

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE OF SOME DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND LESSONS DRAWN FOR VIETNAM TODAY

EXPERIENCIA EN DESARROLLO DE RECURSOS HUMANOS DE ALGUNOS PAÍSES DESARROLLADOS Y LECCIONES EXTRAÍDAS PARA VIETNAM HOY

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ABSTRACT

As the Fourth Industrial Revolution is strongly growing, human resources, especially high-quality ones, play a decisive role in the socio-economic development of each country. Therefore, priority is given by many countries to building and developing human resources, because, in the current context, human resources fully equipped with skills and knowledge will contribute to the development of individuals, organizations and countries. From the strong economic development of the US, Japan and Western countries in the mid-20th century to the title of “Asian Tigers” given to four economies in East Asia and the rapid growth of ASEAN countries, all thanks to policies of human resource development. However, in different countries, the development of human resources is implemented in different directions depending on the economic, cultural and social conditions of each country. In Vietnam, after nearly 35 years of renovation, the country has earned great achievements in human resource development, most clearly reflected in the productivity improvement of the whole society, which speeds up the growth rate and enhances economic competitiveness and national potential. Also, it is necessary to admit that, compared to the resources invested and efforts spent, as well as the conditions and opportunities offered, the achievements mentioned above are still not commensurate with the country’s potential. Therefore, this article aims to discuss the human resource development strategies of some countries in the world, thereby drawing lessons for Vietnam.

Keywords: Human resource development; human resource; human resource development in Vietnam.

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RESUMEN

Mientras la Cuarta Revolución Industrial avanza con fuerza, los recursos humanos, especialmente los de alta calidad, juegan un papel decisivo en el desarrollo socioeconómico de cada país. Por lo tanto, muchos países dan prioridad a la construcción y el desarrollo de los recursos humanos, porque, en el contexto actual, los recursos humanos plenamente equipados con habilidades y conocimientos contribuirán al desarrollo de las personas, las organizaciones y los países. Desde el fuerte desarrollo económico de los EE.UU., Japón y los países occidentales a mediados del siglo XX hasta el título de “Tigres asiáticos” otorgado a cuatro economías en el este de Asia y el rápido crecimiento de los países de la ASEAN, todo gracias a las políticas de desarrollo de recursos humanos. Sin embargo, en diferentes países, el desarrollo de los recursos humanos se implementa en diferentes direcciones dependiendo de las condiciones económicas, culturales y sociales de cada país. En Vietnam, después de casi 35 años de renovación, el país ha obtenido grandes logros en el desarrollo de recursos humanos, que se reflejan más claramente en la mejora de la productividad de toda la sociedad, lo que acelera la tasa de crecimiento y mejora la competitividad económica y el potencial nacional. Asimismo, es necesario reconocer que, frente a los recursos invertidos y los esfuerzos realizados, así como a las condiciones y oportunidades ofrecidas, los logros mencionados aún no están a la altura del potencial del país. Por lo tanto, este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir las estrategias de desarrollo de recursos humanos de algunos países del mundo, extrayendo así lecciones para Vietnam.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo de recursos humanos; Recursos humanos; desarrollo de recursos humanos en Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION

In modern society, human is the most important resource for the development of any organization and any country, because the exploitation of other resources requires qualified and skillful human resources. Understanding that many countries around the world have had policies to develop their domestic human resources as well as to attract high-quality human resources from other countries. Rothwell said: “*Human resource development* refers to the organized learning experience funded by the business owners. It is designed and implemented for the purpose of improving performance and the betterment of the human condition through the integration of organizational goals and individual needs” (Rothwell, 1997). As for Jerry W. Gilley, “Human resource development is understood as the process of promoting organized learning, improving work performance, and creating changes through the implementation of

