

EDUCATION AND TRAINING COOPERATION VIETNAM - CAMBODIA IN THE CURRENT PERIOD

TRAN XUAN HIEP*

ABSTRACT

Education cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia in recent years has gained great achievements, contributing to the socio-economic development of each country. Within the trend of increased integration throughout the region and the world, education has become an important task for both countries, and is the basis for both countries to promote industrialization and modernization in the new period. Vietnam - Cambodia education cooperation has focused on the areas of training students, technology transfer and exchange of experts. In the article, the author mainly focuses on Vietnam - Cambodia cooperative educational achievements and concludes with some suggestions.

Keywords: education, cooperation, Vietnam, Cambodia, important.

TÓM TẮT

Hợp tác giáo dục và đào tạo Việt Nam - Campuchia trong giai đoạn hiện nay

Hợp tác giáo dục Việt Nam - Campuchia trong những năm qua đã đạt được nhiều thành tựu to lớn, góp phần vào phát triển kinh tế - xã hội của mỗi nước. Trong xu thế hội nhập của toàn khu vực và thế giới, hợp tác giáo dục trở thành nhiệm vụ quan trọng của cả hai nước, là cơ sở để hai nước đẩy mạnh công nghiệp hóa, hiện đại hóa đất nước trong thời kỳ mới. Hợp tác giáo dục Việt Nam - Campuchia tập trung vào các lĩnh vực đào tạo lưu học sinh, chuyển giao công nghệ, trao đổi chuyên gia, hợp tác ngành... Trong bài viết này, chúng tôi tập trung khái quát những thành tựu chủ yếu của hợp tác giáo dục Việt Nam - Campuchia và bước đầu đưa ra những kết luận mang tính gợi mở.

Từ khóa: giáo dục, hợp tác, Việt Nam, Campuchia, quan trọng.

1. Introduction

Education and Training is one of important fields to not only Vietnam and Cambodia but also all countries in the world. Therefore, Vietnam and Cambodia have cooperated with each other in this field in order to train and develop human resources serving the national industrialization, modernization and renovation. In the context of international and regional integration with rapid development of science and technology today, the cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia in terms of education and training has been increasingly promoted in order to meet better the work of national construction and protection as well as strengthen traditional relationship between the 2 nations.

* MA, Duy Tan University

2. Preconditions of education and training cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia

Firstly, Vietnam and Cambodia are two countries having a long-standing historical relationship, and similarities in culture and society. Besides, they are neighboring countries having the same border in the southwest. This creates the basic condition for Vietnam and Cambodia to cooperate in developing more and in-depth training.

Secondly, Vietnam and Cambodia are undertaking reforms to build the country, carry out comprehensive cooperation with 16- gold word motto “*good neighborly cooperation, solidarity and traditional friendship, long-term stability*” [13]. To implement this mission, both countries should have mutual co-ordination and help in all aspects, political, economic, cultural and social. At present, the socio-economic development and cooperation is the main mission of every country, at which Vietnam and Cambodia are no exception. However, to make sure that the process of the thoroughly economic relations, each country should deploy positively the proper strategies and policies in this relationship, especially both need to carry out all methods to make training and education become foundational and basic to stimulate development of the economy and society. Therefore, the training and education cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia during this period become more urgent in order to ensure firmly internal development and promote relations with external expansion. In addition, cooperation in education and training contribute to enhance the overall relationship of Vietnam and Cambodia meeting people’s aspirations of each country.

Thirdly, with the constant development of the region and globe, the Asia-Pacific in general and South-East Asia in particular are going to be confronted with challenges and new difficulties. The education and training field of these regions are being expanded and seriously considered; the whole countries have to raise the quality and quantity of a highly, trained workforce to ensure their sustainable development in a rapidly changing world. Due to this fact, Vietnam and Cambodia need to practice comprehensively internal education and training policies as well as expand external relationships. Education cooperation between two countries is the first to be implanted globally and deeply to ensure the steadfastly socio-economic development of two countries. Besides, as developing countries, education and training cooperation is the necessary and indispensable condition to create the favorable condition to exchange and learn from each other, enhancing the intellectual standards of the people level, serving for renovation work and thriving of each country.

3. The reality of education cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia

Vietnam has given a lot of precious support to Cambodia in education since the 1970s. Especially after the genocidal regime of Polpot - IengSary was overthrown and a peace treaty of friendship and cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia was signed on Feb 18th 1979, Vietnam actively supported Cambodia in training human resources and educational aids, which contributed greatly to the revival of Campuchia

in extremely difficult period. In particular, Vietnam focused on helping with 2 main tasks: the first was to train hastily officers and teaching experts from primary to university level and the second was to be specialized in constructing and managing the education system from the central to local. By the efforts of both countries, in nearly 10 years (1979-1988), Vietnam helped Cambodia train more than 5,000 staffs in all careers and domains; sending ten thousands of experts to teach in Cambodia in the period from 1 to 5 years training to help Cambodia train more than 10,000 local technical staffs, nearly 6,000 staffs who had primary to university level [13]. Although the number of students and staffs who were trained are modest, Vietnam has greatly helped Cambodia with an initial intellectual force to serve the restoration and construction of its culture and socio-economic condition while the country emerged from civil war. This assistance has tightened the solidarity between Vietnam and Cambodia.

