

Improving the workforce's competitive advantage in the remote work context: A moderated-mediation analysis of perceived organizational support, employee retention, and transformational leadership

Nhat Tan Pham, Vo Thi Ngoc Thuy, Tran Hoang Tuan, Quang Hai Nguyen, Le Cat Vi

Abstract

Organizations are prioritizing policies to manage and assist employees in enabling them to work well and to retain them, to maintain a competitive advantage and overcome crises such as an economic recession and the negative impact of the pandemic. This study, therefore, addresses the research gap, calling on them to improve employees' perceived organizational support (POS), felt obligation (FO), and transformational leadership (TL) to improve employee retention (ER) in remote and hybrid working environments, which are becoming more popular. Employing time-lagged data, we surveyed 300 remote employees working in multi-sector Vietnam. Based on the social exchange theory, the research results revealed that POS is essential to directly and positively promote ER. Importantly, the study indicated an indirect influence of POS on ER through FO. Moreover, transformational leadership partially moderated those relationships. Specifically, the direct relationship between POS and ER is stronger if TL is high, and reversely, the relationship is weaker if TL is low. The research findings thus enable us to make theoretical and practical contributions to the relationship between POS, FO, and TL toward ER in the post-pandemic remote working context. This encourages managers and researchers to focus more on establishing support and creating a remote work policy that retains employees to achieve stability and bring a competitive advantage to businesses. Finally, we also highlight some limitations and suggest ideas for further studies.

Keywords: *Perceived organizational support, Employee retention, Felt obligation, Transformational leadership, Remote work*

JEL Classification: O15, D23

Article history: Received: May 2023; Accepted: August 2024; Published: September 2024

1 INTRODUCTION

Technology is increasingly reshaping and influencing every aspect of human lives, from communication and security to transportation efficiency and safety (Gere, 2009). The dramatic impact of digital technology on life and work is forcing both employees and organizations to change, such as moving to remote or hybrid combining remote and in-person work (McPhail et al., 2024). Companies attempt to use new digital technology to modify how they operate and manage human resources to boost work efficiency while keeping costs down to remain competitive (Chang, 2020). As a result, concerns about using digital technology and working from home are becoming increasingly significant, particularly in light of the pandemic's impact (ILO, 2020; Hayes et al., 2021). Notably, after the pandemic, the proportion of companies maintaining remote work and hybrid work is still increasing (Sahut & Lissillour, 2023). Building a highly competent team and retaining them has become an important strategy to help a company improve its competitiveness and ensure recovery and growth (Kniffin et al., 2021; Emanuel & Harrington, 2023; Sun et al., 2022). Studies have therefore been conducted to identify factors affecting employee performance when working remotely (Nyberg et al., 2021; Malhotra et al., 2021; Nakrosiene et al., 2019) and demonstrate the positive effects of remote working on different types of employees' outcomes, such as attitudes (Malka, 2024) and productivity (Burdett et al., 2024). However, recent scholars conducting empirical studies in the remote context have indicated contrasting research results. Existing studies demonstrate certain benefits for employees working from home but also many risks and harms, noting employers need to handle and support their employees (Perry et al., 2023; Dhanpat et al., 2022). This is because remote and hybrid working was not a common practice for many companies

(Kossek & Lautsch, 2018). Even for experienced employees or organizations, transitioning from working from the office to working from home can be difficult when employees cannot work remotely or the organization is not yet prepared to keep up with management changes and provide timely employee support (ILO, 2020). Working remotely can thus result in productivity, health, stress, and emotional exhaustion issues (Soga et al., 2022), leading to employee turnover (Dodanwala & Shrestha, 2021). In addition, the attention of current studies mainly focuses on the importance of remote work, employee performance or improving management capabilities in the context of remote work (Sahut & Lissillour, 2023; Burdett et al., 2024; Malka, 2024) while ignoring the need to change the way work is managed to provide necessary organizational support adjustments for employees working from home, which reduces their pressures and prevents resignations (Chan et al., 2023; Malhotra et al., 2021). As a result, organizations must carefully consider and design technical issues and the management system to not reduce employee productivity when working from home (Chi et al., 2021; Galanti et al., 2021) but still deliver organizational support to avoid negative emotions, so as to maintain retention. Employee retention (especially for key employees) is essential to promote productivity and competitive advantage (Kyndt et al., 2009), and could be impacted by employees' perceived organizational support (POS) (Jawahar & Hemmasi, 2006), particularly during the pandemic and beyond. Yet, in the remote work, the critical question of how POS influences employee retention when working remotely remains unanswered.

POS was first established by Eisenberger et al. (1986, 1990), who proposed that beliefs are formed by employees regarding the extent to which their organization values their contributions and are concerned for their well-being. Under the tenets of social exchange theory, POS is positively related to affective organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Rhoades et al., 2001; Wayne et al., 1997). The provision of organizational support to an employee is likely to generate feelings of goodwill towards the organization and strengthening the bond between employer and employee, which, in turn, increases the mindset of obligation to repay the organization through the norm of reciprocity (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Maertz et al., 2007). Consequently, POS should be positively related to affective organizational commitment and negatively related to turnover. Some studies confirm this relationship empirically in Western countries (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Maertz et al., 2007). Later, this idea has been expanded around the world and across sectors. Lew (2009) indicated that there is a correlation between POS and organizational commitment, as well as a correlation between POS and a feeling of responsibility from academics working for private higher educational institutions in Malaysia. Kalidass and Bahron (2015) found a significant relationship between perceived supervisor support, POS, organizational commitment, and turnover. Their study recommends that hotel management pay more attention to its employees to reduce the likelihood of turnover (Kalidass & Bahron, 2015). Despite increasing empirical works on the relationship between POS and turnover intentions or employee retention around the world, limited attention has been paid to this topic in the remote work context.

Transformational leadership is one of the decisive pathways to enhancing a company's innovation capability (Prasad & Junni, 2016; Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt, 2018; Zheng et al., 2016) as it positively involves a firm's innovation capability through intellectual stimulation, encouraging openness among individuals (Vera & Crossan, 2004), inspiring and motivating employee's innovation behavior (Choi et al., 2016). In fact, knowledge of transformational leadership has been generally explored for many years. Some previous studies have shown POS is significant in moderating and mediating organizational relationships (Cheng & O-Yang, 2018; Mahmoud, 2008). According to Mahmoud (2008), POS significantly influences the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' knowledge sharing. Shabane et al. (2017) discussed how transformational leadership impacts the retention of employees, showing that transformational leadership acts as a moderator in the relationship between work satisfaction and the desire to stay on the job. Also, the existing literature has indicated that transformational leadership should be integrated with organizational culture to stimulate employees' voluntary behavior (Tian et al., 2020). Although the interrelationships between transformational leadership and retention have been studied, the role of transformational leadership in the POS and employee retention link still has not been found, particularly in the remote work context.

This study addresses two main research objectives to advance knowledge and reduce these gaps by relying on the social exchange theory. First, we investigate whether POS directly influences employee retention and whether its effects are mediated by other factors (employees' felt obligations) in the

remote work context. Second, we examine the moderating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between POS and employee retention. Specifically, we determine whether transformational leadership acts as a moderating factor in the direct influence of POS on ER and the indirect influence of POS on ER via the mediating role of employees who felt obligated to the remote work context.

