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## THE RECOMMENDATIONS IMPROVING THE MORALE OF EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES IN BA RIA – VUNG TAU

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### ABSTRACT

**E**mployee loyalty has always been a matter of concern for organizations. A large degree of employee turnover is highly detrimental to both the organization as well as the employees. Loyalty has an impact over the organization's costs relating to recruitment and selection, personnel process and induction, training of new personnel and above all, loss of knowledge gained by the employee while on job. The main objective of this paper is to identify all the main factors that affecting morale of employees in selected small and medium sized enterprises in Ba Ria - Vung Tau. the researchers had used analytical method of explore factor analysis to determining factors that are components of the morale of employees. This paper conducted during the period from March 2014 to March 2015. Besides, the research results showed that there were 500 persons who interviewed and answered about 25 questions (but 471 persons processed). The researcher had analyzed Cronbach's Alpha test, the result of KMO analysis used for multiple regression analysis. The results showed that there were five factors, which included of factors following Superior Relationship (SR), Job Development Opportunity (JO), Income Policy (IP), Interested Job (IJ) and Working Environment (WE) affecting the Loyalty of Employee at SMEs in Ba Ria - Vung Tau province with significance level 5 %.

**Keywords:** Morale, employees, small and medium sized enterprises and Ba Ria - Vung Tau.

## Introduction

Developing a group of diverse and competitive small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is a central theme towards achieving sustainable economic growth. SMEs are crucial to the economic growth process and play an important role in the country's overall production network. Some advanced economies have succeeded because SMEs form a fundamental part of the economy, comprising over 98% of total establishments and contributing to over 65% of employment as well as over 50% of the gross domestic product.

Although the numbers might be lower in Vietnam, SMEs have the potential to contribute substantially to the economy and can provide a strong foundation for the growth of new industries as well as strengthening existing ones, for Vietnam's future development. SMEs been believed to be important in supporting economics development within a country (Mazzarol, Volery, Doss, & Thein, 1999). One of the important roles of SMEs in this context includes poverty alleviation through job creation. Thai SMEs increasingly seen as creator of new jobs (Swierczek & Ha, 2003) and Vietnamese SMEs employ 64% of industrial workforce. In line with the country's economic reform and development, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have experienced phenomenal growth, especially since 2000 to date when the Enterprise Law promulgated. However, despite this impressive achievement, Vietnam's SMEs remain weak in terms of internal and external networking, competitiveness, innovativeness, human resource, and readiness to globalization. Apart from the SMEs' low starting points, these shortcomings and weaknesses have been largely due to the prolonged discrimination against private sector access to capital or credit and land, lack of a pro-private and competitive business environment, and poor quality of human resource and business support of development services.

In today's business environment, companies depend on their employees more than at any other time in the past. This is particularly true in hi-tech, biotech, finance, and other market segments where employee contribution does not directly depend on the nominal time spent at work. In addition, firm performance refers to the firm's success in the market, which may have different outcomes. Firm performance is a focal phenomenon in business studies.

With the practical requirements of a working career in mind, the researcher has chosen: "***The recommendations improving the morale of employees in selected small and medium sized enterprises in Ba Ria – Vung Tau***" as a paper for researching in the human resource quality of the SMEs.

## Literature review

**Extrinsic loyalty.** Extrinsic loyalty refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain an outcome, whether or not that activity is also intrinsically motivated. Extrinsic loyalty comes from outside of the individual. Common extrinsic loyalty are rewards (for example money or grades) for showing the desired behavior, and the threat of punishment following misbehavior. Competition is in an extrinsic motivator because it encourages the performer to win and to beat others, not simply to enjoy the intrinsic rewards of the activity. A cheering crowd and the desire to win a trophy are also extrinsic incentives.

**Comparison of intrinsic and extrinsic loyalty.** Social psychological research has indicated that extrinsic rewards can lead to over justification and a subsequent reduction in intrinsic loyalty. In one study demonstrating this effect, children who expected to be (and were) rewarded with a ribbon and a gold star for drawing pictures spent less time playing with the drawing materials in subsequent observations than children who were assigned to an unexpected reward condition. However, another study showed that third graders who were rewarded with a book showed more reading behavior in the future, implying that some rewards do not undermine intrinsic loyalty. While the provision of extrinsic rewards might reduce the desirability of an activity, the use of extrinsic constraints, such as the threat of punishment, against performing an activity has actually been found to increase one's intrinsic interest in that activity. In one study, when children given mild threats against playing with an attractive toy, it found that the threat actually served to increase the child's interest in the toy, which was previously undesirable to the child in the absence of threat.

For those children who received no extrinsic reward, self-determination theory proposes that extrinsic loyalty internalized by the individual if the task fits with their values and beliefs and therefore helps to fulfill their basic psychological needs.

