INTRODUCTION

# 1. Reason for choosing the topic

Human resource plays increasingly important role in development process, which is the factor creating transition of comparative advantage among countries especially developing countries to transform from low-efficiency to high-efficiency development model.

As fully aware of that, Vietnam socio-economic development strategies in all periods have considered human resource development as one of Vietnam top priorities to achieve socio-economic objectives, in which, to emphasize the role of cadres, civil servants and officials, especially leading and managing cadres and civil servants.

After more than 30 years of renovation, together with the progress achieved in the socio-economic development, the leading and state management cadres, civil servants and officials have made positive evolution. However, shortage of highly qualified managers and leaders with good management and organization competence in ministries, branches and localities is actually recognized. Therefore, it is essential to assess the actual situation of leadership competence of management level in general to have the base for proposing solutions to improve the competence of leading officials.

The Northern key economic region (NKER) in recent years has made strong development steps, contributing positively to national socio-economic development process. In such context, the leading and managing team at all levels and branches play important position and role, especially the leading and managing staff at the department level. Although many progresses have been achieved, the management team at division level in the departments has not really met the increasing requirements of the actual socio-economic practices.

Proper assessment and effective solutions to improve the competence of local management team shall be implemented to address the current shortcomings. However, research on this issue is rather limited, there are many shortages in the research from a scientific perspective to practical application, from assessment method to specific solutions to contribute in enhancing leadership competence of management team, especially managers in localities. Therefore, the topic **"** **Improve the leadership competences of divisional managers under Departments in the Northern key economic region**" is chosen as the dissertation topic to contribute more solutions in this sector.

# 2. Research objectives

Overall objective: The dissertation develops a theoretical framework on leadership competences of divisional managers of the Department, applying actual situation assessment in Departments of Planning and Investment (DPI) in the localities of NKER to figure out the positive aspects and limitations, causes of the limitations, thereby, proposing orientations and solutions to improve the leadership competences of department managers of the Department in the coming time.

For the abovementioned overall objectives, specific research objectives are as below:

1. To systematize the theoretical basis on the competence and leadership competence of the divisional manager of the departments.

2. To develop a competence framework and leadership competence requirements of divisional manager under DPIs in NKER by 2030.

3. To analyze the situation, thereby, pointing out the achieved aspects and limitations in leadership competence of divisional managers under DPIs in NKER in recent years.

4. To point out the causes leading to limitations in leadership competence of divisional managers under DPIs in the NKER.

5. To propose orientation and solutions to improve leadership competence at divisional managers in general and division leaders of DPIs in particular in NKER.

# 3. Research target and scope

***3.1. Study targets:***

The target of the dissertation research is the leadership competence at divisional managers of DPIs in the localities of NKER, particularly assessing the leadership competence from the perspective of knowledge, skills and quality of divisional managers (Heads and Deputy Heads).

***3.2. Research scope***

+ In terms of time: the dissertation assesses actual status of leadership competence at divisional managers in DPIs in NKER until 2018 and proposes recommendations in the following years with vision toward 2030.

+ In terms of space: The dissertation studies the leadership competence at divisional managers in DPIs in NKER.

+ In terms of content: The dissertation focuses on researching leadership competence in terms of knowledge, skills and leadership ability.

**4. Research method**

***4.1. Approach method***

The dissertation approaches to study the leadership competence at divisional managers by qualitative methods, based on the competence framework.

***4.2 Research process***

The research process of the dissertation is as follows: Developing leadership competence framework of the divisional manager in the Departments; Identifying requirements of leadership competence at divisional manager of DPIs in NKER; Collecting primary information from related parties in combination with relevant secondary information to analyze actual status of leadership competence at divisional  managers in DPIs in NKER; Assessing actual status of leadership competence at divisional managers in DPIs in NKER, summarizing advantages, shortcomings and causes of pending issues; Proposing orientation and solution to improve leadership competence at divisional managers in DPIs of NKER; Assessing actual status of leadership competence at divisional managers in DPIs in NKER.

***4.3. Data collection method***

In order to achieve the set goal, the dissertation uses both secondary data and primary data. In which: Primary data is collected by investigating, collecting information through sociological methods.

The questionnaire is designed including 2 types: (i) questionnaire to determine the requirements of leadership competence of divisional managers and (ii) questionnaire to determine the status of leadership competence of divisional managers.

The questionnaire on the level of competence requirements was investigated with target groups including: Leaders of Departments (Directors or Deputy Directors), experts of departments under DPI and stakeholders (including staff from MPI, Development Strategy Institute - MPI; officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs and experienced lecturers relating to dissertation topic).

The questionnaire on actual situation of competence is delivered to investigate groups including managers of the divisions under provincial DPIs, experts of divisions and the managers themselves of the DPIs.

Secondary data is collected by desk research method, including: Research of organizations and individuals related to the dissertation, documents on regulation, decisions of the State, Statistical yearbook.

***4.4. Data processing method***

*- Methods on analysis - summary; Comparative method; System analysis method; Statistical methods; Forecast method*.

**5. New contributions of the dissertation**

In term of theory: The dissertation develops leadership competence analysis framework of divisional managers under the Department, in which, to clarify the contents including competence and leadership competence levels of divisional managers under the Department; Evaluation method of leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department; Factors affecting the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department.

