

The Party'S Cadre Political Training and Education in Vietnam – A Comparative Analysis with China

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Published Online: 25 May 2021	Following the system approach developed by David Easton (1967), this study aims to analyse the Party's cadre training and development in Vietnam in comparison with China and test the hypothesis that the Party's cadres training and development in Vietnam lags behind that in China, and there are good experience and lessons learnt in this process. The study shows that the cadre political training and education in Vietnam lags behind that in China in a number of ways: (i) lower quality, modernization and diversification of training programmes; (ii) less competitive and commercialized in cadre training; (iii) the political training and education in Vietnam is largely imposed on the learners, not selective and demand-driven like in China; (iv) remunerations are more competitive in China for lecturers and speakers, including international ones. The implications for Vietnam include: (i) further improvement of the regulations and requirements on cadre training and development in Vietnam; (ii) renewing and updating training content, programme and methodology to make them more learner-oriented; (iii) enhancing quality of annual cadre training planning and delivery; (iv) adequate investment on physical facility for training institutions; (v) renewing the cadre training assesment; and (vi) further strengthening the research and international cooperation.
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KEYWORDS: Cadre, Training and Development, Content and Methodology.	

I. BACKGROUND

The political setup of Vietnam and China have many similarities and differences. Similarities include the single ruling Communist Party, the transition from soviet-style centrally planning economy to socialist market economy, successful reform process and significant socio-economic achievements over the last decades (40 years and 35 years for China and Vietnam respectively). Differences include the size of the Party (80 million members of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) compared to 4 milion of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), the leadership style (collective leadership in Vietnam and individual nucleus leadership in China) and the practical experience in each country...

The cadres, according to Article 4 of the Law on cadres and government officials 2008, are "Vietnamese citizens that are either elected, assigned or appointed to hold tenure positions and titles in the offices of the Communist Party of Vietnam,

state, mass organizations at central, provincial or district levels. They are permanent staff and paid by the state budget". The cadres therefore include the government officials, particularly the mid and high-ranking ones.

The political training and education of the Party's cadres is a core business of the CPV. It is believed that the political training and education in Vietnam lags behind China. There are therefore good experience and lessons learnt from China in this process.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Malcolm Warner¹ indicates that: (i) the human resource management (HRM) reform in Vietnam lags behind China; (ii) although the cultural variables in both China and Vietnam have strong family-resemblances, there are specific differences, so it is hard to point to a single Asian management model; and (iii) while both China and Vietnam

¹ *Comparing Human Resource Management in China and Vietnam: An Overview*, Cambridge Judge Business School Working Papers, 2013

have evolved their own institutional forms in terms of economic, managerial and social responses to globalization, particularly in the implementation of HRM, each country has its own development path.

Charlotte P. Lee² found that: (i) the party school system in China increases the likelihood of attaining a higher administrative rank and more rapid promotion up the career ladder. As a result, it constitutes a pipeline to high office; (ii) there has been an expansion in the diversity of educational and profit-making activities on party school campuses, developments that both complement and conflict with the core function of these schools as elite training grounds.

Frank N. Pieke³ shows that training at a party school in China is not only valuable because of the formal teaching but also the opportunity arise from discussions and interactions with other students, which is often more important than learning from teachers. Study or training at the party school is a valuable opportunity to socialize with people from other areas as much as one’s own. Cadre training at party schools supplements and reinforces the formal structures of the party and government. Ideological training gives cadres a common language and a set of tasks. These in turn facilitate the growth of informal communities of cadres that shape their careers and lubricate the functioning of the institutions of governance. However, teaching methods remain passive and lack of full involvement, which translates in a clear preference for traditional teaching methods, especially lectures and seminar classes. Moreover, the quality of teachers is limited with the party line in their recommendations and suggestions.

Simon Benedikter⁴ indicated that the bureaucracy and heavy state administration and public service in Vietnam lagged behind the socio-economic reform and ought to be remedied by strengthening formal institutions and capacity building.

Cuong Tien Vi⁵ recommended that training and retraining programmes for Vietnamese civil servants need to be designed and delivered in a way that can produce practical and effective outcomes for both participating civil servants and agencies.

Dang Xuan Hoan⁶ pointed out the following limitations in the cadres and civil servants training in Vietnam: (i) lack of separate modules of management theories, models, operation mechanism, tools, regulatory methods or analysis of national and international impacts of public management of economy, cultural and social aspects, defence and security affairs in the world; (ii) poor results and duplicated research due to limited choices of courses, ill prepared study topics and site visits as well as lack of systematic follow up on previous findings; (iii) inadequate attention to the cultural and historical aspects of other nations as well as communication styles, negotiation and presentations skills for international relations and foreign affairs in the training; (iv) poor proficiency in foreign languages, especially English of cadres and civil servants, prevents them from working effectively in international environment; (v) outdated facilities and forms of the training for cadres and civil servants limit the training effectiveness and prevent the students from participating in e-training and distant platforms.

Nguyen Thi Lan Huong⁷ pointed out the following limitations in cadres and government officials training in Vietnam: (i) inconsistent policies and remuneration benefits in cadres and government officials training; (ii) the training preparation remains not demand-driven process; (iii) overlapped and duplicated training programmes and content with theoretical focus and little practical exercises and skill development assignments; (iv) outdated method and training facilities and equipment; (v) weak and limited number of trainers; (vi) inefficient usage and management of financial resource for the Party’s cadres and government officials training.

III. RESEARCH MODEL

Following the system theory developed by David Easton⁸, this study aims to analyse the Party’s cadre training and development in Vietnam in comparison with China. In essence, it finds out the challenges, lessons learnt and policy implications for Vietnam. The hypothesis is that the Party’s cadres training and development in Vietnam lags behind that in China, and there are lessons learnt in this process.

