

Current Status of Human Resource Quality in Vietnam in the Current Digital Transformation Period

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Date of Submission: 25-10-2025

Date of Acceptance: 05-11-2025

ABSTRACT

In the context of the world increasingly developing with breakthrough technological achievements, high-quality human resources have become a key factor determining the success and progress of each country. Vietnam in the current digital transformation period is no exception. However, Vietnam's human resources are facing parallel challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, Vietnam has abundant human resources in terms of quantity, but on the other hand, the quality of human resources has not yet met the requirements of the labor market, especially in the context of digital transformation. Therefore, assessing the current state of Vietnam's human resources and proposing solutions to improve the quality of human resources is an urgent and strategic issue.

Keywords: Digital transformation; Human resources; Human resource quality; Solutions to improve human resource quality

I. CURRENT STATUS OF VIETNAM'S HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Number of human resources

Vietnam has a relatively abundant labor force. According to the General Statistics Office, the total population of Vietnam in 2020 was 97,757,118 people, of which 54.56 million people were of working age, accounting for nearly 58% of the population. The proportion of the population participating in the labor force was highest in the 25-29 age group. By 2021, our country's total population was 98.51 million people, of which 50.5 million people were of working age, accounting for 67.7% of the population. This number of human resources can meet the requirements of the economy in terms of human resources.

2. Quality of Human Resources

However, the quality of Vietnam's human resources is at a low level in the international

competency scale. According to World Bank data, the quality of Vietnam's human resources only reached 3.79 points (on a scale of 10), ranking 11th out of 12 countries in Asia participating in the ranking. The rate of trained workers with degrees/certificates is only over 20%.

Meanwhile, informal and unskilled workers still account for the majority, while the trained workforce with certificates and degrees remains low, about 24.5% in 2020. Vietnamese workers are also assessed to lack soft skills such as foreign languages, information technology, teamwork skills, communication, industrial style and responsibility, and professional ethics.

3. Labor Productivity

Vietnam's labor productivity is also much lower than that of other countries in the region and the world. According to data from the Ministry of Planning and Investment in 2019, Vietnam's labor productivity is only 7.6% of Singapore's productivity; 19.5% of Malaysia's; 37.9% of Thailand's; 45.6% of Indonesia's; 56.9% of the Philippines'; 68.9% of Brunei's. Compared to Myanmar, Vietnam's is only 90% and only 88.7% of Laos'. In Southeast Asia, Vietnam's labor productivity is only higher than Cambodia's.

II. ADVANTAGES OF VIETNAM'S HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Abundant Quantity

Vietnam has a relatively abundant human resource, capable of meeting the requirements of the economy in terms of human resources. The number of people of working age in Vietnam is relatively high and stable over the years. This can be considered an advantage in stabilizing production and labor management in the country.

2. High Work Consciousness

Vietnamese workers have a high work consciousness, are hard-working and diligent. According to some studies, the unemployment rate of working-age workers in Vietnam is always low. Even if we consider the number of human resources with academic titles and degrees in Vietnam today (according to the Statistical Yearbook, there are more than 28,862 PhDs and more than 111,000 Masters) (<https://vietnamnet.vn/khoi-nganh-nao-co-luong-nguoi-dang-ky-hoc-tien-si-thac-si-cao-nhat-2444528.html>), Vietnam possesses a fairly abundant human resource in terms of quantity, not inferior to other countries in the region.

III. LIMITATIONS OF VIETNAM'S HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Quality Does Not Meet Requirements

The quality of Vietnam's human resources is at a low level in the international competency scale. Vietnamese workers lack soft skills such as foreign languages, information technology, teamwork skills, communication, industrial style and responsibility, and professional ethics. Trained workers with degrees and certificates in urban areas are 2.5 times higher than in rural areas. The rate of trained workers with degrees is highest in the Red River Delta and Southeast regions, and lowest in the Mekong Delta.

2. Lack of Skilled Workers

Vietnam is seriously lacking in skilled workers, especially mid-level workers. Only about 20.92% of the total trained workforce has degrees/certificates (including elementary vocational, intermediate, college, university and postgraduate levels). Meanwhile, the rate of trained workers has increased sharply, but 76.9% of the workforce still has no professional training.

3. Low Labor Productivity

Vietnam's labor productivity is much lower than that of other countries in the region and the world. According to data from the Ministry of Planning and Investment in 2024, Vietnam's labor productivity is only 7.6% of Singapore's productivity; 19.5% of Malaysia's; 37.9% of Thailand's; 45.6% of Indonesia's; 56.9% of the Philippines'; 68.9% of Brunei's. Compared to Myanmar, Vietnam's is only 90% and only 88.7% of Laos'. In Southeast Asia, Vietnam's labor productivity is only higher than Cambodia's.

IV. CAUSES OF LIMITATIONS

1. Education and Training System

Vietnam's education and training system still has many shortcomings. The training program is still heavy on theory, lacking in combination with reality. The training quality does not meet the requirements of the labor market, leading to the situation where trained workers do not meet the requirements of employers.

2. Lack of Soft Skills

Vietnamese workers still lack soft skills such as foreign languages, information technology, teamwork skills, communication, industrial style and responsibility, and professional ethics. This has limited the competitiveness of Vietnamese workers in the international labor market.

3. Unreasonable Labor Distribution

Labor distribution by region, area, and locality is not reasonable. Trained workers with degrees and certificates in urban areas are 2.5 times higher than in rural areas. The rate of trained workers with degrees is highest in the Red River Delta and Southeast regions, and lowest in the Mekong Delta.

V. SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF VIETNAM'S HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Reforming the Education and Training System

It is necessary to reform the education and training system to improve the quality of training. Training programs need to combine theory with practice, focusing on soft skills training for students. Strengthen cooperation between training institutions and businesses to ensure training quality meets the requirements of the labor market.

2. Soft Skills Training

Enhance soft skills training for Vietnamese workers. Training institutions need to focus on training skills such as foreign languages, information technology, teamwork skills, communication, industrial style and responsibility, and professional ethics. Enterprises also need to have soft skills training programs for their employees.

3. Support for Training of Mid-Level Workers

There should be policies to support training of mid-level workers. Training institutions need to expand the scale of training of mid-level workers to meet the needs of the labor market.

Enterprises also need to have policies to support training of mid-level workers for their employees.

4. Support Businesses in Labor Training

State management agencies need to have policies to support businesses in labor training. Businesses need financial, technical and human resource support to be able to train workers effectively. State management agencies also need to have policies to encourage businesses to invest in labor training.

VI. CONCLUSION

Vietnam has abundant human resources in terms of quantity, but the quality of human resources is much lower than that of other countries in the region and the world. To improve the quality of Vietnam's human resources, comprehensive solutions are needed from reforming the education and training system, training soft skills, supporting training of mid-level workers to supporting businesses in training workers. Only then can Vietnam improve the quality of human resources and meet the requirements of the labor market in the current digital transformation period.

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