Research Article

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF MIDDLE MANAGERS
AT VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HO CHI MINH CITY

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ABSTRACT

Motivating managers to actively advise and assist the principal in effectively running the university is an important task in the current context of university autonomy. This article reports on a study on how middle managers of functional departments are motivated at seven member universities of Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City through surveys and in-depth interviews. A total of 142 managers participated in the survey, and five were interviewed on their motivational factors: Job, Work Environment, Career Development, and Material Conditions. Based on the findings, several suggestions were proposed to university leaders to increase satisfaction and boost middle e managers' motivation in fulfilling their responsibilities and achieving their institution's goals.

Keywords: middle managers; university; work motivation

1. Introduction

Middle managers (MMs) in universities perform important dual critical functions and roles. They simultaneously advise and assist university leaders in managing and operating various institutional activities and directly manage functional departments – integral components of the university's organizational structure, responsible for implementing educational policies. These MMs' responsibilities highlight their influence and role in the governance and operation of activities, as well as actualizing the goals of the university (Johnsrud & Rosser, 1999; Rudhumbu, 2015).

The current university autonomy in Vietnam and strong competition pose many challenges to universities for effective governance and administration. Therefore, university leaders need advisory teams with adequate ability and dedication to sustain the operation of their institutions during this important transition period. Ensuring a capable and committed team of managerial staff aligned with the university's goals is identified by university administrators as a prerequisite task that contributes to the university's survival, enhancing competitive advantages and sustainable development in the current context. To achieve this,

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job motivation is considered an effective method to encourage the team to devote to strategies, strengthening the position and development of the organization, and achieving pre-set goals and missions (Buberwa, 2015; Stachowska & Czaplicka-Kozłowska, 2017; Van Iddekinge et al., 2017).

Increasing job motivation for university managerial staff is a complex multifaceted process since each individual has a unique set of values, including the common ones and those that reflect a personal identity shaped and expressed through the individual's own needs and desires (Zlatea & Cucuib, 2014; Stachowska & Czaplicka-Kozłowska, 2017). Recognizing the distinctive needs and interests of each individual and understanding what motivates them to be active and effective at work help university leaders choose appropriate approaches and strategies to meet their needs and simultaneously evoke their willingness to work for the university (Hanaysha & Majid, 2018). Therefore, creating work motivation is a powerful way recommended for leaders to direct the will and motivate employees to strive and desire to work for the goals, transforming the organization's goals into the personal needs and desires of the employees (Buberwa, 2015). Motivating MMs is an important task of university leaders that aims to improve work performance and increase efficiency in human resource management, development, and university operations.

This research aimed to understand the current work motivation of MMs at seven member universities of Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCMC) through surveys and in-depth interviews. Solutions are proposed to improve work motivation for MMs in the future based on the study results.

2.   Theoretical review and Research methods

2.1.   *Theoretical review of work motivation in higher education institutions*

The concept of work motivation is studied with different approaches. From a psychological perspective, work motivation is a conditional state that drives workers to put more effort into work, closely linked to the satisfaction of personal needs (Le & Phan, 2023). From a management perspective, work motivation is the employees' persistence and willingness to achieve the organization's goals and their readiness to apply knowledge and skills in accomplishing organizational expectations in relation to fulfilling individual needs and satisfaction (Herzberg, 1959; Hanaysha & Majid, 2018).

The mission of university administrators is to accomplish the goals of the university through its members. Therefore, how to encourage and motivate members to actively and successfully achieve the university's tasks and goals is crucial. Creating work motivation is a way to generate the energy for subordinates to act in ways desired by leaders, connecting with the concerns and goals of the organization (Ndudi et al., 2023; Hanaysha & Majid, 2018). Creating work motivation is a management strategy, a robust mechanism to influence behavior, while also encouraging creativity and maintaining the quality of work (Zlatea & Cucuib, 2014). It is an important part of human resource management and performance management in universities.

In different organizations, factors affecting work motivation are perceived differently. In the private sector, financial aspects play an important role in creating work motivation, whereas in universities, critical factors include the nature of work, personal development policies, and job security (Stachowska & Czaplicka-Kozłowska, 2017). Each individual has basic human needs, interests, and desires in their work. They hold personal standards and views on factors that satisfy or dissatisfy them, those that motivate or maintain the motivation (Stachowska & Czaplicka-Kozłowska, 2017; Zlatea & Cucuib, 2014). Understanding the factors that bring satisfaction and fulfill the needs of employees helps managers build appropriate strategies to encourage employees to realize the organization's goals.