management solutions (official and non-official), initiatives and activities to enhance organizational capacity, performance, competitiveness and innovation” (Jerry w. Gilley, 2002, 6-7). So, many countries in the world have identified the important role of human resources and set out appropriate human resource development strategies, thus having many breakthroughs in socio-economic development. This is the case in the US, Japan and some Western countries. However, these countries are developed economies with modern forces of production. As for countries with modest potentials whose economic, social and cultural characteristics are similar to Vietnam but have succeeded in their industrialization, such as South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, etc., their miraculous development is thanks to human resource development at micro and macro levels, as well as the experience in training and developing technical workforce. This article clarifies the achievements of several countries in the region in terms of human

resource development through education and training. Thereby, the authors seek for solutions to develop the technical workforce in Vietnam (Do Minh Cuong, 2004). For Vietnam, the work of the Institute of World Economics and Politics has provided an insight into the successful education and training policies of East Asian countries, which are an important solution in providing human resources that meet the requirements of the country's industrialization. It also draws a lesson for Vietnam in planning its human resource development strategy (Institute of World Economics and Politics, 2003). Also, recent growth theories pointed out that, an economy that wants to grow rapidly and at a high rate must be based on at least three basic pillars: the application of new technologies, the development of modern infrastructure and the improvement of human resource quality (Hawler, 2008), or having a favorable legal environment for investment, and a stable sociopolitical environment (Jerry w. Gilley, 2002). Those are the foundations for the article to focus on clarifying the views and policies of human resource development of several countries in the world, thus helping Vietnam draw useful lessons, especially in the current context of accelerating industrialization, modernization and international integration.

METHODS

The article utilizes several research methods, including dialectical materialist and historical materialist ones to discuss the experience in building high-quality human resources to meet requirements in the gradual transition to a knowledge-based economy and in the trend of globalization and international economic integration; the strategy to attract, arrange and use high-quality human resources; the economic, cultural, mental, religious, psychological, etc. life of workers of each country in the trend of improving human resource quality; social security issues and the construction of human resource development culture, etc.

The article also uses methods of descriptive statistics, statistical analysis, comparison and synthesis to evaluate the human resource development of developed countries and countries in the region. Through this, lessons are drawn for Vietnam to figure out human resource development solutions in the current period. Research findings and experience exchanges on human resource issues between countries in the region and the world are used to build a knowledge ecosystem with coordination among stakeholders, thus gradually realizing the vision of human resource development in Vietnam in Industry 4.0 and building effective solutions.

In order to achieve the research objectives, qualitative analysis has been conducted and data have been collected from many different sources. In particular: theoretical issues have been drawn from domestic and international research; findings of previous studies which are published in national and international scientific journals; information used in the analysis is collected from published statistical data and consolidated reports from relevant organizations and management agencies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Experience in human resource development of the US

To develop human resources, the US government attaches great importance to providing a creative environment and encouraging talent development, as well as fostering and attracting talents in many fields. World War II gave the US the opportunity to attract a huge source of brainpower, namely top scientists and scholars from Europe and many other countries. According to data from the World Bank (WB), the per capita GDP of some prominent developed countries in 2019, such as the US, is 65,111 USD (World Bank in Vietnam, 2019).

To achieve the above results, the US has been through 200 years of development with a

pragmatic philosophy and the motto of “human resources are the center of all development”. Therefore, right after the Revolutionary War in 1776, the US government launched a strategy to build human resources in two main directions: focusing on investing in education and training, and attracting and using talents. For the development of education and training, the US government funded all states to build schools. Therefore, the system of high schools was expanded and developed continuously. By 1954, there were enough schools and learning facilities for students of various racial and ethnic groups in the United States.

The budget for education in the US increased day by day, accounting for 5.3% of GDP in 1960, rising to 7% of GDP in 1991 and since then has always remained at more than 7%. The government provides 75% of the funding for the education system (both public and private schools).

In the education & training system, general education is determined as fundamental and serves as the basis for higher and professional education; higher education holds a central position and plays an important role in directly training human resources for the country. Higher education consists of two main categories: The first one includes two-year training institutions (i.e. community colleges, which developed stably in the last decades of the 19th century and continued to develop strongly in the 20th century and into the 21st century). The second one is four-year colleges and universities; whose mission is to train students in general and specialized scientific programs in combination with conducting scientific research.

