

## Policy of Vocational Education Development in the Context of Digital Transformation: A Study in Ho Chi Minh City

AnLong DangNguyen<sup>1\*</sup>, TuyetBach ThiLam<sup>2</sup>, HanhBich ThiTran<sup>3</sup>, Tien Ly<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Vice-principal, Ho Chi Minh City College of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

<sup>2</sup>Vice Principal of School of Southern Khmer Language - Culture - Arts and Humanities, Tra Vinh University, Tra Vinh, Vietnam

<sup>3</sup>Deputy Head of Postgraduate Training Department, Tra Vinh University, Tra Vinh, Vietnam

<sup>4</sup>Head of Department, Cooperative Relations, Scientific Management - Library, Ho Chi Minh City College of Economics Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

\*Corresponding Author: AnLong DangNguyen

Ph.D. Vice-principal, Ho Chi Minh City College of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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**Abstract:** The context of digital transformation has posed many policy requirements in the management of vocational education activities. In that context, the requirements for building and developing a team of teachers; requirements for innovation in training program content; changes in teaching and learning methods; and requirements for facilities and digital infrastructure equipment require the state to have appropriate vocational education development policies that meet the requirements of the digital transformation context. The purpose of this study is to assess: (i) The importance of vocational education development policies in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City; (ii) The position and role of vocational education development policies in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City; (iii) The contributions of policies to vocational education development in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City; (iv) Some limitations in vocational education development policies in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City. To achieve the set objectives, this study surveyed 137 people who are managers, teachers at several vocational education institutions and civil servants, public employees at several departments, branches, and business owners in Ho Chi Minh City. The study has shown that although Ho Chi Minh City has had many timely policies to develop vocational education, there are still limitations that have not kept up with the requirements of the digital transformation context. Therefore, the proposed solutions will contribute to perfecting Ho Chi Minh City's vocational education development policies in the context of digital transformation.

**Keywords:** Development Policy, Vocational Education, Digital Transformation Context, Ho Chi Minh City.

## INTRODUCTION

In the process of integrating into the world economy, building a market economy towards industrialization and modernization. Our country's labor market is developing with the need to rapidly increase highly qualified human resources with knowledge and skills in science, technology, management, production and business. Innovating and improving the quality of vocational training, implementing strong breakthrough solutions associated with improving the quality of human resources, especially high-quality human resources, following the needs of the labor market, meeting the requirements of development and international integration are the goals throughout the past years. The resolution of the XIIth National Congress (2016) of the Communist Party of Vietnam identified "fundamental and comprehensive innovation in education and training; developing human resources, especially high-quality human resources" as one of the three strategic breakthroughs; The Resolution of the 11th Ho Chi Minh City Party Congress for the 2020-2025 term sets out the breakthrough task of "Improving the quality of human resources, focusing on vocational training and job creation".

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With its outstanding advantages, over the past years, Ho Chi Minh City, as the economic locomotive of the country, has required important policies for development, thereby leveraging integration, increasing labor productivity, creating a breakthrough in the quality of human resource training, being competitive enough and actively participating in the labor market of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP). One of the key tasks that Ho Chi Minh City has identified is to develop vocational education; considering this an important driving force for training high-quality human resources for the City.

In that context, the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee issued Action Program No. 19-CTrHD/TU on implementing the Resolution of the 10th City Party Congress (October 31, 2016) and the City People’s Committee issued Decision No. 6252/QD-UB approving the Plan of the Resolution of the 10th City Party Congress on the Program to improve the quality of human resources of Ho Chi Minh City for the period 2016-2020 (November 30, 2016). At the 11th City Party Congress (2020), it was determined that: By 2025, the proportion of working workers who have received vocational training with certificates or certificates will reach 87% of the total number of working workers. At the same time, the “Breakthrough Program for Human Resources and Culture Development in Ho Chi Minh City, including 11 Projects and Component Programs” is identified as one of the “Four Development Programs for Ho Chi Minh City 2020 - 2025/2030”.

In addition to the achieved results, in terms of vocational education policy in Ho Chi Minh City, there are still some limitations, specifically: The network of vocational education institutions is still overlapping, scattered, and duplicates training sectors and occupations; there is no mechanism to ensure the effective operation of vocational education institutions after the arrangement in localities. The work of streaming and orienting vocational education from the general education system has not met the requirements. The promotion of autonomy of vocational education still faces many difficulties and obstacles. The imbalance in the structure of training occupations is slow to be overcome, failing to meet the human resource needs of society. Implementing high-quality vocational training (high-quality vocational schools and pilot implementation of international and ASEAN-level vocational training according to foreign transfer programs, etc.) is still slow.

