

STUDY ON FACTORS IMPACTING WORK MOTIVATION OF MANAGERS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN THE MEKONG DELTA

ESTUDO SOBRE FATORES DE IMPACTO NA MOTIVAÇÃO DE TRABALHO DOS GERENTES DE PEQUENAS E MÉDIAS EMPRESAS NO DELTA DO MEKONG*

Nguyen Giac Tri
Dr. Dong Thap University, Vietnam
ngtri@dthu.edu.vn

Abstract: The study aims to investigate factors impacting work motivation of managers of small and medium enterprises in the Mekong Delta. Two phases of the study were conducted: qualitative research and quantitative research. Methods in the data analysis process of the study include: (1) evaluating the scale's validity and (2) testing the value of the scale by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Varimax rotation method was used; (3) re-testing the reliability of the scale with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient after removing inappropriate items; (4) using Pearson correlation coefficient test to measure the relationship between variables; (5) using Multiple Regression Analysis; (6) using Anova test and T-test to assess whether or not there is a difference; (7) using Descriptive Statistics approach. According to research findings, all factors in the model, including job characteristics, as well as emotional competence, which consists of emotion recognition, emotion use, emotion understanding, and emotion control, all have a positive effect on mid-level managers' motivation at work in small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta. The research findings also demonstrated the significance of emotional competence to job motivation, which in turn affects mid-level managers' performance. The four elements of emotional competence each have an impact on work motivation.

Keywords: Work motivation. Small and medium enterprises. Mid-level managers. The Mekong Delta.

Resumo: O estudo visa investigar fatores que impactam a motivação de trabalho dos gerentes de pequenas e médias empresas no Delta do Mekong. Foram realizadas duas fases do estudo: pesquisa qualitativa e pesquisa quantitativa. Os métodos no processo de análise de dados do estudo incluem: (1) avaliar a validade da escala e (2) testar o valor da escala pela Análise Exploratória de Fatores (EFA). Foi usado o método de rotação Varimax; (3) re-testando a confiabilidade da escala com o coeficiente Alfa de Cronbach depois de remover itens inadequados; (4) usando o teste de coeficiente de correlação de Pearson para medir a relação entre as variáveis; (5) usando a Análise de Regressão Múltipla; (6) usando o teste Anova e o teste T para avaliar se há ou não uma diferença; (7) usando a abordagem da Estatística Descritiva. De acordo com os resultados da pesquisa, todos os fatores do modelo, incluindo as características do trabalho, bem como a competência emocional, que consiste no reconhecimento das emoções, uso das emoções, compreensão das emoções e controle das emoções, têm um efeito positivo na motivação dos gerentes de nível médio no trabalho em pequenas e médias empresas no Delta do Mekong. Os resultados da pesquisa também

* Artigo recebido em 12/08/2022 e aprovado para publicação pelo Conselho Editorial em 08/11/2022.

demonstraram o significado da competência emocional para a motivação no trabalho, que por sua vez afeta o desempenho dos gerentes de nível médio. Os quatro elementos de competência emocional têm, cada um, um impacto na motivação no trabalho.

Palavras-chave: Motivação para o trabalho. Pequenas e médias empresas. Gerentes de nível médio. O Delta do Mekong.

1. INTRODUCTION

A fundamental component of human resource management activities, motivation has a significant impact on an organization's performance and outcomes. To help managers and employees complete tasks as effectively as possible, motivation serves as both a goal and a tool. The managers are the organization's leaders and are in charge of setting the direction of the company. Their performance has an impact on the overall effectiveness of the business. As a result, motivating management team members also entails laying a strong basis for motivation across the board for the entire company. Mid-level managers serve as a bridge between the enterprise's lower-level managers and employees and senior management (the chairman of the board of directors, general director, director, etc.) Their performance has a significant effect on how a business operates and expands. Numerous research have been conducted on the subject of mid-level managers' work motivation. Buble et al. (2014)'s research reveals that mid-level managers' participation in decision-making, which makes them feel responsible, is the most important element for their motivation. They also discovered that pecuniary benefits are a strong motivator. Identifying problems and chances to solve them is the process of making decisions, which involves actions taken both before and after decisions are made (Daft, 1997). The way choices are carried out is significantly influenced by who makes them and how seriously subordinates are engaged in the process. In fact, small and medium-sized businesses make up a sizable share of all businesses in Vietnam in general and the Mekong Delta in particular, and they play a significant role in the economy. The existence and growth of this kind of business contribute significantly to the creation of jobs, revenue, and stabilization of the local and national economies. In many domains, it is thought to have achieved great progress. However, there are still many small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta region today with constrained operating scale, limited business models, and unclear business strategies which lead to ineffective outcomes. There are many reasons leading to the low quality of mid-level managers in enterprises in the Mekong Delta. Working under the supervision of the organization's executives frequently involves imposing, stereotyping, and little innovation in terms of thinking and working methods. Furthermore, senior

managers frequently fail to provide their subordinates the attention and assistance they need, particularly when dealing with challenging situations at work or during the management process. Additionally, there are other factors including poor labor resources and little labor awareness. This significantly influences mid-level managers' work motivation, which in turn affects the work they do for the company. The study on factors impacting the working motivation of managers of small and medium enterprises in the Mekong Delta is therefore necessary and has practical meaning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH MODEL

