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Performance-Based Management to Motivate University Lecturers in Vietnam: A Case Study of Tan Trao University, Vietnam

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Abstract:

University lecturers are professional knowledge workers who have the function of training, fostering and developing a high-quality workforce for the society. They perform two tasks at the same time: teaching and researching. The motivation to work of university lecturers is born from the need and is expressed through the aspects of awareness, attitude and behavior. From case study of performance-based management in Tan Trao university, an investigation among 107 responders who are lecturers of the University was implemented. The results showed factors affecting on working motivation of university lecturers and their level of satisfaction with motivating activities in performance-based management system in the University. After that, the author recommended some solutions to motivate lecturers in Vietnam's university to further advance their performance.

Keywords: University lecturers, Tan Trao University, performance, performance-based management, motivation.

1. Introduction

Vietnam's higher education system currently has 237 universities and institutes (including 172 public universities, 60 private universities and 5 universities with 100% foreign capital), 37 scientific research institutes assigned the task of training doctoral level, 31 pedagogical colleges and 2 secondary pedagogical schools. Along with the rapid growth in the number of universities, the number of students is also constantly increasing. This increase requires faculty in universities to constantly increase in both quantity and quality. One of the leading factors making up the quality of a university's training is the quantity and quality of its lectures. Especially, their qualifications and enthusiasm including knowledge, skills and attitudes are the basic and direct factors determining the quality, position and brand of a training institution. Improving the qualifications and the commitment of the faculty is the goal that the leaders and managers of each university need to focus on. Performance based management has been becoming one of effective selection to create a more and more positive motivation for lecturers in universities. In addition, performance based management is also one of key criteria to be granted the quality certification by the Ministry of Education and Training for educational institutions and training programs in universities.

In the context of 4.0 revolution bringing among several opportunities and challenges for universities in any nation, especially developing ones as Viet Nam, to survive and develop sustainably, it is required that universities pay special attention to the human factor. Universities not only need to have excuses to retain lecturers, but also have policies to increase motivation and arouse the desire to contribute to development of the university and national higher education.

Tan Trao University is situated in Tuyen Quang province, Vietnam. In 2013, it was established on the basis of upgrading from Tuyen Quang College of Education. Tan Trao University has mission of a training institution, scientific research, international cooperation and providing products and services to improve the quality of life and build the country. Since 2018, Tan Trao University set the vision to become a center of sustainable development, transforming human life and serving the community. To step by step lead to the noble mission and vision, Tan Trao university has been developing force of lectures in both quantity and quality to implement its educational goals that is stated: 'Train learners with specialized knowledge and skills that are firmly and practically trained, have political qualities, have good ethics, and meet the necessary standards of workers in the background. the market economy according to the socialist orientation and the trend of integrating into the world economy. Learners are equipped with basic knowledge of the training sector to have the ability to research, update new technologies, and to study for a lifetime in the working environment after graduation; have professional and specialized practice skills of the trained discipline, ability to practice, job creation and career development; Equipped with the skills and qualities of modern workers, focusing on communication skills, teamwork cooperation skills, confidence and initiative in socially assigned work positions.' By December 2020, there are 295 lectures and administrative staff working in 23 affiliated units of Tan Trao University, including 1 Associate Professor, 39 doctors of Philosophy, 158 masters and 24 lecturers studying for doctorate. Teachers of the University are experienced

and capable in training and scientific research, trained and fostered at prestigious universities in the country and abroad. Recently, the university has always focused on performance-based management to motivate its lecturers to meet the requirements of training activities, scientific research and community service.

2. Literature Review

Abraham Maslow (1943) wrote in his research that human working motivation originates from needs, perceptions and goals. Employees working in a business have their own interests and desires expressed through relationships. Satisfying the needs of employees will create motivation and good working spirit. The level of satisfaction of the employee's wishes is assessed by comparison with the wishes to be achieved when performing the job with the reality that the employee achieves. Encouraging employees is the most basic factor for employees to stick to work and work better. Therefore, motivating employees to work has been becoming one of the most important aspects in human resource management.

Victor H. Vroom (1964) described why people choose the careers they do? What factors cause people to be satisfied with their work? No single work did more to make concepts like motive, goal incentive, and attitude part of the workplace vocabulary. As a result, the research concluded that the motivation to work has a significant impact on the results and work performance of the employees and the motivation driven by the factors within the employee will be more effective than from the external effects of the organization.

