



Cognitive and Affective Character Strengths and Geographic Location as Predictors of Psychological Well-Being and Job Satisfaction Among Filipino Remote Workers

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Abstract

As remote work becomes common, it is important to understand the psychological factors that support employee well-being and job satisfaction in low- and middle-income countries such as the Philippines. Using a cross-sectional predictive research design, this study examined whether cognitive (creativity, curiosity, judgment, and love of learning) and affective (hope, zest, love, and gratitude) character strengths, along with geographic location (urban vs. rural) predict psychological well-being and job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers. A total of 384 Filipino remote workers employed in a 100% remote work setup completed the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS), the Psychological Well-Being (PWB) scale, and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) collected through an online form. Results showed that both cognitive and affective character strengths were generally high among participants, judgment and hope as the prominent strengths. Multiple regression analyses revealed that cognitive character strengths significantly predicted both psychological well-being, with judgment as the only significant individual predictor. Affective character strengths significantly predicted psychological well-being, with hope as the only significant predictor, but did not show significant individual effects on job satisfaction. Hierarchical regression analyses further showed that the inclusion of affective strengths improved models for both psychological well-being and job satisfaction. Geographic location did not significantly predict either outcome. These findings highlight the importance of individual character strength, particularly judgment and hope, as key psychological resources in remote work settings. It is recommended that organizations implement strengths-based interventions to support employee well-being and performance, particularly in remote work environments.

Keywords: cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, job satisfaction, psychological well-being, Filipino remote workers



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INTRODUCTION

Remote work can be traced back to the early 20th century with the use of telephones and telegraphs, which enabled individuals to perform tasks and communicate across distances from locations such as their homes. The development of personal computers in the late 20th century further facilitated remote task completion, while the rise of the internet in the 1990s significantly expanded its possibilities by enabling global collaboration and real-time information sharing (Paudel, 2023). In the Philippines, the Telecommuting Act of 2019 institutionalized remote work arrangements even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (Mores,

2022). However, remote work became widespread during the pandemic as organizations adopted it for business continuity (Paudel, 2023; Mores, 2022). This shift was reflected in the growing preference for remote work among Filipinos, with 28% favoring a fully remote setup, more than double in the global average of 11% (JobStreet, n.d.; SEEK, Boston Consulting Group [BCG], & The Network, 2023). The increasing number of Filipino remote workers has been attributed to their technological competence and English proficiency (Gador & Sudaria, 2024), although research on their experiences remains limited (Casal & Pineda, 2021; Mercado, 2019, as cited in Gador & Sudaria, 2024). Given this context,

remote work presents both benefits and challenges that may influence psychological well-being, defined as positive functioning, emotional balance, and purpose (Ryff, 1989), and job satisfaction, which reflects individuals' sense of fulfillment and positivity toward their work.

Character strengths offer a useful framework for understanding how individuals adapt to remote work demands. Defined as positive and relatively stable traits influencing thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Niemiec & Pearce, 2021), these strengths are broadly categorized into cognitive (head) and affective (heart) domains (Park & Peterson, 2010). Cognitive strengths include creativity, curiosity, judgment or open-mindedness, and love of learning, while affective strengths include traits such as hope, zest, love, and gratitude (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Niemiec & Pearce, 2021). Prior research suggests that character strengths are universally present but may vary across cultural and contextual settings (Park, et al., 2006). In the Philippines, Resurreccion (2017) found variations in dominant strengths, potentially influenced by sample and access limitations, highlighting the need to consider geographic differences. Although studies show that character strengths are positively associated with psychological well-being and job satisfaction (Littman-Ovadia et al., 2017; Miglianico et al., 2020; Gander et al., 2020; Harzer et al., 2021), most evidence comes from high-income countries, leaving gaps in low- and middle-income contexts (Jeffery-Schwikkard et al., 2024). Moreover, limited research has examined these relationships in remote work settings or considered geographic location (urban vs. rural). Addressing these gaps, the present study investigates whether cognitive and affective character strengths, alongside geographic location, predict psychological well-being and job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Remote Working. In today's context, remote work has significantly reduced geographical

constraints on employment. Data from LinkedIn shows that remote job postings accounted for over 20% of listings in March 2022 but declined to 14% by November 2022, based on 60 million postings since January 2021 (Anders, 2023). Despite this decline, remote roles continue to attract disproportionate interest, receiving up to 50% of applications while comprising only about 15% of listings (Anders, 2023). In the Philippines, JobStreet reported sharp increases in remote-related searches during the pandemic, including an 88% rise in work-from-home searches, 79% in home-based jobs, and 94% in freelance inquiries (JobStreet, n.d., Transitioning towards remote). A global survey by SEEK, BCG, and The Network (2023), which included 11,429 Filipinos out of 90,547 respondents, found that 28% of Filipinos prefer fully remote work compared to the global average of 11%. Although terminology varies, such as telework, telecommuting, and e-working, these concepts consistently refer to work conducted outside traditional office spaces and enabled by technology (Ferrara et al., 2022). While remote work offers benefits such as cost efficiency and environmental advantages, it also presents challenges, particularly as many employees were compelled into this setup during pandemic lockdowns (Mores, 2022; Simpson et al., 2024). Research indicates that although pre-pandemic remote workers reported higher job satisfaction, the abrupt transition has raised concerns about isolation, reduced support, and increased digital fatigue, highlighting the need for organizational strategies that support employee well-being (Simpson et al., 2024).