Various studies have analyzed and identified factors that can contribute to and affect the motivation of employees in universities. They affirm the significance of material values and working conditions in satisfying employees, maintaining their motivation, and improving work outcomes. Those could be salaries, bonuses, allowances, benefits, a conducive working environment, and facilities ensuring work safety (Buberwa, 2015; Nguyen, 2023).

Some modern motivation theories suggest that people do not work only for material values but also for satisfaction with what they do (Zlatea & Cucuib, 2014). Several non-financial factors identified as truly motivating in universities include career advancement and development, a sense of responsibility, and achievements (Herzberg, 1959). Employees are motivated when they realize their roles, responsibilities, and personal values in the university development (Hanaysha & Majid, 2018).

Employees at universities tend to be more motivated in a positive work environment, where they feel engaged in the work they favor, listened to and respected by their leaders, work with trustworthy colleagues, and get the best chance to utilize their abilities and strengths and to contribute creative ideas to increase work efficiency. They can be more motivated when provided a transparent and competitive promotion policy, professional training and development programs, and opportunities for personal growth or certain job positions (Hanaysha & Majid, 2018; Zlatea & Cucuib, 2014).

Recognition from leaders and colleagues for efforts and achievements, or respect toward personal decisions is also considered a motivational factor that encourages individuals to work more efficiently. Hanaysha and Majid's study suggests that employees feel more motivated when there is continuous interaction and communication with managers and leaders to define goals, implement activities, and achieve desired results (Hanaysha & Majid, 2018). Attentiveness from leaders is a particularly encouraging factor for employees to achieve preferable work outcomes.

In another perspective, some authors view employees' motivation as being created by two groups of factors: intrinsic and extrinsic (Zlatea & Cucuib, 2014; Ndudi et al., 2023). Intrinsic motivation is "psychological rewards," which plays an important role because they affect behavior and direct people's will to strive in work. The work, recognition, personal

achievements, and opportunities for self-affirmation are intrinsic aspects that strongly motivate employees to perform at a high level. Extrinsic motivation often involves material values, originating from the environment: salary, bonus, and working conditions, which are meant to boost and maintain employee motivation (Le & Phan, 2023).

MMs are a human resource component in universities with important positions, functions, and responsibilities. They work in functional departments, undertaking advisory roles that help university leaders in operating and managing various university operations, while directly leading and managing these functional departments. In addition to management roles, MMs also perform professional tasks that match their professional titles, such as lecturers, researchers, or administrative staff. For the MM to work effectively, besides training, university leaders need to pay attention to encouraging and motivating them to carry out assigned multifunctional roles.

Many studies have addressed stimulating motivation using different approaches, such as motivation stemming from needs, individual differences, work situations, leadership, organizational management, or clarifying the employees' expectations, goals, and perceptions of their motivation (Nguyen, 2023). Identifying the target employees, motivational approaches, and motivational factors, as well as the ways and extent to which they influence motivation can help leaders enhance the effectiveness of human resource management in university (Stachowska & Czaplicka-Kozłowska, 2019)

Within the scope of this study, factors stimulating motivation for MMs are identified from the perspective of organizational human resource management, including Job, Work Environment, Career Development, and Material Conditions to motivate MMs to strive to fulfill the tasks and goals of the school.

2.2. Research methods

A mixed-methods research design with an explanatory design offers clearer insight into the research objective (Creswell & Clark, 2007). This design was used to study how MMs were motivated at seven member institutions in VNU-HCMC. A survey questionnaire was distributed to collect data on factors affecting MMs' motivation at these universities. The study also interviewed five MMs. The data from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis with SPSS 26 software, while the interview data was compiled and analyzed to elucidate the survey's results.

The questionnaire consists of two sections: Section 1 contains six questions about the respondents' demographic information; Section 2 contains seven questions designed to measure four motivational factors on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 to 5: Very dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Satisfied, and Very satisfied. According to Narli (2010), the interval width of the 5-point Likert scale should be computed to set up the group boundary value for the result discussion. Interval width = (upper value - lower value)/n = (5-1)/5 = 0.8. The meaning of the scale: 1.00-1.80: Very limited motivation; 1.81-2.60: limited motivation; 2.61-3.40: Moderate motivation; 3.41-4.20: High motivation, 4.21-5.00: Very high motivation.

