

**THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM****Independence - Freedom - Happiness***Ho Chi Minh City, 10/7/2025***THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS**

Thesis title: **The relationships between common auditors and accounting comparability of companies listed on Ho Chi Minh city stock exchange, Vietnam**

Major: Accounting

Code: 9340301

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The thesis contributes to accounting research and practices in two respects:

**1. Theoretical contributions**

Firstly, the thesis identifies a positive relationship between common audit firms, audit offices, audit partners, and accounting comparability in Vietnam. These findings not only reinforce Agency Theory but also extend its application in the auditing context by offering a new perspective on the roles of audit firms, offices, and partners. Specifically, common audit firms, offices, and partners appear to be more effective at reducing information asymmetry than their non-common counterparts. This enhances the traditional understanding of Agency Theory by suggesting that common auditors are particularly well positioned to address the principal - agent relationship, beyond the general role typically attributed to auditors.

Secondly, the thesis demonstrates that the positive relationship between common audit firms and accounting comparability is stronger when the firms are industry specialists

or when all audit partners involved are female. These findings provide empirical support for Upper Echelons Theory as well as gender-related theoretical frameworks. According to Upper Echelons Theory, characteristics of key decision-makers - such as gender and contextual factors - such as industry specialisation - can influence organisational outcomes. While Upper Echelons Theory has primarily been applied in management studies, this research extends its relevance to the auditing profession, particularly within the context of a developing country like Vietnam.

Additionally, the thesis provides further evidence supporting gender differences in a professional setting. Specifically, it finds that male and female audit partners tend to approach audit engagements differently, and that female audit partners are more likely to share similar perspectives on audit issues when paired together than their male or mixed-gender counterparts.

Thirdly, this thesis provides empirical evidence on the varying impacts of common audit firms, audit offices, and individual auditors on the accounting comparability of their audit clients. Considering these three levels of common auditors offers meaningful and comprehensive insights into the dynamics and interdependence between organisations and individuals. These findings may serve as a foundation for further research in the fields of management and psychology, particularly regarding the relationship between organisational structures and individual characteristics in shaping organisational performance.

## **2. Practical contributions**

Firstly, this thesis provides original evidence of a positive relationship between common audit firms and accounting comparability in Vietnam. By focusing on a Vietnamese sample, the study extends the existing literature on the link between common audit firms and accounting comparability (Francis et al., 2014; Kawada, 2014; Johnston and Zhang, 2021; Frost et al., 2024), offering insights specific to a developing economy. It highlights the role of audit firms as a vital part of the financial reporting supply chain, demonstrating that the use of common audit firms can enhance accounting comparability. This, in turn, suggests a promising approach to improving the quality of financial reporting in Vietnam. The findings also carry meaningful implications for investors, bankers, analysts,

and management when evaluating the comparability of financial statements among peer companies to support business decision-making.

Secondly, this thesis provides the first evidence of a positive relationship between common audit offices within the same audit firm and accounting comparability in the Vietnamese context. This finding enriches our understanding of the role of common auditors, not only at the audit firm level but also at the audit office level. It offers audit offices a stronger incentive to tailor their audit approaches more closely to their clients' needs, rather than simply following firm-wide practices, in order to improve the effectiveness of audit engagements.

Thirdly, this thesis presents pioneering evidence of the positive impact of both common audit partners and female audit partners within common audit firms on accounting comparability in Vietnam. This finding underscores the importance of audit partners as key decision-makers and offers new insights into auditor characteristics that could influence future personnel assignments and promotion strategies within audit firms.

Lastly, this thesis extends the understanding of industry specialisation in audit practices. The findings have practical implications for boards of directors and shareholders when selecting audit firms, suggesting that industry specialisation can enhance financial reporting quality. Furthermore, audit firms can strengthen their competitive advantage by offering specialised knowledge to clients, particularly in the highly competitive Vietnamese audit market.

**Doctoral candidate**

**Mai Duc Nghia**