



## GENERATION Z'S ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE RETAIL SECTOR IN HO CHI MINH CITY

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>DOI: 10.52932/jfmr.v4i1en.1072</p> <p><i>Received:</i> August 13, 2025</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> November 22, 2025</p> <p><i>Published:</i> March 25, 2026</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Generation Z, Job satisfaction, Organizational commitment, Retail sector</p> <p><b>JEL codes:</b> J28, M12, D23</p>	<p>Generation Z is becoming a dominant workforce group in Vietnam's retail sector, raising concerns about how their unique traits affect organizational commitment. This study aims to examine the effects of workplace mindfulness, employee empowerment, supervisor emotional support, work–life balance, and job security on job satisfaction, and how job satisfaction subsequently influences organizational commitment. Data were collected from 335 Gen Z employees working in the retail sector in Ho Chi Minh City through a structured survey and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 with structural equation modeling. Results reveal that all five factors have significant positive impacts on job satisfaction, with supervisor emotional support showing the most potent effect, followed by work–life balance, workplace mindfulness, employee empowerment, and job security. Furthermore, job satisfaction strongly predicts organizational commitment and fully mediates the relationship between these predictors and commitment. These findings contribute to the literature by integrating the Conservation of Resources theory and the Social Exchange Theory to explain Gen Z's workplace behaviors, highlighting the mediating role of job satisfaction, and extending research to the underexplored retail context in Vietnam. Practically, the study provides managerial implications: enhancing supervisor emotional support, empowering employees, promoting work–life balance, fostering workplace mindfulness, and ensuring job security can improve Gen Z employees' satisfaction and strengthen their commitment in the retail industry.</p>

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## 1. Introduction

Human resources are widely acknowledged as a vital asset that plays a decisive role in determining an organization's success or failure. In the context of globalization and rapid technological advancement, the quality of human capital has continued to improve, most notably with the growing participation of Generation Z (Gen Z) in the labor market. This generation is distinguished by its capacity for innovation, rapid adaptability, digital fluency, creativity, and strong resilience under pressure. In Vietnam, particularly in Ho Chi Minh City, Gen Z represents a significant portion of the population and is anticipated to become the core of the future workforce, gradually succeeding previous generations such as Generation X (1965-1980) and Generation Y (1981-1996).

However, unlike their predecessors, Gen Z is the first cohort to launch their careers amid the global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This unprecedented event has profoundly influenced their psychological well-being and outlook on work and life. As a result, this generation is increasingly gravitating toward a more balanced lifestyle, placing greater emphasis on mental health, flexibility, and personal fulfillment, in contrast to the traditionally work-centric mindset of earlier generations. The unique characteristics of Gen Z employees are also seen as a challenge for older employers, underscoring the need for policy and business practice changes (Aggarwal et al., 2022). More interestingly, a study aimed at measuring organizational commitment among Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z found no significant differences in commitment levels across generations (Ayo et al., 2025). However, the study also acknowledged its limitations in sample size and the statistical methods used, and the authors recommend exploring generational differences in a future study. While Generation Z has gradually replaced other generations in the workforce, their uniqueness

has posed significant obstacles for managers in further engaging their commitment within the organization (Adi & Sary, 2025). Hence, research on Gen Z's psychological mechanisms and organizational commitment is highly beneficial, especially from a managerial perspective.

Given the indispensable role of Gen Z employees in organizational contexts, many studies have examined the underlying mechanisms of this generation. Cubukcu Cerasi and Balcioglu (2024) have identified the lack of studies on how to engage Gen Z in the workplace. Moreover, the study by Nguyen et al. (2024) has highlighted the impressionable nature of Gen Z regarding their commitment to the organization, suggesting the re-evaluation of institutional factors such as job characteristics, promotion, colleagues, manager, work environment, rewards, and green initiatives in other sectors beyond the realm of information technology. A bibliometric analysis of Generation Z at the workplace has also noted a dearth of literature on Generation Z's work behavior in sectors such as finance and customer service, as most studies focus on the hospitality and tourism industry (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). Hence, a delve into the Gen Z labor market in the retail industry, a subsector of customer service, may be academically worthwhile. The retail sector has faced significant challenges in balancing increased product sales volume with maintaining customer satisfaction (Kethan & Basha, 2022). High pressure to improve customer service and streamline human resource operations has been prevalent in retail, underscoring the need to study the influencing factors on human capital in this competitive industry (Jailani et al., 2025). Moreover, retailing offers a platform for the convergence of traditional brick-and-mortar models and digital commerce initiatives, a unique characteristic of this industry that creates a metaverse for user interaction (Abumalloh et

al., 2024). As this study focused on brick-and-mortar retailers, many of these stores have utilized online platforms to enhance consumer engagement and improve delivery services (Ye et al., 2022; He et al., 2021).