Jensen and Meckling (1976) researched and stated that managers have a great influence on employees' motivation. They need to create an environment that encourages employees, conforms and communicates the organization's requirements and goals to employees. At that time, employees will have a good spirit, trust in the leadership and the organization to stick with the organization better.

Truong Duc Thao (2017) has done a doctoral thesis on the topic of working motivation of lecturers in non-public universities in Vietnam. The research pointed out the basic characteristics of work motivation, manifestations and factors affecting work motivation of lecturers in non-public universities in Vietnam. The results of this study was expected to be the basis for the implementation of policies to stimulate and motivate lecturers in these schools to work, stick and dedicate themselves to quality non-public education and training for the existence and sustainable development of non-public universities in the country today. Gerrish, Ed. (2015) showed that performance-based management is pervasive in public organizations; countless governments have implemented performance management systems with the hope that they will improve organizational effectiveness. However, there has been little comprehensive review of their impact. The article conducts a meta-analysis on the impact of performance management on performance in public organizations. It contributes to the current literature in three ways by examining the effect of the 'average' performance management system; the influence of management and the effect of 'time' on performance management. Using 2,188 effects from 49 studies, the analysis finds that performance management has a small average effect. However, the effect is substantially larger when indicators of best practices in high-quality studies are included, indicating that management practices have an important impact on the effectiveness of performance management systems.

3. Methodology of the Study

This article used a questionnaire survey method with 107 responders who are lecturers working at Tan Trao University. The questionnaire contains several different questions related to the level of satisfaction in terms of work management in the University. After the investigation, the obtained results will be synthesized as a basis for proposing and recommending policies for school leaders to improve the effectiveness of management according to work results to create work motivation for lecturers.

This study also used secondary data. The author collected statistics related to universities in Vietnam from Ministry of Education and Training. Tan Trao university's resource is one of the most important data to finish the study. Besides, the author also referred data of higher education mentioned in some manuscripts published specialized magazines. After that, the author aggregated necessary statistics for this paper. After obtaining and integrating data, the author analyzed statistics by using graphs, tables and comparative method to make the study clear and lively. Besides, information technology softs such as Microsoft Excel, Paint and some computer tools were used to support the study.

4. Results and Discussion

The development strategy of Tan Trao University for the period 2014-2018, issued in February 2014, evaluated the entire situation of the University in terms of human resources, training results, scientific research and infrastructure in the period before 2014. This strategy has identified the specific goals of the university's staff development as: '... by 2018, 15% of the total lecturers directly implementing the training programs reach the doctorate degree'. Based on this strategy, the Human Resource Development Strategy of Tan Trao University for the period 2014-2018 was issued on April 10, 2014 to concretize the targets and solutions for human resource development resources to meet training, scientific research and community service. After 4 years of implementation, the University has reviewed and re-evaluated the strategy and issued the development strategy for the period 2018-2025, with a vision to 2030 which has identified specific goals for human resource development of the University about the size of the staff structure, lecturers and staff. Accordingly, the University determined the plan by 2021 to have 20% of lecturers reach doctoral degrees; by 2025 and 2030 reach 30% and 40% respectively. This strategy has been approved by the Standing Committee of the Provincial Party Committee, assigned by the Provincial People's Committee to the School Council to approve and implement.

The University has been implementing performance-based management system with strict regulations, in which the outstanding one is The Regulation on Lecturers' working regime. Chapter II in this Regulation has defined in detail the

working time, standard time, teaching and scientific research norms of lecturers for a school year. Specifically, the total working time of the lecturer in the school year is 44 weeks (equivalent to 1,760 office hours) to perform teaching tasks, research, community services and other professional tasks. A 50-minute theoretical teaching lesson in class or online is equal to 01 standard time unit. The 6th Article of this regulation also specified the conversion of standard time for some professional activities including teaching theory, instruction practice, internship, graduation thesis instruction and several professional activities. Particularly for the task of scientific research, the University also issued The Regulation of scientific management in which determined the number of converted standard time unit to scientific products of lecturers. From there, the level of completing the scientific research tasks of each lecturer can be easily determined.

| Activity | Standard Lecturer | Main Lecturer (PhD Degree) | Senior Lecturer |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Teaching | 990 | 900 | 750 |
| Scientific Research | 585 | 675 | 930 |
| Other professional activities | 185 | 185 | 80 |
| Total | 1760 (hours) | 1760 (hours) | 1760 (hours) |
| Converted standard time unit | | | |
| Teaching | 330 | 300 | 250 |
| Scientific Research | 195 | 225 | 310 |