David Easton’s systems theory is a useful conceptual framework for analysing politics, constructing an empirical

² *Party adaptation, elite training, and political selection in reform-era China*, Ph.D. dissertation, Standord University, 2010

³ *Reinventing the Party-State: An Anthropological Study of Cadre Training, Cadre Careers and the Communist Party in Contemporary China*, University of Oxford, 2009

⁴ *Bureaucratisation and the state revisited: critical reflections on administrative reforms in post-renovation Vietnam*, IJAPS, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1–40, 2016

⁵ *Training and Retraining Civil Servants of Home Affairs in Vietnam in Response to the Requirements of International Integration*, International Journal of Human Resource Studies, 2019, Vol. 9, No. 1

⁶ *Training and making cadres and civil servants capable of working in an international environment*, April 2020

<https://www1.napa.vn/en/training-and-making-cadres-and-civil-servants-capable-of-working-in-an-international-environment.napa>

⁷ *Status of training and development of cadres and government officials in Vietnam at present*, VOER, 2018

<https://voer.edu.vn/>

⁸ *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc; Underlining edition (1967)

theory of Political Science as well as understanding actual forces operating in a political system. The political actors and citizens can know ‘what’, ‘where’ and ‘how’ of political operations, and take remedial actions.

This approach signified that a political system operates within the social environment. As such, it is not possible to analyse political events in isolation from other aspects of the society. To put in other way, influences from the society, be it historical, cultural, economic, religious or otherwise, do shape the political process.

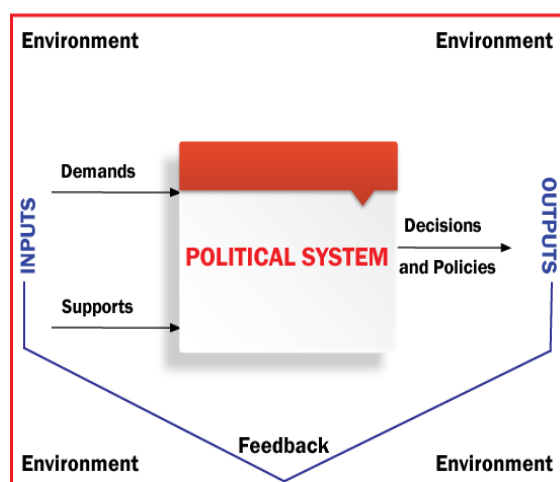


Figure 1: System approach⁹

IV. CURRENT STATUS OF POLITICAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

4.1. Legal framework and mandatory requirements

In the context of Vietnam, where the CPV is the sole ruling party, the Party’s regulations are deeply imbedded in legal framework. A typical process is that the Party set out direction in the form of the Party’s resolutions, which will be subsequently legalized and implemented by the state system, which includes the National Assembly, the State President, the government and local authorities. The Party’s committees, which consist of highest positions in all Party organizations, government agencies, mass organizations, army and police units, discuss and make collective decisions on important issues, particularly the indoctrination and implementation of the Party’s resolutions and policies.

Key legal documents include:

Constitution 2013 (Article 4) explicitly claims: “The Communist Party of Vietnam - the vanguard of worker class, working people and Vietnamese nation, the faithful representative of their interests, grounded on Marxist Leninism and Ho Chi Minh thoughts, is the leading force of the state and society”.

Article 41 of the *Party’s Charter* (term XI) indicates that: (i) the Party leads the state, the Fatherland Front and mass

organizations via political agenda, strategies, policies; the political training, personnel and organizational affairs, inspection and monitoring the implementation process; (ii) the Party unilaterally leads the cadre affairs, holding the organizations in the political system and their heads of agencies accountable for the cadre affairs; (iii) the Party recommend eligible candidates for election or appointment to the state agencies, Fatherland Front and mass organizations; (iv) the Party cells and members in state agencies, the Fatherland Front and mass organizations should comply with the Party’s resolutions and instructions; the Party’s cells lead the legalization as well as the implementation of the Party’s resolutions and instructions.

The *Law on cadres and public officials* 2008 (Article 25) stated: (i) the cadre training and development should follow the cadre standards, positions and titles, task requirements and align with cadre planning; (ii) the cadre training and development rest with the responsible agencies of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the National Assembly’s Standing Committee and Government”.

Other important Party’s documents on cadre political training and education include: (i) the Politbureau’s Decision No. 54-QĐ/TW dated 12 May 1999 on mandatory education and training for the Party members; (ii) the Secretariats Conclusion No. 69-KL/TW dated 14 April 2010 on continuous implementation the Politbureau’s Decision No. 54-QĐ/TW dated 12 May 1999 on mandatory education and training for the Party members; (iii) the Politbureau’s resolution No. 32-NQ/TW dated 26 May 2014 on further renewing and advancing the quality of political training and development for the leading and managing cadres; (iv) the Secretariat’s Conclusion No. 57-KL/TW dated 08 March 2013 on further strengthening the political training and development for leading and managing cadres at various levels.

4.2. Institutional arrangements for political training and education

At national level, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (HCMAP) is the most important national hub for political training and development, particularly for professional degree education and the advanced level training.

