

ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS OF TRAINING SYSTEM OF SOCIAL-HUMAN SCIENCES IN VIETNAM

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Abstract:

Actually many universities of social-human sciences give the important role to the development by the model of combined training and scientific research activities. Some public universities define their clear objectives to become research universities and get the regional level. This report is to present studies, analysis and assessment of strong sides and shortages of the organizational model of training system of social-human sciences in Vietnam during the recent time. Then the recommendations will be proposed for renovation of this system in the future time.

1. Introduction

The training system of social sciences in Vietnam has the long year history of development. Its start would be marked by the establishment of the Hanoi Literature University on 10 October 1945 by Decree No. 45 by the President Ho Chi Minh. Then the University of Social-Human Sciences, Hanoi National University and the University of Social-Human Sciences, Hochiminh City National University were established in 1993 and 1996 respectively. These two universities are the most representative establishments in the fields of social-human sciences in Vietnam.

During the 60 years of development the training system of social-human sciences includes the training organizations of the State and the Communist Party of Vietnam, socio-political organizations, socio-vocational organizations and private organizations. The training activities cover all the sectors and disciplines including social sciences, human sciences, economic and business management, culture and arts, and pedagogical sciences.

Globally the training system of social-human sciences has the long rooted traditions, fast development and good implementation of missions of diffusion of knowledge and provision of high quality human resources for industrialization and modernization of the country.

2. Strong sides of the organizational model of training system of social-human sciences in Vietnam

2.1. The training system of social - human sciences has the fast development over the whole country and meets basically the needs of development of high qualification human resources of the country

According to the Higher Education Framework for the fields of social-human sciences issued by the Ministry of Education and Training the education of bachelor grade is conducted in almost all the sectors and specialties, namely:

- Higher education of the sector of social sciences: 10 specialties,
- Higher education of the sector of human sciences: 8 specialties,
- Higher education of the sector of cultures and arts: 10 specialties,
- Higher education of the sector of pedagogical sciences: 14 specialties,
- Higher education of the sector of economic-business management: 5 specialties,

Tens universities and much more colleges carry out the education and training activities in fields of social-human sciences. They are teaching establishments of various socio-economic ownership status: the State organizations, socio-political organizations, socio-economic organizations, socio-vocational organizations, economic organizations and private organizations. The development in term of quantity and training scale naturally leads to the increase of training power. More than that, the training system covering the whole country creates favorable conditions of learning for teachers and students. Therefore the actual training system of social-human sciences can meet the needs of development and provision of high quality human resources for the country.

2.2. The training system of social - human sciences mobilizes the participation of the economic sectors and develops in the direction of socialization of training activities

As mentioned above, actually the training system of social-human sciences has the participation and contribution of social organizations and economic sectors (the so-called socialization). There are some examples:

- The State owned universities: University of Social-Human Sciences, Hanoi National University and University of Social-Human Sciences, Hochiminh City National University, University of National Economy, Hanoi Pedagogical University, Hochiminh City University of Laws;

- Universities of the Party: Hochiminh City National Political-Administration Academy which has regional branches called sub-Academies, namely Political-Administration Academy Region I (Hanoi based), Political-Administration Academy Region II (Hochiminh City based), Political-Administration Academy Region III (Da Nang based), Political-Administration Academy Region IV (Can Tho based), Administration Academy, Academy of Journalism and Propaganda and Academy of Party Construction;
- Universities owned by socio-political organizations: University of Union of Labors, Academy of Women's Affairs;
- Universities owned by socio-vocational organizations: Hanoi University of Business Management and Technologies (Vietnamese Association of Economic Scientists);
- Universities owned by economic organizations: FPT University (FPT Company);
- Private universities. Sai Gon International University;
- Foreign invested university: RMIT.

The development of the country requires the strong development of scientific human resources in terms of quality and quantity which are qualified and competent for international integration. This explains the fact that the Government of Vietnam asks officially the Governments of some countries (US, EU, Russia) to give assistance for establishment of modern universities. This policy is shown proper and wise because it contributes to settle radically the problem of development of high qualification human resources to meet the global development of the country.

