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Evaluation of Positive Job Involvement of the Tour Guide

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Abstract

Rizwan & Khan (2011) ^[12] believe that to improve employee job performance, increasing positive job involvement is an important solution. Employees who have positive job involvement have high productivity and better work results when compared to employees who are not actively involved in work. The study's objective is to test the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces. Based on the previous research and the actual situations, it has been recognized that the critical role of human resources is in developing the tourism industry, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Improving positive job involvement has motivated the tour guide to work enthusiastically. That is one of the solutions

to improving the quality of human resources. We use qualitative and quantitative research methods. Quantitative research methods were carried out with SPSS software, including descriptive statistics, Independent T-test, and ANOVA. On the basis of a review of previous studies and after interviewing experts, the study has identified and analyzed three scales (component attributes) of the positive job involvement of the tour guide in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces. Based on this result, the study proposes some recommendations to improve the quality of human resources and job performance in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces.

Keywords: Positive Job Involvement, Tour Guide, Tourism Firms, Labor, Human Resource Management, Economics

JEL Code: F66, J01, O15

1. Introduction

Positive job involvement by employees is understood as employees actively participating, contributing, and being willing to move forward with the firm. Positive job involvement by employees also means that employees make high efforts to do their work, feel proud of their work, are dedicated to their work, and are focused and passionate about their work.

Positive job involvement by employees has a positive influence on the production and business activities of the enterprise, bringing many benefits to the enterprise.

Positive job involvement by employees is one of the most difficult tasks for workers in the workplace, especially when they have to do boring jobs.

Work attitude determines the productivity, quality, and job performance that a person creates. A positive attitude helps work go more smoothly. Of course, the results achieved satisfy everyone, so workers with positive attitudes will soon be promoted at work. On the contrary, for workers with negative attitudes, things will go nowhere, and it is understandable that the worker's career path will stand still.

Rizwan & Khan (2011) ^[12] believe that to improve employee job performance, increasing positive job involvement is an important solution. Employees who have positive job involvement have high productivity and better work results when compared to employees who are not actively involved in work.

Tourism, which contributes more than 6% to Vietnam's GDP annually, is one of the most important driving forces for Vietnam's economic development. The domestic tourist market is still the main driving force of Vietnam's tourism industry today. As of November 2022, domestic tourism activities have recorded impressive growth with 96.3 million domestic tourists, exceeding the total domestic tourist arrivals of 2019 at 85 million (Phuong Loan, 2023) ^[10].

In a tourism firm, tour guides play a very important role in determining the entire operation of the firm. They have roles and tasks such as: creating relationships and direct contact with customers from many different sources; accompanying visitors

throughout the journey to explore attractions; arranging, resolving, and handling all situations throughout the travel itinerary; and introducing and promoting the brand for firms, etc.

After two years of prolonged epidemics, organizations and firms operating in the tourism sector are facing extremely difficult times, with many firms even falling into a state of exhaustion and bankruptcy (Phuong Loan, 2023) [10]. Tourism firms have taken many measures to overcome difficulties and return to a normal business trajectory, and there have been signs of improvement for tourism firms. One of those measures is to improve the quality of human resources in general and tour guides in particular through creating work motivation, promoting positive job involvement, and improving job performance.

2. Literature Review

Ashe-Edmunds & Media (2015) [1] state that positive job involvement refers to the degree to which employees are psychologically and emotionally attached to their work.

Many studies show that the positive job involvement of employees affects labor outcomes, performance, and organizational success (Richman, 2006) [11]. This can be explained by the fact that if employees put in significant effort towards achieving personal and organizational goals, it will lead to higher productivity and employee retention with the organization (Kahn, 1990) [7]. Conversely, employees with low positive job involvement are more likely to have low job satisfaction and tend to leave the organization. At the same time, if they stay with the organization, their work will not perform, which will not be beneficial to the organization (Kanungo, 1979) [8]. In the United States, workers who do not have positive job involvement cost businesses up to \$300 billion each year because of low productivity (Bates, 2004) [2]. Thus, positive job involvement is one of the most important ways to increase job performance. If employees make an effort toward positive job involvement, it will help them achieve personal and organizational goals.