The questionnaire was reviewed by experts and piloted with 30 MMs. To evaluate the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test was conducted. The recommended acceptable value for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.7 or higher (Hair et al., 2010). The test results indicated the questionnaire is reliable (Table 1).

***Table 1.** Cronbach's Alpha Results*

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Number of Items
Job	.820	4
Work Environment	.761	5
Career Development	.767	4
Material Conditions	.864	4

A questionnaire was sent to 181 MMs. They were from seven member universities of VNU-HCMC, namely the University of Technology, University of Sciences, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Economics and Law, International University, University of Information Technology, and An Giang University. According to Yamane's sampling formula (Creswell & Clark, 2007) with 97% confidence, 156 samples were needed. A simple random sampling method was used and the survey was conducted at these seven universities.

The number of MMs responding to the survey is 142. Of these, 98 were male (69%) and 44 were female (31%). For age distribution, from 30 to 40 years old: 33 people (23.2%), from 41 to 50 years old: 82 people (57.7%), over 50 years old: 27 people (19%). As regards academic titles and qualifications: 23 were associate professors (16.2%), 50 PhDs (35.2%), 82 MScs (57.7%), and 10 bachelors (7%). For years of service, under 5 years: 05 people (3.5%), from 5 to 10 years: 20 people (14.1%), from 11 to 20 years: 69 people (48.6%), over 20 years: 47 people (33.1%).

3.   Results and discussion

3.1.   Results on Job

The results show that Job (Mean = 3.89, Standard Deviation (SD) = 0.625) and its four related items (Means ranging from 3.75 to 4.04) were rated as 'High Motivation.' Among these, the item with the highest mean was '*The assigned tasks align with strengths and abilities*' (Mean = 4.04, SD = 0.713). The item with the lowest mean within this factor was '*Efforts and work results are fully recognized and evaluated*' (Mean = 3.75, SD = 0.818), which was one of the two items with the lowest mean scores among 17 items across the assessed four motivational factors (Table 2).

Table 2. Results on Job

Item	Items of Job	Level					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
J1	Responsibilities, rights, goals, and expectations are clearly indicated in the job description	1.2	0.6	19.0	55.4	23.8	**3.96**	0.748
J2	The assigned tasks align with strengths and capability	0	1.8	17.3	53.0	28.0	**4.04**	0.713
J3	Autonomy, flexibility, and creativity are allowed in task execution	0	4.2	27.4	47.0	21.4	**3.84**	0.796
J4	Efforts and work results are fully recognized and evaluated	0	6.0	28.6	48.2	17.3	**3.75**	0.818
						Overall	**3.89**	**0.625**

Sharing their opinions on job-related matters, MMs #1, #2, and #4 concurred that the system for recognizing, evaluating, and managing the work results of employees is not sufficiently comprehensive and methodical due to a lack of reliable and scientific measurement tools. MM #2 observed that the current performance evaluation does not hold much significance, serving formalism and subjectivism instead of reflecting the actual work results of MMs, such as a reluctance to point out the limitations of employees. MM #3 noted that the biggest limitation in the evaluation process is the absence of standardized tools and clear criteria; the evaluation methods are not scientific, and there is a lack of complete understanding and awareness among evaluators. MM #4 expressed feeling pressured by the workload during the transition to an autonomous mechanism. Efforts to improve work in this new phase are sometimes not fully understood or recognized by leaders and colleagues, leading to a certain decrease in motivation. MM #5 mentioned that while evaluating work results, the input of relevant parties is considered but not honestly enough; and there are gaps in the supposedly regular and continuous feedback from superiors, peers, and subordinates to help MMs continuously and fully understand their values and capabilities for improvement. It is observed that there is a focus and consensus on the limitations in evaluating MMs' performance, including awareness and evaluation procedures, tools, and criteria. This thoroughly explains why this factor received the lowest score.

MMs #1 and #2 shared that having clear job descriptions outlining responsibilities, authorities, and targets helps them to be proactive in planning and contributing to the results of the university. They experienced a surge of energy when given the autonomy to decide how to execute tasks and when encouraged to express their views and opinions at work. This suggests that the way university leadership delegates authority and acknowledges the efforts of MMs is a crucial factor in driving motivation. These findings align with Ly's study (2018) at another university in Vietnam, which indicated that the manner of decentralization and creating space for managers to be autonomous in their work influences the motivation of the management team.

