
RESEARCH ON HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE TO MEET CURRENT REQUIREMENTS OF EDUCATION REFORM IN VIETNAM

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Abstract

Training quality is vital to the existence and development of a higher education institution and it really makes sense for ones in Vietnam during the period of implementing fundamental and comprehensive reform of education of the country. Besides, education quality assurance is a key part of quality management, making an important contribution to maintaining, improving and enhancing the quality of each university. Therefore, research on the development process and overview of domestic and international experiences in ensuring higher education quality have important implications in promoting the quality of higher education in the current context of education reform in Vietnam.

Keywords: quality, higher education, training, quality assurance, reform.

1. Issue raised

Vietnam is in a period of strong reform of education and training, in which the issues of higher education are strongly mentioned such as quality, quality management and education quality assurance. Although there have been many researches on higher education issues around the world, this field is still relatively new and is carried out with the initial steps in the self-assessment process of universities in Vietnam. Higher education quality assurance is seen as a multifaceted system, a tool for maintaining standards that contribute to the improvement and enhancement of higher education.

The content of this paper mentions about: 1) some basic concepts, which are used relatively uniformly in Vietnam on the basis of studying and applying the theories of quality and quality management in the world; 2) research stages on the quality and quality assurance of higher education in Vietnam; 3) higher education quality assurance in the world and application to the practical conditions of Vietnam. On that basis, a number of solutions are recommended for the implementation of education quality assurance in Vietnamese universities to meet the requirements of higher education reform in the current period.

2. Research content

2.1. Basic definitions

Quality is a concept that is difficult to define, difficult to specify, and difficult to measure. It has many different definitions.

According to Edward Sallis (1993), quality is divided into two different values, namely absolute quality (what makes up the quality, the value of a person, a thing, an event. It is the whole of basic features asserting the existence of one thing, distinguishing them from other things) and relative quality (degree to which a set of inherent properties fulfills requirements. Requirements are understood as the stated or implied need or expectation of interested parties such as organizations and customers) [1].

According to the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Vietnam: “*Training is a process of affecting a person in order to make that person perceive and master knowledge, skills, techniques, etc. in a systematic way to prepare for that person the adaptability to life and ability to receive a certain division of labor, to contribute themselves to the development of society, to maintain and develop human civilization*” [2].

Bui Minh Hien et al (2011) mentioned training quality according to the value-added theory: Quality is reflected in the increase in learners' knowledge, skills, and attitudes after a training process. Qualified training institutions focus on making this increase in graduates and public recognition. The outcome defining criteria are important indicators of training quality [3].

According to the Educational Dictionary of Vietnam (2013), the quality of education is “the whole of qualities and competencies created in the process of educating, training and fostering students compared to the standard value scale of state or society. The quality of education is historic and always depends on contemporary social conditions, including institutions, policies and forces involved in education,…” [4; p.44].

The quality of higher education is a difficult category to define and measure because “there has not been a consistent concept”. Recently, in the “*Regional Collaborative Quality Assurance Framework for Higher Education*”, SEAMEO used the concept “Quality is the match for objectives” in encouraging countries in the region work together [5]. Each university needs to determine the content of the match for objectives on the basis of its specific context at the time of determining its training objectives. Then, quality is the matter of how to achieve those objectives.

Nguyen Van Tuan (2011) said that the quality of higher education is a quality set of factors related to: (1) Inputs (standards related to students admitted to the university); (2) Procedures (standards related to lecturers, teaching, facilities for studying and scientific research, infrastructure, services for teaching and scientific research, etc.); (3) Outputs (standards reflecting the status of students after graduation) [6].

Quality assurance is one of the methods of quality management, originating in the business sector in 1990s. Quality assurance has been applied to higher education sector.

According to the Vietnamese Standard TCVN 5814:1994, “Quality assurance is the whole planned and systematic activities, which are carried out within the quality system and proved to be sufficiently necessary to give adequate confidence that the entity (object) will fully satisfy the quality requirements” [7; pp.445].

Quality assurance of higher education is built up as a predetermined system of policies, procedures, processes, actions and attitudes to achieve, maintain, supervise and reinforce the quality of education in a certain degree of permission, to find solutions to constantly improve the quality of education, and to ensure that the university fulfills its mission.

