

Teaching Staff Quality Improvement – Solution to Implement Social Equality in Education in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT: From a learner's perspective, the teaching staff plays the most important and direct role in the implementation of social equality in education. The great achievements that teachers have obtained in education and training are undeniable; however, with the requirements of fundamental and comprehensive innovation in education and training to ensure the social equality for learners, this staff also has certain limitations. Based on that situation, the article proposes solutions to improve the quality of the teaching staff to meet the current international integration trend.

Keywords: Social equality in education, quality, teaching staff, Vietnam

I. INTRODUCTION

We are on the path of the country industrialization and modernization to bring Vietnam from an outdated agricultural country to a modern industrialized country. People are both a driving force and a goal of the socio-economic development. Therefore, the investment in people and developing new people mainly depends on the teaching staff (teachers). This is also an urgent requirement and a central task of the Education and Training sector, a prerequisite for the goal of the country industrialization and modernization.

The Vietnam Education Development Strategy for the 2011-2020 period clearly states: The teaching staff development is a key step for educational development, thereby confirming that the teaching staff has a particularly important role in educational development in our country. In addition to great achievements of the teaching staff, there are also many shortcomings that need to be resolved to create new breakthroughs in implementing social equality policy and ensure the best interests for learners. The improvement of the capacity of teachers to meet the requirements of education and training innovation is raising many issues of concern that need to be addressed in a synchronized manner. The training of teachers in pedagogical schools is being implemented in the spirit of the Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW dated November 4, 2013 of the 11th Central Committee of the Party Central Committee on fundamental and comprehensive renovation of teacher education and training, meeting the requirements of industrialization and modernization in the conditions of market-oriented socialist economy and international integration. This is also an important and proper guideline to help educational institutions well implement the Vietnam Education Development Strategy in the future.

II. CONTENT

1. Role of teaching staff in implementing social equality in education

Social equality in education is creating equal learning opportunities and is suitable for all learners in approaching, participating in the educational process, and treating learners when studying at educational institutions on the basis of certain socio-economic conditions. Social equality in education also includes the rational resolution of the relationship between mass and spearhead education, between the educational interests of the majority and the priorities for those people with special learning capacities who have made great contributions to education and training. The implementation of social equality in education is to create equality in conditions above minimum standards, exercise democracy, openness and transparency in planning education

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policies and investment in education, implement the regimes prescribed for learners and teachers, as well as encourage social forces to participate in the education development.

In order to implement social equality in education, our Party and State have launched many groups of solutions, such as: group of solutions to raise awareness about the importance of implementing social equality in education; group of solutions for socio-economic development as a condition for realizing social equality in education; group of solutions on mechanisms, policies, implementation organization, etc. Social equality in education is expressed in many different respects; however, within the scope of this article, we only mention a solution that is considered to be of leading importance in the implementation of social equality in education for learners - it is the issue of the teaching staff.

Education and training have a heavy but very glorious responsibility to train people and provide high quality labor resources in accordance with the social requirements. At present, the continuous improvement of training quality is considered as an important political task leading to the survival of any educational institution from high school to university nationwide. Among the factors that ensure the training quality, the teaching quality of teachers plays a decisive role. Because the teaching staff is the direct participation force, they are the most prominent subject in many subjects involved in education - training activities.

The Party and the State have affirmed the role of the teaching staff at the 2 session of the 8th Plenum: Teachers are a decisive factor in the quality of education and are honored by society; in the Education Law 2005: Teachers play a decisive role in ensuring the education quality. These are the right and consistent views of the Party and the State affirming the role of teachers in the cause of education and training. However, in the Education Development Strategy for the 2011-2020 period, it is pointed out: One of the important causes leading to the limitations, weaknesses and inadequacies of education and training is the incorrect awareness of the decisive role of the teaching staff. In our opinion, this is a judgment and a serious and objective assessment based on current social practices. We have emphasized that learners are central but do not appreciate the teacher's role. The teaching staff has a great role in the cause of education and training. If this perspective is not thoroughly understood to become a consistent awareness, it is impossible to innovate substantially and comprehensively with education and training.

2. Current status of teachers in implementing social equality in education

The development of education and training is the responsibility of the whole Party, the entire people and the whole society; in which the teaching staff is the core force, playing a decisive role in operating, implementing and perfecting the education system. Over the past years, the Party and the State have paid attention to building and developing the teaching staff in the direction of standardization, ensuring sufficient quantity, uniformity in structure, quality improvement, with special emphasis on lifting high political stance, ethical qualities, lifestyle, professional conscience, professional qualifications and qualifications of teachers, meeting the increasing requirements of educational career in the country industrialization and modernization.

According to the General Statistics Office, in the school year 2015-2016, the country had more than 1.4 million teachers, of which, the preschool level was 294,655 thousand people, the primary level was 396,843 people, the secondary school level was 313,526 people, the high school level was 150,900 people, and the university and college level was 93,507 people.

