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## ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF HIGH-QUALITY HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING: A STUDY IN THE MARKETING SECTOR IN VIETNAM

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**Abstract:** In recent years, with a high economic growth rate, Vietnam has surpassed the threshold of poor and underdeveloped countries, achieving a remarkable accomplishment. The significant role of human resources cannot be denied in contributing to this success. Numerous studies have indicated that the "quality of human resources" is a decisive factor in the success or failure of businesses and the overall economy. The strong development of international economic integration has posed new demands on high-tech human resources in general, and particularly in the field of Marketing. However, the current workforce in the Marketing sector is both deficient in quantity and lacking in quality.

**Keywords:** training, human resources, high quality, marketing, international economy

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### 1. Introduction

High-quality human resources in vocational education are those that must meet the demands of the labor market (requirements of both domestic and foreign enterprises). These requirements include possessing specialized knowledge, skills, techniques, job-seeking and self-employment capabilities, working safely, and collaborating effectively. Therefore, high-quality human resources in vocational education must be individuals who develop both intellectual and physical capabilities, labor abilities, ethics, and positive emotions. As the economy transitions towards a knowledge-based economy and in the context of globalization and international economic integration, human resources, especially high-quality human resources, play an increasingly crucial role. Recent growth theories suggest that for an economy to grow rapidly and sustainably, it must be built on at least three fundamental pillars: the application of new technologies, the development of modern infrastructure, and the enhancement of the quality of human resources. High-quality human resources constitute a critical component of a nation's workforce, playing an important role in nation-building and development. In the current context of industrialization, modernization, and international integration, the development of human resources, especially high-quality ones, becomes even more significant and essential. Consequently, continuous and long-term research to supplement and improve human resource development policies, including policies related to high-quality human resources, is an objective necessity. This is also one of the tasks set by the 13th National Party Congress, aiming to contribute to the successful achievement of the goal of rapid and sustainable national development.

## 2. Current Situation of High-Quality Human Resources in Vietnam

At present, the participation rate in the labor force is around 68.7% (Q1/2021), which is an advantage in terms of the quantity of human resources in Vietnam (General Statistics Office, 2021). The quality of human resources has improved significantly in recent years [1]. The proportion of trained labor in 2015 was 51.6%, increasing to about 64.5% in 2020. Among them, the proportion of labor with degrees and certificates was 20.29% in 2015, rising to about 24.5% in 2020. Vietnam's Human Development Index (HDI) ranks 110th out of 189 countries and is second in Southeast Asia, only after Singapore. The unemployment rate in the working-age group in urban areas remains below 4% (Central Committee for Propaganda and Education, 2021). Vietnamese workers are considered diligent, hardworking, intelligent, and their labor productivity has continually improved, with an average annual increase of 3.9% (2006-2015) (Ngan Tran, 2020).

Currently, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for the majority (96.7%) of the total number of businesses in the country (Chu Thanh Hai, 2020). These enterprises are prevalent and employ the most human resources in the economy (Pham Xuan Truong, 2019). However, the demand for high-quality human resources for these SMEs remains limited [2]. Nevertheless, Vietnam also has large private enterprises such as Vingroup, Thaco, Hoang Anh Gia Lai, as well as foreign-invested enterprises like Samsung Vietnam, Toyota Vietnam, Intel, which have significant demand for high-quality human resources, and in many cases, these organizations conduct their own workforce training.

Strong international cooperation has opened up opportunities for Vietnam to improve the quality of its human resources according to progressive global standards. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), effective from January 14, 2019, and the European-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), effective from August 1, 2020, with labor standards ensuring the rights and interests of workers, including the right to receive advanced training at the workplace, enable workers to proactively contribute to the process of human resource development.

Despite the positive aspects, the current situation of human resources in Vietnam still faces limitations in terms of training, attracting, and utilizing human resources. Specifically: First, Vietnam still lacks high-quality human resources due to inadequate training. Although Vietnam has established a network of higher education institutions with 237 universities and academies, including 172 public institutions and 65 private institutions (non-public, private, and foreign-funded) (excluding institutions under the Defense and Security sector) (Ministry of Education and Training, 2019), the programs, quality, and teaching methods are not consistent. Many institutions still do not align their training content with practical requirements at enterprises. Additionally, the proportion of individuals in the university-age group (18-29 years old) attending universities in Vietnam is among the lowest in the world. The university enrollment rate in Vietnam is about 28.3%, whereas in Thailand, it is 43%, and in Malaysia, it is 48%. Furthermore, only about 23% of male students and 9% of female students choose majors in mathematics, science, technology, and engineering, while the majority of students opt for

economic majors, leading to a shortage of labor in technical sectors (Tran Huynh, 2019, Nga Tran, 2018).

