

Human resources training at tertiary level through constant education mode in Can Tho University

Pham Phuong Tam

Can Tho University
Email: pptam@ctu.edu.vn
Campus II, 312 street, Ninh Kieu
Can Tho city, Vietnam

ABSTRACT: *Besides the formal education mode, constant education mode plays an important role and function in meeting with needs of human resources to help decrease the gap of level of production and social life in Viet Nam compared with developing countries in the region and in the world, integrate Vietnamese education into regional and global education, which is developing continuously.*

To make sure of the above missions, aside from diversifying modes of training, constant education mode requires evaluating and understanding the roles, functions together with opportunities and challenges of this mode correctly to support and influence it positively.

In the process of human resource training in the Mekong Delta during this time, it is undeniable to mention the role of Can Tho University, which makes a great effort to maintain and develop the effectiveness of constant education mode.

KEYWORDS: Constant education, informal education, part-time learning, distance training, training needs.

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1. Constant education in the role of human resource training

In Viet Nam, constant education mode is understood as informal education modes. It is considered as an open, very various, and flexible educational system to learners. This educational system helps everybody in every situation, physical strength, level, and competence... has conditions and opportunities to approach and learn whenever and wherever they need.

In Vietnamese educational system, Higher education Law 08/2012/QH13 stated clearly that in addition to formal education, constant education mode including part-time learning, distance training... is the education mode which learners follow classes and courses at university institutions and trans-institutional programs suitable with learners' needs to carry out training programs at college and university level with the general aim of training human resources, increasing the intellectual level of the people, and cultivating talented people. Therefore, constant education is considered as an open direction to facilitate learners' needs in lifelong learning and helps them develop their personality, improve the quality of life, and adapt to social life.

Different from developing countries where the educational systems classify learners by organizing procedures and learners' time: full-time or part-time, after finishing the programs, learners receive the same kind of certificate. This is a progressive direction because it creates equality in the society, which Vietnamese people need to consult and be adapted in the near future,

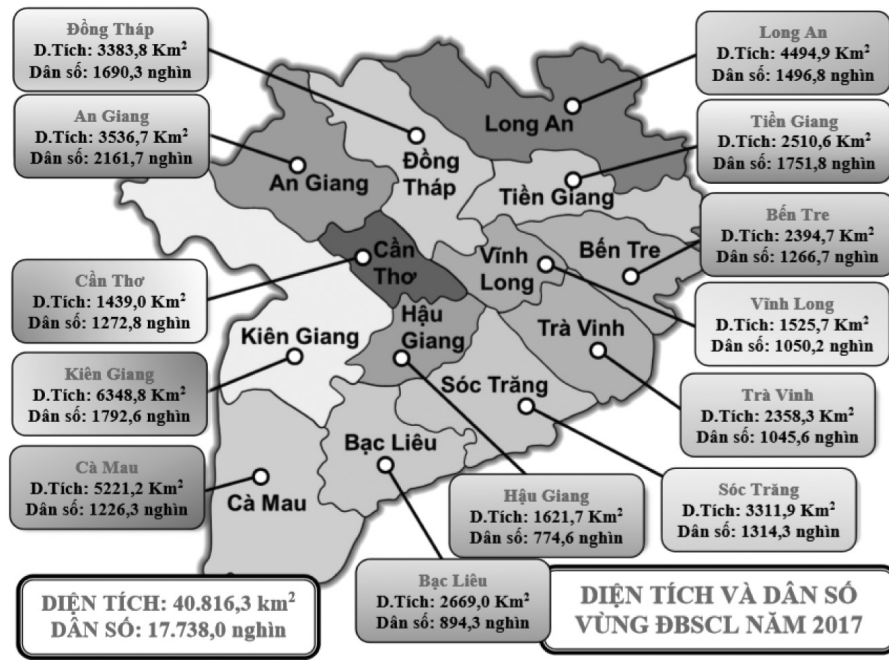
especially in the period of basic renovation, all-sized education; and when Education laws are adjusted and supplemented to be accord with the general trend.

