthen perceived social support—the most significant protective factor against stress. At the individual level, training programs should focus on enhancing positive psychological capacities such as optimism, cognitive restructuring skills, and adaptive coping strategies. Finally, improving job satisfaction through better working conditions, professional recognition, and clear career development pathways can contribute to sustainable stress reduction and reduce turnover intention in the long term.

The results also highlight the need to develop policy frameworks aimed at protecting the mental health of social workers through a resource-based approach. It is essential to integrate mandatory professional psychological

support services into the employee welfare system for social workers. Professional training and development policies should emphasize the enhancement of positive psychological capacities, coping skills, and stress management as core professional competencies. In addition, establishing intersectoral coordination mechanisms among healthcare, education, labor–social affairs, and community-based organizations plays a critical role in strengthening social support at the institutional level. Overall, this study advocates for a preventive policy approach rather than a reactive, consequence-based intervention approach, with the aim of ensuring long-term mental health protection for social workers.

Limitations of the Study

Given the cross-sectional design of this study, no causal conclusions can be drawn about the relationships between the predictors and stress, highlighting the need for longitudinal or quasi-experimental studies in future research to better elucidate underlying mechanisms over time. Reliance on self-report instruments may make the findings more susceptible to common method bias; therefore, future studies should draw on data from multiple sources, such as evaluations by supervisors and colleagues, as well as objective indicators. In addition, the sample size for this study is limited to the Southeast region of Vietnam and was selected using non-probability convenience sampling, which may limit the broader applicability of the results.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should consider conducting cross-regional and cross-cultural comparative studies to enhance external validity. In terms of research directions, future studies should examine mediation and moderation models, integrating variables such as burnout, resilience, psychological capital, and organizational justice. Furthermore, resource-based intervention models should be developed and tested to evaluate their effectiveness in reducing stress within social work practice settings.

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