THE ROLE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING IN BUILDING A LEARNING SOCIETY

IN VIETNAM

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Hanoi, December 2010

Main points

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Open and Distance Learning in the Education System

- Education Law (2005) defined *"National education system, including formal education and continuing education"* (Article 4 Section 1)

- *Continuing education: : (a) in-service education, (b) distance learning, (c) self-study*

- *Distance education is the process in which teachers and students are separated physically, so that the technology and means of transmitting information to make the bridge in teaching-learning.*

Orientation and Guidelines by the Government on ODL

- Decision No. 112/2005 by the Prime Minister on approving the Project "Building a learning society in the period 2005-2010 states: *"Promote the application of distance education methods to conduct continuing educational programs; increase the learning opportunities in distance education for the regions with economic special difficulties and hardship, increase the use of mass media and modern communication technology."*

- Decision No. 164/2005 by the Prime Minister on approving the project "Development of Distance Education in the 2005-2010 period" set out the target, *"Development of methods for distance education at universities and colleges, by 2010 at least 20% of total students learning through distance education"*

Current Status of ODL in Higher Education

- 1993: Establishment of

  Hanoi Open University, (67,000 students)

  Ho Chi Minh City Open University, (65,000 students)

- 16 conventional university operating ODL:

  Hanoi University, Ho Chi Minh City National University, Hanoi University of Education, Hue University, University of Post and Telecommunications Technology, National Economics University, University of Danang, Dalat University, University of Binh Duong, Tra Vinh University, University of Education 2 Xuan Hoa, Hong Bang University, Duy Tan University, Dong Thap Pedagogical University, College of Business - Technology Hanoi, Can Tho University.

- Total enrolment: over 200,000

Current Status of ODL in Higher Education

- Main areas: Pedagogy (44%), Economics (32%), Law (13%), Computer Science and Electronics (9%). The majority of distance learners are employees from offices and enterprises (80%)

- ODL Technology:

  Print materials, audio - visual media, and ICT (e-learning)

- Hanoi Open University (HOU) has been rated as the leading institution for learning materials and technologies of ODL

ICT-based Open Educational Resources

- Distance education technologies, especially ICT, not only facilitate improving the quality of distance education but also change the methodology in conventional institutions.

- Vietnam OpenCourseWare Program (VOCW)

  - MIT OpenCourseWare as a source of extremely useful resources for innovation in higher education;

  - Vietnam OpenCourseWare Program was founded in 2005

  - 12th December 2007, the official website of the program, www.vocw.edu.vn was opened in Hanoi, Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City

  - VOCW website gained 909 modules and 208 textbooks during the testing period (2006-2008),
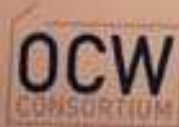
Vietnam Opencourseware Data Centers

MoET Open Educational Resources Project

- The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) has created a platform for sharing courses, lectures, textbooks between institutions, teachers and students at www.ebook.moet.gov.vn

- By the end of 2010, there will be over 1,000 e-textbooks contributed by the universities online. The electronic library is accessible to all.

- Building OER at Hanoi Open University
  - Training workshops on OER capacity building
  - Training workshop on Mobile learning
  - Seminar on ODL

National Seminar on ODL

ODL in Developing Human Resources

- 45 million working people
- 10 million have been trained
- 65%: agriculture, forestry & fisheries, but only 3.85% have been trained
→ low productivity, reducing the competitiveness
- In recent years, many new universities and colleges have been established, but still not meet the learning needs of the people.

Year	Uni. & Colle.	Students
1999	153	893. 754
2009	376	1.729.499

ODL in Developing Human Resources

- 600,000 students of part-time, in-service students, face-to-face teaching
  - Learning materials the same as the formal mode
  - Need classrooms, other facilities & teachers
- 230,000 students of ODL
- By 2020 there will be about 30% distance learning students: 500,000
  - Well prepared learning materials, other media
  - → Solution to the issue of quantity - quality

We will move from the "closed" educational process in nature to the more "open" learning

Open and Distance Learning vs. Face-to-face Education

- **Methodology:** ODL bases on the principle of using the well prepared and standardized learning materials → economic benefits from enormous scale
- **Principle:** to mobilize the ability of self-study, self-training of learners. Learners are not bound by time, working conditions or family circumstances.
- ODL can create learning opportunities for everyone
- ODL with the application of ICT has changed teaching - learning methods, improving the efficiency of tertiary education which has long been limited by the walls.
- ODL can continue, supplement, and replace (face-to-face) traditional education in many cases

ODL for Equality in Learning Opportunities

- *Education is a basic human right, should be made through the entire life of every individual* (UNESCO)
- *Create learning opportunities for people of all levels, all ages, anywhere, for lifelong learning, appropriate to the circumstances and conditions of each individual* (Education development strategy 2001-2010)
- Evidently, at Hanoi Open University, Mr. Cao Giang Son graduated ICT at the age of 70, one current learner 77 years of age
    - Many blind learners graduated from HOU:
      Mr. Le Tu Lap, Ms. Dinh Viet Anh …

Necessary Factors for QA in ODL

Learning materials and media:

    - Well prepared & standardized print materials

    - Digital learning materials: CD, CD-ROM

    - Web-based learning content and interaction

 Assessment system:

    - Methods, tools, management, etc.

Quality "outputs" of ODL students should be equivalent to those of face-to-face education graduates.

Conclusion

- ODL creating equality for the people on educational opportunities, reducing barriers caused by geographical distance, economic factors, age, time, and personal circumstances, meeting the needs of all people, for lifelong learning

- Technology of ODL is widely used not only in distance learning providers but in traditional institutions

- To ensure ODL quality and sustainable development, contribute to building a learning society, there should be the active participation of the policy-makers, managers, teachers, social organizations, and the entire community.