2.2. Research stages on the quality and quality assurance of higher education in Vietnam

2.2.1. From 1985 backwards

The issue of higher education quality was hardly posed because Vietnam's higher education was still basically elite education. The key figures in the training process were the students who had already been considered to be elite and carefully selected from the beginning with a strict screening rate. The Vietnamese higher education system conceived that managing the quality of education meant controlling input through highly competitive entrance exams. A closed, highly introverted system could not fully satisfy all the demands of reality. Everything just started in the direction of innovation since Vietnam started a comprehensive reform, including the reform of higher education from mid-1980s.

2.2.2. From 1986 to 2003

Many measures were taken to achieve the goal of increasing the “supply capacity” of education institutions, maximizing access opportunities for learners. The increase in size and quantity required a corresponding increase in human, material and financial resources and a new management mechanism accompanied by appropriate leadership and management capabilities to the new scale to be able to maintain. However, Vietnam's higher education only focused on increasing resources (mainly through tuition fees contributed by learners and funding from the state budget) without paying due attention to the important role of the mechanism and capacity of leadership and management of the whole system.

The viewpoint that quality has the same meaning as adequate resources at this stage were evident in the increased funding from the budget for national universities and those selected for the “investment-focused” list, while there were no complete mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of resource use to achieve desired objectives. Because of this one-sided viewpoint, after nearly two decades of reform, with the steadily increasing rate of budget devoted to education, the quality of education was not increased but reduced. This situation showed that the application of new management methods to ensure and improve the quality of higher education became an urgent requirement.

2.2.3. From 2004 to present

The year 2004 marked a turning point of the development in Vietnam's higher education quality management with the policy of reforming management by applying quality testing, a way derived from the higher education in the United States and is becoming a method of quality management widely applied in the world since 1990s. A series of documents were issued, including Resolution No. 37-2004/QH11 of the National Assembly XI passed on 3 December 2004 specifying: "Considering the quality control as a core task; conduct annual expertise of education quality" [8]. Directive No. 25/2004/CT-BGD&DT dated 2 August 2004 requires all

levels of education managers and universities to "urgently build and improve the arrangement, apparatus and implementation of the educational testing and quality testing system" [9]. Decision No. 38/2004/QĐ-BGDĐT dated 2 December 2004 promulgates the provisional regulation on university quality testing [10].

For the first time in the history of education, Vietnam has had a clear, transparent set of standards that basically defines the quality requirements related to the mission, objectives, structure, resource conditions and operational aspects of a university. From 2005 to 2007, 20 universities in Vietnam, including 18 public ones and two private ones, which were considered as the top in the system representing geographical areas across the country, were selected for pilot assessment under this set of standards. The set was officially issued by the Ministry of Education and Training in November 2007. The quality standards of a university as prescribed include: 1. The university's mission and objectives (Standard 1); 2. Organization and management (Standard 2); 3. Training program (Standard 3); 4. Training activities (Standard 4); 5. Administrators, lecturers and staff members (Standard 5); 6. Students (Standard 6); 7. Scientific research, technology application, development and transfer (Standard 7); 8. International cooperation activities (Standard 8); 9. Libraries, learning and other facilities (Standard 9); 10. Finance and financial management (Standard 10). It can be seen that the 10 standards cover almost all aspects related to the management mechanism as well as the operational aspects of a modern university, not much different from the standards of other countries in the region and around the world. Having a transparent set of standards for university quality management is truly a breakthrough in Vietnamese education management thinking, showing the education sector's determination to integrate with many promises to bring positive changes in higher education quality in the coming time.

Education quality testing is a relatively new sector in Vietnam. It can be said, at the system level, that it started when the Training Quality Testing Division under Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education and Training was established in January 2002, then expanded to all levels of education and other training qualifications since 2003 after the Education Quality Assessment and Testing Agency was established. Education quality testing has been promoted since December 2004 when the Provisional Regulations on University Quality Testing were enacted and continued to be strengthened and developed in association with the enactment of other testing processes and standards. However, the understanding of educational administrators, lecturers and society in general about testing is still very limited and understood in many different ways.

The State issued many legal documents related to research issues, i.e. (1) Law on Higher Education (2012); (2) Decision no. 38/2004/QĐ-BGDĐT dated 2 December 2004 on provisional regulations on quality testing for universities and Decision 27/2006/QĐ-BGDĐT dated 27 June 2006 promulgating provisional regulations to universities on the amendment and supplementation of a number of articles of the provisional regulations on quality testing; (3) In addition, the Education Quality Assessment and Testin Agency issued Guidelines no. 462/KTKDCLGD-KDDH dated 9 May 2013 on self-assessment for universities, colleges and professional secondary schools, which outlined the basic nine-step self-assessment process, and

Guidelines no. 527/KTKDCLGD-KDDH dated 23 May 2013 on using university quality assessment criteria. The legal documents created an important legal corridor, improved the quality of higher education through the application of quality assurance processes, procedures and criteria.

