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# Solutions to Improve the Effectiveness of Moral Education for Vietnamese Students Today

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**Abstract**---Comprehensive human development is an important content in Ho Chi Minh's thought on human beings. "To reap a return in ten years, plant trees. To reap a return in 100, cultivate the people". A comprehensive person is someone who has both virtue and talent, of which virtue is the root. Virtue is morality, but unlike conservative morality which aims at personal glory, the new and great morality serves the common interest of the communist party, the people, and mankind. The basic requirements of that morality are being loyal to the country and faithful to the people, loving people, being diligent, thrifty, honest, righteous, and selfless, and having a proletarian international spirit. Talent means a person's capability to fulfill assigned tasks, which is demonstrated through continuous learning and improvement of academic, scientific, technical, and theoretical qualifications. Vietnam is being strongly influenced by the trend of international integration with many complicated changes in society. In the face of manifestations of degradation in morality and lifestyle seen in students, moral education for Vietnamese students becomes even more important and necessary.

**Keywords**---improve effectiveness, moral education, morality, Vietnamese students.

## Introduction

In order for people to comprehensively develop, they must cultivate in practical activities that combine education and self-education. "Revolutionary morality does not fall from the sky. It is developed and strengthened through daily struggle, practice and perseverance". Education is the work of the whole society, and plays a particularly important role, especially for young people. Through education, the kind of people that society needs will be trained and appear. Education is associated with self-education. It is the process of self-improvement and self-realization of the revolution in each person. The revolution of oneself is as complicated as the evolution of society. Social revolution is impossible without

self-revolution, and vice versa (Mukherjee, 1988; Valor et al., 2020; Loi, 2021). Especially, under the strong impacts of the fourth industrial revolution across all areas of social life, moral education for Vietnamese students today has become a matter of great concern and interest of the whole education sector and society. In order to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of moral education for Vietnamese students today, we must clearly analyze the causes that are affecting this process. This is one of the practical tasks to strongly renovate education and training towards "attaching importance to developing learners' qualities and capabilities".

### **Research Methodology**

Historical and logical methods are combined with other interdisciplinary methods for social sciences research, such as analysis, synthesis, systematization, comparison, and contrast, etc.

### **Research Findings And Discussion**

#### **The importance of improving the effectiveness of moral education for Vietnamese students**

Morality is one of the important issues that determine the direction of movement and prosperity of each country. Influenced by the economy, moral issues have become important to every person living in Vietnamese society today. Morality has long been addressed by thinkers and philosophers as well as has been concerned and valued by human society of all times. For Confucius, morality is the root of man. When it comes to human, the first and foremost discussion is about morality. "Xue Er", the first book of the Analects said: "There are few who, being filial and fraternal, are fond of offending against their superiors. There have been none, who, not liking to offend against their superiors, have been fond of stirring up confusion. The superior man bends his attention to what is radical. That being established, all practical courses naturally grow up. Filial piety and fraternal submission! - are they not the root of all benevolent actions?" (Chinh, 1997).

In Vietnam, there are also many different conceptions of morality. The authors view morality from many angles and approaches. A relatively easy-to-understand and general definition can be given as follows: "*Morality is a special form of social consciousness, including a system of opinions, concepts, rules, principles and social norms. It is born, exists and changes depending on social needs in the relationship between people and between individual and society.*" (Khiem, 1996). It can be said that along with the movement and development of society, these moral rules and standards also change. Despite different interpretations, in general, the unified view is focusing on the education of human morality through different forms, as moral education for students, today is very important and necessary.

Moral education is understood as the process of transmitting, connecting and developing in learners the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and skills in life. Morality is integrated into orienting the development of skills for cognition,

problem solving, understanding, attitudes and behaviors towards society, as well as emotional aspects affecting the moral thinking of learners. Therefore, the science of morality studies a system of rules of conduct that is equipped for learners to standardize their behaviors, perceive, act and distinguish between the right and the wrong in daily life. Scientists who research the philosophy of education and moral education have pointed out that the purpose of moral education is to help students become self-disciplined in terms of behaviors, have right actions, and at the same time connect to basic values such as respect and personal responsibility for themselves as well as for the social community.

