

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND SUSTAINABILITY ERA: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF SCOPUS PUBLICATIONS (2020–2025)

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Abstract

This study adopts a bibliometric analysis using Scopus data from 2020 to 2025, comprising 558 scholarly publications after careful filtering and normalization. The dataset was processed using Bibliometrix (R) and Biblioshiny to analyze publication output, keyword co-occurrence networks, thematic evolution, and thematic maps, along with a three-field plot. Results reveal that beyond foundational topics such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention, new research directions have emerged, including digital transformation, ESG, well-being, organizational trust, and remote work. This signals a paradigm shift from traditional theoretical frameworks toward multidimensional and interdisciplinary approaches. The study contributes by providing a comprehensive overview of the field's evolution, identifying academic gaps, and offering practical managerial implications for organizations navigating the era of digital transformation and ESG.

Keywords: Organizational commitment; Job satisfaction; Turnover intention; Employee engagement; Bibliometric analysis; Scopus.

JEL Code: M12; M51

1. INTRODUCTION

In the face of unprecedented disruptions in the global labor market, *organizational commitment* has emerged as a critically relevant topic of academic and managerial interest. Transformative forces such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise of remote work, the accelerating pace of digital transformation, and the growing emphasis on ESG have fundamentally reshaped how employees relate to their organizations. In many countries, phenomena like the “Great Resignation” or declining loyalty among younger workers highlight that employee commitment is no longer merely an HR issue—it has become a vital condition for the long-term survival and growth of businesses.

In scholarly discourse, organizational commitment has been studied extensively, often within the boundaries of traditional variables such as job satisfaction, work performance, and turnover intention. However, much of the existing literature remains fragmented—largely focused on isolated variables, with limited attention to emerging contexts involving

technology, sustainability, or employee well-being. Moreover, recent review studies have tended to rely on conventional methodologies and subjective assessments, which fail to capture the comprehensive and dynamic evolution of the field. To address these gaps, the present study employs a bibliometric analysis of international publications on organizational commitment during the period 2020–2025. The goal is to uncover publication trends, map the knowledge structure, trace thematic evolution, and identify research gaps for future exploration. This approach offers a systematic, quantitative, and objective lens through which to assess how the topic has evolved in recent years.

The study's key contributions lie in reinforcing the theoretical foundations of organizational commitment while also proposing novel research pathways situated within the broader context of digital transformation and ESG. It also provides practical implications for human resource management, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), by highlighting strategies to enhance employee engagement. The article is structured as follows: Section 1 introduces the study; Section 2 outlines the methodology; Section 3 presents the findings; Section 4 discusses academic and managerial implications; and Section 5 concludes with recommendations for future research.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs **bibliometric analysis**, a quantitative approach that enables systematic assessment of a field's evolution based on academic data. Unlike conventional literature reviews that often rely on subjective interpretation, bibliometric methods leverage data-processing and visualization techniques to reveal publication trends, knowledge structures, and thematic relationships. This approach was selected not only to measure the volume of publications but also to explore the depth of content and intellectual patterns, while identifying prominent topics and overlooked research gaps.

2.1. Data and Scope

Data were collected from the **Scopus database**, one of the largest and most reputable academic sources available. The primary search keyword was “organizational commitment,” along with related variants, to ensure comprehensive coverage. The study focuses on the period from 2020 to 2025, which reflects emerging trends influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and the global digital transformation context. The search results were carefully screened to remove duplicates and irrelevant records. Only peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers were retained to ensure scholarly rigor and reliability. After this filtering process, the final dataset consisted of **558 publications**, forming the empirical basis for a comprehensive analysis of trends and thematic developments within the field of organizational commitment.

2.2. Tools and Analytical Techniques

Once normalized, the dataset was processed using **Bibliometrix (R)** and its graphical interface Biblioshiny.

The key analytical techniques included:

- 1) **Annual Scientific Production** – to evaluate year-over-year publication trends;
- 2) **Co-occurrence Network** – to identify keyword clusters and their interconnections;
- 3) **Thematic Evolution** – to trace shifts in research themes over time;
- 4) **Thematic Map** – to classify research topics based on centrality and density;
- 5) **Three-Fields Plot** – to analyze relationships among journals, authors, and keywords.