On the basis of achievements in education of each country, the relationship between the education and training of Vietnam - Cambodia has taken steps in the right direction, creating a solid basis for Cambodia to form a team of relatively qualified teachers, restoring the educational system step by step in which the first thing is to train teachers, specialists and to open schools including regular universities and supplemental schools. It can be affirmed that Vietnam is one of the countries which Cambodia trusts to send their children to train in a large number. Cambodia's trust and confidence in Vietnam during these difficult years has created an important foundation for the two countries to promote exchanges and cooperation in terms of education and training for the following years. In the context of international integration, cooperation in education and training of Cambodia has been increasingly consolidated, more practical, effective and comprehensive. Along with the efforts of the two nations' governments and relevant departments, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia had conditions to sign the Agreement of training Cambodian staffs in Vietnam in 1994 and increasing the number annually according to each country's situations and actual conditions.

The Agreement text is an important basis to decide the criteria of training Cambodian students with the long-term regular system in Vietnam. From 1995 onwards, the cooperation in education and training of Vietnam - Cambodia has gained new achievements; especially Vietnam helped Cambodia to train thousands of students, staffs of college and university level, research students in economics, culture, science-technology, medical and other fields. Specifically, in 1995, there were 105 Cambodian students sent to Vietnam to be trained, including 15 graduate students; 115 students in 1997, including 20 graduate students [10].

From 1998 onwards, Vietnam annually has trained for Cambodia 100 students per year, of which 20 students are post graduate. However, the facts show that in the late 1990s, especially since Cambodia became the 10th member of the organization of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the number of Cambodian students sent to other countries such as France, Thailand, China, Singapore, Philippines, and Italy keep

increasing, so the number of students sent to Vietnam to be trained were reduced in comparison with the previous years. By 2000, the education and training cooperation between the two countries has changed significantly; the number of Cambodian students sent to Vietnam for training tends to rise again and prosper. The main causes of this, first of all, derived from the review of the Cambodian government which still sees Vietnam as a reliable training destination, and continues to request the Government of Vietnam to create favorable conditions for them. Secondly, Vietnam and Cambodia signed an agreement with the amendment of the Agreement of training Cambodian officials in Vietnam signed in 1994. Accordingly, Vietnam continues to help Cambodia in training staff and employees in different fields. Especially, since 2000, the relationship between Vietnam and Cambodia follows the 16-word motto “good neighborliness, traditional friendship, comprehensive cooperation, long-term sustainability” (6/1999). Since 2000, at the request of Cambodia, Vietnam agreed to receive 250 short-term training students /year in the military sector, security, tourism [8;6].

On the other hand, to create favorable conditions for Cambodian students while studying in Vietnam, the Government of Vietnam has had preferential policies and scholarships for Cambodian students. On November 4th, 1996, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning and Investment issued the Circular No. 68TC-KH&ĐT assigning the rate of training for students from Cambodia. Moreover, in the regulation of foreigners studying in Vietnam dated August 25th, 1999 of the Ministry of Education and Training, Article 23, Chapter V: (duties and powers of the students’) assigns: “according to the agreement, students are awarded scholarships by Vietnamese currency, scholarship is given monthly to students since the date they come to Vietnam, including summer vacation and 1 month after graduation (from the date they present the projects, thesis, dissertation, thesis or take the final exam), they are also arranged the accommodation in dormitory in accordance with the agreement signed between Vietnam and the sending training address”. This is a basic convenient factor for all the foreign students studying in Vietnam, including the Cambodian students. Besides, for Cambodian students, the Government of Vietnam raised the scholarship annually by 17-18%. Especially, since 2006, the Government of Viet Nam has raised the amount of money for training foreign students. Accordingly, “Cambodian students studying in Vietnam following the annual cooperation agreement of the two Governments receive monthly scholarship in Vietnamese currency from the first month in Vietnam to the end of the course for covering food, clothing and other subsistence allowances as shown in the following table.

Unit: VND

High school	Undergraduate university	Post-graduate university	Short-term
1.320.000	1.570.000	1.820.000	2.150.000

Source: The Ministry of Finance, No. 16/2006/TT-BTC: The Circular stipulating the training rate for Lao and Cambodian students studying in Vietnam, Hanoi, dated 7 March, 2006; p.2.