Empirical studies reveal that remote work produces both positive and negative outcomes for employees and organizations. A review by Ferrara et al. (2022) found that remote work can reduce stress and work-home conflict, improving job satisfaction, motivation, and performance, but may also lead to physical discomfort, longer work hours, unclear boundaries, and weakened social connections. Organizational challenges include difficulties in monitoring performance and maintaining effective communication. In the Philippine context, Gador & Sudaria (2024) identified

benefits such as better compensation, work-life balance, and career growth among Filipino remote workers, alongside challenges related to legal concerns, communication barriers, and technical issues, emphasizing the need to promote mental health awareness. Similarly, Mores (2022) found that remote work experiences vary across demographic factors, including age, gender, education, and experience. For instance, women reported that lack of managerial feedback negatively affects productivity, while millennials experience greater pressure from blurred work-life boundaries. Differences were also observed across educational attainment and work sectors, with concerns ranging from inefficient communication to information overload. Overall, the findings suggest that while remote work offers flexibility and opportunities, it also introduces complex challenges, and the satisfaction and well-being of Filipino remote workers remain underexplored (Mores, 2022).

Character Strengths. Most definitions of character strengths are derived from *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* by Peterson and Seligman (2004), which serves as the foundational framework for this study. They developed the VIA (Values in Action) Classification of Strengths and Virtues to systematically identify positive traits valued across cultures through extensive review of philosophical, religious, and psychological literature. This framework outlines 24-character strengths grouped under six core virtues: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Wisdom includes cognitive strengths such as creativity, curiosity, love of learning, open-mindedness (judgment), and perspective. Courage encompasses emotional strengths like bravery, authenticity, persistence, and zest. Humanity focuses on interpersonal strengths such as kindness, love, and social intelligence, while justice includes fairness, leadership, and teamwork. Temperance involves self-regulatory strengths such as forgiveness, humility, prudence, and self-regulation, and transcendence includes strengths that provide meaning, such as

gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality, and appreciation of beauty (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Character strengths are considered core components of identity that contribute to positive functioning and well-being when expressed in daily life (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Individuals typically possess 2 to 5 “signature strengths,” which are central to their personality and relatively stable over time, though they can be further developed through intentional effort (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Niemic & Pearce, 2021). However, most research on character strengths has been conducted in high-income countries, with limited representation from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), raising concerns about cultural generalizability (Jeffery-Schwikkard et al., 2024). Their review of 164 studies found that character strengths are commonly linked to mental health and behavior, with 18 studies demonstrating positive effects on mental health. Nonetheless, research remains concentrated in countries such as China, Indonesia, and Malaysia, with only two studies conducted in the Philippines and minimal focus on rural populations. Furthermore, most interventions are situated in academic contexts, with limited exploration in workplace settings (Jeffery-Schwikkard et al., 2024).

Cognitive Character Strengths. Cognitive strengths, also referred to as head strengths, are intellectual traits that support the acquisition and application of knowledge (Park et al., 2010), primarily falling under the virtue of wisdom, with one strength linked to transcendence. Under wisdom, these include creativity, curiosity, love of learning, and open-mindedness (judgment). Creativity involves producing novel, adaptive, and meaningful ideas or behaviors that positively impact oneself and others, while curiosity reflects the drive to explore and seek new knowledge and experiences. Love of learning refers to a sustained desire to acquire knowledge and skills that promote lifelong intellectual growth, and open-mindedness or judgment involves the ability to critically evaluate information and

consider multiple perspectives before making decisions. Additionally, under transcendence, appreciation of beauty and excellence refers to the capacity to recognize and value excellence in various forms, such as beauty, skill, and virtue, eliciting emotions like awe, admiration, and moral elevation, extending beyond purely aesthetic appreciation (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Affective Character Strengths. Affective character strengths, also referred to as heart strengths, are emotional and interpersonal traits that contribute to positive relationships and overall well-being, including fairness, forgiveness, gratitude, honesty, hope, humor, kindness, leadership, love, modesty, persistence, prudence, religiousness, teamwork, and zest (Park et al., 2010). Under the virtue of courage, these include honesty (authenticity), persistence, and zest, where honesty reflects acting in alignment with one's values and commitments, persistence refers to sustained effort toward goals despite challenges, and zest represents energy and enthusiasm for life. Under humanity, kindness involves compassion and care for others, while love refers to forming deep and meaningful relationships that promote emotional well-being. The virtue of justice includes fairness, leadership, and teamwork, where fairness involves moral judgment, leadership entails guiding and influencing others toward shared goals, and teamwork reflects cooperation and collaboration. Under temperance, forgiveness involves releasing resentment and responding with understanding, modesty reflects a balanced view of oneself, and prudence involves careful decision-making with consideration of long-term consequences. Finally, transcendence includes gratitude, hope, humor, and religiousness, where gratitude reflects appreciation for positive experiences, hope involves a positive and goal-oriented outlook toward the future, humor reflects the ability to find lightness in situations, and religiousness refers to faith in a higher or transcendent power (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Psychological Well-Being and Character Strengths. Psychological well-being refers to positive psychological functioning, including self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, and positive relations with others (Ryff, 1989). In this study, it is operationally defined as the total score from Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, where higher scores indicate greater well-being. The concept is rooted in Aristotle's notion of eudaimonia, which emphasizes virtue and flourishing as integral to a meaningful life, with wisdom considered the highest virtue achieved through reflection (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Durant, 1961, as cited in Jeffery-Schwikkard et al., 2024). Building on this, Seligman (2011) expanded the concept of well-being through the PERMA model (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment) highlighting that well-being is multidimensional and measurable beyond simple life satisfaction. Engagement or "flow" occurs when individuals fully utilize their strengths, while meaning involves serving something greater than oneself. This shift reframed psychology toward flourishing rather than happiness alone.

