

# HO CHI MINH WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR HUMAN IN VIETNAM

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## **Abstract**

*Ho Chi Minh, the national liberation hero, the great man of the Vietnamese revolution in the 20th century, had great consideration in the relation between education, training and human progress as the main driving force for historical development. In his sense, education and training aiming to comprehensive development for human in which all aspects of learners are concerned is truly not only meaningful for our current educational activities but also in line with the mainstream of the world nowadays. Therefore, firstly, this writing clarifies Ho Chi Minh's thought about the role of education and training in building human personality in Vietnam. Then, his viewpoint on fulfilling inclusively and coherently the schooling syllabus as well as the learning contents that is the key part of his educational ideas are also analysed profoundly.*

**Keywords:** *Ho Chi Minh, education and training, comprehensive development, inclusive human progress.*

## **1. Introduction**

Education and training is an important sector in the upper-structure of a nation. Appropriate education and training activities have great influence on shaping human personality as well as enhancing their competence to take the proactive role in the process of social development.

The rapid changes in modern society are addressing new demands on our education system in which “Lifelong learning” is a major global trend raised in many current education forums worldwide, especially in the context that learning process is supported by modern scientific and technological achievements. These things require education systems in all countries to have clearer, more specific and up-to-date answers for four questions: Teach what? Teach whom? What is the purpose of teaching? How to teach?

In such context, aiming to the sustainable development of the country, it is necessary for Vietnam to build a comprehensive education and training in order to solve the core problems with the ultimate question that “*what kind of people do we want to create for future society through education and training?*”, thereby shaping the educational methods, goals and contents of modern education in Vietnam today. With a radical and progressive vision,

Ho Chi Minh raised the issue of "comprehensive development for people" in education which is currently consistent with the four pillars of education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that UNESCO has pointed out as "Learning to know, learning to do, learning to live, learning to be". In a nutshell, learning to develop inclusively and harmoniously in terms of intelligence, skills, ethics, and lifestyle. Ho Chi Minh's viewpoint of an education toward building full-developed people was shown via a number of his writings as well as his practical actions, both directly and indirectly.

## **2. Method**

The paper has used a combination of research methods including method of logic - history, method of analysis – synthesis, method of structure – function in order to point out the basic thoughts of Ho Chi Minh on education and training due to his writings and the scientific materials on Ho Chi Minh of other researchers inside and outside Vietnam.

## **3. Results**

### ***3.1. The role of education and training in shaping human personality***

When constructing a new society, according to Ho Chi Minh, first of all, we must enhance actively creating people with proper qualities for that society. Every society has people who represent it. The feudalism assumed the knights, the warriors, the sages who are the core factor building feudal society. Capitalism considered merchants and manufacturers as the elites building capitalist society. But according to President Ho Chi Minh, the goal of our revolution is socialism, so "socialism is able to become reality, first of all, we must have socialist people" (Ho, C.M., 2011k, p.66). Hence, Ho Chi Minh expressed the significance of education in the development of the country, "Whether the Vietnam can become prosperous or not, whether the Vietnamese peoples are able to have the equal position with others powers over the world, that depends on the young people's learning" (Ho, C.M., 2011b, p.32).

Education is one of the most fundamental methods that mankind has used from generations to generations in order to build people who can meet the demands of the societies in each historical period. President Ho Chi Minh conceived that people and human personalities are both products of history and a motivation for the development of history, thereby social circumstances impact on people in the good or the evil way. In his thoughts, it's all about "for peoples" and so does education an training purpose. So, as a great educator, Ho Chi Minh said: "For the sake of ten-year-time, we can plant trees, for the benefit of hundred-year-time, we need educating people. We must building up good citizens and good officers for the country" (Ho, C.M., 2011h, p.528).

Nowadays, a number of scientific achievements in psychology and biology proved that people are born with certain abilities which usually exists in the form of potential. Then the basic conditions in terms of nature (nutrition) and society (health care, education, training...) make them a reality. In fact, there are children who are born with good natural qualities, showing an outstanding talent in one or more fields, however, due to lack of

material conditions or lack of caring, nurturing, education and training, those talents are gradually crippled, even disappeared. On the contrary, there are people who are born with normal qualities in all aspects, but they are properly brought up, their hidden abilities are stimulated and well developed. Therefore, in any society, in order to have people with sufficient qualities and capabilities to meet the requirements the development of the country, it is necessary to pay attention to education and training, creating an advanced educational system. In other words, education activities directly impact to the development of all aspects of human beings and played a decisive role in forming the qualities and abilities of each individual.

