



Research Article

The Relationship Between Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being Among Young Vietnamese Employees: The Mediating Role of Work-Life Balance

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Abstract

This study examined how personality traits relate to work-life balance and psychological well-being among 733 young Vietnamese employees, and tested work-life balance as a mediating mechanism in these associations. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from young employees in urban workplaces who completed measures of personality traits, work-life balance, and psychological well-being. Descriptively, participants reported high conscientiousness and relatively elevated psychological well-being, particularly in positive relations and personal growth, alongside moderately high work-life balance but notable role interference between work and personal domains. Mediation analyses indicated that neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness were significantly associated with both work-life balance and psychological well-being, and that work-life balance partially mediated these relationships, whereas extraversion did not show unique effects once other traits were controlled. These findings suggest that, in the context of rapid socio-economic change in Vietnam, personality-based resources (e.g., conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness) and vulnerabilities (neuroticism) play a central role in shaping young employees' ability to manage work-life demands and maintain psychological functioning. The study contributes to the literature by integrating personality and work-life perspectives in an emerging-economy context and highlights the need for organizational interventions that both enhance work-life balance and account for individual differences in personality when promoting employee well-being.

Keywords

Personality Traits, Psychological Well-being, Work-life Balance, Vietnamese Employee

1. Introduction

Young employees represent an important segment of the workforce and play a vital role in organizational sustainability, innovation, and national economic development. In an increasingly globalized and knowledge-based economy, organizations rely heavily on young professionals who possess adaptability, technological competence, creativity, and a

strong capacity for continuous learning. Their ability to respond effectively to rapidly changing work environments contributes substantially to organizational competitiveness and long-term growth. However, the same characteristics that enable young employees to thrive in dynamic workplaces also expose them to heightened job demands, career uncertainty,

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and evolving expectations regarding both professional achievement and personal life. Consequently, understanding the psychological factors that influence their well-being has become an important priority for researchers, employers, and policymakers seeking to promote a healthy, productive, and sustainable workforce.

Psychological well-being has received increasing attention in occupational and organizational psychology because it extends beyond the absence of psychological distress to encompass optimal psychological functioning and human flourishing. Ryff's model conceptualizes psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct consisting of self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Employees with higher psychological well-being tend to demonstrate greater job performance, organizational commitment, creativity, resilience, and work engagement, while also experiencing lower levels of burnout, absenteeism, and turnover intentions. Given these broad individual and organizational benefits, identifying the factors that foster psychological well-being has become an important research agenda.

One factor consistently associated with employee well-being is work-life balance, defined as an individual's ability to effectively allocate time, energy, and psychological resources across work and non-work domains while minimizing inter-role conflict. Rather than representing an equal distribution of time between work and personal life, work-life balance reflects a subjective perception that multiple life roles can be fulfilled in a satisfactory and harmonious manner. Extensive research demonstrates that achieving work-life balance contributes to greater life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being, whereas persistent work-life conflict and excessive job demands are associated with elevated levels of stress, anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and burnout [1-5]. As organizations increasingly adopt flexible work arrangements and digital technologies that blur the boundaries between work and personal life, maintaining work-life balance has become an even greater challenge, particularly for younger employees at the early stages of their careers.

Individual differences in the ability to achieve work-life balance are influenced not only by organizational conditions but also by stable personality characteristics. According to the Five-Factor Model, personality traits shape how individuals perceive workplace demands, regulate emotions, cope with stress, and manage competing life roles. Employees high in conscientiousness tend to organize tasks effectively and demonstrate better self-regulation; emotionally stable individuals experience fewer negative emotional reactions to work-related stress; extraverted individuals often benefit from broader social support networks; while openness and agreeableness facilitate adaptive coping and interpersonal relationships. Consequently, personality traits have been consistently associated with more effective work-life management, lower work-family conflict, and greater adaptability to changing work environments [6].

Beyond influencing work-life balance, personality traits are also among the strongest dispositional predictors of psychological well-being. A substantial body of evidence indicates that conscientiousness, openness to experience, extraversion, and agreeableness are positively associated with psychological well-being, whereas neuroticism is consistently linked to lower well-being due to greater emotional instability and vulnerability to stress. Although these direct relationships have been well documented, considerably less is known about the processes through which personality traits influence psychological well-being. From a theoretical perspective, work-life balance represents a plausible mediating mechanism because personality shapes individuals' capacity to manage work and personal demands, which subsequently affects their psychological functioning. Nevertheless, empirical evidence examining this mediating pathway remains limited, particularly in non-Western cultural contexts.

