

EXPLORING SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF LECTURER MOTIVATION: EVIDENCE FROM PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN VIETNAM

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Abstract: The rapid expansion of private universities in Vietnam is intensifying competition to attract and retain high-quality lecturers. This study examines the social-psychological determinants of lecturer motivation at private universities in Vietnam. The authors used survey data from 1,125 lecturers at private universities in two major cities, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh, analysed using a structural equation model (SEM). The analysis showed that working condition factors such as compensation and fairness, workload, and job security had the most positive effects on job satisfaction. Additionally, job satisfaction was also found to have a positive relationship with work motivation. The study contributes to extending the application of motivational theories within the context of private higher education in an emerging economy such as Vietnam.

Keywords: job satisfaction, work motivation, lecturers, private university, Vietnam

1. INTRODUCTION

Given that the university system in Vietnam is shifting strongly towards autonomy, competition and international integration, private universities are playing an increasingly important role in training high-quality human resources for society. However, compared to public universities, private universities face significant pressure to recruit, retain and develop lecturers. In which the motivation of lecturers is a key factor determining the quality of teaching and scientific research activities, as well as the sustainable development of the university. Improving work motivation is not solely about remuneration policies. Still, it is influenced by many factors, such as the working environment, promotion opportunities, organizational culture and characteristics of the university management model.

Although there is extensive research on work motivation in industry and service sectors, there is surprisingly little known about lecturers' motivation in higher education (Munyengabe et al., 2016; Nguyen & Uong, 2022a; Nguyen, 2024). According to Daumiller et al. (2020), faculty motivation is defined as "the overall process that leads to the instructor initiating, maintaining, and adjusting goal-oriented behaviours." They also emphasized that less research exists on university faculty motivation compared to high school teachers because there is often an assumption that faculty are inherently highly motivated. Furthermore, classical models such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959), or the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), although widely used, do not fully explain how motivating factors operate under the specific conditions of private universities, where governance mechanisms are more enterprise-driven, and profit goals can influence the psychology and career expectations of lecturers.

Currently, many private universities are struggling to retain lecturers, with some transferring jobs or leaving the industry entirely. Meanwhile, policies and measures to boost lecturer motivation at these institutions remain basic or lack scientific data to inform them. In Vietnam, although there is research on the motivation of public lecturers (Nguyen & Uong, 2022b), there is very little in-depth empirical research on the motivation of lecturers at private universities, creating a significant gap in practical solutions for development.

The goal of this study is to analyze and clarify the factors that influence the motivation of lecturers in private universities, thereby contributing both theoretical and practical insights to the field of organizational behavior.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Underlying theory

The analytical framework is based on inheriting and synthesizing classic theories of work motivation and organizational behavior, with a particular focus on the specific context of private universities in Vietnam. This study employs theories such as two-factor theory, the Job Characteristics Model, Self-Determination Theory, Equity Theory, Perceived Organizational Support Theory, and Person-Organization (P-O) fit theory.

The two-factor theory developed by Herzberg (1959) classifies factors influencing motivation into two categories: hygiene factors such as salary, job security, and work environment, and motivators including promotion,

achievement, and recognition. Hygiene factors mainly prevent dissatisfaction, while motivators can boost intrinsic motivation.

Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model identifies five core work features: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. These features influence employees' psychological states and, as a result, boost intrinsic motivation. In private universities, the levels of academic autonomy and workload are seen as two factors that directly reflect job characteristics, affecting lecturers' satisfaction and motivation in teaching and research.

The Self-Determination Theory developed by Ryan and Deci (2000) states that intrinsic motivation is created when three basic psychological needs are met: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the context of private universities, factors such as academic freedom, development opportunities, research support, and supportive leadership style directly address these needs.

The equity theory introduced by Adams (1963) argues that workers' motivations are influenced by a sense of fairness when comparing their contribution levels to what they receive relative to others. Additionally, organizational equity studies break down equity into three aspects: distribution, procedure, and interaction. This framework helps explain how compensation and transparency in decision-making affect lecturers' satisfaction and motivation.