Proved by the educational reality, in Viet Nam, in the beginning period of the country establishment, especially after some initial years of unity in Spring 1975, when the country had troubles, even up to the present, and limitations: invested budgets for education, school building and development, lecturer development, infrastructural conditions, communications among regions, borders, and islands. Compared with the ability to increase the size of formal education in a short time, constant education including part-time learning (also called in-service education), distance training, or guided self-learning has proved its effectiveness and plays a crucial role in training missions and human resource cultivation. The results showed that a quite large number of well-educated staff members competent in science and technology at tertiary level serve practically for the regional and national building and development.

2. Needs of human resource training at tertiary level in the Mekong Delta through the constant education mode

2.1. The Mekong Delta

Located in the south of the nation, consolidated by the silt of the Mekong River, the natural area of the Mekong Delta is about 40,816,3 km² captured 12.2% of the national territory. The terrain of the Mekong Delta is of the lower section of the Mekong River which has over



Picture 1: Map of geographic location, area, and population of the Mekong Delta in 2017

750 km of coast, and a dense network of rivers and lakes. Annually, the Mekong Delta produce more than 50% of rice, provide 70% output of fruits, 52% of maritime products, especially 80% of exported shrimps, and contribute 60% of the national turnover. Moreover, this area also contains mineral resources such as petroleum, limestone, grit, and peat...

Referring to natural geographical features, the Mekong Delta consists of 13 administration units.

Concerning the economy, the Mekong Delta plays an important role in the economic-social development, collaboration, and international exchange relations. It has potentials and advantages of agriculture, oceanic economy, energy industry, clusters of industry – agriculture – commerce association: producing rice, shrimps, fish, fruit trees, and takes part in the global value chain.

Regarding the society, the population of the Mekong Delta in 2017 is 17.738,0 thousand people that the majority is young and in the period of “gold population”. The Kinh is the major group with 92,3%; the population of the Khmer is more than one million people capturing 6,4%; the Chinese is about 192.435 people who live mainly in advantageous areas for economic activities; the Chăm is about 12.500 people.

The Mekong Delta has these geographical features and potentials to develop, but its education and training is still in a “bottom land”. Especially, education and training at tertiary level cannot meet with the requirements, which is one of the reasons limiting the quality of human

resources. Therefore, this region has not handled well the relationship between the number and the quality of human resources. From the above actual situation, it requires local authorities in the Mekong Delta to have effective solutions, but the most important mission is to build a well-qualified workforce for serving industrialization-modernization and international integration.

2.2. Needs of well-qualified human resource training in the Mekong Delta

According to the report of the workforce and employment survey in 2016 of General Statistics Office of Vietnam: the average of the workforce of the country in 2016 was 54,4 million people, but the number of trained people was 20,9% (about 11,3 million people) in total. Especially, the trained technology major workforce at tertiary level just captured 12,0% (particularly 9,2% at university level and 2,8% at college level).

Table 1: Proportion of trained workforce in regions in 2016

Region	Total
The whole country	20,9
The Red River Delta	28,9
The Central Highlands	13,6
The Mekong Delta	12,2

(Source: The report of the workforce and employment survey in 2016)

Table 2: Rate of trained workers in the country in 2016

No.	Region	Total	Vocational training	Intermediate Level	College Level	University Level and above
	The whole country	20,9	5,0	3,9	2,8	9,2
1	The Northern midlands and mountainous	17,9	4,0	4,9	2,8	6,1
2	The Red river Delta	28,9	7,6	4,5	3,6	13,2
3	The North Central region and Central coast	20,6	4,7	4,4	3,2	8,3
4	Central highlands	13,6	2,5	3,5	1,9	5,7
5	The South-eastern region	26,4	6,2	3,5	3,0	13,6
6	The Mekong Delta	12,2	2,6	2,6	1,5	5,5
7	Ha Noi	43,1	8,8	6,0	4,2	24,2
8	Ho Chi Minh city	34,9	6,7	3,8	3,8	20,6

(Source: The report of the workforce and employment survey in 2016)

According to this report, compared with other regions, the total amount of trained workforce of the Mekong Delta is still very low (12,2%), which is lower than of the Central Highlands (13,6%). The reality shows that some new jobs arose and kept arising requirements of qualified, knowledgeable, and easily adaptable to developments in science and technology workforce, which still does not satisfy the labour market and the needs of the society.