Work motivation is the set of factors that motivate and improve working spirit, making employees willing to contribute to the common goals of the organization (Pancasila *et al.*, 2020) [9]. According to Timsal & Awais (2016) [14], work from home (WFH) will be associated with new and advanced technology, thereby helping workers work more easily and keeping them motivated to work. In addition, Susilo (2020) [13] believes that WFH makes employees feel more interested in work because they can avoid phenomena such as traffic jams and no longer have to worry about how long it takes to get to the office. and can protect the health of yourself and your family against the pandemic.

Many experts interviewed shared the same opinion that positive job involvement of employees is demonstrated by (i) compliance with superior orders: This is demonstrated through the self-discipline and concentration of employees with company regulations and requirements from management related to work; (ii) be proactive in work; (iii) be honest; (iv) have a spirit of cooperation with colleagues at work; (v) have a progressive spirit for development; and (vi) have motivation to work and complete work.

Inheriting the results of the above studies and based on the results of expert interviews, we propose a scale for the

positive job involvement variable, including PJI1-PJI3 (see table 1).

Table 1: Observed variables of positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces

Code	Detailed description
PJI1	Important things happen at the tourism firms where I work as a tour guide that are relevant to my current job.
PJI2	I am a tour guide who is committed to the work I am doing.
PJI3	I have a strong relationship with my job as a tour guide, and it is very difficult to break this relationship.

3. Research Methods

Survey Subjects

The survey subjects are tour guides for tourism firms: They are people working in the field of tourism services, using language to present, introduce, and explain the most accurate information about the places in the tourism industry and the nature of an area related to the tourist's travel purpose (see table 1).

Variables Description

The research object is to study the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces. The study examines how to improve the quality of human resources in tourism firms. The study has 3 variables: PIJ1, PIJ2, and PIJ2.

Scale and Design of Questionnaires

The scale used in this study is a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. I totally disagree with 5. Strongly agree. The statements in each scale are inherited from previous studies and expert opinions to correct the wording and then adjusted to suit the context of tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces at the present time, based on the results of expert interviews and group discussions. The positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces is measured by three observed variables.

Data Processing

Quantitative research methods supported by SPSS software include descriptive statistics, Independent T-test, and Anova analysis.

Table 1: Respondents by genders and career seniority

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Genders			
Female	73	35.6	35.6
Male	132	64.4	100.0
Career seniority			
Less than 5 years	51	24.9	24.9
From 5 to 10 years	102	49.8	74.6
10 years or older	52	25.4	100.0
Total	205	100.0	

Information on the data collected is shown in Table 1. It shows that among the respondents, 35.6% were female and 64.4% were male. There were 51 participants (24.9%) who have career seniority less than 5 years, 102 participants (49.8%) who have career seniority from 5 to 10 years, and the remaining have career seniority 10 years or older.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 indicates that the respondents agree with the variables of the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces, where three attributes were quite high. All three attributes were rated at an average of 3.94 or higher.

4.2 Independent T-Test: Different Genders

A comparison of the results of the evaluation of the differences in the positive job involvement of tour guides in

tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces with participants of different genders (male and female) can be seen in Table 3. According to the results shown in Table 3, sig Levene's test is 0.007, which is smaller than 0.05. The variance between males and females is different. Moreover, the sig value t-test is 0.039, which is less than 0.05, which means that there is a statistically significant difference in the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces between these different genders (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair *et al.*, 2009; Hair *et al.*, 2010; Hair *et al.*, 2014) [6, 3, 4, 5].

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of attributes

Code	N	Mini	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
PJI1	205	1	5	3.99	0.877	-0.852	0.170	0.486	0.338
PJI2	205	1	5	4.04	0.890	-0.834	0.170	0.323	0.338
PJI3	205	1	5	3.94	0.861	-0.817	0.170	0.518	0.338
Valid N (listwise)	205			3.99					

Table 3: Differences in the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces with participants of different genders-Independent Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
PJI	Equal variances assumed	7.429	0.007	1.981	203	0.049	0.22333	0.11275	0.00102	0.44563
	Equal variances not assumed			2.082	171.144	0.039	0.22333	0.10728	0.01156	0.43510

4.3 ANOVA-Career Seniority

An ANOVA test was needed to make a comparison of the results of the evaluation of the differences in the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces between the three subjects, including participants who have career seniority less than 5 years, participants who have career seniority from 5 to 10 years, and participants who have career seniority 10 years or older. Table 4 shows that the sig Levene statistic of 0.577 is greater than 0.05, which means that the hypothesis of homogeneity of variance among the variable value groups (career seniority) has not been violated. Table 5 shows that sig. is 0.825, which is more than 0.05, which indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms in Hanoi and neighboring provinces between the mentioned three groups of career seniority (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair *et al.*, 2009; Hair *et al.*, 2010; Hair *et al.*, 2014) [6, 3, 4, 5].