Ho Chi Minh highly appreciated the role of education and training in "building people", shaping and developing the Vietnamese human personality. He wrote: "The mind of young people is as pure as white silk, if dyed green, definitely it turns green. If dyed red, it will be red obviously. Therefore, learning process at school has a great influence on the future of young people" (Ho, C.M., 2011c, p.102). Or "Personalities is not innate but due to educating" (Ho, C.M., 2011a, p.383).

Ho Chi Minh profoundly believes in the ability to pursue the good, "leaving the darkness to the light", along with the spirit of self-effort that "people truly desire to be more and more progressive in order to serve best for their Fatherland" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.214), especially to Vietnamese people who always have been standing together to fight against foreign invaders and defend the country throughout the nation history. It is also his belief in the power of radical education in creating comprehensively developed people in which from his perspectives, it is necessary to conduct an education and training progame in a thoughtful, scientific, and comprehensive way that can both "facilitate all learners' existing capacities improved completely" (Ho, C.M., 2011b, p.32) and build necessary characteristics according with the specific conditions and circumstances of the country. The end result of this educational performance is "ful-developed people" created.

On the basis of Ho Chi Minh ideology, aware of the importance of education and training to the nation's prosperity, the Communist Party of Vietnam has addressed "education and training is the leading national policy" of the country. The basic task of education is to prepare necessary things that human-to-be must have for learners by educating, training, promoting and enriching human qualities and capacities through a system of educational levels, i.e. from kindergarten to university and post-graduate, with many forms of learning such as face-to-face learning, distance learning, home schooling, supervised learning or even on-job-training, etc. The more modern and civilized the society becomes, the more important the education and training is. It is education that plays the role as "the key to open the door to the future" (The Communist Party of Vietnam, 1993, p.27). Therefore, first of all, setting out a truly scientific content and curriculum in which vocational training and human education must be balanced are considered as a top-priority. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has identified the potential stimulating factors of human development that increase the value of individuals in relation to the community including education and training, health and nutrition, environment, employment, human

emancipation in all aspects. These factors joined together in unity and interact mutually in a dialectical way. Accordingly, education and training for people is not only the basis of all other sectors but also the fundamental premise for human development in those sectors.

With such right viewpoints, Vietnam has achieved great achievements in the field of education, particularly in the enhancement of Vietnamese people's abilities and skills as the output of educational process. Education and training, on the one hand, help each member of the community shorten the process of grasping knowledge, save time, energy and intelligence for creativity or finding new things. On the other hand, it is said that the main method to form ful-developed people who have inclusive personalities including physical strength, intellectual power, moral and aesthetic capacity, civic responsibility, etc. To put it another way, a proper, scientific and humane education includes all the above factors will create high quality human resources for national defense and development.

### ***3.2. Ensuring the comprehensiveness of educational and training progame and content***

Ho Chi Minh approached the issue of ful-developed people from the elements constituting their qualities on physical strength, intelligence, aesthetics, and morality which is reflected in many of his speeches and writings such as: "The letter to students on the first day of the new regime" (September 1945) ;"The new life"; "The letter to Tran Quoc Tuan Army High School" (November 9<sup>th</sup> 1949); "To General Nguyen Son" (March 1948); "Duties of the General" (August 1948), "To the students" in the People's Newspaper (October 24<sup>th</sup> 1955); the last letter he wrote for the education sector of our country (November 15<sup>th</sup> 1968) and especially in his sacred will left to the entire Party, the entire People of Vietnam.

*\* In terms of the educational purpose*, according to Ho Chi Minh, "educating people must have the purposes and criteria as clear as building a house. An architect have to figure out how the house is before using bricks, mortar, lime, sand, bamboo, wood to make it, and so do educators"(Ho, C.M., 2011i, p.551). Therefore, education and training system have to create "good and usefull citizens" (Ho, C.M., 2011b, p.32); "the heirs of nation-building career are both radical and professional" (Ho, C.M., 2011i, p.510) that will " enhance completely all existing potentials" (Ho, C.M., 2011b, p.32) in Vietnamere people in current time. This is an crucial preparation for young people to be able to take over "the role of future masters of the country" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.135). In his letter to students on the first day of school in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in September 1945, Ho Chi Minh wrote: "... from this moment on, the children begin to receive a completely Vietnamese education..., an education that fully develops your available abilities" (Nguyen, N.Y., Nguyen, T. T., 2007, p.71-72)