Empirical studies consistently show that character strengths are strongly linked to psychological well-being and positive workplace outcomes. Research indicates that strengths use in the workplace enhances satisfaction, engagement, meaning, and reduces stress (Harzer et al., 2021), while also fostering positive emotions, authenticity, and intrinsic motivation (Miglianico et al., 2020). Character strengths have been classified as "soaring" in research due to strong evidence linking them to well-being and work outcomes, particularly in organizational and academic contexts, although gaps remain in other settings (Niemic & Pearce, 2021). The most commonly studied "happiness strengths," which are zest, hope, love, gratitude, and curiosity, are associated with well-being, though flourishing is not limited to these traits alone (Littman-Ovadia et al., 2017; Niemic & Pearce, 2021).

Systematic reviews in low- and middle-income countries further support the link between positive mental health and strengths such as hope, kindness, curiosity, love of learning, self-regulation, bravery, perseverance, spirituality, fairness, forgiveness, teamwork, vitality, and zest (Jeffery-Schwikkard et al., 2024).

Job Satisfaction and Character Strengths. Job satisfaction refers to how positively or negatively individuals evaluate their job and work experiences (Spector, 1997) and, in this study, is operationalized as the total score from the Job Satisfaction Survey, where higher scores indicate greater satisfaction. Research consistently emphasizes the role of character strengths in the workplace, where adults spend a significant portion of their lives (Peterson, et al., 2009; Heintz & Ruch, 2019). Studies show that character strengths vary across professions and are positively associated with job performance and satisfaction, particularly when there is a good fit between an individual's strengths and job demands (Gander et al., 2020). Using signature strengths consistently is also linked to favorable outcomes and highlights their relevance in vocational guidance (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Gander et al., 2020). Occupational studies indicate that professionals and managers tend to score higher in strengths such as creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, hope, and zest (Peterson et al., 2009), although findings vary across studies (Gander et al., 2020). Further evidence suggests that zest, hope, curiosity, love, and gratitude are strongly associated with job satisfaction, with zest and hope consistently emerging as key predictors across occupations (Heintz & Ruch, 2019; Gander et al., 2020). Other related strengths include kindness, perspective, social intelligence, and leadership, while humility and prudence show negative associations (Gander et al., 2020). Overall, research indicates that alignment between personal strengths and occupational demands enhances job satisfaction, and this alignment becomes increasingly relevant across different age groups and career stages (Heintz & Ruch, 2019; Gander et al., 2020).

Geographic Location. Park, et al. (2006) examined the character strengths of 117,676 adults across 54 countries and all U.S. states and found that character strengths were largely similar across cultures, suggesting that traits associated with a healthy society may be universal, with religiousness as a notable exception. The most common strengths identified globally were kindness, fairness, honesty, gratitude, and judgment, although some countries were underrepresented due to small sample sizes and the online nature of data collection. In relation to the Philippines, Resurreccion (2017), the only known national survey on Filipino character strengths, identified kindness, fairness, hope, teamwork, and judgment as the top strengths, mostly heart strengths except for judgment, reflecting possible rural influence where interpersonal and emotional traits are emphasized. Earlier findings by Park and Peterson (2010), based on a smaller Filipino sample, highlighted judgment, fairness, learning, curiosity, and gratitude, with a stronger presence of head strengths, which Park and Peterson (2010) later associated with urban populations due to greater exposure to technology and opportunities. They further distinguished head strengths (e.g., creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, appreciation of beauty) as intellectual traits linked to innovation and openness, while heart strengths (e.g., kindness, honesty, gratitude, hope, love, teamwork, zest, among others) reflect emotional and interpersonal qualities associated with agreeableness and social harmony; some strengths such as bravery, perspective, self-regulation, and social intelligence do not clearly fall into either category. These differences are important as outcomes may vary depending on whether analysis is conducted at broader regional or more specific city levels. In the Philippine context, urban areas are defined as highly populated and economically developed cities under the Local Government Code of 1991, while rural areas are characterized by lower population density and limited infrastructure (Republic of the Philippines, 1991; Philippine Statistics Authority, n.d.).