**Maslow's hierarchy of needs.** Abraham Maslow viewed loyalty as based off a hierarchy of needs, of which a person cannot move to the next level of needs without satisfying the previous level. Maslow's hierarchy starts at the lowest level of needs, basic physiological needs. Basic physiological needs include air, water, and food. Employees who pay at least a minimal living wage meet these basic employee needs.

The next level of needs referred to as safety and security needs. This level includes needs such as having a place to live and knowing one is safe. Employees can meet these needs by ensuring employees are safe from physical, verbal or emotional hazards and have a sense of job security. The third level of needs is social affiliation and belonging. This is the need to be social, have friends, and feel liked one belongs and loved. Implementing employee participation programs can help fulfill the need to belong. Rewards such as acknowledging an employee's contributions can also satisfy these social and love needs. The fourth level on the hierarchy is esteem needs. This level is described as feeling good about one's self and knowing that their life is meaningful, valuable, and has a purpose. Employees should use the job design technique to create jobs that are important to and cherished by the employee. The last level Maslow described called self-actualization. This level refers to people reaching their potential states of well-being. An employee who ensures that an employee is in the right job and has all other needs met will help the employee realize this highest need.

**Herzberg's two-factor theory.** Frederick Herzberg developed the two-factor theory of loyalty based on satisfiers and dissatisfies. Satisfiers are motivators associated with job satisfaction while dissatisfies are motivators associated with hygiene or maintenance. Satisfiers include achievement, responsibility, advancement, and recognition. Satisfiers are all intrinsic motivators that directly related to rewards attainable from work performance and even the nature of the work itself.

Dissatisfies are extrinsic motivators based on the work environment, and include a company's policies and administration such as supervision, peers, working conditions, and salary. Herzberg believed providing for hygiene and maintenance needs could prevent dissatisfaction but not contribute to satisfaction.

Herzberg also believed that satisfiers hold the greatest potential for increased work performance. Work-life programs are a form of satisfier that recognizes the employee's life outside of work that, in turn, helps motivate the employee.

**Vroom's expectancy theory.** The theory based on three concepts: valence, expectancy, and force. Valence is the attractiveness of potential rewards, outcomes, or incentives. Expectancy is a person's belief that they will or will not be able to reach the desired outcome. Force is a person's loyalty to perform. In general, people will work hard when they think that it is likely to lead to desired organizational rewards.

**Locke's goal theory.** Edwin A. Locke's goal theory describes setting specific goals to elicit higher performance and setting difficult goals to increase effort. He also believed that, through employee participation in goal setting the employees would be more likely to accept the goals and have a greater job satisfaction. The goal theory's underlying assumption is that employees who participate in goal setting will set difficult goals for themselves and yield superior performance.

The theory is logical because employees are going to set difficult goals but the goals will be attainable with increased effort. Sometimes organizations set goals that their employees were rare to meet. If the goals are always unattainable, there is no loyalty to try accomplishing them.

### **Methods of research**

This study used of quantitative research methods to survey employees in selected small and medium sized enterprises in Ba Ria - Vung Tau. The results obtained from quantitative research processed by SPSS statistical software version 20.0.

Quantitative research is the collection of numerical data and exhibiting the view of relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for natural science approach, and as having an objectivist conception of social reality. Therefore, this specific form of research uses the quantitative data to analysis. In addition, preliminary investigations, formal research is done by using quantitative methods questionnaire survey of 500 persons who interviewed and answered about 25 questions. The reason tested measurement models, model and test research hypotheses.

Reliability test: Bryman and Cramer (1990) suggested that, it is just fine when Cronbach's alpha is 0.8 or above 0.8, while Nunnally (1978) stated that it is still acceptable with the value of 0.6, especially for initial investigation like in this research. Therefore, in this research, the value is confirmed when it is greater than 0.7.

Data collected were tested by the reliability index excluding variables with correlation coefficients lower  $< 0.30$  and variable coefficient Cronbach's alpha  $< 0.60$ ), factor analysis explored remove the variable low load factor  $< 0.50$ . The hypothesis was tested through multiple regression analysis with linear Enter method.

