



# Working Motivation of Doctors: The Case of Public Hospitals in Hanoi

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to identify, evaluate and measure the attributes of working motivation of doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi. Based on literature review and the results of some interviews, 225 questionnaires were sent to doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi and were collected in 2 months. However, only 212 questionnaires were satisfactory and included in the analysis. The results of descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha analysis, Independent T-test and ANOVA have identified and measured 3 attributes of working motivation which effect on doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi. Based on the findings, some recommendations are given for doctors and public hospitals in Hanoi to improve the working motivation of doctors. The research has brought practical significance to hospital administrators in public hospitals, who need solutions and policies for improving doctors' performance.

**KEYWORDS:** working motivation, doctors, public hospitals, labor Economics, human resource management

**JEL CODES:** M12, M54, J01

## INTRODUCTION

Hanoi is a big city, the capital, political, economic, cultural, medical and educational center of Vietnam. The public hospital system in Hanoi includes all levels from central-level hospitals managed by ministries to city-level ones, and district-level hospitals to in commue-level ones. Therefore, the public hospital system in Hanoi represents all the lines of the current national health care system.

Hanoi has about 121,000 employees working in the national health system. This medical workforce mainly includes: doctors, nurses, midwives, technicians, and physicians. In which, doctors account for 16.59% of the total. Doctors in public hospitals have been making significant contributions to the development of the city's medical industry, well taking care of health to people, thus contributing to improving their quality of life.

In order to continue to maintain and promote the achievements achieved in the current difficult context, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, public hospitals need to have a team of dedicated and enthusiastic doctors. With that being said, the increasing needs of patients can be met and operational efficiency of public hospitals can be gained. Therefore, hospital managers need practical solutions to actively motivate doctors to work.

Working motivation of employees plays an important role in organizations and enterprises. Ifinedo

(2003) thinks we can easily see from motivated workers their enthusiasm, dedication and focus on the work to contribute to the overall purpose and goals of the organization. Motivation is therefore related to the desire to achieve good results of the assigned tasks. Working motivation of employees is the source of promoting employees' productivity, improving the quality of human resources, directly determining the existence and development of enterprises (Nguyen, 2017). Motivated employees have 80-90% of their productivity, low rates of absence and quit the job (Farhaan, 2009).

The objective of this study is to identify, evaluate and measure the component attributing working motivation of doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi. Thereby, it also gives some recommendations for doctors and public hospitals in Hanoi to create working motivation for doctors.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical studies on content-oriented employees' work motivation such as those of Maslow (1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), Clelland (1985), etc. According to the authors, the basis for creating work motivation is needs and the satisfaction of them. These theories answer what motivates an employee (Chiang et al., 2008). Therefore, managers need to understand the needs of employees and find ways to satisfy those needs, which will improve the work motivation of employees. Empirical studies in this direction have also been

carried out in many different fields such as tourism and hospitality (Ross, 2006; Silva & Thilakasiri, 2016); trade in services (Teck-Hong & Waheed, 2011; Anupama, 2016); education (Shah et al., 2012; Sandhe & Joshi, 2017).

Process-oriented studies on the work motivation of employees such as Vroom (1964), Hackman & Oldham (1976), etc. attempts to identify how motivation is generated, helping to describe and explain how behavior is directed, energized, sustained, or stopped (Mullin, 2006).

Bui and Le (2014), Bui and Le (2016) studied the factors affecting the working motivation of manufacturing and mechanical engineering employees. These studies also provided components of motivation for working including: (i) Employees are interested in the current job; (ii) Employees’ working mood is always good, happy, optimistic; (iii) Employees will to sacrifice their own rights to achieve good results at work and (iv) employees appreciate the company’s incentive policies. The result of this research is similarity to that of Pham (2016).