Strengths Used in the Workplace. Bratty and Dennis (2024) emphasized that organizations benefit more from developing employees' strengths rather than focusing on their weaknesses, as strengths use is linked to higher motivation, better performance, greater well-being, and a stronger sense of purpose, while lack of opportunities to use strengths may increase workplace stress. In their first study, a two-week online intervention involving focus on signature strengths, bottom strengths, or both showed increases in strengths use, job performance, and flourishing, but these were mostly not statistically significant except for partial significance in job performance (Bratty and Dennis, 2024). To address limitations, their second study extended the intervention to four weeks with an added awareness-building phase, resulting in significant improvements in strengths use, job performance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and engagement, showing that longer and more structured interventions yield better outcomes. The findings further suggest that improvements depend on the degree of increased strengths use, participant motivation, and organizational support, aligning with the Positive-Activity Model of Lyubomirsky and Layous (2013), which highlights the role of frequency, variety, and individual effort in intervention effectiveness. Additionally, Perceived Organizational Support for Strength Use (POSSU) influences whether employees apply their strengths, as those who perceive organizational encouragement are more likely to engage in strengths use, leading to better well-being and performance and fostering a supportive workplace culture (Luan, et al., 2023).

Conceptual Framework. This study is grounded in Positive Psychology Theory (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), which emphasizes positive subjective experiences and individual traits as predictors of well-being and optimal functioning. It examines cognitive (head) and affective (heart) character strengths alongside geographic location (urban vs. rural) as predictors of psychological well-being and job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers. Cognitive strengths, such as creativity, curiosity,

judgment, and love of learning, are defined as thinking-related traits that influence how individuals acquire and apply knowledge (Park et al., 2006), supporting problem-solving, adaptability, and autonomy in remote work. Affective strengths, namely hope, zest, love, and gratitude, are emotion-related traits that influence emotional regulation, positive affect, and interpersonal relationships (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), enhancing well-being and workplace functioning.

The relationship between these strengths is further explained by the ABC Model of Attitudes (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960) and Appraisal Theory (Lazarus, 1991), which suggest that cognitive appraisals shape emotional responses; for example, curiosity and creativity can foster adaptive interpretations that lead to positive emotions such as hope and gratitude. Geographic context may also influence the development and expression of strengths, as urban and rural environments differ in access to resources, exposure to experiences, and social conditions, potentially shaping how individuals utilize their strengths (Republic of the Philippines, 1991; Philippine Statistics Authority, n.d.).

Psychological well-being is defined as positive functioning including self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, and positive relations with others (Ryff, 1989), while job satisfaction refers to individuals' evaluation of their work experiences (Spector, 1997). It is assumed that cognitive strengths enhance well-being and job satisfaction through improved cognition and meaning making, while affective strengths do so through positive emotions and relationships (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Furthermore, combining cognitive and affective strengths with geographic location is expected to provide a more comprehensive explanation of outcomes, consistent with the Positive-Activity Model (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013), which highlights the role of contextual and individual factors. To test these assumptions, a hierarchical

regression analysis will be conducted, entering cognitive strengths first, followed by affective strengths, and then geographic location to determine their incremental predictive value on psychological well-being and job satisfaction.

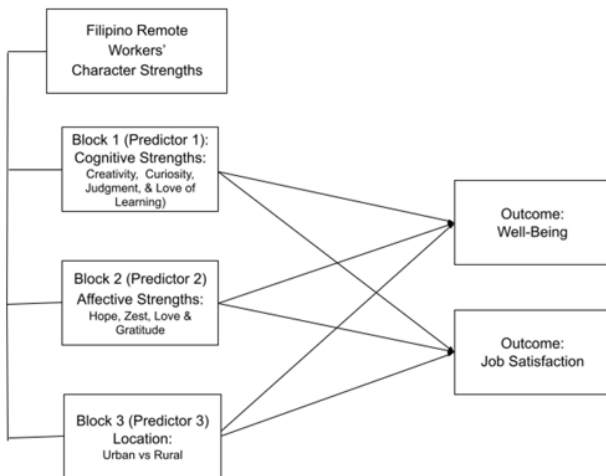


Figure 1
Conceptual Framework of the Study

This study will investigate whether cognitive (head) and affective (heart) character strengths predict well-being and job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers. It will also examine the independent effect of location (rural vs. urban) to better understand their influence on character strengths. This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do Filipino remote workers identify with each cognitive character strength:
 - 1.1 Creativity;
 - 1.2 Curiosity;
 - 1.3 Judgment (open-mindedness); and
 - 1.4 Love of Learning?
2. To what extent do Filipino remote workers identify with each affective character strength:
 - 2.1 Hope;
 - 2.2 Zest;
 - 2.3 Love; and
 - 2.4 Gratitude?
3. Do cognitive character strengths (creativity, curiosity, judgment/open-mindedness, and

- love of learning) significantly predict psychological well-being among Filipino remote workers?
4. Do affective character strengths (hope, zest, love, and gratitude) significantly predict psychological well-being among Filipino remote workers?
5. Do cognitive character strengths (creativity, curiosity, judgment/open-mindedness, and love of learning) significantly predict job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers?
6. Do affective character strengths (hope, zest, love, and gratitude) significantly predict job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers?
7. Do cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, and geographic location (urban vs. rural) significantly predict psychological well-being?
8. Do cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, and geographic location (urban vs. rural) significantly predict job satisfaction?