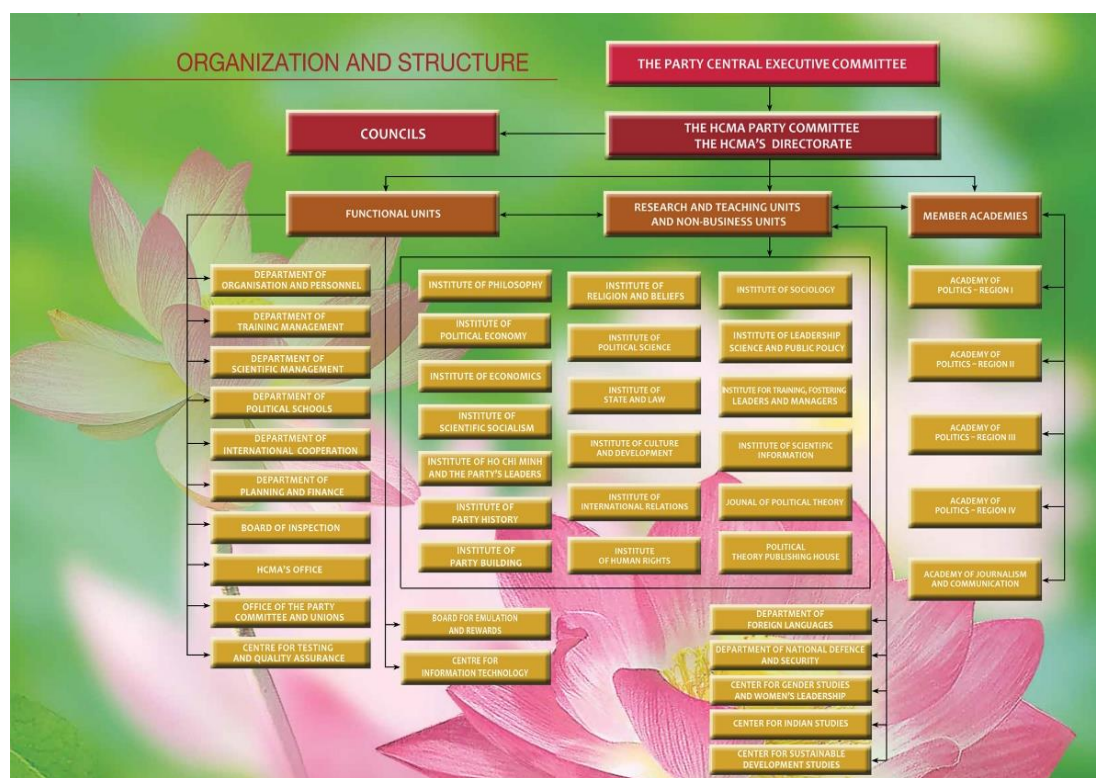
According to CPV Central Committee’s Decision No. 145-QĐ/TW dated 8 August 2018, HCMAP reports directly to the CPV Central Committee. Its President is a member of CPV Secretariat, which run the CPV’s daily operation. The Academy has its national network with five member academies, e.g. the Academy of Journalism and Communication, four regional branches in the North, Central, Mekong Delta and the South regions. In addition, HCMAP is in charge of review and renewal of political training

⁹ *An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems*. Cambridge University Press, 1957

programmes of other academies in the armed forces. It oversees the training programmes development, quality control and trains the trainers in political theory for the 63 provincial political schools, universities and colleges in the country.

HCMAP takes leading role in political training and development of senior leaders, mid-level managers, researchers and rising stars of the political system, public institutions and state-owned enterprises (SOEs). These include formal long-term political education including master and Ph.D., short training courses, train the trainers programmes on political science, management, and a number of social and humanity sciences.

According to the Politbureau’s resolution No. 52-NQ/TW dated 30 July 2005, the HCMAP headquarters trains the following: (i) directors general, deputies director general of departments of ministries, central Party agencies and mass organizations; members of provincial Party’s committees, directors of provincial departments and organizations and secretaries of districts; (ii) master and Ph.D. degrees on political studies for lecturers and researchers of central academies, research institutions and universities; (iii) update new knowledge for eligible leaders and managers, lecturers of HCMAP regional branches, provincial political schools, universities and colleges



Source: Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics portal¹⁰

The HCMAP regional branches train the following: (i) directors, deputies director of divisions in ministries, central Party agencies and mass organizations; deputies director of provincial departments, members of district Party’s committees and directors of district agencies and organizations; (ii) update new knowledge for eligible leaders and managers.

The Academy of Journalism and Communication trains the following: (i) directors, deputies director of central and provincial press and media agencies, vice chairmen of the provincial commission on education and communication, chairmen of district commission on education and communication; (ii) bachelor degree for lecturers of the provincial political schools, training institutions of the ministries, central Party agencies and mass organizations,

universities and colleges; bachelor and graduate degrees on press, publishing and communication; (iii) update new knowledge for eligible leaders and managers.

In addition, HCMAP is also responsible for providing the political training and development for government officials according to the Decree No. 101/2017/ND-CP (Article 27) dated 01 September 2017 as follows: (i) political training courses for leaders and managers at district, provincial and ministerial levels including deputy ministers or equivalent; (ii) professional and technical training for political lecturers from other education, training and research institutions; (iii) standard political training

At sectoral level, there are six institutions that have been given authority to pilot advanced political training for armed

¹⁰ <https://hcma.vn/english/Pages/default.aspx>

forces for a period of three years (2018-2020) according to the CPV Secretariat’s No.25-KL/TW dated 28 December 2017. These include Defence Academy, Political Academy and Infantry Academy under the Ministry of Defence as well as Police Political Academy, Security Academy and Police Academy under the Ministry of Public Security.

At local level, the provincial political schools and district-level political training centres, which are under the respective local authorities’ management, provide political training at intermediate and basic levels for local cadres.

The provincial political schools have the following key functions and tasks¹¹: (i) providing political training and development for commune-level leaders and managers, heads, deputies head of provincial and district-level divisions and offices as well as the candidates for these positions; (ii) providing intermediate level political and administrative training for the above-mentioned positions; (iii) providing knowledge on state management affairs for probational cadres, officials and senior officials; (iv) updating knowledge on state management affairs, professional skills for commune-level leaders and managers, staff of the Party organizations, government agencies and mass organizations as well as deputies of the commune and district-level People’s Councils; (v) training the trainers for district-level political training centres.

