

On a Survey of the Vietnam Trade Union College

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1. Design of the survey

To find out bases for measures to improve tasks of teaching and learning in the Vietnam Trade Union College in the future, we have conducted a survey with a view to collect opinions about activities of the College in recent years.

Target groups of the survey comprise managers and professors of the College; graduates from the College in the last three years; and managers of concerns employing graduates from the College. And we provided them with suitable questionnaires designed for each group. And the we received 76 answers from graduates, comprising 35 male and 41 female ones (some 50% of them majoring in labor protection; 26.3% in business administration and 13.2% in management accounting); 36 answers from managers and officials of the College; and 21 ones from employers (directors and managers of economic and administrative concerns).

2. Main results of analyses

All three groups agree that the biggest shortcomings of graduates are their use of foreign languages

(54% of graduates; 44.4% of officials and 38% of employers said graduates's ability in this field is below the medium level); their ability to use information technology (37% of graduates; 42% of officials and 29% of employers said graduates's ability in this field is below the medium level); and problem analyzing and solving ability (29% of graduates; 33% of officials and 19% of employers said graduates's ability in this field is below the medium level).

Some 10% of officials say graduates lack ability to cope with realities, learn by their own to improve their skills, and apply their expertise. Although these officials represent only a minority, their opinion is worth considering.

All employers think graduates' basic knowledge and ability to cope with realities and learn by themselves are above the medium; and some 60% of graduates are given higher scores. Most college officials share this judgement but think that only 40% of graduates are good. However, some 4% of these officials say graduates only reach the medium level in terms of these fields.

Table 2: Need for more training courses by graduates

Courses	Employers supporting more training (%)	Graduates taking courses or learning by themselves (%)
Technical theory	9.5	80.3
Technical practice	38.1	59.2
Research methods	4.8	13.2
Management	4.8	19.7
Investigation at home and abroad	9.5	2.6
Foreign language	33.3	57.9
Computing	38.1	68.4
VCP Politics	0.0	34.2
More bachelor degree	0.0	22.4
Postgraduate studies	66.7	2.6

On the other hand, most graduates think the basic knowledge supplied by the college is not enough for them to do well their jobs: 20% of them think they are of the medium level. Graduates also show that they need for more training and learning: over 80% of graduates have a need for technical theories (it is understandable because most of them, as mentioned above, are not very content with the knowledge supplied by the college); 60% of them need more training in foreign languages and computing (40% of employers share this opinion); and 60% of

them need more training in technical practice.

When asked what have the biggest effect on the training quality, from 50% to 60% of college teachers and students mention the expertise and skills of teachers. Some 58% of college officials stressed the role of examination. Other aspects they mentioned are premises, facilities for teaching, training process, teaching methods and curricula, managerial skills of officials, and relations between colleges and economic concerns.

The data show that factors with the biggest effects are: the army of

Table 1: Estimates of the training quality

Subjects	Graduates		Officials		Employers	
	Below medium	Above medium	Below medium	Above medium	Below medium	Above medium
Basic knowledge	19.7	80.3	2.8	97.2	0.0	100.0
Ability to apply and develop the expertise	17.1	82.9	5.6	94.4	0.0	100.0
Self-educating ability	14.5	85.5	8.3	91.7	0.0	100.0
Ability to cope with realities	18.4	81.6	8.3	91.7	0.0	100.0
Problem analyzing and solving ability	28.9	71.1	33.3	66.7	19.0	81.0
Ability to apply information technology	36.8	63.2	41.7	58.3	28.6	71.4
Foreign language fluency	53.9	46.1	44.4	55.6	38.1	61.9

Table 3: Opinions about factors affecting the training quality (%)

Factor	Officials' opinion	Graduates' opinion
Examinations	58.3	26.3
College premises	55.6	38.2
Teachers' expertise and skills	50.0	61.8
Facilities for teaching	47.2	44.7
Training process	36.1	44.7
Teaching methods	27.8	51.3
Curricula	25.0	59.2
Participation in researches	25.0	19.7
College managerial skills	25.0	39.5
Relations with economic concerns	13.9	39.5
Access to the Internet	11.1	47.4

teachers, curricula, premises and facilities, and relations with economic concerns. When asked about quality of the army of teachers, college managers appreciate their theoretical knowledge, sense of responsibility and enthusiasm, and readiness in supporting and directing students (over 90%). But 67% of these managers say the biggest shortcoming of this army is the lack of ability to update on realities at home and abroad; and 25% think this shortcoming comes from the lack of foreign language fluency. Some 80% of managers think the army of teacher gain high scores in such aspects as practical skills, experience of teaching methods, and ability to conduct researches; but 8% don't share this estimate. In addition, 20% of managers say teachers are not good at knowledge and skills of examining and assessing their students.

These data show that managing the army of teachers plays an important role in controlling the teaching and learning process. The College must provide conditions for teachers to update their knowledge, improve their foreign language fluency and apply new teaching and researching methods.

As for the curricula, 90% of officials and 87% of graduates think the curricula

have clear objectives and provide students with enough basic knowledge; 94% of officials say the curricula are implemented properly but only 79% of graduates share this opinion. When asked whether subjects in the curricula are arranged reasonably in the class schedule or not, 94% of officials say yes while 66% of graduates say no. thus we have temporarily no answer to this question.

Both officials and graduates think the following aspects are not good enough:

- The curricula are not equal to international and regional levels (81% of officials and 76% of graduates,

but this situation is common among Vietnamese universities.

- The curricula fail to provide conditions for students to choose their elective subjects as they wish (83% of officials and 72% of graduates). This situation affects badly the effort to find jobs by graduates.

- The curricula fail to encourage students to develop their self-learning and creative ability (39% of officials and 45% of graduates), and combine learning with scientific researches (31% of officials and 46% of graduates).

As for relations between the College and economic concerns (employers), most opinions

say they are not close enough and tend to be a one-way relation because most employers never look for information from the College or inquire about future graduates.

3. Some conclusions

Besides achievements gained by efforts of both students and college officials, the survey allows us to identify some shortcomings.

- College statutes are not observed properly by both teachers and students.

- In building the curricula and objectives, the College fails to secure contributions from experienced experts and students.

- There is a shortage of competent teachers, and many of them fail to update their knowledge or apply their knowledge to realities.

- Application of new teaching method is not common enough.

- Cooperation between different departments of the college in working out the training plan and student affairs management is still lacking.

- Relations between the College and future employers are not close and favorable enough. ■