The importance of investigating these relationships is particularly evident in Vietnam, a country undergoing rapid economic growth, industrialization, and digital transformation. These societal changes have intensified workplace competition, increased performance expectations, and accelerated technological adaptation across many industries. Young Vietnamese employees, especially those working in urban and service sectors, frequently face extended working hours, continuous skill development requirements, and increasing employment uncertainty while simultaneously fulfilling strong cultural expectations regarding family responsibilities and social obligations. Such dual demands may undermine work-life balance and place young employees at greater risk of psychological distress. Indeed, recent evidence indicates that more than one-third of Vietnamese employees are willing to leave organizations that negatively affect their work-life balance [7], underscoring the growing importance of creating work environments that support employee well-being and retention.

Despite increasing scholarly attention to workplace well-being, research examining the joint relationships among personality traits, work-life balance, and psychological well-being in Vietnam remains scarce. Existing studies have primarily focused on the direct effects of personality or work-related factors, with relatively few investigating the underlying psychological mechanisms that connect these constructs, particularly among young employees. Furthermore, much of the current evidence originates from Western countries, limiting its generalizability to Vietnam's collectivistic cultural context and rapidly evolving labor market. Addressing this gap, the present study examines the relationship between personality traits and psychological well-being among young Vietnamese employees, with work-life balance proposed as a mediating mechanism. By clarifying these relationships, this study contributes to the literature on occupational psychology while providing evidence to inform organizational policies and interventions aimed at promoting employee well-being, improving work-life balance, and fostering sustainable workforce development in Vietnam.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Design and Data Collection

This cross-sectional quantitative study aimed to examine the relationship between personality traits and psychological well-being among young Vietnamese employees, with a spe-

cific focus on the mediating role of work-life balance. A convenience sampling approach was employed to recruit 733 participants aged 25 to 40 years old. The characteristics of participants are presented in Table 1. Data were processed and analyzed using SPSS and Jamovi. Prior to conducting statistical analyses, the dataset was rigorously screened for missing values, normality, and outliers to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings.

Table 1. Characteristics of participants.

Criteria		N	%
Gender	Male	196	26.7
	Female	537	73.3
Age group	Group 1: 25-30 years old	386	52.7
	Group 2: >30-35 years old	175	23.9
	Group 3: >35-40 years old	172	23.5
Marital status	Single	422	57.6
	Married	303	41.3
	Other	8	1.1
Type of organization	State-owned enterprise	117	16.0
	Private enterprise	381	52.0
	Public administrative institution	124	16.9
	Foreign-invested enterprise	75	10.2
	NGO/NPO organization	2	0.3
	Others (household business, self-employed, etc.)	34	4.6
Position	Employee	605	82.5
	Team leader	79	10.8
	Department/division manager	32	4.4
	Head of Unit/Company Executive	17	2.3
Total		733	100

2.2. Measures

Personality traits: Personality traits were assessed using the NEO-60VN, a 60-item Vietnamese adaptation of the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) [8] developed by Tran Van Cong et al. (2010) [9]. The scale measures the five major personality dimensions: Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness to Experience (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C), with 12 items for each dimension. Participants responded to all items using a Likert-type response format, with higher scores indicating stronger endorsement of the corresponding personality trait. In the

present study, the reliability coefficients for the five subscales were 0.743 for Neuroticism, 0.805 for Extraversion, 0.530 for Openness, 0.848 for Agreeableness, and 0.842 for Conscientiousness.

Psychological well-being: Psychological well-being was measured using the 42-item Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) developed by Ryff [10] and translated into Vietnamese by Kieu Thi Thanh Tra (2021) [11]. The instrument assesses six dimensions of psychological well-being: Self-Acceptance, Positive Relationship, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth, with seven items representing each dimension. Higher scores indicate greater psychological well-being. In

the current study, the PWBS demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.892$). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the six subscales were 0.628 for Self-Acceptance, 0.666 for Positive Relationship, 0.480 for Autonomy, 0.411 for Environmental Mastery, 0.605 for Purpose in Life, and 0.603 for Personal Growth.