3.2. *Results on Work Environment*

Survey responses showed that Work Environment (Mean = 4.20, SD = 0.513) had the highest mean score among the four factors, equivalent to the level of High Motivation. Among the five items related to the Work Environment, three had outstanding mean scores, reaching the Very High Motivation level. These factors reflect information and communication at work, a clear internal management system, and professional development opportunities. The other two items with a mean reaching the level of high motivation are related to the attentiveness of leaders and relationships with colleagues. Work Environment is the only factor with items reaching the level of Very High Motivation among the four factors (Table 3).

Table 3. Results on Work Environment

Item	Items of Work Environment	Levels					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
WE1	Clear and supportive management systems and mechanisms	0.6	1.2	9.5	38.1	50.6	**4.36**	0.756
WE2	Effective information and communication	0	0.6	6.0	35.1	58.3	**4.50**	0.639
WE3	Institutional leaders listen to and respect opinions and feelings.	0	1.2	22.6	47.0	29.2	**4.01**	0.753
WE4	Colleagues are willing to collaborate and support	1.2	3.0	25.0	49.4	21.4	**3.83**	0.833
WE5	Transparent and fair chances of development and promotion	0	0.6	6.0	53.0	40.5	**4.33**	0.604
						Overall	**4.20**	**0.513**

MM #1 showed their satisfaction with the working environment, from relationships with seniors and colleagues to the policies and chances to develop oneself. MM #4 believed that though income is important, most of the teachers choose to work at the universities because of the special values the working environment brings; respect and shared values bring motivation and satisfaction to teachers at work. This is similar to the research results from Zlatea and Cucuib (2014) and Stachowska and Czaplicka-Kozłowska (2017) when analyzing people working in universities with different needs, favoring spiritual values as important factors for work motivation.

MM #3 shared that university leaders sometimes interacted with MMs to grasp their thoughts and work situations. The early stages of the transition to autonomy requiring devotion and time investment make middle managers feel pressured and tired. University leaders did not mindfully provide feedback and suggestions to middle managers about strengths and limitations that need to be improved in work as well as expectations so that they can recognize their abilities and strive to improve.

3.3. *Results on Career Development*

The survey results showed that Career Development (Mean = 4.02, SD = 0.575) was considered to be a high motivation for MMs. Among these, the item with the highest mean score was *'Career development path is regulated and transparent'* (Mean = 4.18, SD = 0.737), and the item with the lowest mean score was *'Programs designed for training and*

developing MAMs' leading and management skills are individualized' (Mean = 3.75, SD = 0.941) (Table 4). This was also one of the two items with the lowest mean score among all 17 items.

Table 4. Results on Career Development

Item	Items of Career Development	Level					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
CD1	Career development path is regulated and transparent	0.6	0.6	14.3	48.8	35.7	**4.18**	0.737
CD2	Individual needs and aspirations for professional and career development are cared for and met	0	0.6	16.1	58.3	25.0	**4.07**	0.648
CD3	Programs designed for training and developing MMs' leading and management skills are individualized	0	11.3	23.8	41.1	23.8	**3.75**	0.941
CD4	Universities provide various methods to support professional and career development in accordance with serving the university's goals	0	0	14.9	57.7	27.4	**4.12**	0.624
						Overall	**4.02**	**0.575**

MM #1 noted that their university offered a variety of policies to support faculty members in participating in professional development programs. The nature and characteristics of work in functional departments are unique, and often the department leaders are faculty members without prior management experience while continuing to engage in teaching and research duties. However, universities have not yet developed internal training programs specifically designed for MMs to enhance their leadership. This observation aligns with the research of Nguyen (2018) and Trinh (2018). MMs participate in general training programs alongside heads of departments and centers in universities. This observation is entirely spot on, as the training programs for leadership and management positions developed by the Ministry of Home Affairs (2022), which are suitable for leaders of functional departments in sectors and localities, are also unreasonably being applied to university managers. Tailoring leadership training programs to the specific needs and characteristics of MMs will help them gain the necessary skills and confidence, thereby enhancing their motivation and better serving the university. This view aligns with the findings of Van Iddekinge et al. (2017), which indicate that motivation and cognitive ability impact employee performance and the achievement of organizational goals.