2.3. University training quality assurance in the world and application to practical conditions of Vietnam

Quality assurance is a method of quality management applied to the quality management of products and services in enterprises in Japan, and incorporated into quality assurance innovation in education and higher education.

Williams P. (1992) said, in higher education, that the quality assurance system does not guarantee good teaching and learning, ... but good teaching and learning are often promoted when quality problems are concerned by people in a university as an important matter of that university [11].

Ellis R. (1993), in “Ensuring the quality of university teaching: Issues and approaches” made a comment: in the business environment, quality assurance is considered as a process, where a manufacturer assures customers that their products and services always meet the standards. Studies have shown that it is possible to apply quality assurance to university teaching process management [12].

Tribus M. (1993) distinguished the main differences between education and business: Educational institutions are not factories or enterprises; Students are not products but the students’ educational outcome is the product; Customers of education services usually include learners themselves, learners’ families, those who are and will use graduates, and society in general; Learners need to be the “co-manager” in their own educational process; Education typically does not give learners the opportunity to do it again [13].

Van Vught F.A & Westerheijden D.F (1993) had a view that higher education always needs both internal and external quality. Internal quality is to look for truth and pursue knowledge. External quality is to provide services to society. Any quality assurance system in universities must be based on this combination... From that, the authors defined a higher education quality assurance system consisting of five elements/ five steps [14].

The work named “Quality Assurance Framework in the Region of Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization in 2003” points out the quality assurance system including the necessary organizational structure, procedures, processes and resources of training institutions used to implement synchronous management in order to achieve specific standards, criteria and indicators issued by the State to enhance and continuously improve quality to satisfy learners’ requirements, meeting the needs of the labor market. Navigation (1997) argued that each higher education institution needs to have its own internal quality assurance process. The external management agency conducts external assessment, from which reports on the strengths and recommendations are introduced to higher education institutions to improve themselves to improve quality assurance.

Petros Kefalas, Symeon Retalis, Demosthenes Stamatis, Kargidis Theodoros (2003) had a view that quality management in education includes the following standards: effective learning programs, teachers, the ability to use infrastructure, positive feedback from students, and support from stakeholders [15].

Len M.P. (2005) in "Capacity Building in Higher Education, Quality Assurance in the Asia-Pacific Region" defined the definition "Quality assurance can be related to a higher education program, institution or system. Quality assurance is all of the views, objects, activities, and processes ensuring that appropriate educational standards are being maintained and enhanced throughout existence, using process, along with the quality control activities inside and outside of each program, quality assurance is to make standards and process be widely known to the educational community and the public" [16].

In the "Manual for the Implementation of the Guidelines" in 2009 of ASEAN University Network-Quality Assurance (AUN-QA), a quality assurance system was introduced and it was said that internal quality management is a key factor that has decisive implications for the quality of higher education institutions. So each university needs to build an effective internal quality assurance system. The experiences of different universities can also be used to develop quality assurance systems to meet the basic requirements of quality monitoring, evaluation and improvement. At least this quality assurance system needs elements of the Deming Circle, namely planning, implementation, testing and action (PDCA Circle) [17]. According to this Manual, no model is appropriate for all universities, it depends on which model the university selects. However, these models need to satisfy some basic conditions.

Quality assurance is widely used as a tool to maintain standards and improve the quality of higher education. Currently, in the world, more than 100 countries have higher education quality assurance systems but quality assurance is perceived and implemented very differently: (1) in Australia, quality assurance includes necessary policies, attitudes, actions and processes to ensure that quality is being maintained or enhanced; (2) in the United States, quality assurance is the process of evaluating an institution/program to determine whether the standards of higher education, academia, and infrastructure are maintained or enhanced; (3) in the UK, quality assurance is a tool for higher education institutions to assert that the conditions for students have met the standards set by the institution or authority. In many European countries in the past, quality assurance was used as an external evaluation system without the need for a formal recognition of the results achieved; (4) for Thailand, quality assurance is introduced through a school quality control system, external quality audits and accreditation testing aimed at the objectives of higher education, performance, learning outcomes or indicators, growth; (5) for Indonesia, quality assurance is identified through internal examination of academic programs, government regulations, market mechanisms and accreditation testing.

