



## A Model of Factors Affecting Work Motivation of Civil Servants: An Evidence from Public Department in Vietnam

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### Abstract

In the centuries of globalization with continuous changes, all organizations especially public institutions are facing various challenges of pleasing citizens' requirements with better and efficient public services. To be able to offer the best possible services, these public institutions have to concentrate on the unique resource, fostering an institution to blossom and accomplish their missions--the human resources. The government of Vietnam has put a lot of effort into administration reform; however, the consummation and achievement of the Vietnam Public Sector are still appraised below par because of the inferior performance of public employees. This article aims to illustrate factors affecting the work motivation of public employees in Vietnam by collecting data from 187 civil servants using the non-probability sampling technique to provide evidence. Results from the PLS-SEM model using SmartPLS 3.0 program revealed the finding of the study that there is a significant effect of two factors decreasing motivation, namely work conditions and supervisor support. In this research, the authors also suggest various managerial implications for leaders and managers to uplift the work motivation in the workplace of employees.

**Keywords:** *work motivation, public department, civil servants.*

### 1. Introduction

Motivation is one of the crucial factors for successful organizations to function properly. Without motivation, the workforce or employees will never be able to run up their best in their careers. In other words, motivation is a source of encouragement that boost the employees to perform effectively and diligently, as a result, assist organizations to develop with extremely outstanding excellence.

Motivated employees play an important role in supporting survival and growth regardless of the type of sector, organizational size, even the age of the organization, at the same time, how to motivate employees is certainly very complicated among the responsibilities of managers and leaders (Zeng et al., 2020). Necessarily, leaders should not underestimate the needs and expectations of their workforce but further recognize issues such as which factors inspire them toward increasing their productivity and capacity, the nature of work motivation, and awareness about the motivation of employees might dissimilar in different sectors or workplace environments. If employees are motivated enough, they would satisfy with their jobs then consequently, work much harder to achieve organizational goals, and the success of the organization will come along. Commonly, public organizations, public departments, and public agencies are highly functional groupings of competence and services. Given this acknowledgment, there is little wonder why public employees specifically civil servants are the main strength, and their actions with good manners are considered as substantial steers to organizational success. Work motivation becomes one of the vital elements in both provision of public services and the quality of public sector work. Robbins, and Judge (2018) previously stated that motivation is the core precursor factor influencing the magnitude of performance among public employees. Being able not only to motivate the workforce but also keep them motivated is emphasized as an urgent mission to fulfill in the majority of organizations, especially in public ones. The results of the civil servants carrying out civil services dramatically depend on their morals, behaviors, qualifications, responsibilities, and of course, their work motivation. When civil servants perform their work enthusiastically

and eagerly, the effectiveness of the authority at all organizational levels in the management will be optimized. Otherwise, if they lose their work motivation, the efficiency and effectiveness of tasks will be weakened without any doubt.

According to Behn (1995) research on motivation remains a big requirement in public management and he urges the scholars to concentrate on the need to understand how “public managers [can] motivate public employees (and citizens too) to pursue important public purposes with intelligence and energy”. Motivating public servants by increasing salary rates is predicted as a basic solution in the administrative reform to positive outcomes. Of course, no one works for free, nor should they, and we all understand that money is a primary incentive; however, money solely can never be enough to motivate for higher work motivation and performance among intellectual people (Latham, & Locke, 1979). As the result, raising salary solely is not highly considered as a practical implication for improving work motivation for employees who work in the public sector as civil servants.

With the data collected in 2020, nearly 253.517 people are working as public employees in Vietnam Public Sector. Unfortunately, Vietnam is experiencing a serious turnover of the groups of young and talented civil servants voluntarily leaving their current work in a public organization to work in the other sectors such as private companies or start-ups. Many studies’ results revealed the fact that qualified civil servants are finding new opportunities because of poor work motivation-related issues, which usually happen quite often in public organizations, such as inefficient compensation, heavy workload, and work pressure. From 2016 to 2020, the number of Vietnamese civil servants who purposely left government agencies and public organizations was nearly 12,000; mainly because of declined work motivation.

Ho Chi Minh City- Department of Home Affairs is one of the 23 core administrative departments, under the authority of Ho Chi Minh City People’s Committee and supervision of The Ministry of Home Affairs; consequently, civil servants working in this department are a group of main actors in serving public services and the sustainable development of the city. As the outcome, the need for empirical researches and studies proposing to understand deeply the antecedents of work motivation among civil servants is a priority. From the findings of this study, managers and leaders in the department may have reasonable shreds of evidence to answer how to increase the degree of work motivation with appropriate strategies.