The district-level political training centres have the following key functions and tasks¹²: (i) providing basic political and administrative training for all Party members and cadres in the districts; (ii) updating new knowledge on Party building issues and state management affairs for the commune-level members of the Party’s committees and cadres from government agencies, Fatherland Front and mass organizations; (iii) providing political training for Party’s potential prospects, political theories for new members and the Party’s affairs for members of the Party’s committees; (iv) communicating and updating news and policies for commune-level reporters and interrogators.

Importantly, there is an on-going overseas training scheme (scheme 165), which provided master, Ph.D. study and short training courses for 11 690 leaders and managers over the first phase of five years (2009-2014). The study fields include public administration, public policies, international relations, economic management, business administration, investment management, urban management, education management, transportation management, human resource management, sociology, international economics, defence and security, Party building affairs, inspection, anti-corruption, leadership.

4.3. Requirements and content of political training and education

Mandatory requirements for political education and training for the Party members include: (i) new Party members should complete their political training programme prior to their official recruitment. Depending on political level and the job requirements, the Party members should undertake relevant political training. The cadres at communes or grassroots level should undertake basic political training at the district political training centres. The cadres in remote areas or ethnic minorities undertake separate tailored political training programmes. The cadres at the Party organizations, state agencies and mass organizations as well as army and police forces follow the instructions of their respective Party’s committees; (ii) the cadres holding key positions at commune level should complete the intermediate political training at provincial political training schools; (iii) the Party cell secretaries and members of Party’s committees at commune level should undertake required political training courses at the district political training centres; (iv) government officials should complete the intermediate political training programmes and senior government officials should complete the advanced political training programmes; (v) core leaders at district level and provincial departments should complete the advanced political training at regional branches of HCMAP; (vi) leaders of ministries, central Party and state agencies, mass organizations, provinces and SOEs...should complete advanced political training programmes at the HCMAP headquarters.¹³

Key requirements on eligibilities and qualifications for advanced political and administrative training¹⁴ are as follows:

Eligible candidates include: (i) group 1: directors general, deputies director general or equivalents of the departments of ministries, central Party agencies, mass organizations; provincial/city Party Committees’ members, directors, deputies director of provincial/city departments or equivalents; district-level core leaders (secretaries, vice secretaries, chairmen of district people’s councils and committees and equivalents); cadres that have been planned for these positions. These candidates will be recommended by their offices, appraised by the CPV’s Central Commission on Personnel and Organizational Affairs, then undertake training at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (HCMAP) headquarters; (ii) group 2: division heads, deputies head of ministries, central Party agencies or mass organizations; division heads, deputies head of provincial divisions; district Party’s members, vice chairmen of district people’s councils and committees or equivalents; cadres that

¹¹ According to the CPV Central Committee’s Regulation No. 09-QDi/TW dated 13 November 2018

¹² According to the CPV Central Committee’s Decision No. 208-QĐ/TW dated 08 November 2019

¹³ According to the Politbureau’s Decision No. 54-QĐ/TW dated 12 May 1999

¹⁴ According to the Official Note No. 4741-CV/BTCTW dated 20 May 2013 of the CPV’s Central Commission on Personnel and Organizational Affairs

have been planned for these positions. These candidates will be recommended by their offices/agencies, selected by the HCMAP to undertake the political training and relevant HCMAP regional branches.

Qualifications include: (i) CPV membership; (ii) bachelor degree in Vietnam or overseas; (iii) age above 40 and 35 for men and women and below 40 and 35 for discrete training fulltime training respectively.

There are up to 110 students and 50 students for each fulltime class and discrete class respectively. The CPV’s Central Commission on Personnel and Organizational Affairs regularly attends, monitors and assesses the training classes.

There are three levels of political training and development, e.g. basic, intermediate and advanced levels, which are defined as follows:¹⁵

The *advanced* political training programme¹⁶ consists of 24 components, which will be delivered through 1 390 study hours, including 755 class hours, 145 discussion hours, 190 self study hours and 95 exam hours. These include six in-depth discussion sessions on various topics and 50 hours of field study. Training content includes Marx Lenin philosophy, Marx Lenin political economy, socialism science, Ho Chi Minh thoughts, history of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the Party building affairs, national defence and security, international relations, political study, leadership science, state and laws, theory and legal framework on human rights, economic management, development economics, culture and development, sociology in leadership science, gender in leadership and management, religions and beliefs, theory on ethnic groups and their relations in Vietnam, discussion sessions on various selective topics.

Advanced political training is exempted for: (i) university degrees on political study, Marxist Leninism studies (philosophy, socialist science, Party building affairs and governance...), communication and education affairs, organizational study; (ii) graduates from training programmes for operational and tactical commanding officers in the social sciences and humanity, military management and command; (ii) master and Ph.D. in Marxist-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh thoughts studies.

The *intermediate* political training programme¹⁷ consists of seven components with total 80 lectures that will be delivered in 1 056 hours, including 576 theoretical study hours, 168 discussion hours and 312 self study hours. Topics include:

fundamentals of Marxist-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh thoughts, key issues on CPV and its history, political system, state, legal system and state management affairs, CPV and state policies on socio-economic development, discussions on selected local or sectoral situations, field study.

The intermediate level political training is exempted for: (i) university, college degrees in economics, management, business administration, social sciences and humanity in Vietnam; (ii) graduates from intermediate level political training or leadership training programmes at provincial political schools; (iii) graduates from other fulltime programmes (more than two years), which are non Marxism Leninism and Ho Chi Minh thoughts studies at the regional branches of HCMAP; (iv) Ph.D. graduates in natural sciences and technology in Vietnam and former socialist countries; (v) master degrees in social sciences and humanity, economic management, business administration in Vietnam; (vi) graduates from fulltime military education for operational or tactical level officers in logistics, technical studies.