2.1. Review of related studies

Numerous research on the motivation of mid-level managers at work have been undertaken. According to Stringer and Didham's (2011) study, internal motivation will be impacted if mid-level managers are not appreciated and do not receive compensation that is proportionate with their job efforts. Chiu (1999) identified the link between a healthy psychological state and work motivation and the perception of organizational equity's impact on compensation, wage satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Mid-level managers' motivation and style are related, according to research by Buble et al. (2014). Their participation in decision-making, which made them feel responsible, was the primary driving element for managers, and they also found pecuniary benefits to be a key motivating factor. Managers at various levels of management and with various leadership philosophies react differently to the influence of significant motivating elements at the same time. According to research by Gatakaa (2013), organizational culture is made up of a set of four elements, including behavioral norms and standards, organizational values, rituals, and the organization's history and growth. They impact on mid-level managers' levels of motivation at work. All of these elements emphasize how important it is for managers to be involved in the organization's rules, values, rituals, and activities. The multiple influences of organizational and manager adaptation on training efficacy and employee satisfaction are examined in the Sherwood research (2015). The authors demonstrated how adaptation affects managers' motivation for their work and has a favorable effect on their job satisfaction.

In Viet Nam, one of the studies related to work motivation was the one conducted by Ngo My Tran et al (2019). The study showed that there are 6 factors under the remuneration regime including salary and bonus; welfare; recognition; career opportunities and advancement; job challenges and work environments. They all have positive impacts

on the job motivation of mid-level managers. In addition, the study also showed that age and gender factors also affect motivation to work. Pham Bao Duong (2012) on the basis of a research review, has identified 6 groups of factors affecting the motivation of managers in the field of agriculture and rural development: salary - bonus, recruitment and training, management and use of staff, working environment, professional value orientation and management operation mechanism.

The process of reviewing a number of relevant pre-existing studies in the world and in Vietnam shows that, although the studies all have the same purpose is to analyze the relationship between factors affecting the motivation of mid-level managers, in terms of job characteristics and emotional capacity, there have not been many studies that clearly mention and test the impact of these factors on the motivation of mid-level managers.

2.2. Theoretical overview

2.2.1. Job characteristics and work motivation of mid-level managers

Hackman and Oldham's (1974) job characteristics model describes the state of trying at work to bring about satisfaction as an intrinsic motivator that includes elements of the nature of the job: There is reflection recovery; Employees are proactive in working; Work with clear results; The importance of the work; The job can develop a variety of skills. The nature and characteristics of the factors belonging to the job as well as the support in the working process have a great impact on the effort at work. The skills of mid-level managers are built heavily on working process, harmonious combination and building relationships between leaders and employees. Therefore, job characteristics are more and more practical in the process of expressing the roles of managers, helping them to operate better, bring job satisfaction, create motivation to work more efficiently. By studying Hackman and Oldham's (1974) job characteristics model, the author hypothesized:

H1: Job characteristics positively affect work motivation of mid-level managers in small and medium-sized enterprises in the Mekong Delta.

2.2.2. Emotional competence and work motivation of mid-level managers

The relationship between managers' work motivation and emotional competence has been the subject of numerous research. However, the majority of studies have demonstrated that several mediating elements have an indirect effect of emotional capacity on job motivation. According to Chiu (1999), the impression of organizational justice in compensation payout, salary satisfaction, and job satisfaction has an indirect impact on the relationship between a pleasant psychological state and work motivation. Inherent characteristics do play a role in the development of emotional competences, but learning,

training, skill building, and work experience play a much larger role. Mid-level managers need this component more than anyone. Managers can better manage relationships both inside and outside of the workplace by using emotional competency indicators. They can also impact workers' work processes for the better. Therefore, the research gap that the author aims to address is whether emotional competence of mid-level managers has a direct impact on those managers' job motivation. We put forward some hypothesis that:

H2: In small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta, mid-level managers' work motivation is positively impacted by their capacity to recognize emotions.