In addition, education must aim to promote the sense of self-education and self-training of each young man. He regularly reminded that young people should promote self-study abilitiy to become a man who are able to receive and complete all assigned tasks. He said: "Young people is now a glorious generation, so they should voluntarily renovate their thoughts to be worthy of their duties" (Ho, C.M., 2011f, p.87). On June 1<sup>st</sup> 1955, he sent a

letter to the children and officials of Southern schools, writing: "You should practice to get used to self-reliance"(Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.80). Therefore, nonstop studying is an important task for young people because "if they do not learn hard, they can not improve themselves. No progress is regressive. The higher a society moves to, the more work requirement is and the more sophisticated the machines are. If someone stop learning he starts falling behind and eliminating himself" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.87). The issue of developing the qualities along with promoting the positiveness and reliant ability of learners are actually concerned in the renovation process of our country's education, especially in the reformation of educational programs and textbooks.

Ho Chi Minh clarified the meaning of the full-developed people based on the concepts of morality, intelligence, physical strength and aesthetics, then set the requirements for education and training process aiming to create those qualities in learners. He wrote: "For children, education includes: Physical education: To make the body healthy; Intellectual education: Review what you have learned and learn new knowledge; Aesthetic education: To distinguish the beauty from the un beauty; Moral education: Love of the Fatherland, love of the peoples, love of labor, love of science, love of the public property (five loves)" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.75). In "The report on the Amended Constitutional Draft" at the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting session of the 1<sup>st</sup> National Assembly (1959), he continuously affirmed: "The Government pays special attention to educating young people in the fields of physical education, intellectual education, aesthetic education and moral education" (Ho, C.M., 2011f, p.593). Ho Chi Minh directed that the new educational development tendency is expanding the people's minds, raising the intellectual quality and enhancing political level for people. In other words, it is the education for the whole people in which no one is left behind. It is also an advanced and modern education with the purpose of creating new generations for new society in Vietnam.

Additionally, in fact, political and social institutions have great influence on the comprehensive development of human qualities and capacities because these impacts take place consciously and intentionally. According to Ho Chi Minh, the ultimate goal of education is to build high quality human resources for the country. "To make a revolution, you have to know how to do everything - if you know how to shoot a gun, you need to know how to repair it when it's damaged also" (Ho Chi Minh Museum, 2009). To achieve that goal, in education and training, "it is necessary to pay attention to the following aspects: revolutionary ethics, socialist enlightenment, culture, technology, labour and production" (Ho, C.M., 2011g, p.190). Ho Chi Minh profoundly understood that "new Vietnamese people" will not appear accidentally but are the product of all purposeful activities of our new regime. Furthermore, with socialist orientation of the country, Ho Chi Minh asserted that "Leninist - Marxist theory are main leading thought for all direction in the constructive process of new society in Vietnam. A right direction makes the right action" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.138). It is the manipulation of the fundamental Marxist - Leninist principals in Vietnam practice that have created a radical scientific outlook for young people that give a hand in building necessary qualities for Vietnamese people in general. In simpler terms, in

his sense, political education is an important activity, deciding the success of the revolutionary career throughout all periods of Vietnam history. If our thoughts are not unified, we're not going to be unified, our actions certainly become inconsistent, of "ununified thoughts make actions chaotic. In an illustrative way, Ho Chi Minh also said: "Politics is the soul, speciality is the body. Having speciality without politics is just a soulless body. It's got to be political first to have speciality" (Ho, C.M., 2011f, p.492).

*\* In terms of educational progame and its content*, an inclusive education need to be implemented. The President Ho emphasized the purpose of education must be associated with the educational content. In short, education must be comprehensive. "In teaching and learning, it is necessary that we must focus on the following aspects: revolutionary ethics, socialist enlightenment, culture, technique, labour and production" (Ho, C.M., 2011i, p.647). Specifically, in "The letter to teachers, teachers, students, youth cadres, and children" on October 31<sup>st</sup> 1955, Ho Chi Minh wrote: "University level syllabus should focus on combining scientific theories with practice, acquiring international contemporary knowledge in line with appropriately applying to Vietnam's practice. high school level have to guarantee students' general knowledge suitable to the needs of the country even in the future, but leaving out the parts that are not necessary for real life. In elementary school, it is necessary to educate children: love of the country, love of the peoples, love of labour, love of science and respecting public property. The teaching method must be gentle and cheerful. Don't force children into adults' framework. The health of the children must be concerned appropriately" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.81). As the result, Vietnamese students have been equipped systmatically modern, radical and scientific knowledge or trained practical working skills as well as forming proper emotional states and attidude that make a harmonious development for Vietnamese people.