The *basic* political training programme¹⁸ consists of 18 lectures that will be delivered in total 295 hours over 30 days. Topics include: background on Marxism Leninism and Ho Chi Minh thoughts, the world history and rules, the evolution of and relationships among phenomena and objects, humankind and its evolution, commodity economics, capitalism and its evolutionary stages, economic forms and communism society, the national liberation process in Vietnam, transitional period to socialism in Vietnam, industrialization and key tasks, socialist market economy in Vietnam, cultural, social and human resource development, national defence and security, CPV’s role and leadership in various stages.

The basic political training is exempted for: (i) graduates from other academies, universities, colleges, vocational schools or lower level schools of the army and police forces; (ii) graduates from military institutions at unit level which not in the fields of social sciences and humanity, management, military or police command.

4.4. Achievements, challenges and limitations

Key achievements in political training and development in Vietnam over the past three decades include: (i) large number of cadres trained in various forms and programmes. Over the period from 2005 to 2011, there are 60 995 and 2 995 cadres graduated from advanced and intermediate political training at HCMAP respectively; (ii) significant change in training scale, format, content and methodology with greater

¹⁵ According to the CPV Secretariat’s Regulation No. 256-QĐ/TW dated 16 September 2009

¹⁶ According to the Decision No. 3092-QĐ-HVCTQG dated 24 July 2017 of President of Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

¹⁷ According to the Guidelines No. 614-HĐ/HVCTQG dated 26 December 2018 of President of Ho Chí Minh National Academy of Politics

¹⁸ According to the CPV Central Commission on Education and Communication’s guidelines No. 65-HĐ/BTGTW dated 11 December 2012

international cooperation. The training programmes are updated regularly to ensure scientific, practical and modern elements. Lecturers include HCMAP’s ones and the invited speakers, including the Party, state leaders and experienced specialists. The training content is demand-driven with focus on addressing the country’s important issues and areas as well as learning relevant experience from other countries. The admission and organization of training classes follow the set standards, conditions and requirements; (iii) great improvement in the cadres’ degrees, professional knowledge, foreign language proficiency and computer skills recently. The number of cadres having graduate degrees increased sharply recently, from 4.4% to 7.3% from 2009 to 2014; (iv) strong system of political education training institutions. These include HCMAP with five regional subordinate academies, six academies in the armed forces, 63 provincial political schools and 707 district political training centres. In addition, many universities, colleges and research institutes also involve in political training at various extent; (v) four high-level training courses for the 181 strategic prospective candidates (Central Committee members and higher) conducted by HCMAP in 2019-2020. These are fulltime training courses over 2.5 months with 46 in-depth themes; (vi) overseas education and training provided for the Party cadres, government officials and prospective candidates. From 2009-2014, the scheme 165 phase I supported 158 Ph.D., 783 master, 6 474 short course graduates in 22 countries. Importantly, these include 31 members of CPV Central Committee, 336 deputies minister and equivalent, 40 CEOs, deputies director general and equivalent of the SOEs, 4 329 directors general of ministerial departments and 460 equivalent level prospective candidates. Out of 4 275 cadres participated in foreign languages training, 1 746 cadres learned English, Chinese, Laotian, Cambodian, French, Russian, Japanese and South Korean. This help improve language proficiency, which makes the cadres able to meet, discuss and negotiate with foreign partners effectively¹⁹. In addition, from 2018-2022, the Japanese government provides 60 scholarships for master study and five scholarships for Ph.D. study annually for Vietnam under the bilateral cooperation framework.

However, there are limitations and challenges in political training and development in Vietnam. These include: (i) training quality is limited with outdated programmes, low practicality, heavy focus on theory, overlapped, inconsistent and disconnected across training levels, formats and programmes; (ii) teaching method remains passive with limited time for discussions; (iii) Many lecturers lack professional knowledge and practical experience; (iv)

repeated requirements for position classification that make a number of cadres to undertake repeatedly the same courses and subjects; (iv) low rate of ministerial departments’ directors general level apply for master and Ph.D. study overseas under scheme 165 (about 5.6%) due to the fear of losing current positions while study; (v) overcrowded classes, particularly for advanced training; (vi) overworked lecturers reduce teaching quality; (vii) students largely perceive the political training and development as a passport for promotion, not for improvement of their own knowledge and skills.²⁰

V. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS WITH CHINA

5.1. Similarities

Both China and Vietnam share the following similarities in cadre training and education:

(i) Special attention of the Party’s highest level.

In China, the CCP paid great attention to the cadre training and education at a very early stage. The establishment and development of the Party’s political schools could be summarized below.

After the Party’s establishment (1925-1935). The cadre training schools including Huangpu military training school in 1924; Beijing and Shanghai Party schools in 1925; China’s Central Party School and Chinese Red Army School in Jinggang Mountains base camp in 1927 (moved to Beijing in 1945). The Marx Communism School (predecessor of the Central Party School) was initially established in Jiangxi province, then moved to Yan’an and later moved to Beijing and merged with China’s Central Party School.

The Party’s growth period (1935-1949). After the long march, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party reestablished the Party’s school named the Central Party School of Chinese Communist Party with the policy “cadre education is a primary priority”.

Party’s revolutionary leadership and socialism development period (1949 - 1977). Since 1954, the Central Committee has set up the rotational training programme, which helps gradually select and bring the high and middle-level cadre for further training in the Party’s school. The mass training institutions such as the Youth Political Academy, Labour Relationship Academy, Women Cadre Academy were established after the power gained.

In 1956, the Central Socialist Academy and branches for provinces and autonomous regions are responsible for training cadre of the eight other parties namely the Chinese National People’s Party Revolutionary Committee, Chinese Democratic Ally, Chinese National Democratic Development

Affairs, Vice Chairman of 165 Scheme Steering Committee, Communist Journal, 7 September 2014

²⁰ The CPV Secretariat’s Conclusion No. 57-KL/TW dated 8 March 2013

¹⁹ Scheme 165: results of the phase I and orientation for next phase, Nguyen Van Quynh, Vice Chairman of CPV Central Commission on Personnel and Organizational

Association, Chinese Democratic Promotion Association, Chinese Farmers and Workers Democratic Party, Chinese Intellectuals and Workers Party, the Ninety Three Learning Alliance and the Chinese Autonomous Taiwan-Hong Kong Ally.