H3: In small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta, mid-level managers' work motivation is positively impacted by their capacity to use their emotions.

H4: In the Mekong Delta's small and medium-sized businesses, mid-level managers' work motivation is positively impacted by their capacity to understand emotions.

H5: In small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta, mid-level managers' work motivation is positively impacted by their capacity to manage their emotions.

2.2.3. Differences in emotional competence according to the demographic characteristics of mid-level managers

- **Differences in emotional capacity of mid-level managers by gender:** There have been many researches referring to the relationship between the emotional capacity of mid-level managers by gender. However, the conclusions drawn from some studies' results are quite different. There are many views that support the difference in emotional competence of mid-level managers by gender, as in the study of Cavallo and Brienza (2002), the results found a difference in emotional competence between men and women. Specifically, Women score better on social responsibility, interpersonal relationships, empathy, and actual ability performance than men do, while men score higher on environmental adaptation and real ability performance. Similar to this, Mandell and Pherwani (2003) discovered a significant difference in the emotional capacity of male and female managers in their study of the relationship between emotional competence and managers. The findings indicate that female managers are better able to use emotional competence in managing in the workplace than male managers. Due to the conflicting findings of the research, a more precise test is required to establish this relationship for mid-level managers in the context of small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. We put forward the hypothesis that:

H6a: There is a difference in the emotional capacity of mid-level managers by gender.

- **Differences in emotional capacity of mid-level managers by age:** In his study, Goleman (2001) showed that emotional capacity of individuals in general and managers in particular tends to change and increase over time, along with an increase in that individual's lifespan. Similarly, the study of Mayer et al (1995); Mayer and Geher (1996) also agreed and concluded that there is a difference in the emotional capacity of managers by age. Research by Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) proved that there is a relationship between emotional competence and age of managers. In contrast, there are also many studies that show the non-existence of the relationship between emotional competence and age of managers as in the study of Slaski and Cartwright (2002). They have studied and showed the conclusion that there is no basis to confirm the difference in emotional capacity of managers by age. Thus, like gender characteristics, in terms of emotional capacity by age of managers, so far, the results of studies have shown heterogeneity. So in the context of small and medium enterprises in the Mekong Delta, we wondered whether this difference exist. We put forward the hypothesis that:

H6b: There is a difference in the emotional capacity of mid-level managers by age.

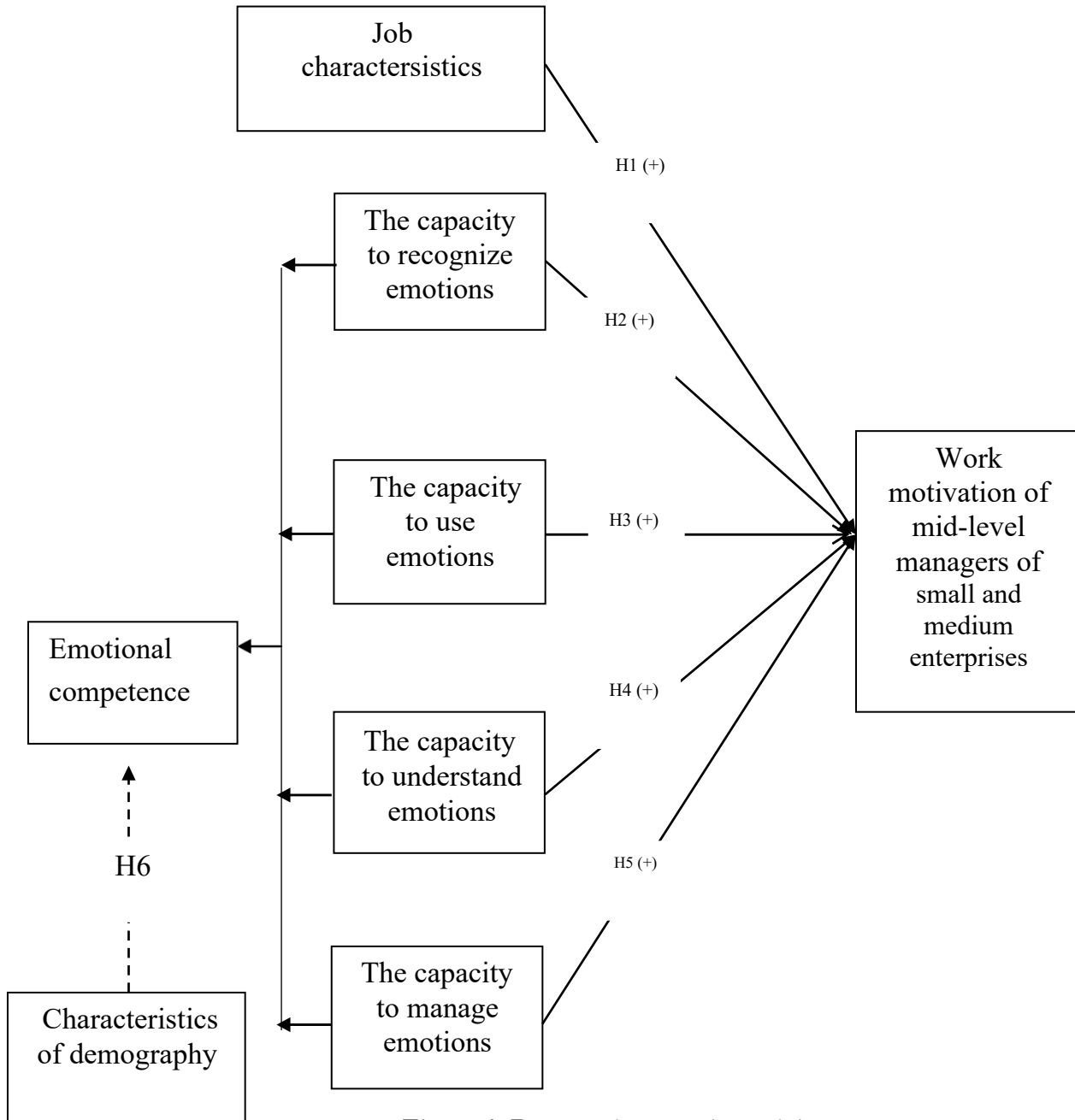
- **Differences in emotional capacity of mid-level managers by seniority:** Seniority is regarded as one of the crucial variables determining work experience and knowledge as well as decision-making capacity. The decisions and management capacity of mid-level managers are thought to be correlated with their emotional competence. Carmeli (2003), for instance, has demonstrated via her research that mid-level managers with high emotional capacities frequently have a more upbeat and successful working attitude. The majority of research, however, have not addressed the connection between mid-level managers' emotional capacities and their specific seniority in each organization. To demonstrate how mid-level managers at small and medium-sized businesses in the Mekong Delta differ in their emotional intelligence based on their level of seniority, as well as to test this, we put forward the hypothesis that:

H6c: There is a difference in the emotional capacity of mid-level managers by seniority.

2.3. Research model

Based on the research overview and theoretical framework, the research model was built including 2 main independent variables: emotional competence and job characteristics. The emotional competence variable includes 4 components: (1) The

capacity to recognize emotions; (2) The capacity to use emotions; (3) The capacity to understand emotions; (4) The capacity to manage emotions. The dependent variable in the model is mid-level managers' work motivation. (Figure 1)



3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Scale development

The scale was used to measure the concepts in the research model, and it is inherited from previous studies.

Table 1. Scale for work motivation of mid-level managers

No.	Encoding	Observed variables	Source
1	DL1	I usually try my best to complete my work despite the difficulties	The scale of Stee & Porter (1983) (with some adjustment by the writer)
2	DL2	I do my best to complete my work for the sake of the organization's goals	
3	DL3	I'm always excited about what I'm doing	
4	DL4	I often think about my work even at home	
5	DL5	I usually try my best to not make mistakes in the process of working	
6	DL6	I am willing to start work early or stay late to get work done	

Table 2. Scale for independent variables used in the model

Encoding	Variables	Source
Job characteristics (CV)		
CV1	My work is interesting and requires creativity	The scale of Hackman và Oldham (1980) (with some adjustment from the writer)
CV2	I am always proactive in my work	
CV3	I always receive timely reviews of my work	
CV4	The work I am doing is important to business and society.	
CV5	My job requires a combination of skills	
CV6	My job offers many opportunities for professional development	
CV7	My work helps me develop social relationships	
The capacity to recognize emotions (NBCX)		
NBCX1	I clearly understand facial expressions, gestures, and behaviors of others mean satisfaction (or discomfort / apprehension, etc.) with me.	The scale SSRI of Ciarrochi et al (2001) (with some adjustment from the writer)
NBCX2	I am aware whether I am happy (or upset/afraid/stressed, etc.) the moment I meet someone.	
NBCX3	I take the initiative and clearly understand the messages/implicits being conveyed when assigning work to my subordinates.	
NBCX4	Looking at the expression on the face of the other person, I can immediately realize that they are feeling comfortable (or annoyed/stressed/ apprehensive/ anxious, etc.) when talking or working with me.	
NBCX5	When my feelings about work change (from excited to depressed or from bewildered to good, etc.), I know well why my feelings change like that.	
NBCX6	I easily recognize my true feelings (feeling happy/annoying/stressed/afraid, etc.) as soon as I meet someone.	
NBCX7	I realize the hidden meaning behind other people's gestures and actions is that they are feeling trust (or disappointed/indignant/fear/apologetic, etc.) in me.	
NBCX8	Just looking at a person, I always know what their feelings are.	
NBCX9	I always recognize other people's emotions by listening to the	