Perceived organizational support, developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), highlights that when employees feel the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, they usually increase their commitment and effort.

Person-Organization fit was introduced by Kristof in 1996. This theory states that the alignment between personal and organizational values significantly affects satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. In private universities, where educational philosophies and objectives can vary widely from those of public universities, the value fit factor is seen as a key element in shaping lecturers' commitment and motivation.

The study model is shown in Figure 1 below:

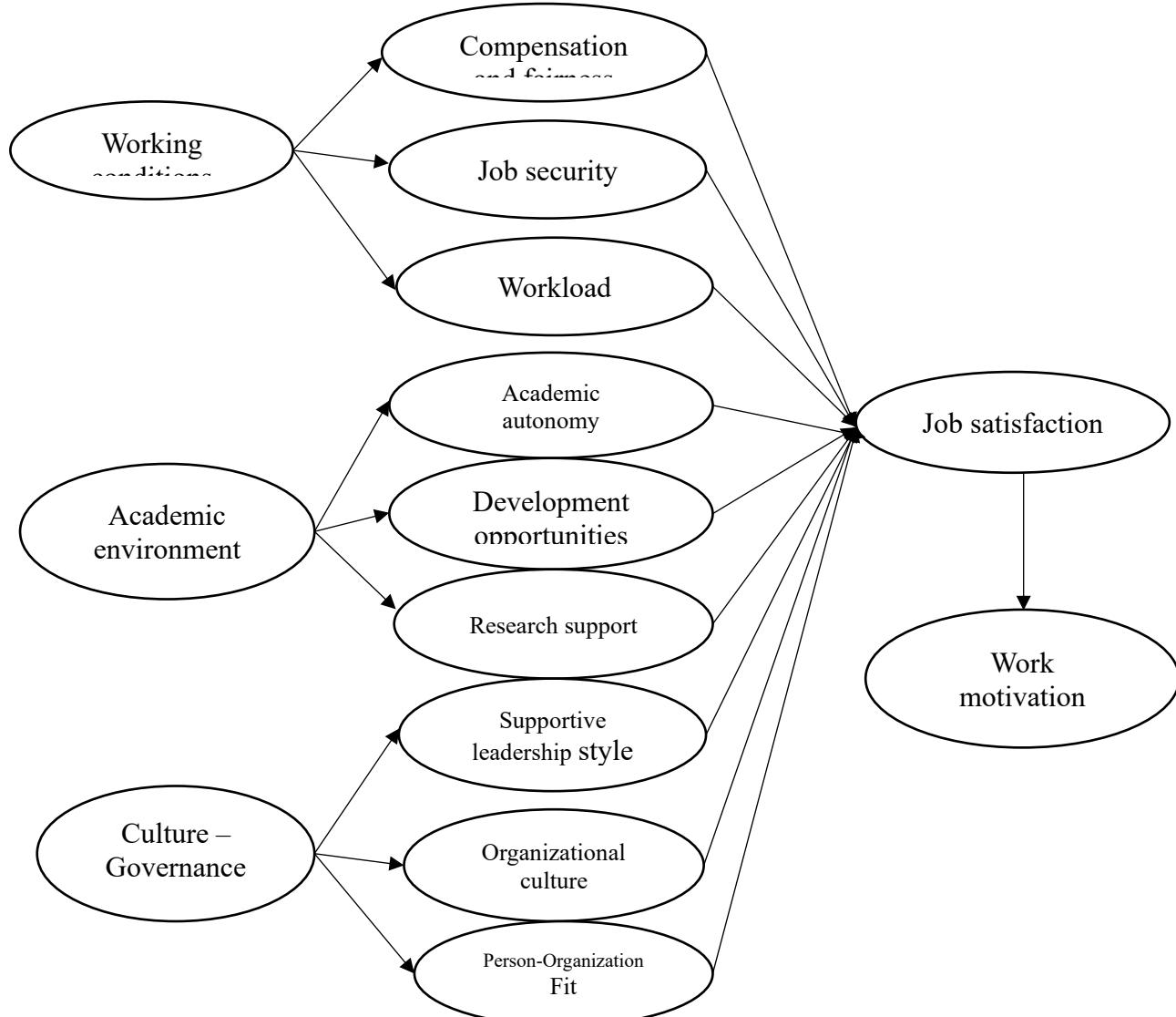


Figure 1: Research model

Source: Proposed by the authors

2.2. Hypothesis development

Compensation and fairness refer to the extent to which faculty members feel that the school's income, benefits, bonuses, and treatment are reasonable and match their contributions (Adams, 1963). Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from evaluating an individual's work based on expectations (Locke, 1976). According to Equity Theory and Two-Factor Theory, the perception of fair compensation is an important hygiene factor that can reduce dissatisfaction and increase satisfaction levels. In the context of private universities, where competition and comparison of benefits are strong, reasonable pay is expected to enhance job satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: Compensation and fairness have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Job security refers to the level of occupational safety that a lecturer perceives based on the type of contract, their ability to keep the position, and the risk of unemployment. According to Herzberg (1959), stability is a maintenance factor that prevents dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction increases when individuals feel secure and worry less about their career future. In private universities, where short-term contracts and staffing instability are common, stability becomes even more crucial for faculty satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: Job security has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Workload refers to the level of work demands, such as teaching hours, part-time work, and administrative tasks, that lecturers must complete within a certain period. According to the Job Demands-Resources Model, when the workload is manageable, workers experience less stress and have greater control, which enhances job satisfaction. Conversely, a high volume of lecture hours leads to increased stress, less research time, and lower satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H3: Workload has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Academic autonomy refers to the extent to which faculty have the authority to make decisions on professional matters like course content, teaching strategies, and student evaluation. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), autonomy is the fundamental psychological need that fuels intrinsic motivation. When lecturers are given this autonomy, they feel their work is meaningful and aligns with their skills, which boosts job satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H4: Academic autonomy has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Development opportunities refer to the access lecturers have to fostering, promotion, and learning activities aimed at enhancing their qualifications or advancing to higher professional roles. According to Self-Determination Theory, career development fosters a sense of progress and self-fulfillment, which in turn increases job satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H5: Development opportunities have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Research support refers to the university's provision of research resources, funding, reduced teaching hours, or administrative assistance for scientific work. According to Perceived Organizational Support (POS), this support makes trainers feel valued, thereby boosting job satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H6: Research support has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

A supportive leadership style refers to the extent to which direct leaders demonstrate interest, provide guidance, listen, facilitate, and offer professional support to trainers during their work. This leadership behavior emphasizes empowerment, fair treatment, and consideration of employees' needs. According to Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) and Social Exchange Theory, when faculty perceive leaders as caring and supportive, they develop a sense of value, protection, and a positive work environment. This fosters comfort, reduces stress, and improves job satisfaction, which is defined as an individual's positive emotional state when assessing work that meets their expectations and needs (Locke, 1976). In private universities, where revenue pressures and policy changes are intense, leadership support has become even more crucial, directly influencing the career experiences of lecturers. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H7: The supportive leadership style has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Organizational culture is a system of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors shared within the school that guides how members interact, make decisions, and perform tasks (Schein, 2010). In a private university setting, culture combines academic logic with business logic. A culture characterized by positivity, academic support, professional respect, internal collaboration, and transparency helps faculty feel more meaningful, less stressed, and aligned with professional values. A strong, supportive culture fosters a sense of belonging to the organization, which in turn increases job satisfaction. Conversely, a culture driven by revenue pressure or excessive control can decrease faculty satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H8: Organizational culture has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Person-Organization Fit refers to the degree of similarity or compatibility between an individual's values, goals, and norms and the organization's values and culture (Kristof, 1996). When faculty members perceive that the university shares their professional values, such as a focus on quality, respect for academics, and support for development, they tend to feel more harmonious and adaptable in the work environment. According to studies on P-O fit, aligning values helps individuals find their work meaningful and supports their professional identity, which in turn boosts job satisfaction (Shah & Ayub, 2021; Deniz & Çimen, 2025). In the context of Vietnam's private universities, value mismatches, such as being too business-oriented or less academic, are likely to cause