To have a comprehensive assessment of vocational education policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, this study focuses on answering the following questions:

- How important is the policy for developing vocational education in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City?
- What is the position and role of the policy for developing vocational education in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City?
- What are the contributions of the policy to the development of vocational education in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City?
- What are the limitations of the policy for developing vocational education in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City?

## RESEARCH METHODS

The method collects documents and documents related to the research problem. The specific documents herein are the guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam; the State’s policies and laws are reflected in the legal documents and Decrees of the Government; circulars of the Ministry of Education and Training; Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs; directive documents of the Party Committee, People’s Committee and People’s Council of Ho Chi Minh City; guidelines from the relevant parties.

Survey method: This study surveyed 137 people (shown in Table 1). The survey content focused on the following basic contents: (i) The importance of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City; (ii) The position of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City; (iii) The contributions of the policy to vocational education development in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City; (iv) Some limitations in vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City.

**Table 1: Classification of survey objects**

Variables	Characteristic	Frequency (number)	Ratio (%)
The gender of the surveyed person	Female	72	52.55
	Male	65	47.45
Age of the people surveyed	25-30 years old	27	19.71
	31-40 years old	45	32.85
	41-50 years old	48	35.04
	51-62 years old	17	12.41

Variables	Characteristic	Frequency (number)	Ratio (%)
The degree of the person being surveyed	Bachelor	33	24.09
	Master	87	63.50
	Doctor	17	12.41
Working years of the surveyed person	Less than 5 years	22	16.06
	5-10 years	55	40.15
	11-20 years	37	27.01
	21-30 years	23	16.79
Working position	Managers at intermediate schools, colleges	21	15.33
	Teachers and staff at vocational education institutions	45	32.85
	Civil servants, public employees	55	40.15
	Business owners	16	11.68

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k X_i K_i}{n}$$

**Processing survey data:** Use the formula to calculate the average score:  $\bar{X}$ . In there,  $\bar{X}$ : Medium score. Xi: Score at level i. Ki: Number of participants rated at Xi level. n: Number of people participating in the assessment. The question is divided into five levels with conventional scores (Table 2).

**Table 2: Table of scale conventions**

Medium score	$1.00 \leq \bar{X} \leq 1.80$	$1.81 \leq \bar{X} \leq 2.60$	$2.61 \leq \bar{X} \leq 3.40$	$3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$	$4.21 \leq \bar{X} \leq 5.0$
Convention point	1	2	3	4	5
Rating level	Not important	Less important	Rather important	Important	Very important
Level of contribution	Absolutely no contribution	No contribution	Rather contribution	Contribution	Very contribution
Position and role	Disagree	Partly agree	Rather agree	Agree	Very agree

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Importance of Vocational Education Development Policy in the Context of Digital Transformation in Ho Chi Minh City

To assess the importance of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, the authors conducted a survey and evaluated it according to the following criteria: (1) Not important. (2) Less important. (3) Quite important. (4) Important. (5) Very important. The survey results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Assessment of the importance of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

Order	Survey subjects	Survey subjects	%	Rating Level									
				Not important		Less important		Rather important		Important		Very important	
				Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Managers at intermediate schools, colleges	21	100	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	4.76	14	66.67	6	28.57
2	Teachers and staff at vocational education institutions	55	100	2	3.64	4	7.27	13	23.64	23	41.82	13	23.64
3	Civil servants, public employees	45	100	1	2.22	3	6.67	8	17.78	21	46.67	12	26.67
4	Business owners	16	100	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	6.25	10	62.50	5	31.25
<b>Total average</b>		<b>137</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.46</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13.11</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>54.41</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>27.53</b>

(Source: Author's survey results in 2024)

The survey data in Table 3 shows that: 27.53% of respondents answered “Very important” (36/137 respondents); 54.41% of respondents answered “Important” (68/137 respondents); 13.11% of respondents answered “Rather important” (23/137 respondents); 3.48% of respondents answered “Less important” (7/137 respondents) and 1.46% answered “Not important” (3/137 respondents). Which, the highest number of respondents answered “Important” at 54.41% (more than half of the respondents assessed). The results of Table 3 also show that those who answered “Not important”, and “Less important” are mainly concentrated in students and teachers.

