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SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY OF INDUSTRIAL PARK WORKERS IN VIETNAM: EVIDENCE OF A RETURN AFTER THE PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: human resources in industrial parks are an important component of the global supply chain. Social capital, including social networks, beliefs and norms, can play an actively expanded role in maintaining the stable working status of this group of workers. This article analyzes social capital as an important factor in bringing a group of workers mostly from rural backgrounds back to the country's industrial parks after the covid-19 epidemic is brought under control. *Design/method/approach:* Questionnaire data from Vietnam's Binh Duong industrial cluster is used to measure social capital and analyze its impact on the return of the workforce. The team used 514 semi-structured questionnaire data combined with 15 in-depth interviews with workers and business and union management groups to measure the relationship between social capital and workers' choice to return to work. *Result:* Social capital has a dominant role in directing workers back to the industrial park. Other factors that have influenced the process include corporate support policies and the role of trade unions. *Practical meaning:* The return of workers to work in industrial parks concentrated in Vietnam in addition to economic value also affirms confidence in the network of relationships. The exchange and trust in corporate policies are the motivation for workers to stick with the business for a long time in the context of safe adaptation to the covid 19 epidemic. *Originality / value:* This article provides an insight into the process and nature of workers returning to work after fleeing industrial parks in Vietnam before the 4th wave of covid-19 outbreak. It provides theoretical lessons on human resource management based on social capital in Vietnam and countries with many industrial parks concentrated in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: social capital, workers, trade unions, covid 19, Binh Duong, Vietnam.