

# **MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF EMPLOYEES IN VIETNAMESE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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## **ABSTRACT:**

The paper studies the motivational factors of employees working in Vietnamese Non-governmental Organizations (VNGOs) and the relation between motivational factors and employees' performance. A sample of 296 employees in various VNGOs was used in a descriptive and econometric analysis to demonstrate that the combination of identified regulation and intrinsic motivation plays a significant role in driving employees' performance. Additionally, we find that regardless of demographical differences, employees of VNGOs are most motivated by intrinsic motivations. These findings help provide insights for the managers of VNGOs on how to build an effective motivational program for their organizations.

**Key words:** Motivational Factors - Local NGOs – Performance - Vietnam

## **1 - INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, as Vietnam has moved from a low-income to a lower middle-income country, many international NGOs (INGO) and donors have been withdrawing their activities from Vietnam, leaving VNGOs to fill the gap and to continue the unfinished missions of INGOs. This creates a double-edged situation for VNGOs. First, they have to struggle to find different funding sources<sup>2</sup> to run their operations. Second, they have to find ways to attract and retain talents. One way to sort these double-edged issues out is to build an efficient motivational program that can allow VNGOs to attract and retain good employees, which in

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<sup>1</sup> The author's views expressed in this research do not reflect the views of Deloitte Consulting Vietnam.

<sup>2</sup> To pay for their operations, VNGOs received funding mostly from service fees, foreign funding through international organizations such as the World Bank, and government and private sources (Asian Development Bank (2011)).

return will provide them with good exposure and lead them to raise the needed funds. In this regard, it has become more compelling to study and comprehend the reasons that incentivize the Vietnamese people to work for VNGOs.

The objective of the paper is to study the motivational factors of employees in VNGOs. A better understanding of these motives will be beneficial to local, regional, and national governments because VNGOs are taking over after the withdrawal of the INGOs, but more importantly because they have become one of the major job sectors in the country and the fight against poverty. This paper's findings will help VNGOs' managers improve their employees' commitment and performance, and minimize their turnover rate and absenteeism.

To fulfil the paper's objective, we resorted to a slightly augmented version of Tremblay et al.'s (2009) questionnaire by gathering data on the motivational factors and performance of 296 employees in VNGOs across Vietnam. Following a descriptive and an econometric analysis, we get the following main findings. First, we find that older employees are more intrinsically motivated than younger ones. This result confirms the natural tendency of the elder to be involved in benevolent activities they truly believe in. Second, we show that male employees are more motivated than female employees. Third, we find that employees with a background in practical degrees (engineering, etc.) are overall more motivated than their counterparts are because their work has a direct impact on the ground and is in tune with the VNGOs' objectives. Finally, the econometric analysis shows that the autonomous motivational regulations, a combination of identified regulation (ID) with intrinsic motivation, especially the belief that "the job is a part of my life," have a strong positive impact on the performance of the VNGOs' employees.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides a literature review. Section 3 presents the data collection and sampling. Section 4 presents the results along with the descriptive and the econometric analysis of the data. Section 5 concludes the paper.

## **2 - LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Theoretical review**

While there are many different views toward motivation, there seems to be a common denominator, which suggests that motivation can be attained by satisfying either internal or external needs. Maslow (1943) contends that people are motivated if their needs can be satisfied either externally or internally. Herzberg et al. (1959) suggest that job satisfiers are related to job content (achievement, recognition, or the work itself can be seen as internal motivators) and job dissatisfiers (the work environment, which can be considered as an external motivator). In this respect, McGregor (1960) points out that there are two groups of employees. First, those who are lazy, inactive, and waiting to be led can only be motivated by good pay and security, or external motivators (theory X). Second, those who by nature are enthusiastic, proactive, and accountable can be motivated by internal factors (theory Y) such as a rewarding organizational structure and working environment.

While classical theories of motivation set an important foundation for subsequent studies, the empirical evidence is mixed. This gives rise to the development of contemporary theories, which better support the evidence and explain the motivation phenomenon in the modern work setting. Vroom (1964), in his expectancy theory, argues that a person will act in a certain way based on their expectation of success and perceived value. Adams (1963), in his equity theory of motivation, states that an individual's motivation is influenced by their perception of the fairness (or equity) of the outcome granted to them for the efforts they made, compared to the outcomes and efforts of other people. Locke (1968), in the context of goal setting theory, states that people will perform better if they have difficult, specific, accepted performance goals or objectives. Porter & Lawler (1968), in their quest for a comprehensive view of the previous theory of motivation, assert that intrinsic motivation involves people doing an activity because they find it interesting and they spontaneously find joy in the activity itself. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation requires tangible or verbal rewards or an instrument from an external source to bring satisfaction to the individual. Building on Porter & Lawler (1968), Deci & Ryan (1980) developed the cognitive evaluation theory (CET), which establishes the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. They allege that the introduction of tangible extrinsic factors influences the impact of intrinsic factors and is detrimental to the effect of intrinsic motivation to the individual.