psychological conflicts and reduce job satisfaction. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H9: Person-organization fit has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state that reflects how well work meets personal needs and expectations (Locke, 1976), and it is regarded as an important basis for work motivation, which is the willingness to put in effort and sustain behavior toward career goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to the two-factor theory, the Job Characteristics Model, and the Self-Determination Theory, satisfaction relates to a sense of meaningful work, acknowledgment, and the fulfillment of the needs for autonomy, competence, and engagement, all of which directly enhance the intrinsic motivation of the lecturer. Simultaneously, based on Social Exchange Theory, when satisfied, lecturers tend to respond by increasing effort and commitment, thereby boosting behavioral motivation. Consequently, job satisfaction is likely to have a positive impact on work motivation. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H10: Job satisfaction has a positive relationship with work motivation.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data collection

We used the survey method to gather data, which involved email or online surveys through Google Form questions. The data was collected from August to October 2025, resulting in 1,125 valid responses after removing invalid votes. The main advantage of using questionnaires is the efficient use of time, money, and focus during data collection (Evans & Mathur, 2018).

Initially, the survey was sent to a small group of 30 lecturers to gather feedback on the questionnaire before conducting a larger survey. The feedback focuses on aspects such as word choice, question clarity, and specific expressions. We then use a convenient sampling method combined with a snowball, in which respondents share the survey link with colleagues and leverage relationships with lecturers to collect data.

3.2. Measurement scales

All variables in the model are latent variables, measured by a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The scales are adapted from previous studies and tailored to the context of private universities in Vietnam. The compensation and fairness scale includes 5 observed variables based on Colquitt's (2001) study. The job security scale draws from Nguyen and Uong's (2022a) research with 4 observed variables. The workload scale is adapted from Spector and Jex's (1998) study, also with 4 observed variables. The academic autonomy scale is based on Aberbach and Christensen's (2018) research with 4 observed variables. The development opportunities scale was developed from London and Smither's (1999) study, containing 4 observed variables. The research support scale comes from Bland et al.'s (2005) research with 4 observed variables. The supportive leadership style scale involves 4 variables from Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) study. The organizational culture scale comprises 4 variables from Nguyen and Uong's (2023) research. The person-organization fit scale includes 4 observed variables from Shah and Ayub's (2021) study. The scales for job satisfaction and work motivation are adapted from Nguyen and Uong's (2022b) research and include 8 observed variables.

This study uses scales that have been validated in previous research to ensure proven reliability and validity. However, the scales are adapted to the context of early retirement and are designed to suit the audience and application specific to this research.

3.3. Data analysis

Data analysis occurs in several steps. First, the reliability of the scale is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to remove unsuitable variables. Then, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is employed to evaluate convergent and discriminant validity and the overall relevance of the measurement model. Finally, structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test research hypotheses and examine causal relationships among concepts. The data processed with SPSS 26 and AMOS 24 software ensures the accuracy and scientific validity of the results. Since this study collected self-reported questionnaire data from a single source and at one point in time, there is a potential for common method bias among constructs. Therefore, the study conducted Harman's single factor test through exploratory factor analysis and addressed this issue as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003).