In term of practice: Firstly, the dissertation has identified shortcomings and inadequacies in leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department, including shortage of knowledge, skills and quality. Secondly, the dissertation points out the reasons for the inadequacies in the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department, including causes from divisional managers themselves, from the organization and from the macro environment. Thirdly, the dissertation proposes a number of solutions to improve the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department in NKER including improving and strengthening personnel organization and management; Renovation of competence assessment methods; Strengthening training and fostering of officials; Improving the salary, bonus and remuneration policies, Motivating managers at department level.

6. Dissertation structure

In addition to the introduction, list on references and Appendix, the dissertation is organized with 5 chapters: Chapter 1: Overview of studies related to the dissertation topic; Chapter 2: Theoretical foundations about leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department; Chapter 3: Framework for assessing leadership competence of Divisional managers under DPI in NKER; Chapter 4: Actual situation of leadership competence of Divisional managers under the DPIs in the NKER; Chapter 5: Orientation and solutions to improve leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department in NKER.

CHAPTER 1  
OVERVIEW OF REASEARCHES RELATING TO THE THISIS TOPIC

1.1 Overview of foreign researches

1.2. Overview of domestic researches

1.3. Conclusions from research works and issues relating to the dissertation topic

Based on overview of domestic and foreign researches about relevant contents, conclusions are summarized as below:

1.3.1. Contributions of the works to dissertation topic

The content of the dissertation can inherit from previous researches:

- The works have basically agreed on the concepts of competence, working competence, management competence ... and their connotations. Simultaneously, methods to assess leadership competencies in many environments, multiple levels and application result assessment have been developed. In addition, researches have also shown factors that affect the leadership competence. These contents are the initial basis for developing dissertation research framework.

- The works have built competence frameworks, implemented sociological surveys, and conducted actual surveys to provide materials for assessment sufficiently; proposed a system of synchronous and feasible solutions. This is the orientation for the dissertation in developing competence framework and determining the evaluation method of actual situation.

- Basically, all works agree on the factors affecting leadership competence including 3 groups namely the factors belong to oneself, the factors belong to the organization, the factors belong to the macro environment. This is the basis for determining the factors affecting the leadership competence of the dissertation.

1.3.2. Research gap

- Although the theoretical concepts have been agreed, actual application has not been consistent and synchronous for each specific target. A general system to evaluate management competence is not available but mainly analyze the aspects and factors about operating competence in general.

- Most of the researches only focus on studying the competence of leaders based on their educational level, expertise ..., not deeply evaluated about skills or not engaged to specific job requirements to make competence requirements.

- There have been quite many researches on leadership competence in both public and business sectors; however, different capacities are required in each region. For the public sector, there have been some initial researches on the management competence of the leaders recently, but for each public position with different functions and tasks, different leadership competence is required. According to overview, not so many researches on competence in general and leadership competence in particular of the divisional managers under the departments have not been done.

- For the research on human resources in NKER, the researches only limited in the orientation or general research of regional human resources, but not yet analyzed and evaluated for each specific group of human resources.

From the above limitations and gaps, the dissertation will solve the following issues: Firstly, to formulate leadership competence framework of the divisional managers under the Departments. Secondly, to design and identify the competence framework for the divisional managers under the Departments, then apply the assessment for the NKER.

CHAPTER 2

RATIONALE FOR LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE

OF THE DIVISIONAL MANAGERS UNDER DEPARTMENTS

2.1. Leadership activities of divisional managers under Departments

2.1.1. Concept of leadership

From analyzing some definitions, leadership is a process and influences others to achieve certain goals, with the following basic characteristics: Leadership expresses the relationship between people and people; Leadership expresses an impact, influence and attract others; The influence, effect and attraction to others is voluntary and optional; Leadership is actually the ability to create vision, inspiration and influence in an organization.

2.1.2. Functions and tasks of divisional managers under Departments

2.1.2.1. Functions and tasks of divisions under Departments

According to Decree No. 24/2014 / ND-CP dated April 4, 2014 of the Prime Minister, the Department is "an agency under the provincial People's Committee; performing the function of advising and assisting the provincial People's Committees in the state management in term of local branches and sectors according to the provisions of law and the assignment or authorization of provincial People's Committees and provincial people's committee chairman”. According to Article 5 of this Decree, the specialized and professional divisions are a mandatory sector of the Departments, under the management of the Department's leaders, assisting the Department in performing the functions of the Department in the related fields…

2.1.2.2**.** Role of division level managers under Department

Divisional management officials of the Department is the bridge between the Department leader (Director, Deputy Director) with the experts in the division, responsible for implementing and realizing the policies and instructions of the Department's leaders to all experts, which means that divisional managers shall perform two basic functions: leadership and executive function.

Divisional management officials under department is at intermediate position, required to meet the expectations of the Department's leaders including organization and management of the operation of the assigned tasks and timely advising the Department leaders...; at the same time to meet the expectations of experts including fairness, facilitating development of experts ...

In addition, the room manager has other relationships within and outside the Department. In each relationship, the role of the manager of the department level has different positions and roles, but must coordinate well with these parties to complete the assigned tasks.

In addition, the department manager at the department level is an important source of planning for the leadership team.

2.1.3. Function and task of divisional managers under departments

2.1.3.1**.** Leasdership function of divisional managers under department

The leadership function of the division manager under department including:

- Organizing the operation of the assigned tasks, thereby, the divisional managers under department shall prepare a realistic and effective plan as planning helps the manager to ensure the right job and the right target. They shall also coordinate the implementation of such tasks so that related activities are progressed at the same speed and in uniformity with each other.

