

## SOME THEORIES AND REALITIES OF THE CURRENT PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

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**Summary.** The article concentrates on clarifying the basic issues of professional education socialization, from the concepts, the implications and the contents to the innovation of professional education. It also clarifies the results, the difficulties and the shortcomings in the implementation of professional education socialization. Finally, the writer suggests some scientific and feasible solutions in order to promote professional education socialization in Vietnam for the time beings.

**Keywords:** socialization; professional education; education socialization; professional education socialization; difficulties; shortcomings; implementation.

The term «socialization» is commonly used in various fields of social sciences to express the process of turning an «individual» of ill social nature (a person, a social phenomenon, a labor tool, a production process... etc.) into an «individual» of profound social nature; changing a person from a natural entity to a social one – «the totality of the social relationships» as Karl Marx emphasized.

Education socialization (ES) is the innovation process of the operating methods in the field of education and training (ET), which creates the mechanism and dynamics for the education development and the implementation of social equality in education and meets the requirements of the industrialization and modernization of the country in the era of international integration and globalization. Education socialization is the change of the form of activities in order to promote all the financial, physical and intellectual resources in society and partly transfers the work of state agencies to organizations, groups, individuals under the management of the state.

Professional education (PE) is one of the five integral parts in the national education system, the function of which is to provide the training to enable workers with technical-professional expertise of primary and secondary levels to achieve the equivalent levels of education from high school to post-high school so that they can directly get involved in the production, the trading and the service according to the needs of the labor market (LM) and can continue learning at higher levels if there are demands and conditions.

PE is the training field with the diversity in the enrollment subjects and in the professional types and structures, which is closely related to and directly affected by the demands for the levels of the socio-economic development, the labor market and the employment in each socio-economic sector, each locality and the whole country.

In the national education system, PE is the highly-socialized field. Therefore, it is the promoting of the professional education socialization that can provide the ways or solutions to improve the quality of professional education.

#### 1. SOME THEORIES OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION SOCIALIZATION

##### 1.1. An overview of professional education.

##### 1.1.1. The objective of professional education.

The objective of professional education is to «train employees so that they can have the knowledge, the professional skills at different levels, the ethics, the professional conscience, the sense of discipline, the working style and good health, which enables them to find jobs, to be self-employed or to further their study, to improve qualifications and professional skills so as to meet the requirements of the socio-economic development and the defense and security consolidation» [8].

##### 1.1.2. Characteristics of professional education.

Compared with other fields of the national education system, professional education has the characteristics as follows:

– Professional education implements the «dual» objective.

Professional education both popularizes the professions for workers and meets the demands for skilled human resources of the industries in the country and of the labor export. This is the «dual» objective of professional education.

– Professional education plays an important role in the training of human resources.

Education and training, in which there is professional education, contributes substantially to the development of the human resources of the country. The institutions of professional education have provided a large labor force in order to meet the requirements of the economic development of the country in each stage of development. The employees who have obtained the vocational training and the higher education play very important roles in the labor force of the society. By 2020, the proportion of already-trained workers in Vietnam is about 70 %, about 55 % of which the professional education accounts for; it means about 34,4 million workers (the number of the workers who have the professional secondary level and the vocational college level is 23 %).

– Professional education is inextricably linked with the labor market.

The people who are trained must meet the requirements of the labor market. If so, they then will have jobs. If not, workers cannot have jobs. It is the strict requirement of the labor market that educational institutions must constantly change, adjust the objectives and improve the quality of the training so that their output can be approved by the labor market. For the institutions of professional education, this requirement is more and more significant. The law of value and the law of competition of the labor market are the factors that make the professional education consider the quality of the training as the top priority.

– Professional education aims at training workers who directly operate the production.

Professional education should take the priority to provide the learners with the system of the professional skills which can be applied in a particular job. Without this system, the learners cannot do their jobs. The learners should learn and train as well as learn and practice during their actual labor. Therefore there must be the

connection between the process of training in professional education institutions and the actual labor process and the daily work of the employees.

– Professional education has the open and inter-college characteristics.

In professional education, the training process is implemented very flexibly, which helps learners have the learning opportunities consistent with their demands, conditions and abilities. Learners can study a complete course in a scheduled period of time to earn a certificate or degree; or they can partly attend a course so as to get a job immediately. Then, when there are opportunities, they can go back to school to learn the rest of the course until they accumulate enough credits of the training programs in order to receive a certificate or degree. Moreover, they can have inter-college transfer to the higher levels and have the opportunities for the lifelong learning in the professional education system and the national education system.