With respect to the structure of human resources of the Mekong Delta: In the structure of human resources relating to the educational level, the Mekong Delta was the region which has the lowest rate of technical trained workers in the country; the highest rate of trained workers was in Ha Noi (43,1%) and the lowest one was in the Mekong Delta (12,2%) as presented in Table 2.

Relating to the rate of regionally technical trained workers in 2016, Table 2 presented that although the Mekong Delta owned a plentiful workforce, the rate of technical untrained workers was pretty high with 87,8%. Besides an unbalanced situation between urban and rural areas, an unbalanced situation among education levels with only 5,5% of university level and above is alarming, which showed the workforce of the Mekong Delta in general was very low in education levels, knowledge, and technical skills. For this reason, it is really difficult to participate in the labour market in the period of the market economy and the deep and broad integration. Therefore, the education and training of the Mekong Delta is in the bottom land which needs to find out solutions in order to increase technically education levels, especially at university level and above so that this high quality workforce serves for the development

of the region.

The Mekong Delta region with many potentials to “take off”, is also the place facing with enormous damages from the climate change and needs some positive and drastic changes to adapt, survive, and develop.

3. Ability to meet the needs of human resource training through constant education mode of Can Tho University

According to the report of Southwest Steering Committee- the regional focal administration point, by 2015, the region had 17 public and non-public universities and 26 public and non-public colleges, so in five years from 2011 to 2015, the region established 4 more universities and 2 colleges. Only 2 provinces not having any universities or campuses of university are Ben Tre and Soc Trang. Almost every university has the training programs or trans-institutional programs at both university and college levels with full-time mode and constant education mode, including part-time and distance training. According to the statistics of General Statistics Office of Vietnam, the total amount of university and college students in Vietnam in 2014 was 2.363.942 students and the one of the Mekong Delta was 192.213 students.

Together with the establishment of new universities in the region, the number of training targets from Ministry of Education and Training increased, but it did not satisfy the learning needs of nearly 180.000 students in the region who were at the age of attending colleges and universities. Every year, just nearly 40.000 candidates have opportunities to be chosen in the education and training programs of the colleges and

universities. Not to mention some prestigious schools satisfying the needs of the regional development, some schools do not pay much attention to material facilities as well as quality assurances. Moreover, in fact, the total amount of the students in the system can be seen as achieving the rate of 190 students/ ten thousand of the citizens according to the approval for Decision No.1033/QĐ-TTg dated June 30th, 2011 of the Prime Minister on education, training, and vocational training development for the Mekong Delta, period 2011-2015. As a whole, however, there is a huge unbalanced situation in the structure of education levels and training careers with approximately 30% of the total amount of students majoring in economic careers, whereas regionally advantageous careers as marine products, agriculture, and processing which are less cared by the society, the colleges, and the universities.

Can Tho University, in the role of the major, long-standing, and biggest university of the region in the past time, along with the full-time training mode, made an effort to organize and maintain the constant education mode with the total targets of part-time and distance training attaining about 10 – 12 thousand targets every year.

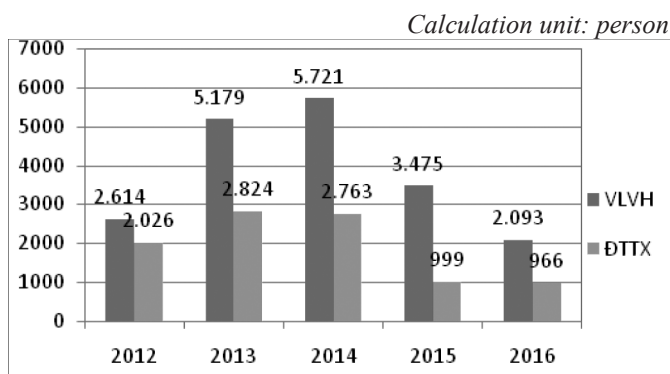


Figure 2: Graph of admission results of constant education modes of Can Tho University from 2012 to 2015 (Source: Cooperative Training Center-Can Tho University in 2017)

Considering the implementation of in-service training (now part-time learning) for nearly 40 years from 1980s until now, the university has trained and released more than 60,000 bachelors and engineers by means of constant education mode, which contributes greatly to the training activities and well-qualified workforce supplying for the region. In training and managing activities, the university usually attaches special importance to the building of training programs and organizations which assures the quality of training

and is worthy of local authorities’ and organizations’ trust internally and externally with “products- graduate students” trained by the university.