2.3. The training system of social - human sciences educates the high qualification human resources of all grades

There are three grades of high qualification human resources: bachelor, master and doctor. The training system of bachelor grade in social sciences has the history of more than 60 years. The training activities of doctor grade started by the end of 1976 and the one of master grade started later in middle of the years of 80s. So since 20 years ago Vietnam has the complete training system which covers all the grades of education. This fact is a very important mark stone meaning the high level and capacities of our higher education organizations and the end of the so-called "rice spiced by rice" (meaning bachelor grade teachers give lectures to graduate students). From economic

point of view the training of master and doctor grades in domestic establishments is less coated than the overseas ones do.

In addition, in Vietnam the education of foreign students at master and doctor grades in the field of social-human sciences overpasses some other fields. Politicians of some other countries get educated in fields of social sciences in Vietnam. The graduate and post-graduate education in Vietnamese establishments in fields of social sciences, medicine and agriculture gets well reputed and becomes the trusted destination for studies of Lao and Cambodian students.

2.4. The training system of social - human sciences develops in the orientation toward the autonomy of universities

It is possible to say this step is a move full of difficulties. The success, if any, remains only in the initial stage. The basic results will be said achieved only after the willing and management measures change. The autonomy is actually seen more clear in non-State owned universities and colleges.

From global view, the autonomous status is reflected in various aspects, namely: self-control in the set up of development strategies (then submitted for approval), self-control in the set up of teaching programs of specialties (then submitted for approval), self-decision of the structure of the university and college, self-control of conclusion of labor contracts, particularly concerning the invited lecturers, self-management of scientific research and implementation.

The autonomy and the self-management of universities and colleges is an adequate direction of development which would consume much time and efforts. It requires still more efforts to set it up in full. The autonomy and the self-management themselves are the way to innovate “the thinking way”, get out of the “being subsidized” and promote the creativity capacities of millions of people. It can be sure that the direction toward the autonomy and the self-management will succeed because they are conducted in the system where the State management is based on the system of legal regulations.

2.5. Universities in the training system of social - human sciences are in the first steps in the direction toward the model of research universities

The model of research universities in fields of social-human sciences, particularly in application for big universities, can be described globally to have: service of management of scientific activities, centers of scientific research affiliated to departments, incentive measures for teachers to conduct scientific researches, scientific research activities linked to training

programs, records of research achievements used for awarding scientific titles (professor, associate professors) and other titles.

We should be sincere, however, to note that we need to put down enormous efforts to make these objectives achieved. We should turn a clear look to the actual figure of scientific publications as results of scientific research activities. In 2006 Chulalongkorn University of Thailand with 2,830 lecturers produced 744 internationally published papers. At the same time 3,360 lecturers of Hanoi National University and Hochiminh City National University produced in total 36 papers [6]. Maybe we “do a lot but remain reticent” as sign of “modesty”. But this example reminds us to spend more efforts for the next activities of integration.

2.6. Universities in the training system of social-human sciences develop in the direction to enhance the links with research institutes

The nature of these links is to increase the resources for development. The links between universities and research institutes of social-human sciences can lead to fruitful successes, namely:

- Enhancing the efficiency of scientific human resources, particularly high qualification experts which are, in fact, not numerous actually;
- Providing the balance between the requirements of use from management authorities and the scientific motivations of researchers;
- Enhancing the communication and exchange;
- Updating teaching programs by results of scientific research activities;
- Enhancing the efficiency of use of infrastructure for teaching and research activities;
- Improving the life quality for teaching and researching staffs.

Therefore, the trends to link universities and research institutes have developed strongly during recent time and they are believed to get a more spectacular development in future.

2.7. Universities in the training system of social-human sciences develop in the direction to enhance the international cooperation and relations

Some universities in the training system of social-human sciences (the University of Social-Human Sciences, Hanoi National University and the University of Social-Human Sciences, Hochiminh City National University, University of National Economy, Sai Gon International University) had defined the orientation of development for some specialties to the

international level. This orientation is based on the internationalization of training programs, promotion of academic activities and extension of cooperation relations with high ranked universities, research institutes, international organizations and NGOs. There are some examples for illustration purpose.

