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Impact of Job Satisfaction, Learning Motivation, and Organization Commitment on Knowledge Absorption Capacity of Lecturers at Universities in Vietnam

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Abstract:

The objective of this study was to Impact of job satisfaction, learning motivation, and Organization commitment on Knowledge absorption capacity of lecturers at universities in Hanoi, Vietnam. The author collected data through a survey of 198 lecturers at universities in Hanoi and analyzed the data using Smart PLS 4.1 software. The results show that job satisfaction, learning motivation, and Organization commitment promote Knowledge absorption capacity of university lecturers in Vietnam

Keywords: *Job satisfaction, learning motivation, Organization commitment, Knowledge absorption capacity*

1. Introduction

In the context that higher education is transforming strongly to adapt to the development of technology and the requirements of educational innovation, the absorptive capacity of lecturers has become a key factor contributing to improving the quality of teaching, research and knowledge transfer. This ability allows lecturers not only to absorb and receive information from the external environment but also to integrate and transform it into useful knowledge for professional work. In particular, in the context of universities aiming for innovation and international integration models, building and developing the knowledge absorption capacity of lecturers is an urgent requirement.

However, to improve this capacity, it is necessary to have a combination of many internal factors and work environment, in which job satisfaction, learning motivation and organizational commitment play a key role. These factors not only affect work performance but also affect the ability of lecturers to absorb, process and apply new knowledge. Although there are many studies on the capacity to absorb knowledge in the context of businesses, in the higher education environment, especially in developing countries such as Vietnam, research is still limited and has not been fully exploited.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the role of job satisfaction, learning motivation and organizational commitment on the knowledge absorption capacity of university lecturers, thereby providing practical policy implications in developing high-quality human resources for higher education institutions.

2. Literature review

2.1. Concepts

The concept of knowledge absorption capacity was introduced by Cohen and Levinthal (1990) as the ability of an organization (or individual) to identify, absorb, transform and exploit knowledge from the external environment. In the context of education, this competency reflects the ability of lecturers to update new knowledge, integrate with existing knowledge and apply it to teaching and research. Zahra and George (2002)

then expanded this concept into two main components: potential absorptive capacity and realized absorptive capacity, providing an important theoretical basis for later research in the organizational environment.

Job satisfaction is considered a strong factor influencing an individual's behavior and performance (Locke, 1976). In the university environment, when lecturers feel satisfied with working conditions, policies, and academic environment, they will actively seek and absorb knowledge to develop themselves. Some studies indicate that high levels of satisfaction can promote positive learning behaviors, thereby improving the ability to absorb knowledge (Jansen et al., 2005; Liao et al., 2007).

Learning motivation reflects the willingness and desire of faculty members to acquire new knowledge (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This motivation can come from intrinsic (self) or extrinsic (pressure, work requirements). When lecturers are highly motivated to learn, they tend to seek new knowledge, participate in training courses, and scientific research – behaviors that contribute to enhancing absorption capacity (Van den Bosch et al., 1999).

Organizational commitment demonstrates an individual's level of attachment to the organization and desire to maintain a long-term relationship (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In the context of university lecturers, the commitment to the organization is shown through participating in professional activities, contributing to the common development. High commitment often promotes learning and cooperative behaviors – factors that increase knowledge absorption (Lane et al., 2006).

Although there are many studies focusing on the capacity to absorb knowledge in businesses, the field of higher education – especially lecturers – has not been deeply exploited. At the same time, the relationship between job satisfaction, learning motivation and organizational commitment and the absorption capacity of lecturers is still lacking clear accreditation in the context of universities in Vietnam. Therefore, this research is expected to fill that gap, and at the same time propose solutions to develop high-quality academic human resources.