**Research results**

**Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha test for the Loyalty of Employee at SMEs**

<b>1. Job Development Opportunity (JO)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
JO1: The SMEs has a policy of training and professional development for staffs and leaders	0.920
JO2: The SMEs gives you the opportunity for staffs and leaders to develop personal ability	
JO3: The SMEs always creates advancement opportunities for qualified persons and working	
JO4: The SMEs employees have the opportunity to work and Job security	
JO5: You always get the enthusiastic from the helping of co-workers and superiors	
JO6: The SMEs gives you the opportunity to improve the training quality and job development	
<b>2. Superior Relationship (SR)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
SR1: Your suggestions is respected by superiors of SMEs	0.937
SR2: The SMEs Superiors who are friendly and approachable with you	
SR3: The SMEs Superiors who support and often help you solve job when you have difficulty	
SR4: The SMEs Superiors who commonly shared and help you about the difficulties in the life	
SR5: The SMEs Superiors and staffs can share ideal each other to develop the job and training quality	
<b>3. Income Policy (IP)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
IP1: Your current salary is in line with your abilities at SMEs	0.895
IP2: Your salary commensurates with your salary the same position in another SMEs	
IP3: The salary policy is for working and researching at the SMEs	
IP4: The policy that you was rewarded with the results of the working at the SMEs	
<b>4. Interested Job (IJ)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
IJ1: Your job is very interesting and comfortable at SMEs	0.905
IJ2: You were given authority in accordance with their abilities at work and sharing your job with leaders	
IJ3: Your job is suitable for you and working time is freedom at SMEs	
IJ4: Your job is creative and freedom for job development and working at SMEs	
<b>5. Working Environment (WE)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
WE1: The SMEs of working environment where your work is clean, cool and comfortable for your working	0.828
WE2: The SMEs of working conditions where you provided a full range of vehicles and machinery needed for the job and working	
WE3: The SMEs of working conditions where make your job really become safe, helpful and happy	
<b>6. The Loyalty of Employee (LE)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
LE1: You are willing to sacrifice personal interests for the good work done and sharing your job with other persons at SMEs	0.947
LE2: You feel more motivated at work and happy in job at SMEs	
LE3: You are willing to improve the knowledge for working better and work for long time at SMEs	

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

Table 1 showed that there are 25 items and table 1 showed that there were 471 persons to be interviewed: all of variables surveyed Corrected Item-Total Correlation greater than 0.3 and Cronbach's Alpha if Item deleted greater than 0.6 and Cronbach's Alpha is very reliability. Such observations make it eligible for the survey variables after testing scale. This showed that data was suitable and reliability for researching.

**Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test the for the Loyalty of Employee at SMEs**

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.807
Approx. Chi-Square	10359.368
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity df	231
Sig.	.000

**Total Variance Explained**

Com.	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	6.418	29.171	29.171	6.418	29.171	29.171	4.339
2	4.459	20.270	49.441	4.459	20.270	49.441	5.452
3	2.795	12.707	62.147	2.795	12.707	62.147	5.110
4	2.114	9.609	71.756	2.114	9.609	71.756	3.323
5	1.362	6.190	77.945	1.362	6.190	77.945	2.516
6	.784	3.562	81.507				
7	.686	3.118	84.625				
8	.555	2.522	87.147				
9	.459	2.088	89.236				
10	.440	1.998	91.233				
11	.347	1.578	92.811				
12	.301	1.366	94.177				
13	.277	1.257	95.434				
14	.242	1.099	96.534				
15	.197	.895	97.428				
16	.175	.795	98.224				
17	.115	.522	98.746				
18	.070	.316	99.062				
19	.063	.287	99.349				
20	.051	.232	99.581				
21	.050	.225	99.806				
22	.043	.194	100.000				

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

Table 2 showed that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was statistically significant and high data reliability (KMO = 0.807 > 0.6). This result is very good for data analysis. Table 2 showed that Cumulative percentage was statistically significant and high data reliability is 77.945 % (> 60 percentage).

**Structure Matrix for factors of the Loyalty of Employee at SMEs**

**Table 3: Structure Matrix for factors of the Loyalty of Employee (Y) at SMEs**

**Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

Code	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
SR1	.960				
SR2	.938				
SR5	.897				
SR4	.877				
SR3	.849				
JO2		.998			
JO1		.988			
JO6		.766			
JO5		.752			
JO3		.592			
JO4		.527			
IP3			.957		
IP2			.921		
IP1			.752		
IP4			.746		
IJ4				.937	
IJ2				.918	
IJ3				.837	
IJ1				.835	
WE2					.918
WE3					.867
WE1					.798

(Source: The researcher’s collecting data and SPSS)

Table 3 showed that the Structure Matrix for the development of SMEs had five Components. Component 1 is Superior Relationship (X1), Component 2 is Job Development Opportunity (X2), Component 3 is Income Policy (X3), Component 4 is Interested Job (X4) and Component 5 is Working Environment (X5).

