



HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY OF EDUCATION

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Abstract: Education plays a particularly important role, not only as a major means of forming and developing the personality of people, but also as a driving force to promote the development of nations at all times. Therefore, most countries in the world, including Vietnam, consider investment in education as investment for the future and define education and training development as the top national policy. Our Party and nation received from Ho Chi Minh an invaluable heritage of arguments on the basic issues on the Vietnamese revolution, including the profound philosophical ideology about education, which remains its theoretical and practical meanings.

Keywords: Ho Chi Minh; education; content; guidelines; meanings.

Article

One of the great heritage that Ho Chi Minh has be queathed to our people and nation is the ideology of education. Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education is expressed with extremely various and profound contents. It is both a combination of the nation and human kind culture's quintessence, and a vivid representation of Vietnamese revolutionary practices as well as the characteristics of the times, based on the inheritance, application and creative development of educational opinions of Marxism - Leninism in specific historical conditions of our country. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh's educational

ideology has profound theoretical and practical implications for the Vietnamese revolution in general, for the fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education and training in our country today in particular. Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education is not only a theoretical basis, a guideline for the construction of educational philosophy and mission, but also a methodological basis for the identification of objectives, contents and methods of education in Vietnam today.

In his life, career and ideology, Ho Chi Minh has always appreciated the role of education. He considered that the mission of "educate people" is tough but also extremely glorious, in order to create newly developed Vietnamese people who are both "communist accomplished" and "specialized", to "reconstruct" what our ancestors have transferred to us,... to walk abreast with the powers of the five continents " (Ho Chi Minh, 2000c, p. 34). Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education is not only expressed by speeches and articles, but also evidenced by special care for education affairs, and especially by the good example of a lifelong learning of Ho Chi Minh.

With a profound and special understanding obtained by experiences and sensible practices, Ho Chi Minh figured out the core limitations of feudal and colonial education. He criticized the conservatism and dogma of *feudal education*; at the same time, clearly pointed out the obscurantism and enslaved nature of the *colonial education*, when "teaching young people to love a country that is not their own country and is giving oppression to them" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000a, p. 399). He condemned the policies of colonial culture that "under the feudal colonial regime, the purpose of going to school was to get a degree in order to become a mandarin; that the purpose of educating slaves of feudal colonialists was to create educated slave to serve them..." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000c, p. 32). From that, He always paid attention on building a new education of an independent Vietnam, an education towards *complete development of people, learning to know, to work, to be a human*. He concluded: We must strive to eradicate the remaining education influence of enslavement of colonialist, such as the indifference to the society, staying out of the life of labor and the struggle of the people; the thought of learning to get a degree, teaching as brain scrambling. And we need to build up the ideology of teaching and learning to serve the Fatherland and the people." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g, p.80). Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary, scientific, humanistic and profound educational ideology was presented richly, concentrated in the following basic contents:

Firstly, Ho Chi Minh's opinions on the important role of education to the development of people and society. With profound knowledge about human nature, the role of human education and with his various practical experience,

Ho Chi Minh always appreciated the important role, function and great effect of education in training, building and comprehensively developing people. He said " "Good and evil are not inherently attributes. Mostly, the education contributes in forming them" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000b, p.383). He advocated building an education because of the people, for the people and aimed at building new people – the socialist people, to build socialism. He pointed out: "To build socialism, first of all, there should exist socialist people" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000i, p. 310). That role, according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology, is clearly shown by the following basic issues: 1). Education contributes a decisively role in equipping comprehensive knowledge, from social sciences and natural sciences to professional and technical qualifications; from ideals, morals to aesthetics, physicals ... for people, forming citizens who are useful to the country. He once asserted that, in order to maintain independence, to make the country rich and strong, all Vietnamese people must understand their rights and duties, gain new knowledge and firstly know how to read and write to take part in the construction of the country. 2). Education plays an important role in the formation and development of human personality and capacity. The revolutionary of our people under the leadership of the Party is for no other purpose than to benefit all people, bring freedom and happiness to all people; that great revolutionary career should be carried out by the people themselves. Therefore, the education will help people reach the values of truth - good - beauty, forming and developing *new socialist people*. According to Ho Chi Minh, new people with all these qualities were the first and foremost premise for the construction of socialism. 3). Education contributes to the expansion and raising of the intellectual level, forming a learning society - the way to quickly and sustainably develop the country. He once emphasized that ignorance is a dangerous internal invasion; said, "an ignorant nation is a weak nation" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000c, p.7). In consequence, education must be developed in order to keep our country in line with advanced countries in the world, creating favorable conditions for people to participate in creating and enjoying cultural values, "turning an ignorant and suffering country into a high-cultured and happy country " (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g, p. 494).