While the cognitive evaluation theory was supported by a great deal of research, its weaknesses lead Deci & Ryan (1985) and Ryan & Deci (2000) to the formulation of the Self-determination theory (SDT). The SDT consists of six mini-theories that explain motivation from different facets. The breadth of SDT,<sup>3</sup> which is generated by classifying extrinsic motivation into types that differ in their degree of autonomy, has received widespread attention, especially in the non-profit domains such as education, health care, religion, and parenting (Ryan, 2009). The breadth of SDT contends that there are 6 types of motivations which are equivalent to 6 reasons underlying a behavior. These types of motivations are different due to the different level of self-determination in a behavior, or to the extent to which a person controls his/her own behavior. This level of motivation ranges from being completely impersonal, (Amotivation - AM) to being completely intrinsically motivated, in which a person performs a behavior for the reasons inherent to it (Intrinsic Motivation - IM). Between these two ends is extrinsic motivation, a family of motivations that make a person enact a behavior due to reasons that are external to the activity itself.

There are four types of extrinsic motivations, which vary in their level of self-determination. The first two types are external regulation (EX) and introjected regulation (IT). These regulations are called controlled regulations, as they "pertain to feeling pressured to perform a behavior or pursue a goal" in a controlled fashion (Vansteenkiste M. et al, 2010). EX means doing an activity because of some kind of external reward for doing so or punishment for not doing so, or the behavior is externally regulated. IT means doing something to avoid negative

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<sup>3</sup> So far, the breadth of SDT seems to make it the most holistic theory of motivation.

feelings like guilt and shame, or we can say the behavior is performed because of internal pressure.

The second two types of motivation in the SDT continuum are identified regulation (ID) and integrated regulation (IN). These motivations, together with intrinsic motivation, are called autonomous regulation. In autonomous regulation, people engage in a behavior because of choice and pleasure. ID is used to achieve an end that affects an individual's personal well-being and desires. The individual performs the behavior because s/he sees the benefit of that behavior in his/her long-term development goal. IN is observed when identified regulations are congruent with that person's other values and beliefs. In this perspective, Tremblay et al. (2009) point out that intrinsic motivation brings the most positive outcomes and consequences, calls for people's full attention, and brings highest performance. Furthermore, they contend that IT and EX bring negative results and that AM causes the most negative consequences, which include counterproductive performance and the withdrawal of the employees.

## **2.2. Empirical review**

The literature shows that changes relating to age can affect work motivation, depending on the work situation. Specifically, Kanfer & Ackerman, (2004) and Boumans et al, (2011) assert that middle-aged and older people are not attracted by extrinsic financial rewards as much as their younger peers because of their "interest in affirming one's identity and concerns for protecting the self-concept increase". Boumans et al. (2011) show that young people are more motivated by external factors such as career opportunities, salaries, and bonuses, while for older employees, these rewards lose their luster as they are more "in need of intrinsic challenging and fulfilling jobs". These findings are in line with An & Ayayi (2018) who find that young employees under 30 years of age who work for the INGO sector in Vietnam are less motivated than those who are more than 30 years old. In segregating this result, they find that while employees between the ages of 30 to 35 are most motivated by introjected motivators, those aged 35 to 40 are motivated by extrinsic ones. This leads An & Ayayi (2018) to point out that older employees are more influenced by autonomous regulations.

Additionally, as documented in classical and contemporary theories of motivation, Shaju & Subhashini (2017) find that the degree of employees' satisfaction at the lower level in the hierarchy is lower in comparison with the degree of satisfaction of the employees in the upper bracket of the hierarchy because of the lack of freedom, lack of autonomy, and lower income. An & Ayayi (2018) show that employees with a longer tenure in INGOs in Vietnam tend to have higher autonomous regulation values that they used to better contribute to the humanitarian mission of the organization.

High or low levels of education also seem to shape people's motivation because education level tends to mold people's cognitive and analytical thinking and their views toward life and fulfillment. Therefore, it may be tempting to argue that employees with different levels of education may be motivated by different factors. Thomas & Feldman (2009) state that education is "inversely related to workplace aggression, substance abuse, and objective measures of absence" or "unrelated to general counterproductive behaviors and tardiness". Hyz (2010)

suggests, “a well-educated employee has a lower state of satisfaction with respect to their salary”. These findings seem to suggest that well-educated employees will be less affected by IT.

As for the connection between gender and motivation, Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu, (2014) point out that women tend to be more patient and skillful than men due to their home education and inherent nurturing abilities, which gear them towards humanitarian and philanthropic and more care-giving jobs than men who are more interested and motivated in professions requiring physical competence, such as driving, building, or constructing than women.

As the ultimate goal of the motivational and incentivizing factors is to provide high performance, the literature contends that employees who display a more autonomous motivational profile than a controlled motivational one provide higher performance than those in the inverse direction, because their enthusiasm for work becomes a key factor that induces them to yield better results. Dobre (2013) finds that employees who have autonomous motivation generate higher performance and are more loyal to their organisation than those who do not. On a broad view, Sekhar et al. (2013) contend that while different employees at different times need different motivational techniques, employees that are highly motivated will certainly generate higher performance than those who are not.