#### 1.1.3 Innovation of professional education

– Innovation of the thoughts on professional education.

The economic nature of the innovation of the thoughts on professional education is that developing professional education must follow the rules of the market economy. One of the significant issues which is vital to the training of skilled workers is that it is always associated with the labor market and the employment, with the objectives and tasks of the socio-economic development in each region as well as in the country. That is the reason why not only those who are directly engaged in professional education but also the whole society, the learners, the labor-users must innovate the thoughts on professional education.

– Innovation of the objectives and the training contents in professional education.

+ Innovation of the training objectives in professional education.

Professional education should identify the appropriate training objectives which meet the demands for human resources in different workplaces and are typical in representing each stage of the socio-economic development of the country.

+ Innovation of the training contents in professional education.

The innovation of the training contents in professional education must ensure



the abilities of the learners to perform the jobs after graduating as required by the workplaces and ensure the comprehensive training quality with good background knowledge.

– Innovation of the state management of professional education.

Innovation of the state management of professional education focuses on the management of the training quality which is shown in the contents as follows: creating the system of standards; creating the quality accreditation system to manage professional education and strictly decentralizing the management.

## 1.2. Professional education socialization.

### 1.2.1. Education socialization.

Education socialization is a fundamental point of view and is strategic in the construction and the development of education, which makes educational activities – the professional and skillful activities of a social institutions (education and training) become the widespread, insightful and comprehensive activities in all areas of the social life (economy, politics, culture, science – technology... etc.). Therefore, it is important not to consider education as the subject influenced by socialization but as the socialization of performing education.

Education socialization is not merely to mobilize people to contribute money and materials, but it is the comprehensive and overall policy. This policy is reflected in the contents as follows:

– Education socialization is an activity in the operating system of the national education.

Education socialization is an activity in the general system of education activities of the country which is closely related to all other educational activities. Generally speaking, education socialization also has a close relationship with the tasks of the socio-economic development of the country. Education socialization includes the diversified, comprehensive and overall activities of the social forces to support the education of the school.

– Education socialization is the mobilization of all the people in professional education.

Education socialization must mobilize all the people to participate in the comprehensive education of the younger generations who are studying in the school. The learning and teaching in the school

is the task of not only the teacher but also the parents and the social organizations. Therefore, the most concerning factor in implementing education socialization in each region is to create a healthy and cultural living environment.

– Education socialization should aim to create the movement to encourage all the people to go to school, self-study and self-improve their cultural levels.

Education socialization is also reflected in the movement to encourage all the people to go to school, self-study and self-improve their cultural levels, which contributes to the rise of the intellectual levels of the whole society.

– Education socialization must be under the state management.

Education socialization must be under the state management, which is an immutable principle. The state manages the educational activities by means of the legal system and the policy mechanisms and creates favorable conditions so that social organizations, businesses and individuals can contribute to the education development.

### 1.2.2. Professional education socialization.

Professional education socialization is the task of education socialization which is reflected in a specific field of education – professional education – in order to mobilize the whole society to participate in the construction and development of professional education.

#### i) Implications of professional education

– Improving the accountability of the government of all levels and the communities for professional education.

Professional education is an organic link in the human resources chain and a provider of the workforces of suitable scales, structures and high quality, which helps boost the socio-economic development and creates jobs for workers.

Professional education socialization once improved will help all levels of the government and the communities have proper awareness of professional education and consider professional education as the socio-economic task of the locality. Consequently, they will bear the responsibility for improving the quality of professional education.

– Contributing to the ramification of students and creating a stable enrollment for professional education.

The labor market in Vietnam currently deals with the problems of having too many unskilled workers and lacking skilled ones. Meanwhile, most of the youth do not want to learn vocational training and professional secondary. Therefore, after finishing secondary school, they want to further their study in high school and then in college and university. In fact, if we can carry out successful professional education socialization, we will ramify students and create a stable enrollment for professional education.

Connecting professional education with the labor market.

One of the characteristics of professional education that it is closely linked with the labor market. It is the labor market represented by the businesses which gives the information on the employment demands (the number of job vacancies in different professions, the qualifications, the physical requirements, the other abilities...etc.) and the regulations for employees (the salary, the working environment and conditions, the benefits... etc.) to the professional education institutions, regularly informs the feedbacks on the levels of satisfaction with the «products» of the professional education institutions as well as directly participates in the training activities (creating the standards of the professional skills, identifying the job categories, building the training programs, assessing the learning outcomes of the vocational students... etc.). All in all, carrying out good professional education socialization will create these connections.

ii) The contents of professional education socialization.