Hypotheses. At 0.05 level of significance, the following alternative hypotheses were tested:

- H₁: Cognitive character strengths (creativity, curiosity, judgment/open-mindedness, and love of learning) significantly predict psychological well-being among Filipino remote workers.
- H₂: Affective character strengths (hope, zest, love, and gratitude) significantly predict psychological well-being among Filipino remote workers.
- H₃: Cognitive character strengths (creativity, curiosity, judgment/open-mindedness, and love of learning) significantly predict job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers.
- H₄: Affective character strengths (hope, zest, love, and gratitude) significantly predict job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers.

H₅: Cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, and geographic location (urban vs. rural) significantly predict psychological well-being.

H₆: Cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, and geographic location (urban vs. rural) significantly predict job satisfaction.

METHODS

Population and Sampling. A purposive sampling approach was used to recruit Filipino remote workers with relevant experience to ensure meaningful insights into character strengths in the workplace. Participation was voluntary, with no employment incentives or obligations, ensuring authentic responses. A total of 409 respondents initially participated, working across various industries such as customer service, finance and accounting, graphic design, healthcare, HR and recruitment, IT and software development, project management, real estate, sales and marketing, virtual assistance, and content creation, reflecting diverse remote work experiences. After applying inclusion criteria - (1) Filipino remote workers, (2) fully remote employment, and (3) active remote work at the time of data collection - and exclusion criteria (hybrid or no longer remote workers), 384 respondents were included in the final analysis.

The sample was predominantly female (n = 267, 69.5%), male (n = 116, 30.2%), with one nonresponse, and mostly identified as heterosexual (n = 352, 91.7%), with smaller representations of bisexual, gay, lesbian, queer, asexual, and transgender participants. Most participants were in middle adulthood (n = 365, 95.1%), with age categorized based on Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development into young adulthood (20–39 years) and middle adulthood (40–65 years). In terms of education, most held bachelor's degrees (n = 261, 68.0%), followed by incomplete degrees, postgraduate education, associate degrees, vocational training, and secondary education. Regarding geographic location, over half resided in highly

urbanized cities (n = 194, 50.5%), followed by component cities (n = 144, 37.5%) and rural areas (n = 46, 12.0%), while place of birth showed a similar pattern. For analysis, geographic location was classified as urban (highly urbanized and component cities) and rural (municipalities) following Philippine standards (Republic of the Philippines, 1991; Philippine Statistics Authority, n.d.). Most participants had 2–5 years of remote work experience (n = 170, 44.3%), followed by more than 5 years (n = 110, 28.6%), with others reporting shorter durations. Participants also represented multiple industries, with the largest groups in real estate and property support (n = 95, 24.7%), human resources (n = 72, 18.8%), and virtual assistance (n = 64, 16.7%), followed by customer service, sales and marketing, IT, healthcare, finance, project management, and compliance roles.

Table 1
Distribution of Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Demographics	Category	f	%
Sex	Female	267	69.5
	Male	116	30.2
	Prefer not to say	1	0.3
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	352	91.7
	Bisexual	12	3.1
	Gay	8	2.1
	Lesbian	7	1.8
	Queer	2	0.5
	Asexual	1	0.3
	Trans / Ladyboy	1	0.3
Age Group	Young adulthood	14	3.6
	Middle adulthood	365	95.1
	Not indicated	5	1.3
Educational Attainment	High school graduate	6	1.6
	Vocational / Technical certificate	4	1
	Associate degree (completed)	12	3.1
	Associate degree (incomplete)	3	0.8
	Bachelor's degree (incomplete)	64	16.7
	Bachelor's degree (completed)	261	68
	Master's degree (incomplete)	23	6
	Master's degree (completed)	10	2.6
	Postdoctoral studies (incomplete)	1	0.3
	Postdoctoral studies (completed)	194	50.5

Current Location	Highly urbanized city	144	37.5
	Component city	46	12
	Rural	228	59.4
Place of birth	Highly urbanized city	93	24.2
	Component city	7	1.8
	Independent component city	56	14.6
	Rural	26	6.8
Remote Work Tenure	Less than 6 months	28	7.3
	1 to 2 years	50	13
	2 to 5 years	170	44.3
	More than 5 years	110	28.6
Line of Work	Risk, compliance & regulatory	2	0.5
	Customer experience & support	51	13.3
	Finance & procurement	11	2.9
	Healthcare & education	17	4.4
	Human resources & people management	72	18.8
	IT, engineering, & technical roles	24	6.3
	Project & program management	10	2.6
	Real estate & property support	95	24.7
	Sales, marketing & media	38	9.9
	Virtual support & administrative services	64	16.7

Note: $N = 384$

Instrumentation. The study utilized three standardized instruments administered through a Google Form for efficient and accessible data collection. Character strengths were measured using the Values-in-Action Inventory of Strengths–P (VIA-IS-P), a shortened 96-item version developed by McGrath from the original framework of Peterson and Seligman (2004), which assesses 24-character strengths with four items each rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Participants' responses were averaged per strength to generate scores, identify virtue domains, and determine signature strengths. The VIA-IS-P demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$) (McGrath, 2019) and was used in accordance with VIA Institute guidelines allowing academic use without modification (VIA Institute on Character, n.d.). Psychological

well-being was assessed using the 18-item Ryff Psychological Well-Being (PWB) Scale, measuring six dimensions including autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989). Items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale with reverse scoring applied where necessary, and higher total scores indicated greater well-being; however, internal consistency ranged from low to moderate ($\alpha = .33-.56$) (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Job satisfaction was measured using Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), a 36-item instrument assessing nine facets such as pay, promotion, supervision, and communication on a 6-point Likert scale, with reverse-coded items and higher scores indicating greater satisfaction; it has strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$) (Spector, 2022). All instruments were used in their validated forms and administered online to ensure consistency and ease of response.

