

Sustainable Employability: Drivers, Success Factors and Implications for Vietnam Context



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ABSTRACT: The rapid advancement of new digital technologies and the aging of the workforce fundamentally alter the nature of work and raise concerns about the future of jobs and organizations. Recently, the concept of sustainable employability has gained prominence as a significant perspective on contemporary jobs and plays a critical role in individuals' resilience in an increasingly complicated and unpredictable career environment. While prior research has highlighted essential aspects determining an individual's employability and methods of obtaining employment, there has been a lack of studies on organizations' needs to maintain or increase their workforce's sustainable employability. To bridge this gap, this paper adopts a systematic literature review to assess, analyze and synthesize extant literature on drivers, objectives, success factors, and implications of sustainable employability. This paper provides insight into why organizations implement HR practices to accomplish the new approach and how sustainable employability affects an organization.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable employability, Literature review, HR practices

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last years, emerging changes in technology and increasingly competitive organizational environments have caused significant shifts in global employment trends (Kuhn et al., 2018; Drange et al., 2018). While the traditional mode of lifetime employment with the same organization has declined, non-standard and informal types of employment have emerged (Le Blanc et al., 2017). This transition can be seen in developing and developed economies with approximately 61% of the total workforce worldwide engaged in informal and temporary employment (ILO, 2016). Moreover, the VUCA world (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) has put more pressure on the workforce, requiring them to better prepare for employability competencies and resilience in each career stage (Akkermans et al., 2020).

Given the growing adaptability and complexity of the working world, a new approach to employability is even more necessary given the growing adaptability and complexity of the working world. It can be argued that for employees to compete in these dynamic and changing environments, they must focus heavily on developing their expertise, enabling them to gain employment with any organization. In addition, employability should not be commonly understood as an individual's capabilities to compete in internal and external labor markets (Forrier, Verbruggen, & De Cuyper, 2015; Clarke, 2017) but as a shared responsibility between employees and employers (Clarke, 2017). This way of thinking evolves the concept of sustainable employability (SE), which is attracting growing attention from human resource management (HRM) researchers and practitioners alike (Picco et al., 2022). While prior research has highlighted significant aspects that determine an individual's employability and methods of obtaining employment, there has been a lack of studies on organizations' needs to maintain or increase their workforce's sustainable employability throughout their working lives (Gurbuz et al., 2022; Picco et al., 2022). This paper, therefore, adopts a systematic literature review that focuses on empirical contributions to assess, analyze and synthesize extant literature on drivers, objectives, success factors, and implications of sustainable employability. This paper provides insight into why organizations implement HR practices to accomplish the new approach and how sustainable employability affects an organization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of sustainable employability

The conceptualizations of sustainable employability cover both the 'employability' and 'sustainability' components. According to Hillage (1998), employability is an individual's capability to gain and maintain employment.

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In other words, it is the ability to identify and realize career opportunities (Fugate et al., 2004) or to remain attractive to the labor market (Brouwers et al., 2015). Page 1

According to Neupane et al. (2022), employability is not just about obtaining a job; it is a broader set of competencies and attributes that enables employees to succeed throughout their careers. While previous operationalization of SE primarily relied on proximal indicators such as worker vitality and employability (Ybema et al., 2017; Houkes et al., 2020), a new measurement of SE combines the values and abilities of employees and the opportunities offered by the work context (Gurbuz et al., 2022). The second noun, "sustainability," can refer to the use of a resource over time without negatively—and preferably positively impacts on the utility value of that resource (Fleuren et al., 2020). As such, to function sustainably, organizations need employable resources in the long term and, therefore, shift the focus from strategic to sustainable HRM (Kramar, 2014; Ehnert, 2015; Fleuren et al., 2020). It means that employers are perhaps now focusing more on flexible human capital arrangements and sustaining competitive advantages to recruit and retain occupationally expert individuals (De Vos and Heijden, 2017). At the same time, these selective approaches of employers exert increased pressure on individuals about their adaptability to changing labor market demands and their capabilities to remain employable in competitive environments, whether with the same or any other organization (De Cuyper and De Witte, 2011). It reasons why some researchers typically characterize sustainable employability as the ability of individuals to sustain a set of capabilities and maintain their employment opportunities (Klink et al., 2015; Ybema et al., 2017; Jabeen et al., 2021).