**Table 4: Regression Model Summary analysis about the Loyalty of Employee**

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.827 <sup>a</sup>	.683	.680		.56586723	1.891

a. Predictors: (Constant), X5, X4, X3, X1, X2

b. Dependent Variable: Y

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	321.104	5	64.221	200.561	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	148.896	465	.320		
	Total	470.000	470			

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.028E-016	.026		.000	1.000		
X1	.423	.027	.423	15.639	.000	.933	1.072
X2	.399	.033	.399	12.252	.000	.643	1.555
X3	.325	.032	.325	9.989	.000	.646	1.549
X4	.059	.027	.059	2.197	.029	.953	1.050
X5	.360	.027	.360	13.525	.000	.962	1.039

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

Table 4 showed that Adjusted R Square was statistically significant and high data reliability. In addition, Adjusted R Square reached 68.0 %. Results showed that all t value > 2 (Sig < 0.00) was statistically significant and high data reliability. Besides, the regression coefficients were positive. This means that the effects of independent variables in the same direction with the development of SMEs.

In statistics, regression analysis is a statistical process for estimating the relationships among variables. It includes many techniques for modeling and analyzing several variables, when the focus is on the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. More specifically, regression analysis helps one understand how the typical value of the dependent variable (or 'criterion variable') changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed.

### Conclusions and recommendations

#### Conclusions

The research results showed that there were 500 persons who interviewed and answered about 25 questions (but 471 persons processed). The researcher had analyzed KMO test, the result of KMO analysis used for multiple regression analysis.

The regression analysis result showed that there were five factors, which included of factors following: Superior Relationship (SR), Job Development Opportunity (JO), Income Policy (IP), Interested Job (IJ) and Working Environment (WE) affecting the Loyalty of Employee at SMEs in Ba Ria - Vung Tau province with significance level 5 %. In addition, the research result processed from SPSS 20.0 software. The parameters of the model estimated by Least - Squares Method tested for the model assumption with significance level of 5 percent. At the same time, the result was also a scientific evidence and important for researchers, and policy makers who apply them for the developing of human resource at the SMEs in the future.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1: Superior Relationship (SR)**

The SMEs continues to improve Superior Relationship following: SMEs building and maintaining good relationships with staff between subordinates and superiors have a very important role. However, many people in high positions often said that under the new grant to focus on relationships with superiors and ignore this responsibility.

In fact, good relationships with staff will help ensure the work place more smoothly, while improving their loyalty to the SMEs. Therefore, leaders should "cared" for relationships with subordinates to create advantages for work and his career.

### **Recommendation 2: Job Development Opportunity (JO)**

The SMEs continues to improve Job Development Opportunity following: (1) The SMEs continues to improve the policy of training and professional development for staffs and managers. (2) The SMEs continues to give the opportunity for staffs and managers to develop personal ability. (3) The SMEs continues to create advancement opportunities for qualified persons, science research and working.

Any employee wishes to be professional development. The survey showed that professional development is an important factor in creating top job satisfaction for employees and make them closer to the SMEs. However, SMEs are not properly invested to build a roadmap for career development for employees.

### **Recommendation 3: Income Policy (IP)**

The SMES continues to improve Income Policy following: (1) The SMEs should improve the quality of Income Policy such as current salary is in line with staffs' abilities. (2) The SMEs should continue to improve the salary policy for studying and researching at the SMEs that reflect current and future social demand, especially enterprises demand. (3) The SMEs should improve the policy that staffs rewarded with the results of the good working at the SMEs and transfer the result of Science research of lecturers for enterprises to apply in business administration.

### **Recommendation 4: Interested Job (IJ)**

The SMEs continues to improve the Job following: (1) The SMEs continues to improve the job policy is suitable for staffs and working time is freedom at SMEs. (2) The SMEs continues to improve the job that is creative and freedom for science researching and working at SMEs. (3) The SMEs continues to improve authority in accordance with their abilities at work.

Nowadays, more and more employees seek a balance between work and life. Thus, in the position of the owner, you should seek help for their employees feel happy. You may think that your employees are lucky to have a job. However, the truth probably will not make you happy. Although all feel satisfied about salary, but not least of which was felt to lack satisfied with his work.

### **Recommendation 5: Working Environment (WE)**

The SMEs continues to improve the Working Environment following: (1) The SMEs continues to improve the quality of Working Environment such as working environment where your work is clean, cool and comfortable for you working and sharing. (2) The SMEs continues to improve working conditions where you provided a full range of vehicles and machinery needed for the job and science research. (3) The SMEs continues to improve working conditions where were working time and your break is consistent and freedom.

To enhance the comprehensive strength of SMEs, SMEs leaders are trying to maintain and develop the work environment is increasingly dynamic and friendly. Policy "Balancing work and life" to motivate all employees develop the full potential job.

### **Recommendations for the future Research**

The above-mentioned things, the future research should survey more than 500 staffs relating to SMEs in Ba Ria - Vung Tau province. This will help to collect the data that is more significant. Moreover, the future research should survey more 25 items (questions) that affecting the loyalty of employee at SMEs in Ba Ria - Vung Tau province.

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