

EFFECTIVE PROMOTION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP IN VIETNAM'S EDUCATION CONTEXT TODAY

Assoc. Prof., Dr. Thai Tran Quang

Dong Thap University

Abstract

The issue of university-enterprise partnership in Vietnam has been raised before, firstly from a practical requirement, which over time has been institutionalized in the Higher Education Law. Based on their own mission and vision, many universities have implemented partnerships with enterprises in various forms and aspects, from training cooperation, recruitment to scientific research, technology transfer. The outstanding results of these activities are: Helping to put professional reality into the training program, shortening the gap between training and recruitment, opening the university to the labor market, taking advantage of social human resources in training and research activities.

However, the university and enterprise partnership still has many challenges and obstacles such as: The requirement of enterprise is changeable while training programs are relatively stable; enterprise does not have enough resources, does not pay much attention to research and development of new products; university lacks resource for research and technology transfer; enterprise often requires the knowledge, skills and qualities that the market needs, while university needs to create and innovate for leading and pioneering in paving the way for production and consumption trends, new services for the future; the legalization of research products into goods still has many gaps and cumbersome procedures.

In order to effectively promote the university and enterprise partnership in the current Vietnamese education context, we propose a number of measures: University needs to be consistent and persistent in their policy of connecting with enterprise comprehensively at the strategic level; the government needs to simplify the legal route from research products to the market, establishing financial conditions so that university and enterprise have enough resources to conduct research, technology transfer, and product development; enterprise needs to have a long-term cooperation strategy with the university for the benefit of both parties, focusing on worthy investment in research and development of new products to serve domestic and international market needs.

1. Introduction

Higher education plays an important role in training highly qualified human resources for socio-economic development in Vietnam. The human resource participates in almost all professional fields of social life, in that a significant amount becomes the labor source of the enterprise. Following Vietnam's socio-economic development over the past time, enterprises increasingly require more capable and diverse human resources to promote labor productivity in the context of increasing competition. Therefore, the university and

enterprise partnership is more concerned to develop highly qualified human resources, research cooperation and technology transfer, thereby bringing benefits to the stakeholders in particular and the country in general.

2. Content

2.1 Some general perspectives on the university and enterprise partnership

University-enterprise partnership has been implemented very early in developed countries, especially in Europe, Japan, and Singapore. The main driving force behind this partnership is the role of university and enterprise and the State has the role of making the right legal framework to develop the university-enterprise partnership in the long run.

Enterprise has a key role to play in building and implementing university partnership. Enterprise is a place to make conditions for learners to apply what they have learned to real work while still not graduating. The diverse practice of enterprise is an important information channel to help the university innovate its training programs and methods, research orientation and technology transfer, and management thinking as well.

Likewise, university provides highly qualified human resources for enterprise, thereby showing an important role in the success of enterprise in the competitive market. The university does research and transfers the necessary technology to meet the needs of enterprise, thereby bringing benefits to enterprise in improving productivity, reducing costs, especially in the context of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 is taking place today.

The university and enterprise partnership is a win-win one derived from the interests of the both sides. Enterprise acts as information providers for university to understand the needs of the labor market. For its own benefit, the university's training activities are always directed towards social needs, including enterprise needs. On the one hand, university always has a need to take partnership with enterprise. Besides, if the university ensures to provide a workforce that meets the needs of the enterprise, then it is the most ideal thing for the enterprise. On the other hand, taking partnership with university is also a practical need of enterprise. So, the partnership is both inevitable and highly feasible in meeting the labor supply for enterprise. However, it should be seen that the university and enterprise partnership is not a support from one side to the other, but the need for coexistence, because the partnership benefits enterprises, universities, learners and society.

The university will increase the quality of student training, commercializing their research results, developing their practical training programs, and innovating their governance. Likewise, enterprise will increase their competitive advantage in the market, optimizing their production and increasing their profits. The university and enterprise partnership is one of the important forms of developing national economy.

Cooperation activities between university and enterprise are quite diverse and multi-goal. By term, there are regular, irregular, short-term and long-term cooperation. By content, there are cooperation in research and technology transfer, cooperation in training, cooperation in management, cooperation in service provision.