Secondly, Ho Chi Minh's opinions on the goals and missions of the new education. With the vision of the era, Ho Chi Minh pointed out the most basic goals of the education under the new regime, which is to train new Vietnamese people, develop comprehensively, loyal to the country, devoted to the people; love people; diligent, thrifty, honest, truthful; public-spiritedness and selflessness; with a clear international spirit, serving the Fatherland, serving the people. To him, "Learning to work, to be a human, to be a cadre. Learning to serve the mass, classes and people, Father land and humanity" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000e, p. 208). Education fulfills the functions of culture in training the right

ideals and beautiful sentiments; expands and improves people's knowledge; helps gaining good qualities and styles for people. In other words, education is the path, the *way to train people becoming useful people for the society*. Under the new social system owned and ownership activated by the people, education is aimed at training people to succeed the revolutionary career, "Serving the mass, classes and people, the Fatherland and humanity", not to be an official of the old society, not to "train the people to memorize the whole book of what C. Mark and F. Angels told us, but then could not finish the simple tasks assigned" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000k, p. 554). With such lofty goals, *education is an important front* in national construction. It can be affirmed that Ho Chi Minh's opinions from the 1950s of the twentieth century on the goals of education (learning to work, to be human) was consistent with the conception of UNESCO (1997) when considering the goals of Education in modern society as "learning to know, to work, to live and to be human". That shows the long- distance vision and ahead of times in Ho Chi Minh's ideology about the purpose of education.

Thirdly, Ho Chi Minh's opinions on comprehensive education content. Education in Ho Chi Minh's conception, as mentioned above, is towards the noble goal of the people, the comprehensive development of the people. To achieve that goal, the educational content must be comprehensive, consistent with the nature of the school under the new regime; suitable with the characteristics of Vietnam in the general context of the world. It includes education of academic level, professional expertise, ideal views, ethical, physical, aesthetic, national consciousness, patriotism and international spirit...

According to Ho Chi Minh, in the field of knowledge education, there must also be comprehensive education, including academic education, scientific and technical knowledge education, professional knowledge and political consciousness; Because those elements bear a close relationship with each other. He reminded: We must strive to study technology, culture, politics... Without cultural training and education level, you cannot learn technology; without technology, you cannot keep up with the economic needs of the country. However, comprehensive education should pay attention to political theory teaching; because if you only learn culture and technology but do not study politics, it is like walking with your eyes closed. Studying politics is learning about Marxism - Leninism and the Party's policies. With regard to the learning of Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh emphasized that the core is to "learn the spirit of handling issues, for everyone and for ourselves; to study the common truths of Marxism - Leninism to apply creatively to the real situation of our country" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000h, p. 292). According to him, studying Marxism - Leninism, is learning the method of dialectics, learning its scientific, revolutionary and creative spirit. Obtaining the theory of Marxism - Leninism

will guide the masses of the people to be able to perceive and act properly, solving well all problems posed by the reality of the country. He wrote: "Combining the education of the school with the propaganda and political education of the people" (Ho Chi Minh, 1972, p. 33) to "foster new ideas to overcome old ones, leaving the old personalities behind to become the new ones." (Ho Chi Minh (2000f, p. 148). And, as Ho Chi Minh opinions, "On the basis of *good political education and ideology leadership, we must strive to improve the quality of culture and expertise* in order to *be practical* in solving the problems set by the revolution of our country and in the near future, achieving the peaks of science and technology." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000k, p. 403).

The comprehensiveness of educational content in Ho Chi Minh thought is reflected as that education must be geared to educating people both on *virtue, intellect, body, and beauty*; in particular, education *revolutionary morality* must be at the forefront. He emphasized: "Just like a river with water coming from a source, without a source, the river runs dry. Trees could survive because of the roots, it withers without roots; revolutionaries must come along with morality, no morals no matter how talented they are, they cannot lead the people" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000d, p. 252). Therefore, in education content, we need to pay special attention to revolutionary ethics education for cadres and people. He said: "Teaching and learning must respect both talent and ethics. Ethics means revolutionary morality. That is the important root, extremely" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000j, p. 329). In particular, Ho Chi Minh drew special attention to educating ethical qualities such as "diligence, thriftiness, honesty, truthfulness, which are the foundation of new life, the foundation of patriotic emulation" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000d, p. 631), the foundation for building a whole new person.

