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RESEARCH LETTER



Climate as a bridge between knowledge and retention

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how implicit and explicit knowledge affect talent retention in Vietnam's high-end hotels, mediated by innovation and mindfulness climates. Survey data from 300 employees analysed via PLS-SEM show that knowledge enhances these climates, which in turn support retention, though no direct link to retention was found. The findings highlight the importance of aligning knowledge management with organisational climate to sustain talent and address retention in emerging market hospitality.

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KEYWORDS

Talent retention; knowledge sharing; innovation climate

Statement of novelty

This study introduces a novel integration of knowledge-sharing practices with organisational climates to address talent retention (TR) in Vietnam's high-end hospitality sector. While prior research has explored individual drivers of TR, this study is the first to examine the combined mediating roles of Innovation Climate (IC) and Mindfulness Climate (MF) in linking Implicit Knowledge (IK) and Explicit Knowledge (EK) to TR. Using PLS-SEM, the study provides empirical evidence that knowledge-sharing alone does not directly influence TR but is amplified through supportive workplace climates, bridging a critical gap in talent management literature.

Additionally, this research expands the Knowledge-Based View (KBV) and Organizational Climate Theory by demonstrating how both cognitive (IC) and emotional (MF) dimensions interact to enhance TR. The focus on Vietnam's luxury hotel sector, an underexplored yet rapidly growing market, offers context-specific insights with practical implications for fostering sustainable retention strategies. This dual-climate perspective contributes to both theoretical advancements and industry applications, setting a new direction for strategic talent management in high-pressure service environments.

1. Introduction

Talent retention (TR) is a key challenge in the high-end hotel industry, where high turnover and service demands create operational pressure. While past research has examined factors such as compensation and work-life balance, it has overlooked the role of organisational climates and knowledge-sharing in retention. Specifically, the combined effects of innovation climate (IC), which

fosters adaptability (Anderson et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2024), and mindfulness climate (MF), which supports well-being (Chong et al., 2020; Malik et al., 2021), remain underexplored. Moreover, the influence of implicit (IK) and explicit knowledge (EK) on these climates and TR has received limited attention.

Existing studies focus largely on linear retention models and fail to capture IC and MF's mediating roles. Using Smart PLS-SEM, this study examines how IK and EK shape IC and MF, and how these climates mediate their impact on TR, thereby addressing gaps in the literature.

Vietnam's luxury hotel sector offers a valuable context. This study aims to: (1) analyse IK and EK's effects on IC and MF, (2) assess IC and MF's mediating roles in TR, and (3) provide actionable retention strategies.

2. Literature review

This study integrates the Knowledge-Based View (KBV) and Organizational Climate Theory to examine how knowledge-sharing affects talent retention (TR) in Vietnam's high-end hotel sector.

The KBV conceptualises knowledge as a core resource for achieving competitive advantage (Grant, 2015). In hospitality, Implicit Knowledge (IK) – tacit, experiential, and informally shared – supports adaptability and creativity (Nonaka, 2009; Yoo, 2017). Explicit Knowledge (EK) – structured and documented – ensures reliability and efficiency (Hussain et al., 2016). While knowledge-sharing enhances performance, its connection to organisational climates and TR is underexplored. This is particularly relevant in smaller economies where foreign direct investment often flows through knowledge-intensive channels, reinforcing the role of knowledge as a key economic driver (Kristjansdottir, 2010).

Organizational Climate Theory emphasises shared perceptions that shape workplace behaviour (Schneider et al., 2013). Two climate types are central to this study. Innovation Climate (IC) encourages creativity, experimentation, and professional development, increasing engagement and reducing turnover (Bogilović et al., 2021; Hussain et al., 2024; Zhang, 2022). Mindfulness Climate (MF) supports psychological safety and well-being, mitigating stress and burnout (Chong et al., 2020; Malik et al., 2021).

Although these climates are often studied independently, this research explores their combined mediating role between knowledge-sharing and TR. It hypothesises that IK and EK influence IC and MF, which in turn shape retention outcomes.

Table 1 and the conceptual model (Figure 1) reflects these relationships and supports 14 hypotheses, summarised below:

Table 1. Summary of hypotheses.