- University of Social-Human Sciences, Hanoi National University has actually the cooperation relation with 80 universities, research institutes and international organizations. Some of them can be listed, namely University Paris 7, University of Toulouse (France), University of Quebec (Canada), Lomonosov University (Russia), Humboldt University (Germany), California University (USA), Hua Nam University (China), National Tokyo University (Japan), National Seoul University (South Korea), Asia-Africa Research Institute and etc;
- University of Social-Human Sciences, Hochiminh City National University has the cooperation relation with about 150 universities, research institutes and organizations. Some of them can be listed, namely Beijing University (China), National Singapore University (Singapore), California University (USA), Jadavpur University (India), Lomonosov University (Russia), University Paris 7, University of Toulouse (France), Toronto University (Canada), National Pushkin University, Australian Research Institute, Ford Foundation, VFF (USA) and etc;
- University of National Economy has exchanges and training-research activities with many reputed universities, research institutes and organizations from many countries, namely Russia, China, Bulgaria, England, France, USA, Australia, Sweden, Netherlands, Germany, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Thailand etc., and various organizations such as Ford Foundation, UNDP, WB, CIDA and JICA (Japan);
- Sai Gon International University has close cooperation relations with Suffolk University (Boston) and VFF (USA) in the set up of teaching programs which would be based on international standards and transferable.

All the universities in fields of social-human sciences turn particular attentions to the development of bilateral or multilateral cooperation relations. These relations would create the mutual understanding and benefits, enhance the reputation of the establishments and quality of teaching staffs and training activities.

3. Shortages of the organizational model of training system of social-human sciences in Vietnam

3.1. The management system of training activities does not keep pace with the development of the training system of social-human sciences

Naturally no one can get “satisfied” while talking about this topic. But the actual situation requires to mention it for purpose of further improvement. It was the time there were only tens public universities. But now we have about 200 universities and almost the same number of colleges. During these long years of development there is almost no considerable change in management aspects. Globally, the macro-management hands come down to every establishment and the common mechanism of “requesting-giving” remains to block “the autonomy rights”. It is worthy to remind that in developed countries the State macro-management is realized by the system of powerful legal regulations. In addition, the role of educational inspection is emphasized. Therefore all the universities do their best for their “trade mark” and reputation. Otherwise they would fail. By other words it is the matter of the market oriented management mechanism of educational establishments which concerns every one.

3.2. Low training quality leads to the migration of high qualified scientific human resources

Naturally the matter of migration of scientific human resources is very complicated because of many reasons. One of them relates to the training quality in Vietnam. Actually the financial conditions of many families permit the investment for their children to be educated overseas, particularly in developed countries despite the high costs of education. Naturally their arguments are that the high costs are justified by the teaching and learning quality. For this topic the arguments are very controversial. The “against” arguments say that the overseas education is too costly [6] giving the annual figure of USD1 billion (including the expenditures by the Government, organizations and private sources) for the overseas education of young students. This figure shows also the discontent of the population toward the system of local universities. The “for” arguments remind that we are following the development paths of Japan, South Korea and China which permit to get modern knowledge and help to cover the gap in English.

Actually it is very difficult to give an exact statistic number of Vietnamese students who return home after being graduated overseas. The most recent official figure shows “a very low rate as it is observed in other Asian countries which means the wasted expenditure of USD250 millions for overseas education very year”. The survey conducted by VietnamNet

Electronic News shows that the half of questioned students say they would stay overseas. 10% of them give the answer to look for job somewhere overseas. Only 29% of questioned students say they returned or would return home. With this number of students who returned or would return home we can expect their considerable contribution of the development of Vietnam [7].

In the fields of social-human sciences the specialties the specialties mostly preferred by Vietnamese students are economic-business management, financial-banking, laws, languages and arts. From the view of development the overseas education of young people is positively evaluated despite the high costs and low rate of returned students.

3.3. Organizational model of training system of social-human sciences does not link the education and recruitment

The loosen links between the education and recruitment are well reflected through the following aspects.