2.2. Research hypotheses

Based on the theory of knowledge absorption capacity (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Zahra & George, 2002), Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and Organizational Commitment Theory (Meyer & Allen, 1991), and when lecturers are satisfied with their work, they tend to actively learn, share and apply new knowledge to teaching and research (Jansen et al., 2005; Liao et al., 2007). In addition, learning motivation motivates individuals to actively access new information, reflect and integrate knowledge (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Van den Bosch et al., 1999). Finally, organizational commitment increases the level of involvement in professional activities, knowledge sharing, and integration of knowledge into organizational goals (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Lane et al., 2006). Therefore, the author proposes three research hypotheses as follows:

H1: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on the lecturer's ability to absorb knowledge.

H2: Learning motivation has a positive effect on the lecturer's ability to absorb knowledge.

H3: Commitment to the organization has a positive impact on the capacity of lecturers to absorb knowledge.

3. Research Method

Research Sample

The study was conducted to examine the relationship between job satisfaction, learning motivation, organizational commitment, and faculty members' ability to absorb knowledge in the context of universities in Vietnam. Specifically, the research focuses on full-time lecturers who are teaching at universities in Hanoi city – the largest center for education, training and scientific research in the country.

The study uses convenience sampling due to time and resource constraints, and ensures that primary data is collected from a group of people with knowledge that is relevant to the research topic.

The total number of valid survey votes used for analysis was 198, collected from lecturers from public and non-public universities in Hanoi, including social sciences, engineering, economics and pedagogy.

Table 1. Statistics describing the study sample

Character	Frequency (n)	Rate (%)
Gender		
Male	91	45.96%
Female	107	54.04%
Education		
Master	123	62.12%
Doctor	75	37.88%
Seniority		
Less than 5 years	42	21.21%
Between 5–10 years	83	41.92%
Over 10 years	73	36.87%
Field Type		
Public	139	70.20%
Non-public	59	29.80%

The research model is as follows:

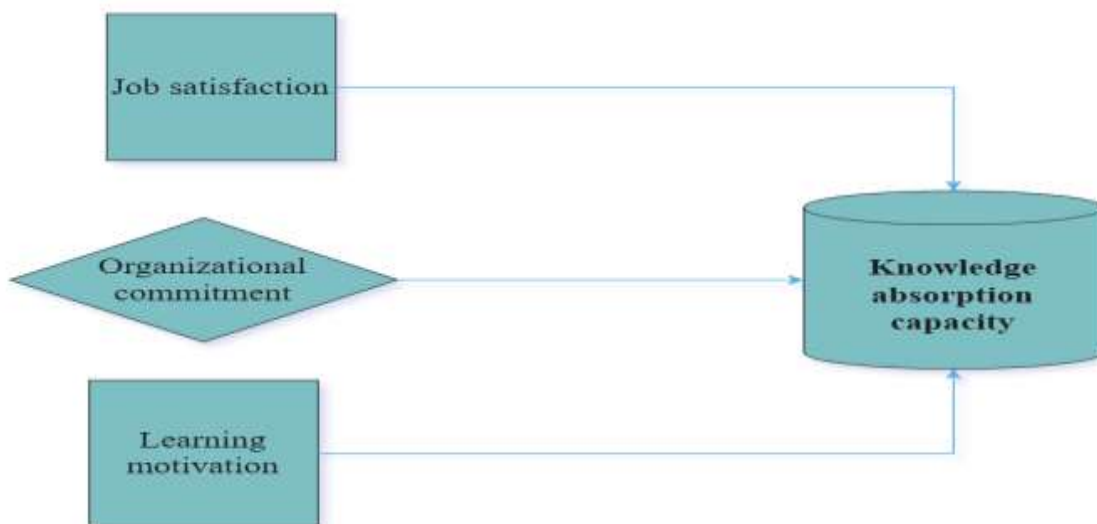


Fig. 1. Research Model

In which: 3 independent variables (Job Satisfaction, Learning Motivation, Organizational Commitment) and dependent variables (Knowledge Absorption Capacity) have scales developed from previous studies as follows:

The Job Satisfaction Scale (JS) was developed from Spector (1997); Weiss et al. (1967)

Horse Indicator Description

- JS1 I feel satisfied with my current teaching job.
- JS2 I am satisfied with the opportunity for professional development at the school.
- JS3 I feel recognized and properly appreciated.
- JS4 I am satisfied with the working environment and my colleagues.