Data Gathering Procedure. The study commenced after obtaining ethical clearance from the Ethics Review Board of St. Scholastica's College and approvals from participating remote organizations (see Appendices B.1 and B.2). Recruitment was conducted through official organizational channels such as email and Slack as well as the researcher's professional networks (Facebook and LinkedIn), with eligibility criteria, voluntary participation, and a survey link clearly provided. Participants were drawn from the researcher's current and former employers and industry networks, with recruitment limited to these groups to enhance data credibility and reduce fraudulent responses. Informed consent was secured at the start of the Google Form survey, which explained the study purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, confidentiality, and withdrawal rights.

Data were collected using an online survey comprising the VIA-IS-P, Ryff Psychological Well-Being (PWB) Scale, Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), and a demographic questionnaire; all instruments were administered in English due to participants' required proficiency, and no

translations were needed. Participation was voluntary with no monetary compensation, though a researcher-funded raffle incentive was offered and disclosed in the consent form. A total of 409 responses were collected, of which 384 met inclusion criteria after excluding non-Filipino respondents, non-remote workers, and hybrid or unemployed individuals. Data were screened, coded, and organized, including dummy coding of geographic location for analysis. To ensure objectivity, a statistician processed the dataset, which was then forwarded to the Center for Research and Evaluation of St. Scholastica's College. Descriptive statistics, multiple regression, and hierarchical regression analyses were conducted using appropriate statistical software with a 0.05 significance level to examine the predictive effects of cognitive and affective strengths and geographic location on psychological well-being and job satisfaction. Ethical standards were strictly maintained throughout the research process.

Data Analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize cognitive and affective character strengths, along with psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and participant characteristics (age, education, work experience, gender, location, and job role), using means and standard deviations to address the first and second research questions. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the independent predictive effects of cognitive and affective character strengths on psychological well-being and job satisfaction, with separate models for each predictor set. Hierarchical regression was then used to assess the combined predictive power of cognitive strengths (creativity, curiosity, judgment/open-mindedness, and love of learning), affective strengths (hope, zest, love, and gratitude), and geographic location (urban vs. rural), entered in three steps to determine their unique and incremental contributions to outcomes. Geographic location was coded into urban and rural categories for analysis. All statistical procedures were conducted by the Center for Research and Evaluation of St. Scholastica's College, and models were evaluated using

standardized regression coefficients (β), coefficients of determination (R^2), and changes in explained variance (ΔR^2), with a significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS

Extent of Identification with Cognitive Character Strengths among Filipino Remote Workers.

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of cognitive character strengths among Filipino remote workers. Judgment/open-mindedness exhibited the highest mean score ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.52$), followed by love of learning ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.60$), curiosity ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.66$), and creativity ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.69$). The relatively small standard deviations indicated low variability across participants for these strengths. These indicated that participants had strong cognitive character strengths.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Cognitive Character Strengths

Variable	M	SD
Creativity	3.90	0.69
Curiosity	3.99	0.66
Judgment	4.27	0.52
Love of Learning	4.03	0.60

Extent of Identification with Affective Character Strengths among Filipino Remote Workers.

Table 3 reveals the descriptive statistics of affective character strengths among Filipino remote workers. Hope had the highest mean score ($M = 4.3001$, $SD = .56951$), followed by gratitude ($M = 4.2389$, $SD = .60029$), love ($M = 3.9818$, $SD = .74552$), and zest ($M = 3.7799$, $SD = .74514$). Compared to cognitive strengths, affective strengths showed slightly greater variability, particularly for love and zest. These findings indicated that participants generally exhibited strong affective character strengths.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Affective Character Strengths

Variable	M	SD
Gratitude	4.24	0.60
Hope	4.30	0.57
Love	3.99	0.75
Zest	3.78	0.75

Predictive Role of Cognitive Character Strengths on Psychological Well-Being. Tables 4 and 5 show the results of the regression analysis examining the predictive effects of cognitive character strengths on psychological well-being. As shown in the model summary (Table 4), the overall model was statistically significant, $F(4, 379) = 5.087$, $p < .001$, and explained 5.1% of the variance in psychological well-being ($R^2 = .051$).

As shown in Table 5, only judgment significantly predicted psychological well-being ($\beta = .144$, $p = .026$), while creativity, curiosity, and love of learning were not significant predictors ($p \geq .05$). These results indicated that among cognitive strengths, only judgment contributed significantly to psychological well-being among Filipino remote workers.