Identifying forms of cooperation guides university and enterprise to develop strategies that are suitable to their capabilities and goals in each specific period.

2.2 Outlines of the current state of the university and enterprise partnership in Vietnam's educational context

In Vietnam, the university and enterprise partnership can be explained through the educational principle of “training – research – serving production”. This principle was first applied to agriculture when Can Tho University trained agricultural staff with professional skills and applied research to impart techniques to farmers.

Along with the country's socio-economic development and deeper international integration, in order to develop the higher education in the direction of mass education and close association with practice, the National Assembly of the Republic of Socialist Vietnam has institutionalized the university and enterprise partnership in the Law on Higher Education (amended and supplemented in 2018).

It can be affirmed that the institutionalization of the university and enterprise partnership is a strong push to promote the implementation. In recent years, many universities have been promoting partnerships with enterprises in various forms. One can mention: University of Agriculture and Forestry in Ho Chi Minh City, Hung Yen University of Technology and Education, Hanoi National University, Ho Chi Minh City National University, Hanoi University of Industry, Can Tho University, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, Duy Tan University, Dai Nam University, Hanoi University of Science and Technology, Nguyen Tat Thanh University, etc.

Hanoi National University has comprehensively cooperated with large corporations and enterprises such as VinGroup, Viettel, Oil and Gas. Thousands of their students are awarded scholarships from enterprises with a total value of 5.0 billion VND/year, their scientists deploy dozens of major topics/programmes/projects to serve the community and to enterprise's order.¹

Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HUTECH) has connected 825 enterprises in many fields (including 243 enterprises actively connected by the unit and 609 enterprises connected by the Center for Business Cooperation), signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with 72 enterprises.²

Duy Tan University has steadfastly cooperated with famous domestic and foreign enterprises to promote training, research and job creation for students such as: US LogiGear Corporation, Microsoft Vietnam, FPT Software Co., Ltd., VPBank Bank, Association of Certified Public Accountants of Australia (CPA Australia), Vietnam Association of Certified

¹ Xem <https://vnu.edu.vn/home/?C2477> and <https://vnu.edu.vn/home/?C2478>.

² Xem <http://hoctacdn.hutech.edu.vn/doanh-nghiep-doi-tac>

Public Accountants (VACPA), The Nam Hai Resort, InterContinental Group, Seirei Social Welfare Group (Japan).³

Dai Nam University is a young university but has always actively cooperated with enterprises to make a real learning environment for students. The Faculty of Tourism currently has 04 practice facilities for students: Lotus Legend Hotel, Hung Long Hotel, Rosamia Hotel Hotel, Travel Practice Center; and 12 enterprises participating in cooperation and training cooperation are Lexury Travel Company, A25 Hotel System, Cat Ba Island Spa and Resort, The Q Hotel, Cosiana Hotel, DragonSea Hotel, House System Vietdeli Restaurant, Sunrise Viet Nhat Trading and Service Joint Stock Company, Daewoo Hotel, DIC Star Hotel Vinh Phuc.⁴

Hanoi University of Science and Technology has cooperation agreements on research and training with a number of large industrial groups: Northern Power Transmission Company, Northern Power Transmission Corporation, Construction Glass and Ceramic Corporation. From the connection with the enterprises, many research works in the fields of new materials, mechanics, electronics, automation, heat and cold, biological products, aquaculture products, environmental service achieves good results. Many products have been completed and technology transferred to enterprises such as: Rang Dong Lamp and Thermos Company, Hoa Binh Hydropower Plant, Lam Thao Superphosphate and Chemical Company, E-hospital, General Corporation. company LILAMA.⁵ In order to implement the policy that scientific research must be closely linked with the socio-economic environment, with production and market, the enterprise system of the university has been established in the model of a corporation, including one member limited liability company (BK Holdings) and member companies (including 5 joint stock companies, 1 associate company and 1 vocational college). BK Holdings is responsible for managing the capital of the university, managing and supervising the activities of member companies. The member companies directly participate in production and business activities and act as a bridge for technology transfer activities, in order to bring the university's scientific research results into the market.