Hypothesis	Description	Supporting References
H1	IK positively impacts IC	Nonaka (2009), Kucharska (2021), Yoo (2017)
H2	EK positively impacts IC	Hussain et al. (2016), Lin et al. (2022), Berraies et al. (2021)
H3	IK positively impacts MF	Chen et al. (2022), Luthans et al. (2024), Issac et al. (2024)
H4	EK positively impacts MF	Ihl et al. (2022), Barber and Deale (2014)
H5	IC positively impacts TR	Zhang (2022), Papa et al. (2020), Newman et al. (2020), Baum (2019)
H6	MF positively impacts TR	Lin et al. (2022), Hyland et al. (2015), Dsouza et al. (2023)
H7	IC mediates IK → TR	Hanif et al. (2020), Naz et al. (2020), Peng and Chen (2023)
H8	IC mediates EK → TR	Hanif et al. (2020), Naz et al. (2020), Peng and Chen (2023)
H9	MF mediates IK → TR	Raza et al. (2018), Lin et al. (2022)
H10	MF mediates EK → TR	Raza et al. (2018), Lin et al. (2022)
H11	MF positively impacts IC	Mulligan et al. (2021), Siqueira and Pitassi (2016), Mahmoud et al. (2024)
H12	IC mediates MF → TR	Hyland et al. (2015), Sun and Xi (2024)
H13	IK positively impacts TR	Kossyva et al. (2024), Nonaka (2009)
H14	EK positively impacts TR	Papa et al. (2020)

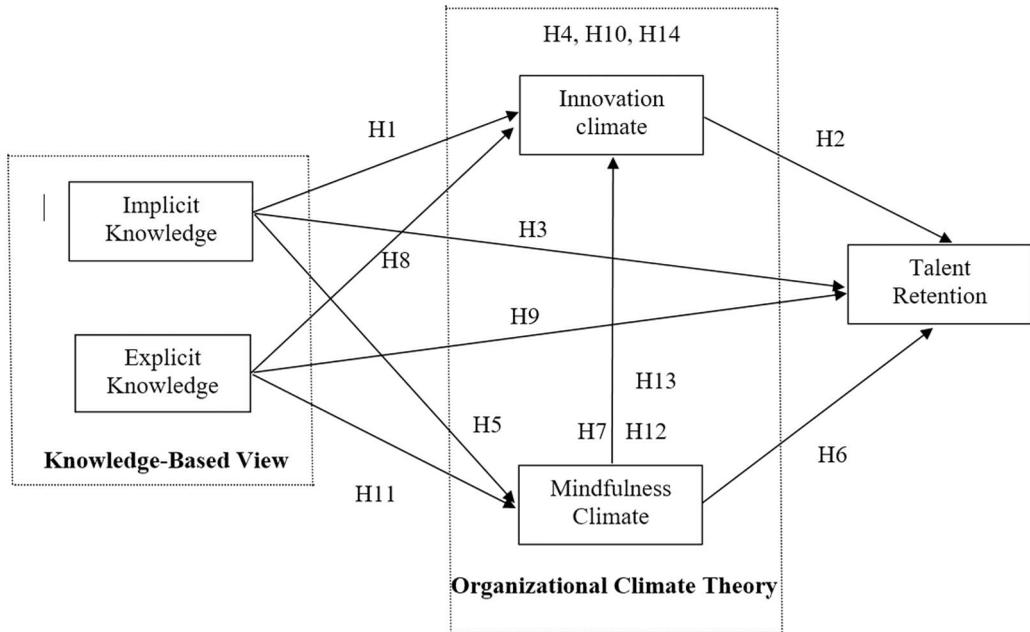


Figure 1. The conceptual framework.

3. Research methodology

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design to investigate the relationships between knowledge-sharing, organisational climates, and talent retention in Vietnam's high-end hospitality sector.

3.1. Sampling and data collection

Data were collected from employees of high-end hotels located in Hanoi, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City. These locations were selected because they represent Vietnam's leading tourism destinations and host a concentration of luxury hotels.

A total of 300 valid responses were obtained through purposive sampling, targeting hotel employees in managerial, supervisory, or skilled staff positions with at least six months of tenure. This inclusion criterion ensured that respondents had sufficient exposure to organisational culture and knowledge-sharing practices.

Data collection was conducted online using Google Forms and Qualtrics, facilitated through internal hotel distribution and email outreach. A response rate of 75% was achieved.

Sample adequacy was confirmed using G*Power analysis, which indicated that a minimum of 138 responses was required to detect a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$) with a power of 0.95 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Our sample of 300 thus exceeds this threshold, ensuring strong statistical validity.

3.2. Measurement instruments

All constructs were measured using validated multi-item scales adapted from prior studies. Instruments were presented in English and translated into Vietnamese using back-translation techniques to ensure semantic accuracy. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) (Table 2).

Table 2. Summarises the constructs.

Construct	Source	Items	Sample Item
Implicit Knowledge (IK)	X. Wang et al. (2020)	5	'I often rely on intuition or experience'
Explicit Knowledge (EK)	X. Wang et al. (2020)	4	'I use manuals or documented procedures'
Innovation Climate (IC)	Janssen (2000)	4	'New ideas are welcomed here'
Mindfulness Climate (MF)	Brown and Ryan (2003)	5	'There is awareness of others' well-being'
Talent Retention (TR)	Hom and Griffeth (2000)	5	'I intend to stay with this organization'

3.3 Justification for PLS-SEM

Data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is appropriate for theory development, exploratory models, and situations where data may not be normally distributed.