The Party’s reform, open door and socialist modernization period (1977-present). The Party’s school system has been formalized. A pyramid shaped network comprising 33 provincial Party’s schools and 1 000 district, city and sectoral Party’s schools established and strengthened. Since 1994, the administrative academies were established at central, city and district levels. The East Street Cadre Academy, Yan’an Cadre Academy, Jinggang Mountains Cadre Academy and Dalian Senior Cadre Academies were set up in 2005 at central level. The Party’s schools are under the leadership of Party’s committees at various levels. Upper level Party’s schools instruct the lower level Party’s schools professionally, without administrative relations.

The fourth Plenum, tenure XIII of the CCP has marked the shift in standardization of the cadre training and development with the focus is the district-level cadre and availability of large variety of training: formal training in lecture rooms, self-study, knowledge exchange and field training. The cadre training and development, which has been paid high attention by CCP, and has been the second largest system, just after the national training and education one. This helps attract, train and nurture many talents among the Party’s 87 million members.

In Vietnam, the CPV, following the Comintern’s instruction, opened many training classes on political theory for young patriots in 1927 in Guangzhou, China. The Nguyen Ai Quoc Party’s School (now is the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics) was established in 1945, right after the government was formed. There are five subordinate institutions including branches in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Can Tho and the Academy of Journalism and Communication. In addition, the nationwide system of 63 provincial training schools established at provinces in the 1950s-60s as well as 707 district-level training centres. Basically, the national system of cadre training institutions have been well established and improved overtime. As a result, many key cadres have been trained in different periods, including wartime.

(ii) Well established institutions and regulations.

In China, the CCP has been fundamentally reforming the institutional framework and regulations for cadre training and development with clear guidelines, plans and processes. Cadre training and development tasks has been paid greater attention after the Central Committee’s “Cadre training planning 2006-2010”, “Large scale cadre training and development implementation implementation plan 2008-2012” and “Key orientation for cadre development 2010-2020” promulgated.

The Operational Regulations of the China’s Central Party’s School was issued in 2008 with training management standards and examination system improved. The students’ training results will be basis for cadre classification, appraisal, selection and appointment at local level. The appointed cadre and the elected cadre should attend 110 and 550 training hours per year of required classes respectively. Those who fail to meet these requirements will not be eligible for appointment or reelection. The attendees in training courses should register in accordance with the required processes and are closely monitored. The central-level cadre training schools are headed by senior Party officials such as Deputy Prime Minister, Vice State President or member of Politbureau, Secretariat or Chairman of Central Commission on Organization and Personnel Affairs). The Party’s schools, administrative and cadre academies are the core players and other universities and training institutions actively involve with large variety of training methods available, including online training.

The training methods have changed significantly as follows: (i) the trainees are given choices and encouraged to actively participate, self study and gain practical and quality knowledge; (ii) demand-based training with diversified courses designed for relevant groups of trainees, who can be selected based on either positions, types or professions; (iii) shift from long-term centralized training to short-term courses (less than two months) that fit better with time, work arrangements, training needs. For instance, the Yan’an Cadre Academy’s has five outstanding features: interesting training subjects, high-quality training materials, talented trainers, practical field training sites and the courses highly appreciated by the trainees.

In Vietnam, the CPV’s Politbureau has regulations on political, professional and practical training requirements, attached training standards with cadre appraisal, selection and promotion as well as the authority delegation and training management across different levels.

The Politbureau’s regulation No. 164-QD/TW dated 1 February 2013 stipulated the requirements for training and updating knowledge for leaders and managers at various levels, including: (i) Politbureau and Secretariat members, State Vice President, Vice Chairmen of National Assembly, Deputies Prime Minister, Chairman of Central Fatherland Front; (ii) Cadre under Politbureau, Secretariat’s management; (iii) Members of provincial Party’s standing committees; central-level Party’s committees and equivalent; (iv) Cadre under the district-level Party’s standing committees and equivalent. Required time for training is 5-7 days annually with courses designed for each group. The training should be organized at central, regional or provincial level. This is mandatory for every Party’s committees at all levels.

(iii) The training content and methods renewed and updated.

In China, the CCP’s Central Committee closely monitors the renewal of training content and methods. The trainees’ needs should be taken into account. These include strengthening political aspects, unlock of their potentials in their positions, practical problem-solving ability as well as updating information on contemporary issues.

Renewing the training content is at the core of the cadre training and development. The content is tailored for each group of trainees with updated information, relevant trainers assigned, training programmes’ practicality and wide variety of subjects, topics, field sites and models. For instance, the Chinese East Street Cadre Academy has arranged hundreds of training sites and training programmes for more than 1 000 subjects with selective topics. Trainees are provided not only exchange visits to domestic sites but also abroad. In addition to lectures, the discussions, debates on hot issues and share hands-on experience are regularly conducted. The distant and online training courses are available in cooperation with other training institutions.

In Vietnam, regular training and updates are mandatory for cadres at all levels. During the tenure XI, HCMAP conducted six four-month training courses for total of 511 high-level candidates including 113 members of Central Committee (93 full members and 20 alternate members) and leaders of various ministries, agencies and provinces. The training for 20 alternate members of Central Committee tenure XII are conducted with 30 in-depth seminars, 8 debates and a 5-day field visit.

In preparation for Central Committee tenure XIII, which will take place in 2021, HCMPA has organized four three-month training courses with total 181 participants. The Party’s standing committees at various levels also organized training for candidates of the next tenure.