Work-life balance: Work-life balance was assessed using the Work-Life Balance Scale developed by Hayman (2005) [12], consisting of 15 items measuring three dimensions: Work Interference with Personal Life, Personal Life Interference with Work, and Work-Life Enhancement. The Vietnamese version of the scale was developed using the back-translation procedure to ensure conceptual equivalence with the original instrument. Higher scores reflect more favorable work-life balance after reverse-coding negatively worded items where appropriate. In the present study, the overall scale demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.879$). The three subscales also showed excellent reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.912 for Work Interference with Personal Life, 0.864 for Personal Life Interference with Work, and 0.854 for Work-Life Enhancement.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analyses

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for personality traits, psychological well-being, and work-life balance ($n = 733$).

	M	SD
Personality traits		
Neuroticism (N)	2.14	0.55
Extraversion (E)	2.38	0.58
Openness (O)	2.31	0.44
Agreeableness (A)	2.33	0.70
Conscientiousness (C)	2.87	0.53

	M	SD
Psychological well-being		
Self-acceptance	4.12	0.73
Positive relationship	4.27	0.76
Autonomy	3.86	0.65
Environment mastery	4.10	0.60
Purposes in life	4.10	0.74
Personal growth	4.16	0.73
Total psychological well-being	4.10	0.57
Work-life balance		
Work interference with personal life	4.34	1.27
Personal life interference with work	4.90	1.32
Work-life enhancement	4.70	1.26
Total work-life balance	4.58	0.95

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for personality traits, psychological well-being, and work-life balance. Among the five personality traits, Conscientiousness showed the highest mean score ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.53$), followed by Extraversion ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 0.58$), Agreeableness ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 0.70$), Openness ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 0.44$), and Neuroticism ($M = 2.14$, $SD = 0.55$).

For psychological well-being, the overall mean score indicated a relatively high level of well-being among participants ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.57$). Among the six dimensions, Positive Relationship had the highest mean ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.76$), followed by Personal Growth ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.73$), Self-Acceptance ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.73$), Environmental Mastery ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.60$), Purpose in Life ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.74$), and Autonomy ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.65$).

Regarding work-life balance, participants reported a moderately high level of overall work-life balance ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.95$). Among its three dimensions, Personal Life Interference with Work had the highest mean score ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 1.32$), followed by Work-Life Enhancement ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.26$) and Work Interference with Personal Life ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.27$).

Table 3. Correlation matrix among personality traits, psychological well-being and work-life balance ($n = 733$).

	N	E	O	A	C	PWB	WLB
N	1						
E	-0.096**	1					
O	0.088*	0.027	1				
A	-0.275**	-0.076*	0.151**	1			

	N	E	O	A	C	PWB	WLB
C	-0.205**	0.394**	0.125**	-0.047	1		
PWB	-0.376**	0.187**	0.341**	0.333**	0.476**	1	
WLB	-0.381**	0.113**	0.185**	0.288**	0.241**	0.508**	1

Note: N: Neuroticism; E: Extraversion; O: Openness; A: Agreeableness; C: Conscientiousness; PWB: psychological well-being; WLB: work-life balance

*: $p < 0.05$ (sig. 2 tailed); **: $p < 0.01$ (sig. 2 tailed)

Pearson correlation coefficients among the study variables are presented in Table 3. Overall, psychological well-being and work-life balance were positively associated ($r = 0.508$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that employees reporting better work-life balance also experienced higher levels of psychological well-being.

Regarding personality traits, Neuroticism was negatively correlated with both psychological well-being ($r = -0.376$, $p < 0.01$) and work-life balance ($r = -0.381$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals with higher emotional instability tended to experience poorer well-being and greater difficulty balancing work and personal life.

In contrast, Extraversion showed weak but significant positive correlations with psychological well-being ($r = 0.187$, $p < 0.01$) and work-life balance ($r = 0.113$, $p < 0.01$). Openness to Experience was moderately associated with psychological well-being ($r = 0.341$, $p < 0.01$) and positively correlated with work-life balance ($r = 0.185$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, Agreeableness demonstrated significant positive relationships with both psychological well-being ($r = 0.333$, $p < 0.01$) and work-life balance ($r = 0.288$, $p < 0.01$).