While it can be challenging to identify an established definition of sustainable employability as the concept is still very much evolving (Blanc et al., 2017; Houkes et al., 2020), the widely cited definition was put forward by Van der Klink et al. et al. (2016), among the pioneers in this emerging field, comprehensive enough to cover all significant elements examined under this area. Van der Klink et al. (2016, p.73) defined sustainable employability as "...Sustainable employability (SE) means that throughout their working lives, workers can achieve tangible opportunities in the form of a set of capabilities. They also enjoy the necessary conditions that allow them to make a valuable contribution through their work, now and in the future while safeguarding their health and welfare. This requires, on the one hand, a work context that facilitates this for them and on the other, the attitude and motivation to exploit these opportunities...".

Although sustainable employability has been conceptualized in some recent studies, results cannot be compared across studies (Fleuren et al., 2020); and while critical dimensions have been proposed, the theoretical underpinning needs to be improved (Jabeen et al., 2021). While De Jonge and Peters (2019) denote the three critical dimensions are well-being, performance, and health issues, Magnano et al. (2019), following Klink et al. (2015) has suggested four components, including health, productivity, valuable work, and long-term perspective. Other dimensions could be listed as employability, workability, and vitality (De Lange et al., 2020; Ybema et al., 2020).

The link between sustainability employability and individuals' career

In research and practice, employability primarily refers to individuals' capability to maintain and develop their career prospects (Clarke, 2017; Forrier et al., 2018). According to Fugate (2004), employability should be considered an individual characteristic coming from relationships with other individuals, work, and contextual characteristics. However, the job is not as simple as it may seem when it comes to sustaining employability. De Vos and Van Der Heijden (2017) pointed out that sustaining employability would not limit to a specific time in employees' career path, and upgrading their employable capabilities in the short run was insufficient. It cannot be assumed that the employable individual at a specific moment of their career will continue to be so in the future, especially in cases where labour market demands fluctuate and need adaptable employees (De Vos et al., 2020; Magnano et al., 2019). Hence, sustainable employability is crucial for employees as it involves developing the long-term capability of adaptation to changing employment, economic and personal conditions (van Gorp et al., 2018; Satori et al., 2023). For their sake, employees must focus significantly on developing their expertise and mobility attitude to fit with any reputable organization to compete in these dynamic and changing environments (Jabeen et al., 2021). Their independence in the organization and career advancement would create more flexibility in employment relationships and unpredictable career patterns (Samarra et al., 2013; Guan et al., 2019). In addition, once employees could gain employment with any organization, they will have better bargaining power within and across organizations (Forrier et al., 2015; Sartori et al., 2023).

Research on sustainable employability bears significant implications for individuals on multiple counts: career continuity of older workers (Le Blanc et al., 2017), well-being and occupational health (van Gorp et al., 2018), working career stage (Fleuren et al., 2020; Klink et al., 2015; Akkermans et al., 2021) and vulnerable workers (Dello Russo, 2020; Rhee et al., 2021)

The link between sustainability employability and employers

Given today's rapidly aging workforce and significant technological changes, sustainable employability has become increasingly crucial for employers (De Jonge & Peeters, 2019; Fugate et al., 2020; Gurbuz et al., 2022). In line with Klink's definition, further

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studies highlighted the roles of organizations in achieving SE, including facilitating work engagement (van Dam et al., 2017), work environment (Nilsson, 2020; Neupane et al., 2022) and work context (Gurbuz et al., 2022). From employees' perspectives, organizations must support their participation in planning sustainable employability interventions in line with their work-life stage and setting the total values they can obtain (Ybema et al., 2017).

In contrast, such enhancements in skills and capabilities exert pressure on employers regarding what they offer individuals, and employers' investments are risky if employable workers are more qualified and motivated to leave the organization (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). For example, previous studies showed that highly skilled and talented workers explore career opportunities and prefer not to restrict themselves to a single organization throughout their career (Deci and Ryan, 2008). Thus, while individuals develop an attitude to fit with any reputable organization and become responsible for their career advancement independent of their organization (Samarra et al., 2013), they are more flexible to changes and can move jobs when desired or required (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011; van der Heijden et al., 2020). It creates more flexible employment relationships and better bargaining power for individuals within and across organizations (Forrier et al., 2015; Guan et al., 2019; Richards, 2020).