Education firstly provides knowledge of natural science, social sciences and humanities comprehensively. It can be said that this is the main path for students to be able to absorb scientific knowledge in order to improve their awareness and actions constantly. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh said, "Attempt to improve the knowledge of culture and techniques" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.364); "learning politics, culture and techniques to improve understanding" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.413); "a person who does not know how to count or write is half-blind. Someone who has knowledge moves forward faster. The more you learn, the more progressive you are" (Ho, C.M., 2011c, p.99). In fact, when a person is uneducated, their ability to grasp scientific knowledge will be onesided and extremely difficult. Moreover, the more society develops, the more important the role of education in equipping knowledge and professional skills for members of society becomes more important. "On the basis of political education, it is necessary to improve the quality of culture and speciality in order to solve the practical problems set by the revolution of our country and, in a short time, reaching the peaks of science and technology" (Ho, C.M., 2011i, p.403). "To increase production capacity, there must be improved techniques. If you want to use technology, you have to have knowledge" (Ho, C.M., 2011i, p.361). Hence, conducting an comprehensive

education is the prerequisite for gaining fulfilled cognition in all aspects to promote Vietnamese people as the driving force in the process of building the country.

Additionally, also through comprehensive education and training, Vietnamese people are equipped scientific backgrounds on daily activities such as hygiene, disease prevention, physical training to build a healthy lifestyle to constantly enhance both physical and mental health, an important part making the comprehensiveness of human development. "Healthy person have a life as good as the gods" - it is the words of President Ho Chi Minh that asserted the importance of health as a precious asset or the happiness of each individual. Likewise, a body which is unhealthy in terms of physical organs will have to endure a lot of difficulties in intellectual activities as well as practical behaviours.

Besides, by the right way of education and training, learners are educated in terms of civil responsibility, human morality, revolutionary spirit, international responsibility contributing to the formation of new moral qualities called "revolutionary ethics". Along with other educational contents, "doing well in aesthetic education will promote strongly the formation of personalities including the truth, the good and the beauty values that guiding people's behaviours to contribute to society (Ho, C.M., 2011g, p.175). On that basis, they become willing to wholeheartedly serve the peoples, serve the Fatherland in order to bring freedom and happiness to the whole community.

Commenting on the content and programme of education and training leading to build full-developed people in Ho Chi Minh's thought, Professor Do Huy wrote: "Under the leadership of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, the revolutionary education while re-establishing the schooling time for the youth and teenagers from the primary school to higher levels along with reforming constantly education and training contents simultaneously. In the new system, the viewpoint of general technical education is conducted. Beside the teaching of scientific knowledge, in Ho Chi Minh's educational thought, ethical education, physical education, labor education, aesthetic education and political education need teaching at all levels of schooling" (Do, H., 2000, p.93).

### ***3.3. Some principles in education and training process to create inclusive people***

#### ***\* Inclusive combination of school, family and social education***

Educational impacts from schools, families and society are considered as a principal matter facilitating for all educational activities to attain best consequences. According to Ho Chi Minh, schooling education has to cooperate with family and social education to increase the effectiveness of education in schools. "No matter how good the education in the school is, without education in the family and society, the educational results are not completed" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.87). In other words, the tightened unification of three sectors as family, school and community will certainly create a combined force in which full-developed people are formed as the ultimate purpose of education and training. Because when three above educational environments come together and plan for common action, it is certain that there is the unity in both awareness and actions. For example, on the one hand, all educational activities follow one direction, one strategy which motivate the development process of

personality of learners; on the other hand, avoiding conflicts or nationtion mutally that make learners become suspected and confused when choosing the living values. The coordination of families, schools and society can take place in many forms. The top fundamental problem is that all educational forces must actively promote responsible spirit in cooperation for the purpose of educating young generation to become useful citizens for the country.