The promotion of human role in Vietnam in the current conditions has been emphasized by the Party in congresses, in the documents of the Central Executive Committee as well as in policies for socioeconomic development management and administration in general. *On one hand*, the Party emphasizes the uncompromising struggle against the degradation and deformation of political, ideological and moral stand, against vices and negative characteristics of Vietnamese people which are hindering the development of people and society. *On the other hand*, the Communist Party of Vietnam also emphasizes on training Vietnamese people to meet the current development requirements of the country with the following virtues: "Having patriotism and national self-reliance, striving for national independence and socialism, having the will to rise up and get the country out of poverty and backwardness, uniting with people across the world in the struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. Having a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity, striving for common interests. Having healthy, civilized, thrifty, honest and benevolent lifestyle, respecting rules and regulations of the country as well as conventions of the community; being conscious of protecting and improving the ecological environment. Working hard with professional conscience, techniques and creativity to achieve high productivity for the benefit of self, family, the collective and society. Regularly studying and improving knowledge and professional, aesthetic and physical qualifications" (the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016). Or "The care for the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people focuses on fostering patriotism, national pride, morality, lifestyle and personality to create a remarkable change in terms of awareness and sense of respect for the law. Every Vietnamese has a deep understanding and is proud of the national history and culture [...] developing people to have a scientific worldview towards truth, goodness and beauty. Associating moral development and practice with exercising human rights as well as the basic rights and obligations of citizens. Improving intelligence and knowledge of Vietnamese people... Building and promoting the lifestyle of "one for all and all for one" (the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2014). The cause of renovation requires human to be placed at the center and seen as both the goal and the driving force of development. Also, only in that way can the renovation in our country today be successfully realized. Human independence, freedom and happiness, as well as comprehensive human development, are the core, the main, the highest and the most prominent goal of the renovation in particular and the cause of human liberation in general. The goals of renovation and construction of socialism in Vietnam today are rich people, strong country, equitable, democratic and civilized society, which is a focused expression of the goal of human liberation (Citrawati et al., 2016; Badera & Jati, 2020).

In general, moral education can be understood as part of human education for them to both have knowledge in all areas of life and behave the right way in the "combination of social relations", thus help them become virtuous people, gain happiness and become useful to society. This interpretation also emphasizes that moral education for students has become an urgent task and plays a crucial role in moral education for Vietnamese people in general and Vietnamese students in particular.

### **Some solutions to improve the effectiveness of moral education for Vietnamese students today**

#### **First: Enhancing the education of political and legal ideology for Vietnamese students**

Students continue to be educated to see the revolutionary and scientific nature of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's Thought; as well as equipped with proper worldview and scientific methodology to help them adequately perceive nature and society, thus have scientific confidence in their actions. From which, students clearly understand and have adequate awareness as well as actions regarding policies and viewpoints of the Party and laws of the State. Each student will be aware of their own actions to become a good and useful citizen to society, who always lives, studies and works according to the Constitution and the law, has love for the homeland and recognizes building socialism as inevitable in history. Students must also be educated to have the right attitude and to realize their responsibilities for the fate of the country and the nation of Vietnam; in this aspect, Ho Chi Minh is a shining example of morality for generations of Vietnamese students to follow (Wang, 2014; Huynh, 2020; Ramos et al., 2021).

Legal education plays an important role in educating moral values and creating a legal environment to protect the fine customs and traditions of the nation. Legal education helps students orient their behaviors and build their lifestyles. In fact, many students come from rural areas and are familiar with the long-standing traditional way of life, customs and practices; thus they have limited understanding of, and even disregard for, the law ("customs rule the law", "the daredevil prevails over the king") or seriously lack knowledge of law and social order.