As a practice-oriented university, for many years, Nguyen Tat Thanh University has pioneered in building a model of engagement between the university and businesses. Currently, the univeristy cooperates with many enterprises such as: Sailun Vietnam Co., JVS Electronics Distribution Joint Stock Company, Hitachi Consulting-Global CyberSoft-Hitachi Global Corporation, Company Limited Technology and Solutions Saigon CMC, East Sea Automatic Electrical Technology Engineering Company Limited, with forms such as supporting internships and job opportunities for students, coordinating training programs, organizing student support activities and scientific research activities.⁶

³ Xem <https://duytan.edu.vn/doi-tac>

⁴ Xem <http://www.dainam.edu.vn/vi/khoa-du-lich>

⁵ Xem <https://hust.edu.vn/web/hop-tac-doi-ngoai/doi-tac-doanh-nghiep>

⁶ Xem <https://ntt.edu.vn/web/danh-muc/lien-ket-hop-tac>

In general, university-enterprise partnership has been widely deployed in Vietnam, in both public and private university systems. This has brought many benefits to universities and enterprises, helping them to take reality into the training program, shortening the gap between training and recruitment, attaching the training programs to the labor market, exploiting social resources in training and research activities.

The most popular form of cooperation between university and enterprise in Vietnam is training cooperation rather than scientific research and technology transfer⁷. There are a number of universities that have focused on scientific research cooperation and technology transfer for enterprises such as Hanoi National University⁸ and Can Tho University⁹. However, the forms of cooperation in scientific research and technology transfer are still simple, infrequent and are not interdisciplinary products, and are almost not long-term. The number of inventions and technology transfer from universities to enterprises is still small.

A prominent feature of the university and enterprise partnership in Vietnam in recent years is that the proportion of universities that cooperate with enterprises is still quite low (about 10%), and forms of cooperation is often short-term, seasonal. University often focuses on long-term goals while enterprise often focuses on short-term goals. The needs of enterprises are often changeable while the university's training programs are often stable. Enterprise has not paid much attention to research and deploying new products, while university lacks the sources for research and also the outputs for technology transfer. Enterprise often requires the knowledge, skills and qualities that the market needs, while university sometimes needs to lead and to make pioneer innovations in production and consumption trends for the future. In addition, the legalization of research products into goods still has many legal gaps and cumbersome administrative procedures.

2.3 Some measures to promote the effectiveness of the university and enterprise partnership in Vietnam's educational context

Firstly, the university needs to be consistent in its policy of connecting with enterprise at the strategic level, innovating their governance, and paying attention to professionalizing the department of enterprise cooperation.

Based on their vision, mission, goals, and core values, university needs to actively survey the human resource needs of enterprises through various information channels to

⁷ Đinh Văn Toàn (2016). Hợp tác đại học - doanh nghiệp trên thế giới và một số gợi ý cho Việt Nam.

(*University-enterprise cooperation in the world and some suggestions for Vietnam*) VNU Journal of Science:

Economics and Business, 32(4), 69-80; Trang, P. T. T., Thúy, B. T., Thủy, N. T. T., & Hùng, H. T. (2019). Thúc đẩy hoạt động liên kết giữa nhà trường và doanh nghiệp - Trường hợp nghiên cứu tại Trường Đại học Kinh tế, Đại học Huế.

(Promoting linkages between schools and businesses - A case study at the University of Economics, Hue University), Hue University Journal of Science: Economics and Development, 128(5A), 79-91.

⁸ Hoàng, Đ. P. (2016). Hiệu quả hoạt động chuyển giao công nghệ của Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội cho các tổ chức và doanh nghiệp Việt Nam. Đề tài khoa học. (*Effectiveness of technology transfer activities of Vietnam National University, Hanoi to Vietnamese organizations and enterprises. Science project*) Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội, Việt Nam.