The integration of these tools allowed the study not only to describe publication patterns and intellectual structures but also to detect prominent themes, research gaps, and potential future directions in the study of organizational commitment.

2.3. Research Process

To ensure methodological transparency and consistency, the study adopted a six-step process. First, it identified ‘organizational commitment’ and its related variants as the core search terms. Second, it retrieved data from the Scopus database for the period 2020–2025. Third, the results were screened and filtered to remove duplicates and irrelevant records, retaining only peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings. Fourth, the dataset was normalized and analyzed using Bibliometrix (R) and the Biblioshiny interface. Fifth, results were visualized through tools such as Annual Scientific Production, Co-occurrence Network, Thematic Evolution, Thematic Map, and Three-Fields Plot. Finally, the findings were synthesized to trace developmental trajectories and highlight prominent thematic clusters.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1. Publication Trends in Organizational Commitment Research

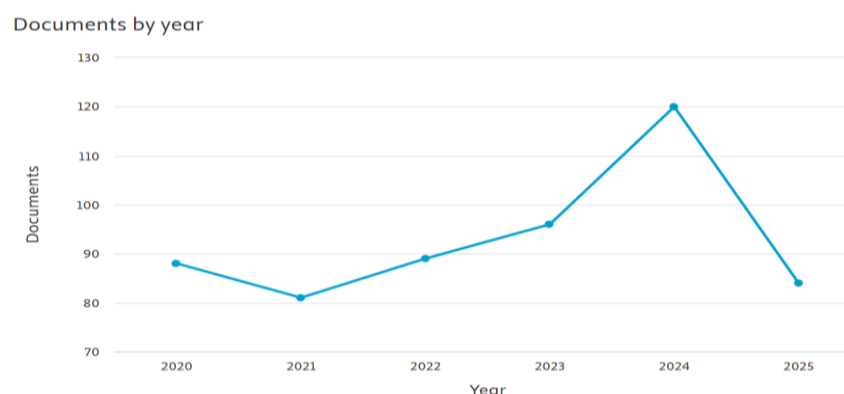


Figure 1: Trends in Organizational Commitment Publications (2020–2025)

(Source: Scopus data, 2025)

The sharp increase in international publications on organizational commitment after 2020 reflects the influence of multiple macro-level factors and emerging management trends.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote and hybrid work models, which, in turn, triggered an urgent need to understand how employee engagement evolves in non-traditional work settings.

Simultaneously, digital transformation and the growing importance of ESG have significantly influenced corporate culture and employee commitment. Organizations are increasingly integrating technology with sustainability values to retain employee loyalty and enhance performance.

Recent studies have also shifted their attention to themes such as employee mental health, talent retention during the “Great Resignation”, and the role of organizational commitment in driving innovation. This indicates a transition from traditional theoretical frameworks toward broader, multidimensional, and interdisciplinary perspectives, thereby opening up diverse opportunities for future research.

3.2. Co-occurrence Network of Keywords



Figure 2: Keyword Co-occurrence Network

(Source: Scopus data processed via Biblioshiny, 2025)

Based on 558 articles retrieved from Scopus between 2020 and 2025, a co-occurrence network was constructed using the Biblioshiny tool (R/Bibliometrix). The analysis identified the 50 most frequently used keywords and applied the Walktrap algorithm to detect major thematic clusters. Node size indicates keyword frequency, while colors denote thematic groupings.

The keyword network reveals four dominant research clusters, each showing substantial thematic shifts since 2020:

(1) Cluster 1 – Organizational Commitment and Employee Motivation (red): This central cluster features “organizational commitment” as the most frequently cited keyword, closely linked to “job satisfaction,” “employee engagement,” and “turnover

intention.” Studies here build upon foundational theories, focusing on factors directly influencing employee attachment to organizations.

(2) Cluster 2 – Leadership, Organizational Culture, and Retention (blue): This cluster revolves around terms like “transformational leadership,” “organizational culture,” “employee retention,” and “work-life balance.” It reflects a shift from rigid managerial models to employee-centered approaches, emphasizing the role of leadership and culture in fostering trust and long-term commitment.