On the other hand, organizations may have the opportunity to identify and develop the skills and capacities of their employees. The potential of employable workers in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities brings competitive advantages to organizations. In this way, the enhanced resources of employees would be utilized to the organization's full potential. Hence, there is a win-win situation for both individuals and organizations. Individuals are better able to develop their resources and capabilities, which are helpful for the organization, and at the same time, they are better able to sustain their employability in the broader sense. With regard to the latter, organizations are better able to develop and utilize their resources to achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Jabeen et al., 2021)

Therefore, companies must understand and search for sustainable approaches to promote healthy, productive, and valuable environments to attract and retain talent. The approaches could vary from facilitating employees' share in their units (Roczniewska et al., 2020) to employers' investments in HRM policies and practices (Dello Russo et al., 2020). Instead of restricting employability to individuals' assets and responsibilities, companies should perceive their employees' employability in employment relationships with mutual responsibilities.

Research gap and questions

Sustainable employability is a multilevel phenomenon in which several stakeholders with varying interests at different levels of the workplace are engaged (employee, employer, government). Previous reviews focused significantly on SE interventions at the employee level; however, the responsibility for SE is shifting, and both employers and workers should share responsibilities to improve SE (Kuhn et al., 2018; Picco et al., 2022). While individuals take their own responsibility, the organizations should enable a supportive work context to do so (Klink et al., 2015). According to Fleuren et al., (2020), further attention to understanding what happens is crucial to orient sustainable employability interventions and practices. It might be interesting to investigate SE interventions at other levels of organizations, such as at the level of the managers (Hazelzet et al., 2019).

Despite the notion of sustainable employability having received increasing scholarly attention, it is still in the embryonic stages of development.

Therefore, this paper investigates sustainable employability in the organizational context to answer three research questions:

- RQ1: Why do organizations undergo sustainable employability?
- RQ2: How can an organization accomplish sustainable employability?
- RQ3: What are the implications for organisations implementing sustainable employability?

By answering these questions, this research provides insight into what has been identified in the literature as drivers and objectives, success factors, and implications of sustainable employability in organizations.

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology is broadly based on a systematic review. Such an approach requires analyzing as many existing studies as relevant. The approach is suited to this study's aims, as it is based on a reliable knowledge base accumulated from a range of studies (Tranfield et al., 2003).

The article was approached in the following way.

To conduct research about sustainable employability based on a systematic literature review extension, the author has reviewed journals, conference papers, and reports to have a profound view of the topic. To ensure that the research highlights current research and trends to inform future research and theory development, the author prioritized studies (having peer-review) published in high-quality journals (based on SCIMAGO rankings) from 2000 to June 2022.

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First, a literature search with title, abstract, and keyword search was conducted using the ScienceDirect and Scopus databases. There are some key terms such as sustainability', 'sustainable', 'employability', 'work' and 'employment'. Additionally, the author manually searched reference lists of reviews on keywords and relevant highly cited publications. This "ancestry and snowballing" search strategy ensured that the research captured trends in sustainable employability.

After the keyword search, the papers were screened to ensure their coverage of sustainable employability or related phenomena. Given the broad search strings, the author excluded many papers that were not relevant according to the search words or research focus.

The initial screening resulted in 94 papers, 77 from journals, 03 from conferences, and 04 from other sources (book sections, reports, and articles). However, after the broad search strings, there are only 67 relevant papers, including 62 journal articles, 03 conference paper, and 02 consultancy report. The paper list is specified in the reference list.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION Driver and Objectives

Drivers can be seen as external or internal triggers for why organizations engage in sustainable employability.