Our study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the existing knowledge of POS and ER by investigating these relationships. Our study is one of the pioneers in exploring the contributions of POS towards employees' behaviors such as employee retention, especially when employees are working remotely. Additionally, although there have been many empirical studies on transformational leadership, the present study is valuable in clarifying the role of this leadership towards the relationship between POS and ER in the remote work context, which previous studies have left undeveloped. Finally, relying on these research findings, the study proposes practical implications for enhancing telework human capabilities. These recommendations call attention to supporting employees and creating a conducive working environment that empowers them to have a competitive, committed workforce for the firms. The following section includes the theoretical background and the research hypotheses. The third section is the research method, while data analysis is described in the fourth section. The fifth section is the research findings, followed by the conclusion section discussing limitations and future studies.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory highlights that employees are motivated towards voluntary behaviors because of the benefits they get from others (Blau, 1964). Social exchange behavior is described as a social exchange process between at least two persons about activity, intangible or intangible and more or less rewarding or costly (Homans, 1974). Consequently, employees perform social exchanges in response to both individuals and the organization. Accordingly, Emerson (1976) refers to organizations providing support as a source of exchange, obtaining the social exchange participation of employees following the principle of reciprocity. The recipient is indebted to the donor until they repay the obligation (Gouldner, 1960). Social exchange is established as parties get reciprocal advantages from one another and create cooperation, trust, commitment, and shared benefits (Rupp & Mallory, 2015; Phan et al., 2020). Furthermore, the business demonstrates support and shares with its workers to accomplish development objectives, contributing to employees' POS (Witt & Carlson, 2006). Consequently, social exchange theory has been extensively used in POS research for many years to explain the underlying behaviors of employees towards their organizations. Specifically, the literature study has highlighted, through the norm of reciprocity, the significance of an employee's POS in fostering a sense of obligations, fostering organizational commitment and satisfaction, and reducing turnover intention (e.g., Huang et al., 2021; Zagenczyk et al., 2021). In addition, employees who believe their organization cares about them are more likely to respond to the organization by proactively supporting colleagues (Pham et al., 2023) and forming a stronger commitment to the organization to increase employee retention (Rogers & Ashforth, 2017). Moreover, given the importance of employee retention, when a skilled, experienced employee leaves, it incurs high costs (Waldman et al., 2015). The loss of these employees will result in a decline in output, work efficiency, and productivity (Cloutier et al., 2015). Therefore, managers need to consider appropriate strategies to retain employees with good technology competencies to work remotely to keep the company's long-term development and increase competitiveness (Antosova et al., 2022; Ohunakin et al., 2019). Numerous studies have been conducted to explain and imply that the elements that assist in retaining workers, such as leadership, are on the rise. Specifically, among the forms of leadership explored, several topics utilize social exchange theory to claim that transformational leadership has a pull effect that encourages employees to remain with the business (Tse et al., 2013). Consequently, with the focus on supporting the development of employees, creating a favorable working environment, and motivating employees to work together for the development benefits of both the organization and employees (Ohunakin et al., 2019; Zwingmann et al., 2014), transformational leadership motivates employees to form social exchanges with superiors and the organization, acquiring appropriate attitudes and behaviors, and retaining employees (Tse et al., 2013).

2.2 Hypothesis development

Perceived organizational support and employee retention.

According to Eisenberger et al. (1986), POS relates to “the extent to which their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being” (p. 501). It might be regarded as the company agreeing, supporting, and sharing with workers (Witt & Carlson, 2006). The literature review has demonstrated the relevance of employee’s POS in enhancing employees’ organizational commitment and satisfaction, balancing work and life (O’Driscoll et al., 2003), and subsequently minimizing turnover (Huang et al., 2021; Zagenczyk et al., 2021). Meyer and Smith (2001) stated that POS is also a mediator in the connection between HRM practices and a company’s degree of commitment. One way for employees to publicly acknowledge and express their gratitude to POS is to maintain organizational membership, outstanding attendance and punctuality, among other things (Meyer & Smith, 2009). Other studies indicated that POS negatively affects employee retention (Jawahar & Hemmasi, 2006; Loi et al., 2006).

Employee retention is summarized as a goal that includes retaining the qualified or the best employees and reducing turnover by providing them with a positive work environment, showing them gratitude, and delivering competitive wages and benefits. Indeed, Jones and Skarlicki (2003) indicated that organizations’ retention of high-performing employees is becoming increasingly critical due to labor shortages. According to Kyndt et al. (2009), a company’s competitiveness depends on its ability to retain outstanding individuals since their knowledge and skills are critical to the success of any particular organization. Employees have difficulty adapting to changing working circumstances due to sudden workplace changes and the quick advancement of technology (Stankovic et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2022). In addition to the demands of completing required tasks, the influence of personal external issues may extend the working hours of remote employees (Peasley et al., 2020; Singer-Velush et al., 2020). Work-related demands and stress that lead to dissatisfaction or a sudden negative change in work have been cited by earlier studies as the main reasons for employee turnover (Sun & Wang, 2017; Waldman et al., 2015). This prompted research on the importance of having organizational support and its effect on employee retention. POS indicates the genuine respect of the organization for the employee and recognition of the employee’s contributions and then delivering timely support (Loi et al., 2006). Consequently, as a social exchange, POS positively enhances response to the organization’s value and support (Eisenberger et al., 2001). The greater the perception of organizational support, the more favorable employees see their work environment, which in turn promotes commitment and decreases turnover (Lee et al., 2010; Loi et al., 2006). Gaps remain in understanding how POS impacts employee retention in different contexts in work environments, particularly with the rise of remote work and rapid technological changes. Thus, the following hypothesis:

H1: Perceived organizational support positively and indirectly influences employee retention in the remote work context.

The mediating role of employees’ felt obligation

Rossi and Rossi (2018) defined employees’ felt obligation as the feeling of being required to act in certain ways toward others. In an organization, if employees feel an obligation, they care for the organization’s well-being and help it achieve its required goals (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Specifically, the reason for the feeling of obligation that employees need to strive for their organization is because “POS provides a broad and valued set of socio-emotional and impersonal resources to employees, the norm of reciprocity” (Eisenberger et al., 2004, p. 212). In addition, workers often feel obligated to their employers after receiving benefits or other aid to meet their needs (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Numerous academics have examined the links between employees’ felt obligation and their work outcomes and behaviors, such as reducing employee withdrawal behaviors, employee retention, and performance (Arshadi, 2011; Eisenberger et al., 2001).

According to Tsui et al. (1997), support from the organization that demonstrates care and appreciation of employers for workers might increase commitment through the reciprocity norm. In particular, the shift to remote work will be challenging for employees due to a deficiency in technology competencies and factors such as emotions of isolation and a shortage of supervision. Thus, in the current context, the significance of organizational support may outweigh that in a conventional work setting. Currently, employees may increasingly depend on the perceived support from the organization to be prepared,

maintain motivation, and remain engaged. Because of this, POS has the potential to improve employee's behaviors, mostly due to the fact that it instills a feeling of obligation in employees to repay the business (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This conclusion lends credence to the reciprocity relationship between organizations and employees of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Employees, in particular, react to the organization's good treatment by developing emotions of obligation to care and work for the organization's benefit. These sentiments of obligation, in turn, boost their positive work attitudes and behaviors (Arshadi, 2011). Employees are willing to commit to their obligation to repay POS by staying and maintaining good attendance (Arshadia, 2011).

As a consequence, according to the social exchange theory, POS generates a sense of obligation to worry about the organization's well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2001). The obligation that workers give back as much as they get care leads to a higher commitment and effort for the organization to organization, which in turn helps mediate the effect of POS in retaining employees. Hence, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H2: Perceived organizational support positively and indirectly influences employee retention through felt obligation in the remote work context.

The moderating role of transformational leadership

Transformational leadership focuses on engaging and influencing workers, making those individuals more determined to change and develop their businesses (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership demonstrates commitment, empowering employees to accomplish organizational goals jointly (Yukl, 2013) and listening to and observing employees to provide them with constructive feedback, which will change their behavior and attitudes for the betterment of the organization as a whole (Bass, 1985). This leadership has been found to create a favorable working environment for employees (Mittal, 2016; Ohunakin et al., 2019) and enhance feelings of recognition, commitment, attitude, satisfaction, work results, and employee retention within the organization (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006).