Ho Chi Minh also concretized educational content to suit each educational level: "In University, it is necessary to combine scientific theory with practice, strive to study advanced theory and science of other countries, combining with our country's reality, to practically help the construction of the country. *In Secondary and High school*, it is a need to ensure students with general knowledge that is firm, practical, appropriate to the needs and money of the nation's construction, leaving out unnecessary parts for real life. *In Primary school*, children need to be taught to: love the country, love the people, love working, love science, respect the public property." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g, p. 81)

Fourthly, Ho Chi Minh's opinions on educational motto and method. In order for education to achieve high quality and efficiency, it is necessary to clearly define that education is a science and it is a must to have the right guidelines and methods of education. He said: "Children's education is a science. So you

must try to study, research, exchange experiences, to progress ceaselessly” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000d, p. 713). This is important, because it creates a difference in a positive way, progressive quality of the new education of the people's democratic system compared to the old education of the semi-colonial feudal regime which was far away from reality, with obscurantism and slavery.

The most correct and scientific motto of education supports learners in acquiring good knowledge, thereby applying creativity in practice, as Ho Chi Minh pointed out, that is: Education content must be associated with reality, teaching and learning must come from the needs of life, serving the Fatherland and the people: “Teaching and learning need to follow the needs of the people and the State. Good teachers, good students provide sufficient staff for agriculture, industry, economics and culture. That is the glorious task of teachers” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g, p. 138). At the same time, according to Ho Chi Minh, in order for education to be effective, teaching and learning must also focus on good implementation of theory always attaching to reality, learning combining with working and production. He wrote: "Studying requires brainstorming, connecting with reality, conducting experiments and practicing. Studying and practicing must be combined with each other ” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000j, p. 331). With a broader vision, Ho Chi Minh also attached great importance to the view of education as a common revolutionary cause, and in the process of carrying out education, a close cooperation between factors such as family, school and society is always a requirement. Because, according to Ho Chi Minh: "Despite of a good education in school, without the family and social education the results will not be completed" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g, p. 394). Therefore, he asserted: “Education is the cause of the masses. It is necessary to fully promote socialist democracy, build a good relationship, close solidarity between teachers, teachers and students, between students themselves,... between the school and the people to successfully complete the mission.” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000k, p. 403).

In order to acquire and master the rich treasure of knowledge about the fields of social life that humanity has created, Ho Chi Minh believed that the most essential thing was that learners must study by themselves with appropriate and effective methods and forms. Learning in reality and life is a direct, fast and close way of learning for every person. Along with that, they should study through books, learn from friends,...

In the educational method, an important requirement that Ho Chi Minh indicated is that learners must set a spirit of overcoming difficulties, consider *to* value self-study, self-training, re-training *and* learning in everywhere. He wrote: "It is not only at school that we could learn, cultivate, train and improve

ourselves, we could and must learn and reform ourselves in every revolutionary activity” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000h, p. 284). Self-studying, self-training, knowing how to apply what has been taught in practice is a great ideology of Ho Chi Minh. Ho Chi Minh's path to becoming an outstanding cultural celebrity, the founder of revolutionary education, also relies on his self-study, self-training and hard training. From his childhood when studying in schools or in his traveling across the five continents to find a way saving the country and when he became the head of the Party and State of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh has never stopped self-studying and always spent time to self-study. He had really set a shining example of the spirit and attitude of striving for continuous learning. According to Ho Chi Minh, in order not to be left behind, not to be surpassed by reality, each person *needs to be a lifelong learner*. He asserted that, "learning is a lifelong task (...). No one can claim to fully and totally study it all ” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g, p. 215). These are really very modern perspectives on education, which Ho Chi Minh, with his own deep awareness and vivid practical experiences throughout the life of revolutionary activities, outlined and conduct at the very early time.

More than that, in the educational method, Ho Chi Minh also attached great importance to the education that must come from and stick to the educational purposes and objects., Among that, He suggested, the way of teaching and learning must be *suitable* with different ages, close to the level, psychological status and activities of the object, combining learning with useful and fun activities. Education must be based on "education level, living habits, enlightenment level, fighting experience, desire, ambition, practical situation of the masses" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000d, p. 248). Furthermore, according to Ho Chi Minh, to achieve good education there must also be a way of organizing education in accordance with the circumstances of each educational object. “Workers, farmers are busy doing their businesses, if the teaching is not suitable for them, with their business,... it will not work. Depending on each working situations, teaching and learning need to be designed to maintain in long-term and perform good outcomes (Ho Chi Minh, 2000g,p 206).

In order for education to be effective, Ho Chi Minh particularly appreciated *the praising method*. The life and career of Ho Chi Minh has always been an excellent example for everyone to follow. Ho Chi Minh affirmed that the praising method, showing the close unity between words and deeds, is one of the most vivid, practical and effective educational measures. He told that: “I have to be a good example, a good example among brothers, and when I am on business, try to be a good example for the people. Setting good example in all three aspects: spirit, material and culture” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000c, p.150). In the method of praising, he also advocated taking good examples of people - good

deeds to educate people. Ho Chi Minh specified: “It is necessary to take those good examples of children and those of good people and good deeds from the people to educate them. Plain arguments should not be said” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000k, p. 556). Especially, Ho Chi Minh stressed that education must be associated with emulation in order to promote the inherent positivity of each individual. He always cared about directing and closely following emulation movements, such as the "Good people, good deeds" national movement, the "Good teaching - good learning" movement in schools, the "Small Plan" movement” for students, creating a large and favorable social environment for education.