- Training programs are late to be upgraded. Many years of efforts would be required to get the objectives of “internationalization” of training programs. Nevertheless the common efforts of the last 5 years in this field are appreciated where the Ministry of Education and Training guided the preparation and issue of the Higher Education Framework for the fields of social-human sciences (5 sectors and 50 specialties). As practice there is surely a long distance between the guidelines issued by authorities and the actions implemented by universities and colleges.
- Teaching methods are late to be changed. The teaching method remains the same: lecturers follow the fixed courses and students note down the presentation. The team work and discussion are almost absent. Therefore the creativity and presenting skill of students remain inactivated.
- Linking relations are absent between training establishments and production-business enterprises. The mass media have many times to present the discontent of employers toward the recruited graduates of universities and colleges. The most impressive example is that, in general, only 10% of interviewed students get recruited.

Of course it is not education establishments who are charged of these shortages. If the above mentioned problems, however, get rectified the training activities and the recruitment would get “strictly linked” to give contribution to the modernization and industrialization of the country.

4. Recommendations for renovation of the training system of social-human sciences in Vietnam

4.1. Renovation by merging the two State owned universities to create an university of high regional rank

The University of Social-Human Sciences, Hanoi National University and the University of Social-Human Sciences, Hochiminh City National University are the two leading universities of Vietnam in fields of social-human sciences. Therefore the focus of resources to rise up the level of these two universities to the regional rank is extremely important.

First, they would set up a standard and prototype for the remaining universities.

Second, the existing potentials and long years of tradition would be the pre-conditions to make this target achieved.

Third, these two universities with their post-graduate education experiences would be the centers to train high qualification human resources for the remaining universities in fields of social-human sciences.

Fourth, the existing teaching programs of these universities are conveniently applicable for other universities.

Fifth, the existing high qualified staffs (professors, associate professors) are leading experts-lecturers in the fields and the training and scientific research activities of other universities can get benefits from their cooperation activities.

This approach can be called the method of construction of example prototype. This method is used regularly in other countries. The most difference is only the private owned status of those universities including the Harvard University of the USA as example.

4.2. Renovation by applying the autonomous status of universities

When we emphasize the renovation of management systems of the S&T authority agencies including the one for universities and colleges we would focus the special attention on their autonomous mode of management. The State plays a very important role in preparation and issue of legal regulations and guidelines for the nationwide unified implementation. We need also to turn the important attention to the activities of education inspection (which is not believed to be right position now). These measures include also the prevention of direct involvements of authority agencies into activities of universities and colleges.

With the above mentioned autonomous conditions the universities and colleges can promote their potentials and capacities. The autonomous status should cover all the scopes of activities of universities and colleges which would be governed only by management regulations and rules. The following examples would make this autonomy concept clear.

Example 1. It is a popular situation that lecturers are not motivated for scientific research. Many of them spend too much time to give extra-lessons to get more incomes (actually the State regulated annual norm is 260-300 lessons but there are lecturers who give 800 lessons, even 1000 lessons, per year). With the autonomous status introduced into implementation the universities and colleges may “rectify” this situation by various measures, namely compulsory scientific research tasks coupled with earned benefits, fixed quota of extra lessons, active implementation of invited lecturers coupled with strict regulations of additional lectures in other establishments.

Example 2. The universities and colleges would be autonomous in awarding the positions of professors and associate professors. It is the regular practice in all the universities over the world. The award of these titles would enhance the reputation of establishments. At the same time the universities and colleges have to pay these positions and this charge would require from them a very serious attention when they set up the specific and global regulations of their establishments.

In certain view it is possible to say a similarity between the transfer of universities and colleges to the autonomous status and the transfer of lands to farmers in the “Doi moi” period. The transfer of the autonomous status to universities and colleges is a process which is, being in conformity to international practice, the effective solutions to mobilize their collective capacities for development. It would be wrong to think that the transfer of the autonomous status to universities and colleges will reduce the effectiveness and power of the State management in the educational field. In fact, the leading and managing boards of universities and colleges are composed of high qualified and experienced staffs. They understand the educational environment, lecturers and students, and therefore they surely know to lead the fast and sustainable development under the Party guidelines and the State legal regulations.