In the first step of the social exchange process, transformational leaders encourage and enable their staff members (Bass, 1985). This allows the staff members to share their challenges, requirements, and suggestions for the leadership and the organization to rapidly react and modify, which will deliver social exchange to the employees and the organization. When an employee is given attention to their personal needs, they experience a sense of support in their job, which in turn drives them to commit to their tasks, strive to complete them, and respond to their business objectives (Burns, 1978; Yukl, 2013). Additionally, employees will develop a reaction from the leadership's support of empowerment and offer good feedback to the team to modify the irrationality in work, which is less frequent when leadership is not transformational (Schmitt et al., 2016). Highly transformational leadership thus guarantees that employees consistently feel supported and appreciated through frequent communication, tailored assistance, and the capacity to inspire and encourage even at a physical distance. Transformational leadership is essential for engaging and inspiring people and demonstrating the organization's support, particularly in a remote working setting. Second, transformational leaders serve as examples for their staff members to emulate, motivating them to get work done by presenting them with meaningful and challenging work (Mittal, 2016). Therefore, with transformational leaders, employees get support from the organization to have a good working environment and to attain well-being in their job (Schmidt et al., 2014). As a result, employees will attempt to model their behavior and strive toward contributing advantages to the organization proportionate to the benefits they get from the organization and the leader (Schmitt et al., 2016). Therefore, having transformational leadership not only has a positive impact on employee commitment, behavior, and performance (Mittal, 2016; Ohunakin et al., 2019), but it also enhances the image of influence of the organization's activities and support for employees (Kurtessis et al., 2017), which in turn helps retain employees within the organization (Eberly et al., 2017). Hence, the following hypothesis is suggested.

H3: Transformational leadership moderates the direct influence of perceived organizational support on employee retention in the remote work context.

Previous research has examined the notion of transformational leadership and its characteristics, which include "communicates a vision; develops staff; provides support; empowers staff; is innovative; leads by example; is charismatic" (Carless et al., 2000, p. 390). Therefore, transformational leaders make it

abundantly clear that they have an influence on the organization and its employees by considering and paying attention to each employee in the organization, thereby inspiring the employees' ideals and their motivation to work for the development of the organization (Peng et al., 2020). The social exchange theory shows employees' responses by focusing on the attitudes influenced by the employees' sense of obligation to both the organization and their superiors (Emerson, 1976). Therefore, employees will have attitudes and behaviors at work that are congruent with what they get throughout their work at the organization. Through this, it is shown that leadership is one of the major factors in the workplace that significantly influences the attitudes and behaviors of the employees (Cheung & Wong, 2011). Previous research has shown that leadership is essential in delivering policies, resources, and motivation to employees, which in turn helps support the employees' work (Wayne et al., 1997). Employees perceive that their leaders' treatment and support are a sign of the organization's support for them because leaders are seen as representatives of the organization and communicate the organization's values, goals, and desires to those employees (Suifan et al., 2018). Therefore, having a transformational leader who cares, supports, and facilitates employee work will be closely related to the support employees receive, which will help to increase their POS (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Suifan et al., 2018), work engagement (Schmitt et al., 2016), and employee retention (Eberly et al., 2017). To put it another way, transformational leadership contributes to a rise in employee POS and has a beneficial influence on the social exchange process that shapes employee desires and commitment to the organization (Carless et al., 2000). Then, when POS increases, it will increase employees' feelings of obligation to the organization, helping to motivate and promote employees' commitment to retaining them with the organization, as described in the previous section. Hence, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H4: Transformational leadership moderates the indirect influence of perceived organizational support on employee retention via employees' felt obligation in the remote work context.

3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

3.1 Research design

Several initial studies have pointed out the relationship between POS, felt obligation, and employee retention (Kalidass & Bahron, 2015; Lew, 2009). However, the relationship between POS and employee retention and the mediating role of employees' felt obligation towards the POS (employee retention link) has not been tested. Moreover, even though the interrelationships between transformational leadership and felt obligation or retention are clear, the role of transformational leadership in the POS (employee retention link) has not been found in previous research. Meanwhile, there are some gaps related to transformational leadership and employee retention. In addition, the relationship between POS, employees' felt obligation, transformational leadership and employee retention in the "new normal life" context is a new topic because it has occurred after the movement restriction during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the literature on employee retention by identifying the dimensions of relationships between POS, FO, TL and employee retention – mentioned in Figure 1, which depicts the interrelationship of POS, felt obligation, and transformational leadership related to employee retention. The mixed-methods approach design incorporates qualitative and quantitative approaches. A qualitative approach is used to investigate a subject further as an extra tool for uncovering mental tendencies as well as points of view, in addition to quantitative research. Before releasing the official survey to all participants, this study began with developing questions and continued with a pilot test with 20 responders.

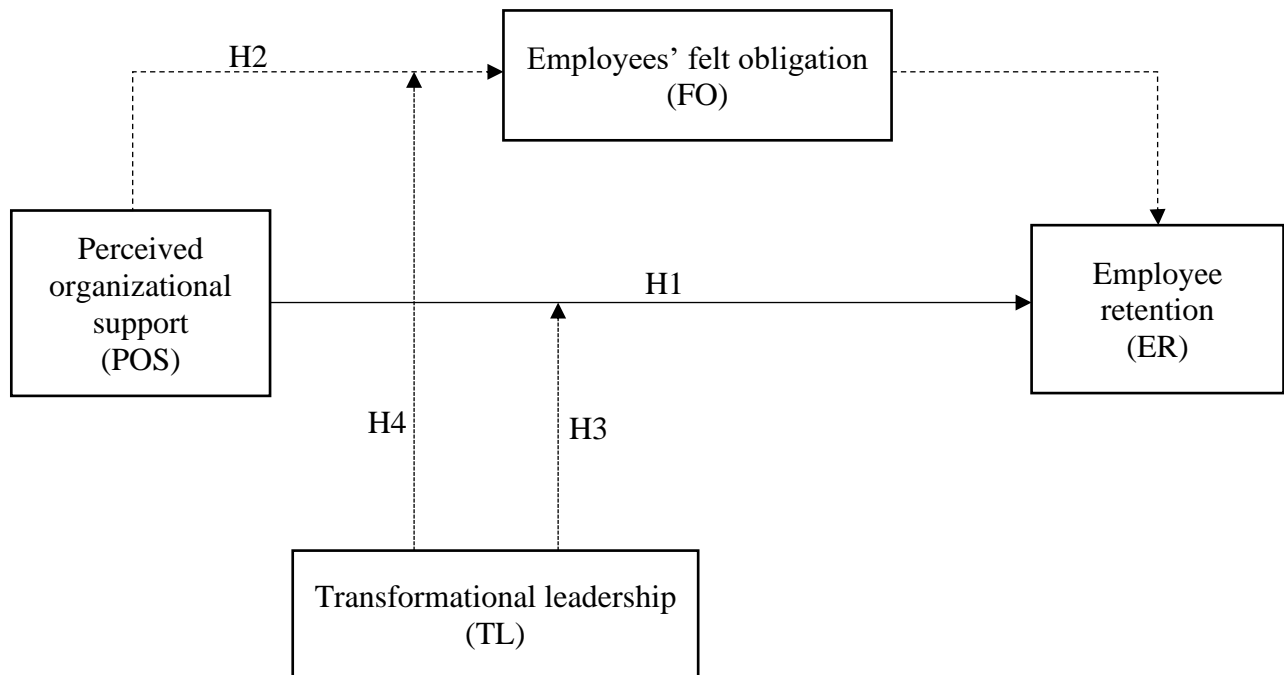


Fig. 1 - Research model

3.2 Sample and data collection

The formula was used to calculate the sample size: $N = 8M + 50$, where M is the number of independent variables and N is the sample size (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). A 10:1 ratio could be a usable sample (Wolf et al., 2013). Meanwhile, the inverse square root method needs at least 160 samples, and the gamma-exponential method needs more than 146 samples (Kock & Hadaya, 2018). Due to 27 questions in the survey, the sample size was 300, which met the criteria. The candidates were employees who have worked for at least two years in companies in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Those employees were under the remote and/or hybrid work models. Therefore, they could reveal the support perception in the organization, feeling of obligation and leadership experiences. To avoid common method bias, we administered the surveys at two different times. At Time 1, we sent 500 questionnaires asking employees to rate perceived organizational support and transformational leadership, and received 338 valid responses. At Time 2, four weeks later, we invited the same employees to assess their felt obligation and employee retention. Finally, 300 valid questionnaires were returned for the final analysis. Characteristics of the respondents are shown in Appendix 1.