PLS-SEM is also well-suited for small to medium sample sizes, models with moderate complexity, and when constructs are modelled as latent variables. These characteristics align with the present study's goals.

The analysis followed the two-step approach outlined by Hair et al. (2019):

1. Measurement model assessment to evaluate reliability and validity
2. Structural model evaluation, including mediation effects

To assess common method bias, we applied Harman's single-factor test, which revealed that the first factor accounted for less than 40% of the variance, indicating that common method variance was not a major concern.

4. Data analysis

Data from 300 respondents across high-end hotels in Hanoi, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City were analysed. The sample included a balance of managerial and operational roles and represented diverse departments such as front desk, housekeeping, food and beverage, and administration. The responses indicated generally positive perceptions of knowledge sharing, organisational climates, and talent retention, with mean construct scores ranging from 3.96 to 4.17. These values suggest moderate variability and approximately normal distribution, as confirmed by skewness and kurtosis statistics (Table 3).

4.1. Common method bias and data screening

To assess potential common method variance, we conducted Harman's single-factor test. The first unrotated factor accounted for less than 40% of the variance, indicating that common method bias was not a serious concern. Additionally, data were screened for missing values, outliers, and multicollinearity. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were all below 3.0, suggesting acceptable levels of multicollinearity among predictors.

4.2. Measurement model evaluation

The reliability and validity of the measurement model were assessed using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), Fornell-Larcker criterion, and Heterotrait-

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and normality.

Construct	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
IK	4.14	0.76	-0.45	-0.49
EK	3.99	0.83	-0.42	-0.36
IC	4.17	0.76	-0.65	0.04
MF	3.96	0.84	-0.49	0.08
TR	3.99	0.84	-0.43	-0.39

Monotrait ratio (HTMT). All constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\alpha > 0.70$, $CR > 0.80$), convergent validity ($AVE > 0.50$), and discriminant validity ($HTMT < 0.85$; square root of $AVE >$ inter-construct correlations), as shown in Tables 4–6.

4.3. Model fit and structural model evaluation

Model fit indices (Table 7), including Standardized Root Mean Square Residual ($SRMR = 0.065$) and Normed Fit Index ($NFI = 0.754$), indicated acceptable model fit, consistent with thresholds suggested by Henseler et al. (2015).

The model explained 42.8% of the variance in Innovation Climate, 42.1% in Mindfulness Climate, and 42.6% in Talent Retention, as presented in Table 8, indicating moderate explanatory power.

4.4. Hypothesis testing and path coefficients

As shown in Table 9 and Figure 1, ten of the fourteen hypotheses were supported. Implicit Knowledge (IK) significantly influenced Innovation Climate ($H1: \beta = 0.357, p < 0.001$) and Mindfulness

Table 4. Scale reliability and convergent validity.

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Implicit knowledge	0.776	0.857	0.600
Explicit knowledge	0.880	0.909	0.626
Innovation climate	0.844	0.895	0.681
Mindfulness climate	0.895	0.916	0.577
Talent retention	0.845	0.896	0.682

Table 5. Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT).

Constructs	EK	TR	IC	IK	MF
EK	1.00				
TR	0.57	1.00			
IC	0.65	0.64	1.00		
IK	0.79	0.58	0.73	1.00	
MF	0.70	0.66	0.58	0.65	1.00

Table 6. Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Constructs	EK	TR	IC	IK	MF
EK	0.791				
TR	0.505	0.826			
IC	0.566	0.544	0.825		
IK	0.658	0.473	0.597	0.774	
MF	0.626	0.576	0.507	0.540	0.760

Note: Saturated and estimated model values in Table 7 is identical due to the model's low degrees of freedom and simplicity, a common occurrence in PLS-SEM.

Table 7. Model fit indices.

Fit index	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.065	0.065
d_ULS	1.478	1.478
d_G	0.721	0.721
Chi-square	1041.699	1041.699
NFI	0.754	0.754

Table 8. R^2 values.

Construct	R^2	R^2 adjusted
Innovation climate	0.428	0.421
Mindfulness climate	0.421	0.416
Talent retention	0.426	0.417

Table 9. Hypothesis testing results.