Given these generational shifts, this study seeks to address an existing research gap by exploring the key factors that influence organizational commitment among Gen Z employees in the fast-evolving retail industry. Exploring institutional factors such as workplace mindfulness, employee empowerment, supervisor emotional support, work-life balance, and job security in relation to Gen Z's organizational commitment can help bridge current gaps in the academic literature. The findings aim to offer practical insights for businesses seeking to attract and retain this emerging workforce segment effectively.

## 2. Literature review and theoretical framework

### 2.1. Literature Review

#### *Generation Z employees*

Generation Z is usually conceptualized as people born after 1995, specifically between 1996 and 2010, although several researchers suggest otherwise (Jayatissa, 2023). According to the study, as most of Generation Z transitions into adulthood, the workforce is predominantly occupied by this unique cohort. Generation Z's characteristics have set them apart from the rest of the global population in many contexts, including the office setting, where their values, attitudes, and beliefs differ from those of other generations. Waworuntu et al. (2022) have provided insightful observations on the different characteristics between millennial and Gen Z workers in their study. The results revealed that Gen Z employees are more emotionally attached and seek self-development and meaningful work at the workplace. They also request real connections and social interactions

rather than just opportunities for promotion, like their millennial counterparts, suggesting that spiritual empowerment is prioritized over financial incentives. As Generation Z places great emphasis on development and progress, a focus on enhancing organizational learning, leadership, and entrepreneurship can help organizations improve employee satisfaction and retention (Jayathilake et al., 2021). A semi-structured interview has posited that while Gen Z employees are considered to possess unrealistic wage expectations, their satisfaction can be promoted through a detailed human resource development and incentive plan, including aspects like advancement opportunities, training, work-life balance, transparent communication, other economic incentives, as well as the assignment of challenging tasks (Racolța-Paina & Irini, 2021). Hence, the aspect of human development and cultivation is the primary focus of this study, as Generation Z expects benefits beyond mere promotion opportunities and high salaries.

#### *Job satisfaction*

Hoppock (1935) defined job satisfaction as satisfaction with the mental, physiological, and environmental aspects of a job, from which people can say for themselves that they are satisfied with their current job. From there, job satisfaction is influenced not only by the external environment but also by each employee's subjective feelings. Spector's (1997) definition indicates that job satisfaction is related to how people feel about their jobs and their various aspects.

Karag n and Ekiz (2020) also note that job satisfaction encompasses internal and external satisfaction. Internal satisfaction is the desire an individual feels while performing work. However, when they do that job, it brings them joy, helps them develop necessary skills, or is simply because the job is ethically compliant. External satisfaction is related to the benefits

that the organization brings to employees. It is the satisfaction of a salary, a bonus, or a good assessment of that individual's capacity within the organization. Extrinsic satisfaction not only encourages individuals to participate in activities for enjoyment but also to receive rewards beyond the nature of the job.

### *Organizational commitment*

Organizational commitment has been widely recognized as a critical construct in organizational behavior research, referring to an individual's psychological attachment to an organization. Abou Hashish (2017) conceptualized organizational commitment through three core dimensions: (1) a powerful belief in and acceptance of the organization's objectives and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; (3) a powerful need to take care of membership within the organization. These dimensions suggest that committed employees not only align with organizational objectives but also actively contribute to its success.

Wombacher and Felfe (2017) emphasized that organizational commitment plays a fundamental role in understanding and predicting employee behavior within organizational settings. Similarly, Das et al. (2017) described organizational commitment as a sense of loyalty and dedication, reflected in employees' willingness to invest effort and their intention to remain with the organization over an extended period. Taken together, these perspectives highlight the multifaceted nature of organizational commitment and its pivotal role in promoting workforce stability and performance.

## **2.2. Theoretical framework**

### *The theory of resource conservation (COR)*

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, introduced by Hobfoll (1989), is a motivation theory that explains how

individuals are driven to protect their current resources and seek out new ones. According to this theory, individuals are more likely to experience stress when they perceive a threat to, or actual loss of, their valued resources. In this context, resources are broadly defined as objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by individuals (Hobfoll, 1989). Significantly, the significance of specific resources may vary from person to person. In this study, job engagement and job satisfaction are considered essential resources that help employees manage and reduce stress, thereby preserving what they personally value.

The COR theory proposes two key principles for understanding how individuals manage resource loss. The first is the primacy of resource loss, which suggests that the psychological impact of losing resources is more severe than the positive effect of gaining resources of equal value. The second principle is resource investment, which holds that individuals will use their existing resources in efforts to protect against future losses, recover from past losses, or generate new resources (Hobfoll, 2001).

To further explain the dynamics of resource investment, Hobfoll (2001) introduced several corollaries. Three of these are particularly relevant. Corollary 1 states that individuals with more resources are better positioned to invest them, thereby creating an advantage. Corollary 2 describes a resource-loss spiral in which individuals experiencing resource loss may find it increasingly difficult to invest, leading to further losses. In contrast, Corollary 3 refers to a resource-gain spiral, in which individuals with abundant resources are better able to acquire additional resources through continued investment.

