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A STUDY ON THE EXECUTIVE POWER OF MIDDLE MANAGERS IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

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Abstract:

The competition among enterprises has intensified, creating a struggle for survival. Effective enterprise management is essential for developing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), where performance is the critical standard. Management execution, beyond management styles and top managers' ideas, is crucial for SME development. Middle managers significantly influence the enterprise's future and play a decisive role in its management. Therefore, SMEs must emphasize and correctly assess the execution level of middle managers, continuously improve corporate culture implementation, build high-performance teams, and enhance the practical execution of middle managers to elevate overall management and drive progress. This paper focuses on SMEs, examining the status quo of middle managers' executive power to identify management deficiencies and propose optimization programs to achieve ultimate management goals. The study highlights the critical role of middle managers in SMEs, which aims to evaluate their current execution levels, identify management gaps, and recommend strategies for improvement. The findings reveal significant performance metrics, training, and corporate culture implementation gaps through mixed-method approaches, quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and comparative analysis. The implications suggest that targeted interventions can enhance management practices, which leads to improved performance and sustainability for SMEs. This underscores the importance of continuous professional development and robust evaluation systems for middle managers.

Keywords:

SMEs, Enterprise Management, Middle Managers, Management Execution

Introduction

Competition among enterprises is increasingly fierce, and the fittest will be eliminated. Adequate and correct enterprise management is the premise for small and medium-sized enterprises to seek development, and the evaluation standard of enterprise management is performance (Jia et al., 2022). Regardless of the factors of enterprise management mode and the management thought of the top management, the executive ability of management is the most important factor for small and medium-sized enterprises to seek development. Middle managers greatly influence enterprises' future growth and are also the mainstay of enterprises, which is significant to enterprise management (Yao et al., 2024). However, it is essential for small and medium-sized enterprises. The executive power of middle managers is closely related to the survival of enterprises and even plays a decisive role. Therefore, the middle management level of execution should be brought to the attention of small and medium-sized enterprises (Huang et al., 2022). Small and medium-sized enterprises should also properly evaluate managers' execution level, continuously improve the enterprise executive culture, build high-performance teams, improve the executive force of middle managers in work practice, improve the enterprise management level, and make constant progress in corporate development (Dwikat et al., 2022). This paper takes small and medium-sized enterprises as the starting point, through the middle management of the current situation of the executive force, to find the deficiencies in enterprise management and put forward a series of optimization programs to help enterprises achieve the final management goals.

Competition among small and medium-sized enterprises in China is becoming more and more intense, and an effective management plan is a prerequisite for small and medium-sized enterprises to continue to seek development, which is related to the implementation of the power of essential enterprise management factors (Khan et al., 2021). Enterprise strategy can not be fully realized, and the development of plans can not be completed in quality and quantity, and work to receive the effect of the high and low depends on the strength of an enterprise's executive power (Yuan & Chen, 2022). This key factor of enterprise management plays a mainstay in the role of the middle managers, so the middle managers, in a certain degree of implementation, reflect the future development of an enterprise. This paper uses a mixed-method approach—comprising quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and comparative analysis.

Literature Review

Untimely Change of Managerial Roles

The decisions of top decision-makers are communicated to middle managers, and middle managers need to communicate the latest information to their subordinates. In the process of conveying this information, the role of the conversion of the deviation is straightforward to appear in the high-level decision-makers issued instructions, middle managers to grasp the understanding, and then according to the instructions of the planned placement to deal with the corresponding work (Xiang & Chin, 2021). In this process of receiving, understanding, and action, middle managers uploading and downloading simultaneously play two roles in the upper level of decision-making in the work of the receiving manager belonging to the "lower level". The decision-making arrangements for implementing the work belong to the "superior". Among the two, middle managers tend to favour one or the other, blurring the reciprocal relationship between the two, which results in a certain degree of bias (Ma et al., 2022). If you favour the superior, only arrange the subordinate work, but ignore its subsequent completion

of the situation, the role of the transition is not timely. In addition, the efficiency of enterprise management is reduced (Park & Byun, 2021).

Heavy Management Tasks and Little Managerial Autonomy

Middle-level workers, rather than upper leaders and front-line workers, are in closer contact, so the middle leaders understand how upper leaders make decisions in practical work arrangements. Many SMEs senior leaders of middle managers of management of the management of the function of half-understanding, the rights given to the middle managers are not enough, resulting in the middle managers working on the idea but not putting it into practice the power (Shaturaev, 2022). This behaviour usually manifests in the middle managers' need to make decisions at all levels of approval. However, middle management implements enterprise management and plays a pillar role in the characters, heavy tasks, and responsibilities (Zhao et al., 2022). If the task is not completed on time, it will let the leadership know that the management ability is insufficient. Poor execution while affecting the work progress of subordinate staff and completion, and thus affect the progress of the work of the entire enterprise (Wang & Cheng-Han, 2020).