(3) Cluster 3 – Digital Transformation and Sustainability (green): Clearly emerging after 2020, this cluster captures the post-pandemic context and global integration. Key terms include “digital transformation,” “remote work,” “sustainability,” and “ESG.” Research here explores how these dynamics reshape HR practices and employee commitment.

(4) Cluster 4 – Mental Health and Employee Well-being (purple): Though smaller in scope, this emerging research stream centers around “mental health,” “burnout,” “well-being,” and “psychological safety.” It underscores a managerial shift toward holistic employee care, recognizing mental health as integral to organizational commitment.

Overall, the co-occurrence map illustrates a marked transition from traditional frameworks to cross-disciplinary approaches, yet emerging themes such as digital transformation, ESG, and well-being remain insufficiently integrated—particularly within the context of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Vietnam—thereby highlighting critical gaps that offer promising avenues for future research.

3.3. Thematic Evolution

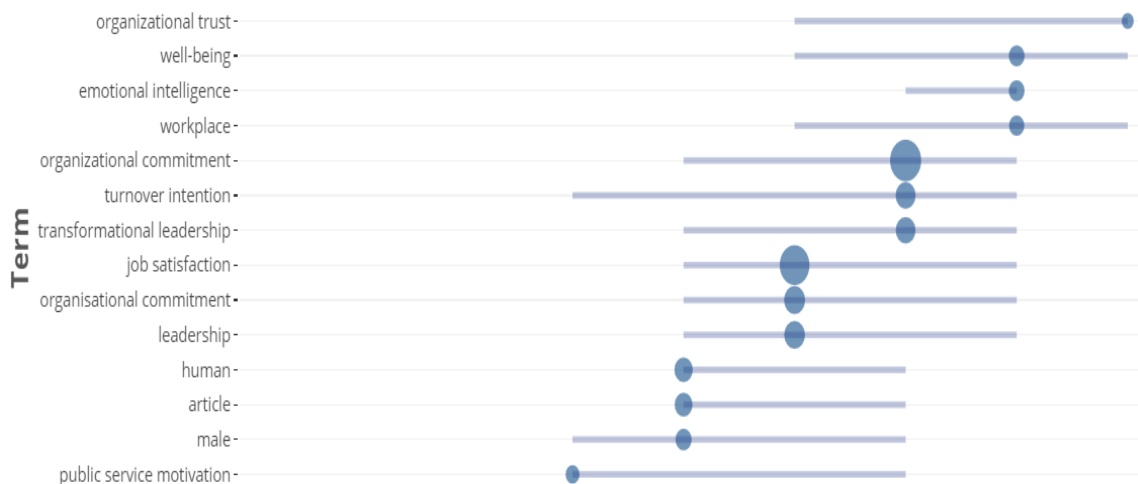


Figure 3: Thematic Evolution of Organizational Commitment Research (2020–2025)

(Source: Scopus data processed via Biblioshiny, 2025)

The thematic evolution chart, based on keyword occurrences over time, illustrates **significant shifts in research focus** regarding organizational commitment from 2020 to 2025. The size of each node reflects the frequency of a given keyword, while connecting lines indicate continuity and thematic linkage. The findings reveal a clear evolution in thematic priorities across three major phases:

During the period 2020–2021, research predominantly focused on traditional theoretical constructs such as job satisfaction, turnover intention, leadership, and organizational commitment. These foundational studies aimed to explain the direct predictors of employee engagement and retention, thereby forming the classic framework of the field.

Between 2022 and 2023, there was a noticeable expansion toward emergent constructs, including transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, and public service motivation. This shift reflected a growing scholarly interest in the emotional and interpersonal dimensions of leadership and their influence on organizational commitment.

Throughout 2024–2025, new focal areas began to emerge, with keywords such as well-being, organizational trust, workplace, and psychological safety gaining significant traction. This trend highlights an increasing academic focus on mental health, sustainable work environments, and trust-building as mediating factors for sustaining employee commitment.

The trajectory clearly demonstrates a move away from the classic linear model of “job satisfaction → commitment → lower turnover intention”. Instead, recent research adopts a multidimensional approach that integrates leadership style, emotional intelligence and well-being, and sustainable organizational culture.