In recent years, besides increasing in number, the training of teachers meeting the standards of teachers has been paid attention by the education sector. Standard and above-standard teachers account for a high percentage in all grades. At the primary level, the number of teachers reaching standard and above standard accounted for 99.9% and the figure for secondary and high school level made up 99.49%[†]. Thus, this figure basically shows the efforts of the education sector in building and training the teaching staff to meet the industry's tasks and goals.

However, besides the achievements that the Party, State and people have achieved in the cause of education, there are still shortcomings, namely the education management staff and employees are inadequate in quality, quantity and structure; a department has not kept up with the requirements of education renovation and development, lack of enthusiasm and even violated professional ethics. In particular, a few teachers have seriously violated ethics, which greatly affected the honor and prestige of the profession, affected public opinion and reduced people's confidence into the teaching staff.

From the perspective of social equality in education for learners, it can be seen that the scope of educational objects does not cover all of the population. That is the ability of the poor to pay for education services is still low, even in some localities; access to education of rural and mountainous children is much lower than that of urban children; and access to educational services for girls is lower than for boys. In addition, non-financial causes that hinder access to education services for poor children are the traveling distance,

[†] Source: <http://www.qdnd.vn/van-hoa-giao-duc/giao-duc/trong-tam-la-chat-luong-doi-ngu-nha-giao-493056>

difficulty in transportation, problems of language and low people's awareness, etc., have significantly affected children's rights to education.

In general, there exist many problems in the implementation of social equality in education; overcoming this problem is the great responsibility of the whole society. However, it can be affirmed that teachers also have a great impact on the implementation of social equality in education for learners.

The decisive role in implementing the policy of illiteracy eradication and education universalization belongs to the teaching staff. Up to now, the country has completed the work of eradicating illiteracy, universalizing primary education and implementing secondary education. The drastically striving to achieve the universalization of education at all levels has great socio-political significance, while ensuring the sustainable development of education and improving the quality of training, on that basis, step by step meeting the requirements of improving people's awareness, enhancing the quality of human resources and training talents. Attaining that success, it is the combined strength of the entire Party and the entire population, in which the staff of educational managers and teachers is a key force of determination, a strong will to overcome difficulties and not to be afraid of difficulties, especially teachers working in mountainous, deep-lying and remote areas. Therefore, this success, in our opinion, first comes from the teaching staff.

Differences in teacher qualifications by region. Although the number of teachers who reach the standard and above the standard of training is very high, the capacity and professional qualifications of many teachers are still unsatisfactory. This situation occurs at all levels of education, not only in mountainous areas, especially difficult areas, but also in large cities. Basically, teachers in urban areas are more qualified than those in rural areas. This is explained by many subjective and objective reasons. Although the Ministry of Education and Training has also had policies to rotate and increase teachers for mountainous areas, it does not bring in high efficiency. This situation shows the social inequality of learners, especially in extremely difficult areas.

The imbalance in the structure of subjects and levels. This has led to a shortage of cultural teachers, a shortage of teachers teaching specific, elective subjects; the structure of teachers at the unbalanced level, the preschool level is seriously lacking while the lower secondary level is in large quantity. The situation of oversupply and lack of teachers in addition to objective reasons from population fluctuations, migration, urbanization, etc. has led to a change in the number of pupils at all levels, and is also caused by the examination of education officials. This imbalance in the near future will cause another imbalance in the choice of majors and levels of high school students.

Achievement diseases in the education are dragging Vietnam's education down. Facing this situation, since 2006 the Ministry of Education and Training has launched the movement "Say no to negative in examination and achievement disease". However, in recent years, achievement disease has the opportunity to "outbreak" again. The underlying cause of this situation is that the set of emulation targets are too high, incompatible with the actual ability to achieve, leading to the schools "struggling" to run the targets. Achievement disease has caused significant consequences to many components: Schools, teachers, students, even affect the parents of students. Students go to school under pressure from many sides, but most directly from their teachers. The special incentives and special regimes for teachers may urge a large number of teachers chasing achievements and scores. Doing this, in a certain aspect, leads to an imbalance in learning, that students only know how to learn but do not know the behavioral culture and living skills. It seems that we are doing the opposite of the slogan "Study manners first then read and write". This is the main reason leading to school violence - a problem that is painful for the society today. To combat the virtual achievement disease in education, the teaching staff should be pioneering.

3. Solutions to improve the quality of the teaching staff to ensure social equality in education

In order to develop education, there is a need for the support of many factors: financial resources, human resources, facilities, social support, etc. Among these factors, the teaching staff is the most important one. They are a prerequisite to ensure the quality of national education. The common goal of our country's education is to train Vietnamese people to develop comprehensively: having ethics, knowledge, health, aesthetics and careers, adhering to the ideals of national independence, forming and fostering citizenship, quality and capacity of citizens. In the process of realizing the common goal, each level and subject must have appropriate goals. Teachers are an important role in the relationship between teachers and learners, this is the central relationship of education in the educational environment. Therefore, teachers must be built and developed strongly so that learners can fully enjoy benefits in terms of social equality. To this end, attention should be paid to the following solutions:

Firstly, formulate special mechanisms and policies for teachers

Develop a reasonable and satisfactory salary and allowances for teachers. Salary and allowances are calculated on the basis of work efficiency in order to create the efforts, strives and devoted dedication of the teachers to their job.