## **2. Objectives**

- 1) To study factors that influence the work motivation of civil servants
- 2) To measure the level of each factor that affects the work motivation of civil servants
- 3) To propose suggestions, recommendations, and management applications to enhance work motivation

## **3. Materials and Methods**

### **3.1 Work Motivation**

Motivation is interpreted as “a decision-making process through which the individual chooses desired outcomes and sets in motion the behaviors appropriate to acquiring them” (Huczynski, and Buchanan, 1991). Moreover, Nzuve (1999) argued that motivation is the willingness of an individual to put more effort towards accomplishing organizational objectives, conditioned by their capability to fulfill their personal needs. Robbins, and Judge (2018) defined that work motivation can be applied to measure enthusiasm, willingness, and continuations in achieving the goals of the individual. Work motivation is the undeniable element for all organizations to complete achievements regardless they are private organizations or public bodies (Chintaloo, & Mahadeo, 2013).

### **3.2 Work Conditions and Work Motivation**

“Working conditions are created by the interaction of employee with their organizational climate and includes psychological as well as physical working conditions” (Gerber, Nel, & Dyk, 1998). Working conditions, which include facilities, working time, safety, and a comfortable workplace (Dublin, 1994), are one of the most important cumulative factors affecting the physical and mental health of employees directly. Working in a safe environment with fully equipped, partly satisfying the needs of employees are remarked as

conditions to improve work motivation of employees and increase the productivity of labor (Yazdani, Yaghoubi, & Giri, 2011). Working conditions are much needed; therefore, organizations should pay attention to constructing a pleasant working space for their workforce.

Furthermore, good working conditions are an antecedent of motivation for employees to work better with higher efficiency (Irons, & Buskist, 2008). Barzoki (2012) concluded that positive working conditions are the main factor influencing the work motivation of individuals. As the result, the hypothesis is presented as:

H<sub>1</sub>: Work conditions positively affect the work motivation of civil servants.

### **3.3 Job Security and Work Motivation**

Job security is the feeling of staying in a stable position in the organization, acknowledging the guarantee of a job's duration, as well as the freedom from suddenly losing work or becoming unemployed (Arabi, & Kamani, 2000). Herzberg (1968) also described job security as the construct to which an organization continuously supports durable hiring for their employees. In the workplace, employees might want to be challenged with new tasks or missions as a way to motivate themselves to use all the skills they have or even learn new ones. However, no one can completely concentrate on working when some kind of insecurity feelings are perceived such as replacement by young staff or staff cutback. Only if an employee is free from those worries during working in an organization, they can feel relief and settle into focusing on tasks and duties. In other words, job security is the vital motivator when an employee can foresee a direct correlation between their work and the bright future with the organization. The employee who feels secure in his or her position is far more productive than those who are not feeling the same. Maslow's Needs' Hierarchy included security and safety as the second level of an individuals' needs after physiological needs. The study of Muhammad (2012) about antecedents of employee motivation proved job security as one of the main motivational factors of employees. Moreover, Najmulmunir (2020) reported a similar result stating job security positively generated a high degree of work motivation among employees. From the literature review, it is hypothesized that:

H<sub>2</sub>: Job security has a positive impact on the work motivation of civil servants.

### **3.4 Supervisor Support and Work Motivation**

The supervisor is an administrative officer controlling the stable functioning of a business, governmental organization, school, or operational unit. The position of supervisor refers to one's immediate superior and being in charge of productivity in the workplace. Supervisor support is defined as the acknowledgment of employees that supervisors will always give them enough work-related support and assistance which enables them to perform their work quicker and more effectively or even solve problems and conflicts. Besides, supervisor support is the belief of employees concerning the extent to which supervisor appreciate their contributions and care about their well-being (Sharafinski, & Clare, 1988). Richmond, and McCroskey (2000) argued that immediate assistance from the supervisor is positively related to the work motivation of employees. For that reason, the behaviors of supervisors have a remarkable impact not only on employees but also on the organization. Support of supervisors could help employees to increase the degree of work motivation. According to Černe, Nerstad, Dysvik, and Škerlavaj (2014), an employee's work motivation is the result of an exchange process resulting in the relationship between supervisor and employees. Asegid, Belachew, and Yimam (2014) agreed that a successful organization requires the supervisor to create a productive and motivated workforce. Lee, and Kusumah (2020) concluded that supervisor support positively influences employee work motivation. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>3</sub>: Supervisor support positively influences the work motivation of civil servants