Table 1: Working Volume of Lecturers in Tan Trao University

Source: Decision No. 946 Issued on October 14, 2020 by the Rector of Tan Trao University

Based on the regulations of the University, the heads of specialized units such as faculties and disciplines assign specific teaching modules to lecturers, require the lecturers to register for tasks of scientific research and other professional tasks to ensure enough work volume of each teacher as prescribed. At the end of the school year, according to the University's announcement, each faculty and department requires its lecturers to self-declare their labor norms including teaching volume, scientific research and other professional activities, then the Faculty's leaders synthesize the results and submit them to higher-level council.

Tan Trao University assesses the capacity of lecturers and performance-based management through evaluating scorecard with specific evaluating criteria. The assessment of lecturers' competencies has different classifications and requirements for whom holding managerial positions and who do not hold managerial positions. The lecturer assessment procedures are carried out through the following steps: 1) Notification of the Organizing - Political Department, accompanied by a dispatch guiding the evaluation, the scorecard form, and the criteria framework for the evaluation of public employees; 2) The officer self-evaluates, classifies on the sample sheets and scores himself; 3) Organize a faculty meeting to collect comments and assessments of Lecturers and the faculty leaders directly manage comments and assessments in the self-assessment and grading of each Lecturer; 4) The Faculty synthesizes the evaluation form, together with the minutes of the faculty meeting, submits it to the Department of Organization - Politics; 5) The Department of Organization and Politics synthesizes the evaluation and classification results to submit to the School Emulation Council for consideration and decision-making. Tan Trao University always pays attention in creating working motivation for its staffs by performance-based management through several different tools.

4.1. Motivating Work by the Salary Tool

Salary is always the top factor to motivate staff and lecturers; therefore, the university's headers are always interested in creating motivation through salary tools. For lecturers, wages are the most basic part of their income, helping them and their families cover expenses, living expenses and necessary services. At the same time, the salary earned affects the status of workers in the family, their status in relation to their colleagues as well as their relative value to the organization and to society. In addition, the ability to earn higher wages will motivate employees to create learning power to enhance their value to the organization through improving their level and contribution to the organization. For universities, an attractive payroll is a tool to attract and maintain good teachers. Besides salary and wage regime was built and issued in accordance with the State regulations, Tan Trao University also has internal spending regulations and additional income regulations with detailed articles on payment for working volume exceeding the prescribed work. Based on the rank, position, working performance of each officer, department, and affiliated unit, classified to determine the additional income payment coefficient. There are 96 per 107 responders (equal to 89,72%) feel satisfied with their salary paid by the University. However, the rest think that their present salary is still lower than work volume and expectation.

| Criteria | Level of Satisfaction (%) | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| | Absolutely Satisfied | Satisfied | Unsatisfied | Absolutely Unsatisfied |
| Salary and other financial incomes | 27.11 | 62.61 | 5.61 | 4.67 |
| Working and resting conditions | 15.89 | 54.21 | 19.63 | 10.27 |
| Evaluation and rewarding | 40.19 | 48.60 | 7.48 | 3.73 |
| Professional training activities | 35.51 | 41.12 | 12.15 | 11.22 |
| Working environment | 49.54 | 43.93 | 2.80 | 3.73 |

Table 2: Lecturers' Satisfaction with Performance-Based Management in Tan Trao University

In addition, Tan Trao University also has emulation and commendation regulations with specific provisions not only on periodic rewards for collectives and individuals with outstanding achievements in their work, but also for many extraordinary rewards in each specific work program and activity. All rewards are always attached with identified number of money which is considered to be a factor in improving staffs' life quality. Besides official salary and reward, Tan Trao University also performs well the provisions of the law in the implementation of the compulsory welfare regimes, expanding the forms of voluntary welfare to ensure the care, sharing, and attention to comprehensive human development. These practical welfare programs bring benefits to staff, lecturers and affect the self-conscious and creative working attitude and motivation of all members.