The Learning Motivation (LM) scale was developed from Deci & Ryan (1985); Gagné & Deci (2005)

Horse Indicator Description

- LM1 I actively seek learning opportunities to improve my expertise.
- LM2 Studying helps me feel more meaningful at work.
- LM3 I regularly participate in professional training courses/seminars.
- LM4 I feel interested in learning new knowledge.

The Organizational Commitment (OC) Scale was developed by Meyer & Allen (1991)

Horse Indicator Description

- OC1 I am willing to stick with the current organization for a long time.
- OC2 I am proud to be a member of the school I am working at.
- OC3 I feel a responsibility to contribute to the development of the organization.
- OC4 I always try to get things done for the benefit of the organization.

The Knowledge Absorption Capacity (AC) scale was developed from Zahra & George (2002); Flatten et al. (2011)

Horse Indicator Description

- AC1 I regularly update new trends and knowledge in the field.
- AC2 I can easily understand and apply academic knowledge from the outside.
- AC3 I can integrate new knowledge into teaching/research.
- AC4 I actively share new knowledge with colleagues and students.

All scales are measured through a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Completely disagree → 5 = Completely agree.

The research data was processed and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.1 software – a popular tool in linear structure modeling using the fractional least squared method (PLS-SEM). The PLS method is suitable for models with a

moderate number of samples ($n = 198$) and allows the evaluation of both the measurement model and the structural model in exploratory studies or theoretical validation.

The data analysis process in this study consists of 2 main steps:

Step 1: Evaluate the Measurement Model

Tests the reliability, convergence and differentiation of scales used in the model.

- Intrinsic Reliability:
 - *Cronbach's Alpha* > 0.7
 - *Composite Reliability (CR)* > 0.7
- Convergence value:
 - *Average Variance Extracted (AVE)* > 0.5
- Distinguishing Value:
 - *Fornell–Larcker Criterion*: The square root of the AVE of each greater variable correlates with the other.
 - *HTMT (Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio)* < 0.85

Step 2: Evaluate the Structural Model

After confirming the reliability and validity of the scales, the structural model is validated to evaluate the relationship between the variables.

Specific steps:

- Check the R^2 determination factor of the dependent variable (*Knowledge Absorption Capacity*):
 - $R^2 \geq 0.10$: Acceptable level of explanation (Falk & Miller, 1992)
 - $R^2 \geq 0.25$: Average; $R^2 \geq 0.50$: Good (Hair et al., 2017)
- Path Coefficients Test, Using Bootstrapping Technique (5000 Repeating Patterns) to evaluate:
 - Beta Factor (β)
 - p-value
 - Confidence Intervals
- Testing the statistical significance of the hypotheses:
 - $p\text{-value} < 0.05 \rightarrow$ accept the statistically significant hypothesis

Structure of test hypotheses:

- H1: Job Satisfaction \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption Capacity
- H2: Learning Motivation \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption Capacity
- H3: Organizational Commitment \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption Capacity

4. Results

Evaluate the reliability and convergence value of the scale

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) are all satisfactory for further testing

Get lost	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Assess
JS	0.812	0.872	Good
LM	0.837	0.889	Good
OC	0.843	0.890	Good
AC	0.857	0.904	Good

The results of the difference in value inspection are as follows:

	AC	JS	LM	OC
AC	0.836			
JS	0.514	0.794		
LM	0.533	0.522	0.818	
OC	0.565	0.518	0.537	0.820

Thus, the results of the measurement model evaluation are satisfactory to continue testing the structural model.