Tran (2016) performed analysis and measurement of the motivation of civil servants at the Department of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs of Nam Dinh Province, consisting of 5 components: “I always try my best to complete the assigned work”; “I keep working for a long time”; “I am always actively involved in the Department’s activities”; “I always strive for the goals of the Department’s work and activities” and “My efforts have contributed to fulfilling the Department’s operational goals”. The results indicated that the motivation working on the average level of 3.59/5 points was a high score which also showed the good working motivation of the Department. The standard deviation at the value of 0.575 is not high, showing a little difference in opinion about the working motivation of civil servants.

Nguyen (2017) said that the working motivation of employees is defined the desire and motivation from inside employees or outside influences that make them willing to work to achieve the goals at work. Those motivations are expressed in the following aspects: Employees feel satisfied and interested in the job; They are willing to sacrifice their

interests to achieve the goals of the job as well as dedicating to the business; They are satisfied with the company’s salary policy, remuneration, environment and working conditions.

According to Pham (2022), the working motivations of employees in transport and warehousing firms include: (i) You usually try your best to complete the job regardless of difficulties; (ii) You often think about work even outside of working hours; (iii) You are willing to start work early or stay late to complete the work; (iv) You can maintain your efforts to perform the job for a long time; (v) You always feel excited about doing your current job. The working motivation of lecturers at public universities in the economic sector in Hanoi includes 8 component attributes (scales) (Ha, 2022).

The above researchs have studied the working motivation of employees, who are directly participating in manufacturing, mechanical engineer, civil servants, logistics, etc. However, there has been no research yet fully researching the working motivation of doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research subjects: The research subjects of this study are doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi.

Qualitative research methodology: We used a qualitative research methodology based on some in-depth interviews with 4 lecturers with extensive experiences in managing human resource in public hospitals of the National Economics University and University of Labour and Social Affairs. They are the two leading universities in Vietnam in training human resource management. At the same time, we interviewed 4 experts working as Head of Human Resources Department in public hospitals in Hanoi. The contents of the interviews focus on the subject of working motivation of doctors’ attributes.

Inheriting the results previous research and using qualitative research methodology through interviews with experts, we identify working motivation of doctors (DL) including three attributes in table 1 as follows

**Table 1:** Attributes of working motivation of accountants

Code	Scale	Sources
<b>Working motivation of doctors (DL)</b>		
DL1	Doctor is excited about their current job	Bui and Le (2014); Bui and Le (2016); Pham (2016); Tran (2016); Pham (2022); Ha (2022)
DL2	Doctor feels to encourage in the job	
DL3	Doctor always works with the best state of mind	

Quantitative research methodology

Scales: We have designed a questionnaire consisting of 3 variables with a 5-point Likert scale from 1 “Strongly disagree” to 5 “Strongly agree”.

Research sample: The method of data collection was accomplished through the survey and subjects were doctors doing in public hospitals in Hanoi. We sent 250

questionnaires and received the feedback of 212. Time to complete is two months. There were 212 questionnaires with full information for data entry and analysis, the size of this

## “Working Motivation of Doctors: The Case of Public Hospitals in Hanoi”

sample was consistent with study of Hair et al. (1988): The research sample must be at least 5 times the total number of indicators in the scales. The questionnaire of this study includes 3 indicators, therefore, the minimum sample size to achieve are  $3 * 5 = 15$  observations. After collecting 212 questionnaires, we cleaned the data and coded the necessary

information in the questionnaires. We inputted the data and we used SPSS to analyze the data.

In addition, in this study, the authors also tested the theory of normal distribution. The authors use Histogram frequency chart, P-P Plot cumulative distribution chart and Scatterplot chart.