- Managing the operation of the assigned department, thus, the manager of the divisional level must understand the financial, material and human resources in need to successfully implement the plan timely and properly and to be used effectively. They shall assign tasks to individuals, or teams, to those who have necessary skills to perform the work, ensuring that everyone does the right thing.

The good managers will provide appropriate orientation and motivation for others, so that each person will make contributions to accomplishment of the expected results.

- Controlling the operation of the division: The control function is aimed at ensuring completion of task assigned for the managers - ie achieving the desired results - not dominating and manipulating the subordinates. Controlling here means to monitor employee performance.

2.1.3.2**.** Characteristics of leadership activities of divisional managers under department

From the position, role and relationship with the above-mentioned stakeholders, the leadership activities of the divisional managers under the Departments have the following characteristics:

- Leadership of divisional managers under departments must be associated with political tasks, associated with the development objectives of the sector, field in particular and localities in general.

- The leadership activities of divisional manager under Department are in the relationship with the higher level (Directors of the Departments), and lower-level of the division, both in relationship with other division under the Department and related departments.

- The specific leadership activities of the division level under Department have other characteristics with divisional managers in the districts. As the divisional of the provincial agencies, the district-level managers have higher authority, have the right to sign decisions and have their own seals, whereas, the divisional managers under departments do not have these rights.

- The manager of the room level in the district with the lower level is the commune level while the manager of the department level of the department only has subordinates who are experts in the department under his management.

- District management officials have just performed the advisory function (for district leaders and Department leaders) to implement specific tasks, while divisional managers are only advisory.

- Divisional manager of the Department only manages one sector while the manager of the district office manages a local branch.

2.2. Leadership competence of divisional managers under department

2.2.1. Definition of leadership competence of divisional managers under department

The leadership competence of divisional manager under the departments is "all knowledge of leadership and management; leadership, management skill and leadership ability/ competence that divisional managers can complete their jobs to lead and manage all activities of the Division assigned by the Department, creating sustainable development for agencies, units, branches, sectors and localities”*.*

2.2.2. Factors constituting leadership competence of divisional managers under department

From the concept of leadership competence of divisional managers under department, necessary capacities of the leadership at the divisional level can be specified as follows:

*Knowledge of divisional managers*: Leadership knowledge of divisional managers is all the knowledge that leaders have in term of professional skills, natural and social knowledge etc., used to lead and manage their division as assigned to perform tasks.

*Skills of divisional managers*: Leadership skills of divisional managers are proficiency in the practical application of knowledge of heads / deputy heads in leadership and management of division to complete the assigned tasks.

The quality of departmental leadership: The quality, quality or attitude of working are expressed through behavior in leadership.

2.3. Factors affecting leadership competence of divisional managers under department

Based on an overview of the researches in Chapter 1, it is shown that basically all reseaches agree on other factors that have a great impact on leadership competence including 3 groups, including: (i) Group of factors belong to oneself; (ii) Group of factors belong to organization and (iii) Group of factors belong to macro environment. These factors are mentioned as follows:

2.3.1. Group of factors belong to oneself

Individual factors including Qualifications (including education and professional qualifications), gender, age, work experience, family conditions, emotional intelligence, leadership quality.

2.3.2. Group of factors belong to organization

Characteristics of the organization: The formation and development of leadership competence of management team depends on factors related to organization characteristics such as organization size, type of organization, governance institution of human resource management of the organization…

2.3.3. Group of factors belong to macro environment

2.3.3.1. Legal factor

2.3.3.2. Socio- economic development level

2.3.3.3. Education factors

2.4. Method on assessing leadership competence of divisional managers under departments

2.4.1. Method on assessing leadership competence of divisional managers under departments

Assessment method 3600 is applied in many sectors, which is particularly suitable for assessing leadership competencies in organizations. The dissertation will use this method to assess the leadership competence of the divisional leaders under Departments

2.4.2. Process on assessing leadership competence of divisional managers under departments

**Step 1: Determine the required leadership competence of the divisional manager: (1) Develop a work-related competence framework; (2) Determine the required competence requirements**

**Step 2: analysis and assessment of current competence**

Based on the necessary competence framework developed in step 1, designing the survey questionnaire and assess the actual leadership competence of divisional managers. Develop questionnaires, send and process results.

**Step 3: Identify the gap between the current competence level and the requirement for leadership and analysis of causes**

Find the gap between the current competence and the necessary competence of the leadership at the department level; Make conclusion

CHAPTER 3

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE OF DIVISIONAL MANAGERS UNDER THE DPI IN NKER

3.1. Overview of the NKER and issues of divisional managers under the Department

3.1.1. Formation process of NKER

3.1.2. Orientation for socio-economic development of the NKER in the period to 2020 and orientation toward 2030

3.1.2.1. Targets toward 2030

3.1.2.2. Orientation toward 2030

3.1.3. Actual situation of socio-economic development

From the general analysis of some aspects: The economic growth of restructuring and income per capita and the development orientation of the above-mentioned NKER can be seen: After more than 20 years of establishment, the NKER has made many achievements in socio-economic development, gradually affirming its leading position in the country's growth, but besides, there are still many shortcomings, economic growth of the region tends to slow down, lack of sustainability, the income per capita of the region is still much lower than the Southern Focal economic zone, the economic structure is moving slowly, the set target has not been achieved. The issues raised for divisional managers under department.

3.1.4. Issues raised for divisional managers under department in NKER

3.1.4.1. Regarding organization

There needs to be a more open mechanism, more effective and efficient implementation of the Regional Committee and the organization of the leadership apparatus capable of managing and administering the work.