The COR theory has been applied to account for the development of stress and uncertainty among employees in the workplace, which can be attributed to the loss of significant resources

such as job security and procedural justice (Bayraktar, 2019). The study also highlighted the importance of organizational support in further engaging employees and equipping them with sufficient resources to overcome challenges and adapt to changes. This study applied the COR theory to examine the effects of primary resources (job security), organizational support (employee empowerment, supervisor emotional support, work-life balance), and employee psychologies (mindfulness), with these three aspects together exerting an overall influence on employee satisfaction and organizational commitment.

### *Social Exchange Theory (SET)*

The cornerstone of COR relies upon why organizational resources like job security, organizational support, and empowerment contribute to shaping employee psychological outcomes. Contemporary research has posited combining different organizational behavior theories, including the bases of COR and SET, to link organizational perspectives, such as leader-member exchange initiatives, with individual perceptions of psychological, social, and material resources (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). As SET suggests the need for mutual interaction between managerial departments and employees, integrating this theory with COR's background extends this relationship. It views the exchange process as the exchange of resources, particularly psychological ones (Bordia et al., 2017). In other words, to provoke favorable psychological responses from employees, the organization must make certain social exchange efforts regarding work characteristics and human development initiatives. The COR emphasizes the "why," while SET focuses on the "how" to foster employee satisfaction and commitment to the organization.

Since the 1950s, Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been developed as a psychological

framework and later extended to explain both economic and organizational behavior. Initially introduced by Homans (1958) to understand individual behavior, the theory was subsequently applied in workplace contexts to explain how relationships and obligations form within organizations.

SET has become one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks for understanding work-related behavior. While different interpretations of the theory exist, scholars generally agree that social exchanges involve a series of interactions that generate mutual obligations (Ahmad et al., 2023). Over time, such exchanges can lead to high-quality relationships built on trust, loyalty, and reciprocity. However, these outcomes are not guaranteed and depend heavily on the specific context in which the exchanges occur.

A central assumption of SET is that relationships evolve into committed partnerships when parties adhere to specific "rules" of exchange. These rules form a normative framework, a shared understanding or set of expectations that guide behavior in exchange relationships (Ahmad et al., 2023). Similar to the COR theory, SET focuses on the combination of multiple variables and exchanges to increase employee engagement and positive behaviors. Considering the current gaps in the literature and the review of relevant studies, this study delved into the exchange perceived from the organizational and leadership perspectives, with factors such as employee empowerment, supervisor emotional support, work-life balance, mindfulness-based programs, and job security positively influencing desired psychological outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

### **2.3. Research hypotheses**

*The relationship between workplace mindfulness and job satisfaction*

Mindfulness has its roots in several academic fields, including philosophy, mathematics,

neuroscience, and psychology. It is recognized as a practical concept that involves specific behaviors that help employees maintain focus and sustained awareness during work tasks (Zivnuska et al., 2016). Mindfulness practices have been shown to reduce job boredom and increase job satisfaction, both of which are important factors in reducing employee turnover intentions (Wihler et al., 2022). Mindful employees tend to engage in prosocial behaviors that benefit others, which, in turn, enhance their own job satisfaction (Bansal et al., 2025). In professional settings, especially in the public sector, employees who practice mindfulness tend to have greater self-awareness and are better able to manage stress effectively. Workplace mindfulness is considered highly effective in alleviating the impact of adverse and stressful events, reinforcing employees' resilience and enhancing their satisfaction (Lin et al., 2022). As workplace mindfulness refers to the internal mechanisms of individuals, it is closely linked to their performance and satisfaction. Thus, organizations need to implement mindfulness training or related programs. These initiatives support employees in cultivating mindfulness traits, leading to better emotional regulation, reduced stress, and higher job satisfaction (Bansal et al., 2025).

As for Generation Z, Fleeton (2024) has noted significant differences in how this generation perceives job satisfaction compared to other generations, such as millennials, due to unique psychological mechanisms, including attitudes, beliefs, and ambitions, suggesting the need for an alternative approach to motivate job satisfaction among this generation. Therefore, mindfulness-based programs targeting Gen Z employees can help identify the diverse work desires of this workforce and relieve workplace stress (Labrague et al., 2025). Gen Z's distinct expectations and behaviors can be an obstacle to the adaptation of traditional work cultures, leading to significant stress and a lack of

focus among young employees (Mund et al., 2024). By focusing on improving employee mindfulness at the workplace, managers can benefit from enhanced efficiency in workplace stress management and employee engagement. The sense of stress accompanies satisfaction as two extremes on a single axis (Hendriana et al., 2023). Therefore, when organizations implement mindfulness-based initiatives that help employees cope with stress, workplace satisfaction will generally increase.