In the US, the reform of higher education is carried out continuously to improve training quality, thus meeting the ever-evolving socioeconomic development and preparing for the great development in the first decades of the 21st century. With a long-term strategy, the funding for higher education in the US comes

from many different sources: The Government, non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, philanthropists, etc. The abundant funding gives schools the ability to build modern facilities, hire good teachers and establish student support funds. The rapidly growing and expanding the scale of higher education and professional secondary education has brought the US to the level of mass higher education, with many of the world’s best schools, such as Harvard University, University of California in Berkeley, University of Chicago, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology, etc. The competition between higher education institutions in the US is very fierce. If a student gets into a university of good reputation and studies well, the chances of getting a job will greatly increase.

This is an endogenous resource and a strong driving force for the development of American education. That is the reason why the number of people going to universities and colleges increased rapidly in the late 20th century. Along with the Government, American companies are also very interested in human resource development and the training of technical workers.

Not only paying attention to training, the US government and authorities at all levels always attached great importance to the use of human resources, especially talented people. To develop human resources, the US government places much value on providing a creative environment and encouraging talent development, as well as fostering and attracting talents in many fields. World War II gave the US the opportunity to attract a huge source of brainpower, namely the immigration of top scientists and scholars in many fields from Europe and many other countries to the US. This is also one of the reasons why the US has many of the world’s leading scientists in many fields. In addition, the Government and businesses often roll out campaigns to hunt for brainpower, hire experts at high prices and create good conditions in terms

of salary, accommodation, travel, etc. for them to work and make contributions.

Thus, thanks to the right strategies and policies over more than 200 years of development, American education has thrived and is now one of the best in the world. This system has created citizens with a high level of education and solid skills to contribute to the country's rise to the position of a superpower in terms of economy and science - technology.

Experience in human resource development of China

China's rise to become the world's second-largest economy is substantially due to quality human resources. This practice of socio-economic development is an eloquent proof of the right human resource development strategy, making China a model to study from. China's GDP in 2020 reached nearly 100 trillion RMB (equivalent to 14.3 trillion USD), higher than the forecast of 92.7 trillion RMB. Accordingly, in the past half-decade, China has lifted 55.75 million people out of poverty and created 60 million jobs in urban areas. By the end of 2020, 1.3 billion Chinese people enjoy basic health insurance and nearly 1 billion people receive basic pension benefits. China has been implementing reforms, opening up and transitioning from a centrally-planned economy to a socialist-oriented market economy since 1978. The Chinese government is very aware that, without strong human resources, it is impossible to reform and modernize Chinese society. To resolve the above contradiction, the Chinese government has developed and implemented a human resource development strategy with important decisions. The large human resources in China are built with high education background, professional skills and good health, which is considered an important issue in the development strategy of countries. However, an equally important issue is to manage and use human resources to promote their capabilities. Policies on management and use of human resources in developed and industrialized

countries are factors to stimulate production and create new incentives for workers. Usually, such policies are integrated into social policies, such as Employment policy, salary policy, and policies related to social welfare including prioritizing domestic education & training (investing in building, upgrading and expanding schools; reforming education & training contents, in which priority is given to updating new knowledge and technologies; inviting foreign experts to teach at colleges and universities; sending teachers to study abroad, etc.); Encouraging and creating favorable conditions for students to study abroad, especially in the US, the UK, Australia, France, Germany, etc.; Building high-tech parks with "training - research - production" complexes (that train technicians, engineers and experts; at the same time conduct research and apply research results to on-site production), typically the Shenzhen high-tech park with 25 leading scientific and training institutions in the world; in rural modernization, implementing the policy of "quitting farming but not leaving the homeland" for on-the-spot training and production; Training highly-skilled workers and technical experts for labor export.