3.1.4.2. Regarding link in instruction and execution

The biggest obstacle in regional current link is the closed and local development thought in each city and province. Since then, it is necessary to expand the development mindset, implement the coordination and broad linkage according to a common development plan, the new NKER will be capable of outstanding, sustainable and effective development.

3.1.4.3. Regarding development and impementation of planning

The system of planning, long-term, medium-term and short-term development plans in Vietnam in general is implemented according to the administrative and regional planning levels set up without the corresponding planning management level. The sequence of plans is also quite "confusing" between levels and across sectors. There are too many overlapping planning types. Geographical area planning, focal area planning, planning of big and neighboring urban areas (Hanoi, the Capital Region and the NKER) make planning coordination difficult and sometimes overlapping and conflict happen.

3.1.4.4. Regarding Socio- economic development management

**3.2.** **Leadership competence framework of divisional managers under DPI in NKER**

**3.2.1. Position and role of DPI**

Firstly, DPI activities are more integrated than local departments of locality, Secondly, the DPI activities are related to all departments in the locality. These characteristics of DPI compared with other departments will set specific requirements for the competence of DPI civil servants in general and the leadership competence of divisional managers in DPI in particular. This will be the basis to form the leadership competence framework of divisional managers in DPI.

3.2.2 Leadership competence framework of divisional managers under DPI in NKER

Originated from the powers, functions and duties, leadership role of divisional managers under DPI and based on the requirements and the actual status of socio-economic development in the NKER, dissertation on developing leadership competence framework for divisional managers under DPI is as follows:

Table 3.4: Leadership competence framework of divisional managers under DPI

| **No** | **Leadership role** | **Required knowledge** | **Skill** | **Quality** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Build goals and orientations for the sectors and fields in charge | - Basic professional knowledge, technical and professional aspects of sector, broad understanding of related profession.  - Policy of the Party and State, the policy and direction of sector in term of management field and relevant profession.  - Professional development trend in the country and in the world. | - Skills to determine vision, identify goals.  - Prediction and forecast skills.  - Skills to disseminate the goals to subordinates. | - Wide coverage and visibility.  - There is political and responsible thinking.  - Sensitive, flexible.  - Clever… |
| 2 | Making hard and complicated decision under division authority and right | - Identify, analyze, evaluate complex information, causal factors, secret and hidden information to make options and consider costs, benefits, risks, and impacts of these options.  - Understand the actual situation, existing resources and available information even in difficult and unprecedented cases. | - Decision-making skills.  - Problem analysis skills. | - Decisive.  - Dare to take responsibility.  - Clever |
| 3 | Management and promotion of the division resource | - Understand the process, how to organize the work.  - Understanding the content of functions and management methods such as financial management, human resource management, operational management ...  - Understand the methods of assessing competence and know how to assign the right person to the right job, authorize and assign responsibility to the subordinates. | - Communication skills.  - Job arrangement skills.  - Skills of managing and developing relationships.  - Self-management skills. | - Have a plan.  - Creation.  - Responsibility.  - Consistent with the goal.  - Sensitive.  - Flexible. |
| 4 | Advising for leader | - Basic knowledge of profession and technical aspects of management field, broad understanding of related professional skills.  - policy and guidelines of the Party and the State, policy directions of the sector, management and related operations.  - Professional development trend in the country and in the world. | -Communication skills.  - Data collecting and processing skill.  - Skill on writing and managing documents.  - Presentation and persuasive skills. | - Creative and flexible.  - Wide coverage and visibility.  - Responsibility  - Flexible, responsive. |
| 5 | Construction and personal development of subordinates. | - Understanding the psychology of subordinates.  - Understand the basic knowledge of social psychology and human resource management  - Understanding office culture  - Understanding organizational behavior  - Understand the legal policies | Skill on training and individual development of subordinates. | - Sensitive to the needs of others, (EQ) is high.  - Creative and flexible. |
| 6 | Motivate, encourage and inspire individuals. | - Understand and grasp the principles on influencing and personal incentives.  - Understand the principles of communication.  - Understand the knowledge of social psychology and how to impact.  - Understand local social culture. | - Effective communication skills.  - Skills to influence.  - Effective persuasion skills.  - Skills to motivate subordinates… | - Friendly.  - Enthusiastic working.  - Pure mind |

Source*: Summarized by Post-graduate student*

3.2.2. Requirements for divisional managers of DPI in NKER

3.2.2.1. Development of questionnaire

*Survey questionnaires require leadership competence to be required. Based on the developed "competence framework", the questionnaire was designed (Appendix 1), using Likert scale with 5 scales to arrange the required level of competence from small to large*.

3.2.2.2. Selection of investigated targets

The dissertation selects divisional managers at DPI in NKER as the target to implement the "360o assessment method". The dissertation investigated and collected a total of 303 questionnaires for 3 groups including: (i) Group 1 is the higher level of the divisional manager (Director, Deputy Director of DPIs of provinces / cities in the region (02 people in each province: total of 14 people (ii) Group 2 is the subordinates of the divisional managers, the total number of collected questionnaires is 256, (iii) Group 3: related parties (including officials at the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Vietnam Institute for Development Strategies - MPI, the staff of the Ministry of Home Affairs and lecturers with rich experience in research topic), the total number of collected questionnaires is 33.