A sustainably employable workforce is a requirement of today's world of work, and productive employees guarantee economic welfare for the whole society (Fleuren et al., 2016). At the organizational level, employers demand productive employees to survive and achieve sustained competitive advantage (Asuquo & Inaja, 2013; Ybema et al., 2020) including corporate social responsibilities (CSR). Dello Russo and colleagues (2020) showed employers have a social responsibility regarding older workers in employability-related matters. In their research, the relationship between employees' age and perceived external employability is negative across all countries, regardless of the country's unemployment rate. This study suggests that understanding employability implications for vulnerable workers, such as those who are older, non-core, and with little education, can help abate challenges at both the country and organizational levels.

On the other hand, employee satisfaction, performance, and loyalty are considered as internal triggers for an organization's desire for sustainable employability. Previous studies show a positive correlation between sustainable employability and organizational commitment (De Cuyper and De Witte, 2011; Moore and Khan, 2020; van der Heijden et al., 2020). These studies show that organizations' investments to signal that they care about their employees' employability can trigger reciprocating behavior among employees (e.g., increased commitment to adapt to business needs). For example, once companies provide training opportunities and signal their interest in employees' values, employable workers are more likely to stay loyal and prioritize career options within the organization if adequately managed and supported (Blokker et al., 2019; Magnano et al., 2019). In addition, the unpredictable career circumstances of contemporary organizations have made employees insecure about their current and future employability. Sustainable employability induces a good quality of working life for individual employees, enabling a stable context for employees and providing chances to enhance their skills and expertise continuously. Eventually, employees learn about the necessary personal and social resources to enhance their sustainable employability (Jabeen et al., 2020) and increase their job satisfaction and performance, which in turn benefits the company (Rhee et al., 2021).

Objectives. Sustainable employability practices can boost positive effects and buffer potential risks in employability-related perceptions and behaviors. Employers who invest in their employees may fear the employability management paradox or the situation that employees may leave their companies once their performance improves. The return on investments in this case is paid to competitors who give the workers more attractive offers and motivate them to leave their current office (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). However, this idea may be too simplistic. In fact, individuals who are better able to develop their resources and capabilities useful for the organization can sustain their employability in the broader sense. Once employers invest in workers' career development (such as training programs), employable workers could perceive more internal career opportunities and feel more attached to their company. HRM investments in employability are more likely to lead to gain than loss (Harten et al., 2020).

Moreover, sustainable employability could help build capabilities. According to Klink et al. (2016), employability approaches and current work-life focus goes beyond what individuals are doing and reach what individuals are able to do or what he or she values doing or being. In other words, it is the individual capabilities that generate value and create valuable functioning for both the worker and the organization. While employees could make use of their capabilities, they are more inclined to flourish and achieve job-related goals (Gurbuz et al., 2022). Therefore, it is a shared responsibility of the employee's and the work context's obligations to develop and facilitate these capabilities enabling opportunities and valuable (working) life. In order to obtain these outcomes, companies are promoting the possible interrelations that amplify productivity, health, and safety in creating capabilities (Picco et al., 2022). However, it involves resilience in upgrading capabilities and preparing for uncertainties, especially when labor market demands fluctuate and need adaptable employees (De Vos et al., 2020; Magnano et al., 2019).

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Success factors

• HR Practices

Many organizations have developed HR policies and actions and implemented practices aimed at increasing workers' sustainable employability at work (van Dam et al., 2017; van Harten et al., 2016; Vos et al., 2017). Sustainable employability is positioned as a shared responsibility of the individual and their employer. As such, organizations should promote their employees' sustainable employability on the HR agenda. It means that HR managers need a broad understanding of what sustainable employability is and how it can be addressed. Whereas most HR practices are focused on strategic organizational goals, such as placing the right people at the right time in the right position, HR practices for sustainable employability are focused on the longterm goals of contributing to employees' sustainable careers, which occur both inside as well as outside the organization (Ybema et al., 2017). Implementing these HR practices goals can bolster higher work performance, work motivation, health, skills, and knowledge of employees, resulting in improved employability, higher productivity, and lower sickness absence. (ArmstrongStassen & Ursel, 2009; Kooij, 2011; Kuhn et al., 2018; Ybema et al., 2020). Besides, HR practices enable workers to be socially integrated, feel valued, and empowered to contribute to the organization (e.g., by participating in decision-making processes) (Nembhard and Edmondson, 2006; Prieto and Perez, 2012) and satisfy their needs for relatedness and autonomy. This fulfillment may create a suitable environment for workers to achieve essential work goals in the form of capabilities, thus leading to higher SE. However, employers should implement HR practices that are tailored to employees' requirements and desires, as well as actively promote and convey the available HR practices. Indeed, HR practices can only be effective if employees actively utilise them (Gratton & Truss, 2003; Nishii et al., 2008; De Vos and Heijden, 2017)