Among the five personality traits, Conscientiousness exhibited the strongest positive association with psychological well-being ($r = 0.476$, $p < 0.01$) and was also positively related

to work-life balance ($r = 0.241$, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that conscientious individuals are more likely to maintain higher levels of psychological functioning and effectively manage the demands of work and personal life.

The intercorrelations among personality traits were generally weak to moderate. Neuroticism was negatively associated with Extraversion ($r = -0.096$, $p < 0.01$), Agreeableness ($r = -0.275$, $p < 0.01$), and Conscientiousness ($r = -0.205$, $p < 0.01$), but showed a weak positive correlation with Openness ($r = 0.088$, $p < 0.05$). Extraversion was positively correlated with Conscientiousness ($r = 0.394$, $p < 0.01$), while Openness was positively associated with Agreeableness ($r = 0.151$, $p < 0.01$) and Conscientiousness ($r = 0.125$, $p < 0.01$). Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were not significantly correlated ($r = -0.047$, $p > 0.05$).

Overall, the correlation analyses provide preliminary support for the proposed model by demonstrating that personality traits are significantly associated with both work-life balance and psychological well-being, and that work-life balance is positively related to psychological well-being. These findings justify the subsequent mediation analyses examining work-life balance as a potential mechanism linking personality traits to psychological well-being.

3.2. Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Work-life Balance in the Relationship Between Personality Traits and Psychological Well-being

Table 4. Mediation Analysis of the Relationships Between Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being via Work-Life Balance.

Effect		β	z	P	95% CI		Conclusion
					Lower	Upper	
Neuroticism (N)	N $\rightarrow$ PWB (total effect)	-0.25	-8.53	< 0.001	-0.32	-0.20	Accepted
	N $\rightarrow$ WLB	-0.31	-8.86	< 0.001	-0.65	-0.41	
	N $\rightarrow$ PWB (direct effect)	-0.18	-5.83	< 0.001	-0.24	-0.12	
	N $\rightarrow$ WLB $\rightarrow$ PWB (indirect effect)	-0.08	-6.19	< 0.001	-0.11	-0.06	
Extraversion (E)	E $\rightarrow$ PWB (total effect)	0.02	0.64	0.53	-0.04	0.07	Rejected
	E $\rightarrow$ WLB	0.03	0.96	0.34	-0.06	0.17	

Effect		β	z	P	95% CI		Conclusion
					Lower	Upper	
Openness (O)	E → PWB (direct effect)	0.01	0.36	0.72	- 0.04	0.06	Accepted
	E → WLB → PWB	0.01	0.96	0.340	- 0.01	0.03	
	O → PWB (total effect)	0.28	9.84	< 0.001	0.29	0.43	
	O → WLB	0.16	4.90	< 0.001	0.21	0.49	
	O → PWB (direct effect)	0.23	8.63	< 0.001	0.24	0.37	
	O → WLB → PWB	0.04	4.26	< 0.001	0.03	0.08	
Agreeableness (A)	DC → PWB (total effect)	0.24	8.30	< 0.001	0.15	0.24	Accepted
	DC → WLB	0.19	5.46	< 0.001	0.16	0.35	
	DC → PWB (direct effect)	0.19	6.84	< 0.001	0.11	0.20	
	DC → WLB → PWB	0.05	4.61	< 0.001	0.02	0.06	
Conscientiousness (C)	C → PWB (total effect)	0.39	12.88	< 0.001	0.36	0.49	Accepted
	C → WLB	0.15	4.22	< 0.001	0.15	0.40	
	C → PWB (direct effect)	0.35	12.04	< 0.001	0.32	0.44	
	C → WLB → PWB (indirect effect)	0.04	3.79	< 0.01	0.02	0.06	

Note: N: Neuroticism; E: Extraversion; O: Openness; A: Agreeableness; C: Conscientiousness; PWB: psychological well-being; WLB: work-life balance

Neuroticism had significant negative effects on psychological well-being ($\beta = -0.18$, $p < 0.001$) and work-life balance ($\beta = -0.31$, $p < 0.001$), while work-life balance positively predicted psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$). Neuroticism also indirectly reduced psychological well-being through work-life balance ($\beta = -0.08$, $p < 0.001$), indicating partial mediation. These findings suggest that individuals high in neuroticism are more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and difficulties maintaining boundaries between work and personal life, which in turn lowers psychological well-being. Improving work-life balance may therefore help mitigate the negative impact of neuroticism on psychological well-being.