Criteria	Result	Assess
Aggregate Reliability (CR)	> 0.87	Good
Convergence Value (AVE)	> 0.63	Reach
Differential value (Fornell-Larcker)	Reach	Good
HTMT	< 0.85	Reach

After evaluating the measurement model to achieve reliability and differentiation value, the study conducted structural model validation to determine the degree of influence between variables. The analysis was performed with the Bootstrapping technique of 5,000 iterative samples in SmartPLS 4.1 to test the statistical significance of the hypotheses with the following model:

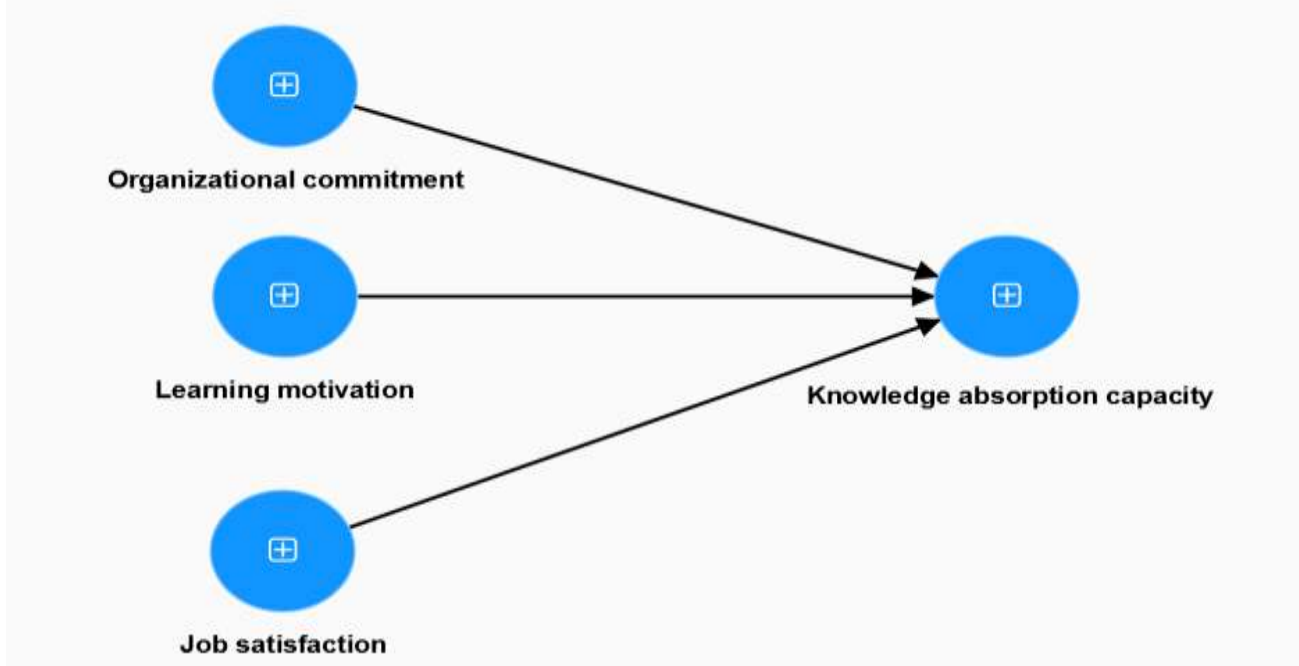


Fig.2. Model research to test bootstrapping

The inspection results are as follows:

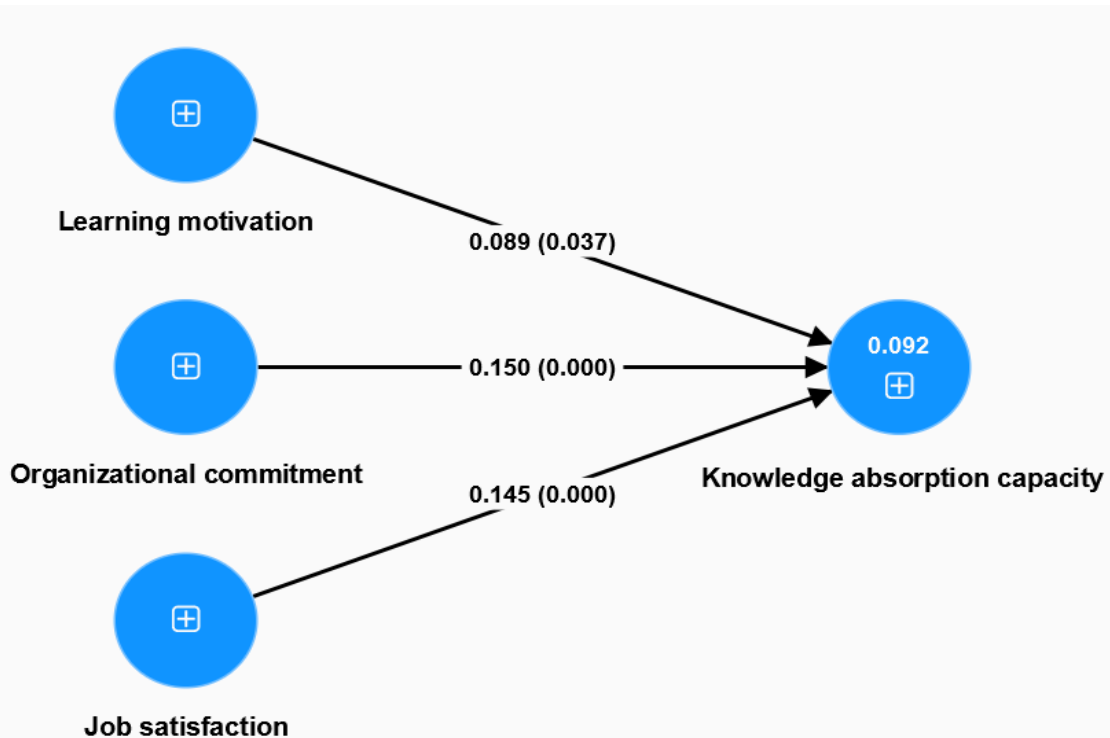


Fig.3. Results of hypothesis testing

The structural model has been tested using the Bootstrapping technique (5,000 iteration patterns). The path coefficient and p-value are displayed next to each arrow, respectively, in the format: β (p-value). Hypothesis H1: Job Satisfaction \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption Capacity has a coefficient of $\beta = 0.145$, p-value = 0.000, this relationship is statistically significant at 1% ($p < 0.01$). The results show that job satisfaction has a positive

effect on the ability of lecturers to absorb knowledge. This is in line with previous studies such as Jansen et al. (2005), which suggest that when lecturers are satisfied with their working conditions, they will actively learn, update and apply new knowledge to their professional activities. Thus, universities need to improve remuneration, working environment and achievement recognition to promote job satisfaction, thereby improving the academic capacity of lecturers.

With the hypothesis of H2: Learning Motivation \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption Capacity, the test results with a coefficient of $\beta = 0.089$, p-value = 0.037, the relationship was statistically significant at 5% ($p < 0.05$). This result confirms that learning motivation has a positive effect on the ability to absorb knowledge. Although the influence coefficient is the lowest of the three factors, it still has significant practical significance, especially in the context of rapid innovation in higher education. The results are consistent with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which argues that intrinsic motivation is an important factor in promoting active learning behavior, thereby contributing to the development of personal competence. It is necessary to encourage and motivate lecturers to learn through fostering programs, lifelong learning and empowerment in professional development.