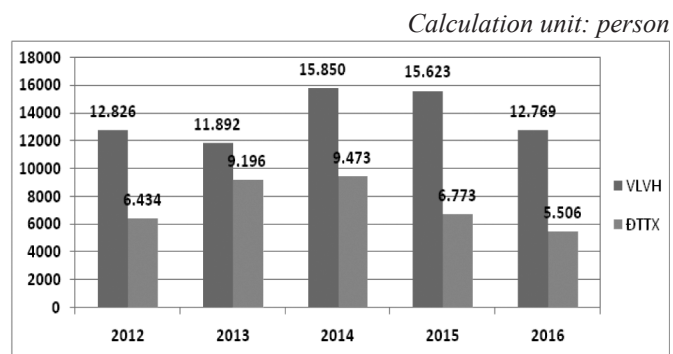


Figure 3: Graph of the size of Can Tho University students from 2012 – 2016 (Source: Cooperative Training Center-Can Tho University in 2017)

Consequently, taking constant education modes of Can Tho University in particular and all of the national levels in general into consideration, although they have achieved a fairly great rate, they still get some difficulties, limitations, and increasing trends in the enrollment size and training size which need to have some policies to develop and complete the procedure, and carry out the right role.

4. Some solutions to develop the constant education modes of Can Tho University

In the future, in order for constant education modes of Can Tho University to develop and perfect day by day, and carry out the right role and function of training a well-qualified workforce at tertiary level, the university needs to implement some measures:

4.1. Researching and implementing policies of the Government on the constant education and lifelong learning in the specific condition of the region and in the activities of the university

4.2. Establishing a management unit which has functions and forecasting abilities to evaluate the supply and demand of the labour market so that it can guarantee the development of suitable constant education modes, adapt and adjust to the needs of the market and the society

4.3. Enhancing awareness of stakeholders: the university management units, employers, trans-institutional training places, and learners on this training mode. Constant education modes is considered suitable in the current period and in the future.

4.4. Organizing the enrollment and training in the same training program to grant a common diploma pattern for all of the training modes

4.5. Building flexible, effective, suitable training programs to the target learners with practice-oriented training models and diversified learning styles, and providing education and training opportunities to satisfy the constant learning needs

4.6. Developing the policies supporting learners in the constant education, and assuring them of learning conditions, and receiving policies on tuition fees, scholarships, probations, internships, and work opportunities after graduating from the university.

4.7. Renovating approaching and teaching methods of the lecturers, organizing professional development training programs for staff members on approaching and teaching methods, compiling materials and textbooks constructing learning, testing, and assessing the constant education modes

4.8. Renovating the testing and assessment so that the enrollment, the training, and the outcomes of the constant education modes assure learners of knowledge and ability to join the labour market.

4.9. Organizing independent testing to evaluate the programs and training facilities of the constant education modes so that the university can usually manifest and public information to the learners and the community in choosing training programs- continuously assuring and increasing the training quality

4.10. Researching and promoting the international cooperation in the constant education missions, activities, and training with domestic and foreign partners to exchange programs, methods, and training and managing experience to recognize each other and co-ordinate training

5. Conclusion

The constant education has an important role and mission in training a workforce to serve for the development of the country. It needs attention, research, and support from many stakeholders in order for the constant education modes to be consistent and develop.

This is a training mode suitable and effective in the condition and situation of the Mekong Delta- where is considered as “a bottom land” of education and training, has many troubles and limitations of transport infrastructure among local areas in the region. The local organizations and enterprises in the region need to take advantage of the flexible and positive training modes to strengthen and complete the quality of human resources at the companies and local areas. With the current trend of development, the constant education is going to have the role, contribute greatly, facilitate for everyone to engage in lifelong learning and carry out social equality in accessing to education.