Following the literature review, we deduced the following two hypotheses to answer our research question.

H1: Demographical factors may have either a positive or a negative impact on motivational factors.

H2: Autonomous STD motivational regulations have more positive impacts to the employees’ performance than controlled ones.

### **3 - DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

We resorted to a slightly augmented version of Tremblay et al.’s (2009) questionnaire to gather the data on the motivational factors of employees working in VNGOs. We incorporated in Tremblay et al.’s (2009) questions on demography, education, work experience, and performance. We provided the questionnaire in English and Vietnamese to give participants the opportunity to fill it out in their language of choice. They scored each question by selecting a suitable score on the Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (do not agree at all) to 7 (agree exactly). The questionnaire was sent out to VNGOs located in Hanoi and the Northern provinces in three different ways<sup>4</sup> by a professional firm with more than 15 years of experience in data collection in Vietnam. First, by physical visits to the NGOs; second, during two big workshops organized for VNGOs in December 2017 in Hanoi; and third, via emails. Within 3 weeks of the dispatch of the questionnaire, we received 296 responses in excel sheets. We took three steps to clean up the data. First, we randomly compared the coded questionnaire sheets with the data spreadsheet to see if the data was entered correctly. Second, we took out the questionnaire sheets with incomplete responses. This step reduced the number of valid responses from 296 to 292. Third, we screened out the excel sheets by

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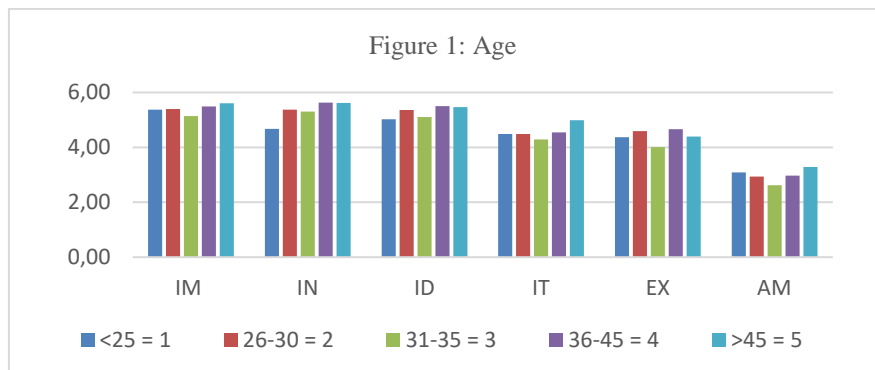
<sup>4</sup> We administrated the questionnaire in Hanoi and the northern provinces because that is where the vast majority of VNGOs are located.

carefully looking for illogical scores a participant provided to any of the three statements (arranged randomly in the questionnaire) that characterizes each type of the six motivations in the self-determination continuum. For example, statements number 2, 9, and 16 of the questionnaire describe EX (salary, bonus, job security). If a person provided the score 7 (agree exactly) to statement number 2 (For the income it provides me) and the score 1 (do not agree at all) to number 9 (Because it allows me to earn money), it is likely that an error has occurred so this answer should be removed. We believe that a three-score-difference among statements of a same code (for example, score 7 for statement 2, score 4 for statement 9, and score 4 for statement 16) would produce an error, so we removed all such answers. After completing this step, we had on hand 290 valid and trustworthy answers for the all the variables in the final database to start our analysis. Due to the lack of respondents in the two ends of the age range (under 20 and over 50), as well as between 36 and 40, we collapsed the original eight age groups in the questionnaire into five age groups.

#### 4 - METHODOLOGY

We resorted to two types of analysis. First was an exploratory graphical descriptive analysis to have the first insight of the data to better comprehend the salient indicators that guide the employees' motivations in VNGOs. This allows us to have a holistic understanding through a combination of different graphical analyses. Second, we resorted to the econometric cross-sectional data analysis to test our hypothesis on the relation that links the performance with several different motivational factors and moderator variables. We used STATA 14 for the econometric analysis.

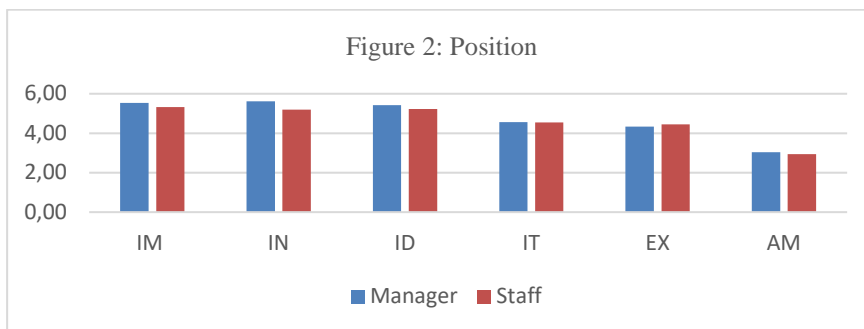
##### 4.1. Exploratory descriptive data analysis