Despite this progress, the field still lacks integrative studies that connect multiple emerging factors within a single analytical model—particularly in the context of digital transformation and ESG in emerging economies such as Vietnam. Addressing this gap represents a valuable opportunity for future interdisciplinary research.

3.4. Thematic Map

The thematic map was constructed using the 150 most frequently occurring keywords in the Scopus dataset for 2020 - 2025. We applied the Louvain clustering algorithm to group keywords into thematic clusters. The map plots thematic areas along two axes. The horizontal axis (centrality) reflects a theme’s importance and its connectivity within the broader research field. The vertical axis (density) indicates the level of internal development of each theme.

The map divides the thematic space into four quadrants: Motor Themes, Basic Themes, Niche Themes, and Emerging or Declining Themes.

Motor Themes (upper-right quadrant) – These are well-developed and central to the field. The blue cluster includes keywords such as *leadership*, *organizational culture*, *human*, and *article*. These themes represent mature research areas that actively shape the global discourse on organizational commitment.

Basic Themes (lower-right quadrant) – These are essential but less internally developed. The red cluster centers around *organizational commitment*, *job satisfaction*, *turnover intention*, and *transformational leadership*. These foundational constructs have long been core to the field and serve as key frameworks for understanding employee behavior.

Niche Themes (upper-left quadrant) – These are specialized but relatively isolated. The green cluster focuses on *affective organizational commitment*, *sustainability*, *organizational framework*, and the *hospitality industry*. These topics are rich in depth but remain underexplored across sectors, often concentrated in specific contexts like tourism or hospitality.

Emerging or Declining Themes (lower-left quadrant) – These are underdeveloped or fading in relevance. The purple cluster includes *organizational change*, *emotional exhaustion*, *work-family conflict*, *personality*, and *quality of life*. While these themes receive less attention in recent studies, they remain conceptually relevant to contemporary human resource management.

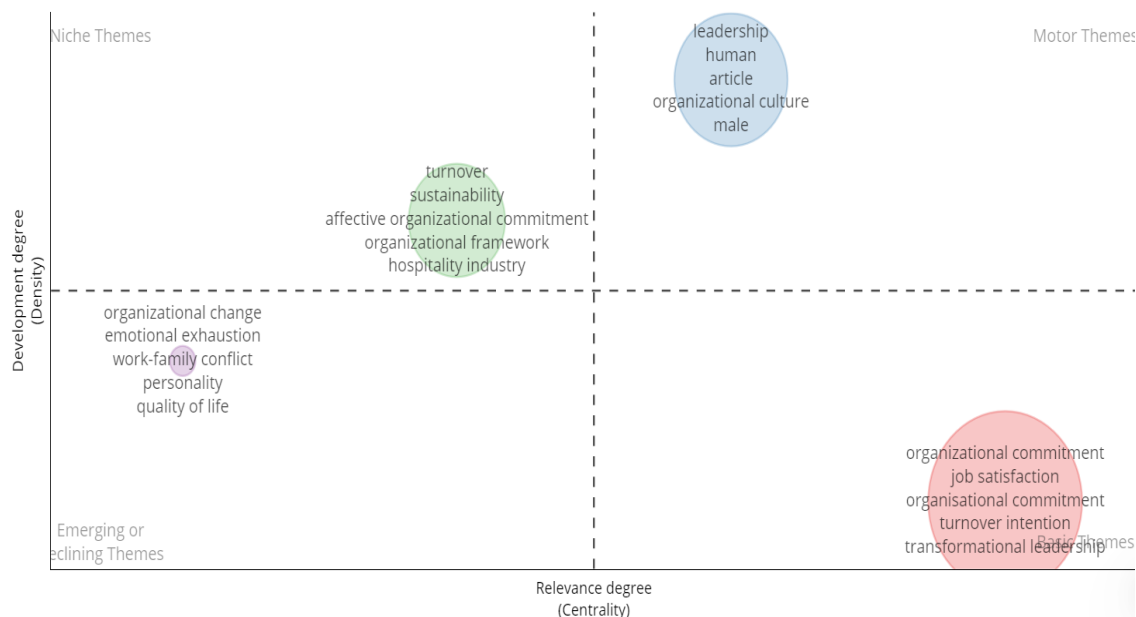


Figure 4: Thematic Map of Organizational Commitment Research (2020–2025)

(Source: Scopus data processed via Biblioshiny, 2025)

Overall, the thematic map indicates that organizational commitment research is expanding from traditional theoretical foundations (e.g., job satisfaction, turnover intention, leadership) to incorporate broader domains such as sustainable leadership, workplace culture, and employee mental well-being.