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A comparative research on the international classification of education (ISCED) 1997-2011 and the new structure of Vietnam education system

Tran Khanh Duc¹, Duong Thi Thuy Mai²

¹ Email : kdudc1954@yahoo.com

² Email; mai.duongthithuy@hust.edu.vn

Hanoi University of Science and Technology
01 Dai Co Viet, Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi, Vietnam

ABSTRACT: *This article reflects a comparative analysis and assessment on structure of the education system of the countries, comparing structure of Vietnam national education system and ISCED 1997-2011(UNESCO), giving some basic orientation on Vietnam national education system appropriate to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) and the Vietnamese National Qualifications Framework (VQF).*

KEYWORDS: Pre-school; primary education; secondary education; university; college.

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1. Introduction

Restructuring the national education system plays an important part in the comprehensive renovation process of the education system in Vietnam. Our research on the international standard classification of education (ISCED 97 and 2011) and the application of international experience in restructuring process of the national education system is, therefore, very necessary, contributing to the development of our national education system during the industrialization, modernization and international integration process.

2. A comparative analysis and assessment of the education system of different countries.

2.1. General features

Depending on the national development with their socio-economic, traditional and cultural features, different countries may have different educational structure systems. However, there are four main educational stages in all systems as follows:

- Kindergarten/pre-school
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher education

In some countries such as Malaysia and Singapore, the post – secondary education does exist, in which the students may acquire pre-university education with a two-year junior college or three-year centralised institute course, or enrol in a vocational institution such as a polytechnic or the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), or specialised arts institutions [1].

These are four basic education stages classified basing on ages and characteristics of educational targets and educational contents at different stages. If pre-school is

for the children under 6 years old, which requires special care, nourishment and education of the family and society, the primary education is for the children who need the initial qualification from school, family and society to initiate, open their minds for integration into social life. This is the first popularization on education in all countries, usually called the compulsory education. The secondary education is for juvenile ages between 12 and 18, which includes junior and senior secondary education stages. The primary and junior-secondary education stages together create Basic Education, which often lasts for 9 years and is compulsory for children in many countries.

The Basic Education is a foundation for the learners to decide whether to go further with senior secondary education and secondary technical-vocational education or join the labour market. With these features, the secondary education includes different types of schools and different modes of training. However, in some countries such as England, Singapore, Russia, Korea, etc, the basic general education final grade is 11. Grade 12 is a pre-university education, with which the student can get a certificate for university entrance consideration (England, Singapore) or mainly learns optional subjects (60%) to prepare for post-secondary classification such as in Korea. University education is the highest level in the educational system, which graduates students with diploma, bachelor, master, PhD and post-PhD. This education stage provides 18 to 24-year-old learners with high qualifications in different social, scientific and technological fields.

Most of the education systems are classified with three key criteria: age, number of school years and training characteristics (target, content, types of degrees, etc). The

total number of school years from primary education to university and post-university (master, PhD) are within 20-22 years with the ages from 6 to 28.

2.2. Distinct features

Although the education stages have been basically unified in the education system in different countries under 4 key stages: pre-school, primary education, secondary education and university education, the classification of the education stages in accordance with ages, number of school years and title is different. In most of the countries, students start their primary education at 6 years old and study for six school years (grade 1 - grade 6), however, in some countries such as India, the Primary education includes only 5 years. Especially, the Indian education system contains an upper-primary education with grade 6 and 8, which combines with the primary education to form Elementary Education [2]. In the countries as China and Korea, the occupational education is provided soon after the Primary education [3] [4]. In New Zealand, the students start their primary education at the age of five, and the Primary school covers Years 1 to 8 if it is a 'full' primary school, or Years 1 to 6 if it is a 'contributing' primary school [6]. In Singapore, the Primary education is divided into two phases: 4 years of foundation and 2 years of orientation to meet the distribution demand soon after the Primary education [5]. The Primary education in New Zealand is divided into two phases: Junior 1 and 2, then Standard 1 – 4. In terms of the title, besides the popular term in English as Primary, some countries use another term as Elementary (as in the Philippines, Korea, America, India) with meaning as the compulsorily elementary education.

The Secondary Education presents diversification of the education and training system of the countries. In addition to Lower secondary education and Upper secondary education, the Secondary education includes Middle School and High School (such as in Korea) [7]. After the Lower Secondary School or Middle school, there are different types of education toward technical – occupational orientation besides the Secondary education such as vocational training schools, technical – occupational secondary schools, training centres and so on.