Source: authors from the survey data

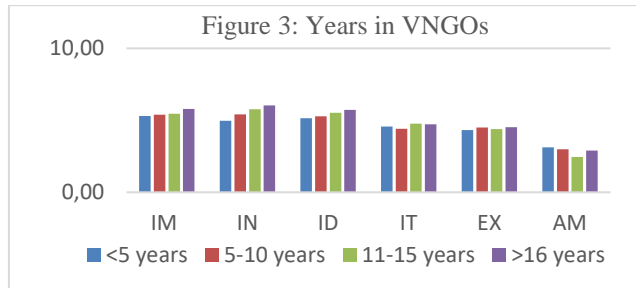
The results in figure 1 convey that IM, IN, and ID are the most important motivators for VNGO employees according to their age. A careful observation of the graph shows that older employees tend to be more intrinsically and less

extrinsically motivated than young employees. This finding conveys that as employees become older, motivation factors such as income, promotion, or financial rewards are gradually replaced by mastery, autonomy, or relatedness. This suggests that they are working for the real humanitarian causes pursued by the VNGOs. Inceoglu et al (2012) corroborate this finding by contending that older employees on average tend to be motivated by different job features than young employees. It is also in line with An & Ayayi (2017) who point out that many people working for INGOs in Vietnam for money quit as soon as they find a better moneymaking opportunity. Furthermore, we found that VNGO employees aged 31 to 35 are the least motivated in all types of motivations in comparison with other age groups. This result is in line with the drop to the lowest level of their extrinsic regulation embodied in compensation and benefits compared to other age ranges as VNGOs have never been seen as a work sector with high income and generous benefit plans. The result also corroborates the general observation among the Vietnamese between 31 and 35 years of age who focus on other life priorities such as having and raising children and pursuing higher education.



Source: authors from the survey data

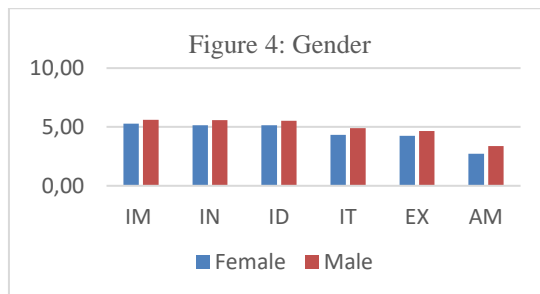
A closer look at figure 2 shows that managers are more motivated by intrinsic motivation factors than their staff, while staff are more motivated by extrinsic motivation factors than their managers. We provide two potential explanations for this finding. First, staff have less self-control than managers due to less experience, less autonomy at work, and less information to be able to work independently. Therefore, they work better by following instructions or orders from their managers and are motivated by the face values of any job that one can expect: salary, compensation, benefits, and financial rewards. Second, managers are the ones who hold core and important information in the organization that enables them to take decisions. This allows them to work autonomously and pursue their interests in serving the cause of their NGOs. This explains why managers scored higher in autonomous motivation factors than their staff. To deepen the analysis of motivation by position, we investigated the relation between different motivation factors and employees' seniority in figure 3.



Source: authors from the survey data

Figure 3 shows a clear and notable higher level of motivation in the first three autonomous motivational factors when employees spend a longer time with their organizations. This lends support to the argument that the longer employees stay with their VNGOs, the more they are committed to the cause of the organization. Therefore, they are keener on and in tune with the goals of the VNGOs that provide solutions for the society, which in return may help them to be promoted to management positions as a reward. In this respect, An & Ayayi (2018) contend that the longer people work in the philanthropy sector, “the better they internalize extrinsic motivations” and “people could have quitted their job and switched to other work sector if they had not found their job interesting at a certain time of their service in NGO”. Overall, the results from figure 2 and figure 3 fully support hypothesis 1, as we explained throughout the interpretations and the analysis above.

Even though 63% of our sample is female, figure 4 shows that VNGOs’ female employees are less motivated than their male colleagues with respect to IM, IN, ID, and EX.



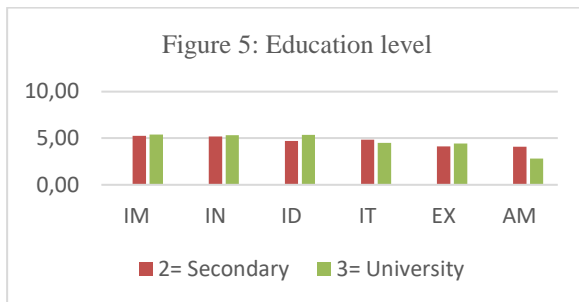
Source: authors from the survey data

This result corroborates Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu (2014) who contend, “Gender plays a significant role in job motivation and job performance among employees in some professions, especially in developing countries”. The nature of these professions tends to be humanitarian and nurturing which could give the impression that many males may not be as highly motivated as their female counterparts may. However, taking a deeper look into these professions, their core vision is to bring drastically positive changes to the world, most of the time by bringing people’s concerns to the governments, advocating policies, and creating pathways for people’s participation in the decision-making process. This political nature turns out to be very male-oriented and that is why males are more interested



in the job and are proud that what they are doing can change the whole nation. Figure 4 also conveys that males are more amotivated than females.