⁹ Nguyễn Chí Ngôn và Nguyễn Minh Trí (2011). Hoạt động Nghiên cứu Khoa học và Chuyển giao Công nghệ tại Khoa Công nghệ Trường Đại học Cần Thơ: Một năm nhìn lại. (*Scientific Research and Technology Transfer Activities at the Faculty of Technology, Can Tho University: A year in retrospect*). Tạp chí Khoa học Trường Đại học Cần Thơ. Số 20a-2011, 169-175.

understand the university's ability to meet, thereby forecasting the labor market, personnel needs, investment trends in order to build effective cooperation strategies with related enterprises. University leadership teams need to be consistent about the importance of partnership with enterprise. The content of cooperation strategy needs to be clearly shared with the enterprise side because this is a prerequisite for the start of cooperation. Mutual trust, attachment and sharing a common goal are key drivers in the cooperation process of the university and enterprise partnership. This means that even if a lack of financial source is seen as the reason for such cooperation to be impossible, then a strong financial source by itself is not enough to cooperate if such as the motivation to promote cooperation or the perception of benefits is not firmly established.

The sustainability and effectiveness of the university-enterprise cooperation strategy depend greatly on the university governance system, in which the enterprise should certainly be given a compatible role. When the university governance system is still weak, the enterprises have not had the conditions to cooperate with, or just stop at formal activities. The capacity of the leadership team is one of the key factors determining the success or failure of any organization. In the university and enterprise partnership, the university leadership team needs to think about enterprises as the center to build and develop their training and research products.

In addition, the capacity of the enterprise cooperation department plays a decisive role in attaching the enterprises and maintaining a sustainable long-term relationship. So, the university needs to strengthen the professionalism of this department, thereby developing their cooperation programs and strategies with enterprises, organizing the implementation of such cooperation activities, regularly reviewing and checking the progress and effectiveness of activities to solve arising problems in a timely and effective manner.

Secondly, enterprise needs to have a long-term cooperation strategy with university for the benefit of both sides, investing compatibly in research and development of new products to meet the needs of the competitive market.

The attachment of training and research activities between university and enterprise is an inseparable process that benefits both sides. The cooperation on scientific research can help to solve practical problems of enterprise, or can give enterprise the opportunity to access new scientific products from university research, and can be very beneficial when enterprise has the ability to commercialize such scientific products. Technical and high-tech products are all great opportunities to change the market, which is also what leading enterprises always want to capture. Therefore, enterprise needs to develop internal policies to form a creative culture within, and to promote research and development (R&D) activities. Through research cooperation with university, enterprise can propose policies to support startups, encouraging university scientists to participate in projects and share academic knowledge with enterprise.

The current state shows that most universities in Vietnam only conduct research from projects and topics of the State. They do not yet pay much attention to order from enterprises. Meanwhile, Vietnamese enterprises, most of which are small and medium ones, do not yet invest in research and technology transfer, but most of them usually choose to

buy foreign technology that can be useable immediately. Through cooperation with university, enterprise if necessary, will order specific researches that can help solving their specific problems.

Thirdly, the State needs to simplify the legal route from research products to the market, making convenient financial conditions so that universities and enterprises have enough sources to conduct research, transferring technology and developing new products.

The State always plays an important role in managing and coordinating the university and enterprise partnership. So, the State should have policies and mechanisms for close partnership on training highly qualified human resources between university and enterprise, making a legal framework and intellectual property basis for technology transfer products.

State policy is a macro factor that greatly affects the university and enterprise partnership. This partnership works well or not, it depends greatly on the permission of the law and facilitated by the law. Especially in the current context, university autonomy is being promoted and expanded, which is one of the important factors for effective promotion of the university and enterprise partnership.

3. Conclusion

The need for the university and enterprise partnership in Vietnam is very large and big, and the benefits brought from the partnership are not only limited to the two sides but also affecting the prosperity of the country. The reality of the partnership over the past time has shown initial successes along with certain limitations. In order to promote the effectiveness of the university and enterprise partnership in Vietnam in the coming time, it is thought that the relevant entities: State - University - Enterprise need to innovate the diverse cooperation measures, in line with the strengths and potentials of each side towards the common goal of national prosperity.

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