4. RESULTS

The study gathered 1,125 valid responses, with 57.3% female and 42.7% male. This ratio aligns with the typical gender distribution among private university lecturers in Vietnam, where female lecturers tend to make up a slightly larger share in socio-economic sectors. Regarding age, 18.5% were under 30, 42.7% ranged from 31 to 40, 27.7% were between 41 and 50, and 11.1% were over 50. The results indicated that most lecturers were under 40, reflecting a trend of younger staff in private universities. Concerning educational background, all respondents held postgraduate degrees, with 50% having master's degrees, 34.3% holding doctorates, and 15.7% being associate professors or professors. This demonstrates that the sample is reliable for assessing issues related to motivation and the academic environment. In terms of seniority, 20.3% had less than 3 years of experience, 35.3% had 3 to 5 years, 27.8% had 6 to 10 years, and 16.6% had more than 10 years. The group with 3 to 10 years of

experience represented the largest share, indicating relative stability among private university lecturers. Regarding contract type, 40.5% held indefinite-term contracts, 45.7% had fixed-term contracts, and 13.8% were on visiting contracts. Overall, the contract structure reveals that most lecturers work under fixed-term contracts, a common feature in Vietnamese private universities.

Table 1 shows that the scales have Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7, indicating good reliability. The corrected item-total correlation of the observed variables exceeds 0.3, suggesting they are unlikely to be excluded in the exploratory factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, the scales meet the standards and will continue to be included in the exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural model analysis (see Table 1).

Table 1: The results of Cronbach's Alpha

Scales	Sign	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected item-total correlation
Compensation and fairness	CF1	I believe my salary matches the workload.	0.832	0.683
	CF2	The bonus and allowance policy is reasonable.		0.681
	CF3	I am happy with the benefits.		0.582
	CF4	I believe my compensation is comparable to that of other lecturers with similar contributions.		0.675
	CF5	I am well compensated for my teaching and research efforts.		0.687
Job security	SE1	I'm not concerned about the chance of losing my job.	0.809	0.666
	SE2	I plan to work for a long time.		0.680
	SE3	My current job is relatively stable.		0.679
	SE4	The work is well-suited to my abilities.		0.662
Workload	W1	My teaching load is manageable.	0.817	0.710
	W2	I had enough time to properly prepare for the lecture.		0.690
	W3	I am not overwhelmed by administrative tasks.		0.688
	W4	The allocation of lecture hours and scientific research is reasonable.		0.673
Academic autonomy	AA1	I have the authority to design the course content.	0.812	0.590
	AA2	I have the right to select the proper teaching method.		0.555
	AA3	I actively evaluate students.		0.616
	AA4	I am free to decide the direction of scientific research.		0.637
Development opportunities	DO1	I was given the opportunity to participate in professional training courses.	0.799	0.628
	DO2	I have the chance to further my career.		0.631
	DO3	I am supported in improving my qualifications.		0.685
	DO4	Provide clear career development pathways for lecturers.		0.700
Research support	RS1	I received funding to support scientific research projects.	0.801	0.581
	RS2	I get fewer lecture hours when I do research.		0.539
	RS3	I received support with procedures and administration while conducting research.		0.619
	RS4	The research facilities meet my needs.		0.608
Supportive leadership style	SLS1	The faculty/department leaders listened to my opinion.	0.810	0.620
	SLS2	The leader backs me up when I face difficulties at work.		0.627
	SLS3	I received encouraging feedback from the leader.		0.617
	SLS4	Leaders treat lecturers with fairness and respect.		0.609
Organizational culture	OC1	Establish core values and a clear vision.	0.821	0.625
	OC2	Colleagues work together and support one another.		0.610
	OC3	Fosters creativity and innovation.		0.649

Scales	Sign	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected item-total correlation
	OC4	Organizational culture aligns business needs with academic values.		0.686
Person-Organization Fit	POF1	My principles align with those of the university.	0.800	0.654
	POF2	I believe the university's educational philosophy aligns with my personal views.		0.633
	POF3	I am aligned with organizational culture.		0.678
	POF4	The university matches my long-term career goals.		0.653
Job satisfaction	JS1	I am happy with my current teaching job.	0.818	0.670
	JS2	I am pleased with the work environment at the university.		0.623
	JS3	I am pleased to have the opportunity to grow my career at the university.		0.572
	JS4	Overall, I am pleased with my work.		0.579
Work motivation	WM1	I put in a lot of effort to enhance the quality of my teaching.	0.835	0.601
	WM2	I actively pursue new knowledge for my work.		0.628
	WM3	I regularly engage in research activities.		0.630
	WM4	I'm interested in doing academic tasks.		0.639