Middle Managers Have Limitations at Their Level

Today's society and economy are developing, new things and new ideas are appearing continuously, and the competition of enterprises is becoming more and more fierce (Sun et al., 2023). The manager's management-level requirements are increasing. Middle managers are the key to enterprise management. The implementation of middle managers is more related to the survival and development of enterprises. Nowadays, middle managers ignore the improvement of their execution and understanding and only pay attention to the subordinate's working ability. In this way, the middle manager's level of limitation will result in the upper level of the decision-making is not enough to understand the purpose of the decision to understand fuzzier, which will lead to the subordinate work arrangements are not appropriate, and the results are minimal (Gennitsaris et al., 2023). It will also lead to asymmetric information transfer, dare not and can not freely grasp the implementation of standards, and the possibility of effective implementation of corporate policy.

Lack of Relevant Performance Appraisal and Incentive Mechanisms

Nowadays, small and medium-sized enterprises' performance appraisal mechanisms are imperfect, especially since middle managers have not formulated an effective performance appraisal mechanism. The supervision of middle managers is insufficient, which will make some middle managers not serious about the management work, and it is easy to neglect their work duties and then pull down the execution of the work (Qalati et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the lack of incentive mechanisms will also make the middle managers lose their enthusiasm for improving their enthusiasm for work and seriousness, which is also one of the essential reasons for the low implementation of small and medium-sized enterprise managers.

Management Objectives Are Vaguely Understood and Poorly Principled

Because middle managers have a dual role in receiving and conveying information, information asymmetry occurs occasionally. That is, there are deviations in the information conveyed. Sometimes, middle managers do not understand that the objectives of the upper decision-making are not clearly in place sometimes selfish interests will produce the transmission of information, and subordinates receive information is inconsistent with the phenomenon of fuzzy decision-making information, thus causing the subordinates to act to produce bias, resulting in the phenomenon of little effect of enterprise management (Zhang et al., 2022).

There is also a part of the enterprise, especially the "family culture" of some small and medium-sized enterprises, in the process of enterprise management does not comply with the norms, resulting in the principle of the enterprise being very poor, the business development of the enterprise has a considerable impact.

The Manifestations of Insufficient Execution by Middle Managers in SMEs

Poor Compliance with Implementation Standards

The main manifestations are low personal qualities of middle managers. To the top management of the strategic intent and business decisions half-understand, cognitive deviation from the guidelines and policies to make mistakes. It cannot scientifically develop an effective and efficient program implementation, resulting in little effect or even the opposite, as the implementation process did not carry out effective communication and information feedback (Sun & Liu, 2021). This results in a lack of fundamental understanding of the actual situation of the implementation of the target managers, and implementers of the staff's goal also lack sufficient knowledge. There is also a lack of timely communication between the various departments of the enterprise is not in place (Alzoubi et al., 2022). The result of the work produced by the deviation from the goal of the error, only focusing on the number and speed of implementation of the task, not paying attention to the quality of the implementation of the task completion is significantly reduced, the implementation of low standards so that the results of the serious deviation from the standard.

Poor Timeliness of Target Implementation

Specifically, the middle managers of small and medium-sized enterprises are not personally involved, lead by example, deviate from practice when making plans and assigning tasks, are unrealistic, and cannot promptly find and adjust subordinates' deviation in task implementation. The inappropriate use of financial resources, manpower, and time, pulling down the implementation of the task process, is the deterioration of the sense of teamwork (Simonsen et al., 2023). The focus is only on the work efficiency of the Ministry, the implementation of the duties is not clear enough, the rewards and punishments are not in place, and the staff's enthusiasm cannot be mobilized. It is impossible to accomplish the set goals, and the implementation is inefficient.

The Small Effectiveness of the Implementation Results

Specifically, in the process of implementation, the communication skills were not grasped, the ability to deal with emergencies was not strong, the plan could not be combined with the actual situation, the level of implementation of the plan was low, and suitable working methods were not found. Without good planning and preparation, the difficulties encountered in implementation cannot be correctly recognized. Problems are not solved in time, which affects the implementation effect. Mutual excuse, once there is a problem, the responsibility is unclear. They are irresponsible and prevaricate, and the company's management is "people-oriented" (Bento et al., 2023). They cannot stick to the end, and they cannot hold back halfway. The long-term planning of the enterprise can not reflect the effect in the short term. Middle managers are eager for quick success and instant benefits and are easy to give up if their achievements are not prominent.