*Hypothesis H1: Workplace mindfulness has a positive impact on job satisfaction.*

#### *The relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction*

Employee empowerment is a multidimensional concept that refers to the process of granting employees the authority, resources, and motivation needed to make decisions and take actions that influence both their roles and the organization as a whole. This empowerment may take the form of structural changes within the organization or psychological support that enhances individual motivation and initiative (Bal, 2024). Empowered employees are encouraged to explore new ideas and adopt innovative approaches, thereby contributing to organizational performance and continuous improvement. At its core, empowerment involves enhancing employees' control over their decisions and actions, which fosters a sense of autonomy. This autonomy is essential for both personal and professional development, as it enables individuals to navigate their work environment with greater confidence and effectiveness (Olaya et al., 2022).

The relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction is both complex and significant, shaped by a range of organizational practices. Numerous studies have emphasized the strong influence of empowerment on job satisfaction (Papageorgiou et al., 2025; Bal, 2024; Zamanan et al., 2020; Olaya et al., 2022).

According to Zamanan et al. (2020), employees report higher levels of satisfaction when they are given decision-making authority and when their perspectives are acknowledged within the organization. By delegating responsibilities and promoting autonomy, organizations can cultivate a more engaged, motivated, and high-performing workforce (Olaya et al., 2022). Given the uniqueness of Generation Z, a study by Waworuntu et al. (2022) found that this generation is more idealistic about workplace growth than their counterparts. This higher level of expectation can be achieved through a sense of empowerment stemming from skills gained through workplace training and learning opportunities (Tran et al., 2024). The aspect of empowerment can also be linked to employee psychological mechanisms that evoke a sense of work ownership and heightened engagement in continuing to contribute to achieving organizational objectives (Oraibi et al., 2025). Like mindfulness, empowerment is also an internal drive that generates favorable psychological responses and satisfaction.

*Hypothesis H2:* Employee empowerment has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

#### *The relationship between supervisor emotional support and job satisfaction*

Supervisor emotional support is a subset of the support and training initiatives, which include a wide range of assistance in emotional, instrumental, and tangible aspects (Mohr et al., 2021). The dimension of emotional support refers to the availability of considerate and devoted supervisors, as perceived by employees, in the form of care, encouragement, sympathy, or connection regarding inner feelings (Lin et al., 2022). Emotional support involves considering employees' emotional exhaustion and work-related commitment, which are closely correlated with their performance and psychological outcomes (Grobelna, 2021).

Emotional support from supervisors is a key factor in employee job satisfaction (Roberts & David, 2020). When managers provide emotional support to their employees, it can help create a positive work environment and enhance overall employee well-being (Baker & Kim, 2020). Receiving emotional support from a supervisor can make employees feel valued and appreciated, which, in turn, may lead to higher job satisfaction. This type of support can be expressed in various ways, including offering encouragement, listening attentively to concerns, and demonstrating empathy for employees' personal and professional situations (Stenner & Andersen, 2020). Employees who feel supported by their managers often report feeling respected and valued, which increases their motivation and engagement at work (Jolly et al., 2021). When employees are motivated and committed to their jobs, this often leads to improved performance and productivity, which in turn contributes to their job satisfaction (Silic et al., 2020). Moreover, supervisory emotional support plays a vital role during stressful or uncertain times, such as organizational mergers or downsizing. In such situations, employees may feel anxious or insecure, but support from their manager can help ease these emotions and maintain or even improve their job satisfaction (Shipman et al., 2023).

In the existing literature, supervisor support is believed to help relieve stress and anxiety, thereby increasing feelings of satisfaction (Modaresnezhad et al., 2021). A supportive supervisor can foster favorable perceptions of the organizational climate among employees, which, in turn, results in positive work-related attitudes and satisfaction (Altaş et al., 2024). According to recent research, supervisory support influences both millennial and Gen Z workers, thereby enhancing their job satisfaction (Fleaton, 2024). More interestingly, Gabrielova and Buchko (2021) have identified

a shift in the workforce, with many millennials becoming managers while Gen Z workers account for the majority. This has also underscored the importance of supportive management practices to alleviate workplace conflicts and improve employee morale. Hence, supervisor emotional support is increasingly important for narrowing generational gaps and promoting a healthy relationship between leaders and employees, thereby enhancing overall satisfaction.

*Hypothesis H3:* Supervisor emotional support has a positive influence on job satisfaction.

*The relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction*

Work-life balance refers to how people manage their work responsibilities, family duties, and personal activities to avoid conflicts among these areas. It reflects how individuals should organize their time and tasks so that their professional and personal lives do not overlap (Kerdpitak & Jermsittiparsert, 2020). According to Abdirahman et al. (2022), work-life balance has a significant impact on job satisfaction. In other words, employees who experience a better balance between work and life are likely to feel more satisfied with their jobs. Work-life balance is a key issue that human resource managers must consider across all organizations. Regardless of company size, it is essential to ensure that employees have enough time to manage both work and family responsibilities (Abdirahman et al., 2020). When employees maintain a healthy work-life balance, they often become more satisfied with their jobs and show appreciation for their employers. As a result, they are more motivated to work efficiently and contribute positively to the organization. In fact, employees with a good work-life balance are usually more productive and perform better in their roles (Allen et al., 2020).