However, significant **research gaps** persist—particularly in integrating emerging elements like *sustainability*, *ESG*, and *work–family balance* into commitment models. This gap is especially pronounced within SME contexts, which are increasingly vulnerable to

global transformation pressures. Such observations point toward the need for multidimensional and cross-sectoral frameworks in future studies.

3.5. Three-Fields Plot

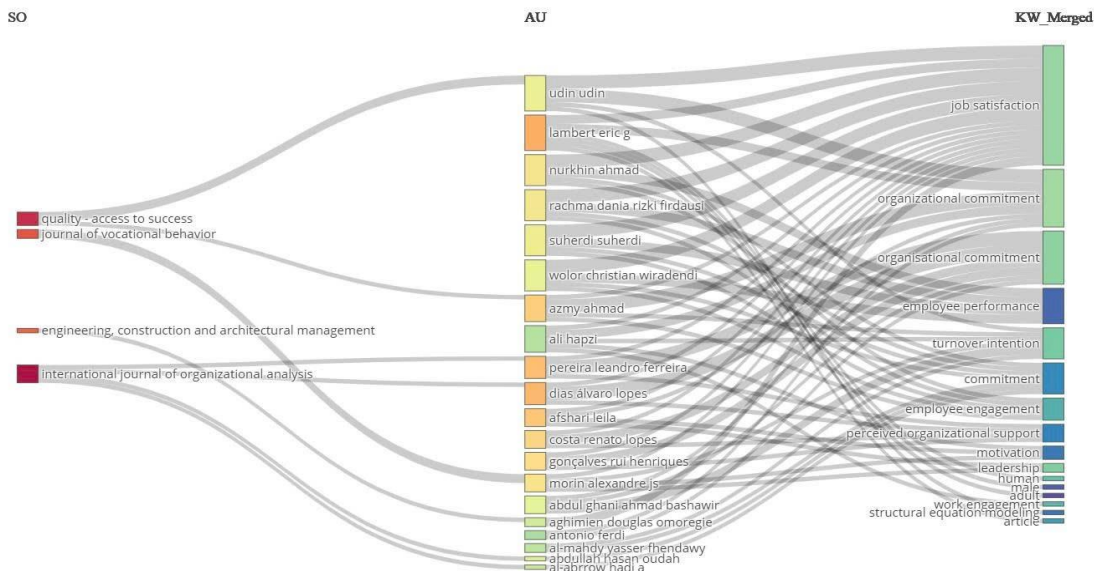


Figure 5: Three-Fields Plot – Journals, Authors, and Keywords in Organizational Commitment Research (2020–2025)

(Source: Scopus data processed via Biblioshiny, 2025)

The Three-Fields Plot visualizes the interconnections among three core dimensions: **source journals (SO)**, **authors (AU)**, and **keywords (KW)**. Based on data from 2020 to 2025, the plot provides an overview of where the research is published, who the key contributors are, and which topics are most frequently explored.

Journals (SO): A small number of journals dominate the publication landscape on organizational commitment. Notable outlets include the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, and *Quality – Access to Success*. These journals consistently publish work on employee engagement, leadership, and organizational behavior, indicating their strategic focus on human capital and workplace dynamics.

Authors (AU): Several prominent scholars appear at the center of the author-keyword network. Noteworthy contributors include Udin Udin, Lambert Eric G, Nurkhin Ahmad, Rachma Dania Rizki Firdausi, and Suherdi Suherdi. These authors maintain strong thematic alignment with core constructs in the field and frequently contribute to journals that specialize in management and organizational studies.

Keywords (KW): The most recurrent terms include *organizational commitment*, *job satisfaction*, *employee performance*, *turnover intention*, and *employee engagement*.