(iv) systematic training the trainers.

In China, the training institutions operate in a professional, well organized, cost efficient and result-based manner by having a combination of small number of fulltime trainers and invited trainers. The training institutions have close cooperation with a wide network of experts in different areas, domestic and international scientists and business managers and pay them relatively high based on their qualifications, experience and skills (average Chinese yuan 3 000 or 4 000 without interpretation per day), excluding accomodation, transportation and meals costs. Many training institutions have about 80% of invited trainers, including 10% foreign trainers. In addition, there are field visits, in which the trainees select their research topics and write reports recommending good or creative solutions.

In Vietnam, the formal training programmes are conducted by the training institutions’ lecturers while the cadre development are carried out by the invited trainers, including senior leaders, experts or retired professionals. There is no

regulation on this issue so far but the invited trainers account for 30-50%. The pay rate for the invited trainers depends on the level of the training courses.

(v) modernized training facilities.

In China, at central level, except Party’s schools and National Academy of Public Administration built from the state budget, there are other forms of fund mobilization. The Chinese East Street Cadre Academy construction was funded by Shanghai City (60%) and the East Street (40%). The Chinese Yan’an Cadre Academy has an area of 40.000m² that can accomodate 2 400 boarding students. Most of training institutions are modernly equipped with necessary items such as airconditioner, hot water and communication facilities (telephone, TV, computer with internet connection). There are total 3 000 cadre training schools in China including Party’s schools, Academies of Public Administration and Cadre Management Schools.

In Vietnam, all cadre training institutions have been enlarged and upgraded with equipment for training and daily life activities. Though not comparable with China, the physical facilities are being modernized with internet access, nice class rooms and dormitories.

(vi) international cooperation in political training for cadres.

In China, CCP has been sending cadre to study abroad at leading institutions including Harvard, Oxford, French University of Administration and Singapore Cadre School.

In Vietnam, the scheme 165 started in June 2008 for the department’s deputies director general level at central agencies and department deputy director at provincial level and state owned enterprises. Majors include: administrative management, economic management, urban environment management, social management, human resource management, international law, justice, public service, computer science, leadership, foreign languages. Training forms include: 1-4 years (interns, master, Ph.D. degrees), short courses for professional or language training from three months to less than one year, intensive advanced courses from two weeks to two months, exchange study with foreign institutions...Over the last 10 years, many leading, managing and advisory cadres participated in these training programmes. In addition, there are bilateral cooperation with a number of countries (China, Japan, Australia, U.S., U.K...) to train the Party cadres and government officials at various levels.

5.2. Challenges and limitations in cadre training and education in Vietnam in comparison with China

There are a number of challenges and limitations as follows.

(i) *incomplete policies and mechanisms on cadres’ political training and education and ineffective enforcement in Vietnam compared to China.*

In China, the Operational Regulations of the Chinese Central Party’s School is the highest legal document, which requires

mandatory compliance in terms of political training. As a result, the organization of training is well planned and implemented with annual workplan for training. There are about 2 000 secretaries, 400 chairmen of Party’s commissions, 200 cities’ secretaries, 2 600 ministry-level cadre, 4 800 provincial department level cadre should be trained at central level. At provincial level, there are about 60 000 division-level cadres including 280 division heads. The district secretaries and chairmen are equivalent to provincial department-level cadres, who should be trained at central level. In case not being able to participate or overcome the training with good reasons, one should apply for the training in a timely manner. If one fails to participate in the training as planned without proper reasons, that will be criticized or even disciplined. Being disqualified in the training leads to low annual performance appraisal. Those who falsely claim degrees, certificates or the like will be subject to regulatory charges.

In Vietnam, the political training requirements as stipulated by the Central Committee’s Regulation No. 54 are well implemented since these are integral parts of appointment and promotion process. However, many fail to comply with the requirement of 5-7 days per year for every cadre without any consequence. This is a gap in the cadre training as assessed by the Central Committee²¹.

(ii) weak and disconnected communication between the training institutions and the trainees and their responsible Party’s committees.

In China, there is a good communication between the training institutions and the trainees in selection of training content and methods. The trainees are given liberty in choosing training content, format, venue, programme and time. As a result, the training is practical and effective with good planning for both training institutions and trainees.

In Vietnam, while there are some improvements such as the training packages made available for the Party’s committees to select, the trainees are not given options. As such, the training content, programme and format remain somehow irrelevant and mismatching with the trainees’ needs and expectations.

(iii) limited remunerations for lecturers/trainers.

In China, the remunerations are clear and attractive for high-quality lecturers/trainers, including foreign ones. The remunerations are paid in accordance with levels of training, the higher level, the better remuneration for lecturers/trainers. Those who can work without translation could obtain the translation fees.

In Vietnam, the remunerations paid in accordance with the lecturers/trainers’ degrees, titles or positions regardless of

the training level. There is a regulation gap that limits the pools of high-quality lecturers/trainers and discourages lecturers/trainers in renewing their training.

(iv) outdated training methodology.

In China, there is a combination of classroom training and field training with large variety of training models, simulation and situation exercises. Each institution develops its own style and advantages, which are complementary across different institutions. For instance, Yan’an is strong in the Party’s historical training since this is the revolution’s base. In addition, the availability of online training and distant learning forces the training institutions compete with each other, making the training strong and lively.

In Vietnam, even though there has been attention recently, the field study remains a sightseeing visit rather than historical or revolutionary study. The training institutions are designated for certain regional geographical coverage, which prevents good cooperation or competition.

(vi) lower investment, training quality, modernity and diversification of training programmes.

The cadre training in China is in large part a very deliberate effort to counter a tendency towards the growth of dual elite: for political loyalists training provides the professional expertise they lack, while for expert cadres training immerses them in political orthodoxy. The political training in Vietnam remains weak in terms of providing professional expertise for the cadres. As a result, the learners see the political training largely as evidence for being selected by the Party and promoted in the system, not so much useful in terms of knowledge or skills.