3.3 Measurement

All the variables were measured using items developed and used in previous studies to consolidate the validity and reliability of the scales. In addition, all constructs were measured using multiple items, and all items were measured via five-point Likert-type scales (1-“Totally Disagree” and 5-“Totally Agree”).

Perceived organizational support (POS). According to the strategic literature on research that measures and evaluates (Labrague & Santos, 2020), we acknowledged participants’ perceptions about organizational support with seven adopted items. Sample items are “the organization appreciates my well-being contributions”, “the organization is willing to assist me when I need, especially in remote work context”, and “the organization would facilitate my career growth if given the opportunity.”

Felt obligation (FO). We utilized seven measurement items adapted from the research of Osveh (2016) to measure the degree of employee’s felt obligation. Sample items are “I honestly have a great feeling of belonging to my company”, “I would go above and beyond the call of duty to resolve a work-related issue”, and “I am constantly focused on what has to be done, not on what has been allocated to me.”

Transformational leadership (TL). This study used seven measurement items adapted from Vought (2017) to measure the degree of transformational leadership perception. Among these, an example is “the leader makes me feel good to be working with him or her, even in remote work”, and “the leader puts organization’s benefits above his/her standards.”

Employee retention (ER). This study adopted six measurement items from the research of Jun et al. (2006), and Matongolo et al. (2018). Sample items include “this organization is the ideal place for me to work”, “my long-term goal is to establish a career path with this organization”, and “I’m willing to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to assist this organization achieve its goals.”

3.4 Data analysis

SPSS and AMOS software were used to analyze the data. Using SPSS, the survey findings will be evaluated, including descriptive statistics, a reliability test, and an exploratory factor analysis. With descriptive analysis, we get unambiguous descriptions of the sample, essential properties of the data under investigation, and the connection between variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) will both be tested using AMOS, which is yet another software package (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In detail, CFA was used to determine if data matched a hypothesis model or not, and SEM was used to determine whether variables were related.

Measurement model:

$$X_{POS} = \Lambda_{POS} \times POS + \delta_{POS}$$

$$X_{FO} = \Lambda_{FO} \times FO + \delta_{FO}$$

$$Y_{ER} = \Lambda_{ER} \times ER + \epsilon_{ER}$$

$$Z_{TL} = \Lambda_{TL} \times TL + \delta_{TL}$$

Where:

- X_{POS} , X_{FO} , Y_{ER} , Z_{TL} represent the observed indicators for each latent variable.
- Λ_{POS} , Λ_{FO} , Λ_{ER} , Λ_{TL} are the factor loading matrices.
- δ and ϵ are the error terms associated with each observed variable.

Regression analysis:

$$ER_i = \alpha + \beta_1 POS + \beta_2 X_{FO} + \beta_3 X_{TL} + \epsilon_i$$

Where:

- α : Intercept.
- β_1 , β_2 , β_3 : Regression coefficients.
- ϵ_i : Error term.

Mediation model:

$$FO = \gamma_1 \times POS + \zeta_1$$

$$ER = \gamma_2 \times FO + \zeta_2$$

Where:

- γ_1 is the path coefficient from POS to FO.
- γ_2 is the path coefficient from FO to ER.
- ζ_1 and ζ_2 are error terms.

The indirect effect of POS on ER through FO is then $= \gamma_1 \times \gamma_2$

Moderation analysis:

$$ER_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 POS + \beta_2 TL + \beta_3 (POS \times TL) + \epsilon_i$$

Where:

- β_0 is the intercept.
- β_1 is the coefficient for the independent variable POS.
- β_2 is the coefficient for the moderating variable TL.
- β_3 is the coefficient for the interaction term (POS \times TL).
- ϵ_i is the error term.

Moderation of mediation:

$$FO = \gamma_1 \times POS + \gamma_3 \times TL + \gamma_4 \times (POS \times TL) + \zeta_1$$

$$ER = \gamma_2 \times FO + \zeta_2$$

Where:

- γ_3 is the coefficient representing the effect of TL on FO.
- γ_4 is the coefficient for the interaction term (POS \times TL).
- Moderated mediation effect = $(\gamma_1 + \gamma_4 \times TL) \times \gamma_2$

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

Reliability and validity

First, the data is tested for exploratory factor analysis. All factors have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.8 which is greater than 0.6, showing that the scale has high reliability (Hair et al., 2010). The Varimax rotation test showed the total value of the four first components' initial Eigenvalues is $1.345 > 1$, and at the same time, the cumulative % of initial Eigenvalues for those components is $61.023\% > 50\%$, the amount of variance in all the tests that is accounted for the first four components is acceptable. Therefore, we continue to test confirmatory factor analysis to consider the appropriateness of the model. Specifically, all composite reliability values are required to be greater than 0.7, along with an AVE > 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, the model of this study is fit for performing subsequent analyzes when all composite reliability indexes are > 0.85 and average variance extracted > 0.5 . The specific indicators are presented in Table 1.

Tab. 1 - Correlation, Reliability and Validity

	CR	AVE	Mean	MSV	POS	ER	TL	FO
POS	0.889	0.535	3.280	0.233	0.731			
ER	0.897	0.592	3.315	0.233	0.482***	0.769		
TL	0.878	0.507	2.600	0.401	-0.429***	-0.380***	0.712	
FO	0.881	0.514	3.370	0.401	0.398***	0.425***	-0.633***	0.717

Notes: † $p < 0.100$, * $p < 0.050$, ** $p < 0.010$, *** $p < 0.001$. POS: *Perceived organizational support*, ER: *Employee retention*, TL: *Transformational leadership*, FO: *Employees' felt obligation*

Next, the first-order indicators mentioned the model fit that $1 < CMIN/df = 1.64 < 3$, $CFI = 0.936 > 0.9$, $AGFI = 0.851 > 0.8$, $TLI = 0.930 > 0.9$, $RMSEA = 0.052 < 0.08$, $PCLOSE = 0.279 > 0.05$, $RMR = 0.021 < 0.08$ (Figure 2), which meet the requirements values (Schreiber, 2008). Besides, the average variance extracted value of each factor is higher than the maximum shared squared variance, which better indicates the discriminant validity of the final model. The SEM model of the research is illustrated in Figure 2.