The implementation of the policies mentioned above has brought practical results. After only 20 years of reform and opening-up, China has had quite strong human resources to meet the increasing development requirements of the economy and the society. 5 years after becoming a member of WTO, the economy of China has grown quite rapidly (GDP on average grows more than 10% per year). In 2003, China set out a strategy to further enhance the training and cultivation of talented people in order to achieve the goal of building a well-off society. The main contents of this strategy are: using talents to make the country prosper, growing a large number of high-quality talents; resolutely and thoroughly observing the motto of respecting workers and intellectuals, respecting talents and creativity, promoting talent fostering, persistently innovating and putting efforts in developing a mechanism to evaluate and use talents in a

scientific manner, etc. Currently, the conception of attracting talented people abroad in China is changing, i.e. these people do not need to return to China, but instead can live and work abroad and use their grey matter as well as investment to make contributions to China. Clearly, the Chinese government is well aware of the need to speed up training to meet the country's human resource requirements, value foreign education experience, associate training institutions with research institutes, and have preferential policies to invest in facilities for the development of education, training and scientific research and to attract talented people to serve their country.

Thus, the success of China over the past 30 years is also thanks to their attention to and specific policies of human resource development. In China, higher education has a very long history, and many universities here are famous around the world. The strong development of the Chinese economy and society, with a high annual growth rate, has proved the right direction in developing human resources to serve the process of industrialization and modernization of the country, which is growing the economy in association with providing education and training, solving employment issues and raising the living standards of workers.

Experience in human resource development of Japan

Japan is the third-largest economy in the world. Japan's population in 2011 was about 127.8 million people; its human development index (HDI) in 2011 was 0.901, its GDP in 2011 (based on purchasing power parity) was \$4,440 bn., and its GDP per capita in 20 was \$34,739.

In Asia, Japan is one of the leading countries in human resource development. Due to the fact that Japan has very few natural resources and often suffers from natural disasters, while its population is large, most of the raw materials and fuels have to be imported, and the Japanese economy was destroyed during World War II,

the Japanese government fully understands that Japanese people can only count on themselves, and thus pays special attention to education and training, considering it a top priority of the nation.

Shortly after World War II, the government of Japan implemented the philosophy of development, which is combining Japanese people with Western science and technology.

In order to build new generations that are capable of promoting traditional values and receiving the achievements of Western science and technology at the same time, the Japanese government focuses resources on education and training strategies.

The Japanese education system is divided into four levels: 6 years of primary education, 3 years of lower secondary education, 3 years of upper secondary education, and 4 years of tertiary education; referred to as the "6-3-3-4" education system. The vocational training system consists of vocational schools and colleges (with training programs of 2 to 3 years). The higher education system also includes post-graduate training, distance learning, and training through radio and television to meet the diverse learning needs of people. Accordingly, education programs for primary and secondary levels are compulsory; tuition fees are exempted for all students between the ages of 6 and 15. As a result, the number of students passing the entrance exam to universities and colleges in Japan constantly increases. Japan has also become the world's powerhouse in education.

In order to ensure regular human resources for socio-economic development, the government encourages and creates favorable conditions for the establishment of vocational education and training systems in companies and enterprises. Along with strengthening education and training (especially vocational training), the Government also has preferential policies for skilled and

expert workers; at the same time encourages creative activities of workers to adapt to all conditions. Regarding the use and management of human resources, Japan implements policies of pay rises and seniority bonuses. As such, the government of Japan has focused on education and training and always considers this the leading national policy. The Japanese government's methods of training and using human resources aim to promote the creativity and initiatives of workers; create favorable conditions for workers to quickly adapt to changing working conditions and be acute in mastering new technologies and forms of labor.