In China, the expenditure for cadre training has risen sharply not only in order to pay for better instruction, but also because training has become an item of conspicuous consumption, a way of rewarding cadres for their services and reinforcing their sense of being special and privileged. Well-funded party schools have become a powerful symbolic tool to assert the vitality of a reconstructed socialism and more generally the new administrative ethos that undergirds the CCP’s claim to be China’s legitimate ruling party. Central schools for cadres (the National Academy of administration, the Central Party School and the four new cadre academies in Shanghai, Yan’an, Jinggangshan and Dalian) are flush with central funds. Other parts of China have also invested heavily in their local party schools, particularly at the provincial level and in large cities. This is most clearly the case with the party schools in Shanghai and Shenzhen. The same logic occurs in Vietnam but the investment level is much lower. While the central HCMAP gets relatively adequate investment on

²¹ Communist Party of Vietnam, *Resolution No. 04 of the Central Committee* (2016)

infrastructure and facilities, the regional and local institutions are still insufficiently invested.

There has been more commercialization and competition among the institutions in China for cadre training. As a result, cadre training has become just one of many services that educational institutions offer, whether they are party schools, universities, or other secondary and tertiary schools. In this process, the prestigious and rich party schools used their competitive advantage to offer courses to a range of other customers, including businesspeople and even foreign students. In Vietnam, this is not happening. The political training and education rests mainly with political institutions, including HCMAP and its network, provincial political schools and some selected academies in the armed forces.

Key implications for Vietnam include:

(i) *further improvement of the regulations and requirements on cadre training and education.*

This is responsibility of leaders and managers of training institutions, particularly at central level. The promulgation of the Party and government regulations and guidelines on cadre training and development should be consistent, clear, practical, specific and feasible. In essence, it is important to amend the Regulations No. 54 and No. 162 to make them more legally binding, as the Operational Regulations of the Chinese Central Party’s School;

(ii) *renewing and updating training content, programme and methodology to make them more learner-oriented.*

This is the responsibility of the training institutions, particularly the lecturers/trainers. The training approach should focus on the cadre capacity development with the trainees’ active participation and exchanging experience, with training programmes, topics, format and time available for their selection. The training institutions should be able to address the needs and fill in the gaps in capacity and skills of the trainees. The courses should be short time with focus on practical issues and related with the cadre’ daily works.

A combination of the fulltime lecturers and invited lecturers/trainers, who are experts or experienced professionals in various fields, is a good way to provide in-depth knowledge, updated information and practical skills for trainees. The regulations on their responsibilities and benefits should be clear with competitive remunerations.

(iii) *enhancing quality of annual cadre training planning and delivery.*

This is the combined responsibility of the Party’s committees and the training institutions. The implementation of annual training should be strengthened and routinized. Annual workplan should be developed with good estimate of quantity of trainees, number of courses, training time throughout the year. The training should be centralized and fulltime.

(iv) *adequate investment on physical infrastructure for training institutions.*

The Party’s committees at various levels should pay adequate attention on physical facility of the training institutions, particularly the technological application. Online training with digital, virtual classes, simulation, open source learning materials should be largely used and promoted. This would help train massive number of trainees in all over the country and enable the high-quality trainers more largely accessible.

(v) *renewing the cadre training assessment.*

The training assessment should focus on results, including knowledge, skills, scores obtained by the learners. The assessment could be conducted in many forms: scoring, interviewing committees or the feedback by the agencies that send the trainees. The assessment should be open, fair and transparent. The good performers should be merited and awarded accordingly (salary raise, promotion, appointment...).

(vi) *further strengthening the research and international cooperation.*

The trainers should strengthen their research ability by involving in practical and scientific research, participating projects in collaboration with various partners, including trainees.

It is important to invite international lecturers, reporters, trainers and researchers from developed countries. Organize study and exchange visits to relevant foreign institutions to learn from advanced research and teaching institutions. Continue to effectively implement the delegation annual exchange programme between the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics and Chinese Central Party’s School.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The contribution from the Party’s schools in cadre training is significant in both China (100 years of establishment) and Vietnam (90 years of establishment). The well established network and development over the different stages help train generations of the Party cadre, who play important roles in the political system and the development of both countries. While there are differences between two countries in this regard, there are many similarities in cadre training model, content and method. There are good experience and lessons learnt for Vietnam.

Overall, the Chinese cadre training system is more advanced and offers good foods for thoughts for Vietnam. These include: (i) clear, consistent and legally binding regulations on cadre training; (ii) the large number of training institutions that have complementary and competitive strengths; (iii) reform in cadre training with variety of choices in terms of training content, topics, format and time for trainees and good communication between the training institutions, the trainees and their Party’s committees on the training needs and result-based assessment; (iv) good system of combining fulltime lecturers and invited lecturers/trainers with competitive remuneration helps provide in-depth knowledge in various

fields, updated information, practical skills and good experience for trainees.

The comparative analysis shows that the cadre political training and education in Vietnam lags behind that in China in a number of ways: (i) lower quality, modernization and diversification of training programmes; (ii) less competitive and commercialized in cadre training; (iii) the political training and education in Vietnam is largely imposed on the learners, not selective and demand-driven like in China; (iv) remunerations are more competitive in China for lecturers and speakers, including international ones.

The implications for Vietnam include: (i) further improvement of the regulations and requirements on cadre training and development in Vietnam; (ii) renewing and updating training content, programme and methodology to make them more learner-oriented; (iii) enhancing quality of annual cadre training planning and delivery; (iv) adequate investment on physical facility for training institutions; (v) renewing the cadre training assessment; and (vi) further strengthening the research and international cooperation.

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