	intensity of their voice.	
NBCX10	I often don't understand why people feel the way they do.	
The capacity to use emotions (SDCX)		
SDCX1	When I encounter a major event in my life, I often judge what is important or unimportant.	The scale SSRI of Ciarrochi et al (2001) (with some adjustment from the writer)
SDCX2	When the mood changes in a positive direction, I find myself more enthusiastic about the work.	
SDCX3	Emotions are one of the things that make my life meaningful.	
SDCX4	When I'm in a good mood, I always solve problems easily.	
SDCX5	When I'm in a good mood, I can think of many new ideas.	
SDCX6	I tend to come up with new ideas when I feel a change in my personal feelings.	
The capacity to understand emotions (THCX)		
THCX1	I always know when to share my private problems with others.	The scale SSRI of Ciarrochi et al (2001) (with some adjustment from the writer)
THCX2	People often find it easy to share their problems with me.	
THCX3	I like to share my feelings with people.	
THCX4	When it comes to communication, I know how to arrange events to make others happy.	
THCX5	When I need to express myself to someone, I always know how to make a good impression on that person.	
THCX6	I usually give praise when my subordinates do something good.	
THCX7	When someone tells me about an important event in their life, I often feel as though I have experienced the situation myself.	
THCX8	I often help other people feel better when they are sad.	
The capacity to manage emotions (KSCX)		
KSCX1	Whenever I encounter difficulties/obstacles at work, I often recall similar situations that caused emotions (sadness/anger...) in me and how I overcame those emotions. .	The scale SSRI of Ciarrochi et al (2001) (with some adjustment from the writer)
KSCX2	I always believe that I will do well everything.	
KSCX3	In any situation, I always expect good things to come to me.	
KSCX4	When I'm in a good mood, I know how to prolong it.	
KSCX5	I am always looking for work that brings me joy and excitement.	
KSCX6	I always control my emotions in every situation.	
KSCX7	I have self-control and personal emotional stimulation to adapt to any changing circumstances.	
KSCX8	I easily find effective ways to deal with problems that arise in the workplace.	

3.2. Research stages

3.2.1. Preliminary research

At the preliminary research stage, the author used qualitative research methods with target group discussion techniques. Specifically: the author used convenient sampling method, selected ten mid-level managers of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Mekong Delta to participate in the discussion. This research phase aimed to adjust and added observed variables to the scale for concepts in the research model. Besides, the author also conducted in-depth interviews with 10 University lecturers majoring in Economics and Business Administration and 20 managers who are leaders of enterprises located in provinces and localities in the Mekong Delta region. All interviews were in the form of face-to-face interviews with a duration of 30 to 60 minutes, with an average of 45 minutes. Interview period is from May 2022 to June 2022. The objective of the group interview is to evaluate and edit the content of observations and models, research hypotheses, how to measure variables and model results. The objective of the group interview is the managers to find out and capture their attitudes and views on how to motivate mid-level managers and also to investigate their level of understanding and contribution to the observations in the research scale.

3.2.2. Quantitative research

In the quantitative research stage, the author used the non-probability sampling method, which is convenience sampling. The subjects were managers and employees at small and medium enterprises in the Mekong Delta region in order to verify the accuracy and suitability of the model, assessed the reliability of the scale and variables, and removed nonconforming indicators. Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to a direct survey for the period from July 1, 2022 to August 1, 2022, with an expected sample size of 800.

3.3. Data processing method

The results of data collection through the investigation and survey process were analyzed by SPSS software to draw conclusions that demonstrate the appropriateness of the model and the research hypotheses. The steps were:

First, evaluating the scale's validity.

Second, testing the value of the scale by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Varimax rotation method was used.

Third, re-testing the reliability of the scale with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient after removing inappropriate items.

Fourth, using Pearson correlation coefficient test to measure the relationship between variables;

Fifth, using Multiple Regression Analysis.

Sixth, using Anova test and T-test to assess whether or not there is a difference.

Seventh, using Descriptive Statistics approach.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Research sample information

The research sample was selected by non-probability sampling method, which is convenient sampling, stratified relatively according to provinces and localities in order to increase the representativeness of the research sample including Can Tho, Dong Thap, Vinh Long, An Giang, Kien Giang, Tien Giang. The participants were mid-level managers in small and medium enterprises.