### **3.5 Coworkers Support and Work Motivation**

Co-workers are groups of people in the organization who hold the same rank as each other. Co-workers are an essential part of the working environment, and most employees expect to work and cooperate with colleagues in a friendly and harmonious environment when they start their career in an organization (Susskind, Kacmar, & Borchgrevink, 2003). According to Bagraim, and Hime (2007),

coworkers in the organization should technically, emotionally, and socially support one another in all working facets. A relationship with coworkers is the combination of giving and receiving support among individuals in an organization. Harmonious relationships and cooperation between an individual, and their coworkers have a positive impact on an individual level, organizational commitment, and work motivation. Work motivation will be increased if every individual perceives a tight and bonded relationship with one another. Sajjad, Ghazanfar, and Ramzan (2013) predicted one of the antecedents of employee motivation is collaboration, more specifically teamwork. The more harmonious the team, the quicker collective goals will be achieved with the cooperation of all members. Miller, and Lee (2001) strongly believed that coworker support is a factor that creates employee motivation. Based on the foregoing review and previous researches, it is hypothesized that:

H<sub>4</sub>: Coworkers have a positive influence on the work motivation of civil servants.

### **3.6 Rewards and Recognition and Work Motivation**

The rewards system is policies, strategies, and practices for praising excellent employees with their advanced abilities and contributions by providing various flexible types, levels of pays, benefits, and forms in the organization or business unit (Armstrong, & Taylor, 2017). Normally, the common aim of a reward and rewards system is motivating employees to work, achieve, and complete the goals. Therefore, a rewards system refers to programs designed by an organization to reward the best performance and motivate employees at individual and/or group levels.

On the other hand, recognition is “the timely, informal acknowledgment of a person’s or team’s behavior, effort or business result that supports the organization’s goals and values and which has been beyond normal expectation” (Harrison, 2013). There are various forms to recognize deserved individuals such as thanks, praise, appreciation, respect, safe workplace. According to many researchers, recognition is the highest need while a reward including the monetary and compensative benefits is not able to be the sole motivator. Various researches suggest that rewards and recognition should not be separated (Saleem, Mahmood, & Mahmood, 2010) as cash awards are not always a truly effective way to motivate employees in the long term, and recognition itself is not sufficient either. Therefore, the phrase “rewards and recognition” would be better illustrated as “benefits as increased salary, bonuses, and promotion, which are conferred as a public acknowledgment of superior performance concerning company’s objectives” (Khan, Waqas, & Muneer, 2017).

Flynn (1998) emphasized that rewards and recognition can maintain the high spirits for employees’ morale and can establish a correlation between motivation and performance of the employees. Hence, recognition belongs to “esteem needs” in Maslow’s hierarchy of need theory (Khan et al., 2017). Ali, and Ahmed (2009) concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between rewards & recognition and motivation. The study also proved that if rewards and recognition were given to employees fairly and transparently, then there would be a significant increase in work motivation. Based on previous empirical evidence, the hypothesis is developed as below:

H<sub>5</sub>: Rewards and recognition impact the work motivation of civil servants positively.