• Leadership

According to Houkes et al., (2020), the support managers provide is vital in enhancing employees' employability. Their behavior is an excellent source of information, which can control or influence employees' resources and career advancement, influencing the activities of a group in efforts toward goal achievement (Roczniewska et al., 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to study the influence of leadership to examine their role in providing social cues to improve the sustainable employability of employees (Jabeen et al., 2021).

One recent approach that has gained increased attention is inclusive leadership, defined as leadership behaviors that ensure that the voices and ideas of subordinates are genuinely heard and respected (Nembhard and Edmondson, 2006). Inclusive leaders encourage their subordinates to contribute meaningfully to their work and the organization (Pless and Mark, 2004). Their behaviors (e.g., being open and accessible, involving workers in decision-making, encouraging subordinates to speak up) may create a suitable environment for workers to convert the inputs (e.g., personal capacity, work demands) into a set of tangible opportunities (e.g., development of knowledge and skills) to fulfill valuable work functioning. In other words, more inclusive leadership at the workplace will lead to a higher SE of workers. As working with inclusive leaders help workers feel respected, socially integrated, and valued, their need for relatedness can get fulfilled. This satisfaction can create an atmosphere where workers experience intrinsic motivation to realize their valued work goals, which leads to higher SE (Gurbuz et al., 2022).

• Training and improving capability.

If employees fail to update their skills and knowledge during their entire career, their ability to continue working will be reduced. Previous research has shown that both types of formal and informal learning reinforce each other, underlining the importance of including different forms of updating activities aiming for employability enhancement (van der Heijden et al., 2015; Kooij et al., 2022)

Enough training on the job is one primary indicator to capture the competence aspect of employability. When knowledge and skills are further developed "on-the-job," employees act as co-development partners, and the likelihood that self-perceptions of competencies do not correspond with the perceptions of other parties decreases, thereby improving workers' employability (Neupane et al., 2022). Moreover, employees should not just learn through courses or training programs but by working with their supervisors and by applying the newly learned in practice. Attention to the learning value of one's job and the applicability of training and development participation is necessary, especially in case of a lack of the ability to participate and perform in different work groups (corporate sense) and in case of shortcomings in terms of the flexibility dimensions (personal flexibility, anticipation, and optimization). Employees need to perform a job wherein they experience (urgent) requirements to further develop their talents and capabilities and be encouraged to do so. Their job needs to challenge them to build up new knowledge and skills so that they can enlarge their expertise base and apply these in a large variety of tasks (van der Heijden et al., 2015; Sartori et al., 2023)

Managers and employers can evaluate the capabilities of their workers and can provide technical support. For example, by providing training to enhance the skills and knowledge of workers and encouraging them to achieve relevance in work, companies

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could attain sustainability of productive employment. This productivity could be measured by experiences of doing significant work for the organization (van Dam et al., 2017). When employees could feel the achievement of valuable functioning, they will more likely feel proud and motivated to better engage in their jobs. It helps them feel ownership and autonomy in carrying out their job and perform better now and in the future (Dello Russo et al., 2020; Ybema et al., 2020; Sartori et al., 2023).

- **Personalized approach**

Aiming to promote sustainable employability requires longitudinal monitoring and, most likely, a personalized approach to sustainable employability. The longitudinal and long-term nature of SE, on the other hand, receives little attention. Meanwhile, many employees' long-term plans could have been hindered by the current more flexible and dynamic labor market (Hazelzet et al., 2019).