– Socializing the responsibilities and obligations of the government, the family, the market and the civil organizations towards the development of professional education.

The government, the family, the market and the civil organizations must have the duties and responsibilities for professional education in consistent with their own strengths and characteristics.

+ The government: providing the main service of professional education and being responsible for the most important segments which require the most resources; building the policies on professional education socialization; mobilizing all forces

and all of the social potentials to participate in the development of professional education.

+ The family: orientating professions, developing the children's affection for professions; contributing energy, finance and materials to the development of the professional education institutions.

+ The labor market: placing orders with the professional education institutions.

+ The civil organizations and the professional associations: being engaged in professional education with the functions of professional training and counseling the training programs so that the training contents can meet the requirements of human resources of the society.

– Socializing the rights to study and participate in professional education of all the members of the society.

+ The rights to study in the field of professional education of all citizens must be guaranteed and expanded.

If any members of the society wish to learn professional secondary and vocational training, they will be facilitated. In order to do this, the professional education institutions must conduct surveys on the learning demands, the learning conditions (the qualifications, the financial ability, the learning time... etc.) to design training programs which are suitable for each subject.

+ The right to participate in the management of the professional education institutions

Any members of the society depending on their own conditions and abilities are entitled to participate in different levels of the management of the professional education institutions.

## 2. THE REALITIES OF THE CURRENT PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

2.1. The results of the implementation of professional education socialization.

2.1.1. Mobilizing the resources of the branches of the industry, the authorities of all levels, the socio-economic organizations and the individuals to develop professional education.

In recent years, professional education has mobilized enormous resources of the society in order to improve education.

– The number and the scale of the development of non-public schools have continued to increase in quantity.



At present, there are 153 professional secondary schools (which increased by 21,6 % compared with the year 2006) and there are 1293 professional education institutions including primary professional education institutions (which increased by 16 % compared with the year 2006), secondary professional institutions and vocational colleges (which increased by 5,5 % compared with the year 2006).

– The quality of professional education has been strengthened and has increasingly met the learning demands of the society.

– The annual increasing levels of the investment in professional education have created more favorable conditions for public schools in the suburbs and in the remote areas, which results in the exemption and reduction of the school fees and the contributions for social beneficiaries and the poor as well as conducts social equality professional education.

– The fact that the facilities, the schools which have been newly-built, repaired, upgraded, expanded annually and the teaching equipment is added and enhanced (in both public and non-public schools) plays very important roles in the innovation of professional education in general and the innovation of teaching methods in particular to improve the quality of the school education as well as the comprehensive education of students.

2.1.2. Strengthening the relationship between the school and the family and the society; mobilizing the intellectual resources of all the branches of the industry and the whole society in the innovation of the contents, the programs and implementing the comprehensive education.

Professional education socialization has strengthened the relationship between the three forces, which are the family, the school and the society. Together with the school, the family and the society are not only the environment and the educational resource but also the important resource provider for the development of professional education.

2.1.3. Diversifying the types of education and creating the conditions to complement the strengths between the types of education.

The diversification of the types of education meets not only the requirements of learning professional secondary and vocational training of the citizens' children and

the workers but also the services of high education (facilities, modern equipment, small class size... etc.) as well as the special demands in the management and education of students.

2.1.4. Promulgating the specific mechanisms of the policies to encourage and regulate the responsibilities of the branches of the industry, the localities, the socio-economic organizations and the labor-users in building schools, supporting learners financially, attracting already-trained human resources and supervising educational activities.

In recent years, many localities have enacted specific mechanisms of the policies to promote professional education socialization based on the documents on professional education socialization by the Government and the Ministry of Education and Training(MOET).

2.2. The difficulties and the shortcomings in the current implementation of professional education socialization in Vietnam.

The issue of professional education socialization in Vietnam currently poses many challenges which need solving, such as the people's perceptions, the tasks of orientation, the planning and implementation process. Therefore, besides the encouraging results, the implementation of professional education socialization in Vietnam has had the difficulties and the shortcomings as follows:

– The orientation of development, the planning and the directing of the implementation in the spirit of the Resolution 05/2005/NQ-CP have not been properly invested and have not been of the interest to direct the implementation determiningly. That is the reason why there is still the situation «where every man follows his own way» in professional education socialization.

– The departments have not been very active in advising the executive committees and the People's Committees of the provinces and the cities in the implementation of the Resolution 05/2005/NQ-CP. As a result, there is insufficient awareness, which results in the confusing implementation of professional education socialization in the localities. Education socialization and professional education socialization are simply understood as the financial contribution to education.