Hypothesis	Path	β	t -value	p -value	Result
H1	IK \rightarrow IC	0.357	4.720	0.000	Supported
H2	IC \rightarrow TR	0.283	3.688	0.000	Supported
H3	IK \rightarrow TR	0.059	0.809	0.419	Not supported
H5	IK \rightarrow MF	0.226	3.740	0.000	Supported
H6	MF \rightarrow TR	0.344	3.907	0.000	Supported
H8	EK \rightarrow IC	0.221	2.559	0.011	Supported
H10	EK \rightarrow TR	0.091	0.895	0.371	Marginal (0.056)
H11	EK \rightarrow MF	0.477	7.180	0.000	Supported
H13	MF \rightarrow IC	0.177	2.602	0.009	Supported

Climate (H5: $\beta = 0.226$, $p < 0.001$), while Explicit Knowledge (EK) also significantly affected both (H8 and H11). Both Innovation Climate (H2) and Mindfulness Climate (H6) positively affected Talent Retention.

However, direct paths from IK (H3) and EK (H10) to Talent Retention were not significant. Although the p -value for H10 was 0.056, just above the conventional 0.05 threshold, this marginal result may still hold practical relevance. We suggest interpreting this finding as ‘marginally non-significant’ rather than definitively unsupported, and we recommend future studies explore this relationship further with a larger sample.

4.5 Mediation analysis and effect sizes

Table 10 summarises the mediation results. Both Innovation Climate and Mindfulness Climate partially mediated the relationships between knowledge and retention. Specifically:

- IK influenced TR through IC (H4: $\beta = 0.101$, $p = 0.002$) and MF (H7: $\beta = 0.078$, $p = 0.002$).
- EK influenced TR through MF (H12: $\beta = 0.164$, $p = 0.002$) but not through IC (H10: $p = 0.056$).
- MF influenced TR indirectly via IC (H14: $\beta = 0.050$, $p = 0.030$).

Table 10. Mediation Analysis.

Hypothesis	Mediation path	Indirect effect	t -value	p -value	Result
H4	IK \rightarrow IC \rightarrow TR	0.101	3.066	0.002	Supported
H7	IK \rightarrow MF \rightarrow TR	0.078	3.061	0.002	Supported
H10	EK \rightarrow IC \rightarrow TR	0.062	1.908	0.056	Marginal
H12	EK \rightarrow MF \rightarrow TR	0.164	3.127	0.002	Supported
H14	MF \rightarrow IC \rightarrow TR	0.050	2.175	0.030	Supported

Table 11. Effect sizes (f^2) and VIF values.

Path	f^2	VIF
IK \rightarrow IC	0.128	1.92
IK \rightarrow MF	0.112	1.74
EK \rightarrow IC	0.078	2.01
EK \rightarrow MF	0.134	1.87
IC \rightarrow TR	0.096	1.85
MF \rightarrow TR	0.122	1.90
MF \rightarrow IC	0.058	1.69

Additionally, we calculated f^2 effect sizes and presented them in Table 11. Most relationships demonstrated small to moderate practical impact (f^2 between 0.05 and 0.15). No path showed signs of multicollinearity, as all VIF values remained below 3.0.

5. Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that implicit (IK) and explicit knowledge (EK) significantly shape organisational climates – Innovation Climate (IC) and Mindfulness Climate (MF) – which in turn drive talent retention (TR) in Vietnam’s high-end hospitality sector. While IK and EK do not directly affect TR, their indirect impacts via IC and MF are significant, affirming the mediating role of workplace climate in strategic talent management. These findings extend prior research (Nonaka, 2009; S. Wang & Noe, 2010) by addressing both cognitive (IC) and emotional (MF) needs. IC fosters innovation and engagement (Janssen, 2000; Zhang, 2022), while MF enhances well-being and reduces burnout (Dsouza et al., 2023; Hyland et al., 2015). Notably, EK – traditionally viewed as procedural – also contributes to MF, suggesting that codified tools (e.g. stress protocols, communication guides) can support emotional resilience (Barber & Deale, 2014; Ihl et al., 2022).

Theoretically, this research contributes to the Knowledge-Based View (KBV) by showing that knowledge-sharing improves retention only when facilitated by supportive climates. It also builds on Organizational Climate Theory by demonstrating how IC and MF interact to influence TR. The study fills a gap in hospitality literature by offering cross-cultural insights from Vietnam’s emerging luxury sector.

Practically, hotel managers and HR leaders should align knowledge-sharing with climate-focused strategies to build engagement and resilience. This includes encouraging cross-functional brainstorming, mindfulness training, open communication, mentoring, and use of structured tools like SOPs. Such integration can strengthen employee loyalty and reduce turnover.

While this study is based on a cross-sectional design, we acknowledge that such designs limit the ability to draw causal inferences. However, for the study’s objective of exploring the structural relationships among knowledge-sharing, organisational climate, and talent retention in the Vietnamese luxury hotel sector, a cross-sectional approach remains appropriate and effective. Future research should adopt longitudinal or mixed-method designs, explore other service industries and cultural contexts, and incorporate additional drivers such as leadership, organisational support, and employee engagement.

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