Table 4
Model Summary for Cognitive Character Strengths Predicting Psychological Well-Being

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	F	df1	df2	Sig.
1	0.23	0.05	0.04	9.79	5.09	4	379	<.001

Table 5
Regression Coefficients for Cognitive Character Strengths Predicting Psychological Well-Being

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Creativity	-0.17	-0.01	-0.14	0.89
Curiosity	1.65	0.11	1.38	0.17
Judgment	2.77	0.14	2.24	0.03
Love of Learning	0.35	0.02	0.27	0.79

Predictive Role of Affective Character Strengths on Psychological Well-Being. Tables 6 and 7 present the results of the regression analysis examining the predictive effects of affective character strengths on psychological well-being. As shown in the model summary (Table 6), the overall model was statistically significant, $F(4, 379) = 15.100$, $p < .001$, and explained 13.7% of the variance in psychological well-being ($R^2 = .137$).

As shown in Table 7, only hope significantly predicted psychological well-being ($\beta = .224$, $p = .002$), while gratitude, love, and zest were not

significant predictors ($p \geq .05$). These findings indicated that among affective strengths, only hope contributed significantly to psychological well-being among Filipino remote workers.

Table 6
Model Summary for Affective Character Strengths Predicting Psychological Well-Being

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	F	df1	df2	Sig.
1	0.37	0.14	0.13	9.34	15.1	4	379	<.001

Table 7
Regression Coefficients for Affective Character Strengths Predicting Psychological Well-Being

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Gratitude	1.97	0.12	1.67	0.10
Hope	3.93	0.22	3.17	0.00
Love	1.37	0.10	1.67	0.10
Zest	-0.30	-0.02	-0.34	0.73

Predictive Role of Cognitive Character Strengths on Job Satisfaction. Tables 8 and 9 reveal the results of the regression analysis examining the predictive effects of cognitive character strengths on job satisfaction. As shown in the model summary (Table 8), the overall model was statistically significant, $F(4, 379) = 2.928$, $p = .021$, and explained 3.0% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .030$).

Table 8
Model Summary for Cognitive Character Strengths Predicting Job Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	F	df1	df2	Sig.
1	0.17	0.03	0.02	25.31	2.93	4	379	<.001

Table 9
Regression Coefficients for Cognitive Character Strengths Predicting Job Satisfaction

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Creativity	-3.79	-0.10	-1.19	0.23
Curiosity	4.59	0.12	1.49	0.14
Judgment	7.96	0.16	2.49	0.01
Love of Learning	-0.59	-0.01	-0.17	0.86

While in Table 9, only judgment significantly predicted job satisfaction ($\beta = .162$, $p = .013$),

while creativity, curiosity, and love of learning were not significant predictors ($p \geq .05$). These findings indicated that among cognitive strengths, only judgment contributed significantly to job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers.

Predictive Role of Affective Character Strengths on Job Satisfaction. Tables 10 and 11 show the results of the regression analysis examining the predictive effects of affective character strengths on job satisfaction. As shown in the model summary (Table 10), the overall model was statistically significant, $F(4, 379) = 7.059$, $p < .001$, and explained 6.9% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .069$).

Table 10
Model Summary for Affective Character Strengths Predicting Job Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	F	df1	df2	Sig.
1	0.26	0.07	0.06	24.79	7.06	4	379	<.001

Table 11
Regression Coefficients for Affective Character Strengths Predicting Job Satisfaction

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Gratitude	5.07	0.12	1.62	0.11
Hope	3.48	0.08	1.05	0.29
Love	0.29	0.01	.013	0.90
Zest	3.46	0.10	1.49	0.14

However, as shown in Table 11, none of the affective character strengths significantly predicted job satisfaction ($p \geq .05$). These findings indicated that while affective strengths collectively contributed to job satisfaction, no single affective strength independently predicted job satisfaction among Filipino remote workers.

Hierarchical Predictive Effects of Cognitive and Affective Character Strengths and Geographic Location on Psychological Well-Being. Tables 12 and 13 presents the results of the hierarchical regression analysis examining the combined effects of cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, and geographic location on psychological well-being. Cognitive

character strengths entered in Step 1 significantly predicted psychological well-being, $F(4, 379) = 5.087$, $p < .001$, accounting for 5.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .051$). When affective character strengths were added in Step 2, the model significantly improved, explaining an additional 9.0% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .090$, $p < .001$), bringing the total explained variance to 14.1% ($R^2 = .141$). However, the inclusion of geographic location in Step 3 did not significantly improve the model ($\Delta R^2 = .000$, $p = .899$), indicating that it did not add explanatory power beyond cognitive and affective strengths. In the final model, only hope emerged as a significant predictor of psychological well-being ($\beta = .247$, $p = .001$), while all other variables, including location, were not significant ($p \geq .05$). These findings indicated that affective strengths, particularly hope, played a more substantial role in predicting psychological well-being than cognitive strengths and geographic location.