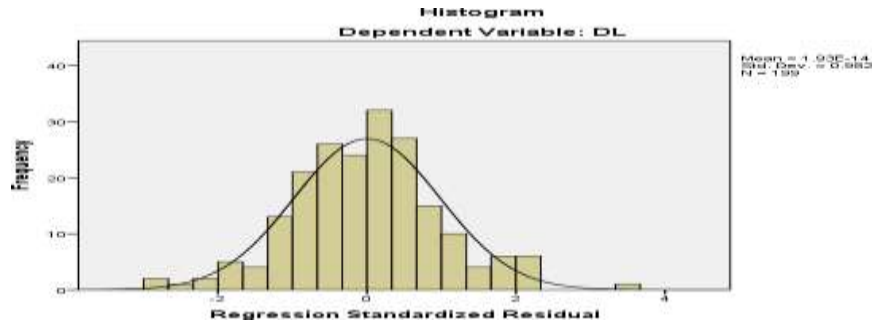


Fig. 1: Histogram chart

The mean is very small, almost 0 (Mean =  $-1.93E-14$ ) and the standard deviation is close to 1 (Std.Dev = 0.982) so the assumption of normal distribution is not violated.

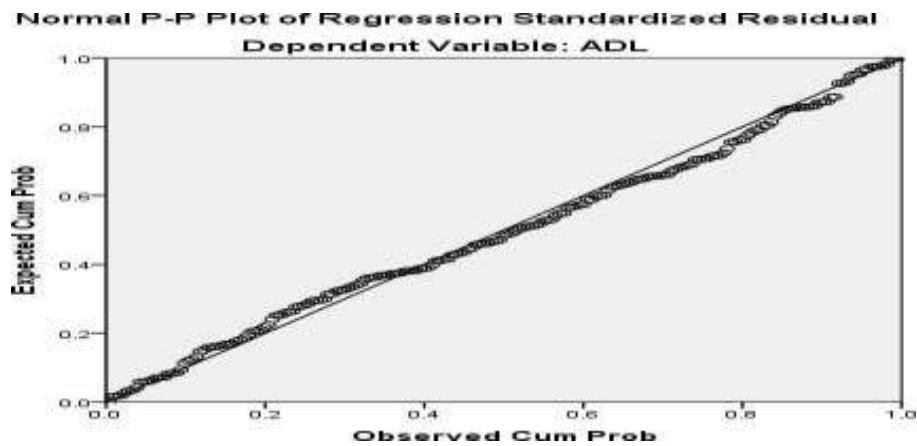


Fig 2: P-P Plot chart

The observations are not scattered too far from the expected line, so the assumption of normal distribution is not violated.

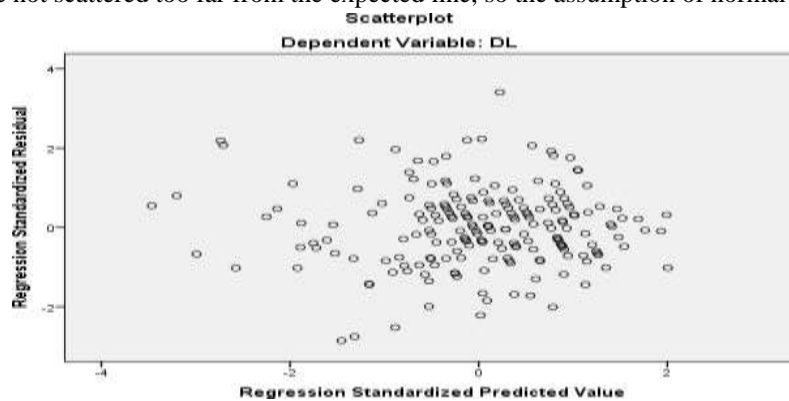


Fig. 3: Scatterplot Chart

The results of Figure 2.3 show that the normalized residuals scattered randomly on the graph do not form any definite shape. Therefore, the predicted value and the residual

are independent, and the variance of the residual is constant. The regression model is suitable.