Extraversion did not significantly predict psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.01$, $p = 0.72$) or work-life balance ($\beta = 0.03$, $p = 0.34$). The indirect and total effects were also non-significant, indicating that work-life balance does not mediate the relationship between extraversion and psychological well-being. This suggests that extraversion may not meaningfully influence psychological well-being among young employees, possibly because extroverted individuals are less affected by work-life imbalance and adapt more easily to occupational pressures.

Openness positively predicted psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < 0.001$) and work-life balance ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.001$). It also had a significant indirect effect on psychological well-being through work-life balance ($\beta = 0.04$, $p < 0.001$), indicating partial mediation. Individuals high in openness tend to be

more adaptable and flexible in managing both work and personal life, which helps them maintain balance and improve psychological well-being.

Agreeableness positively affected psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < 0.001$) and work-life balance ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < 0.001$). Work-life balance partially mediated this relationship through a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$). Agreeable individuals are more likely to maintain harmonious relationships and experience less conflict between work and personal life, contributing to higher psychological well-being.

Conscientiousness showed positive effects on psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$) and work-life balance ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.001$). The indirect effect through work-life balance was also significant ($\beta = 0.04$, $p < 0.001$), indicating partial mediation. Individuals high in conscientiousness tend to be organized, disciplined, and effective in managing work demands, which helps reduce work-life conflict and enhances psychological well-being.

4. Discussion

4.1 Personality Traits, Work-life Balance, and Psychological Well-being

The present study investigated how personality traits relate to work-life balance and psychological well-being among

young Vietnamese employees and examined work-life balance as a mediating mechanism linking these constructs. Overall, the findings supported the proposed model, indicating that several Big Five traits are associated with both work-life balance and psychological well-being, and that work-life balance partially mediates these relationships [13, 14].

This study provides an integrated view of the psychological profile of young Vietnamese employees, situating personality traits alongside work-life balance and psychological well-being. Descriptively, conscientiousness showed the highest mean level among the Big Five traits, suggesting that participants generally perceived themselves as organized, responsible, and achievement-oriented, which is consistent with research indicating that conscientiousness is highly valued and rewarded in collectivistic and achievement-oriented contexts [14]. Vietnam's rapidly evolving labor market, with increasing demands for productivity, career advancement, and continuous professional development, likely further reinforces conscientious characteristics among young workers.

Participants also reported relatively high levels of psychological well-being, particularly in the domains of positive relations and personal growth. This pattern is coherent with Ryff's conceptualization of psychological well-being, in which close, supportive relationships and ongoing self-development are central components [10, 15], and with developmental perspectives that characterize young adulthood as a period of active career exploration, identity formation, and expanding social networks [16]. In contrast, autonomy showed the lowest mean score among the six Ryff dimensions, which is understandable in collectivistic contexts where family expectations, organizational hierarchies, and prevailing social norms may constrain independent decision-making among young employees [17].

Work-life balance was at a moderately high level overall, indicating that participants perceived a generally positive integration between work and personal life. Nonetheless, relatively elevated levels of both work interference with personal life and personal life interference with work underscore that balancing multiple roles remains challenging, consistent with research on role conflict among early-career employees [18]. For young employees in the early stages of their careers, the simultaneous demands of establishing professional competence, managing family responsibilities, coping with financial pressures, and meeting social expectations can generate persistent tensions between work and non-work domains, even when global perceptions of balance are favorable [19].

4.2. Work-life Balance as a Correlate and Mediator of Psychological Well-being

Consistent with prior research, work-life balance was moderately and positively associated with psychological well-being, highlighting its role as a protective factor for mental health (e.g., [20]). Employees who perceived greater balance between work and personal life reported better psychological

functioning, supporting theoretical perspectives that emphasize balanced resource allocation across life domains as a condition for environmental mastery, self-development, and life satisfaction [10, 15]. From the vantage point of resource-based models, work-life balance can be conceptualized as a favorable resource configuration that allows individuals to conserve and effectively invest their personal and social resources across domains, thereby promoting psychological well-being [21, 22].

The mediation findings further indicate that work-life balance functions as an important psychological mechanism linking several personality traits to psychological well-being. For neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, work-life balance partially explained the associations with psychological well-being, suggesting that the way individuals manage the interface between work and personal life is one pathway through which personality exerts its influence on mental health (e.g., [23]). At the same time, the persistence of significant direct effects for several traits implies that additional mechanisms such as coping styles, perceived stress, emotional regulation, social support, and achievement experiences also contribute to the personality, well-being relationship beyond work-life balance [24, 25].