Source: Analysis results from SPSS 26

The results in Table 2 show that factors were extracted with Eigenvalues greater than 1, explaining 70.312% of the variance. The factor loadings were above the 0.5 threshold, indicating good convergence and no significant cross-loading. The KMO index was 0.821, and the Sig was 0.000, confirming the data's consistency. Therefore, both independent and dependent variables are included in the confirmatory factor analysis to test convergent and discriminant validity, as well as unidirectionality.

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis showed that the weights of the reported indices for the research concepts reached a significance level with p less than 0.05, a t-value greater than 15, and the values in the normalized factor range from 0.51 to 0.91. This result confirms that the scales used in the model have achieved reliability and convergent validity. At the same time, the inspection standards in the CFA analysis model are as follows: CMIN is 1680,839, df is 809 (p < 0.001). Other conformity metrics also achieved very high values: GFI = 0.906, CFI = 0.924, TLI = 0.916, CMIN/df = 2.212, and RMSEA reached 0.045.

Table 2: The results of CFA

Indicator	CMIN/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	p_value	Conclusion
CFA	2.212	0.906	0.916	0.924	0.045	0.000	Accepted

Source: Analysis results from AMOS 24

The results of the analysis of the structural equation model (SEM) showed that the CMIN/df indices reached 2.587, GFI = 0.910, TLI = 0.921, CFI = 0.933, and RMSEA was 0.052, all within the acceptable thresholds (Hu & Bentler, 1999). As such, the dataset fits the model quite well.

Based on the results presented in Table 3, all hypotheses from H1 to H10 are accepted with a p-value less than 0.05.

Table 3: The results of SEM

Hypothes is	β	S.E	C.R	p	Conclusi on	Hypothes is	β	S.E	C.R	p	Conclusi on
H1	0.45 3 8	0.07	2.57 9	0.00 2	Accepted	H6	0.41 7	0.07	2.78 9	0.00 4	Accepted
H2	0.43 5 6	0.07	2.58 9	0.00 3	Accepted	H7	0.43 0	0.07	2.73 5	0.01 2	Accepted
H3	0.44 0 7	0.07	2.78 2	0.00 1	Accepted	H8	0.37 7	0.06	2.80 0	0.00 1	Accepted
H4	0.40 0 2	0.08	2.79 1	0.00 0	Accepted	H9	0.38 9	0.08	2.83 1	0.01 0	Accepted
H5	0.42 1 0	0.08	2.89 5	0.00 5	Accepted	H10	0.49 5	0.08	2.89 3	0.01 2	Accepted

Source: Analysis results from AMOS 24

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Discussions

The study results indicate that the motivation of lecturers at private universities in Vietnam is significantly affected by three main factors: working conditions, academic environment, and culture–governance. These findings not only enhance the theoretical understanding but also clearly demonstrate the operational characteristics of Vietnam's private higher education sector.

Firstly, compensation, fairness, workload, and job security have the strongest positive relationship with lecturers' job satisfaction. These findings align with two-factor theory and equity theory and reflect the context of private schools operating within market mechanisms, where financial factors and resource allocation directly impact faculty members' career choices. The sensitivity to salaries, bonuses, and teaching hour assignments is higher than in public schools, where lecturers often enjoy greater job stability. This indicates that financial management and workload structure are two key factors influencing the satisfaction and motivation of lecturers in the private sector. Next, a supportive leadership style plays a crucial role in boosting job satisfaction and indirectly enhancing work motivation. The study supports the POS and Social Exchange Theory's argument that leadership serves as an intermediary between governance policy and lecturers' experiences. In a private setting with a centralized governance structure, support from faculty or department leaders can reduce feelings of business pressure, enhance professional security, and foster trust within the organization.