Analysis of the Reasons for the Inadequate Execution of Middle Managers in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Middle Managers' Lack of Knowledge and Understanding of Execution

Some middle managers in small and medium-sized enterprises can not take the initiative to think. All things have to ask for instructions from superiors, and there is no independent opinion. Moreover, they stay passively obedient to the work stage and can not give full play to the functions of middle managers (Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020). In addition, some middle managers are promoted from basic administrative positions or professional and technical positions. Their ideology and management capabilities can not be converted promptly to find the correct position, and they do not have the necessary organizational coordination and communication skills of middle management positions. "Sweep the snow in front of the door" narrow vision, the lack of big-picture concepts, can not make every employee play a role, can not effectively play the team fighting force.

Inadequate Delegation of Authority by Senior Management

As the development of small and medium-sized enterprises is relatively short, the organizational structure of enterprises is not perfect. Therefore, senior managers, regardless of the size of the matter, have personal decision-making skills, no concept of authorization, and are not accustomed to decentralization. The middle management's work enthusiasm and initiative are affected and may appear at a loss, inertia and distrust (Teofilus et al., 2022). Meanwhile, this situation will also distract the energy of senior management, which can not better focus on the overall situation and high-level strategic decision-making. In addition, too much involvement of top management in specific matters of the enterprise will result in the phenomenon of "one person, many jobs", resulting in staff being overwhelmed by the situation. The negative feelings of the staff will also be enhanced. The consequences of unclear responsibility, inefficiency and confusion will occur.

Enterprise-level Issues

First, the objectives of SMEs are not clear. Each enterprise has its medium- and long-term planning and short-term work. The goal, but at the practical level, in the decomposition of tasks and work distribution, lacks substantive implementability (Oldham & Spence, 2022). Work planning has become a "slogan" without a roadmap, resulting in inefficient implementation. Secondly, the system or management of small and medium-sized enterprises is not standardized enough. Enterprise management is not to stay in the "system of management" of the rule of law management mode but to stay in the "people in charge of people" of the rule of man mode. There is no effective performance appraisal and incentive mechanism, unable to stimulate the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of the middle managers, the management system's executability is low, and the management system of each department cross, overlaps, and even conflict can not make the system effectively implemented. The management system is designed to be unreasonable, complex, cumbersome, and reduce work efficiency (Su et al., 2021).

Absence of A Corporate Culture

The formation of enterprise culture is a gradual process. Many SMEs realize the importance of corporate culture. However, there are still many limitations, such as the size of the enterprise, staff structure, business status, and professional corporate image designers, that have not yet cultivated an influential corporate culture. Middle managers are leaders and executors (Dong et al., 2023). If middle managers can play their role well, they will become a bridge between top management and grassroots staff. They will become a wall between top management and

grassroots staff if they do not play well. The positive cooperation of middle managers in implementing the enterprise's tasks is essential. If the middle managers of the implementation of the weak ability to complete the tasks issued by the enterprise are complex to enhance, the implementation of the middle managers is very urgent.

Solutions of Middle Managers in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Improving Personnel Performance

For small and medium-sized enterprises to establish effective incentives and constraint mechanisms, one of the essential points is the performance appraisal, strong execution, excellent performance of managers through the incentive mechanism, with an open and, fair and reasonable rewards and penalties system to enhance the execution of managers, will be incentivized by the open and open penalty system to change the poor execution of the staff (Khan et al., 2021).

Optimistic Attitude

Optimistic attitude, good mentality, and strong psychological qualities are middle managers of small and medium-sized enterprises should be, to subconsciously transfer good psychological qualities to the staff to enhance the enterprise's competitiveness and have a strong heart to become a good manager (He et al., 2023).

Middle Managers Should Emphasize the Execution of Their Employees

SME middle managers in the distribution of tasks can be assigned according to each person's expertise to assign tasks, clear each employee's specific tasks, and effectively shorten the time to complete the task.

Leadership for Middle Managers

In small and medium-sized enterprises, middle managers should also have the ability to educate and guide (Hortovanyi et al., 2021), good at finding the ability to supervise and assess the ability of middle managers to be good at finding employees to do things, and the appropriate time to utilize the staff's ability to stimulate the staff's enthusiasm for work.

Creative Capacity

Innovation is a necessary standard to measure whether a person has the core competition and improves execution. A strong sense of innovation is essential to create wealth for the enterprise, which makes the staff listen to the managers' arrangements.

Conclusion

The research underscores the pivotal role of middle managers in SME success, revealing that their execution strength is vital for enterprise development and sustainability. By addressing performance metrics, training, and corporate culture deficiencies, SMEs can significantly enhance their management practices. The study identifies deficiencies in current management practices and proposes optimization programs to enhance the execution capabilities of middle managers. The study concludes that continuous professional development and robust evaluation systems for middle managers are crucial for fostering high-performance teams and achieving sustainable growth in a competitive business environment.

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