**RESEARCH RESULTS**

**Descriptive Statistics**

Information of data collected is shown in Table 2

**Table 2:** Respondents by gender, age

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	104	49.1	49.1
Female	108	50.9	100.0
<b>Age</b>			
Less than 30 years old	81	38.2	38.2
From 30 to 40 years old	75	35.4	73.6
Over than 40 years old	56	26.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Data in Table 2 show that among the 212 respondents, 49.1% of the participants were male while the remaining 108 were female, representing for 50.9%. Of these,

81 of them are less than 30 years old, accounting for 38.2%; 75 of them are from 30 to 40 years old, accounting for 35.4%; and 26.4% of the participants were over than 40 years old.

**Table 3:** Descriptive Analysis of Attributes of working motivation of doctors

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
DL1	212	1.0	5.0	3.475	.462
DL2	212	1.0	5.0	3.188	.490
DL3	212	1.0	5.0	2.978	.485
Valid N (listwise)	212			<b>3.214</b>	

Data in Table 3 illustrate that the respondents agree with the dependent variables of “working motivation of doctors” where three attributes were quite high with an average of 3.214 compared with the highest of the Likert 5-point scale. All 3 attributes were rated at an average of 2.978 or higher.

**Cronbach’s Alpha**

Working motivation of doctors has been measured by the Cronbach's Alpha. Results of testing Cronbach’s alpha of attributes are presented in Table 4 as follows,

**Table 4:** Results of Cronbach’s Alpha Testing of Attributes

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
DL1	7.62	.511	.645	.723
DL2	7.67	.475	.617	.756
DL3	7.60	.496	.669	.698

The results also show that attributes of the dependent variables had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient greater than 0.6; the correlation coefficient of all attributes was greater than 0.3, so all the attributes of the dependent variables were statistically significant (Hoang & Chu, 2008;

Hair et al., 2010).

**Independent T – test**

Comparing the results of the evaluation of working motivation of doctors between participants have differences gender is shown in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Differences of working motivation of doctors between participants differences gender - Independent Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
DL	Equal variances assumed	.634	.427	.258	197	.797	.01101	.04263	-.07307	.258
	Equal variances not assumed			.258	194.271	.797	.01101	.04269	-.07319	.258

According to the results of Table 5, Sig Levene's Test = 0.427 more than 0.05; the variance between the participants differences gender is not different. Moreover, Sig value T-Test = 0.797 > 0.05, which means there is statistically no significant difference in the level of working motivation of doctor competence evaluation by doctors who have different gender (Hoang & Chu, 2008, Hair et al. 2010).

**ANOVA analysis**

ANOVA test helps us perform a comparison for the results of the evaluation of working motivation of doctors between the three subjects, including participants are less than 30 years old, including participants are from 30 to 40 years old and including participants are over than 40 years old.

**Table 6:** Test of Homogeneity of Variances

**DL**

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.194	2	210	.823

Table 6 shows that Sig Levene Statistic of 0.823 is more than 0.05; the hypothesis of homogeneity variance

among the variable value groups (different age) has not been violated.

**Table 7:** ANOVA

**DL**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.025	2	.012	.137	.872
Within Groups	17.789	210	.091		
Total	17.814	212			

Table 7 shows that, Sig. = 0.872 is more than 0.05; There is not statistically significant difference in the level of working motivation of doctors for the doctor for the mentioned three groups of age (Hoang & Chu, 2008, Hair et al., 2010).

odontologists, and preventive medicine doctors. After working for a period of time, doctors can continue to be trained and recognized at the level of specialty level 1 and specialty level 2. A small number of newly graduated doctors with good academic records are allowed to take the entrance exam to study in the residency program for a period of 3 years. These doctors usually work in central hospitals.

**DISCUSSION**

**Some characteristics of doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi**

The percentage of doctors with specialized qualifications accounted for 38% of the total number of doctors. Doctors are trained at the university level, including general practitioners, traditional medicine doctors, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a doctor who is recruited can be promoted from primary doctor to senior doctor.