Employers are urged to focus on sustainable employability as early in an employee's career as possible, since it will be beneficial to improve their workforce's employability later in life (Brouwers et al., 2015). For example, undoubtedly, chronological or objective age is something one cannot change. However, individuals and organizational stakeholders (direct supervisor, management, and HR representatives) can intervene in the employee's organizational, functional, and, to a lesser extent, life-span age to protect and enhance his/her sustainable employability. Only if all parties involved do their utmost to promote workers' sustainable employability are their chances to survive in the current dynamic working environment optimized (Blanc et al. 2017). More extended follow-up periods (in both intervention and research) are highly recommended. In particular, effects on health might be the result of a long-lasting process. Sound interventions at the workplace focusing on lifestyle health and workability are advised to protect one's ability, motivation, and opportunity to work. Also, further measures to enhance the employee's mobility and career development should be proposed to reduce the possible harmful effects of organizational age (the years an employee work for the company) due to experience concentration (Fleuren et al., 2020).

HR managers, thus, must retain ongoing future-oriented conversations with workers to identify opportunities and threats in achieving sustainable employability (Fleuren et al., 2020). For example, the two parties could discuss how to map the employment characteristics with what may define long-term developments for employability. According to Jabeen et al. (2020), personal resources—including career competencies, psychological capital, core self-evaluations, mindfulness and emotional intelligence—may enhance an individual's perceived sustainable employability.

- **Organization culture and team collaboration**

Sustainable employability interventions should be acknowledged as a social construct rather than a latent individual trait. Within organizations, this entails creating a solid culture of sustainable employability. Social support resources specifically provided by co-workers and by supervisors can mitigate the adverse effects of work-related stress, improve individuals' job performance, well-being, and health (Klink et al., 2016; Ding and Yu, 2022) and achieve work-related goals (Akkermans et al., 2013). In addition, an individual's social support is the best informational resource that can enhance their potential employability (Fugate et al., 2004). Support from co-workers and supervisors can guide them regarding the future development of their employability, may increase their motivation to work (vitality), and contribute towards their health (workability). In contrast, employees should also be aware of their roles in creating a compelling and healthy work environment that enables life-long learning (valuable work and health components) (van der Heijden et al., 2015). In fact, in a good teamwork environment, individual employees reported better productivity and health (Roczniewska, 2020). First, the influence of teamwork on productivity extends beyond individual perceptions and might imply that good collaboration and communication among team members facilitate task execution. In addition, good teamwork denotes collaboration and support that can work as a buffer in times of stress (van Gorp et al., 2018), helping employees lower the psychological cost of their job demands and, therefore, bringing more healthy members. Moreover, positive team collaboration may lead to the development of strong social bonds among team members.

Paying attention to these factors could be considered the first step to building an organizational culture for sustainable employability and lead to individuals' higher perceived sustainable employability (Jabeen et al. 2021).

Implications for Vietnam context

According to the survey by ILO (2022), over the last ten years (2011- 2019), the labor force participation rate in Viet Nam remained high and continued to increase. As a whole, Vietnamese worker can access jobs easily, mainly because the informal sector is still relatively large in Vietnam despite their limited working conditions and below-average income. As such, the unemployment rate and underemployment rate in Viet Nam have often been lower than that of developed countries.

Despite the stable employment rate, constant changes in Vietnam socio-economic development has restructured the proportion of workers and implied both opportunities and challenges for labour market.

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• Aging population

Rapid urbanization and a changing demographic pattern due to population aging were the reasons for high employment growth among workers aged 60 years and above and in urban areas, higher than that of the younger age groups. Over the last periods, early retirement has been popular in the Vietnamese workforce; however, it was estimated that one-third of retirees would continue to work after retirement and tend to shift from wage-paid work to self-employment. Elderly employees might want to adjust their work life to more individual preferences – and, therefore, prefer a more flexible way to balance work, their health, and their family life (Doan & Ngo, 2020). In order to get longer working careers, more flexibility is needed in recruitment, employability, part-time retirement patterns of older employees, and so on. However, the demand for flexibility for elderly workers is a challenge because of the relatively low levels of education and training investments in senior employees and their difficulties in finding new jobs.