4.3. Neuroticism and Vulnerability in Managing Life Roles

Neuroticism emerged as the trait most strongly and negatively related to both work-life balance and psychological well-being. This finding aligns with a substantial body of evidence identifying neuroticism as a key predictor of lower subjective and psychological well-being, largely due to heightened emotional instability, anxiety, and vulnerability to stress [13, 26]. Individuals high in neuroticism tend to experience more persistent negative affect, worry, and rumination, which can impair their ability to cope with occupational demands and maintain clear boundaries between work and personal life [27].

The mediation analysis showed that work-life balance partially explained the association between neuroticism and psychological well-being, indicating that poorer management of competing life roles is one pathway through which neuroticism diminishes well-being. In other words, neurotic individuals may be more likely to experience work-related strain that spills over into personal life, thereby eroding overall psychological functioning [28]. However, the remaining direct effect suggests that neuroticism also affects well-being through other routes, such as maladaptive coping strategies, heightened perceived stress, or difficulties in regulating emotions, which were not directly assessed in the present study [29, 30].

4.4. Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Adaptive Functioning

Openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness were all positively related to both work-life balance and psychological well-being, with work-life balance partially mediating these relationships. These patterns are broadly consistent with the Five-Factor Model and resource-based theories, which view personality traits as personal resources that facilitate adaptive coping and effective resource management [22, 23, 31].

Individuals high in openness may exhibit greater cognitive flexibility, curiosity, and willingness to explore new solutions, enabling them to adjust more effectively to changing work demands while maintaining meaningful engagement in personal life. This adaptability is likely to support better integration of work and non-work roles, which in turn fosters psychological well-being [32]. Agreeable individuals, characterized by empathy, cooperation, and prosocial interpersonal behavior, may experience fewer conflicts in both work and family contexts, thereby reducing cross-domain tension, supporting healthier work-life balance, and enhancing psychological functioning [33].

Among the Big Five traits, conscientiousness showed the strongest positive association with psychological well-being, both directly and indirectly via work-life balance. Conscientious individuals typically possess strong self-discipline, planning skills, and goal-directed behaviors that promote effective time management and role organization, which can reduce work-life conflict and enhance perceived control over multiple responsibilities [34]. The relatively larger direct effect of conscientiousness suggests that its influence extends beyond work-life balance, potentially through increased achievement, self-efficacy, and environmental mastery—core elements of Ryff's model of psychological well-being [10, 14].

4.5. The Unique Role of Extraversion

A particularly interesting finding concerns extraversion. Although extraversion showed significant positive bivariate correlations with work-life balance and psychological well-being, its direct, indirect, and total effects were no longer significant when all personality traits were entered simultaneously in the mediation model. This discrepancy indicates that the initial associations may reflect variance shared with other traits, especially conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism, rather than unique explanatory power of extraversion [23].

This result differs from much of the broader literature, which often identifies extraversion as a positive predictor of subjective and psychological well-being [13, 26, 35]. One potential explanation is that, in the context of young Vietnamese employees, attributes such as responsibility, emotional stability, and adaptability are more critical for maintaining psychological well-being than sociability.

It is also possible that extraversion contributes to well-being primarily through mechanisms not examined in the present

study—such as perceived social support, workplace engagement, or sense of belonging rather than through work-life balance. Intervention studies on enacted extraversion suggest that acting in an extraverted manner can improve momentary positive affect and well-being, partly through increased social interaction and engagement [35, 36], which may operate through pathways other than work-life balance.

4.6. Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings and designing future research.

First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences about the relationships among personality traits, work-life balance, and psychological well-being. Although the mediation analyses are consistent with the proposed pathways, they cannot establish temporal ordering; longitudinal or experimental designs are needed to clarify whether work-life balance prospectively mediates the effect of personality on well-being.

Second, the data were collected from a single national context and a relatively specific segment of the workforce—young Vietnamese employees—using non-probability sampling. This limits the generalizability of the findings to other age groups, occupational sectors, and cultural settings, and may also introduce selection bias related to employment type, urban residence, or willingness to participate.