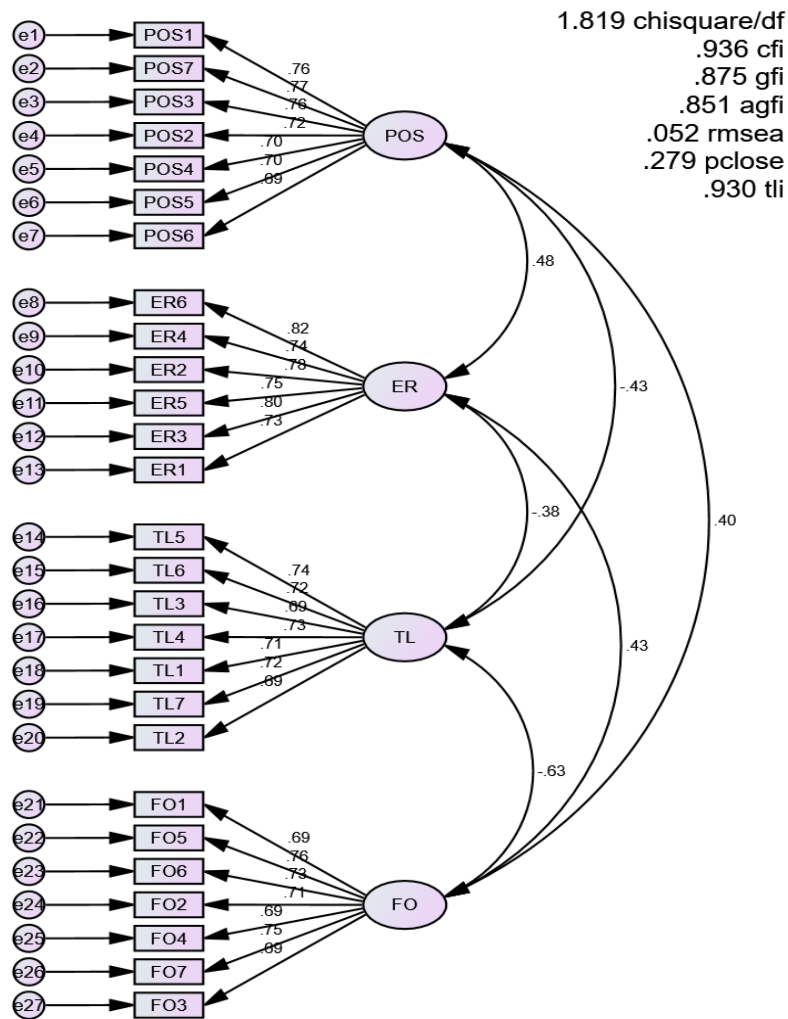


Fig. 2 - The model fit

Direct and moderation analysis

After analyzing the structural equation modeling using observed factors and items in figure 1, we find two significant relationships between the factors. This result confirms hypotheses H1 (Table 2) and H3 (Table 4). First, POS has a slightly significant positive impact on employee retention (ER). The regression weight shows that the relationship between the two variables is $\beta = 0.434$, $p < 0.001$. Hypothesis H1 is therefore accepted. Second, we find a moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between perceived support on employee retention. The value of regression weight = 0.015 at 95% significance level. This result accepts hypothesis H3 proposed by the study. Besides, the regression coefficient also shows a significant positive effect of POS on employees' felt obligation (FO). The results show that the regression weight $\beta = 0.098$ at a 99% significance level.

Table 2. Direct and moderating effects

Effects		S.E	C.R	Estimate (sig)
Perceived organizational support	-> Employee retention	0.068	6.344	0.434 ***
Perceived organizational support	-> Employees' felt obligation	0.029	3.322	0.098 ***
Perceived organizational support x Transformational leadership	-> Employee retention	0.028	2.436	0.068 **

Notes: † $p < 0.100$, * $p < 0.050$, ** $p < 0.010$, *** $p < 0.001$

A moderated-mediation analysis

We continue to use the bootstrapping method to analyze the direct, indirect, and overall effects of the relationships in the model. The results of the indirect effects of POS on employee retention through employees' felt obligation and the case with the addition of a moderated mediation effects of transformational leadership. The findings suggest that there is a mediating effect of employees' felt obligation in the relationship of POS to employee retention. The regression weight shows that the effect of the relationship is $\beta = 0.046$, $p < 0.050$. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is accepted. Meanwhile, the hypothesis that transformational leadership moderates the indirect influence of POS on employee retention through employees' felt obligation is rejected due to the insignificant value of the p-value being $0.938 > 0.05$. Those are shown in Table 3.

Tab. 3 - Indirect and moderated-mediation effects

Indirect effects				Lower	Upper	Estimate (sig)	
Perceived organizational support	->	Employees' felt obligation	->	Employee retention	0.017	0.098	0.046**
Perceived organizational support x Transformational leadership	->	Employees' felt obligation	->	Employee retention	-0.026	0.015	-0.001

Notes: † $p < 0.100$, * $p < 0.050$, ** $p < 0.010$, *** $p < 0.001$

As a result, we have the hypothesis testing result as shown below (Table 4)

Tab. 4 - Summarize the research hypotheses.

Hypothesis	Significance level	Conclusion
H1: Perceived organizational support directly influences employee retention in the remote work context.	99%	Supported
H2: Perceived organizational support indirectly influences employee retention via employees' felt obligation in the remote work context.	95%	Supported
H3: Transformational leadership moderates the direct influence of perceived organizational support on employee retention in the remote work context.	95%	Supported
H4: Transformational leadership moderates the indirect influence of perceived organizational support on employee retention via employees' felt obligation in the remote work context.	< 90%	Rejected

4.2 Discussion

Theoretical implications

Previous research has shown a connection between POS and employee retention (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Guzzo et al., 1994). This research reveals similarities regarding the positive effects of POS on organizational employee retention. In addition, the increase in POS results in an increased feeling of obligation on the part of employees for their company. According to social exchange theory, this sense of obligation retains employees and motivates them to form an interest in their work, make an effort to work and adjust their work behavior to assist the organization in achieving its goals. Therefore, POS not only directly impacts employee retention but also increases the sense of obligation, which in turn leads to an indirect impact on the work outcomes, such as employee retention. Previous studies have shown the effect of POS based on the reciprocity principle of social exchange theory. Employees feel an obligation and expect that efforts to deliver good work outcomes will be recognized and rewarded

(Kurtessis et al., 2017). Specifically, the sentiments of indebtedness after getting organizational support make them enhance their dedication to their job and commitment and do better work, both of which should reduce turnover (Arshadi, 2011; Eisenberger et al., 2002). However, studies investigating the role of POS and the mediating effect of employees' feelings of obligation to the organization still have some limitations. Existing studies focus mainly on studying their impact on work outcomes and employee retention in the case of full-time employees (Arshadi, 2011) or part-time employees (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003) or an employee-type nature (Garcia et al., 2021). Ours is the first study to be undertaken in the context of remote work following the epidemic, which calls attention to identifying timely support for employees. The studies that came before ours were conducted before the effects of the pandemic (Hayes et al., 2021; Dhanpat et al., 2022). This study is complementary to the evidence on the impact of POS on employees' felt obligation, subsequently helping to retain employees in different contexts.

Moreover, this study also shows the effect of transformational leadership moderating the direct influence of perceived support on employee retention and also uses transformational leadership as a moderating mediation factor in the remote work context. This finding is consistent with those of previous studies on the role of transformational leadership in the organization (Koh et al., 1995). The transformational leadership style will favor organizational citizens' behavior and performance (Cheung & Wong, 2011). Riggle et al. (2009) demonstrate a correlation between POS and employees' sense of obligation and a correlation between POS and employee retention. Also, after undertaking a study of the prior empirical literature (Koh et al., 1995; Zellars et al., 2002), there is the position that the relationship between POS, employees' felt obligation and employee retention is positively affected by transformational leadership. In other words, good transformational leaders in the organization will enhance the perception of organizational support and organizational commitment and then positively impact the retention of employees. When employees realize that they receive enough support and encouragement from their leaders and the company, they will have more commitment to the company and less intention to leave. Thus, transformational leadership style positively impacts the link POS, and employees feel an obligation; then employee retention helps the organization grow and be more competitive. However, the current biggest limitation is that previous studies were conducted in the context of normal working and operating conditions. These articles have not examined the moderating role of transformational leadership in the context of remote work. Therefore, this paper considers this kind of leadership as a mediator to enhance employee retention, especially in the remote work context.