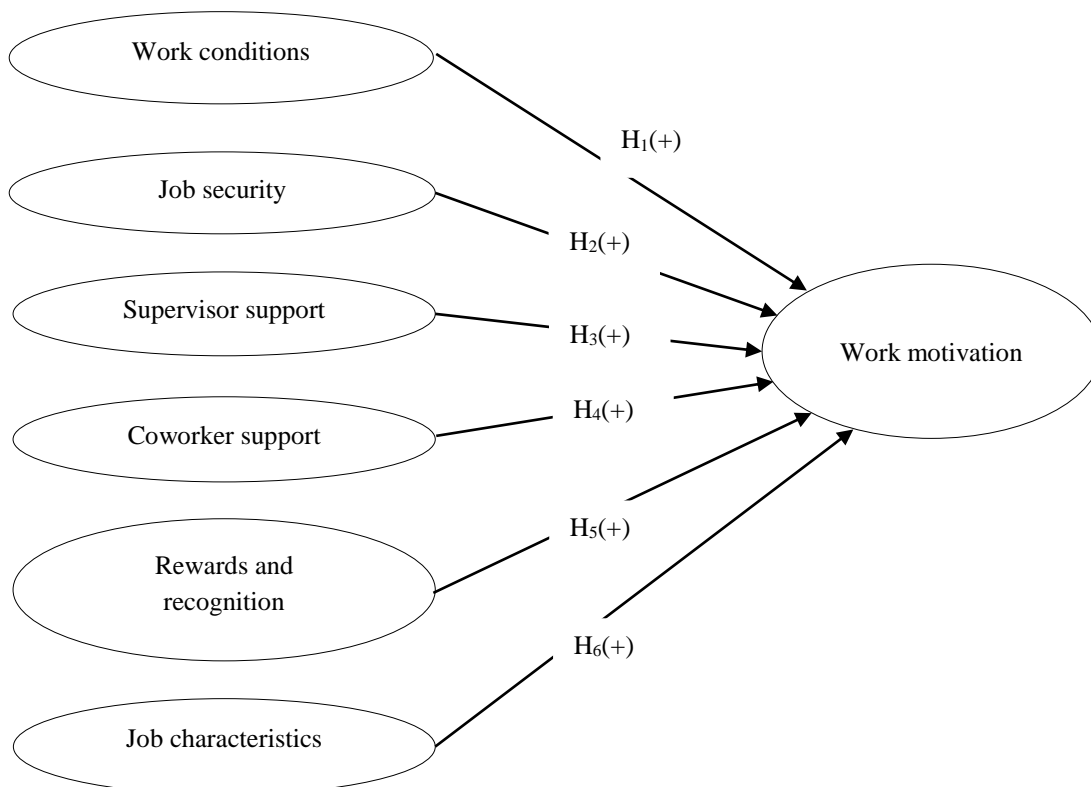
### **3.7 Job Characteristics and Work Motivation**

Job characteristics are objectives of jobs, particularly the level to which jobs are designed that increases the work motivation Hackman, and Oldham (1974). Task significance, task variety, task identity, autonomy, and feedback are five core job features, which correlate positively with work motivation (Hunter, 2006). Specifically, more challenging work will motivate employees to self-explore, learn, improve knowledge skills to get the job done effectively. Kovach (1987) agreed that an interesting job manifests diversity, creativity, challenge; hence creating more opportunities to apply and promote personal skills as well as competencies. Challenging work encourages employees to utilize all their working skills, knowledge, and intelligence to handle with complexities involved in each task they take responsibility. Kivimäki, and Koskinen (1995) proved that employees’ work motivation is closely related to the degree of diversity in jobs. Therefore, employees performing diverse jobs will be more motivated than those who just do repetitive work. Spector, and Jex (1991) support the idea that job characteristics can predict employees’ motivation. Perry, and Wise (1990) suggested the characteristics of a specific job influence motivation of the individual who is

working on it. Similarly, Juhdi, and Saad (2007) figured out the fact that clearly understanding job characteristics can increase motivation, and effectiveness of employees in their workplace, especially, considered as a principal indicator influencing the degree of employees' motivation. The characteristics of work had a super-strong influence on employee motivation. Therefore, the hypothesis is suggested as:

H<sub>6</sub>: Job characteristics have a positive impact on the work motivation of civil servants.

Relating to the literature review, the main key concepts: motivational factors and work motivation were reviewed carefully. The conceptualization and definitions of six motivational factors (work conditions, job security, supervisor support, coworkers support, rewards and recognition, and job characteristics) positively affect work motivation supported by numerous research studies.



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework

### 3.8 Research Methodology

#### 1) Sample Size

After reviewing literature and deducing from previous research, a conceptual framework and research hypotheses were formed (Figure 1). This study was done using a quantitative approach method through two steps: a pilot test and the main survey.

The pilot test was conducted to confirm that the survey items were appropriate and fit the concepts as step one. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms and sent to public employees working in Public Organizations via email. Through this, 30 responses were obtained.

**Table 1** Results of the Quantitative Pilot Test Analysis 30 Respondents

Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Work conditions	5	0.807
Job security	5	0.814
Supervisor support	5	0.861
Coworker support	5	0.954
Rewards and recognition	4	0.904
Job characteristics	5	0.857
Work motivation	5	0.845

As shown in Table 1, the result of every construct's reliable test with the value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of all scales was higher than 0.8 (Hair, Anderson, Babin, & Black, 2010). Therefore, the reliability of the scales was pretty good and these measurement scales can be applied in the next step: The main survey.