Waworuntu et al. (2022) have emphasized the importance of work-life balance as a primary desire, alongside job satisfaction, among Gen Z employees. The study also highlighted aspects of work-life balance, such as flexible time, annual leave, and work-from-home options, which are highly valued by Gen Z employees and positively affect their job satisfaction and work performance. Work-life balance can help reduce workplace burnout, thereby significantly enhancing job satisfaction among employees (Lestari & Setyaningrum, 2024). Research also found that the role of a predictor of work-life balance in organizational commitment is mediated by job satisfaction (Riyadi, 2024). In other words, implementing work-life balance strategies fosters a sense of fulfillment in both their work and personal lives, which, in turn, confirms their expectations and increases their organizational commitment. The polarity between work and life demands can also cause employees to suffer from mental health issues; hence, the promotion of work-life balance at the workplace (Adedeji et al., 2023). Therefore, work-life balance can elicit favorable psychological responses at work, thereby increasing individuals' sense of satisfaction.

*Hypothesis H4:* Work-life balance support has a positive influence on job satisfaction.

*The relationship between job security and job satisfaction*

The concept of job security refers to the legal responsibility of organizations when developing a contract relationship with their employees through which employees are assured of continued employment within the business (Hur, 2022). Like organizational support factors, job security can also be reflected in individuals' perceptions of the likelihood of losing their jobs in the near future (Wang et al., 2024). Organizations can promote a sense of job security among employees

through benevolent leadership practices or by cultivating a motivational workplace culture, which, in turn, enhances overall commitment and satisfaction within the system (Üngüren et al., 2024; Anand et al., 2023).

Job security is widely acknowledged as a key factor influencing employee satisfaction. Numerous studies have shown that employees are more likely to remain with an organization when they are satisfied with their jobs, a condition often linked to perceived job stability (Imran, 2015). A stable work environment not only fosters job satisfaction but also enhances employee engagement, which in turn contributes to improved organizational performance (Zamanan et al., 2020). The relationship between job security and job satisfaction has been extensively examined in the human resource management literature, with a consensus emerging that the two are positively correlated (Falatah et al., 2021; Zamanan et al., 2020). For instance, Zamanan et al. (2020) found that greater job security significantly increased employee satisfaction. Similarly, Falatah et al. (2021) observed that while many employees experienced low job security, a considerable number still reported moderate levels of job satisfaction.

Job security, like monetary benefits, is one of many factors influencing job satisfaction at the workplace (Dash & Islam, 2024). According to the study, job satisfaction is the key driver of employee mental and behavioral well-being. Job security usually accompanies economic incentives, such as fair pay, employee development programs, and a supportive work environment (Laksmi et al., 2024). According to the study, implementing those practices creates a sense of security and development among employees, thereby increasing their satisfaction and productivity. Moreover, the unique characteristics of Gen Z employees also provoke some interesting implications for the role of job security. Atiq and Usmani

(2023) have proposed a somewhat conflicting characteristic among Generation Z employees: on the one hand, they are willing to take risks and leave the organization, but on the other hand, their ability to cope with the stress of job loss is weaker than that of other groups. Hence, job security is essential in promoting employees' mental well-being and satisfaction, especially among Gen Z workers.

*Hypothesis H5:* Job security has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

*The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment*

Huynh and Hua (2020) found that job satisfaction positively influences employees' organizational commitment in small- and medium-sized enterprises in Vietnam. When employees experience greater job satisfaction driven by factors such as recognition, supportive management, and meaningful work, they are more motivated to perform well and contribute to organizational goals. This sense of fulfillment fosters emotional attachment, making employees more likely to remain loyal to the organization. Job satisfaction is thus commonly regarded as a key antecedent of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is also a centerfold in HR practices, influencing both task performance and affective organizational commitment of employees as their expectations are met (Aggarwal et al., 2020). Job satisfaction is the vehicle through which organizational commitment is enhanced by implementing favorable management practices (Riyadi, 2024).

The correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment has also been proven to be significant among Gen Z employees. There is an interesting behavior concerning the Gen Z workers, which is called "quiet quitting behavior". Implementing practices that combine the effects of job satisfaction and organizational justice can help minimize "quiet quitting behavior" among employees

and improve their organizational commitment (Margaretha & Panggabean, 2025). In some cases, job satisfaction reflects Gen Z employees' perceptions of the support they receive from the

organization, which, in turn, strengthens their organizational commitment (Alyani, 2025).

*Hypothesis H6:* Job satisfaction has a positive impact on organizational commitment.