Second, attracting and utilizing human resources faces difficulties due to the ongoing brain drain phenomenon in Vietnam. The relatively low standard of living and inadequate salary and incentive systems in the domestic working environment have led many skilled and trained workers to seek employment in more developed countries. In some cases, students studying abroad do not return to work in Vietnam [3].

### **3. Impact of Marketing Environment on Vietnamese Business Activities During the COVID-19 Period**

#### **3.1. Macro Marketing Environment**

The macro marketing environment consists of broad societal forces that influence the market. Business marketing activities also affect all factors within the macro marketing environment, which includes elements such as demographics, economy, political-legal factors, natural factors, international environment, technology, and socio-cultural factors.

**Demographic Environment:** Currently, Vietnam's population exceeds 96.2 million, making it a large market that attracts businesses across various sectors. Consumers are not only interested in products that fulfill their needs but also consider factors such as pricing, design, and product quality. During the initial months of 2020, many stores and businesses closed due to the pandemic, leading to increased unemployment and a sharp decrease in consumer spending.

**Economic Environment:** The economic backdrop impacts consumers' purchasing power and spending patterns. During the COVID-19 pandemic, certain industries experienced unexpected growth, such as face mask production, hand sanitizers, pharmaceuticals, and food. However, these sectors are the minority compared to the numerous industries severely affected by COVID-19, including education, tourism, aviation, exports, construction materials, and manufacturing.

**Political-Legal Environment:** The government introduced practical measures to combat the pandemic, which included social distancing and closure of crowded venues like bars and cinemas. While these measures helped control the spread of the disease, they also imposed significant pressures on businesses. The government prepared financial support packages through fiscal and monetary policies. However, the effectiveness of these measures depends on how businesses utilize them to maintain, recover, and grow.

**Natural Environment:** The pandemic led to material shortages, increasing product costs. Environmental pollution escalated, imports of raw materials were limited, and labor shortages occurred, creating both opportunities and challenges for businesses.

**Socio-Cultural Environment:** Societal culture influences strategic decisions such as choosing business fields, products, branding, design, distribution channels, and advertising.

**Technological Environment:** During periods of social distancing, businesses needed to adapt their operations to survive. Effectively leveraging technology provided a competitive advantage in sales and customer reach. The rapid technological development presents both opportunities and challenges for businesses, requiring substantial investment of time and capital.

### **3.2. Micro Marketing Environment**

The micro marketing environment encompasses direct influences on a business's marketing activities, including: the business itself, suppliers, competitors, marketing intermediaries, customers, and the public.

**Business:** Amid the pandemic, it is crucial to establish commitment to marketing programs among all members of the business, especially during challenging times like COVID-19.

**Suppliers:** Price hikes or scarcity of input materials can significantly impact marketing activities and overall business operations. The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions in supply chains, affecting raw material sourcing and product distribution.

**Customers:** Customer retention and market expansion are critical challenges for businesses. Efforts to diversify markets and customer segments can help balance revenue sources and maintain business operations during crises.

**Competitors:** Both direct and indirect competition pose threats to business survival. Monitoring competitors and adjusting competitive marketing strategies is essential.

**Marketing Intermediaries:** Distribution channels, organizations involved in product circulation, marketing services, and financial institutions play vital roles in business survival and growth.

**Public:** Public sentiment can support or oppose a business. Engaging with the public positively enhances a company's reputation.

### **3.3. Internal Marketing Environment**

Internal factors within a business influence resources and marketing quality:

**Human Resources:** Businesses experienced a significant reduction in personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting operations. However, as the situation improved in Vietnam, companies faced recruitment and training challenges to align with their business activities.

**Finance:** During the pandemic, businesses aimed to conserve capital and optimize spending to survive. Currently, financial resources are crucial for business operations, given the previous challenges faced. Active support from credit institutions through government policies is indispensable for businesses.

**Machinery and Equipment:** Many businesses' machinery and equipment remained idle during the pandemic, negatively affecting operations and assets. Reactivating machinery and equipment and finding alternative sources of capital are essential for business recovery.

**Supply of Raw Materials:** The pandemic led to disruptions in supply chains, affecting industries such as agriculture and causing stockpiles of goods. Some businesses managed to utilize these opportunities to meet a portion of food demand.

**Market:** Industries such as food and dining services that invest in technology experienced growth. However, challenges such as raw material supply, additional costs, and labor shortages arose.

In summary, the marketing environment, including macro, micro, and internal factors, significantly influenced Vietnamese business activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Businesses that effectively adapted to these challenges and opportunities managed to maintain, recover, and even thrive amid the crisis.

