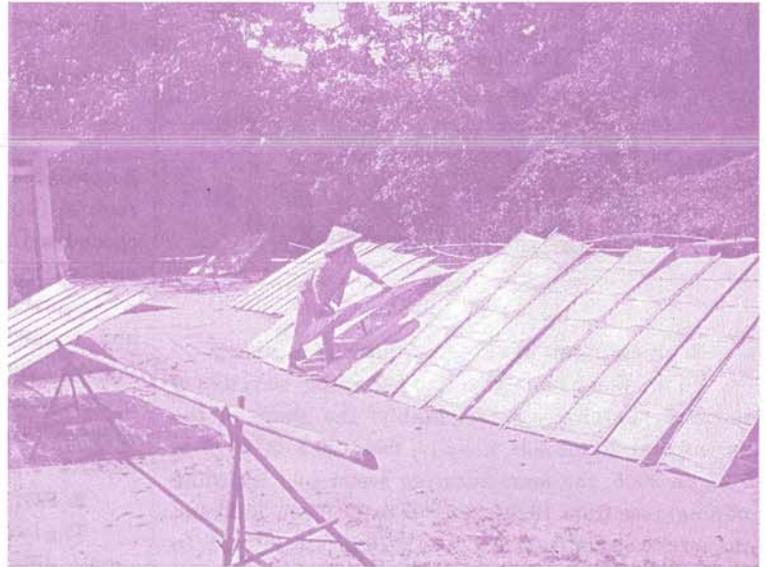


My survey of in 300 guilds provides many problems with their human resource. The first one is their small scale. Most traditional guilds in this region are small although some of them have developed into companies with better machines and management. Their workforce is determined by business performance, products and specific features of their trade. Guilds employing some machines (ceramics, textile, lacquerware, etc.) usually have bigger workforce in comparison with ones based on manual labor.

Table 1: Workforce

Workforce	Concerns	%
Under 10 laborers	215	71.7
10-20	31	10.3
20-30	17	5.7
30-40	15	5.0
40-50	7	2.3
50-60	3	1.0
60-70	4	1.3
70-80	1	0.3
80-90	1	0.3
90-100	2	0.7
Over 100	4	1.3
Total	300	100

The workforce of a guild depends on its degree of development. Many guilds making ceramics in Bình Dương, lacquerware in Tương Bình Hiệp, textile in Xuân Thới Đông and wooden artworks in Trung Mỹ Tây, etc. have passed their good days and many laborers have had to look for new jobs. Guilds that maintain some market shares, such as thin rice pastry from Phú Hòa Đông and bambooware from Thái Mỹ, could maintain their labor force to a certain extent. In addition, the fast urbanization and appearance of new industrial estates in Bình Dương, Đồng Nai, HCMC, and Tây Ninh that offer new employment opportunities have attracted more and more laborers from traditional guilds. And as a



Human Resource for Traditional Guilds in Eastern South

by MEcon. NGUYỄN ĐÌNH HÒA

result, their armies of skilled laborers reduce quickly. My survey shows that the shortage of labor is found in 22.3% of 300 concerns surveyed. More specifically, 6.6% of thin rice pastry concerns in Phú Hòa Đông; 22.2% of wooden artworks concerns in Trung Mỹ Tây; 15% of textile concerns in Xuân Thới Đông; 35.6% of ceramic concerns in Bình Dương; 5% of bambooware concerns in Tây Ninh; 50% of lacquerware concerns in Tương Bình Hiệp and 63.6% of ceramic concerns in Đồng Nai lack skilled labor.

Table 2: Difficulties in terms of human resource

Difficulties	Cases	%
Lack of support from the State	177	59.0
Lack of market information	78	26.0
Lack of managerial experience	56	18.7
Lack of capital	196	65.3
Lack of skilled labor	67	22.3
Increased cost of raw materials	260	86.7
Obsolete machines	68	22.7

Unsuitable workshops	56	18.7
Decreased market demand	66	22.0
Total	300	341.4

The shortage of skilled labor in Eastern South hasn't been very serious but effective measures are necessary to maintain the existing labor force in these traditional guilds. Comparing with local standards, many laborers in these guilds have good skills. My data show that 172 out of 300 concerns employ 961 laborers with excellent skills; and 236 others employ 1,606 laborers with good skills. Most of them learn their trade from experience or from older laborers and they usually get their jobs from their early ages. Many owners of concerns have at least 10 years of experience and many of their products are exported.