**Figure 1.** Research model

### 3. Methods

Employee organizational commitment has been studied in many countries across different generations. However, employees in these countries may differ significantly from those in Vietnam, particularly Gen Z, which exhibits distinct characteristics compared to earlier generations. Therefore, it is necessary to refine the research model to better reflect the local context. One appropriate approach involves focus group discussions with experts, analysis of relevant documents, and the use of questionnaire-based surveys. This method was applied to explore and modify the questionnaire accordingly.

The measurement scales used in this study were adapted from previously validated sources. Workplace mindfulness (WM) was measured using five items developed by Zivnuska et al. (2016). Employee empowerment (EE) was

assessed with five items adapted from Zamanan et al. (2020). Supervisor emotional support (SES) was measured using four items from Baker and Kim (2020). Work-life balance (WB) was assessed with four items developed by Talukder et al. (2018). Job security (SE) was measured using four items from Oldham et al. (1986). Job satisfaction (JS) was assessed with five items adopted from Talukder et al. (2018). Finally, organizational commitment (OC) was measured using five items adapted from Talukder et al. (2018).

Accurately and fully determining the sampling frame for the entire population was difficult. To ensure respondents could be reached and to optimize costs, the study employed convenience sampling with a projected sample size of 350. After data screening, 335 valid questionnaires were retained, while invalid responses were excluded

due to incomplete answers or uniform responses across all survey items. According to the 10-times rule, the minimum sample size should be at least ten times the maximum number of structural paths directed at any latent construct (Hair et al., 2011). In this model, the construct Job Satisfaction has the most predictors (5), suggesting a minimum sample size of 50 cases. The actual sample of 335 far exceeded this requirement. In addition, Cohen's (1992) power analysis suggests that a sample size of 200 or more is sufficient to detect medium effect sizes ( $f^2 = 0.15$ ) at a statistical power of 0.80 and a 5% significance level in SEM. Thus, the sample size in this study is deemed not only adequate but also robust for ensuring reliable estimation, hypothesis testing, and generalizability within the target population.

Data were collected using a Google Forms, with items measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Completely disagree) to 5 (Completely agree). The target population of this study was Gen Z employees working in the retail sector in Ho Chi Minh City. To maximize data collection while maintaining compliance with research standards, the study used convenience sampling. A screening process was applied to ensure eligibility: participants had to meet two criteria: (1) be aged between 18 and 30; and (2) have worked in the retail sector. Two preliminary yes/no screening questions were used: "Are you between the ages of 18 and 30?" and "Have you worked in retail?" Participants who answered "No" to either question were excluded from the primary survey.

The survey items were adapted initially from established English-language research to ensure content validity. To ensure both linguistic accuracy and cultural appropriateness, the questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese by bilingual experts. A panel of research specialists then reviewed the translated version to confirm clarity, contextual relevance, and semantic consistency.

## 4. Results and discussion

Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 software. To test hypotheses within the theoretical framework, we used structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis.

### 4.1. Descriptive statistics of the sample

The study surveyed 335 Generation Z employees working in the retail sector in Ho Chi Minh City. Among the respondents, 46.9% were male ( $n = 157$ ) and 53.1% were female ( $n = 178$ ), showing a relatively balanced gender distribution. In terms of income, 21.5% earned below 10 million VND per month, 47.7% reported a monthly income between 10 and 15 million VND, and 30.8% earned above 15 million VND. Regarding work experience, 23.6% had less than 1 year in the retail sector, 40.9% had between 1 and 3 years, and 35.5% had more than 3 years. Overall, the sample represents a diverse, representative cross-section of young employees in the retail industry (*see Appendix 2*).

### 4.2. Measurement model

The data processing results presented in Appendix 3 (*see Appendix 3*) indicate Cronbach's Alpha  $> 0.7$ ,  $\rho_A > 0.7$ , composite reliability (CR)  $> 0.7$ , and overall variance extracted (AVE)  $> 0.5$ . The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was calculated to assess the convergent validity of the constructs. According to Hair et al (2019), an AVE value of 0.5 or higher indicates adequate convergent validity, meaning that the latent construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators on average. However, the outer loading of EE3 and WM5  $< 0.7$ , so these two observed variables were eliminated.

The coefficient of the HTMT matrix (*see Appendix 4*) is  $< 0.9$  (Hair et al., 2019), and the VIF value of the observed variables is  $< 2$ . This reflects that the model fits the actual data because the concepts in the research model achieve discriminant value.

**4.3. Structural model**

The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value for JS is 0.537, indicating that EE, SE, SES, WB, and WM explain 53.7% of its variance. Similarly, the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> for OC is 0.563, which means that JS explains 56.3% of its variance. All VIF values are below 3, indicating no multicollinearity. All relationships exhibit

f<sup>2</sup> coefficients greater than 0.02, with the JS → OC path showing an f<sup>2</sup> value of 1.297 > 0.3. This suggests that the effect size of this relationship is relatively strong. Additionally, the Q<sup>2</sup> values for the model involving JS and OC are 0.334 and 0.328, respectively, indicating moderate accuracy (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6).