MM #4 said that their university openly and strictly manages the professional development of the managers according to state regulations and the school's internal regulations. MMs are clearly aware of the conditions and processes to achieve higher positions and ranks. MMs are evaluated or tested for title promotion when meeting the prescribed conditions. They also receive support in training and improving themselves, are rewarded when completing a postgraduate training program, and are well-appreciated and compensated at retirement.

Development and promotion are often associated with salary increases and enhanced income opportunities, leading to a general expectation among employees for the organization to have a satisfying and rewarding career development system that recognizes and fulfills their needs when they achieve accomplishments and work diligently for the organization. The survey and interview results indicate that the majority are satisfied because the universities have clear and transparent policies and regulations for career advancement. MMs are openly informed and aware of the regulations regarding professional development, and positional advancements.

3.4. Results on Material Conditions

The survey results showed that Material Condition (Mean = 3.87, SD = 0.664) was evaluated at a level of high motivation for MAMs. Among these, the item with the highest mean was *'Diverse welfare regime and fair income distribution'* (Mean = 4.01, SD = 0.679); The two items with the lowest mean of 3.77 were *'Facilities and resources for work are guaranteed'* (SD = 0.839) and *'Competitive income that is correspondent with work results'* (SD = 0.864) (Table 5). Though Material Conditions have been claimed to highly motivate MMs, the factor had the lowest mean score among the four motivational factors.

Table 5. Results on Material Conditions

Item	Items of Material Conditions	Level					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
MC1	Facilities and resources for work are guaranteed	1.2	3.6	28.6	48.2	18.5	**3.77**	0.839
MC2	Diverse welfare regime and fair income distribution	0	1.8	19.0	57.7	21.4	**4.01**	0.679
MC3	Competitive income that is correspondent with work results	0	8.9	24.4	47.0	19.6	**3.77**	0.864
MC4	Work income secures quality of life	0	1.2	22.0	55.4	21.4	**3.95**	0.708
						Overall	**3.87**	**0.664**

The interview with MM #5 revealed that in addition to the salary regulated by the state, their university has a variety of allowances and additional expenses as defined in the internal spending regulations. The distribution of income is public and transparent based on job position and work results, specified by particular KPI targets. This encourages MMs to put a lot of effort into their work.

On facilities conditions, MM #1 stated that their university has installed more equipment and infrastructure, creating a positive working environment and promoting the MMs team to work effectively. Since administrative work is stressful, a comfortable and clean workplace will help workers concentrate more on their work. This reflects Maslow's motivational theory which holds that people have basic needs that, when satisfied, will lead to positive behavior, increasing work performance. These are basic survival needs such as food and water; safety needs such as clean office; needs for respect and self-expression.

MM #3 affirmed that salary or incomes have a certain impact on effort in work. At the same time, they believe that compared to MMs working as administrative officers, those who also work as lecturers receive more opportunities and higher income from teaching and research. This is similar to the study of Shattock (2003) where some universities are said to not pay adequate attention to the administrative management team when analyzing and comparing the responsibilities, policies, and salaries of this team with the academic team.

The overall results indicate that the assessed motivational factors for MMs had an overall mean of 4.00 (SD = 0.532), equivalent to very high motivation.

In detail, the mean scores of these four factors ranged from 3.89 to 4.20 (High Motivation). Among these, Work Environment (Mean = 4.20, SD = 0.513) produced the highest level of satisfaction. It was followed by Career Development (Mean = 4.02, SD = 0.575). The other two factors with almost the same level are Job (Mean = 3.89, SD = 0.625) and Material Conditions (Mean = 3.87, SD= 0.664) (lowest ones) (Table 6).

Table 6. Results on motivational factors

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation	Rank
Work Environment	4.20	0.513	High Motivation	1
Career Development	4.02	0.575	High Motivation	2
Job	3.89	0.625	High Motivation	3
Material Conditions	3.87	0.664	High Motivation	4
Overall	**4.00**	**0.532**	**High Motivation**	

4. Conclusion and recommendations

4.1. Conclusion

The results of the study indicate that in general, the universities have provided good motivation for MMs. Among these factors, Work Environment and Career Development were observed to be better motivation for MMs than Job and Material Conditions.