*\* The principle of unity between learning and practising, theory and reality, education and production*

Ho Chi Minh advocates to combine "learning with practice", "theories must be related to reality" (Ho, C.M., 2011e, p.496); "learning in combination with production" (Ho, C.M., 2011f, p.174); "schools, organisations, families, communities all must come together" (Ho, C.M., 2011f, p.330). He always emphasized the role of practical activities in the formation of personality and considered practical activities as the standard for the examination and assessment of human awareness in all aspects. The educational purpose of all time not only helps students master knowledge but also applies knowledge into practice, forming skills, learning to know and learn to do. "There is no point having knowledge without practising. But practising without knowledge is as same as moving in the dark, slowly and stumblingly"(Ho, C.M., 2011d, p.86). Hence, the consistent principle that Ho Chi Minh outlined in the strategy of "developing people" of "re-educating the people" (Ho, C.M., 2011b, p.8) to form ful-developed people in Vietnam is: "The method of combining theory with practice means turning what has been learned into action. Learning must go along with practice, not just on the tip of the tongue" (Ho, C.M., 2011i, p.249); "Studying in all other disciplines must be: learning with practice, studying with labouring" (Ho, C.M., 2011f, p.174).

Ho Chi Minh believed that this educational content and method not only overcomes the limitations of the onesided and theoretical study which existed quite popular in the old society with the purpose that "taking a degree to have high ranking position in the society"; "learning a way but doing another way" (Ho, C.M., 2011c, p.60) but also creates the new generations of the new society "both radical and specialized"; "to be loyal to the country as well as to the peoples"; "Every task is completed, every difficulty is overcome, every enemy is defeated". The tightened combinations between theorerical awareness and practical activities, between scientific knowledge and labour activities, between learning and practice help learners attain a deep understanding on many the fields of social life as well as have enough capacity to actively participate in the process of protecting and developing the country.

In the context of glolisation nowadyas, tt is required that the education of Vietnam also needs to make a breakthrough change from a traditional approach - a content approach which provided knowledge mainly but paid less attention to the demand applying the knowledge in solving practical problems into new approach - access to capacity in which the qualities and abilities of learners are formed through the need to conduct dialectically all knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors. To put it differently, the ability to apply knowledge,



practical skills, ability to perform other life skills are highly appreciated. Regarding the qualities must-have for learners in many recent studies, educators say that with the new general education program, students need the following abilities: self-study, problem solving, critical thinking, self-management, communication, cooperation, using of information and communication technology, using language, calculation. And the result is a new generation of Vietnamese people with inclusive development of quality meeting the demand of modern society is born.

*\* Building equal and democratic environment in education for young people to develop their talents*

“Everyone have opportunity to study” (Ho, C.M., 2011b, p.161) is one of the most important thoughts in the Ho Chi Minh’s thought on education that expresses his desire for general education for both boys and girls, rich and poor, old and young .

Democracy in education is also a basic principle that President Ho Chi Minh concerned seriously. Because from his perspectives, people have to understand about their democratic right as well as their responsibility in democratic operating before exercising that right in practice. One of the top important factors to conduct democratic right is in the field of human education expressed by the right and obligation to learn.

In the current context, in the industrial revolution 4.0, applying scientific and technical factors are becoming an indispensable element in education that is changing the traditional way of learning from direct to indirect, shortening geographical distances, narrowing social gaps as well as expanding opportunities for lifelong learning of each person. These changes have facilitated people in many countries, in many fields and in different social groups to have access to a similar educational platform, equally. On the basis of Ho Chi Minh's ideology, it is clear that one of the top priorities in education is equipping technical facilities and creating a lifelong learning ecosystem which are immediately able to catch up with the development trend of the world as well as adapt to accidentally unpredicted situation such as the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak in recent years.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusions**

It can be said that human beings are the central factor that determines all social processes, while education and training are the most basic and direct tools to form human qualities and abilities. Ho Chi Minh’s thought on education and training to building fully-developed people still remain its values in contemporary context that demonstrates the proactiveness of countries and political institutions in defining sustainable development strategy. Those ideas also contain the great aspirations of the Vietnamese peoples particularly and of the mankind generally in which everyone has opportunities to go to school and have facilities to enhance inclusively. UNESCO has appreciated President Ho Chi Minh's important contribution in many aspects of culture, education and the arts which is the convergence of the precious tradition of the Vietnamese people throughout the history and the aspirations of all peoples worldwide in affirming their national identity. Ho Chi Minh is a typical symbol in inheriting selectively the positive aspects of traditional education and

absorbing the quintessence of modern education. His thoughts on education and training have become the fundamental methodology for the strategy of building Vietnamese people in the new era – inclusively developed people meeting the requirements of the comprehensive renovation process.

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