Psychological difference in gender seems to offer some explanations to this observation. Males tend to be more quickly discouraged and less patient than females. On the one hand, they are eager to do good deeds and committed to the cause of their NGO job. On the other hand, they can quickly freak out and become helpless if something negative happens.

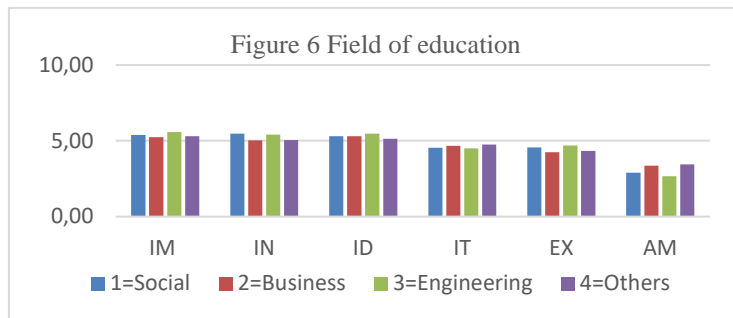


Source: authors from the survey data

The notable feature from figure 5 is that employees in VNGOs with university degrees are more autonomously motivated than those with secondary school degrees. This finding concurs with and reinforces our previous findings on the link between the motivational factors and the employees' position and experience in VNGOs (people who are at a managerial level, who have worked for VNGOs longer, and who are more autonomously motivated than their staff). Indeed, the higher the level of education of the VNGOs' employees, the more capable they are of performing their job, and the higher the chances they sit in management positions, hence their higher level of autonomous motivation. At the same time, compared with high school graduates, those who have college degrees tend to attach greater importance to altruistic rewards (e.g., helping others) and social rewards (e.g., developing good relationships with others) (Johnson & Elder, 2002). These are basic attributes of an NGO's cause, which means that more highly educated employees understand the significance of what they are doing and are intrinsically motivated by those factors. Moreover, education stimulates the development of students' minds and promotes the growth of general knowledge, vocabulary, and verbal comprehension related to complicated topics and areas. This capability allows people to better analyze and transform information, to work more independently, and hence generates higher chances to be motivated autonomously.

Furthermore, figure 5 shows that VNGOs' employees with a secondary educational level are more influenced by IT and AM than those with university education. A potential explanation is that employees in VNGOs with a secondary education tend to have a lower level of knowledge, which puts them in subordinate positions where they have to follow orders and do what they are told. The higher level of their amotivation in comparison with those with university education (see figure 5) could indicate that as soon as they do not get what they want from their position, they quickly get demotivated and retreat from the challenge more easily than their co-workers who have a level higher of education.

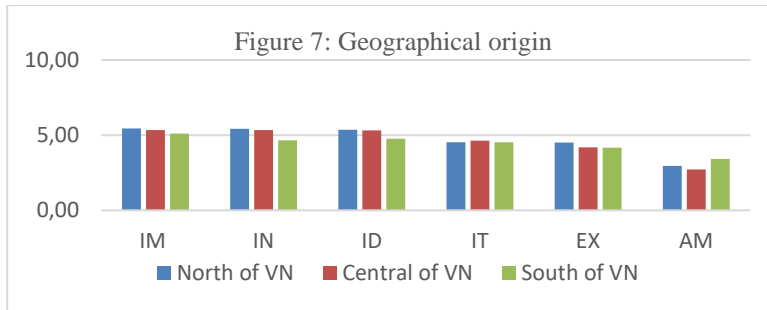
To deepen our understanding of the role of education, we look at the VNGO employees' fields of education. Field of education refers to one of four types of educational backgrounds: social, business, engineering, and others.



Source: authors from the survey data

In figure 6, one can observe that people with an engineering background have the highest level of motivation compared to their coworkers. Engineers bring technical tangible values to VNGOs such as improving the sewage system, bringing in a clean water system, clean energy, providing health care, etc., which are in line with the NGO sector's focus on society and community. Following engineers are employees with a social education, who put their social skills at the service of the VNGOs to do the social work, which is at the core of NGO objectives and missions. At the end of the spectrum are the employees with business degrees. This is possibly due to the high level of employment in their field (for-profit, private sector); NGOs become their gate of entry into the job market in the meantime (NGOs may be their temporary solution) while they are actively looking for a job in their fields. Their lack of motivation in comparison with the engineers and social workers could also be due to the social and non-business mentality that is the core of NGOs. Taken together, all of the above findings in this section suggest that employees in VNGOs with engineering and social educations are more motivated than employees with other educational backgrounds.

Geographical origin refers to the region where the participant was born and raised. Each region has a very different climate, topography, character, and lifestyle. These differences carry certain cultural characteristics that may have impacts on how VNGOs' employees react vis-à-vis the impact of different types of motivation.