3.2.2.4. The results of processing survey information on the leadership competence requirements of divisional manager of DPI

Analyzing the survey data results of the leadership competence requirements of divisional leader according to the summary table as below:

Table 3.5: Leadership competence requirements of Divisional manager under DPIs in NKER

| **No** | **Skills, qualities and knowledge** | **Minimum required score** | **Average (Mean)** | **Maximum required score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Knowledge** | | | | | |
| 1 | Knowledge of legal policies | 4 | 4,485 | 5 |
| 2 | Knowledge of professional skills | 4 | 4,512 | 5 |
| 3 | Knowledge of social psychology | 3 | 4,017 | 5 |
| 4 | Knowledge of culture and development history | 3 | 4,003 | 5 |
| 5 | Knowledge of the development trend of the professional field | 4 | 4,488 | 5 |
| 6 | Knowledge of human resource management | 3 | 4,007 | 5 |
| 7 | Political and social knowledge | 4 | 4,505 | 5 |
| 8 | Knowledge of divisional management | 3 | 4,050 | 5 |
| **Skill** | | | | | |
| 9 | Communication skill | 3 | 4,007 | 5 |
| 10 | Skill on heading to target and operation | 3 | 3,993 | 5 |
| 11 | Advising skill | 3 | 4,036 | 5 |
| 12 | Skill on development of subordinates | 3 | 4,010 | 5 |
| 13 | Skill on organizing and exploiting resources | 3 | 4,023 | 5 |
| 14 | Skills to create and develop relationships | 3 | 3,980 | 5 |
| 15 | Self-management skill | 3 | 4,023 | 5 |
| **Quality** | | | | | |
| 16 | Creative | 3 | 4,020 | 5 |
| 17 | Flexible | 3 | 4,000 | 5 |
| 18 | Planned | 4 | 4,505 | 5 |
| 19 | Visible | 4 | 4,482 | 5 |
| 20 | Responsible | 3 | 4,020 | 5 |
| 21 | Sensitive | 3 | 4,073 | 5 |
| 22 | Brave, persistent | 3 | 4,040 | 5 |

Source*: Summarized by Post-graduate student*

The processing results also show that the required level on competence factors also varies among the parties, reflecting the expectations of different parties for leadership competence of divisional manager. In particular, the majority (16/22) among the factors, higher level requirements are higher than the requirements of subordinates and stakeholders.

Table 3.6: Leadership competence requirements of Divisional manager under DPIs in NKER

| **TT** | **Skills, qualities and knowledge** | **Requirements of higher level** | **Requirements of subordinates** | **Requirements of stakeholders** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Knowledge** | | | | | |
| 1 | Knowledge of legal policies | 4,643 | 4,48 | 4,42 |
| 2 | Knowledge of professional skills | 4,643 | 4,53 | 4,33 |
| 3 | Knowledge of social psychology | 3,857 | 4,00 | 4,21 |
| 4 | Knowledge of culture and development history | 3,929 | 4,02 | 3,94 |
| 5 | Knowledge of the development trend of the professional field | 4,571 | 4,48 | 4,52 |
| 6 | Knowledge of human resource management | 4,000 | 4,02 | 3,94 |
| 7 | Political and social knowledge | 4,286 | 4,50 | 4,61 |
| 8 | Knowledge of divisional management | 4,429 | 4,03 | 4,06 |
| Skill | | | | | |
| 9 | Communication skill | 4,143 | 3,99 | 4,06 |
| 10 | Skill on heading to target and operation | 4,286 | 4,01 | 3,73 |
| 11 | Advising skill | 4,429 | 4,03 | 3,94 |
| 11 | Skill on development of subordinates | 4,214 | 4,02 | 3,88 |
| 12 | Skill on organizing and exploiting resources | 4,071 | 4,02 | 4,06 |
| 13 | Skills to create and develop relationships | 4,143 | 3,98 | 3,88 |
| 14 | Self-management skill | 4,429 | 4,01 | 3,97 |
| **Quality** | | | | | |
| 15 | Creative | 4,143 | 3,98 | 4,24 |
| 16 | Flexible | 4,286 | 4,00 | 3,88 |
| 17 | Planned | 4,500 | 4,50 | 4,52 |
| 18 | Visible | 4,500 | 4,48 | 4,45 |
| 19 | Responsible | 4,571 | 4,02 | 3,82 |
| 20 | Sensitive | 4,286 | 4,06 | 4,09 |
| 21 | Brave, persistent | 4,286 | 4,02 | 4,06 |

Source*: Summarized by Post-graduate student*

The results on required level for leadership skills of divisional managers in NKER according to the above table will be the basis for assessing the actual leadership competence of divisional managers under DPIs in NKER.

CHAPTER 4

CURRENT STATUS OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE OF DIVISIONAL MANAGERS UNDER DPIs IN NKER

4.1. Overview of divisional managers under DPIs of NKER

Up to now, there are 64 operational divisions, functional centers with 184 managers (heads and deputy heads) in all 7 DPIs. In which, according to the statistics, divisional leadership competence under DPIs in FEZ is quite high: 100% of the university level or higher, in which post-graduate is quite high. For example: For Bac Ninh, 20/23 divisional managers have master degrees (accounting for 86.95%, For Quang Ninh, 23/26 divisional managers have master degrees, accounting for 88.46%).

In terms of age, the divisional manager of DPI in NKER is aged 35-45 (accounting for 69.4%) in general. The number of managers under 35 and over 55 years old is very small. Besides, most managers are men, accounting for 71.42%.

Regarding management experience: because of young age, the number of years in management is mainly under 10 years.

The above characteristics will affect the leadership competence of divisional manager and will be analyzed in more detail in the later part of the dissertation.