Table 4: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Descriptions	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
PJI				
Based on Mean	0.552	2	202	0.577
Based on Median	0.143	2	202	0.867
Based on Median and with adjusted df	0.143	2	179.246	0.867
Based on trimmed mean	0.561	2	202	0.571

Table 5: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
PJI					
Between Groups	0.236	2	0.118	0.193	0.825
Within Groups	123.404	202	0.611		
Total	123.640	204			

4.4 The Relationship between Positive Job Involvement of Tour Guides in Tourism Firms-Career Seniority

Next, the line graph shows the relationship between the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms and each respondent's career seniority (Figure 1). Figure 1 shows that this line tends to go down when the respondents' career seniority is from 5 to 10 years old. But this line tends to slope up when the respondents' career seniority is 10 years or older.

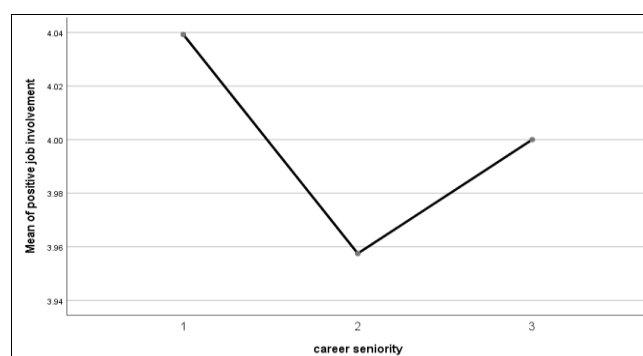


Fig 1: The line graph shows the relationship between the positive job involvement of tour guides in tourism firms and each respondent's ages

5. Discussion and Implications

When tour guides promote positive job involvement, they will feel that they are healthy in terms of (i) physical health: health, stamina, and energy; (ii) psychology: level of optimism, ability to control pressure, confidence, and control; and (iii) social: work relationships, work-life balance, respect, and connection.

Tour guides who have positive job involvement should:

(i). Have positive beliefs: believe in what the tour guide wants to do; a firm belief will give the tour guide the courage to achieve his or her goals. Tour guides should set goals that are consistent with the firm's goals, believe in the firm's goals, and associate the firm's goals with their own career goals.

(ii). Have a good attitude: Tour guides should accept all assigned tasks with a positive attitude. Tour guides should perform each task with pride, passion, and confidence. When instructors approach work with a positive attitude, they will become enthusiastic about it. From there, it helps guide them on the path to their career goals.

(iii). Respect: Tour guides should admire the good qualities or successes of their colleagues. New instructors often do not show enough respect for their supervisors and colleagues because they do not fully understand each other's roles. Tour guides should start by respecting themselves; if they want others to respect them, then employees will be active in their work. (iv) Understanding: Tour guides should be able to put themselves in other people's shoes and share their feelings and experiences. Tour guides should learn to sympathize with colleagues who do not want to cooperate or customers and partners who are unreasonable. Tour guides should also put themselves in their shoes to find out why they behave that way, which will help the tour guide feel less frustrated and overcome this.

(v). Sincerity: Tour guides should say and do things that they believe in, things that come from the bottom of their hearts. When performing assigned tasks, tour guides should work sincerely and enthusiastically. When receiving help at work, tour guides should sincerely thank them. Then employees will see that the job is not too difficult and become positive about their work.

Besides professional factors, tour guides should continue to improve soft skills, such as:

Communication skills: For tour guides, the first job is to have communication skills because the nature of their job is to directly contact and guide tourists about the places they guide. Above all, communication skills will help the tour guide respond to unforeseen situations in the fastest, most effective, and most stable way. To have these skills, a tour guide should first have good professional knowledge and then self-confidence; from there, he or she will become a professional tour guide.