Source: authors from the survey data

Figure 7 shows that employees who come from the north of Vietnam are the most motivated by autonomous regulations than those from the other two regions. This observation is in line with the tendency that the people of northern Vietnam tend to be more idealistic than their counterparts of the other two regions because they are more ingrained with the values of the communist party that holds humanitarian causes and helping the needy in high esteem.

As for the VNGOs' employees who come from the central region, they scored the lowest in the AM factor, which means that they do not give up and quit easily when facing challenges. Indeed, the harshness of geographical characteristics (climate, mountainous terrain, etc.) combined with limited access to different infrastructures which make living more difficult in the central region seems to make VNGOs' employees from the central region more persistent, stronger, and more mentally patient.

With regard to the southern region, we found that they are more motivated than their colleagues from the northern and central regions. We believe that this is related to the fact that the south is the economic center of the country, which has an advanced and capitalist mentality where people work at a faster pace and do not want to spend time on a job that does not give them promising financial opportunities and promotions. Therefore, a job in an NGO and more particularly in a VNGOs is probably a temporary option for them, as they will move on the moment they find a better, financially secure opportunity.

Overall, hypothesis 1 is fully supported. This suggests to the managers a better way of viewing and understanding employee's motivation, as it varies due to the demographical features of each person. They can use these results in adjusting their recruitment plan, or work assignment for their VNGO.

## 4.2. Econometric analysis of the impact of the motivational factors on the VNGO employees' performance

### 4.2.1. Estimation procedure and results analysis

We proceeded with a step-by-step econometric estimation. First, we estimated six Ordinary Least Square regressions (OLS) by regressing the performance on each of the constituents of the six motivational factors as well as on the moderator variables. Second, we ran the test of heteroscedasticity on the

OLS results. The test indicate the presence of the heteroscedasticity<sup>5</sup>. Third, we ran Generalized Least Square regressions (GLS) to correct for the heteroscedasticity (Table 2 panel I). Fourth, we estimated a global model (Table 2 panel II) of the performance by using only the constituents of each of the six motivational factors that are statistically significant in the GLS regressions and checked for the presence of heteroscedasticity, which was negative.

Before we start modeling, we provide in table 1 the standard univariate statistics to gain the first insights in the analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> Due to space constraint, we do not report in the paper the OLS regression and the results of the test of heteroscedasticity. They could be provided upon request.

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficient of motivational factors of VNGO employees**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18						
1. P	5.13	1.07	1.00																					
2. IN	5.80	1	0.18	1.00																				
3. IC	5.18	1.21	0.45	0.34	1.00																			
4. IDT	4.88	1.47	0.43	0.35	0.35	1.00																		
5. IAW	5.50	1.17	0.42	0.38	0.43	0.45	1.00																	
6. IAS	6.89	1.28	0.47	0.55	0.31	0.42	0.55	1.00																
7. IGD	5.19	1.25	0.34	0.40	0.14	0.15	0.44	0.34	1.00															
8. IAC	5.05	1.14	0.40	0.45	0.25	0.35	0.35	0.47	1.00															
9. IAI	4.64	1.47	0.29	0.33	0.47	0.26	0.15	0.45	0.46	1.00														
10. IAW	4.96	1.49	0.31	0.38	0.15	0.39	0.18	0.35	0.49	0.25	0.47	1.00												
11. IGD	4.53	1.12	0.31	0.33	0.28	0.40	0.45	0.29	0.35	0.27	0.27	0.29	1.00											
12. IAW	4.65	1.15	0.27	0.15	0.27	0.22	0.31	0.35	0.30	0.11	0.48	0.35	0.38	1.00										
13. IAS	3.95	1.26	0.14	0.30	0.49	0.42	0.14	0.37	0.32	0.2	0.30	0.44	0.17	0.11	1.00									
14. IDT	4.22	1.42	0.15	0.36	0.24	0.27	0.55	0.21	0.27	0.14	0.46	0.25	0.31	0.15	0.24	1.00								
15. IAW	4.06	1.46	0.14	0.10	0.20	0.42	0.39	0.14	0.35	0.04	0.48	0.14	0.27	0.40	0.32	0.11	1.00							
16. IAS	4.11	1.35	0.27	0.30	0.38	0.37	0.38	0.25	0.35	0.19	0.56	0.33	0.49	0.47	0.40	0.15	0.18	1.00						
17. IAW	2.75	1.35	0.08	0.09	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.1	0.12	0.09	0.1	0.13	0.28	0.12	0.14	0.26	0.18	1.00					
18. IAW	2.82	1.40	0.09	0.03	0.02	0.12	0.26	0.01	0.04	0.14	0.15	0.15	0.20	0.1	0.12	0.15	0.20	0.31	0.4	1.00				
19. ATM	3.17	1.46	0.14	0.05	0.18	0.12	0.30	0.11	0.02	0.06	0.17	0.22	0.28	0.41	0.19	0.15	0.22	0.3	0.41	0.26	1.00			
20. IAW	3.15	1.14																						
21. IAW	2.98	0.39																						

Source: authors from the survey data

P: Performance;

IN: IntrMot\_LearningNewThings; IC: IntrMot\_InterestingChallenges; IDT: IntrMot\_DifficultTasks