Third, all key constructs were measured via self-report questionnaires, raising concerns about common method variance, social desirability, and shared response tendencies. Self-reported work-life balance and psychological well-being may be influenced by transient mood, individual differences in response styles, or cultural norms regarding the expression of distress and satisfaction. Incorporating multi-source data—for example, supervisor ratings of performance or objective indicators of workload—would strengthen the robustness of future findings.

Fourth, the study focused on broad Big Five domains and global indices of work-life balance and psychological well-being, without examining facet-level personality characteristics or specific components of the work-life interface. Evidence suggests that personality facets and differentiated work-life constructs can provide more nuanced insights into the mechanisms linking personality and well-being. Future work could employ more fine-grained measures to unpack which aspects of personality and work-life balance are most influential for particular dimensions of psychological well-being.

Finally, several potentially important contextual and individual variables were not assessed, such as organizational climate, job demands and resources, social support, and coping styles. These factors may moderate or further mediate the observed relationships, and their omission constrains the ability to test more complex, ecologically valid models of employee well-being. Including these variables in future studies would help clarify how personality interacts with workplace conditions and personal resources to shape work-life balance and

psychological functioning over time.

5. Conclusion

The present study examined how personality traits relate to work-life balance and psychological well-being among young Vietnamese employees, and tested work-life balance as a mediating mechanism in these associations. Overall, the findings supported the proposed model: neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness showed significant links with both work-life balance and psychological well-being, and work-life balance partially mediated these relationships, underscoring its role as an important psychological pathway between individual dispositions and mental health.

Descriptive results revealed a profile characterized by relatively high conscientiousness and elevated psychological well-being, particularly in positive relations and personal growth, alongside lower autonomy and only moderately high work-life balance. This pattern reflects both developmental features of young adulthood and the collectivistic, achievement-oriented context of Vietnam, where strong social ties and career striving coexist with constrained independence and substantial role demands. The findings contribute to the growing literature on personality, work-life experiences, and well-being by demonstrating that, in an emerging economy, traits linked to emotional stability, adaptability, cooperation, and responsibility are especially salient for maintaining psychological functioning under increasing occupational pressures.

At the theoretical level, the study extends prior research by integrating personality frameworks with work-life balance and Ryff's multidimensional model of psychological well-being, highlighting work-life balance as a partial mechanism through which personality-based resources and vulnerabilities translate into eudaimonic outcomes. The non-significant unique effects of extraversion in the multivariate model further suggest that the role of sociability may be contingent on cultural and occupational contexts, and that traits related to emotional regulation and self-management may be comparatively more critical for young employees' well-being in high-demand settings.

Practically, the results indicate that organizational initiatives to foster employee well-being should take into account both personality differences and work-life dynamics. Interventions that enhance work-life balance—such as flexible work arrangements, supportive supervision, boundary management training, and realistic workload designs—are likely to be particularly beneficial for employees high in neuroticism and those facing intense role demands. At the same time, organizations can leverage the strengths associated with conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness by creating environments that support continuous learning, collaboration, and effective self-management, thereby helping young employees transform these traits into sustainable work-life balance and psychological well-being.

Finally, the study's context-specific focus on young Vietnamese employees suggests several avenues for future research. Longitudinal designs could clarify the directionality and stability of the observed relationships over career transitions, while multi-source and cross-cultural studies could examine how organizational climates, social support, and policy environments moderate the links between personality, work-life balance, and well-being. Such efforts would deepen understanding of how personality and work-life experiences jointly shape psychological functioning in diverse labor markets and inform more tailored, evidence-based strategies to support the well-being of emerging workforce cohorts.

Abbreviations

N	Neuroticism
E	Extraversion
O	Openness
A	Agreeableness
C	Conscientiousness
PWB	Psychological Well-being
WLB	Work-life Balance

Author Contributions

Khue Le Minh Phan: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation

Tra Thi Thanh Kieu: Conceptualization, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Biography



Khue Le Minh Phan was born and educated in Vietnam. She earned her Master's degree in Psychology from Ho Chi Minh City University of Education in 2024. She currently works as a freelance life-skills trainer in Ho Chi Minh City. Her research interests include psychological well-being, personality traits, and youth development.



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Research Field

Khue Le Minh Phan: psychological well-being, personality traits.

Tra Thi Thanh Kieu: well-being, mental health literacy, individual differences, personality development, psychological assessment.