Experience in human resource development of Singapore

Singapore is a country in Southeast Asia. In 2010, its population was 5.1 million people. Singapore's human development index (HDI) in 2011 was 0.846, its GDP in 2011 (based on purchasing power parity) was \$314.911 bn., and its GDP per capita in 2011 was \$59,711. In the economic structure of Singapore, agriculture accounts for 0%. Compared to other Southeast Asian countries, Singapore is a small country with a small population and few natural resources but has stronger economic development. This is the result of a lot of efforts of the Singaporean government; however, the biggest factor contributing to this success is the effectiveness of the country's executive apparatus with the right policies and long-term strategies.

One of the most highly appreciated policies of the government of Singapore is the strategy of developing human resources, especially high-quality ones to expand and develop science and technology for the economy, thereby boosting it with a high growth rate. Singaporean government always thoroughly observes the idea that successful human resource development is the main and fundamental factor to ensure the success in socio-economic development in particular and country development in general.

Singapore's policy of developing high-quality human resources is reflected in 2 main points: First, focusing on investing in education and training and developing human skills. The government plays the leading role in the development of education and training. It sets policies, ensures resources for implementing those policies, and establishes necessary organizations and institutions. The current and future needs for human resources of the economy are determined by the government as the decisive factor for the development of the education and training system in Singapore. The government works closely with the private sector to ensure that its education and training system meets the needs of the sectors. It implemented universal primary and secondary education in the 1960s and 1970s to lay the foundation for skill improvement. In the following years, the government aims to improve the quality of primary and secondary education to strengthen that foundation. The technical education and training system are developed in connection with economic development. It is upgraded as Singapore aims to become a "high-tech" manufacturer. Singaporean government closely cooperates with governments of other countries and transnational corporations in developing and training human resources for industry.

Second, promoting the attraction of foreign talents to work in Singapore, enlisting the wisdom of this force to quickly catch up with the development level of other countries and support the training of domestic high-quality human resources. The government of Singapore developed a policy of using immigrants, also known as the foreign talent recruitment policy, as demographic leverage to compensate for the shortage of indigenous workers.

The national human resource information system is developed to provide information on the current labor market and analyze the human resource situation in economic and non-economic organizations. Experienced and good-quality human resources abroad are actively

and systematically recruited to complement the shortage of domestic human resources. Assistance is provided for these people to reside in Singapore. Singaporean government also exempts international students from visa considerations, does not require financial proof, and provides them with a modern learning environment and training programs for diverse professions with moderate tuition fees, etc. Foreign talents are even recruited into the state apparatus. Singapore particularly focuses on attracting talents to work in the public sector. The government has adopted a variety of flexible policies for talents to work in this sector. This is first reflected in the satisfactory compensation and benefits policy for civil servants. Along with appreciating talented people, Singapore is also very bold in replacing individuals that are no longer fit in the apparatus. Regarding the development of human resources in enterprises, the investment in human resource development of these enterprises, especially the small and medium-sized ones, is also supported by the government.

Thanks to these, Singapore rises from a low starting point to achieve many impressive results acknowledged by the whole world. Its thoughts and strategies for human resource development have always been seen as role models for other countries in the region as well as in the world.

Experience in human resource development of Thailand

Thailand's GDP in 2019 is expected to reach \$555.49 bn if its economy remains at the same pace of GDP growth as in 2019. For the transition from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy, Thailand determines that human resource development is the only and the fastest path. Therefore, the Thai government is very interested in investing in education and training. Since 1960, Thailand's education and training have started to thrive with universities, colleges, and vocational schools, both public and private, to create opportunities for people to learn.