Develop a process of recruiting teachers and lecturers in accordance with the characteristics of each educational level, which is close to the realities of the region.

Review, amend, supplement, complete and develop preferential policies and regimes for public-service houses for teachers working in areas with difficult socio-economic conditions and specialized schools and pay more attention to training ethnic minority teachers.

Adopt policies to further encourage teaching staff to raise their professional qualifications; support young teachers with accommodation, learning and scientific research.

Formulate policies and mechanisms to attract overseas Vietnamese and international experts to participate in domestic teaching and research. This is a very important solution, both improving the quality of teachers, and creating conditions for learners to inherit advanced educational achievements in the world.

Secondly, build a standardized roadmap

Implement a comprehensive review of teachers at all levels to standardize and develop a standardized roadmap. Build a full database of teachers to make annual training and retraining plans.

Standardized criteria: Depending on the level of education to develop standardization criteria. However, to meet the requirements of the current context, teachers must be standardized in terms of professional qualifications, pedagogical skills, foreign language skills, and information technology qualifications.

From the perspective of social equality in education, the education sector needs to resolutely eliminate those teachers who are weak in professional and professional capacity; and arrange other jobs suitable for them. Without this, basic and comprehensive innovation of education and training will be difficult to be successfully implemented.

Thirdly, re-planning the network of pedagogical training institutions

In order to build and develop the teaching staff, it is impossible not to mention the solution to pedagogical schools. In reality, the capacity of lecturers at universities with pedagogical training is still inadequate, especially pedagogical and scientific research capacity. In order to meet the requirements of standardizing the teaching staff, pedagogical schools must also constantly renovate the form, content, teaching methods to ensure both improving the quality of student training, and ensuring demand of international integration trend. Moreover, this training process also needs to take into account local human resources and practical requirements. From this fact, the Education and Training sector needs to coordinate more closely with localities, associate planning, retrain and recruit staff at all levels in accordance with the practical situation of the locality. It is necessary to create a systematic training link between the key schools and the local schools. In addition, the Education sector also needs to continue to organize the reorganization, reorganization and re-planning of teacher training and retraining institutions and renew the operation of pedagogical schools across the country.

Fourthly, it is crucial to deploy the training, fostering and improving the professional ethical quality of the teaching staff in the current situation.

Innovate methods of training and retraining teachers, focus on integrated teaching methods, organize training according to their carrying capacity and credit training; innovate content and organizational forms of pedagogical practice; coordinate with schools and educational institutions in approaching, train and update professional knowledge; standardize and improve skills, professional ethics, attitudes and responsibilities in teaching. Train and retrain to standardize teachers on occupational skills, pedagogical skills, foreign languages, information technology in the direction of standardization, sufficient in quantity and quality assurance.

Fifthly, strengthen international cooperation in teacher training and fostering

Strengthen international cooperation in staff development, proceed to exchange experts between countries in the region and around the world. Expand cooperation with some countries in the world through organizing conferences, international seminars, survey and learn experiences on teacher training abroad; organize teachers to go abroad for training, or invite foreign experts to train in Vietnam; and receive transfer of training and retraining programs for teachers.

Strengthen cooperation in scientific research, exchange of experience in innovating teaching methods and applying new scientific and technological achievements to improve the quality of the teaching staff.

Sixthly, increase resources to develop the teaching staff

Strengthen resources for the teaching staff development, including: The State budget is based on the current budget decentralization, learners' contributions as prescribed by the law, mobilization of socialized

resources from joint venture and association activities of educational institutions and organizations, individuals, domestic and foreign enterprises and other legal sources.

The State plays a key role in securing resources to train and foster the teaching staff for the whole system and the teaching staff to conduct training and retraining.

Seventhly, make plans for self-study, self-improvement and professional training

In today's market economy, the virtues and talents of teachers have to be closely linked. Educators not only do one thing is to transfer existing knowledge but also to become an organizer of cognitive activities, cognitive orientation, suggestive and build political bravery and stance for learners. Therefore, the teaching staff needs to really meet the two requirements of "both stuff and profession". To do that, teachers need to constantly "refresh" themselves of knowledge, pedagogical skills and practical experience and constantly self-study to expand knowledge. The reality of teaching shows that every teacher not only has extensive professional knowledge in his/her specialty but also needs to be thorough, knowledgeable, always updated with new knowledge, meeting the requirements of the international integration trend.

Above are the solutions to build and develop the teaching staff to implement social equality in education for learners. To be effective, these solutions must be implemented synchronously and above all, the responsibility for implementing social equality in education rests with the whole society. Targeting to social equality in education also means towards the development view that Vietnam has chosen "Fast, efficient and sustainable development, economic growth coupled with the implementation of progress and social equality".

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