The Communist Party has also affirmed and pointed out: "The cultural environment is compromised, hybridized, unhealthy and contrasted with good habits; social evils, criminality and the penetration of harmful products and services are causing moral degradation, especially in adolescents, which is very disturbing."(the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011). Therefore, legal education is needed for students to understand the law and thus avoid getting entangled in unhealthy culture. Moral education must go hand in hand with legal education. Morality and law have a close relationship with each other, working together to promote each other's development.

Perfecting institutions and law enforcement will repel negative phenomena in society and promote legal education relationships for students. The school environment has been more or less affected by the negative impacts of the market

economy, which has alienated part of students. Manifestations such as laziness, poor sense of learning, passive acquisition of knowledge and cheating in study and examination are becoming more and more common. Currently, the legal education for students still has many limitations, thus the degree of moral violations among students tends to increase. Some students look down on subjects about law and political affairs, thinking of them as secondary and unimportant... This thought unfortunately has led to many law violations. Therefore, strict student management regulations in accordance with state law and the rules of the school must be in place. On the other hand, it is also necessary to have policies for poor students, students in remote areas like coastal regions and islands, etc. to overcome difficulties, grow interest in learning and understand what they should and should not do. Through that, they can orient and adjust their own behavior. In order to achieve that goal, the Party and the State really need to pay attention to the development and further improvement of regulations on law, culture and morality to embellish and preserve traditional moral values of the nation. Policies are also needed to further promote the creation of a healthy learning environment and to learn from world experiences in order to gradually improve the legal system and open up many opportunities for students to actively study and build a new lifestyle, thereby helping them to be more aware of their responsibilities to the country, family, school and society (Tan et al., 2018; Lisievici & Andronie, 2016).

### **Second: Closely connecting family, school and society in moral education to build new lifestyle for Vietnamese students today**

Family is always considered the cell of society and the bridge between individual and society, where the personality and qualities of each person are sowed and nurtured. "Family environment is the root of a child's personality; if that environment is unstable and turbulent, it will greatly affect personality development" (Thi, 1997). Family is where life begins and love never ends. It is the most solid fulcrum and the most peaceful harbor for each person. Family can help people overcome all difficulties in life and is a place where faith and hope are created to overpower hardships and struggles. As society develops, many different relationships are formed; however, there is nothing like family love, because family helps people connect with each other and helps society develop even more. Thus, students must understand that family is where people are nurtured and cared for, where there is a home with our loved ones: parents, grandparents and siblings; that it will give them more strength to confidently enter society and overcome its many hardships to rise up and face even more great challenges.

The Communist Party of Vietnam has clearly pointed out: "Taking care of education and training the young generation are the responsibilities of the Party, the State, organizations in the political system, families, schools and entire society" (the Communist Party of Vietnam, 1996). Documents of the 11<sup>th</sup> Congress affirmed: "Combining and bringing into full play the roles of society, family and school, as well as labor collectives, mass organizations and communities in developing Vietnamese people to have patriotism, sense of being their own master, civic responsibilities, knowledge and health to effectively work and live with true international spirit" (the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011). Ho Chi Minh once said: "There is nothing difficult if you are resilient enough; you can dig up the

mountains and backfill the sea if you have strong will.”, The youth must be educated to love their homeland, their country, their people and socialism, because that is the origin of the solid mental motivation which evokes national pride and self-esteem as well as the determination to not give in and to be resilient in the love for the homeland (Falkenberg & Noyes, 2010; Tanner et al., 2022). From which, students will have a sense of self-improvement to own their lives, to build and preserve the good lifestyle of Vietnamese people in the new era.

According to Ho Chi Minh, morality does not fall from the sky, but is the direct result of the education and cultivation of each person. He affirmed: “Educating children is a joint work of families, schools and society. Parents, teachers, and adults must be in charge together”. The current trend of international integration has opened up great opportunities and challenges to students, one of which is the impact on morality. With little life experience and youthful impulsiveness, students are easily tempted by material values and caught up in the vortex of money, thus forget the values of being human and lose their own conscience and honor. In order to well regulate social relationships, students themselves must be aware of what they are doing and understand that money is important but not everything, and the dignity of a person is of greater significance.