Public speaking skills: One of the important tasks of a tour guide is to convey information to tourists. A good tour guide must not only grasp the psychology of tourists but also be familiar with presentation skills and create inspiration in presentations. Tour guides should convey information in an expressive, dynamic, and concise tone to create excitement and attract tourists.

Emotion control skills: The job of a tour guide is to serve many different audiences; therefore, the tour guide must always be in a happy, open, and comfortable mood to serve tourists well. the best. Tour guides should always be calm in all situations; no matter what happens, they must maintain a polite attitude towards tourists. Tour guides should make tourists feel secure and comfortable when accompanying them. This is a necessary soft skill that tour guides should try to cultivate to be successful in this job. In addition, tour guides need non-verbal skills, so they should be equipped with composure and clarity, creating trust and comfort for tourists.

Subtlety in observation: This is one of the important skills for tour guides. Observation is not just about looking but also about receiving something. Behavioral communication is not always done through spoken language but is often a gesture, a look, a frown, etc. Observe to understand the emotional index of visitors, from words to words. That will help tour guides adjust their behavior to change tourists' emotions in a more positive direction.

Training is one of the most important tasks for tourism firms. In fact, tour guides mostly only know issues related to the services and tourist destinations whose sales they are in charge of. Other contents related to the supply chain, legal regulations, etc. are only roughly understood by the tour guide and have not been updated. This is the cause of lack of confidence or providing inaccurate information during work, as well as tour consulting for customers. Therefore, the solution that needs to be taken to improve confidence and professional knowledge is that the training plan of tourism firms should be seriously planned, conducted periodically and systematically, and have updated training content. Update and expand issues related to tourism.

The government has issued policies to create the most favorable conditions for international tourists when traveling to Vietnam, such as restoring the visa exemption and immigration policy as before the epidemic and no longer requiring visas for COVID-19 vaccination certificates (Phuong Loan, 2023) ^[10].

Information published by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism said that in January 2023, Vietnam welcomed an estimated 13 million domestic visitors, nearly 1.6 times more than the same period last year. Of these, 4.5 million guests stayed. This is the highest number of domestic visitors in the past 5 years, since 2018 when the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism provided monthly visitor statistics. Along with that, the number of international visitors to Vietnam in January 2023 is nearly 872,000, an increase of 23.2% compared to December 2022 and 44.2 times higher than the same period in 2022. Monthly tourism revenue in January 2023 is estimated to reach 2,200 billion VND, an increase of 113.4% over the same period last year (Vu Linh, 2023) ^[15].

Salary and bonuses are considered recognition of an individual's level of dedication to the development of the organization. Having a reasonable remuneration policy and rewarding and recognizing the timely contributions of tour guides also contributes to raising the level of their work participation because it shows that the administrator sees and appreciates the tour guides' abilities, helping them believe in their abilities and be motivated to strive for better. Salary and bonuses affect the quality of life and morale of employees and thereby increase or decrease the employee's ability to recover through each stage of work. Therefore, strengthening and improving the confidence and, especially, the resilience of tour guides cannot lack the element of compensation at work.

According to Vu Linh (2023) ^[15], localities have proactively renewed tourism products, decorated and embellished tourist areas and destinations, and organized many unique cultural and artistic events to attract tourists, highlighting the cultural characteristics of each locality. In particular, the companionship of businesses has created many new and attractive tourism products, promoting the entertainment, shopping, and sightseeing needs of tourists at the beginning of the year. In addition, accommodation establishments and

guest service establishments have actively and seriously implemented price stabilization, posted prices, and sold at listed prices, preventing negative phenomena from occurring and creating a bad impression on visitors. However, from another perspective, many experts also believe that Vietnamese tourism is facing significant challenges. Despite welcoming nearly 872,000 international visitors in January 2023, this number of visitors still decreased by 42% compared to the same period in 2019, when the COVID-19 epidemic did not occur. Domestic tourism is still a market expected to continue to "boom" and is the main growth driver of the tourism industry. However, the number of domestic tourists staying is not high, leading to a decrease in total revenue from tourists. For example, according to statistics, during the Quy Mao Tet holiday (from the 29th to the 5th of Tet), there were about 9 million domestic visitors nationwide, an increase of 47.5% over the same period last year. But there were only 2 million guests, down 37.5%, and average room occupancy was about 45%. Total revenue from tourists is estimated at 17.5 trillion VND, down 30% over the same period.

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