4.2. Motivating Work by the Working and Resting Conditions

In modern society, salary has not the only factor affecting motivation in working. Human needs have been becoming higher and more diverse, one of them is the need of rest to take a break from work. Tan Trao University has fully paid attention in improving working conditions. The University has been equipped facilities for teaching and scientific research for lecturers with modern equipment and is regularly supervised, repaired and maintained. This is an important condition to help lecturers work effectively and improve their creative capacities, and increase motivation to work at the office. For the health care and rest regime for teachers, the University has activities such as: Taking leave, maternity leave, sick leave, filial piety in accordance with the state regulations. Every summer vocation and on legal day-offs, the University also organizes tours for staff and lecturers to enhance the commitment and enthusiasm at work. In addition, Tan Trao University has a affiliated polyclinics where regularly carry out health checks for staff and lecturers. Therefore, up to 70% of the respondents completely agree that the university implements a good working and resting policy for the staff.

4.3. Motivate with Performance Assessment system

Evaluating and how to use the results of teacher performance evaluation are the bases for the decision to reward and use reasonable labor. An effective assessment system is a strong motivational factor for lecturers to devote all their strength and intelligence to complete the assigned tasks. Therefore, the evaluation of lecturers must be considered and performed consistently on the basis of scientific viewpoints and methods, in accordance with the professional characteristics and psychology of lecturers. The evaluation of lecturers has a great influence on the work motivation of lecturers because it is related to their benefits such as training, promotion, salary increase, reward, planning. Criteria for evaluation of lecturers must be scientifically developed, that is, there must be clear criteria and the criteria must be able to quantify: qualifications, expertise, degrees, etc. characteristics such as: public service ethics, personal qualities, enthusiasm for the profession... and these criteria must have detailed and specific instructions. If the performance evaluation results are not based on two factors, which are objective and fair, it will make teachers lose confidence in the evaluation results, one of the reasons why they are not motivated to work. Awaring of the importance of evaluating the performance of lecturers, Tan Trao University has developed and regularly updated evaluation criteria and a reasonable system of reward to satisfy the requirements of lecturers and staff in the school. The result is up to 88.79 percent of 107 responders evaluated that they have been satisfied with evaluation and rewarding system of the University.

4.4. Motivation by Training Policies and Opportunities for Career Advancement

People living and working have different needs such as material, spiritual and social needs that are the objectives to ensure their existence and development in certain conditions. Motivation is the inner force that motivates people to act, directs behavior and increases persistent determination to achieve goals. Thus, work motivation is the willingness to devote mind and energy to the pursuit of organizational goals to meet and satisfy individual needs.

Lecturers always want to have learning opportunities to perfect and develop professional expertise. Therefore, it is very important for universities to train and send teachers to higher study. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the ideological education of lecturers, improve the working spirit, the importance of discipline, awareness, solidarity, and help each other in work for the common good. In addition, for those who have contributed to the organization for a long time in terms of strength and intelligence, career advancement is a higher need than it is the purpose and goal of officials and lecturers. In order to develop a career, individuals must make efforts to develop job skills, professional qualifications and professional qualifications by self-improvement of knowledge, or by participating in advanced courses to perfect their

abilities. To implement this need, lecturers must ask for the help of organizations such as financial supports, flexible working volume and etc.

According to Tan Trao University's Regulation about training of lecturers for lecturers and internal spending rules, the standard level of lecturers at Tan Trao University is defined as the Master's level. Lecturers with master's degrees, women aged 42 or under, men 45 years old or younger must develop a plan to register as a doctoral learner. The study to improve qualifications is considered an important criterion when considering emulation at the level of excellent completion of tasks. Lecturers who go to improve their qualifications will be supported by the University with funding and reduced labor norms during their schooling. The lecturers will be received financial supports such as payments for textbooks and learning materials are paid by the school; for transportation once in a quarter. After- bachelor courses are supported at 500,000 VND per month for 10 months in a year during 2 years while being a PhD student is supported by 3 times the base salary per 1 month for 10 months in a year, up to 3 years.

4.5. Motivating by Comfortable and Modern Working Environment

Working conditions and environment is one of the most decisive factors for motivating lecturers to work. Working conditions of each worker are very rich and diverse and each working environment and working condition affects many workers and it affects them in many different ways. Working environment includes of several factors such as Physiological conditions at work, Psychosocial conditions, working infrastructures and facilities, ...More than 90 percent of responders answered that they are satisfied with Tan Trao University's working conditions and environment. Consequently, these lecturers agreed that the comfortable working environment has been one of important factors motivating them in the University.

5. Recommendations to Motivate University Lecturers by Performance- Based Management System

To increase the motivation in working for lecturers, first of all, universities need to pay attention to carrying out a number of oriented jobs including: Understanding the needs of lecturers; Set clear and specific goals for trainers; Develop tools and policies to support lecturers in achieving their goals; Evaluate and compare the performance of lecturers before and after implementing motivational enhancement policies.