**Table 1.** Bootstrapping results of the structural model

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Results
H1: WM ⇒ JS	0.241	0.242	0.040	6.011	0.000	Accepted
H2: EE ⇒ JS	0.224	0.226	0.045	5.008	0.000	Accepted
H3: SES ⇒ JS	0.278	0.277	0.049	5.723	0.000	Accepted
H4: WB ⇒ JS	0.257	0.257	0.041	6.263	0.000	Accepted
H5: SE ⇒ JS	0.138	0.140	0.050	2.782	0.005	Accepted
H6: JS ⇒ OC	0.751	0.752	0.025	29.969	0.000	Accepted

As the estimates in the model presented in Table 1 are statistically reliable, all six proposed hypotheses are accepted (P-value < 5%, t > 1.96). Among them, SES has the most substantial positive impact on JS (0.278), followed by WB (0.257), EE (0.244), and SE (0.138).

**4.4. Mediating effect**

This section presents the results of the mediation analysis, examining the indirect effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment.

**Table 2.** Regression model for the mediated variables

IV	M	DV	IV ⇒ DV (c)	IV + M ⇒ DV			Mediator
				IV ⇒ M (a)	M ⇒ DV (b)	IV ⇒ DV (c')	
EE	JS	OC	0.168	0.224	0.751	-	Yes
SE			0.104	0.138		-	Yes
SES			0.209	0.278		-	Yes
WB			0.193	0.257		-	Yes
WM			0.181	0.241		-	Yes

To examine the mediating role of job satisfaction (JS) in the relationship between independent variables (EE, SE, SES, WB, WM) and organizational commitment (OC), we followed the procedure proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). As shown in Table 6, all five independent variables significantly affected the

mediator JS (path a), and JS had a strong positive influence on OC (path b, O = 0.751). Initially, each IV had a significant direct effect on OC (path c), but after including JS as a mediator, the direct effects (path c') became non-significant. This indicates that Job Satisfaction fully mediates the relationships between the

five predictors (EE, SE, SES, WB, and WM) and Organizational Commitment (Table 2).

#### 4.5. Discussion

The findings reveal that workplace mindfulness, employee empowerment, emotional support from supervisors, work-life balance, and job security positively and significantly affect job satisfaction. These findings are consistent with previous research (Bansal et al., 2025; Shipman et al., 2023; Wihler et al., 2022; Olaya et al., 2022; Falatah et al., 2021; Zamanan et al., 2020; Silic et al., 2020; Allen et al., 2020; Abdirahman et al., 2018). However, since this study focuses on Generation Z employees in the retail sector in Ho Chi Minh City, the results may differ from those of studies conducted in other countries.

Most notably, supervisor emotional support emerged as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction (0.278). This finding reinforces prior research emphasizing the importance of supportive leadership (Modaresnezhad et al., 2021; Roberts & David, 2020), but its dominant role in this study may be explained by the nature of the retail environment, where frontline employees are highly dependent on daily interactions with supervisors for guidance, emotional reassurance, and conflict resolution. Compared to sectors such as healthcare or manufacturing, where structural stability and long-term security may play a greater role, Gen Z retail employees appear to value relational support more highly, reflecting their preference for empathetic and trust-based management.

Work-life balance (0.257), mindfulness (0.241), and empowerment (0.224) also showed significant impacts on satisfaction, consistent with evidence that Gen Z workers place greater emphasis on autonomy, flexibility, and mental well-being than earlier generations (Fleaton, 2024; Waworuntu et al., 2022). The relatively high effect of work-life balance echoes findings

in the service sector (Abdirahman et al., 2018; Allen et al., 2020), but may be particularly pronounced in Ho Chi Minh City, where retail jobs often involve long hours, irregular schedules, and customer-facing stressors. Mindfulness also contributed meaningfully, aligning with prior studies (Lin et al., 2022; Zivnuska et al., 2016), but in this context, it may be especially relevant for younger employees who face constant digital distractions and pressure for multitasking.

Interestingly, job security (0.138) exerted the weakest effect, though it remained statistically significant. This contrasts with some studies in healthcare or public-sector settings, where job security is a stronger determinant of satisfaction (Falatah et al., 2021; Imran et al., 2015). One possible explanation lies in the characteristics of Gen Z, who are simultaneously more mobile in the labor market and less tolerant of prolonged insecurity compared to older cohorts (Atiq & Usmani, 2023). In Ho Chi Minh City's dynamic retail industry, where alternative opportunities are abundant, stability may be seen as desirable but less decisive than more immediate relational and psychological factors, such as support and balance.