These represent the field's traditional research concerns, highlighting the enduring relevance of classic variables in explaining employee behavior.

The plot illustrates tight linkages between core authors and long-standing keywords such as *job satisfaction* and *turnover intention*. However, newly emerging themes—including *sustainability*, *well-being*, and *digital transformation*—remain underrepresented in these relationships and have yet to appear frequently in top-tier journals.

This observation suggests a critical gap in the literature: while traditional themes continue to dominate, integrative studies that connect organizational commitment with contemporary issues like ESG and remote work are still lacking. Addressing this gap will be essential for advancing both theoretical understanding and practical application, especially in the post-pandemic, tech-driven era.

4. DISCUSSION

Academic Implications: The bibliometric findings present a clear shift in the intellectual landscape of organizational commitment research. Whereas previous studies concentrated heavily on familiar constructs—such as *job satisfaction* and *turnover intention*—post-2020 publications demonstrate a broader scope, reflective of a changing global work environment.

New themes have begun to emerge, including those linked to digital transformation, flexible work environments, ESG values, and mental well-being. These additions suggest that organizational commitment is no longer viewed solely through the lens of conventional employee behavior. Instead, it is increasingly understood within interdisciplinary frameworks involving technology, sustainability, and social psychology.

In this context, while foundational theories remain influential, they are now being expanded and enriched by contemporary perspectives. The academic discourse is gradually moving from isolated variable models toward holistic, systemic approaches.

Managerial Implications: From a managerial standpoint, the findings highlight that employee commitment today is shaped by fundamentally different factors than in the past. Traditionally, organizations emphasized salary, benefits, and immediate job satisfaction. However, contemporary employees seek more than transactional engagement.

Remote work models, hybrid environments, and digital tools have reshaped employee expectations. In parallel, values associated with ESG culture and social responsibility are increasingly shaping how employees perceive their organizations.

Moreover, mental health has emerged as a top concern. Issues such as burnout and the need for psychological safety have become central, particularly in the wake of pandemic-induced disruptions.

To sustain long-term commitment, employers must adopt a comprehensive HR strategy—one that not only addresses professional requirements but also actively supports employees' emotional and psychological well-being.

Research Gaps and Future Directions: A key observation from the knowledge map is the growing divergence between two research streams: one anchored in traditional theoretical models, and the other exploring emerging but fragmented themes.

Notably, few studies attempt to bridge these two streams, for example by integrating *organizational commitment*, *digital transformation*, and *ESG* into a single conceptual framework. This gap is particularly significant in the context of SMEs in emerging markets like Vietnam, which face increasing pressures from globalization and limited resource capacity.

Future research should therefore explore integrative models that examine how variables such as mental well-being serve as mediators, or how transformational leadership functions as a moderating factor.

Such interdisciplinary approaches would not only advance theory but also yield practical insights for human resource management in the context of post-pandemic recovery and digital integration.

5. CONCLUSION

This study conducted a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of over 500 international publications on organizational commitment during the period 2020–2025, thereby offering a systematic overview of the knowledge structure within the field. The findings confirm that traditional constructs such as *job satisfaction*, *turnover intention*, and *employee engagement* continue to serve as central theoretical pillars.

However, the emergence of new thematic directions—including *digital transformation*, *ESG*, *mental well-being*, and *leadership culture*—reflects a significant shift in both research and practice paradigms. Scholars are increasingly adopting interdisciplinary perspectives that transcend classical HR models and engage with broader social, technological, and environmental concerns.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study advocates for a more integrated approach, combining conventional constructs with contemporary drivers of commitment. Future research should examine how emerging variables interact with established models to better reflect the complexity of human behavior in modern organizations.

In practical terms, the study suggests that businesses—particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)—must adapt to the evolving expectations of the workforce. This involves fostering flexible work environments, leveraging digital technologies, cultivating an ESG-based organizational culture, and prioritizing mental well-being as a core component of HR strategy.

Finally, future studies are encouraged to expand the data sources beyond Scopus—e.g., Web of Science or Dimensions—and apply empirical quantitative methods. Attention should also be given to Vietnam-specific contexts, in order to provide more locally relevant insights with both academic and managerial value.

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