For the main survey, the authors distributed 200 questionnaires to the HR division in the Department of Home Affairs in Ho Chi Minh City to collect data. The number of returned questionnaires was 190. After the screening process, three of them were removed because the participants missed answering some questions. Then, 187 questionnaires were used to analyze in step two (main survey) of the quantitative approach (Table 2).

**Table 2** Descriptive Statistics

	N= 187	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	105	56.1
	Male	82	43.9
Marital status	Marriage	147	78.6
	Single	40	21.4
Age	≤ 25 years old	30	16.0
	26-30 years old	67	35.9
	31-40 years old	70	37.4
	≥ 40 years old	20	10.7
Experience	Less than 3 years	19	10.2
	3-5 years	30	16.0
	5-10 years	66	35.3
	≥ 10 years	72	38.5
Education	Below than bachelor's degree	18	9.6
	Bachelor's degree	155	82.9
	Master's degree	14	7.5
	PhD's degree	0	0

## 2) Variable Measurements

This study divided a questionnaire into two parts to collect the data. The first part measures the observed variables of motivational factors and work motivation. The second part identified the personal information of participants (gender, age, tenure, marital status, and education). To ensure validity and reliability, all questionnaire items were adopted from previous researchers. Each item was measured using a five Likert scale. Work conditions scale with 5 items adopted from Edgar, and Geare (2005). While job security scales include 5 items from the study of Kuhnert, Sims, and Lahey (1989). A five-item scale was adopted from Hammer et al (2009) to measure supervisor support. Coworkers' support scales were measured by 5 items adopted from Ducharme, and Martin (2000) and 4 items from Vuong, and Sid (2020) were adopted to measure rewards and recognition. Job characteristics were measured by 5 items of Hackman, and Oldham (1974). Finally, 5 items adopted from Akkermans et al (2016) were used to measure work motivation.

### 3) Partial Least Square Regression

This study used partial least square-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) via the Smart PLS 3.0 to test the conceptual framework. Giao, and Vuong (2020) proved that PLS is able to support the service for causal analysis in many types of researches, especially behavioral research. Moreover, PLS is one of the useful multivariate techniques that examine complex research problems involving both unobserved variables and the multifaceted interaction of different variables. If samples are independent and data is not required to be normally distributed, PLS calculates p-values by bootstrapping technique (Hair et al., 2010). Considering all the above advantages, the authors decided to employ Smart PLS 3.0 to analyze data for this study.

### 4. Result

The constructs' reliability is determined by indicator reliability and internal consistency reliability. According to Hair et al (2010), indicator reliability is calculated by the square of the loadings for each indicator. When this value is higher than 0.5, the data of the study satisfies indicator reliability. From the analysis result, three items; SS5, JM5, and JC5, were deleted due to loading  $\leq 0.5$ .

Next, Fornell, and Larcker (1981) posited that a score of composite reliability (CR) should be used to measure internal consistency reliability and the value of CR should be equal to or higher than 0.7. As shown in Table 3, the CR score for all constructs is higher than 0.7; thus, it illustrated good internal consistency reliability.

Fornell, and Larcker (1981) also stated that the average variance extracted (AVE) can be used to access the convergent validity of the latent variables. When the AVE for each of the constructs is not lower than 0.5, convergent validity is confirmed.

AVE of construct "coworkers support" was 0.4306; lower than 0.5, therefore, the authors omitted to delete low indicator loading items CS1 and CS4 to increase the AVE of construct "coworkers support". After omission, the AVE of the construct is 0.526 (Table 3, Figure 2). Therefore, each of the constructs in this study determined good convergent validity.

**Table 3** Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Indicator loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	AVE $\geq 0.5$
Coworker support	CS2	0.797	0.552	0.768	0.526
	CS3	0.678			
	CS5	0.694			
Job characteristics	JC1	0.950	0.957	0.969	0.886
	JC2	0.953			
	JC3	0.925			
	JC4	0.939			
Work motivation	JM1	0.925	0.952	0.965	0.874
	JM2	0.946			
	JM3	0.930			
	JM4	0.938			
Job security	JS1	0.593	0.820	0.872	0.581
	JS2	0.671			
	JS3	0.843			
	JS4	0.814			
	JS5	0.854			
Rewards and recognition	RR1	0.939	0.957	0.969	0.886
	RR2	0.955			
	RR3	0.939			
	RR4	0.931			
Supervisor support	SS1	0.952	0.948	0.963	0.866
	SS2	0.943			