Next, academic environmental factors such as development opportunities, research support, and academic autonomy also have a significant positive relationship with lecturers' job satisfaction. This result aligns with the self-determination theory and the job characteristics model, but the effect is weaker than the theoretical prediction. A key reason is that many private schools focus more on teaching than research, leading to limitations on research funding, facilities, and long-term academic focus. Academic autonomy, although theoretically important, is also restricted by quality control requirements and the need to follow the standardized programs of private schools. This indicates that, while academic factors remain important, they are not yet primary drivers of motivation for private lecturers in Vietnam.

Additionally, person-organization fit and organizational culture were also found to have a positive relationship with faculty job satisfaction but are less influential than other factors. These results indicate that private schools lack a sustainable and long-term stable academic culture. Business principles still strongly dominate, while academic values, research, academic freedom, and knowledge communities have not been fully developed yet. Therefore, the influence of culture on satisfaction is limited. However, value alignment still plays a fundamental role, especially for a highly academically oriented lecturers group.

Finally, job satisfaction directly positively influences the motivation of lecturers at Vietnam's private universities. This result aligns with the two-factor theory and SDT. When lecturers are satisfied with their working conditions and development opportunities, their intrinsic motivation increases, helping them stay committed, boost their teaching and research efforts, and lower their intent to switch jobs. Therefore, satisfaction is a crucial factor in the private sector, where work motivation is closely linked to the overall perception of occupational conditions.

5.2. Implications

The research findings have made significant theoretical and practical contributions to the field of human resource management in private higher education. Theoretically, the study helps expand and reinforce classical motivational theories within the private education sector in an emerging economy like Vietnam, a context that has been underexplored in previous research. The results indicate that economic factors and working conditions (such as compensation, workload, and job security) have greater explanatory power than academic factors, reflecting the market-driven nature of Vietnam's private education. These findings serve as additional empirical evidence for broadening the application of these theories to enterprise-focused higher education institutions. Furthermore, the evidence from Vietnam can offer a comparative perspective for developing countries with similar higher education models.

Practically, the study results offer valuable information for managers of Vietnamese private universities to enhance job satisfaction and motivate lecturers. According to the findings, private universities should focus on optimizing the compensation system, ensuring fairness, and designing a reasonable workload, as these are the most influential factors affecting lecturers' satisfaction and motivation. Additionally, strengthening career stability, boosting the role of support leaders, and ensuring transparency in evaluation and assignment processes are key to improving job satisfaction. The findings also emphasize the importance of investing in career development and research support to boost intrinsic motivation and team quality. Finally, cultivating an organizational culture that balances academic and corporate logic, along with aligning person-organizational values in recruitment and human resource practices, will help foster a sustainable work environment and attract talent in the private higher education sector.

6. CONCLUSION

This study developed and validated a comprehensive model of factors influencing the motivation of lecturers in private universities in Vietnam, combining three main groups of factors: working conditions, academic environment, and cultural-government characteristics. The results show that working conditions aspects,

especially compensation, workload, and job security, have the strongest impact on job satisfaction and motivation; meanwhile, supportive leadership styles, development opportunities, and research support have a positive but moderate effect; organizational culture and person-organization fit exhibit weaker influences but remain statistically significant. Therefore, this research is not only academic but also highly practical, particularly as Vietnam focuses on developing the private sector as a key driver of economic growth through 2050.

Although the research findings have achieved certain outcomes, there are still some unavoidable limitations. First, the data is collected through self-reporting, which can be influenced by cognitive biases and social desirability trends. Second, the cross-sectional research design does not allow for testing causal relationships over time; therefore, the conclusions are only correlational rather than establishing definitive causality. Third, the survey sample focuses on private universities in Vietnam, so the generalizability to other education systems is limited. Based on these limitations, future studies could employ longitudinal designs to analyze changes over time, use a multi-source approach to reduce self-report bias, and compare public and private education models or different countries to enhance generalizability. Additionally, future research may examine the regulatory impact of factors such as research pressure, discipline-specific demands, regional culture, or governance structures of private institutions to deepen our understanding of faculty motivation within the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education.

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