Regarding factors relating to Job, clear work assignments, suitable abilities, and autonomy in work create motivation for MMs, while evaluating MMs' work results reveals many limitations, from awareness to assessment implementation. The Work Environment factor was found to motivate MMs the most with high scores for issues related to the internal management system and opportunities for development and advancement. Regarding the Career Development factor, paying attention to needs and making policies to support professional development bring satisfaction and to some extent motivate MMs. However, the lack of systematic training and fostering, designed programs exclusive for MMs is evident in this study and has a certain impact on MMs' work motivation. The Material Conditions factor received the lowest satisfaction scores compared to other factors but still at a high motivation level for MMs thanks to diverse welfare regimes and income that covers living wage. The results also show that some still believe the income is not yet competitive and not commensurate with MMs' performance.

Overall, a fundamental legal framework and a good internal management system serve as the foundation for activities supporting work, development, and effectively creating motivation for MMs in universities. However, the innate nature of existing regulations and policies has not yet fully addressed or responded to the unique roles, functional features, and responsibilities of MMs to maximize their motivation. The results show that many aspects related to intrinsic motivation (full recognition, development programs, autonomy) produce lower satisfaction levels than extrinsic ones (environment, facilities, working conditions).

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the research findings, suggestions are proposed for the leaders of universities to improve satisfaction and increase motivation among MMs for better task performance.

(1) Motivation is influenced by organizational factors, as well as by intrinsic states, characteristics, and personal values. MMs, being intellectual workers with distinct job characteristics, value spiritual recognition and individual autonomy. University leaders need to adopt personalized approaches to understand and create appropriate motivational methods, making MMs feel their work is meaningful, thereby increasing their work effort.

(2) A robust internal management system creates opportunities for each member to unleash their energy, develop themselves, and serve the institution. The transition to an autonomous mechanism presents numerous challenges in the operation of universities. Therefore, universities need to perfect their management systems in accordance with the autonomous mechanism. This allows systematic and scientific management and development of motivational policy systems that allow MMs to contribute freely to the development of the institution.

(3) MMs have a unique dual role: advising university leaders and directly managing functional departments. A tailored training and development program for MMs is essential to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills for effective execution of tasks. Continuous feedback from leaders on MMs' advisory work and entrusting them with autonomy and flexibility in managing departmental activities are crucial for enhancing their motivation.

(4) Motivating MMs should involve a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors to develop a comprehensive motivation system. Institutions need to improve satisfactory income policies and modern, professional working conditions and also focus on building and maintaining intrinsic motivation by connecting and evoking MMs' feelings with the values and goals of the institutions and their work. Delegation, training and development policies, job performance evaluation, and effective human resource management are elements that create the strongest and most sustainable source of intrinsic motivation.

These solutions are expected to form a foundation that supports motivation, encouraging MMs to be more active and dedicated to the tasks and objectives of the university.

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YẾU TỐ TẠO ĐỘNG LỰC CỦA VIÊN CHỨC QUẢN LÍ HÀNH CHÍNH CẤP PHÒNG TẠI ĐẠI HỌC QUỐC GIA THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

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TÓM TẮT

> *Tạo động lực để viên chức quản lí tích cực tham mưu, giúp hiệu trưởng điều hành hiệu quả trường đại học là nhiệm vụ quan trọng trong bối cảnh tự chủ đại học hiện nay. Bài báo nhằm tìm hiểu thực trạng tạo động lực cho viên chức quản lí hành chính công tác tại các phòng chức năng của 7 trường đại học thành viên Đại học Quốc gia Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh thông qua khảo sát ý kiến và phỏng vấn sâu về mức độ hài lòng đối với các yếu tố tạo nên động lực làm việc tại các trường. 142 viên chức quản lí tham gia trả lời khảo sát; trong số đó, 5 người trả lời phỏng vấn về mức độ hài lòng đối với các yếu tố tạo nên động lực làm việc gồm: Công việc, Môi trường làm việc, Phát triển nghề nghiệp, Điều kiện vật chất. Từ kết quả nghiên cứu, một số gợi ý được đề xuất đối với lãnh đạo các trường đại học nhằm làm gia tăng sự hài lòng, thúc đẩy động lực của viên chức quản lí hành chính tại các phòng trong thực hiện nhiệm vụ, đạt được mục tiêu nhà trường đã xác định.*

> ***Từ khóa:*** *viên chức quản lí hành chính cấp phòng; trường đại học; động lực làm việc*