IPW: IntegRegu\_PartWayLiveMyLife; IFP: IntegRegu\_FundamentalPart; IJO: IntegRegu\_FundamentalPart

IAS: IdRegu\_AttainLifeStyle; IAC: IdRegu\_AttainCareerGoals; IAI: IdRegu\_AttainImpObjectives

IGD: IntrojRegu\_BeGoogOrDisappointed; IWL: IntrojRegu\_BeWinnerInLife; ISA:

IntrojRegu\_SucceedOrBeAshamed

IE: ExtRegu\_Income; EEM: ExtRegu\_EarnMoney; ES: ExtRegu\_Security

AUM: Amotiv\_UnableManageTasks; AUW: Amotiv\_UnrealisticWorkingCond; ATM:

Amotiv\_TooMuchExpectedOfUs

On average, the mean of the performance is 5.50 out of 7. The high value indicates that the employees are really committed to their jobs. This high value is primarily explained by the high means value of their integrated motivational elements that range from 5.29 out of 7 to 5.50 out of 7 and by the high intrinsic motivation factors whose means range from 4.88 to 5.53 out of 7. While the IT and the EX factors play some important role in the employees' motivation, table 1 shows that their contributions to the overall motivation are less than that of the intrinsic and integrated motivation factors. Overall, the descriptive statistics tend to indicate that the VNGOs' employees seem to be happy with their jobs, as shown by their high performance and to some extent by their contributions to the goals of their organisations. The pairwise correlations in table 1 indicate that correlations among the variables are lower than the acceptable levels. This offers the opportunity of using the selected variables for the empirical analysis. Additionally, the positive association between the performance variable and the motivational factors, except for amotivational factors, indicates that any increase of these factors would contribute to a high performance.

4.2.2. Results and analysis

VARIABLES	Panel 1			Panel 2			
	Intrinsic motivation performance	Integrated regulation performance	Identified regulation performance	Introjected regulation performance	External regulation performance	Amotivation performance	Global Model performance
InstrMot_LearningNew Things	0.0656 (0.0610)						0.106* (0.0573)
InstrMot_InterwiningChallenges	0.183*** (0.0603)						0.186*** (0.0513)
InstrMot_DifficultTasks	0.283*** (0.0465)						-0.0693 (0.0839)
Gender	-0.0821 (0.0970)	-0.162 (0.103)	-0.164 (0.104)	-0.0982 (0.113)	-0.130 (0.111)	-0.257** (0.112)	
LNGO_Experience	-0.00183 (0.00645)	0.0122 (0.00857)	0.0171** (0.00799)	0.0115 (0.00833)	0.0245*** (0.00888)	0.0134* (0.00807)	
Edwv_Level	-0.0568 (0.132)	0.00625 (0.133)	-0.0499 (0.135)	0.0913 (0.144)	-0.121 (0.147)	-0.163 (0.126)	0.0288 (0.0986)
Edwv_Field	-0.0381 (0.0399)	0.00258 (0.0433)	-0.0126 (0.0428)	-0.0111 (0.0458)	0.0275 (0.0469)	0.0121 (0.0450)	0.0121 (0.0334)
Position	0.212** (0.106)	0.0826 (0.124)	6.24e-05 (0.125)	0.323** (0.131)	0.216* (0.128)	0.208* (0.115)	0.0497 (0.117)
InstrRegv_FundamentalPart		0.101 (0.0638)					
InstrRegv_PartWaysLiveLife		0.0223 (0.0385)					
InstrRegv_JobPartOfMyLife		0.336*** (0.0668)					
IdfRegv_AttainLifeStyle		0.243*** (0.058)					0.263*** (0.0545)
IdfRegv_AttainCareerGoals		0.119** (0.0487)					0.161*** (0.0582)
IdfRegv_AttainImpObjectives		0.154*** (0.0488)					-0.171** (0.0470)
InstrRegv_SuccessOfLifeAchieved				0.164*** (0.0516)			0.0983*** (0.0385)
InstrRegv_BeGoodOrDisappointed				0.0515 (0.0334)			
InstrRegv_BeWiserInLife				0.0791** (0.0395)			0.0697** (0.0331)
ExtRegv_Income					0.0481 (0.0571)		
ExtRegv_EarnMoney					0.168 (0.0503)		
ExtRegv_Security					0.167*** (0.0433)		0.000113 (0.0350)
Amotiv_UnableToManageTasks						-0.0182 (0.0457)	
Amotiv_UnableToWorkingCond						-0.0462 (0.0471)	0.00574 (0.0257)
Amotiv_TechInExperteInOU						0.0712** (0.0355)	0.00599 (0.00480)
Working_Experience							1.770*** (0.443)
Constant	2.966*** (0.52)	3.084*** (0.523)	2.997*** (0.52)	3.865*** (0.469)	4.764*** (0.483)	6.034*** (0.415)	253
Observations	238	253	255	254	256	243	
R-squared	0.367	0.301	0.287	0.247	0.190	0.101	0.517