4.2. Current status of leadership competence of divisional manager under DPIs in FFEZ

4.2.1. Process on assessing leadership competence of divisional manager under DPIs in FFEZ

Step 1: Select the survey targets: To assess the actual situation of leadership competence of divisional manager under the Department, the dissertation investigates 3 target groups and collect a total of 337 questionnaires: (i) Group 1 is the higher level of divisional manager (Directors, Deputy Directors of DPI provinces / cities in the region (02 people in each province): a total of 14 questionnaires; (ii) Group 2 is the subordinates of the divisional manager, the total number of collected questionnaires is 256 votes; Group 3: Leaders of the divisions under the local DPI (head, deputy head of the division), total collected questionnaires are 67.

Step 2: Design an existing leadership survey questionnaire

Step 3: Processing investigation results

4.2.2. Overview of the current leadership competence of divisional manager under DPIs in FFEZ

Processing results of the leadership competence survey by 3600 method proposed in chapter 2, based on the leadership competence framework of the divisional competence manager under the Department proposed in chapter 3, giving general results about actual situation of leadership competence of divisional competence manager in NKER under the Department is as follows:

Firstly, score of most competence is under requirement, which indicates the need for improvement in most competence, in which competence aspects which hold the lowest one in comparison with requirement are skills under knowledge groups (4/8 capacities), the quality skills group also have 2/7 competence with big difference. The skill competence group also has difference between the actual status and the requirements, but the level of difference is not large. Thus, through overview analysis, it can be seen that in the coming time, it is necessary to focus on improving the competence of the knowledge group and some capacities of the quality group.

Secondly, a few capacities of the divisional room manager are assessed as meeting the higher level than required. This is a positive point in the leadership competence of divisional managers in NKER.

Thirdly, despite the shortage compared to the required average, the average score of capacities are rated as more than 3.8, greater than the minimum required level of divisional manager. In particular, the competence being rated as the most is KT2 competence (professional knowledge and profession), the competence being rate as the worst is KT4 competence (knowledge of culture and development history).

4.2.3. Current status of knowledge of divisional managers under DPI in NKER

The survey results show that knowledge for divisional managers under DPIs shall be updated and improved with including the general knowledge of the socio-economy, policy and laws of the State as well as policies on culture, society and knowledge about leadership to meet leadership competence requirement. In which, it is necessary to focus on the knowledge on legal policies KT1, professional knowledge KT2, Knowledge about the development trend of the specialized field KT5 and political and social knowledge KT7. This is totally reasonable because with the characteristics of DPI, it is required that experts in general and managers in particular need to have a general and macro knowledge.

4.2.4. Actual situation of skills of divisional managers under DPI in NKER

By the analysis, it can be seen that to carry out the leadership role, good divisional manager need to supplement skills including advising skills KN3, orientation and management skills KN2, self-management skill KN7, Communication skill KN1, skills of subordinates development KN4, and skills on organizing and exploiting human resources KN5. In particular, advising skill shall be most paid attention KN3.

4.2.5. Actual status of the leadership quality of divisional managers under DPI in NKER

From the above analysis, it can be seen that divisional managers should improve the competence under quality group. In which the capacities to be paid attention should be planning, vision, responsibility, sensitivity and flexibility.

4.3 Assessing the status of leadership competence of divisional managers under DPI in NKER and the causes of limitations

4.3.1. The advantages in leadership competence of divisional of DPI in NKER

Results of leadership competence analysis show the strong points of the divisional manager in DPI in NKER as follows:

Firstly, many capacities of divisional managers of DPI is highly appreciated: 11 out of 22 capacities score above 4, details area as follows:

In term of knowledge: there are 3/8 factors with scores above 4, including: KT2, KT5, KT8, which means that divisional managers are assessed as mastering adequate professional knowledge, development trend knowledge of expertise, leadership knowledge on division administration.

In terms of skills: there are 5/7 leadership skills with scores above 4, including: KN1, KN3, KN4, KN5, KN7 means divisional manager are assessed as mastering communication skills, advising skills, and competence organization skill and high self-management skill.

In term of qualities: there are 3/7 factors scoring above 4 which are TC4, TC5, TC7, which means that in general, division- level manager has a vision, a responsibility and a high level of character.

Secondly, some competences of divisional manager have met the requirements of all parties. In terms of knowledge: KT4 and KT6 have met the requirements of higher level, KT3, KT6 to meet the requirements of subordinate; Regarding skills: KN4, KN5 have met the requirements of higher level, KN1, KN6 to meet the requirements of subordinates; About qualities: TC1 (creative) meets the requirements of subordinates.

4.3.2. Limitations in leadership competence of divisional managers under DPI in NKER

In addition to the above results, some limitations on leadership competence of divisional managers under DPI in the NKER are as follows:

*In terms of knowledge: Although most divisional managers have relatively good knowledge, there is a lack of the following knowledge*: Knowledge about socio-politics and legal policies, knowledge of development trends of expertise and knowledge of profession, knowledge of development trends of expertise are the 4 knowledge with the highest deficit compared to the requirements, thus, in the coming time, it is necessary to quickly supplement in order to promptly meet the leadership requirements.

- Knowledge of social psychology, knowledge of historical and cultural development, despite the lack of knowledge is not as high as the above group of knowledge, but it is under-estimated, so in the coming time, it is also need to be concerned and supplement.

- The knowledge of human resource management and knowledge of division administration and leadership also needs to be supplemented and updated.