Construct	Indicator	Indicator loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	AVE $\geq$ 0.5
Work conditions	SS3	0.880	0.903	0.931	0.734
	SS4	0.945			
	WC1	0.896			
	WC2	0.908			
	WC3	0.941			
	WC4	0.915			
	WC5	0.565			

Discriminant validity signifies the difference of a construct when compared with others in the model. Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) suggested the Heterotrait-Monotrait criterion (HTMT) can be used to consider the discriminant validity of latent variables. Garson (2016) stated that when the HTMT ratio is lower than 1.0, the discriminant validity between two reflective variables is proved. Table 4 showed that the result of the HTMT ratio of all latent variables is lower than 1.0, thus it is satisfied for discriminant validity.

**Table 4** Heterotrait-Monotrait Criterion (HTMT)

	CS	JC	JM	JS	RR	SS	WC
CS							
JC	0.6104						
JM	0.7125	0.8922					
JS	0.9188	0.8383	0.8231				
RR	0.6861	0.9716	0.8903	0.8430			
SS	0.6834	0.9681	0.9081	0.8699	0.9459		
WC	0.7824	0.8037	0.8624	0.8432	0.8051	0.8374	

In the structural model analysis, the first step is collinearity assessment. This procedure was essential to guarantee that the path coefficients that are estimated by regressing endogenous variables on the attached exogenous variables are not tendentious. The structural model assesses the collinearity among indicators using variance inflation factor (VIF). A VIF value below 10 signifies the absence of collinearity (Hair et al., 2010). As seen in Table 5, VIF values of the construct were less than 10. Therefore, the authors can conclude that no collinearity existed between the indicator variables and the latent variables.

**Table 5** Collinearity Statistics

Construct	Maximum of outer VIF value
	Work motivation
Coworkers Support	1.2397
Job Characteristics	6.9518
Job Motivation	5.7437
Job Security	5.1009
Rewards and Recognition	6.6082
Supervisor Support	7.0087
Work Conditions	5.9203

The hypotheses in this study and represented in the structure model were analyzed using the Smart PLS 3.0 software. The structural model was examined using three assessments: the significance of the path coefficients between constructs was determined, also called nomological validity, f square value, and R square value.