In addition, “All the students studying, researching and practicing in Vietnam have equal duties and rights in education, research, practice and other activities” (Article 21). They are respected and equally treated as Vietnamese citizens by department of education, students’ management and service; provided sufficient information for learning in accordance with the conditions of educational institutions; used equipment and facilities for activities such as learning, culture, sports of the department of education, students’ management, service; rewarded if they have excellent results in studying and research, got allowance for careers in accordance with the current regulations of Vietnamese Government” (Article 23) [7]. At the same time, the material facilities for teaching and learning have been given more attention; many dormitories for students were renovated, upgraded; teaching and learning equipment were upgraded in many schools with the expenditure of 12 billion VND in 2010 [5].

Besides bilateral cooperation, Vietnam and Cambodia have strengthened the multilateral cooperation in education and training; the two countries, together with Laos, signed an agreement of equivalent qualifications, academic titles and degrees on March 16th 1989 in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. This Agreement has created very favorable conditions for students from Vietnam and Cambodia in particular and the three countries in general to study, research, and be equally and fairly treated after graduation. Most importantly, this agreement expands the cooperation opportunities in training and studying among three countries on the Indochinese peninsula.

Based on great achievements gained in cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia, both governments have created the best possible conditions for children to learn, exchange and develop, contributing a motivation to build high human resources. In previous years, education and training cooperation between Cambodia and Vietnam was one-way cooperation, ie, Vietnam primarily helped training for Cambodia, from 1994 onwards; however, this cooperation has become a two-way and multi-way one. In that spirit, on December 10th 2005, in Hanoi, Vietnam, Cambodia and Vietnam signed Education and Training Cooperation Protocol in the period 2006-2010 between the Ministry of Education and Training of Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Ministry of Youth and Sport of Kingdom of Cambodia with 21 articles. Accordingly, Article 1 reads: “The Vietnamese side helps to train Cambodian students with non-refundable funds of the Vietnamese Government led by the Royal Government of Cambodia. The

receiving of annual number of new students is 100 per capita per year (since the school year 2005-2006 at the time of September 2005). The above number can be changed to annually increase, decrease depending on the requirements of Cambodia and depending on the specific capacity to the Vietnam and will be adjusted in the next years, including the following subjects: university students, graduate students, research students and short-term training in the fields of economic, cultural, scientific, technical and professional proficient”(Article 1) [3]. Thanks to the efforts of both sides, the number of Cambodian students to study in Vietnam has gradually increased and Vietnam is the country receiving the largest number of Cambodian students of countries in which Cambodian students studying. If we do not count the number of students in the self-sufficiency of 25, and the number of students in the field of security and defense, training funding in 2010 for Cambodian students to study in Vietnam was 83.5 billion VND [5].

Also, according to the figure of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the implementation of the commitments in the memorandum of understanding at the Inter-Governmental Committee meeting every year, Vietnam aid to Cambodia from 2001 - 2010 was 618.897 VND billion, of which the period 2006 - 2010 was VND 464.397 billion, about three times more than the period 2001 - 2005 and 12.67 times more compared to the period 1996 - 2000. The amount of non-refundable aid reserved for staff training and Cambodian students in Vietnam is 479.247 VND billion, accounting for 77.44% of total aid. The rest (22.56%) is reserved for the program, cooperation projects and other unexpected requirements [6]. Before 2000, Vietnam just received annually 100 Cambodian students in college and graduate school in economics, culture, science and technology, then after 2000, other forms of short-term training and fostering expanded in both size and diversity of form in the field of training.

Within five years, from 2006 to 2010, the institutions of Vietnam have received a total of 1,167 Cambodian students to study, in Vietnamese, Foundation 519; the rest are 648 specialized students. The number of graduate students (Masters and PhD) accounts for about 20 - 25% of the total number of students. The majors attracting the most Cambodian students are medical - pharmaceutical, agricultural, economic, architectural, and engineering and technology. In particular, the medical and pharmaceutical industry accounted for 47%, agriculture 11%, economics 10.8%, engineering 8.8%, architecture 8.8% and construction 8.8% [2]. Especially, “In 2010, Vietnam received 130 Cambodian students to study university degrees, postgraduate, practice, short-term training and research in the fields of science and technology, English language preparation for college and a number of other fields” [1]