– The habit of getting the subsidies still has influenced a number of the authority in a public professional education institutions, which leads to not adapting the mechanism of socialization. In some localities with more favorable conditions for professional education socialization, the managers of public professional education institutions still rely heavily on the state funding and are not active in mobilizing from the community and from the local socio-economic organizations.

– The types and the ways of socialization are diverse and flexible, but the policies, the methods, the management ways are not really compatible. Some professional education models need researching and perfecting.

– Professional education socialization has not attracted the investment of high levels of science and technology for professional education.

– The socialization of land for professional education institutions has many obstacles.

– The fees of the non-public schools is currently the biggest barrier to the implementation of professional education socialization.

### 3. SOME SOLUTIONS TO PROMOTE THE CURRENT PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION SOCIALIZATION IN VIETNAM

3.1. Mobilizing the whole society to participate in the development of professional education.

Professional education socialization is to mobilize the whole society to participate in the education of young people who have enrolled in professional secondary and vocational training. Thus, it is necessary to improve the accountability of all levels of authority and all the branches of the industry and make each community consider professional education as the socio-economic task of its own.

Professional education socialization requires a residential community to become a professional education one. Each individual in the community must be either a vocational trainer or a vocational learner. This will create a favorable environment for the development of professional education and contribute to effectiveness of the policy of implementing professional education socialization in reality.

3.2. Strengthening the vocational training in enterprises.

The vocational training in enterprises is considered as the effective model of professional education socialization based on the conditions of Vietnam. The nature of the vocational training in enterprises is to conduct the relationship between professional education and the labor market. The learners are trained at the request of the labor market (enterprises) and the labor market (enterprises) can recruit employees according to their requirements. Thus, the training and using employers are strictly linked together, not causing any waste to the learners and the society.

3.3. Searching the resources for professional education.

In order to develop professional education, it is necessary to have such resources as human resources, material resources and financial resources. These resources are partly subsidized by the state budget and the rest can be obtained from the learners, from the production facilities, the businesses, the services, and from the communities. Therefore, professional education socialization also implies the mobilization of the resources for professional education.

3.4. Implementing the social equality in the opportunities for regular training and life-long learning. Professional education socialization is understood not only in terms of the responsibilities and the obligations but also in terms of the rights, notably the right to have equal opportunities for regular training and life-long learning. This right is not only reserved for a small number of people but for everyone.

3.5. Completing the legal documents on professional education socialization.

Education socialization in general and professional education socialization in particular should be institutionalized in legal documents which specify the rights and duties, the willingness and the obligations for any individuals and organizations involved in the construction and development of professional education. Meanwhile, supplement and perfect the macro policies to implement professional education socialization, the regulations on joint training and the rules on the foreign schools in Vietnam and on the training quality accreditation and the diversification of the programs.



3.6. Innovating the system and management mechanisms of professional education.

Strictly and reasonably innovating the system and management mechanisms of professional education towards the decentralization to promote the autonomy and responsibility of all levels of authority and of professional education institutions.

In order to develop a competitive advantage in professional education, the government must assign the autonomy for professional education institutions. Change the professional education system which is mainly subsidized by the state budget to the professional education system which can mobilize all social resources and community responsibilities. It is the professional education system of the people, by the people and for the people.

3.7. Having appropriate steps for professional education socialization.

The lesson has been drawn from the implementation of the policy which transferred the vocational schools to the corporations. This is the right and necessary thing. However, how to transfer and when to transfer must be carefully planned and considered by means of the training demands and the ensuring abilities of a corporation. The fact that the government has recently cut down the subsidies for the vocational schools belonging to the corporations creates the difficulties to many schools, some of which had to downsize the training because there was not enough money to serve training demands.

3.8. Promoting the international cooperation in professional education.

Promoting the international cooperation in professional education must begin from exchanging information and sharing experience to inviting international experts, particularly in the fields which are new in our country such as professional education management, building the system of evaluation and conferring certificates of professional capacities, developing the training programs for several new

industries and carrying out the connection and inter-college in training.

To sum up, professional education socialization has important implications in the cause of education in general, and professional education in particular. Socialization is both the objective and the means of professional education. Promoting professional education socialization not only creates the resources to build the facilities for the schools but also mobilizes the participation of the businesses, the companies, the civil organizations to get involved in the training process of the schools (building training programs, guiding students' professional practice, using the products of the training... etc).

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