**Position and Role of Vocational Education Development Policy in the Context of Digital Transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

To assess the position of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, the authors follow the convention: (1) Disagree. (2) Partially agree. (3) Rather agree. (4) Agree. (5) Very agree. The results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Assessment of the position and role of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

Order	Content	Rating Level					$\bar{X}$	Level
		1	2	3	4	5		
1	Encourage the development of an open, flexible and diverse vocational education system	4	21	33	56	23	3.53	2
2	Towards standardization, modernization, democratization, socialization and international integration of vocational education	5	22	35	53	22	3.47	3
3	Helping to connect between vocational education levels and to connect with other training levels	8	24	37	45	23	3.37	6
4	Improving training quality and developing vocational education institutions	7	22	33	51	24	3.46	4
5	Helping to stream graduates into vocational education	7	23	34	52	21	3.42	5
6	Ensuring the effectiveness of vocational education through the application of information technology	3	19	29	61	25	3.63	1
<b>Total average</b>		<b>5.67</b>	<b>21.83</b>	<b>33.50</b>	<b>53.00</b>	<b>23.00</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rate (%)</b>		<b>4.14</b>	<b>15.94</b>	<b>24.45</b>	<b>38.69</b>	<b>16.79</b>		

(Source: Author’s survey results in 2024)

The survey results in Table 4 show that: The total average  $\bar{X} = 3.48$  in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$  equivalent to the “Agree” rating level. Examining each survey content shows that each survey content is in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$ , so the contents are all at the “Agree” level. No content is in the range of  $4.21 \leq \bar{X} \leq 5.0$  (the “Very agree” level) and no content is in the range of  $2.61 \leq \bar{X} \leq 3.40$  (the “Disagree” level). However, specifically at each assessment level, in all 06 survey contents, there were people who “Disagree” about the position and role of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, with an average of 5.67 (accounting for 4.14%); the number of people who “Partially agree” was an average of 21.83 (accounting for 15.94%); “Rather agree”, an average of 33.50 (accounting for 24.45%). The highest level of assessment is “Agree”, with an average of 53.00 (accounting for 38.69%); and “Very agree”, with an average of 23.00 (accounting for 16.79%).

**Contributions of Policies to Vocational Education Development in the Context of Digital Transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

To assess the contributions of policies to vocational education development in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, the authors follow the convention: (1) Absolutely no contribution. (2) No contribution. (3) Partial contribution. (4) Contribution. (5) Very contribution. The results are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Assessment of policy contributions to vocational education development in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

Order	Content	Rating Level					$\bar{X}$	Level
		1	2	3	4	5		
1	Diversify educational institutions and training forms, thoroughly apply digital technology in training	5	23	31	52	26	3.52	1
2	Encourage socialization and social contributions to occupations requiring technology application	6	22	33	52	24	3.48	3

Order	Content	Rating Level					$\bar{X}$	Level
		1	2	3	4	5		
3	Prioritize private vocational institutions and foreign investment in technology training	5	22	35	53	22	3.47	4
4	Encourage the participation of technology enterprises and highly qualified people in vocational training	8	25	36	45	23	3.36	7
5	Open up opportunities for stakeholders to participate in vocational education and promote innovation and creativity	8	22	33	51	23	3.43	5
6	Develop a team of teachers and managers, thoroughly apply digital technology.	8	25	34	48	22	3.37	6
7	Build vocational education institutions into “electronic schools”	7	19	29	61	21	3.51	2
<b>Total average</b>		<b>6.71</b>	<b>22.57</b>	<b>33.00</b>	<b>51.71</b>	<b>23.00</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Rate (%)</b>		<b>4.90</b>	<b>16.48</b>	<b>24.09</b>	<b>37.75</b>	<b>16.79</b>		

(Source: Author’s survey results in 2024)

**The survey results in Table 5 show that:** With the total average  $\bar{X} = 3.45$  in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$ , equivalent to the “Contribution” assessment level. Examining each survey content shows that each survey content is in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$ , so the contents are all at the “Contribution” level. No content is in the range of  $4.21 \leq \bar{X} \leq 5.0$  (the “Very Contributing” level) and no content is in the range of  $2.61 \leq \bar{X} \leq 3.40$ , the “No Contribution” and “Absolutely no contribution” levels. However, specifically at each assessment level, in all 07 survey contents, some people assessed “No contribution” to the position and role of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, an average of 6.71 (accounting for 4.90%); the number of people who “Partially contributed” on average was 22.57 (accounting for 16.48%); “Partially contributed”, an average of 33.00 (accounting for 24.09%). The highest level of assessment is “Contribute”, with an average of 51.71 (accounting for 37.75); and “Very contribute”, with an average of 23.00 (accounting for 16.79%).