Finally, with the H3 hypothesis: Organizational Commitment \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption Capacity, the coefficient $\beta = 0.150$, p-value = 0.000, the relationship was statistically significant at 1% ($p < 0.01$). Organizational commitment is confirmed as the most influential factor on knowledge absorption capacity in the model. This shows that when lecturers have attachment and trust in the organization, they will tend to actively learn, absorb and transform knowledge to contribute to the development of the organization. The results are consistent with studies by Meyer & Allen (1991) and Lane et al. (2006), which emphasize the role of organizational commitment in promoting learning and innovation. Managers need to build a positive, equitable, and cohesive organizational culture to strengthen faculty long-term commitment to the school.

Summary of hypothesis test results (Bootstrapping results)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path (β)	p-value	Conclude
H1	Job Satisfaction \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption	0.145	0.000	Support
H2	Learning Motivation \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption	0.089	0.000	Support
H3	Organizational Commitment \rightarrow Knowledge Absorption	0.150	0.037	Support

All hypotheses have a p-value < 0.05 , a t-value > 1.96 , demonstrating that the relationships are statistically significant at 95%. That means that all factors have a positive and statistically significant effect on the lecturer's ability to absorb knowledge, in which organizational commitment is the most impactful factor.

Multiline Testing (VIF)

Independent variables	VIF
Job Satisfaction (JS)	1.712
Learning Motivation (LM)	1.866
Organizational Commitment (OC)	1.943

All VIF values $< 5 \rightarrow$ No multilinearity occurs between independent variables.

Model Fit

Index	Value	Assess
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Index	Value	Assess
SRMR	0.061	Good (< 0.08)
NFI	0.913	Good (> 0.90)

The model has a good overall fit, ensuring reliability in interpreting the results.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to examine the relationship between job satisfaction, learning motivation, organizational commitment and knowledge absorption capacity of university lecturers. Based on data collected from 198 lecturers in Hanoi and analyzed by SmartPLS 4.1 software, the results show that all three factors have a positive and statistically significant impact on knowledge absorption capacity – a key factor in improving the quality of teaching and research today. Organizational commitment is the most influential factor ($\beta = 0.150$), indicating that attachment to the organization creates a strong motivation for lecturers to receive and apply new knowledge. Job satisfaction also had a significant impact ($\beta = 0.145$), suggesting the role of the work environment, remuneration, and recognition in promoting learning behavior. Learning motivation, even with a smaller influence coefficient ($\beta = 0.089$), is still an indispensable factor in nurturing the ability to acquire knowledge actively and sustainably.

This study contributes to the theoretical system of academic human resources and knowledge absorption capacity in the educational environment and at the same time suggests orientations to improve human resource management policies in universities in Vietnam. Therefore, universities need to build a positive working environment, share a clear mission, and be transparent about professional development opportunities to strengthen the organizational commitment of lecturers. Implementing collective activities, listening to faculty voices, and empowering decision-making are important factors that increase long-term engagement and contribution. To improve job satisfaction, schools need to consider improving factors such as remuneration, recognition of achievements, and opportunities for academic advancement. At the same time, ensuring a friendly and transparent working environment in evaluating effectiveness and creating conditions for lecturers to participate in the process of educational innovation are also practical solutions. Finally, in order to promote the learning motivation of lecturers and encourage the spirit of lifelong learning, universities should sponsor lecturers to participate in seminars, research, and study at home and abroad. Facilitating learning through digital platforms, e-libraries, and internal mentoring programs will contribute to maintaining learning motivation and updating knowledge.

However, the study still has limitations and the next research direction is as follows: Limitations: The study focuses on the lecturer sample in Hanoi, which does not fully reflect the context of other regions. In addition, the model does not take into account other mediating or regulatory factors such as organizational culture, work pressure, or the level of support from leaders. Next research direction: The following studies can expand the scope of survey and comparison between different regions and industries; at the same time, add intermediate or regulatory variables to better understand the mechanism affecting the knowledge absorption capacity of lecturers in the higher education environment.

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