Practical implications

This study assists managers in better appreciating the relationship between an engaged workforce and increased employee retention. Managers could find and adopt skills and tools to improve the retention rate if they want their employees to be happy and engaged in their jobs. This is consistent with the recent emerging interest in studies showing the changing need for companies to preserve and maintain employees to achieve digital, remote work that enhances competitive advantage (Kő et al., 2022). Then, employees would invest and dedicate themselves to meeting the organization's goals and objectives. Secondly, another essential objective of management is to provide a favorable environment for its employees. Loyal employees go above and beyond their professional responsibilities to guarantee their employers' satisfaction. Managers may use efforts to encourage career progression, recognition, trust between employees and senior management, and personal status to increase the satisfaction of employees commuting to work in the new normal life period in particular and in the normal period in general. The third practical implication is to help understand how the degree of POS, FO, and TL exerted by workers might impact the performance levels of the organizations in which they operate. This suggests that managers who enhance their employees' organizational support and engagement levels will have increased retention. Therefore, managers should recognize that having suitable policies, processes, structures, and systems in place will assist in reducing the turnover rate of personnel, eventually contributing to the attainment of corporate objectives in growing and becoming competitive.

An additional way to improve employee retention in companies is to implement high-performance work practices (such as employee training and empowerment), clear managerial expectations and feedback from the supervisory staff (such as regular meetings and informal mentorship programs), and employee recognition programs that include financial incentives (such as profit-sharing) or even paid time off (such as sick days). All of these things could be done successfully by transformative leaders and organizational support policy, since better retention of workers leads to higher profits for organizations.

Also, leaders should focus on building emotional connections with employees about their positions and responsibilities inside the firm.

Limitations and future research

While the research has yielded theoretical and practical implications, we acknowledge its existing limitations, which might be addressed in future research. First, the utilization of social exchange theory has facilitated the elucidation of the correlation among POS, ER, FO, and TL. However, there may exist alternative theories that might serve as a means of triangulation to validate the links, as demonstrated in previous research, such as the organizational support theory (Naz et al., 2020; Eisenberger et al., 2002) and the social comparison theory (Vardaman et al., 2016), which could be applied to explore the role of POS in remaining employees when working remotely. Also, the influence of POS on ER is enhanced when the level of TL is high. Examining and highlighting the moderating significance of TL in the correlation between POS and ER may not provide a thorough understanding. Future research might investigate the potential impact of alternative leadership styles, such as servant leadership (Pham et al., 2023) and ethical leadership (Brown & Trevino, 2006), on the relationship between POS and ER in the remote work environment.

Furthermore, the research surveyed individuals employed in a remote or hybrid work arrangement for at least two years at firms in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. This study comprehensively analyzes the effects of POS, FO, and TL on ER in remote or hybrid organizations. However, it would be intriguing to conduct future studies to determine if other circumstances provide similar findings, such as certain types of organizations or different nations. Lastly, this research was conducted using a quantitative method, so it is inevitable to deny the bias in doing and collecting the survey period. In addition, the research findings of the quantitative study could be deeply explored by a qualitative study. Therefore, researchers should apply a mixed-method to gain a deeper understanding of the topic in the future. The reason behind using the mixed-method is a list of deep questions for respondents that could not be covered and broadened by using the quantitative method only.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings, this study indicated that POS greatly influenced employee retention, particularly in remote work environments. Employees' organizational support perception also considerably influenced employee retention through their felt obligation. Additionally, transformational leadership does moderate the direct influence of POS on employee retention. However, transformational leadership has no moderated-mediation influence on the indirect relationship between POS and employee retention through their felt obligation. The study's findings have made theoretical advances, emphasizing the need for more focus on POS, FO, and TL in the current remote or hybrid working environment. Furthermore, recommendations have been offered to assist managers, especially HR managers, in modifying their management techniques (e.g., training and development, performance management programs) and helping employees effectively adapt to the technology-based changes in work to bring out the workforce competitive advantage in the uncertain situation after the pandemic. This adjustment has proven to significantly influence employee retention within the organization.

References

1. Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, *103*(3), 411–423.
2. Arshadi, N. (2011). The relationships of perceived organizational support (POS) with organizational commitment, in-role performance, and turnover intention: Mediating role of felt obligation. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *30*, 1103–1108.
3. Antosova, I., Hazuchova, N., & Stavkova, J. (2022). Competitiveness of individuals in the labour market during the pandemic. *Journal of Competitiveness*, *14*(3), 24–40.
4. Bass, B. M. (1985). Leadership: Good, better, best. *Organizational Dynamics*, *13*(3), 26–40.
5. Blau, P. M. (1964). Justice in social exchange. *Sociological Inquiry*, *34*(2), 193–206.
6. Brown, M. E., & Treviño, L. K. (2006). Ethical leadership: A review and future directions. *Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(6), 595–616.

7. Burdett, A., Etheridge, B., Tang, L., & Wang, Y. (2024). Worker productivity during Covid-19 and adaptation to working from home. *European Economic Review*, 167, 104788. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2024.104788>
8. Burns, G. P. (1978). *The principles of leadership*. Our Lady of the Lake University.
9. Carless, S. A., Wearing, A. J., & Mann, L. (2000). A short measure of transformational leadership. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 14(3), 389–405. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022991115523>
10. Chan, X. W., et al. (2023). Work, life and COVID-19: A rapid review and practical recommendations for the post-pandemic workplace. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 61(2), 257–276. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12355>
11. Chang, K. (2020). Artificial intelligence in personnel management: The development of APM model. *The Bottom Line*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BL-08-2020-0055>
12. Cheng, J.-C., & O-Yang, Y. (2018). Hotel employee job crafting, burnout, and satisfaction: The moderating role of perceived organizational support. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 72, 78–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.01.005>
13. Cheung, M. F. Y., & Wong, C. (2011). Transformational leadership, leader support, and employee creativity. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 32(7), 656–672.
14. Chi, O. H., Saldamli, A., & Gursoy, D. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on management-level hotel employees' work behaviors: Moderating effects of working-from-home. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 98, 103020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103020>
15. Choi, S. B., Kim, K., Ullah, S. M. E., & Kang, S.-W. (2016). How transformational leadership facilitates innovative behavior of Korean workers: Examining mediating and moderating processes. *Personnel Review*, 45(3), 459–479. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-03-2014-0058>
16. Cloutier, O., Felusiak, L., Hill, C., & Pemberton-Jones, E. J. (2015). The importance of developing strategies for employee retention. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability & Ethics*, 12(2), 119–129.
17. Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874–900. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
18. Dhanpat, N., Makgamatha, K., Monageng, R., & Sigawuki, K. (2022). COVID-19: Employee experience and adjustment at a state owned company in South Africa. *SAGE Open*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221102435>
19. Dodanwala, T. C., & Shrestha, P. (2021). Work–family conflict and job satisfaction among construction professionals: The mediating role of emotional exhaustion. *On the Horizon: The International Journal of Learning Futures*, 29(2), 62–75.
20. Eberly, M. B., et al. (2017). Staying after the storm: How transformational leadership relates to follower turnover intentions in extreme contexts. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 102, 72–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.07.004>
21. Eisenberger, R., et al. (2001). Reciprocation of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(1), 42–51.
22. Eisenberger, R., Fasolo, P., & Davis-LaMastro, V. (1990). Perceived organizational support and employee diligence, commitment, and innovation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(1), 51–59.
23. Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 500–507.
24. Eisenberger, R., Lynch, P., Aselage, J., & Rohdieck, S. (2004). Who takes the most revenge? Individual differences in negative reciprocity norm endorsement. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(6), 787–799. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167204264047>
25. Eisenberger, R., et al. (2002). Perceived supervisor support: Contributions to perceived organizational support and employee retention. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(3), 565–573.
26. Emanuel, N., & Harrington, E. (2023). Working remotely? Selection, treatment, and the market for remote work. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4466130>
27. Emerson, R. M. (1976). Social exchange theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2(1), 335–362.
28. Gakovic, A., & Tetrick, L. E. (2003). Perceived organizational support and work status: A comparison of the employment relationships of part-time and full-time employees attending university classes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24(5), 649–666.
29. Galanti, T., et al. (2021). Work from home during the COVID-19 outbreak: The impact on employees' remote work productivity, engagement and stress. *Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine*, 63(7), e426–e432. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0000000000002236>