Table 3. Distribution of the research sample

No.	Place	Number of expected participants	Participants	Rate
1	Can Tho city	250	187	40.74
2	Dong Thap	150	92	20.04
3	Vinh Long	100	46	10.02
4	An Giang	100	51	11.11
5	Kien Giang	100	47	10.24
6	Tien Giang	100	36	7.84
Total		800	459	100

Source: Summary of the author's research

4.2. Evaluate the reliability of the scale

To assess the reliability of the scale, the study conducted Cronbach's Alpha analysis for each group of variables. Cronbach's Alpha is a statistical test of the rigor or explainability for a research concept of a set of observed variables in the scale.

Table 4. Summary of Cronbach's Alpha values of variables

TT	Variables	Coding	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Job characteristics	CV	0.884
2	The capacity to recognize emotions	NBCX	0.909
3	The capacity to use emotions	SDCX	0.860
4	The capacity to understand emotions	THCX	0.850
5	The ability to manage emotions	KSCX	0.862
6	Mid-level managers' work motivation	DL	0.933

Source: Extracted from analysis of results

4.3. Testing the value of the scale by EFA

After conducting a test of the reliability of the scale, the study conducted an exploratory factor analysis EFA. The analysis process for the independent variables was conducted twice, in which the factor loading coefficients in the analyzes all had values >0.5 , showing the appropriate correlation between the observed variables (indicators) and selection factors in the model. However, in the first time, due to not guaranteeing the "convergence value" of the same factor, the CV6 indicators were rejected.

Table 4. EFA analysis results for independent variables

EFA	KMO	P-value	Average Variance Extracted	Factor loading	Conclusion
1 st time	0.927	0.000	58.628	All >0.5	Delete CV6
2 nd time	0.940	0.000	55.921	All >0.5	Acceptable

Source: Extracted from analysis of results

4.4. Pearson's correlation coefficient test

The results of the correlation analysis showed that all independent variables have an impact on the dependent variable (work motivation of mid-level managers). At the same time, there was a close correlation between the variables (the coefficient Sig (2-tailed) was <0.05). Therefore, to ensure the level of accuracy, it was necessary to carefully review the role of the independent variables on the multivariable regression model by considering the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variables.

4.5. Analysis of regression model

The results of the regression analysis showed that, with the value Sig. < 0.05 , and the normalized regression coefficient Beta was positive, all hypotheses from H1 to H5 were accepted which mean that the independent variables included in the model including: job characteristics, emotional awareness, use of emotions, emotional understanding and emotional control all have a positive impact on the work motivation of mid-level managers in small and medium enterprises in the Mekong Delta region. At the same time, with the highest standardized regression coefficient among all the independent variables of 0.467, the job characteristics variable has the strongest impact on the work motivation of mid-level managers. The next was emotion control variable with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.139, and then emotional understanding (0.134), and then emotional use (0.104) and emotion recognition (0.101). The regression equation is obtained:

$$DL = -0.485 + 0.600*CV + 0.108*NBCX + 0.095*SDCX + 0.151*THCX + 0.157*KSCX.$$

Table 5. Results of regression analysis of factors affecting work motivation of mid-level managers in small and medium enterprises in the Mekong Delta

TT	Independent variables	Coefficient Regression	Standardized Beta Coefficient	Sig.	Variance inflation factor VIF
	(Constans)	-0.485		0.013	
1	Job characteristics	0.600	0.467	0.000	1.159
2	The capacity to recognize emotions	0.108	0.101	SS0.020	1.696
3	The capacity to use emotions	0.095	0.104	0.024	1.902
4	The capacity to understand emotions	0.151	0.134	0.003	1.827
5	The ability to manage emotions	0.157	0.139	0.002	1.768

Source: Compiled from analysis results. The adjusted R2 coefficient is 0.493. This means that the independent variables take into account 49.3% of the change in the dependent variable (mid-level manager's motivation). Other tests show that the regression hypothesis is not violated.

4.6. Differentiation testing

4.6.1. Testing the differences in emotional capacity of mid-level managers by gender

T-Test test was used for gender variables (male and female). The results showed that the sig value of Levene's Test was $0.880 > 0.05$, so the variance between the 2 groups of gender variables was not different, the study used the sig T-Test value in the Equal variances row. The sig T-Test value was $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no difference in the emotional capacity of the mid-level managers by gender. The study disproves the H6a hypothesis.