On the side of the school, as reported by the Ministry of Education and Training, in 10 years (1994 - 2003), Cambodia has sent to Vietnam 2091 students to train, including 1667 graduate, and 136 graduate students. All of those who graduated were appointed to work in the Cambodian state agency and promote what has been learned. Mr. Sok Sopho An, the 2nd Minister, Embassy of Cambodia in Vietnam said: “Vietnam plays an important role in the training of human resources for Cambodia. The

two countries have much in common, so there are a lot of advantages in students' training when the country is going to be applied in the work and service of the country" [9]. Obviously, the education and training of Cambodia-Vietnam actually bring more effective and important contribution to promote comprehensive relationship between the two countries. At present, most of the main universities in Vietnam have Cambodian students enrolled. Specifically, during the period 2006-2010, the number of Cambodian students studying at specific universities included: Hanoi University of Technology, Graduation 78, entry 32; Medical University has 20 students; Hanoi University of Architecture has 30 students; Thai Binh Medical University has 230 students; University Irrigation 5 students; University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Ho Chi Minh city has 77 students; University of Agriculture and Forestry in Ho Chi Minh city has 51 students; University of Architecture of Ho Chi Minh city has 30 students; An Giang University has 7 students [3].

On the Cambodian side, although more difficult than Vietnam, the Cambodian government spent funds on scholarships for Vietnamese students to study in Cambodia under the Agreement, the decree signed between the two governments. Accordingly, since 1992, Vietnam began sending students to Cambodia, primarily to train the Khmer language and Cambodian culture and society in order to serve in foreign relations, and expand comprehensive cooperation between two countries.

Currently, with the development of the socio-economic, security and political stability, the Government of Cambodia continues to provide scholarships for Vietnamese students to study in Cambodia, mainly in the Royal University. According to the Vietnamese Embassy in Cambodia, "In five years (2006 - 2010) there were 13 [Vietnamese] students enrolled in courses in the Kingdom of Cambodia (in the Royal University of Phnom Penh - Department of Khmer literature and class two years for staff translator). . . . Total number of students in the fifth year is 167 students, in which students complete the course is 76 students, students studying in Cambodia" [12].

For living conditions, Vietnamese students have their daily life, eating and living place in a dormitory carefully arranged by Cambodia. In addition, The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport supply necessary equipment fully for Vietnamese students such as: blanket, pillow, gas stove, etc. Besides, for conducting agreement about education and training cooperation between two countries, annually Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training Ministry and Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport usually arrange the criteria for scholarships that the two sides agreed to sign. Cambodia has made considerable efforts, especially increasing amount of students (class for Khmer literature students from 10 students to 15 students per year, class for staffs studying Khmer language in 2 years increases 30 students per year, increasing the monthly living fee for students from 70 US dollars to 100 or 120 dollars at the present time). In 2010, there were 75 Vietnamese students studying in Cambodian University and 40 staffs studying Khmer language for 2 years in Cambodia. Especially, Cambodia agreed to give 10 longtime scholarships in all fields

that Vietnam has needs and 20 short term scholarships in studying Khmer language in 2 years for Vietnamese staffs in Cambodia in 2010. [4], [5]

With the training of students and professional staffs, educational and training cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia also grew broader in many different ways such as developing programs at college level for Vietnamese overseas students, cooperating to publish Vietnamese - Khmer dictionary, printing text books to serve teaching and studying, contacting and communicating, transforming science research topic, exchanging educational professors, encouraging to self- studying. A typical example in the process of cooperating entirely about education between the two countries is that Vietnam provided 16, 870 billion VND without repayment in order to build Mondulkiri high school and 14,997 billion VND to build Banlung high school in Rattanakiri which annually accepts about 300 students per year. Besides, Vietnam finished constructing and giving the career teaching school (having 150 students) in Mondulkiri to Cambodia in 2010. Also, provinces that are near the Cambodia border will have many effective methods to support education for Cambodia. For instance, Gia Lai Province helped Preach Vihear Province to build 12 classrooms at Hunsen natural village with 7 billion VND [7], [11]. With many positive results, it is a clear evidence to prove for closeness and cooperation between Cambodia and Vietnam in the new period.

4. Conclusion

Education and training cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia has made some suitable steps marking positive points, which enhance both quantity and training quality. However, awareness is needed that training courses for Cambodia students in Vietnam and vice versa have some great difficulties, especially in improving and considering about training Vietnamese and Cambodia for exchange student before studying at their neighbors. In addition, both countries should have plenty of conventions and protocols with high legal values in education and training cooperation in order to replace some agreements. Thanks to these conventions, the results and quality of exchange students are guaranteed. Finally, with a view to further strengthening the wholly education and training cooperation relationship between Vietnam - Cambodia, “two sides agree to seriously obey inspection and evaluation wholly education cooperation between two countries, offer some solutions to enhance the training quality” [7]. It is of great importance that Cambodia and Vietnam continue building the ongoing education and training relationship, especially creating a favorable condition signed protocol about education cooperation for the period 2011-2015 between the two governments.

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Journal reviewer: Dr. Nguyen Kim Dung

(Received: 12/7/2013; Revised: 14/8/2013; Accepted: 18/9/2013)