Fifthly, Ho Chi Minh's opinions on building teachers. Teachers are those who directly carry out a very tough but glorious task entrusted by the society and the people - *the task of educating people*. Therefore, according to Ho Chi Minh, the role of teachers is very important, a decisive factor to the quality of education; Good or bad students are resulted by the teachers. In consequence, the most important requirement of a teacher is to have good moral qualities and excellent professional qualifications; a passion for the job and a sense of self-respect; focus on good combination between teaching behaviors and teaching knowledge; be excellent in politics, ideology, always keep the standards in words and actions, to really be a good example for students to follow.

It can be said that Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education on education is one of the precious theoretical heritage that he has left for us in the process of fighting and building a new society, which contains very various, profound, vivid, comprehensive, practical content, showing the science, practicality and humanity. By experience and generalization from practice as well as inheritance, development of values in the educational tradition of the nation, the cultural quintessence of mankind, especially the opinions of Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh summarized the ideas of education with profound philosophy, transcending space and time. Hence, his ideology on education remains the validity with great significance and practicality, from theoretical to practical aspects, which are theoretical basis for radical and comprehensive renovation of education and training system in Vietnam today.

Inheriting and promoting the spirit of science, revolution and humanity in Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education, in the process of national renewal, our Party has made revolutionary development decisions on education and training. These are the Party's Resolutions on the task of fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education and training in Vietnam today. The objective of fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education - training, as our Party has determined, is to create a fundamental and strong change in the quality and

effectiveness of education and training; to better meet the increasing demands of the nation's construction and defense and the learning desires of the people.

The guiding views are: (1) Education and training are the top national policies, a decisive factor for the successful implementation of national construction and defense, the cause of the Party, the State and the entire people (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2013, p.1); (2) Basic and comprehensive renovation of education and training; in which vigorously and synchronously renovate the basic elements of education and training, from programs, content, learning and training materials, to teaching and learning methods, examination forms and methods, in the direction of "shifting the educational process mainly from equipping knowledge to comprehensively developing the capacity and quality of learners; learning attached with practice, theory coming along with practice" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016, p. 114); (3) Development of education and training to improve people's knowledge, train human resources, foster talents; Investment in education and training means to investment in development; (4) "Development of education and training must be linked to the needs of socio-economic development, national construction and defense, and the progress of science and technology, human resource development requirements and labor market" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016, , p. 114 – 115); (5) "Reforming the national education system towards an open education system" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016, p. 116), flexible, interconnected between educational levels, standards and between different modes of education and training; (6) "Fundamentally renovating education and training management, ensuring democracy and unity; increase autonomy and social responsibility of educational and training institutions; attaching importance to quality management ..., developing the contingent of teachers and management officials, meeting the requirements of renewing education and training. Standardizing teaching staff according to each educational level and training level. Renewing policies, financial mechanisms, mobilizing the contribution of the whole society; improving the investment efficiency for educational and training development" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016, p. 116 – 117); (7) Proactively and actively integrate into the world to develop education and training, contribute to the renovation and accelerate the industrialization and modernization of the country.

Studying and acquiring Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education, we need to thoroughly grasp and creatively apply his ideology into the characteristics and requirements of the task of building and developing our country today; *on that basis*, building a strategy, goal, mission, content, guideline, and method of scientific education and correctness, in order to bring Vietnamese education to

keep up with regional and world standards, "walking abreast with the powers of the five continents", as President Ho Chi Minh always wanted.

Summary: Ho Chi Minh's ideology of education contains basic and comprehensive content, demonstrating the strategic vision of the education role in the development of people and the whole society. Among them, there are ideas ahead of the world, becoming the truth recognized by progressive humanity and continuing to develop. His ideology of education expressed a profound philosophy, conceived and developed on the basis of inheriting and creatively applying the essence and core values of the national culture along with advanced knowledge of humanity civilization, at the same time, originated from the reality of the country and by then, returned to direct and lead the education of the country. His ideology on education continue to be a theoretical basis for enlightening the cause of renewing Vietnam's education and training in new conditions. Professor Song Thanh once made a very remarkable comment that Ho Chi Minh's philosophy of education is the connection between tradition and modernity, between Vietnam and the world, between the socialist orientation of the people and universal values of humanity.

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