4.6.2. Examine the differences in emotional capacity of mid-level managers by age group

The ANOVA test results showed a sig value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, it can be concluded that there are statistically significant differences in the emotional capacity of mid-level managers by age groups. Therefore, the H6b hypothesis is accepted. The study conducted in-depth testing after ANOVA to assess the average and difference in emotional capacity of mid-level managers by age group. The test results showed that group 3 (from 40 to under 50 years old) had the highest average value of emotional capacity factor compared

to other age groups (3.8162). This was followed by group 4 (aged 50 and over) with an average value of emotional capacity of 3.5756, group 2 (aged 30 to under 40) of 3.1075, and finally group 1 (3.0192) consisting of mid-level managers under the age of 30.

4.6.3. Verify the difference in the working capacity of mid-level managers according to their working seniority.

The ANOVA test results showed a sig value of $0.044 < 0.05$. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the emotional capacity of mid-level managers according to seniority. Therefore, the H_{6c} hypothesis is accepted. The study conducted in-depth testing after ANOVA to assess the average and difference in emotional capacity of mid-level managers according to their seniority. The results showed that group 3 consisted of mid-level managers with a current management seniority of 20 years or more with the highest average value of emotional competence compared to other groups (3.4733). The next was group 2 consisting of mid-level managers with a current management seniority of 10 to less than 20 years with an average value of emotional capacity of 3.4017 and finally was group 1 consisting of mid-level managers with a seniority in the current management field of less than 10 years with a value of the average emotional capacity is 3.2875.

4.7. Descriptive statistical analysis

With the highest average value of the research factors included in the model which is 3.8664, the job characteristics of mid-level managers at small and medium-sized enterprises in the Mekong Delta region are rated at the highest level. While, with an average value of emotional capacity of 3.3056, it can be seen that the emotional control capacity of mid-level managers at small and medium-sized enterprises in the Mekong Delta region is still at the lowest level among all variables included in the model.

5. CONCLUSIONS

First, the study showed that all factors included in the model including characteristics at work; emotional capacity with four factors of emotion recognition, emotional use, emotional understanding and emotional control all have a favorable impact on the motivation of mid-level managers at small and medium-sized enterprises in the Mekong Delta region.

Second, research showed the importance of emotional competence for motivation, thereby governing the performance of mid-level managers. All four elements of emotional competence have an impact on work motivation.

Third, the study also identified the order of impact of each factor on the motivation of mid-level managers. In particular, work characteristics have the strongest impact. The next order of impact includes the variable of controlling emotions, understanding emotions, using emotions, and recognizing emotions.

Fourth, the results of the study showed differences in the emotional capacity of mid-level managers according to demographic variables including age group and seniority, but no differences by gender.

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, the authors proposed to imply governance focusing on the following 02 issues:

5.1. With the job characteristics of the mid-level managers

- Firstly, create initiative in work performance: To create initiative in work, enterprises also need to create conditions for mid-level managers to participate in decision-making and give ideas, suggestions and suggestions related to their work and participate in strategy development, the company's business plan. Proper job assignments create initiative in the work of mid-level managers, they will have to spend less time correcting errors, finding information or fixing unnecessary problems.

- Secondly, create interest in working: Management is a creative, scientific and artistic activity, requiring managers to converge many different skills and excitement in this job will be an effective solution to help managers overcome many difficulties at work and bring success. The interest in work for mid-level managers can stem from a variety of reasons such as the engagement in the work of managers and employees; working environment; the results of the work of the mid-level managers themselves or the rewards of the organization bring to the managers themselves

- Thirdly, Create opportunities to develop professional competencies for mid-level managers: Professional skills are considered important skills for mid-level managers, who will be in charge of managing each specialized department in the enterprise. Therefore, improving the professional capacity of the middle management team is not only an urgent requirement in the present time but will be a long-term, annual goal of every organization. Small and medium enterprises with limited scale, technology level is not close to large enterprises as well as leading corporations. Therefore, they need to promote the strength

factor of human resources. The main manifestation is the professional capacity, working skills of the management team, thereby affecting the working efficiency of employees.

- Fourthly, Develop relationships inside and outside of work: Mid-level managers with the most important skill is relationship skills, always require managers to practice and improve qualities related to this skill. Regularly building and creating cohesion in relationships with both subordinates, colleagues and senior managers, as well as creating, maintaining and developing external relationships are considered necessary requirements for all business activities involving mid-level managers.

- Fifthly, Improve the working environment: Build a proactive, safe working environment and limit pressure at work. At the same time, create conditions for mid-level managers to manage their work with the best efficiency. Building a good management environment is one of the top contents and tasks that any business must pay attention to. Having a good management environment, each individual from managers to employees has good working conditions, promoting their abilities and abilities at work, especially with mid-level managers. In other words, a good management environment is not only a condition but also a motivational basis for mid-level managers.