Most importantly, job satisfaction was found to be a very strong predictor of organizational commitment (0.751), even stronger than in many previous studies (Margaretha & Panggabean, 2025; Huynh & Hua, 2020). This underscores the central role of daily job experiences in shaping Gen Z employees' loyalty and willingness to remain with their organization. It also explains why the mediating effect of job satisfaction was full rather than partial: resources and supports influence commitment primarily by enhancing satisfaction rather than exerting direct effects. In other words, for Gen Z in the retail sector, feeling satisfied in their day-to-day work is the key pathway to developing long-term organizational commitment.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

### 5.1. Conclusion

While evaluating the factors influencing Generation Z's organizational commitment in the retail sector, the study significantly bridges gaps in literature. First, the study's findings indicate a positive relationship between various work-related psychological mechanisms and job satisfaction, thereby enhancing organizational commitment. Few prior studies have incorporated a diverse range of mechanisms to explain employee satisfaction and organizational commitment, focusing solely on incentive factors such as rewards and job security (Dash & Islam, 2024). Moreover, some studies denied the mediating effect of satisfaction, or, in some cases, examined only the mediating role rather than its direct influence (Alyani, 2025). Hence, the study can provide significant insights into the multiple mechanisms of job satisfaction, especially as a bridge between work-related psychology and organizational commitment.

Second, the study combined COR theory and SET to elucidate employee behaviors and emotional responses in the workplace. The COR theory emphasizes the conditions of stress and uncertainty, which are considered a major weakness among Gen Z employees (Margaretha & Panggabean, 2025). However, like other generational groups, Gen Z employees have basic needs and expectations regarding their development and achievement at work (Waworuntu et al., 2022), a central theme of SET. The combination of these two theoretical backgrounds, while stressing the importance of engaging Gen Z workers, underscores the need to recognize their basic needs and avoid excluding them on the grounds of their distinct nature. This can be a valuable contribution to academic literature on the psychology of Gen Z employees. They are, in fact, not so different from the other generational groups.

Third, the study contributes to bridging geographical and sectional gaps regarding the research topic. The study is conducted in the retail industry, where the basic needs of employees are less extensively discussed than in sectors such as information technology (Nguyen et al., 2024) and hospitality and tourism (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). In addition, the sample of Gen Z employees in Ho Chi Minh City, a central city of economic activity and population boom in Vietnam, can be representative of Gen Z workers in organizations across the country. This can serve as a basis for more empirical work—studies conducted in other nations and regions around the globe.

### 5.2. Recommendations

The results of this study offer valuable insights for retail managers aiming to enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment among Generation Z employees in Ho Chi Minh City. The following implications are recommended:

#### *Workplace mindfulness*

Retail organizations should foster a work environment where employees are encouraged to stay present, focused, and aware of their tasks without excessive stress or distraction. This can be achieved through mindfulness training programs, quiet spaces for short breaks, and practices that reduce multitasking and workplace noise. For Generation Z, often exposed to digital distractions and fast-paced environments, cultivating a culture of mindfulness can improve attention, emotional regulation, and job satisfaction.

#### *Employee empowerment*

Generation Z values autonomy, opportunities to contribute, and a sense of ownership in their work. Managers should create systems that allow employees to participate in decision-making, take initiative, and voice their ideas. This could

include collaborative goal-setting, open forums for suggestions, and recognition of individual contributions. Empowering young employees not only increases their job satisfaction but also fosters innovation and engagement.

#### *Supervisor's emotional support*

The study shows that emotional support from supervisors is the strongest predictor of job satisfaction. Therefore, retail managers must prioritize developing trust-based, empathetic relationships with employees. Supervisors should be trained in emotional intelligence, active listening, and supportive communication. Providing consistent feedback, expressing appreciation, and offering help during stressful periods can make Generation Z employees feel valued and supported.

#### *Work-Life balance*

Retail businesses should design work schedules that support a healthy balance between employees' personal and professional lives. This may involve offering more flexible shifts, ensuring predictable work hours, and respecting time off. Generation Z places strong importance on personal well-being and mental health; hence, employers who accommodate these needs are more likely to retain satisfied, committed staff. Initiatives like wellness programs and mental health days can further strengthen this balance.

#### *Job security*

Although job security showed a relatively minor effect, it remains a significant factor

for Generation Z. To address this, managers should provide clear information about job expectations, performance standards, and potential career advancement within the company. Regular communication about business stability, along with transparent human resource policies, can help reinforce a sense of safety and reduce anxiety about job loss, especially in a volatile retail market.

#### **5.3. Limitations and future research direction**

This study is not without limitations. First, the data were collected from a convenience sample of Generation Z employees in the retail sector of Ho Chi Minh City, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other industries or regions. Future studies should consider larger, more diverse samples or comparative analyses across sectors. Second, while this study drew on Conservation of Resources theory and Social Exchange Theory, future research may integrate other perspectives, such as psychological contract or generational cohort theory, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Gen Z's organizational behavior.

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