To do this well, there needs to be a unity between family, school and society to build a new lifestyle for all classes of people, including students. The new lifestyle must start from families, then spreads to schools to create a healthy environment for students to live, study, work and enjoy life. In addition, families, schools and society must regularly exchange information and coordinate with each other to foster moral values for students to use as the basis for building the new lifestyle. The close coordination of these three educational environments ensure unity in awareness as well as in educational activities to achieve the goal and purpose of promoting the cognitive process of students. If separated, it will lead to hesitation and confusion and make it more difficult for students to perceive good values and form good personality to become useful citizens to society (Widana et al., 2020; Lefebure, 2019).

### **Third: Improving the sense of self-discipline and self-education of Vietnamese students in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's moral thought**

Ho Chi Minh once said: "A talented person without virtue is useless. A virtuous person without talent will find it difficult to do anything." Talent and virtue are the unifying qualities of each human being. If morality is the standard for the end of action, talent is the means to that end. Therefore, talent and virtue always go hand in hand. The basic principle in Ho Chi Minh's moral thought is to talk the talk and walk the walk; that theory and practice must be in harmony with each other and act as the basis for human moral evaluation. From the consolidation of practice, it is necessary to improve the quality of Ho Chi Minh's moral thought education for college students for them to promote self-discipline and self-education in association with the performance of learning duties.

Students must identify the right learning goals. They themselves are the ones to decide their learning process; thus, students must have a proper learning motivation: learn to expand knowledge, to work, to perfect themselves and to

contribute to social improvement and development. If the right learning motivation is determined, it will create students' positive learning attitude. Therefore, students need to actively develop a study plan and be determined to take that plan seriously. In order to perform well, students must distinguish between short-term, medium-term and long-term plans to make appropriate adjustments in the learning process. However, the actual study plan must be based on their own ability and capability.

Students need to develop effective self-study methods. Self-awareness in self-study plays an extremely important role in the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of personal moral qualities of students. Students must acquire self-study skills to get high results. To be effective in self-study, they must read books at home, read textbooks before going to class, look into new lessons by themselves, etc. Promoting the right learning methods will create the right attitude towards their study, as well as help them and their friends learn well through study groups to supplement each other's knowledge and develop together on the learning path.

In addition, students must also well implement the rules and regulations of the school, adequately and punctually attend classes, be serious in studying and taking exams, and always have respect for teachers and older ones. Each student comes from a different place, so they should care for and learn from each other, as well as participate in activities organized by the school to be able to improve themselves. Activities such as sport events, cultural and artistic performances, gratitude movements, summer volunteer programs, blood donation events, etc. will allow students to learn and improve their personal moral qualities (LePage et al., 2011; Petrova-Gjorgjeva, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

Human is placed at the center of socioeconomic development; with much value placed in their legitimate needs and interest as well as their self-cultivation and self-training. Practical activities are carried out for people to train and cultivate themselves, to regularly practice criticism and self-criticism and fight individualism in order to build a transparent and strong communist party. The success of the renovation in particular and the development of the country in general depend greatly on promoting the role of human, especially when the fourth industrial revolution is taking place like a storm, and there are unusual and unpredictable developments in globalization and international integration (Ministry of Education and Training, 2021). On the other hand, the Communist Party of Vietnam specifies: "Pay attention to fostering students to have a strong desire to build a strong and rich country in association with establishing themselves in the community and society in the future, as well as cultivating the qualities and lifestyle of Vietnamese modern young generation" (Phan, 1996). Moral education for students today is crucial, as students are knowledgeable people who will inherit and promote the revolutionary achievements of the Party and the nation, and represent Vietnamese wisdom. To reach that goal, it is necessary to coordinate and connect three forces of family, school and society... Such combination plays an extremely important role in moral education for students today, because the rapid changes in economy, science and technology

have had a strong impact on students' moral behaviors; thus, we need to figure out the most appropriate methods of moral education for students to foster their moral qualities.

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