- Finally, building a positive motivation for a middle management team: A manager's motivation can come from two positive and negative aspects. The negative aspect often comes from the individualistic, opportunistic needs that exist in the middle management relationship. Managers in this case often still try at work, but the ultimate goal they aim for is not for the collective good but for the individual good. Therefore, it can have a significant impact on the overall efficiency of the business. Therefore, it is necessary to motivate the middle manager based on positive working motives. These are the motives that come from the collective interest, towards the common goal of the department and solve the problems of the whole enterprise. It is necessary to create a friendly and effective working atmosphere. Create a positive, professional and effective work culture.

5.2. With the emotional capacity of the mid-level managers

- Firstly, regarding the capacity to recognize emotions: mid-level managers need to practice the ability to communicate personal feelings and needs to others, self-awareness of changes in personal emotions that affect decisions in management.

- Secondly, regarding the capacity to use emotions: It is necessary to improve the ability to influence, catalyze to change, control employee behavior of mid-level managers, the ability to feel and understand the emotions of employees, understand the nonverbal language messages of employees.

- Thirdly, regarding the capacity to understand emotions: Mid-level managers, in addition to understanding and controlling their own emotions, also need to grasp the psychology, needs and expectations of subordinates and leaders. It is necessary to build and maintain relationships based on increasing knowledge sharing, work with other employees and managers.

- Finally, regarding the capacity to control emotions: Mid-level managers need to be trained to improve their understanding of problems at work, develop emotional self-control skills, and be able to work under high pressure.

REFERENCES

Buble, M., Juras, A. & Matic, I. (2014), 'The relationship between managers' leadership styles and motivation', *Management*, 19 (1), pp. 161-193.

Carmeli, A. (2003), 'The relationship between emotional intelligence and work attitudes, behavior and outcomes: An examination among senior managers', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 18(8), pp. 788-813.

Cavallo, K. & Brienza, D. (2002), 'Emotional competence and leadership excellence at Johnson & Johnson: the emotional intelligence and leadership study', Downloaded 7 June, 2006, from <http://www.eiconsortium.org>.

Chiu, R. (1999), 'Does perception of pay equity, pay satisfaction and job satisfaction mediate the effect of positive affectivity on work motivation?', *Social Behavior and Personality*, 28(2), pp. 177-184.

Ciarrochi, J., Chan, A. Y. C. & Bajgar, J. (2001), 'Measuring Emotional Intelligence in Adolescents', *Personality and Individual Differences*, 31(7), pp. 1105-1119.

Daft, 1997, *Management* Dryden Press series in management, Dryden Press.

Gatakaa, M.A. (2013), 'Perceived relationship between organizational culture and motivation of paralegal staff at the Kenya judiciary', School of business, University of Nairobi.

Goleman, D. (2001), '—An EI-based theory of performance', in Cherniss, C. and Goleman, D. (Eds.), *The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Hackman, J.R. & Oldham, G.R. (1980), *Work redesign*, Addison-Wesley.

Mandell, B., & Pherwani, S. (2003), 'Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership Style: A Gender Comparison', *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 17, pp. 387-404.

Mayer, J.D., & Geher, G. (1996), 'Emotional intelligence and the identification of emotion', *Intelligence*, 22(2), pp. 89-113.

Mayer, R.C., Davis, J.H. & Schoorman, F.D. (1995), 'An Integrative Model of

Organizational Trust', *The Academy of Management Review*, 30(3), pp.709-734.

Ngo My Tran, Ly Ngoc Thien Kim & Le Tran Minh Hieu (2019), Research on the influence of corporate culture on organizational commitment of employees of commercial banks in Soc Trang province' , *Journal of Science Open University Ho Chi Minh City*, 14(3), pp. 123-146.

Nikolaou, I., & Tsaousis, I. (2002), Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace: Exploring its Effects on Occupational Stress and Organizational Commitment', *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 10(4), pp. 327-342

Pham Bao Duong (2012), Factors affecting the work motivation of scientific researchers', *Scientific activities*, no. 4, pp. 14-16.

Sherwood, J.A. (2015), The multilevel effects of supervisor adaptability on training effectiveness and employee job satisfaction, *Portland State University, USA*.

Slaski, M. & Cartwright, S. (2002), Health, performance and emotional intelligence: An exploratory study for retail managers', *Stress and Health*, 18, pp. 63-68.

Stee, R.M. & Porter, L.W. (1983), 'Motivation: New directions for theory and research', *Academy of Management Review*, 17(1), pp. 80-88.

Stringer, C. and Didham, J. (2011), Motivation, pay satisfaction, and job satisfaction of front-line employees' *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 8(2), pp. 161-179.