Some solutions to increase work motivation for university lecturers in Vietnam are attached to implement synchronously performance-based management solutions.

First of all, reforming economic treatment policy is an important solution in order to increase the income of the lecturers. If the income meets the basic needs of the lecturers, they can work with peace of mind and focus on realizing their career goals. This solution requires universities to increase their revenue to compensate for the additional costs. Universities can increase revenue from tuition fees, leasing of facilities, opening short-term training centers, opening applied research centers and etc. Unlike non-public universities, in which their managers can be fully self-financed, in public universities, lecturers' salaries are paid according to the general regulations of the State. Thus, increasing the basic salary for lecturers surely face many difficulties. However, all universities can reform their policies on bonuses. Universities should offer different rewards, not necessarily according to the holidays, periodically, but need to be according to the achievements to have a timely motivational nature. The bonus level also needs to consider the performance of the lecturers. Regarding to early salary increase, universities also need to have strict and suitable regulations by recognizing work achievements. In addition, universities need to have more diverse, more flexible and specific welfare policies. The economic supports for lectures who are in higher level courses should not be accompanied by a time constraint to devote to the organization after training, which sometimes reduces the motivation of lecturers to work.

Secondly, universities' managers have to pay more attention to the spiritual life of lecturers to create a rich spiritual life in the workplace to increase the level of satisfaction, excitement, pride, etc., of the lecturers when working in the university. The solution's impact direction should be on organizational culture, on emulation and commendation, on contractual relationships and special incentives and on students' learning attitude. Universities need to:

- Paying more attention to the activities of the university's labor union organization and the work of the Youth Union and the Communist Party.
- Regularly organizing professional and entertaining exchange programs for officials and lecturers in the Departments, Faculty, Institute...
- Honoring faculty, staff and their families for their contributions to the university.
- Creating meaningful titles to raise reputation for lecturers. Thereby, improving the stature of the lecturers in society and also creating conditions for them to have opportunities to interact with the outside reality through part-time jobs outside.
- Continuously improving the quality of training and researching of the university.
- Well implementing the regime on labor contract and developing a code of conduct in the workplace.

Thirdly, Universities need to improve the quality and working attitude of lecturers. Universities should influence the lecturers by making professional demands, by influencing the interest of lecturers in teaching and research, through the sense of responsibility of the faculty. Along with that, universities also need to influence students' attitudes and academic achievement. In addition to administrative reform, universities also need to consider organizing movement activities to encourage students' studying attitude such as: Establishing clubs for activities and exchange of learning, Regularly organizing extracurricular sessions for students, Creating a friendly training environment from study space, play space, dining space... To enhance student's learning achievements, universities and their departments like Youth Union, labor

Union of all levels should hold several contests about learning and research for students, pay more attention on scholarship for students, strengthen ideological education for students so that increase the pride of teachers in the school through the success of alumni.

Another solution is paying attention to the working conditions of lecturers towards the conditions of facilities to serve the teaching and scientific research of lecturers at the workplace. To implement this solution, universities need to facilitate for the system of classrooms, teaching equipment, laboratories, libraries - learning materials, self-study rooms ...

6. Conclusion

The role of university lecturers is very important, which determines the quality of higher education regardless of the fact that each university has different educational goals and requirements, training professions with different characteristics. The issue of motivation in labor is one of the important contents of human resource management, motivating members of the organization, employees to work hard and improve labor efficiency. In recent years, thanks to the great achievements of more than 30 years of national renewal initiated and led by Vietnamese Communist Party, the education and training sector has received more attention. The system of synchronous infrastructure, technical means for education and training tasks are invested with quality. The system of legal documents, regulations, mechanisms and basic preferential social policies is comprehensive and complete; The contradictions from the training process, which were a hindrance, are now properly recognized and resolved. The needs for benefits, including economic - political, material - spiritual benefits of the teaching staff are met relatively well. The creation of a favorable, really clean and healthy working environment is concerned with practice... thereby, creating consensus, arousing the confidence, pride and self-esteem of the teaching staff make them want to contribute. However, creating conditions for university lecturers to be motivated to work is still a problem with many shortcomings such as: Teaching hours, scientific research hours... An effective performance-based management system is one of useful solutions to motivate lecturers in Tan Trao University and Vietnam's universities in general.

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