4.3. Renovation by applying the model “research institutes in universities” to turn universities to the research universities

The model of “research institutes in universities” is an important strategic orientation of renovation. This model would be realized when it is implemented with the strong willing of management authorities (of all the

levels), of leading boards and teaching staffs of universities. It is possible to say this orientation will govern the organizational structure, operational modes and almost all the scopes of activities of universities.

From the theoretical point of view this model may be considered new and may not be extended yet in Vietnam. But this concept is quite natural in mind of university lecturers-scientists in developed countries. The following case would be a good example.

The author of this paper had put a question: “How the university lecturer thinks of scientific research and what he/she would get from this?” to a lecturer with doctor grade of the second reputed university of Singapore during the 1995 Singapore visit. The answer can be summarized as follows: “The scientific research does not give any cent additionally to my earning. I am lecturer with doctor grade. My monthly wage is SGD6,500. My duties are to give lectures and conduct scientific researches. After certain years if I do well my teaching jobs (assessment being based on the number of students to attend my lectures) and scientific research activities I may get the associate professor position with the monthly wage of SGD8,500. Some years after if I do excellently my teaching jobs and scientific research activities, from the common view of colleagues, I would get the opportunity to be appointed to professor position. My wage then will be SGD12,000”.

This example gives us many suggestions for the important role and the strategic objectives to build up our universities in the model of “research universities”. It is also the scientifically based orientation to make our educational system internationally integrated.

4.4. Renovation by applying the model of socialization

The simple interpretation of this concept is to mobilize maximally all the social resources for the development of high qualification human resources in the field of social-human sciences. It requires the involvement of all the organizations and individuals of all the economic sectors, namely the State, political organizations, socio-political organizations, socio-vocational organizations, economic organizations, private sector, overseas Vietnamese and foreign partners. Investments can be made not only for a single university or college but also for a single department or even a single specialty.

The socialization of the training system in its most active interpretation can lead to the new concept for development of universities and colleges. Without differences in the status positions (teaching or managing staffs, permanent staff or non-staff, local, overseas or foreigner) every one can buy

the shares. This move could not only raise the investment capital for the development but also makes the laborers have the ownership position. They would attach their interests more closely to the development of the establishments.

In our practice there are some private universities and colleges which have followed this way of development and they actually go ahead of reforms of management concept.

4.5. Renovation by applying the model of self-arrangement

The concept of self-arrangement can be interpreted as follows: the extravagant and unreasonable development of universities and colleges leads to the unreasonable concentration of resources and inadequate distribution (geographical and demographical points of view). For solution of this problem the management agencies would not apply administrative measures for re-arrangement. The best solution would come from the measure of “self-arrangement”. The management agencies are here only to issue the framework of rules and the universities and colleges would do the re-arrangement themselves. The concept of the self-arrangement can be illustrated from the Malaysian example during the years of 80s and 90s of the last century. In fact, Malaysia with the population of 20 million people had too many universities. The Government proposed to re-arrange them. The universities agreed but no one of them accepted to be “re-arranged” or merged. Finally the Government requested that those universities having the enrolment of less than 2,000 students have to sit down for re-arrangement (facilities, ownership, management board, leading board, learning specialties, human resources, financial aspects and etc.). Their final agreements of re-arrangement were submitted to the authority agencies for record and approval. The procedure of self-arrangement turned out to be satisfying, reasonable and effective which lead to the stable training system of Malaysia as we see actually. Now they can focus their efforts for the further development.

4.6. Renovation by applying the model of “smokeless industry”

The universities of social-human sciences of Vietnam have a long years of development. We have also high qualified scientists in the fields of social-human sciences. Many of them are at national and international level. Therefore it is possible to recommend the renovation of development in the model of “*smokeless industry*”. More simply speaking it is the development of some high quality universities to attract the overseas students. In practice we have foreign students educated in Vietnam but we could not give it the

title of industry because they are not numerous and mainly come to learn the Vietnamese language and Vietnamese studies. The next development requires the renovation of programs, teaching staffs to give lectures in Vietnamese, English and French in different disciplines (Vietnamese studies, Eastern studies, literature, archeology, economy, languages and etc.). Many countries, even small ones, have succeeded. Why we do not put down efforts for the development of the country?

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