Most traditional guilds have no designer with the result that their products are not diverse and beautiful enough. Many designs have been used

for generations and many concerns make the same products of the same designs. Both skilled and unskilled laborers haven't got good education. Most of them only finish primary of junior secondary schools. Graduates from the senior secondary schools are usually found in larger concerns. Owner196s of these concerns are not better educated than their employees. It's poor education prevents them from applying new techniques, managerial methods, standard accounting or expanding their businesses.

After getting jobs, most laborers only get short-term training courses from older workers at their workplace and only a few get formal training from technical schools. My survey shows that 2,506 laborers in 234 concerns got only short-term training courses at their workplace and 870 others in 165 concerns got no training. They are the main force of the concerns. The survey also shows that only 81 laborers in 40 concerns got training from technical high schools; 70 laborers in 41 concerns finished education from colleges; and 46 laborers in 26 concerns were graduates from universities. These trained workers are usually managers or white collar employees in companies. As for employers, they usually lack knowledge of management, law, design, etc. This situation makes it difficult for them to develop and modernize their businesses.

Table 3: Education of the labor force

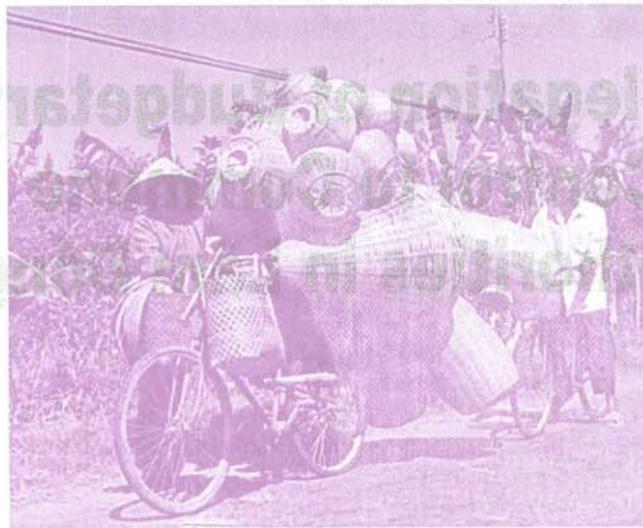
Education of employees	Concerns	Laborers	Average
University (4 years)	26	46	1.77
College (3 years)	41	70	1.71
Technical high school	40	81	2.03
Short-term training	234	2,506	10.71
No training	165	870	5.27

The average income of a laborer in traditional guild varies between VND700,000 to 1.3 million a month. In concerns requiring artistic skills, such as ceramics, lacquerware or wooden artworks, laborers usually get higher incomes than their counterparts in concerns employing only manual labor. Laborers could get pay on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, and their skills and number of pieces produced will determine their wages.

Their average income is acceptable but their working conditions are poor. Most of them lack

Laborers in most concerns are family members. Larger companies may employ laborers from other provinces. Most concerns may give short-term training courses but pay little attention to selection when recruiting labor. They usually have no system of estimating labor performance or rating skills and progress of laborers; buy no social insurance or medical care for laborers; and make no payroll.

In all traditional guilds, there are no standards for rating skills of laborers and praising skilled laborers and masters of the trade. This is one of



equipment and machines and the workplace is usually not airy and well lighted. Laborers have no protective clothes when they are exposed to chemicals. Even companies in these traditional guilds could not ensure as good working conditions as companies in other industries.

Table 4: Income of laborers

Monthly income (VND)	Concerns	%
Under 500,000	29	9.7
500,000 - 700,000	49	16.3
700,000 - 900,000	60	20.0
900,000 - 1,000,000	66	22.0
1,000,000 - 1,300,000	61	20.3
1,300,000 - 1,500,000	22	7.3
Over 1,500,000	13	4.3
Total	300	100

reasons for decline of many guilds.

The training in guilds is usually poor. Training is given by fathers to their children and limited to close family members. Only a handful of laborers get formal training from technical schools. At present, besides a college of fine arts in Đồng Nai where training courses in making ceramics are given, there is no training school that aim at developing the human resource for traditional guilds in Eastern South.

In short, the traditional guilds are facing many problems with their human resource, which are affecting badly their survival and development ■