In many countries, the subsystem of post-secondary education does not belong to university education, typically Singapore, Malaysian education systems include many kinds of Post – Secondary Education such as colleges, technical and general technical schools.

The formation of post-secondary education [8] subsystem reflects high popularization and training demand of technicians with college qualification of Singapore – a country with economic, social, scientific,

hi-tech development in ASEAN.

A typical form of transferring between the Secondary education (Junior High School) and the University education in Japan is College of Technology [9] with five-year training and the ages of 15-20. These colleges recruit students from Junior High School or Senior High School and graduate them as technological technician after two to five-year training. It ensures connection and distribution of students towards technology orientation to create technological human resources for industries.

In most countries, the university education includes colleges, universities and post-universities. The intensive training has been developed for Post-Doctor research. However, in some countries, there is a difference between Research University and Professional University/College. The Research Universities focus on academic orientation, combining the scientific research and hi-quality training, typically in the American education system, there is a segregation and diversification of forms of university education. The duration of university education has been shortened to 3 or 3.5 years for bachelor's degrees and 1-1.5 years for master's degrees.

In addition to the regular full-time education system with different educational stages from primary to university, there are subsystems such as the China's adult education [10], which is called the special education subsystem.

Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system of Australia provides many modes of training, which usually graduates learners with certificates I – IV and diploma. Actually, TAFE courses are structured in such a way that no matter what the learner's previous education level he/she can work the way up to advanced qualifications and even university degrees [11]. The regular education systems such as those in Taiwan and England include from primary education to open universities. Some Catholic and multi-racial countries such as Malaysia, and Indonesia, their education system is divided into general subsystems and the subsystems for ethnic groups and religions at the Primary Level.

3. A structural comparison of Vietnam education system and the ISCED of UNESCO 1997 and 2011

With a difference in history, culture, economics, political - social institution of each country, the education system in the world is diverse. The ISCED 1997 has been developed by UNESCO in 2011 (ISCED 2011) with some changes on structure of education levels and criteria on time, distribution and connection development orientation among levels. The following table shows the comparison between ISCED 97 and ISCED 2011 with structure of Vietnam national education system: [12] and [13].

Table 1: A structural comparison of Vietnam national education system and ISCED 1997 - 2011 (by UNESCO)

Level	ISCED 1997 (UNESCO)	Level	ISCED 2011 (UNESCO)	Vietnam National Education System
Level 0	Pre-school	0.1 0.2	Kindergarten Nursery	Nursery
Level I	Primary education (4 - 6 years)	Level 1	Primary education (4 - 7 years, normally 6 years)	Primary education (5 years)
Level II	Lower high education (second phase of the secondary education)	Level 2	Lower high education (2-5 years, normally 3 years)	Lower General Secondary education (4 years)
Level III	Upper high education	Level 3	Upper high education (2-5 years, normally 3 years)	Upper Secondary General education (3 years) - Professional Middle School (2-3 years)
Level IV	Non - University, Non tertiary education	Level 4	Non University, Non tertiary education Not less than 6 months	Professional Training Centre (0,5-1 years)
		Level 5	Short- term university (2-3 years)	Professional College (1,5-2 years) Pedagogical College (2-3 years)
Level V	First stage of tertiary education - Bachelor	Level 6	University (bachelor) (3-4 years)	University (bachelor) (3,5 - 4 years)
Level VI	Second stage of tertiary education - Master	Level 7	Master (1-3 years)	Master (1-2 years)
		Level 8	Doctor (3 years or more)	Doctor (3 years)

4. A structural comparison of the new educational system in Viet Nam and Vietnamese National Qualifications Framework.

The Vietnamese National Qualifications Framework includes 8 levels: Primary certificates I-II-III; Middle

school diploma: IV; College diploma: V; Higher Education degree: VI; Master’s degree: VII; and Doctorate: VIII [14].