**Some Limitations in Vocational Education Development Policies in the Context of Digital Transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

To assess the limitations of vocational education development policies in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, the authors follow the convention: (1) Disagree. (2) Partially agree. (3) Quite agree. (4) Agree. (5) Very agree. The results are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Assessment of limitations in vocational education development policies in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City**

Order	Content	Rating Level					$\bar{X}$	Level
		1	2	3	4	5		
1	The network of vocational education institutions is still overlapping, fragmented, and duplicates training sectors and occupations	4	21	35	53	24	3.53	3
2	There is no mechanism to ensure the effective operation of vocational education institutions	5	19	35	50	28	3.56	1
3	The work of streaming and orienting vocational education from the general education system has not met the requirements	6	20	37	49	25	3.49	4
4	Promoting the autonomy of vocational education institutions still faces many difficulties and obstacles	5	19	35	51	27	3.55	2
5	The imbalance in the structure of training sectors and occupations is slow to be overcome, not meeting the human resource needs of society	7	21	38	53	18	3.39	6
6	The implementation of high-quality vocational training (high-quality vocational schools and piloting international and ASEAN-level vocational training according to foreign transfer programs...) is still slow	6	21	37	51	22	3.45	5
<b>Total average</b>		<b>5.50</b>	<b>20.17</b>	<b>36.17</b>	<b>51.17</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rate (%)</b>		<b>4.01</b>	<b>14.72</b>	<b>26.40</b>	<b>37.35</b>	<b>17.52</b>		

(Source: Author’s survey results in 2024)

**The survey results in Table 6 show that:** The total average  $\bar{X} = 3.50$  in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$  is equivalent to the “Agree” rating level. Examining each survey content shows that each survey content is in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$ , so the contents are all at the “Agree” level. No content is in the range of  $4.21 \leq \bar{X} \leq 5.0$  (the “Very agree” level) and no content is in the range of  $3.41 \leq \bar{X} \leq 4.20$  (the “Disagree” level). However, specifically at each assessment level, in all 06 survey contents, there were people who “Disagree” about the position and role of vocational education development policy in the context of digital transformation in Ho Chi Minh City, with an average of 5.50 (accounting for 4.01%); the number of people who “Partially agree” was an average of 20.17 (accounting for 14.72%); “Rather agree”, an average of 36.17 (accounting for 20.40%). The highest concentration of assessment is “Agree”, with an average of 51.17 (accounting for 37.35%); and “Very agree”, with an average of 24.00 (accounting for 17.52%).

## DISCUSSION

The research results have clarified the position, role and importance of vocational education policy (Jibladze, 2021; Cedefop, 2024a & 2024b) and the impact of policies on vocational education development in Ho Chi Minh City. This result is consistent with the research results of Vuong Linh (2022), Tien Luc (2022), Thanh Le (2022), Duchiep *et al.*, (2022), Hong (2022), Vu (2023), Van Thuan & AnLong (2023), AnLong (2024), etc. The studies of these scholars have shown that without the right policies, it will be impossible to develop vocational education and train human resources, especially quality human resources. high, production, business and service activities will face many difficulties.

To have high-quality human resources, it is necessary to have the policy to develop education and training, considering education and training as the “top national policy”. This is one of the most basic and important policies of the CPV and the State of Vietnam. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh City, as the largest economic center of the country, has focused on developing education, focusing on developing vocational education, investing a lot of money and Ho Chi Minh City has also issued many mechanisms and policies to develop the field of vocational education.

Based on those studies, this study has made discoveries when finding policy limitations for vocational education development in Ho Chi Minh City. In particular, this study has proposed solutions to develop vocational education in Ho Chi Minh City in the coming time. However, due to time constraints (survey from February to June 2024), and the small number of survey respondents (137 people); the survey scope was only in Ho Chi Minh City; the survey was not conducted on enterprises; therefore, the reliability is still limited and needs to be further studied in the next stages.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Laws and policies play a special role in the management and development orientation of society. A policy cannot be correct if it does not meet the development requirements of society. Therefore, studying the conditions for social development to serve policy-making is a necessary and long-term task. Regarding the development of vocational education in general and in Ho Chi Minh City in particular, there have not been many research works. In particular, studies on policies for developing teaching staff, policies for building and developing facilities, and equipment, policies on financial resources, etc. serving the development of vocational education have not received attention and in-depth research.

Therefore, these are important suggestions for future research to implement and focus on clarifying, contributing to perfecting policies for developing vocational education, meeting the requirements for developing high-quality human resources for the City, and bringing Ho Chi Minh City deeper into the process of international integration and globalization. This study focuses on clarifying issues related to Ho Chi Minh City’s policy on vocational education development; this study also analyzes the current situation: The role, position, and importance of vocational education in training human resources in Ho Chi Minh City; the current situation of vocational education development policy to meet the human resource needs of Ho Chi Minh City; the results achieved and some shortcomings; Some solutions to improve the vocational education development policy to meet the current human resource needs of Ho Chi Minh City. The results achieved contribute to improving the vocational education development policy of Ho Chi Minh City. However, due to objective and subjective reasons, this study still has some limitations that need to be further studied.

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