The human resource development policy focuses on quantity, quality and industry structure at the same time. This is a solid base for the success of industrialization and modernization in Thailand. The government and schools pay a lot of attention to training skills for workers, including general and specialized skills. For general skill training, the State advocates extensive training of skills to adapt to the changing market needs. Specialized skills training is focused on a number of specialized disciplines to meet the competitive requirements in the market. In addition to the system of specialized training schools, Thailand also deploys vocational training in enterprises (schools within enterprises). Especially, in Thailand, there is a type of school that provides education at all three levels primary, secondary and tertiary. In this school, students at the primary level are given career orientation and training for their talents; at the secondary level, they receive both normal education and vocational training; and finally, at the tertiary level, they are trained intensively according to their choice of profession. The outstanding feature of higher education in Thailand is that private universities strongly thrive; due to the requirement of improving productivity and labor efficiency, schools and economic corporations are linked together and cooperate with foreign countries for training. Due to the policy of developing human resources to meet market development and with special attention to skills training, a large number of Thai workers have been recruited to work in the domestic market as well as in the markets of the Middle East and Asia. Learning from training models of developed countries not only helps the Thai government improve its human resource training technology, but also creates links for the government to receive assistance from many countries.

Lessons drawn for the human resource development of Vietnam in the current period

Human resources are one of the important factors that determine the success or failure of the socio-economic development of a country. Therefore,

human resource development has become an urgent task, not only for each country but also for each region depending on geographical characteristics, population, requirements and orientation of socio-economic development.

For Vietnam, in the process of leading the Vietnamese revolution, especially during the renovation period, the fundamental view of the Communist Party is to put humans at the center of the development process and consider humans as both the goal and the driving force of the country's development. After more than 30 years of renovation, our country has had a great achievement of historical significance. The quality of human resources has been improved, which is most evident in the higher productivity of the whole society, prompting a good growth rate and enhancing the competitiveness of the economy and national potential. Currently, Vietnam has many advantages in terms of human resources thanks to its golden population structure; however, there are still a lot of limitations regarding human resources in Vietnam. Most of the soft skills of Vietnamese workers, especially teamwork and leadership skills, are moderate or weak; and the building of new skills to adapt to technological changes of workers in electronics and garment enterprises does not have much progress.

Based on the analysis of human resource development practices in some countries as presented above, along with the analysis of specific historical conditions of Vietnam, the following lessons about human resource development can be drawn:

First, human resource development must be associated with and respond to the country's socio-economic development strategy in certain periods. Today, in the science and technology revolution and knowledge economy, accompanied by the trend of integration and globalization, competitive advantages belong to the countries with systematically trained human resources

of high quality - people with high professional qualifications, international competitiveness, excellent skills, professional ethics and ability to best adapt to the social production process to achieve rapid and sustainable development.

Second, human resource development must be based on the inheritance and promotion of traditional cultural values combined with the absorption of human cultural quintessence. This is a profound lesson drawn from many countries, the most successful being Japan, Korea, Singapore, China, etc.

Vietnam has had a system of traditional cultural values for thousands of years, in which "Vietnamese patriotism" stands out. These values need to be inherited and promoted in the context of international integration. At the same time, it is necessary to selectively receive the achievements of human civilization (new science and technology knowledge, experience in building a rule-of-law state in history, experience and methods of organizing and managing a modern society, techniques and art in doing business, etc.)

Third, human resource development is the development in terms of quantity and quality of human resources, focusing on developing the quality of human resources (such as physical and mental capability; qualifications, knowledge and practical capability; professional skills and moral qualities, etc.), which have decisive significance to the current socio-economic development in our country. Comprehensive human resources development requires the improvement of physique, knowledge, skills, behaviors, and political and social consciousness. Therefore, the development of human resources, especially high-quality ones, will contribute to socio-economic development, at the same time quickly and sustainably reduce poverty, build great national solidarity, and improve material and mental living standards for our country.

CONCLUSION

Vietnam is falling behind many countries in terms of industrialization, modernization and human resource development, especially in the current context of vigorous international integration. Therefore, it is essential to learn from the experience of countries that have successfully identified and established the relationship between economic strategy and human resource strategy. This is considered one of the foundations for the success in terms of the economy, science and technology of these countries. Vietnam needs to turn human resource development into a driving force for

economic growth through close coordination between economic development strategy and human resource development strategy in order to address the shortage of human resources at the root and at the same time turn the current population burden into its global competitive advantage in the 21st century.

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