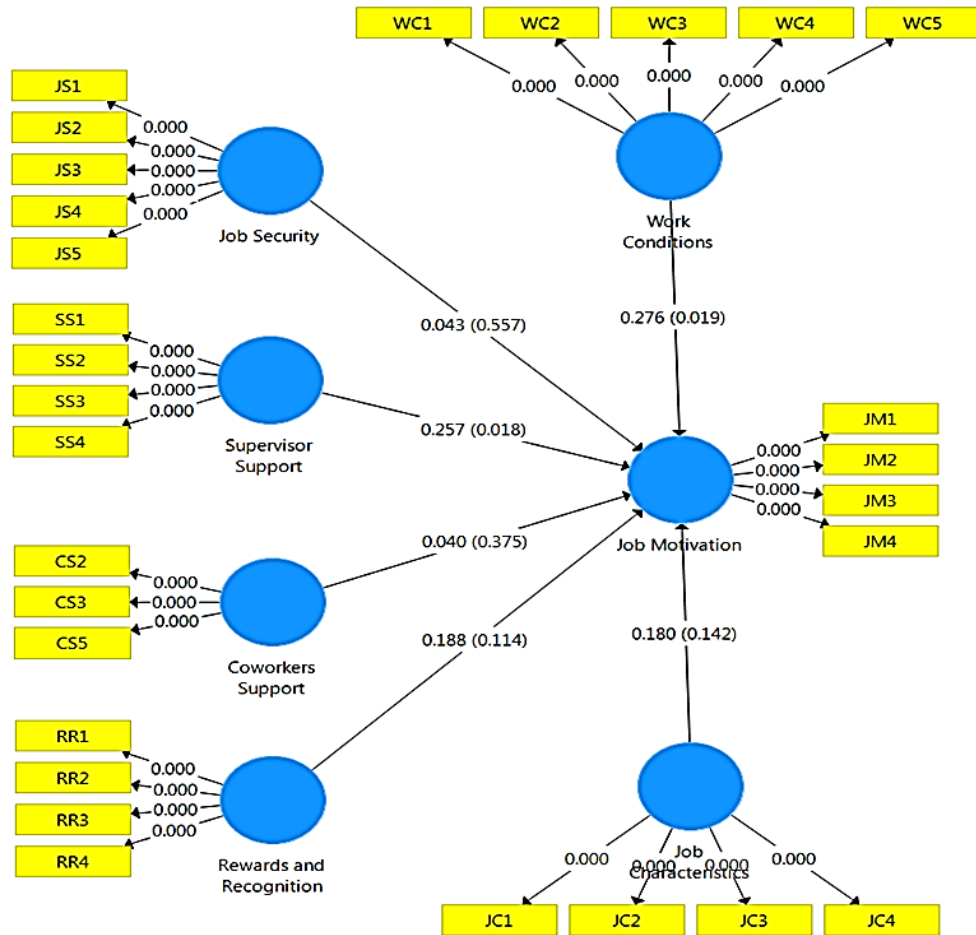


Figure 2 Hypotheses Summary Model

The result of the study was summarized in Table 6. The columns showed the dependency, beta coefficient, Standard Deviation, *t* statistics, *p* values, and the conclusion displaying the “Support” or “Not support”. To accept or reject any hypothesis, if the value in the “*p*-value” column is higher than 0.05, it is not significant, meaning that the hypothesis is “Not supported”. If the value is lower than 0.05, it is significant, thus the hypothesis is “Supported”. The findings illustrated that H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>4</sub>, H<sub>5</sub>, and H<sub>6</sub> were rejected since their *p*-values are higher than 0.05.

Work condition and supervisor support positively influence the degree of work motivation (*p*-value  $\leq 0.05$ ); therefore, H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>3</sub> are accepted.

Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>: the result showed that ‘work conditions’ had a significant positive relationship with the work motivation of civil servants, (*p*-value = 0.019 < 0.05 and beta coefficient = 0.276). The result indicated that the better the work conditions in the workplace, the higher the work motivation of civil servants. Thus, hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> was supported.

Hypotheses H<sub>3</sub>: the finding illustrated that ‘supervisor support’ had a significant positive relationship with the work motivation of civil servants (*p*-value = 0.018 < 0.05 and beta coefficient = 0.257). The result showed that civil servants perceived higher work motivation if they received more support from their supervisor. Thus, hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> was supported.

**Table 6** Path Coefficient

Hypothesis	Dependency	Beta coefficient	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P-Values	Conclusion
H <sub>1</sub>	WC->JM	0.276	0.278	2.351	0.019	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	JS -> JM	0.043	0.047	0.588	0.557	Not supported
H <sub>3</sub>	SS -> JM	0.257	0.261	2.378	0.018	Supported
H <sub>4</sub>	CS -> JM	0.040	0.036	0.888	0.375	Not supported
H <sub>5</sub>	RR -> JM	0.188	0.189	1.582	0.114	Not supported
H <sub>6</sub>	JC -> JM	0.180	0.176	1.472	0.142	Not supported

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was examined to assess predictive fit.  $R^2$  shows how much of the variance of the latent variables is explained by the latent variable. Hair et al (2010) suggested that the primary criterion for the assessment of a PLS path model is the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ).  $R^2$  ranges are always between 0 and 1, which means higher  $R^2$  values indicate a better fit of the data to the model. Typically,  $R^2$  values are ranked in which 0.1, 0.3, and 0.5 indicate a small effects size, medium effects size, and large effects size respectively (Hair et al., 2010). As shown in Table 7, work conditions and supervisor support indicate pretty large effects size on work motivation ( $R^2=0.812$ ), which means work conditions and supervisor support can explain 81.2% of the variance Work motivation.

**Table 7** R Square Result

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
<b>Job Motivation</b>	0.812	0.806

## 5. Discussion and Implication

### 5.1 Discussion

In this discussion, the authors explain reasons why, among six factors affecting work motivation in the conceptual framework, only two factors (work conditions and supervisor support) turned out to be the motivational factor of the civil servants in the Department of Home Affairs- Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The results of this study are consistent with some previous studies. First of all, the prior researches' results illustrated the same conclusion that good working conditions could be a source of motivation for employees to work better with advanced efficiency. Research by Yazdani et al (2011); Irons, and Buskist (2008) and Barzoki (2012) confirmed working conditions belong to the top factors affecting work motivation.

Secondly, Richmond, and McCroskey (2000) shared the common finding that the behavior of supervisors can have a remarkable influence in not only employees' work motivation, but also the organizational performance levels altogether. Furthermore, a relationship with the supervisor would affect the psychological condition of employees during the time they work in the organization.