Table 12
Model Summary for Cognitive Character Strengths Predicting Job Satisfaction

Model	Predictors	R	R Square	ΔR^2	F Change	Sig.
1	Cognitive Strengths	0.23	0.05	0.05	5.09	<.001
2	+Affective Strengths	0.38	0.14	0.09	9.86	<.001
3	+Location	0.38	0.14	0	0.02	0.90

Note: Predictors:
^aCreativity, Curiosity, Judgment, Love of Learning
^bCreativity, Curiosity, Judgment, Love of Learning, Gratitude, Hope, Love, Zest
^cAll above + Geographic Location (Urban, Rural)
 Dependent Variable: Psychological Well-Being (PWB Total)

Table 13
Final Model Coefficients Predicting Psychological Well-Being

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Creativity	-0.98	0.07	-0.81	0.42
Curiosity	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.99
Judgment	0.16	0.01	0.13	0.90
Love of Learning	-0.47	-0.03	-0.37	0.71
Gratitude	1.98	0.12	1.66	0.10
Hope	4.34	0.25	3.21	0.00
Love	1.45	0.11	1.72	0.09
Zest	0.16	0.01	0.16	0.87
Location	-0.05	-0.01	-0.13	0.90

Hierarchical Predictive Effects of Cognitive and Affective Character Strengths and Geographic Location on Job Satisfaction. Tables 14 and 15

illustrate the results of the hierarchical regression analysis examining the combined effects of cognitive character strengths, affective character strengths, and geographic location on job satisfaction. Cognitive strengths entered in Step 1 significantly predicted job satisfaction, $F(4, 379) = 2.928, p = .021$, accounting for 3.0% of the variance ($R^2 = .030$). The addition of affective strengths in Step 2 significantly improved the model, explaining an additional 6.0% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .060, p < .001$), increasing the total explained variance to 9.0% ($R^2 = .090$). However, geographic location in Step 3 did not significantly contribute to the model ($\Delta R^2 = .003, p = .274$). In the final model, creativity ($\beta = -.172, p = .044$) and zest ($\beta = .179, p = .018$) significantly predicted job satisfaction, while all other variables, including location, were not significant ($p \geq .05$), indicating that both cognitive and affective strengths influenced job satisfaction, whereas geographic location did not.

Table 14
Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Job Satisfaction

Model	Predictors	R	R Square	ΔR^2	F Change	Sig.
1	Cognitive Strengths	0.17	0.03	0.03	2.93	0.02
2	+Affective Strengths	0.30	0.09	0.06	6.20	<.001
3	+Location	0.31	0.09	0.00	1.20	0.27

Note: Predictors:
^aCreativity, Curiosity, Judgment, Love of Learning
^bCreativity, Curiosity, Judgment, Love of Learning, Gratitude, Hope, Love, Zest
^cAll above + Geographic Location (Urban, Rural)
 Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction (JSS Total)

Table 15
Final Model Coefficients Predicting Job Satisfaction

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Creativity	-6.41	-0.17	-2.02	0.04
Curiosity	0.26	0.01	0.08	0.94
Judgment	4.55	0.09	1.36	0.18
Love of Learning	-2.19	-0.05	-0.66	0.51
Gratitude	5.08	0.12	1.62	0.11
Hope	4.19	0.09	1.18	0.24
Love	0.40	0.01	0.18	0.86
Zest	6.15	0.18	2.38	0.02
Location	1.20	0.06	1.10	0.27

Note: $p < .05$

DISCUSSION

The findings indicated that both cognitive and affective character strengths were generally high among Filipino remote workers, with judgment emerging as the most prominent cognitive strength and hope as the most prominent affective strength. These results suggest that participants possess strong critical thinking, open-mindedness, and optimism, which are essential in remote work environments that require autonomy and self-direction. Consistent with Positive Psychology Theory, individual strengths such as judgment support adaptive functioning and effective decision-making (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), while hope fosters motivation and resilience despite challenges (Snyder et al., 1991; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). These findings also reflect Filipino cultural traits such as perseverance and optimism, which may further strengthen the role of hope in sustaining engagement and well-being (Resurreccion, 2017).

The results further showed that cognitive character strengths significantly predicted both psychological well-being and job satisfaction, with judgment as the only significant individual predictor. Affective character strengths significantly predicted psychological well-being, with hope emerging as the strongest predictor, although they did not independently predict job satisfaction. When combined through hierarchical regression, affective strengths explained additional variance in both outcomes, highlighting the importance of emotional and motivational resources. These findings support theoretical perspectives emphasizing how cognitive processes influence emotional outcomes (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and align with prior research linking hope and positive affect to well-being and life satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2009; Littman-Ovadia et al., 2017).

In terms of job satisfaction, zest and creativity emerged as significant predictors, with zest showing a positive relationship and creativity demonstrating an inverse relationship, suggesting that person–job fit plays a critical role (Gander et al., 2020; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Geographic location (urban vs. rural) did not significantly predict psychological well-being or job satisfaction, indicating that remote work may reduce traditional location-based differences by providing similar access to work systems and opportunities. This suggests that personal psychological resources, particularly character strengths, play a more central role than contextual factors in shaping employee outcomes in remote settings. Overall, the study concludes that character strengths, especially judgment and hope, are key predictors of well-being, while both cognitive and affective strengths contribute to job satisfaction. These findings reinforce the value of strengths-based approaches in understanding and enhancing employee functioning in remote work environments, particularly within the Filipino context.

Based on these findings, organizations are encouraged to adopt strengths-based strategies by promoting the use of character strengths in employee development, well-being programs, and performance management systems. Interventions that enhance hope, zest, and other affective strengths may improve engagement, resilience, and job satisfaction. Mental health professionals and career counselors may also integrate character strengths assessments into their practice to support emotional regulation and vocational alignment among remote workers. Future research is recommended to explore longitudinal effects of character strengths, incorporate qualitative approaches, and examine additional contextual variables such as workplace support and leadership to further understand how these factors interact in shaping well-being and job satisfaction (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013).

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