The results in the table 2 show that all three determinants of ID are statistically significant in comparison with two out of three for the intrinsic motivation and IT, one out of three for the IN and EX, and zero out of three for the AM. This indicates that more attention needs to be paid to the ID constituents (life style, career goal, and important objective) to induce high performance among VNGOs' employees. Among the three constituents, attained life style has the highest positive coefficient of 0.243 with  $p < 0.001$  followed by important life objective (0.154 with  $p < 0.001$ ) and then by career goal. This ranking shows that the prism through which VNGOs' employees view their way of life is an important determinant in their performance. This in return is tightly related to their career objectives and how they implement that to achieve better career goals. Furthermore, the variable "the job is part of my life" has the statistically highest

coefficient (0.336 with  $p < 0.01$ ) among the significant variables. This indicates that the foremost factor that draws people to work for VNGOs is their desire to help those that are in need, which is in tandem with the positive high statistical coefficient of life style, as we pointed out. This finding is in line with An & Ayayi (2018) who point out that the *raison d'être* of the NGOs, rather than high salaries and financial benefits, are the main reasons that drive the Vietnamese to work for INGOs.

Results in table 2 show that previous experience work in VNGOs coupled with the current position are the two most important moderation variables that positively contribute in a statistically significant manner to the VNGO employees' performance. The knowhow gained through learning by doing in previous NGOs seems to be a good asset that is carried on to nurture and to put at the service of the new VNGO that also reverberates through the position occupied in the new VNGO.

Turning to the epitome of the regression analysis, the global model shows that out of the 18 variables that are used in the literature to capture motivational factors, only about a third has a statistically significant impact on the performance of VNGOs' employees. In terms of their respective contributions to the performance, these variables are: this job is a part of my life, difficult task, lifestyle, interesting challenge, succeed or be ashamed, be a winner in life, and attain a career goal. Once again, the dominance of "Because this job is a part of my life" reconfirms that working for a cause that is dear to one's heart and contributing to life improvement and to poverty alleviation are paramount in joining the VNGOs.

A careful observation of the global model also reveals that VNGOs employees tend to work for organizations in which they are intrinsically motivated to achieve their life style in order to have a positive impact that is measured through their performance. From the preceding analysis of the results, we conclude that hypothesis 2 is fulfilled.

An interesting aspect of the global model is that attaining important objectives, which is part of the ID motivational factors, has a negatively significant coefficient of -0.121 with  $p < 0.05$ . This seems to indicate that deviating from the humanitarian goal (pursuing personal goals, which may be aiming for personal ambition to shine) has a negative impact on VNGO employees. This negative impact could also be viewed as pursuing individual objectives that are contrary to the collective goal of poverty alleviation or providing services to deprived communities that the VNGO targets. A theoretical ground of this finding could be found in goal setting theory, which contends that goals have negative impacts on performance (be it corporate goals or individual goals) when they are not specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (Locke & Latham, 1991). In the context of NGOs and more specifically VNGOs, employees tend to have ambiguous, too broad, unrealistic, and sometimes conflicting goals because their goals are jointly set by the donors who provide the funds for the projects, the VNGOs who disburse the funds by implementing the projects, and the local counterparts of the projects.

Overall, the supported hypothesis 2 suggests to the managers that in trying to appraise employees' performance, attention needs to be paid more to the autonomous regulations and less to the controlled ones. In other words, if managers focus in actions that help employees fulfill their psychological needs



which are characteristics of autonomous motivation, employees will have great job satisfaction hence excellence performance. On other hands, if managers emphasize on financial rewards or external regulations, their employee's performance may not increase as much as they expected.

## 5 - CONCLUSIONS

The paper deals with the motivational factors of VNGOs' employees because of the crucial role they play in poverty alleviation as well as in social and in economic revitalization of their local communities. To achieve the paper's objective, we gathered data on 296 VNGOs' employees from questionnaires and conducted a descriptive graphical and econometric analysis. The econometric results reveal that, among other things, the factor "Because this job is a part of my life is the most significant element that drives their performance. Additionally, the econometric results show that the intrinsic motivation and the ID play pivotal roles in the attainment of the high performance of the employees of the VNGOs.

From the descriptive analysis, we firstly find that, older employees are more intrinsically motivated than younger employees. This age factor seems to lend support to the difference we find on the intrinsically motivated nature of the managers rather than their staff. The second salient piece of the descriptive results is that while overall, higher education is a good asset, an engineering degree is the most valuable asset that tends to provide more motivation to work for VNGOs, perhaps because it gives a real sense of helping, building, and giving back to their poor communities. Finally, our findings show that people from the north of Vietnam are more motivated by autonomous regulation than those of the other regions. This is probably because of the rooted idealism of the communism philosophy in this region in comparison with the southern and central regions.

Practically, we believe that the findings of this paper will be useful for managers, donors and policy makers in providing them with a better understanding of the reasons that drive the Vietnamese from different ages and different societal spectrums to sign up for low-pay jobs. This will allow them to develop a suitable and efficient motivational program for their employees. In crafting this program, we recommend that they also take into consideration the regional differences that we have shown in our findings.

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