Surprisingly, work conditions and supervisor support are the two most influencing factors, demonstrating that Vietnamese civil servants are more concerned with intangible supports (organizational support through considering providing work conditions for the workforce or support from their supervisor) than tangible conditions such as rewards, or bonuses in salary. The findings are useful for public sector leaders and supervisors to pay more attention to considering building a good relationship with their subordinates rather than reforming the rewards system as such. The reason is that the common problem of civil servants is stress or burden. The Vietnamese government has been designing strategic plans to improve administrative activities. With positive outcomes, the reform somehow becomes the source of burden and stressor to public servants and the whole system due to the too high requirements as well of expectations for the better public services with a high rate of population. In those situations, they would prefer to contact and communicate with their supervisor or just a silent space to be calm down. It is, therefore, an important observation that, in the current context, with the adoption of a new interaction between supervisor and employees, investing in work conditions in the workplace can enhance the work motivation of Vietnamese civil servants in general.

It was interesting and surprising at the same time to see how the data and results went beyond the expectations. Nonetheless, these results reflect very well the true picture and nature of public organizations in Vietnam socially and politically.

## 5.2 Implication

### 1) Work Conditions

Leaders and managers should pay more attention to the workload in every single division in the department, balance the numbers of civil servants with the workload to get higher efficiency and effectiveness to achieve the sustainable development of the department. Physical conditions in the department such as a clear break room, canteen, or coffee corners are considered necessary physical conditions that should be designed for civil servants. Besides, facilities such as printers, fax machines or desktops should be kept in good quality then the civil servants can work without any disturbance, then the work motivation, as well as the level of their performance, would be surged. Based on the study results, the physical and mental health of civil servants in the organization is worth investing in. Leaders or managers should consider the special service to take care of the health of civil servants especially mental health by constructing a small clinic room inside the department with one or two physicians and psychologists where civil servants can visit during their break time or right after working time.

### 2) Supervisor Support

Supervisors should communicate openly and let subordinates feel free to share their concerns, their problems at work, or even in private life sometimes. Besides, the supervisor should care for a team member who suddenly behaves strangely, that individual might be under stress or problem from their work or conflict in the family. Moreover, the supervisor should be the person that civil servants or subordinates can rely on in their hard times or when they have to deal with turbulence in work. With the work experiences, the supervisor can give civil servants suggestions, feedbacks, and comments to assist them to overcome those hard times. In case employees do not perform well, the supervisor should provide constructive feedback with practical advice and guidance on areas that need improvement as the way that employees feel safe and they do not lose face or feel embarrassed among their coworkers.

## 6. Conclusion

This article aimed to identify factors that affect the work motivation of civil servants working in the public sector, specifically the Department of Home Affairs in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

From the result of data analysis, two factors are affecting the work motivation of the civil servants. The measurement scales used in this article are estimated with validity and reliability ( $CR \geq 0.7$ ,  $AVE \geq 0.5$ ). The article found the factors that positively affect the work motivation of civil servants, in descending order, as work conditions (beta coefficient= 0.276) and supervisor support (beta coefficient= 0.257).

The finding provides leaders, managers, and supervisors of the department with a new and overall look at the antecedents of work motivation. Based on the research findings, the conclusion drawn is that if the advance in motivational factors is high enough, the work motivation among civil servants will be increased, thus enhancing the sustainable development of the department as well as public organizations in Vietnam generally. The article may contribute valuable information with managerial implications so that leaders and managers could apply in the department to boost the degree of work motivation among civil servants.

Some limitations existed in this article. First, the questionnaire for collecting data in this study was using only a convenience sampling method with quite a small sample size. Therefore, it may not illustrate the overall civil servants in the Department of Home Affairs in Ho Chi Minh City as well as in Vietnam public organizations in general.

Secondly, the article remained in finding factors that influenced work motivation and does not mention how work motivation can contribute to other related key concepts in organizational development such as job performance, job burnout, or job satisfaction. Further, the consequences of work motivation are one of the recommendations for future researchers who want to devote themselves to the organizational field.

Finally, for future work, the researchers should consider the characteristics of the organization while doing any works related to HR management research. Sometimes, the point of view of researchers and

employees in that organization is quite dissimilar. When the researchers acknowledge the importance of this point, it will be a concrete background to understand clearly what and how they process the next steps in their research.

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