The number of doctors working in public hospitals in Hanoi has changed but not much in recent years. Doctors with high professional qualifications such as doctorates, masters and specialties mainly work at the central level. According to the classification system of the Ministry of Health and

**Table 8:** Number quality of doctors in public hospitals in Hanoi

Description	2018	2019	2020	June, 2021
Doctors	17.546	18.442	20.085	21.794

**Some professional characteristics of doctors**

The job of doctor is to diagnose and treat illness and injury. They take a patient's health history, examine areas of the body that are unwell or in pain, and interpret diagnostic tests, plan and implement courses of treatment. They often advise patients on diet, hygiene, and lifestyle changes that can improve well-being. Whatever the requirements of the job, they fulfill their duties by relying on the services of other medical professionals, such as nurses and diagnostic technicians, and administrative staff, medical service manager or medical programmer.

The profession of a doctor has many distinct specialties because medical practice is so complex that many doctors specialize in particular medical conditions or areas of the body. Family physicians and general practitioners perform a variety of general medical conditions and refer complex cases to specialists. Surgeons treat injuries, diseases, and deformities through operations. Anesthesiologists help surgeons by managing patient pain during procedures. Obstetricians and gynecologists focus on women's conditions, such as pregnancy and childbirth. Pediatrician specializes in children. And general internists diagnose and treat problems that affect internal organs, such as the kidneys or digestive tract.

The doctor's work is hard: At the hospital, outside of normal administrative working hours, doctors must be on duty. It can be said that for the medical profession, there are no New Year's Days and Holidays, but only working days, on-call days and off-duty days. Patients and family members can call the doctor at any time.

Doctors at high risk of occupational diseases: Doctors are in daily and continuous contact with patients carrying diseases such as viral hepatitis, diphtheria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, especially those who work at specialties such as infectious diseases, tuberculosis, surgery, departments with surgical intervention, procedures (eg, maxillofacial surgery, obstetrics, emergency resuscitation).

A doctor with a silent dedication: A doctor is diligent with diseases, correcting and restoring the body's malfunctions with the ultimate goal of improving the patient's health. Doctors often have to worry about choosing, balancing their own interests and those of the patient. If there is no responsibility to the profession, there will be no doctor who will point out adverse and often dangerous behaviors to the patient that the patient himself does not know.

**Doctor's working motivation**

The work of the medical industry in general, and of doctors in particular, is the work of passion and commitment

to meet people's needs and seek positive results. They recognize the sacrifices that can only be made in a professional healthcare setting.

Doctors always have passion, interest and desire for patients to recover, they always determine to stick with them for a long time despite hard work.

Doctors work with enthusiasm and passion because then intrinsic motivation is in control. They do it because they feel the need to do it, they love to do it.

Doctors have positive thinking, do something better every day, improve hospital quality and always enthusiastically contribute new ideas to build and develop, create a dynamic environment.

Doctor have passion, love for the profession, dream of taking care of, treating and keeping others healthy; that's what they chose when they entered the medical profession.

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

In order to maintain the passion and motivation to work, public hospitals should build a good working environment. The management team always encourages and helps doctors to balance their lives, and evaluates the contribution of each. Moreover, hospitals must take care of and ensure basic needs and fairness. Finally, leaders also need to promote leadership skills, focusing more on training and capacity development for doctors.

Doctors should determine the internal and external dynamics; which encourages them to have positive thoughts to promote righteous motivation in the work environment and generate positive energy for themselves and their colleagues.

**CONCLUSION**

Evaluation of the working motivation of doctors at public hospitals in Hanoi was carried out, in order to propose some recommendations to help public hospital managers have policies to increase motivation for doctors.

In the process of implementation, the study still has some limitations due to limited resources, since there was only survey spread in Hanoi, which would more or less limit the representativeness of the results. From these results of this study, further studies can expand other groups of doctors over time to understand the change of work motivation, or expand the scope of the study to all medical fields in every provinces of the country.

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