*Skills: Although according to the general assessment, the lack of skills of divisional manager is not much, but the skills need to be developed including*:

- Advising skill is the most lacking skill to meet the requirements of higher level as well as subordinates.

- Communication skills, as not much in shortage in comparison with general requirements, but compared to the requirements of higher levels, the level of deficiency is quite high (lack of 0.213 points), and this is also the lowest factor to be assessed among skill factors.

- Skills on orientation and self-management, skills to develop subordinate, skill on human source organization and exploiting should also be improved so that divisional manager can perform well the leadership activities.

*Regarding qualities:* Divisional managers need to improve the capabilities under qualitative group:

- Qualities in planning and visibility competence, flexibility is the most serious deficiency. Due to the characteristics of the staff under DPIs and advising function, it is necessary to quickly add these qualities to ensure the leadership activities of divisional manager.

- Sensitive and flexible, responsible, and creative qualities need to be added.

4.3.3. Causes of limitations

Analysis of factors affecting the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department showed that the limitations in leadership competence of divisional managers under DPI in the NKER are caused by:

4.3.3.1. The causes belong to managers themselves

Lack of experience: the majority of divisional managers under departments are aged from 35-45 years old, with less than 10 years of management experience, thus, they do not have much experience, have not accumulated much knowledge and leadership skills.

*The self-improvement of knowledge and leadership skills is still limited*: In general, the self-training of managers at division level is quite limited.

4.3.3.2. Deficiency from organization

*Firstly, inadequacies in planning and appointment of managerial staff:* The planning of manager, the selection of current manager is still inadequate, which is a cause of limited competence of divisional manager.

*Secondly, the assessment of staff competence is not reasonable:* At present, the competence assessment of divisional manager in particular and state civil servants in general is being implemented according to Decree No. 88/2017 / ND-CP with unclear assessment basis and criteria, mainly qualitative assessment, thus, the evaluation is relatively formal, not assessing the competence properly, reducing the motivation for public officials on improving competence.

*Thirdly, the training and fostering activities for divisional manager is still limited:* the training work over the past time only complies with the criteria, according to the planning, which has not really come from the actual requirement. That has led to gaps such as above situation, both redundant and deficient: it can be said that the number of trained people is 'redundant', but there is no place for practice and there is 'lack of' labor required of high quality that training has not kept up with.

Fourthly, inadequacies in the benefit package: For many years, although the basic salary has been adjusted many times, it is now much lower than the regional minimum wage of the production and business sector (The average regional minimum wage in 2018 was 3.34 million VND/ month). With such a salary calculation, it is difficult to ensure basic living needs of officials, leading to the situation that many state agencies cannot keep capable people.

Fifthly, difficulties come from subordinates: subordinate experts affect the leadership competence of division-level. In general, over the past time, the quality of the expert at most departments increased, however, the level of expertise among the experts are not uniform, causing difficulty for divisional manager in leading and operating activities. In addition, similar to divisional manager, the officials have a relatively low salary, so their work motivation also decreases, causing difficulties for the divisional manager in implementing leadership activities.

At the same time, according to the current regulations, when civil servants and officials are officially recruited and put in the "payroll", therefore, there is a "assured for life" feeling in addition to low wages as analyzed above makes work motivation decrease, so the voice of the divisional manager decreases.

4.3.3.3. Inadequacy from macro environment

*Firstly, the legal framework is not synchronous, incomplete and instable:* Laws such as the State Budget Law, the Law on Public Investment, the Bidding Law ... still have many shortcomings, which are under finalization and may change. Meanwhile, the database has not been developed yet, making it difficult for managers in particular and civil servants to update new documents. This is a reason why the knowledge of the legal policy of divisional managers is evaluated as not satisfied.

*Secondly, the shortcomings of the education and training system*: In general, the NKER has a widely distributed system of education and training, which can be seen as the most complete system among the economic zones of the country. However, in the general context of education and training quality, the content and programs, the quality of training of these schools are still limited, the content of training is slowly updated, sometimes far from reality, therefore, officials are not fully equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and qualities.

The limitations and causes analyzed as above are the basis for determining the direction and solutions to improve leadership competence for divisional managers under DPI in NKER.

CHAPTER 5

ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE OF THE DIVISIONAL MANAGER UNDER DEPARTMENTS IN THE NKER

5.1. Context

5.2. Perspectives, orientations, improvement of execution competence of divisional managers of the NKER toward 2030

5.2.1. Perspectives

Firstly, improving the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department is coverage task, that should continue to be promoted and regularly executed from developing the source, training and supplementing policies to be strong enough to attract and use talents to improve the quality of human resources associated with scientific and technological development;

Secondly, improvement of leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department is considered as the focus and core to achieve the regional development objectives;

Thirdly, improving the leadership competence of divisional manager of the department must be associated with the requirements and tasks of the period;

Fourthly, improving the leadership competence of divisional manager under department comprehensively and synchronously;

Fifthly, effort from all parties must be taken for improving the leadership competence of the divisional managers under the department, in which divisional managers themselves play the most important role;

Sixthly, improving the leadership competence of divisional managers under department must be consistent with the characteristics and development level of each sector.

5.2.2. Orientation and objectives to improve leadership competence of divisional managers under DPIs in NKER

*Firstly,* to supplement the knowledge in lack while improving comprehensively the level of knowledge, to regularly update knowledge. *Secondly*, to train leadership skills, especially to prioritize the skills that are still in lack to help managers to get comprehensive knowledge but good leadership skills. *Thirdly,* to improve the leadership qualities of divisional managers, especially the capabilities of planning competence and visibility, sensitivity and flexibility and creativity.