30. Garcia, P. R. J. M., Amarnani, R. K., Bordia, P., & Restubog, S. L. D. (2021). When support is unwanted: The role of psychological contract type and perceived organizational support in predicting bridge employment intentions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *125*, 103525.
31. Gere, C. (2009). *Digital culture*. Reaktion Books.
32. Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American Sociological Review*, *25*(2), 161. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2092623>
33. Guzzo, R. A., Noonan, K. A., & Elron, E. (1994). Expatriate managers and the psychological contract. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *79*(4), 617.
34. Hayes, S. W., Priestley, J. L., Moore, B. A., & Ray, H. E. (2021). Perceived stress, work-related burnout, and working from home before and during COVID-19: An examination of workers in the United States. *Sage Open*, *11*(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211058193>
35. Homans, G. C. (1974). *Social behavior: Its elementary forms*. Harcourt, Brace.
36. Huang, C., et al. (2021). Leader–member exchange, employee turnover intention and presenteeism: The mediating role of perceived organizational support. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *42*(2), 249–264.
37. International Labor Organization. (2020). *ILO monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. Fifth edition*. ILO.
38. Jawahar, I. M., & Hemmasi, P. (2006). Perceived organizational support for women’s advancement and turnover intentions: The mediating role of job and employer satisfaction. *Women in Management Review*, *21*(8), 643–661. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420610712036>
39. Jones, D. A., & Skarlicki, D. P. (2003). The relationship between perceptions of fairness and voluntary turnover among retail employees. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *33*(6), 1226–1243. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2003.tb01947.x>
40. Jun, M., Cai, S., & Shin, H. (2006). TQM practice in maquiladora: Antecedents of employee satisfaction and loyalty. *Journal of Operations Management*, *24*(6), 791–812.
41. Kaiser, H. F. (1974). An index of factorial simplicity. *Psychometrika*, *39*(1), 31–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02291575>
42. Kalidass, A., & Bahron, A. (2015). The relationship between perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, organizational commitment and employee turnover intention. *International Journal of Business Administration*, *6*(5), 82. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijba.v6n5p82>
43. Kaplan, D. (2008). *Structural equation modeling: Foundations and extensions*. SAGE.
44. Kock, N., & Hadaya, P. (2018). Minimum sample size estimation in PLS-SEM: The inverse square root and gamma-exponential methods. *Information Systems Journal*, *28*(1), 227–261.
45. Ko, A., et al. (2022). Digital agility, digital competitiveness, and innovative performance of SMEs. *Journal of Competitiveness*, *14*(4), 78–96.
46. Koh, W. L., Steers, R. M., & Terborg, J. R. (1995). The effects of transformational leadership on teacher attitudes and student performance in Singapore. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *16*(4), 319–333. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030160404>
47. Kniffin, K. M., et al. (2021). COVID-19 and the workplace: Implications, issues, and insights for future research and action. *American Psychologist*, *76*(1), 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000716>
48. Kossek, E. E., & Lautsch, B. A. (2018). Work–life flexibility for whom? Occupational status and work–life inequality in upper, middle, and lower level jobs. *Academy of Management Annals*, *12*(1), 5–36. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0059>
49. Kurtessis, J. N., et al. (2017). Perceived organizational support: A meta-analytic evaluation of organizational support theory. *Journal of Management*, *43*(6), 1854–1884. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206315575554>
50. Kyndt, E., Dochy, F., Michielsen, M., & Moeyaert, B. (2009). Employee retention: Organisational and personal perspectives. *Vocations and Learning*, *2*(3), 195–215.
51. Labrague, L. J., & Santos, J. A. A. (2020). COVID-19 anxiety among front-line nurses: Predictive role of organisational support, personal resilience and social support. *Journal of Nursing Management*, *28*(7), 1653–1661. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jonm.13121>
52. Lee, H.-R., Murrmann, S. K., Murrmann, K. F., & Kim, K. (2010). Organizational justice as a mediator of the relationships between leader-member exchange and employees’ turnover intentions. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, *19*(2), 97–114.

53. Lew, T. (2009). The relationships between perceived organizational support, felt obligation, affective organizational commitment and turnover intention of academics working with private higher educational institutions in Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(1), 72–87.
54. Loi, R., Hang-Yue, N., & Foley, S. (2006). Linking employees' justice perceptions to organizational commitment and intention to leave: The mediating role of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 79(1), 101–120.
55. Maertz, C. P., Griffeth, R. W., Campbell, N. S., & Allen, D. G. (2007). The effects of perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support on employee turnover. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 28(8), 1059–1075. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.472>
56. Mahmoud, A. H. (2008). A study of nurses' job satisfaction: The relationship to organizational commitment, perceived organizational support, transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and level of education. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 22(2), 286–295.
57. Malhotra, A. (2021). The postpandemic future of work. *Journal of Management*, 47(5), 1091–1102. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063211000435>
58. Malka, S. C. (2024). The new post pandemic workplace: Shedding light on more recent developments. SSRN. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4897555>
59. Matongolo, A., Kasekende, F., & Mafabi, S. (2018). Employer branding and talent retention: Perceptions of employees in higher education institutions in Uganda. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 50(5), 217–233. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ICT-03-2018-0031>
60. McPhail, R., Chan, X. W. (Carys), May, R., & Wilkinson, A. (2024). Post-COVID remote working and its impact on people, productivity, and the planet: An exploratory scoping review. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 35(1), 154–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2023.2221385>
61. Meyer, J. P., & Smith, C. A. (2009). HRM practices and organizational commitment: Test of a mediation model. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences de l'Administration*, 17(4), 319–331. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1936-4490.2000.tb00231.x>
62. Mittal, S. (2016). Effects of transformational leadership on turnover intentions in IT SMEs. *International Journal of Manpower*, 37(8), 1322–1346. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-10-2014-0202>
63. Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). The assessment of reliability. *Psychometric Theory*, 3, 248–292. <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=1960143>
64. Nakrošienė, A., Bučiūnienė, I., & Goštautaitė, B. (2019). Working from home: Characteristics and outcomes of telework. *International Journal of Manpower*, 40(1), 87–101. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-07-2017-0172>
65. Naz, S., et al. (2020). A study in the relationship between supportive work environment and employee retention: Role of organizational commitment and person–organization fit as mediators. *SAGE Open*, 10(2), 215824402092469. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020924694>
66. Nyberg, A. J., Shaw, J. D., & Zhu, J. (2021). The people still make the (remote work) place: Lessons from a pandemic. *Journal of Management*, 47(8), 1967–1976. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063211023563>
67. O'Driscoll, M. P., et al. (2003). Family-responsive interventions, perceived organizational and supervisor support, work-family conflict, and psychological strain. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 10(4), 326.
68. Ohunakin, F., et al. (2019). Employees' retention in Nigeria's hospitality industry: The role of transformational leadership style and job satisfaction. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 18(4), 441–470.
69. Osveh, E. (2016). *Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement: Role of organizational identification and employees' lower-order need strength* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Malaya].
70. Ohunakin, F., et al. (2019). Employees' retention in Nigeria's hospitality industry: The role of transformational leadership style and job satisfaction. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 18(4), 441–470.
71. Peasley, M. C., et al. (2020). Can't leave it at home? The effects of personal stress on burnout and salesperson performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 58–70.

