

CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE FIRST SIX YEARS OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY APPLICATION IN VIETNAM (2014 - 2020) AND AN APPROPRIATE ROADMAP FOR UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY IN 2020 - 2030 TO ASSURE THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION TOWARDS THE ASEAN STANDARDS

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Abstract

This article presents the results of a two-year study assessing the challenges and practical lessons of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the pilot implementation of university autonomy in Vietnam over the past six years (2014 - 2020). The authors analyzed data from in-depth interviews with 25 experts conducted through two large-scale seminars organized in 2019 and 2020, and pointed out a total of 32 challenges and barriers in the process of implementing university autonomy which can be divided into six groups as follows: (1) Legal barriers; (2) Limits on the state management and monitoring capacity of the state governing body; (3) Difficulties in the establishment and operation of the University Council; (4) Limited management capacity of HEIs; (5) Limited financial capacity and facilities of HEIs; (6) Inadequate understanding of HEIs' social accountability. The study also draws lessons from the practical experience of several HEIs in the implementation and application of university autonomy, thereby proposing an appropriate roadmap including three stages and six steps for a more efficient implementation of university autonomy based on the specific conditions of Vietnamese universities, as far as the assurance of higher education quality is considered in view of the ASEAN standards. The research results will then provide an important argument and make a contribution to the improvement of state policies and quality control mechanisms, the management capacity of the governing body as well as the development of a plan for successful implementation of university autonomy at the grassroots level.

Keywords: University autonomy, Vietnam, challenges, obstructions, practical experience, roadmap for implementation and application

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