5.3. Some solutions to improve the leadership competence of divisional manager under the DPIs in the NKER

5.3.1. Improvement and strengthening organization and management of human source

Simultaneous implementation of human resources policies: Policies on human resources must be taken into consideration in the whole organization, from recruitment, assignment, use of staff. Accordingly, it is necessary to complete policies to attract and promote highly qualified human resources, improve the quality of personnel planning, develop and implement staff standardization.

5.3.2. Renovation of competence assessment method

With the analysis and research proposals implemented in the previous chapters, the dissertation proposes to assess the leadership competence of divisional managers in an accurate and comprehensive way associated with position.

5.3.3. Strengthening training and fostering of staff

*For standing divisional managers*: Regularly retraining and fostering competence in lack based on the analysis of the situation in Chapter 4.

*For potential officials:* In addition to training retraining and fostering the current divisional manager force, it is also necessary to pay attention to the next potential officials.

5.3.4. Improving salary, bonus policies and benefit package

Improving policy of salary, bonus and benefit package towards integrating achievements and work results with encouragement by benefits and material responsibilities. Reforming the salary regime, monetization of wages and regimes according to salary to ensure rationality and fairness; wages must be taken as basic source of income, ensuring that officials have a stable life to dedicate to work.

5.3.5 Creating motivation for divisional managers under department

To assign the work in accordance with the competence and strength of divisional managers. At the same time, to create promotion opportunities for officials and public servants. To timely compliment and reward the staff who have outstanding achievements in their work. To finalize organization in the unit, creating a democratic, respect, trust, support and mutual assistance atmosphere.

5.4. Recommendations

*Firstly, To recommend the State, Government, Ministries and agencies:* Quickly formulating and approving regulations on job title standards in state administrative agencies; completing and promulgating a synchronous legal system, study the implementation of a definite term contract with all civil servants and officials. Effectively carrying out the struggle against corruption, wastefulness, handling according to law and Party discipline to violations.

*Secondly, recommend to political schools and administrative schools:* It is necessary to renovate training contents and methods to improve the quality of training activities.

*Thirdly, recommending to officials and civil servants themselves:* Need to be proactive in self-cultivation, training to improve the competence to meet the work requirements. Put the benefits of the collective above personal interest, strictly comply with the regulations of the State, the Party and the Law on Civil servants.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation "Improving the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department in the NKER" has developed a theoretical framework to study the leadership competence of divisional managers under the Department based on approach to competence framework, using the 3600 assessment method. Accordingly, the leadership competence of divisional managers is the entire knowledge of leadership and management; leadership, management skill and leadership capability/ quantity that divisional managers have to complete their jobs to lead and manage all activities of the division assigned by the Department, creating sustainable development for agencies, units, branches, sectors and localities, including 3 contents: knowledge, skills and leadership qualities. The aspects of this competence are concretized into groups, in which, the knowledge aspect includes 8 contents, skill aspect including 7 contents and quality aspect includes 7 contents. On that basis, the dissertation surveys stakeholders to determine the requirements for these capabilities.

Based on which to assess the current situation, the dissertation has pointed out some strong points of leadership competence of divisional managers under DPIs in the NKER. At the same time, it was discovered shortcomings in the leadership competence of divisional managers under the DPIs include: Regarding knowledge: Not meet the requirements of leadership knowledge, in which, the most shortages are social politics and legal policies, knowledge of the development trend of expertise and knowledge of profession, knowledge of the development trend of the ​​expertise; Lack of leadership skills, especially advising and communication skills, and the most serious of factors including planning competence and vision, flexibility.

The causes of these limitations are due to: Causes from the divisional manager themselves including: lack of experience and limitations in self-improvement and competence improvement; causes from the organization include: firstly, inadequacies in planning, appointment of managers; secondly, the assessment of staff competence is not reasonable; thirdly, the training and fostering divisional managers is still limited; fourthly, inadequate in benefit package; Fifthly, difficulties from subordinate; and causes from the macro environment including a lack of uniformity of laws, limitations of education and training systems.

By such assessments, the dissertation proposes point of view and orientation to improve the leadership competence of divisional manager under the department in the NKER in the coming period: Firstly, improving leadership competence of divisional managers under departments is an extensive task need to be promoted and implemented regularly; Secondly, improving leadership competence of divisional managers under Departments is the key task to achieve the regional development objectives; Thirdly, improving the leadership competence of the divisional managers under Departments must be associated with the requirements and tasks of the period; Fourthly, improve the leadership competence of divisional managers under Departments comprehensively and synchronously; Fifthly, improving the leadership competence of the divisional managers under department must take effort from all parties, in which divisional managers themselves under Departments plays the most important role; Sixthly, improving the leadership competence of divisional managers under Departments must be consistent with the characteristics and development level of each sector. To implement these points of views and orientation, 5 groups of solutions shall be implemented including: (i) Improving and strengthening the organization and management of human resources; (ii) Renovating competence assessment methods; (iii) Strengthen training and fostering of officials; (iv) Improving salary, bonus and benefit package, and (v) Motivating divisional managers of the Department.

Although the dissertation has achieved the set objectives, but for objective and subjective reasons, the dissertation has not yet analyzed the evaluation of people and enterprises about the leadership competence of the divisional managers under Department. This limitation of the dissertation is suggestive for next researches. The author is looking forward to receiving contributions and help of experts and researchers to finalize the research.