Level 1 requires the minimum academic load of 5 credits. Students who successfully complete the training

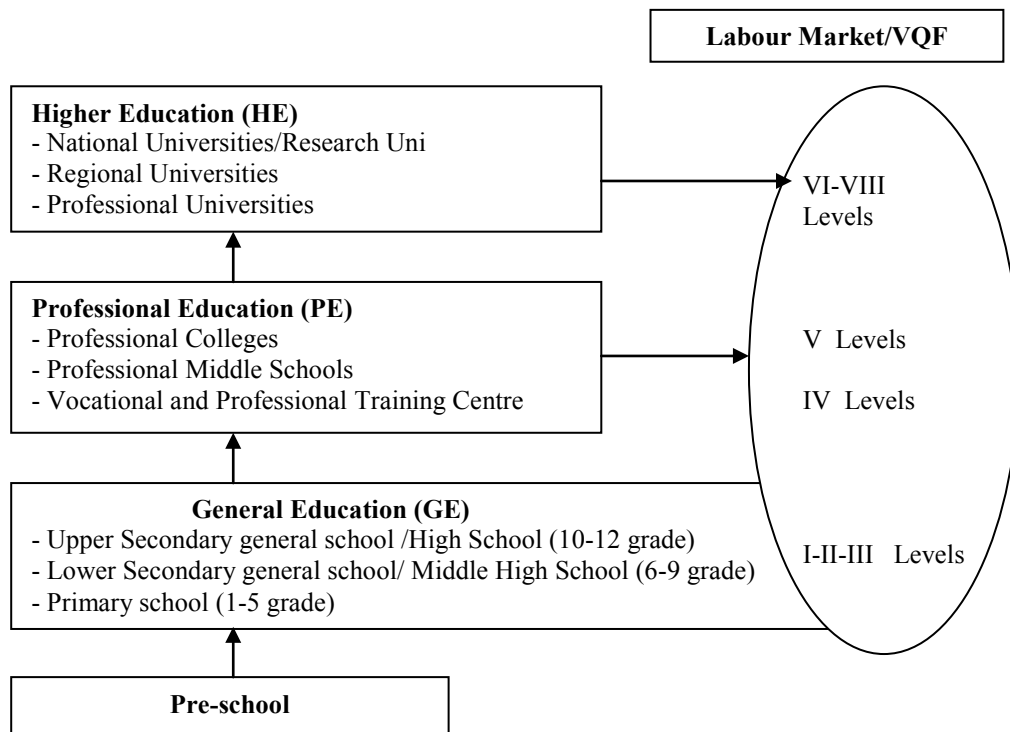


Figure 1: A comparison of the structure of the new educational system in Viet Nam and Vietnamese National Qualifications Framework (VQF). [15]

program and meet the requirements of Level 1 will be granted Primary certificate I.

Level 2 requires the minimum academic load of 15 credits. Students who successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 1 will be granted Primary certificate II.

Level 3 requires the minimum academic load of 25 credits. Students who successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 3 will be granted Primary certificate III.

Level 4 requires a minimum of 35 credits for an upper secondary general school diploma, 50 credits for a lower secondary general school diploma. Students who successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 4 will be granted Middle school diploma.

Level 5 requires the minimum academic load of 60 credits. Students who successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 5 will be granted College diploma.

Level 6 requires the minimum academic load of 120 credits. Students who successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 6 will be granted Bachelor's degree (University degree, Higher education degree).

Level 7 requires the minimum academic load of 60 credits for people with a bachelor's degree. Students who

successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 7 will be granted Master's degree.

Graduates from a university with a minimum of 150 credits, meeting the requirements of Level 7, will be recognized as acquiring the qualification equivalent to Level 7.

Level 8 requires a minimum of 90 additional credits for a holder of master's degree, and 120 credits for a holder of bachelor's degree. Students/ Researchers who successfully complete the training program and meet the requirements of Level 8 will be granted a doctorate.

The graduates from a university with Level 7 equivalent qualification, having completed a specialized training program with a minimum of 90 credits and meeting the requirements of Level 8 are recognized as acquiring the qualification equivalent to Level 8.

5. Conclusion

It is very important to do research on the structure of Vietnam education system. This paper has made a comparison and analysis between the current Vietnam education system and the ISCED 1997-2011 with an aim to propose a more suitable structure to the new Vietnam education system, which should be adaptable to the ISCED 2011 and the Vietnamese National Qualification Framework.

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