#### **4. Solution for Enhancing the Quality of High-Quality Human Resources Training in Marketing during the Post-COVID Period**

##### ***4.1. Improving the Quality of Training Programs, Aligning with Practicality***

In order to elevate the quality of educational services, it is necessary to enhance the curriculum and align training with practicality, ensuring that customers – the students – acquire the necessary knowledge and can perform assigned tasks within their respective fields of study. Quality assurance activities are considered effective measures to enhance the quality of institutions. By relying on quality assurance frameworks and mechanisms, institutions should establish a quality model that suits their own context. However, implementing this task in reality poses challenges, and progress has been insufficient to satisfy stakeholders. Emphasizing the responsiveness and adaptability of educational institutions to the evolving needs of the economy is crucial. While the threat of unemployment persists for graduates, businesses continue to face challenges in recruiting skilled labor with flexibility, agility, creativity, proficiency in information technology, and foreign language proficiency. Additionally, maximizing the efficient utilization of resources is an essential requirement in determining and managing training programs. Furthermore, addressing university education should not solely be the responsibility of the government; it should also involve businesses. Establishing robust collaborations between businesses and educational institutions is pivotal. Encouraging internship opportunities for students is imperative. Educational institutions should partner with businesses to provide post-graduation employment opportunities, which is a strategic approach to overcoming the bottleneck of graduate employability, fostering stronger connections between education and application, academia and the labor market, and institutions and society as a whole.

##### ***4.2. Enhancing the Quality of Lecturers and Support Staff for Teaching Activities***

Lecturers, as knowledge conveyors, are not only responsible for imparting knowledge but also igniting passion for their professions in students, playing a pivotal role in elevating the quality of education. Establishing plans, training schemes, and professional development for lecturers in terms of subject matter expertise, foreign language proficiency, and standardizing managerial positions in accordance with titles and assigned duties are essential. Special emphasis should be placed on disciplines lacking lecturers with doctoral qualifications. Development plans for leadership and management at various levels, as well as experts in their fields, must be carried out. This involves building teams of lecturers, technical staff, and individuals for quality assurance at both the institutional and department levels. Policies encouraging incentives and motivation should be enacted to achieve a predetermined percentage of lecturers being awarded academic titles. The organization should be developed to create opportunities for postgraduate education, both domestically and abroad, serving the post-university training strategy. Recruiting young professionals with high expertise levels, including top-performing graduates, should be prioritized. Collaborative initiatives should facilitate lecturer exchanges between the institution and foreign universities. Intensified efforts to invite experts and high-caliber academic staff from

domestic universities and research institutes to teach subjects that lack lecturers are crucial. Establishing commitment agreements between staff, lecturers, and the institution regarding responsibilities, rights, and recognition for those who excel in professional expertise, foreign language proficiency, information technology, and contributions to the institution are vital.

#### ***4.3. Innovating the University Education Service Delivery Process***

This initiative will encourage community involvement in the university education service delivery process, thereby changing the evaluation of educational quality. The current process of university education service delivery at institutions has limitations that affect the quality and effectiveness of education investment. Therefore, the university education service delivery process needs to be reformed. This reform should aim to meet the vocational training needs of students. Diagram 3.1 illustrates the university education service delivery process. Additionally, the methodology of education service delivery for university education needs to be modernized. The quality assessment of education should not be unidirectional, where lecturers assess students. Instead, students' evaluations of lecturers are essential. From a service perspective, students are customers and have the right to evaluate the quality of services through lecturers' competence, attitude, and capabilities. Establishing a rewards system based on achievements, and recognizing lecturers' contributions to teaching, learning, and research, is essential. Regular evaluation of lecturers by students, peers, superiors, and independent quality assessment organizations invited from external institutions should be established. These evaluations should cover aspects such as lecture preparation, teaching methods, and contributions to the development of departments and institutions.

#### **CONCLUSION**

As our nation enters the phase of industrialization and modernization and approaches the knowledge-based economy in the context of relatively lower economic and social development, the importance of enhancing the quality of human resources becomes crucial for the success of the innovation endeavor. The Party has identified that emphasizing the quality of human resources is a fundamental factor for rapid and sustainable development, reducing the development gap, promoting economic growth, and accelerating the process of industrialization and modernization in the country for sustainable development. It is also essential for deep and extensive international integration. To achieve a transformation in the quality of higher education, several key issues need to be addressed.

In terms of the education system, a competitive and highly practical university system needs to be established. Regarding management mechanisms, shifts towards increased autonomy at lower levels of administration are necessary. The higher-level management agencies should timely issue guidelines, policies, and ensure consistent supervision of implementation (such as the distribution of textbooks and teaching materials in various subjects at different institutions). In terms of content, programs need to shift from heavy theoretical emphasis to enhancing a practical knowledge system and particularly focus on developing creative thinking skills for students. Additionally, promoting the socialization of education is essential, allowing economic entities within and outside the country to participate in the training and development of high-

quality human resources that meet the requirements of international integration and are compatible with Vietnamese law in the current context.

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