72. Peng, S., Liao, Y., & Sun, R. (2020). The influence of transformational leadership on employees' affective organizational commitment in public and nonprofit organizations: A moderated mediation model. *Public Personnel Management*, 49(1), 29–56.
73. Perry, S. J., et al. (2023). Interruptions in remote work: A resource-based model of work and family stress. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 38, 1023–1041.
74. Piccolo, R. F., & Colquitt, J. A. (2006). Transformational leadership and job behaviors: The mediating role of core job characteristics. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(2), 327–340.
75. Prasad, B., & Junni, P. (2016). CEO transformational and transactional leadership and organizational innovation: The moderating role of environmental dynamism. *Management Decision*, 54(7), 1542–1568. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-11-2014-0651>
76. Pham, N. T., et al. (2023a). Improving employee outcomes in the remote working context: A time-lagged study on digital-oriented training, work-to-family conflict and empowering leadership. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 61(4), 1008–1038. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12374>
77. Pham, N. T., et al. (2023b). Socially responsible human resources management and employee retention: The roles of shared value, relationship satisfaction, and servant leadership. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 414, 137704. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.137704>
78. Phan, Q. P. T., Pham, N. T., & Nguyen, L. H. L. (2020). How to drive brand engagement and eWOM intention in social commerce: A competitive strategy for the emerging market. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 12(3), 136–155. <https://doi.org/10.7441/joc.2020.03.08>
79. Rhoades, L., Eisenberger, R., & Armeli, S. (2001). Affective commitment to the organization: The contribution of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(5), 825–836.
80. Riggle, R. J., Edmondson, D. R., & Hansen, J. D. (2009). A meta-analysis of the relationship between perceived organizational support and job outcomes: 20 years of research. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(10), 1027–1030. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.05.003>
81. Rogers, K. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (2017). Respect in organizations: Feeling valued as “we” and “me”. *Journal of Management*, 43(5), 1578–1608.
82. Rossi, A. S., & Rossi, P. H. (2018). *Of human bonding: Parent-child relations across the life course* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351328920>
83. Rupp, D. E., & Mallory, D. B. (2015). Corporate social responsibility: Psychological, person-centric, and progressing. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 2(1), 211–236.
84. Sahut, J. M., & Lissillour, R. (2023). The adoption of remote work platforms after the Covid-19 lockdown: New approach, new evidence. *Journal of Business Research*, 154, 113345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113345>
85. Santos, J. R. A. (1999). Cronbach's alpha: A tool for assessing the reliability of scales. *Journal of Extension*, 37(2), 1–5.
86. Sattayaraksa, T., & Boon-itt, S. (2018). The roles of CEO transformational leadership and organizational factors on product innovation performance. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 21(2), 227–249. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-06-2017-0077>
87. Schmidt, B., et al. (2014). Psychosocial resources and the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' psychological strain. *Work*, 49(2), 315–324. <https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-131713>
88. Schmitt, A., Den Hartog, D. N., & Belschak, F. D. (2016). Transformational leadership and proactive work behaviour: A moderated mediation model including work engagement and job strain. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 89(3), 588–610.
89. Schreiber, J. B. (2008). Core reporting practices in structural equation modeling. *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, 4(2), 83–97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2007.04.003>
90. Shabane, Z. W., Schultz, C. M., & Van Hoek, C. E. (2017). Transformational leadership as a mediator in the relationship between satisfaction with remuneration and the retention of artisans in the military. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1(2).
91. Sun, C., Zhang, Z., Vochozka, M., & Vozňáková, I. (2022). Enterprise digital transformation and debt financing cost in China's A-share listed companies. *Oeconomia Copernicana*, 13(3), 783–829. <https://doi.org/10.24136/oc.2022.023>

92. Singer-Velush, N., Sherman, K., & Anderson, E. (2020, July 15). Microsoft analyzed data on its newly remote workforce. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2020/07/microsoft-analyzed-data-on-its-newly-remote-workforce>
93. Soga, L. R., et al. (2022). Unmasking the other face of flexible working practices: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Business Research*, *142*, 648–662.
94. Suifan, T. S., Abdallah, A. B., & Al Janini, M. (2018). The impact of transformational leadership on employees' creativity: The mediating role of perceived organizational support. *Management Research Review*, *41*(1), 113–132. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-02-2017-0032>
95. Sun, R., & Wang, W. (2017). Transformational leadership, employee turnover intention, and actual voluntary turnover in public organizations. *Public Management Review*, *19*(8), 1124–1141.
96. Stankovic, J. J., Marjanovic, I., Drezgic, S., & Popovic, Z. (2021). The digital competitiveness of European countries: A multiple-criteria approach. *Journal of Competitiveness*, *13*(2), 117–134.
97. Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (1996). *Using multivariate statistics*. Harper Collins.
98. Tian, H., et al. (2020). The impact of transformational leadership on employee retention: Mediation and moderation through organizational citizenship behavior and communication. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*, 314.
99. Tse, H. H. M., Huang, X., & Lam, W. (2013). Why does transformational leadership matter for employee turnover? A multi-foci social exchange perspective. *Leadership Quarterly*, *24*(5), 763–776. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leafqua.2013.07.005>
100. Tsui, A. S., Pearce, J. L., Porter, L. W., & Tripoli, A. M. (1997). Alternative approaches to the employee-organization relationship: Does investment in employees pay off? *Academy of Management Journal*, *40*(5), 1089–1121.
101. Vardaman, J. M., et al. (2016). Social comparisons and organizational support: Implications for commitment and retention. *Human Relations*, *69*(7), 1483–1505. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715619687>
102. Vera, D., & Crossan, M. (2004). Strategic leadership and organizational learning. *Academy of Management Review*, *29*(2), 222–240. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2004.12736080>
103. Vochozka, M., Janek, S., & Siranova, L. (2023). Geopolitical deadlock and phosphate shortfall behind the price hike? Evidence from Moroccan commodity markets. *Agricultural Economics*, *69*(8), 301–308. <https://doi.org/10.17221/140/2023-AGRICECON>
104. Vought, W. X. (2017). *E-leadership in practice: The components of transformational leadership in virtual business environments* [EdD, St. John Fisher University]. https://fisherpub.sjf.edu/education_etd/323/
105. Waldman, D. A., Carter, M. Z., & Hom, P. W. (2015). A multilevel investigation of leadership and turnover behavior. *Journal of Management*, *41*(6), 1724–1744.
106. Wayne, S. J., Shore, L. M., & Liden, R. C. (1997). Perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange: A social exchange perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, *40*(1), 82–111.
107. Witt, L. A., & Carlson, D. S. (2006). The work-family interface and job performance: Moderating effects of conscientiousness and perceived organizational support. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *11*(4), 343.
108. Wolf, E. J., Harrington, K. M., Clark, S. L., & Miller, M. W. (2013). Sample size requirements for structural equation models: An evaluation of power, bias, and solution propriety. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *73*(6), 913–934. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164413495237>
109. Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson.
110. Zagenczyk, T. J., et al. (2021). Context and social exchange: Perceived ethical climate strengthens the relationships between perceived organizational support and organizational identification and commitment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *32*(22), 1–20. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09585192.2019.1706618>
111. Zellars, K. L., Tepper, B. J., & Duffy, M. K. (2002). Abusive supervision and subordinates' organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*(6), 1068–1076.
112. Zheng, X., Liu, Z., & Gong, X. (2016). Why does leader attention scope matter for innovation ambidexterity? The mediating role of transformational leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *37*(7), 912–935. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-12-2014-0242>

113. Zwingmann, I., et al. (2014). Is transformational leadership healthy for employees? A multilevel analysis in 16 nations. *German Journal of Human Resource Management: Zeitschrift Für Personalforschung*, 28(1–2), 24–51.

Contact information

Nhat Tan Pham

International University, The School of Business, Vietnam

Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

E-mail: ptnhat@hcmiu.edu.vn

ORCID: 0000-0001-9927-2257

Vo Thi Ngoc Thuy

Hoa Sen University, Faculty of Business Administration, Vietnam

E-mail: vtnt.thuy@gmail.com

Tran Hoang Tuan

International University, The School of Business, Vietnam

E-mail: tuanth@ldxh.edu.vn

Quang Hai Nguyen

Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, Faculty of Business Administration, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

E-mail: quangnhai@huit.edu.vn

Le Cat Vi

University of Economics and Law, Faculty of Business Administration, Vietnam

Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

E-mail: vilc@uel.edu.vn