This changing population structure towards rapid aging is likely to increase pressure on ensuring social security for the elderly. • Graduates' employability

Over the ten years, Viet Nam made significant progress in educating its labor force, but the gap between supply and demand was still relatively high. According to ILO (2022), the unemployment rate among people with high professional qualifications was higher than those with lower qualifications. Despite the dramatical increase in the number of students enrolled in higher education from approximately 133,000 in 1987 (Tran et al., 2014) to 1,526,111 in 2018 (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2020), the massification of higher education (HE) failed to meet the nation's workforce need (Tran et al., 2014). In addition to the quantitative imbalance between labor supply and demand, the quality mismatch is another reason for low graduate employment outcomes. Notably, despite the growing popularity of internships in Vietnamese HE, research evidence suggests a lack of partnership between universities and employers to facilitate these experiences, leading to ineffective organization and monitoring and low-quality work placements (Nghia & Tran, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2019).

The mismatch between the preparation of Vietnamese graduates for employment and the new expectations and requirements of the labour market results in graduates' inability to translate the knowledge acquired at university into real-life work. Inadequate work-integrated learning in HE partly explains why thousands of students graduate each year, but employers still lament the difficulty in finding graduates with the required knowledge and skills. It led to the phenomenon of "excessive abundance of bachelors, shortage of technical workers" (Tran et al., 2014, p. 51). Technical and professional qualifications held by the labor force were still meager and slow to improve. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate among workers without professional or technical qualifications recorded a higher increase than other groups. This situation suggests that when the economy is in shock, workers without professional and technical qualifications experience more difficulties than those with such qualifications.

These highlights suggested both government and coporates' actions to meet the requirements of fast, sustainable development and competitiveness of the economy. However, the number of journals analyzing Vietnamese workforce's employability are currently limited and focused mainly on specific segments (graduates or vulnerable). Therefore, it would be necessary to discuss further about Vietnam's sustainable employability and how organizations could support their employees in achieving this ability. The five enablers as discussed above will be a source for companies to consider before and during the implementation of sustainable employability practices.

CONCLUSIONS

This study systematically reviewed a list of articles on sustainable employability to identify the existing gaps in the research literature that has less focused on employers' perspectives (Klink et al., 2015; Picco et al., 2022)

Based on a thorough analysis of related journals, conference papers, and reports articles, the research has multiple theoretical and practical contributions.

Firstly, it contributes to sustainable employability literature and provides an updated and better understanding of its objectives, drivers, and enablers. The findings, which have accounted for a gap in the literature, help better assess the organizational benefits of employability investments, as until now, employability outcomes are predominantly measured at the individual/employee level. Meanwhile, the emphasis on external factors such as sustained competitive advantages and CSR has been highlighted. Internally, employee satisfaction, performance, and loyalty are the organization's primary desires for sustainable employability.

Secondly, this study provides an overview of (1) why organizations adopt a strategy for sustainable employability, (2) how an organization can promote sustainable employability, and (3) implications for organizations. The findings presented in this paper result from a thorough analysis of various influential journals possessing high index and citation numbers. Based on that, the paper identifies enablers and implications for organizations to promote sustainable employability. These initial findings in the Vietnam

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context will support future studies to further focus on some characteristics highlighted in this paper, such as the progress, available supports, and barriers to promoting sustainable employability.

This paper also holds practical implications, especially for investors, managers, and companies. Due to population aging, technological developments, and uncertain career trajectories, demand for sustainable employability is on the rise and should be addressed in this VUCA world. By implementing HR practices that bolster employees' health, work motivation and skills, and knowledge, organizations can witness significantly improved employability, higher productivity, and commitment. In contrast, employees also play critical roles in participating and designing practices implementation that could use HR strategy in sustainable employability. These practices will serve more than just the aging workforce but include all employees who could leave the workforce due to problems with the ability, motivation, or opportunity to work.

The research, however, possesses some limitations. Despite the extensive literature on enablers for sustainable employability promotions, further qualitative research is needed to test the relationship. In addition, it is essential to call for research in countries with limited knowledge in building a workforce that could attain sustainable employability, like Vietnam.

In conclusion, the fast-changing demands in the labor market will inevitably lead to a highly adaptable workforce across countries. By adopting an early strategy in building sustainable employability, companies could remain competitive and actively embrace their employees to deal with challenges.

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