Some Southeast Asian countries have also established national testing agencies such as BDAC (Brunei), BAN-PT (Indonesia), LAN (Malaysia), FAAP (Philippines), ONESQA (Thailand). The testing focus is different, i.e. Indonesia carries out testing at program level while Malaysia, Brunei, and Thailand conduct testing at school level. In addition, there are a number of networks involved in the development of quality assurance systems in the region such as the ASEAN

University Network (AUN) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), Asia-Pacific quality network.

In parallel with the development of the higher education quality assurance system, theoretically, the issue of higher education quality assurance has also attracted the attention of many authors. The authors' studies on the quality assurance of higher education can be generalized in several main aspects:

- The concept of quality assurance in higher education

Frazer M (1992) defined the category of quality assurance according to the following index: Each member in the university has the responsibility to maintain; improve the quality of training and services; understand, use and master the system of maintaining and improving training and service quality; university managers regularly check the reliability and accuracy of the quality management system [18]. According to Ellis R. (1993), the concepts of quality assurance in higher education are very diverse, but can be grouped into three groups of opinions: (1) quality assurance is the new name of a procedure system that has been established in higher education (external assessment, peer assessment; examination process, etc.); (2) quality assurance is a new approach to setting and maintaining quality standards in universities; (3) quality assurance with a focus on building processes and regulations during training and transferring the primary responsibility for quality from above and outside managers to teachers and administrators of the higher education institution itself [12]. According to Bogue E.G. (1998), quality assurance is seen as a system in which different forms of assessment are used, each of which emphasizes one or more elements of the quality assurance system, etc [19].

- Elements of quality assurance in higher education

Van Vught F.A & Westerheijden D.F. (1993) considered quality assurance as a five-element system [14]. When studying the issue of quality assurance within higher education institutions, Barnett R.A. (1987), Brennan J., Vries P. & Williams R. (1997), Church C.H. (1998), Bogue E.G. (1998) paid special attention to the consideration of inputs, processes and outputs. Graeme John Davies thought that three most important factors needed to ensure the quality of higher education are curriculum, lecturers and vocational skills, i.e. the curriculum must ensure to guide students from knowledge to skills and applying in practice; lecturers must be assured of the quality of their teaching; vocational skills must be flexible and developed, not only what are already known but also what the professions need, etc [19].

- Self-assessment in higher education quality assurance

In higher education quality assurance, self-assessment plays an important role, attracting the attention of many authors. Kells H.R. (1992) identified two self-assessment models of higher education institutions, namely component model (focusing on the nature, function, and activity level of each element as well as the relationship between them and process model) and process model (assessment activities presented in a process order from diagnosis, design-planning to the process; personnel arrangement; self-assessment process conduction; analysis and report preparation; welcoming the appraisal team (external evaluation); deciding to change [20].

According to Piper D.W. (1993), developing and maintaining quality assurance processes is one of the conditions of self-assessment; and the presence of quality assurance is a key factor in maintaining quality and preventing poor quality products [21].

In recent years, there have been a number of researches on the quality assurance of higher education in Vietnam. These works have contributed to clarify the following contents:

- The role of quality assurance activities in universities

According to Pham Thanh Nghi (1998), the quality of universities is only maintained and improved through quality assurance activities. In particular, quality assurance within universities “must be considered as the starting point, a decisive foundation to the quality of higher education” [22, p.129]. Pham Xuan Thanh (2005) said that economic globalization has led to internationalization, popularization, competition and global cooperation in higher education. This trend requires countries to develop higher education systems that can be compared with each other, recognize and acknowledge each other based on common standards of higher education quality. Quality assurance in university then plays an important role [23]. According to Nguyen Quang Giao (2009), improving quality assurance activities in universities is “an important task and an urgent requirement for the Vietnamese higher education system in general and universities in particular so as to ensure and incessantly improve the training quality” [24, p.34]. According to Do Van Xe (2010), quality assurance is a core, long-term and permanent activity; is a tool to manage university affairs [25]. Hence, quality assurance is a vital activity for universities. Establishing, maintaining and developing a quality assurance system is a vital task for any university.

- Quality assurance in higher education in Vietnam currently

The author Vu Thi Phuong Anh (2008) showed the shortcomings of ensuring quality in higher education: (1) The national quality assurance system has been incomplete, the quality assurance agency has not been separated from the direction and control of Ministry of Education and Training, the National Council for Education Quality Assurance has not yet been established; (2) The implementation of internal quality assurance is still dealing with external requirements rather than an internal need for the purpose of self-improvement; (3) The mechanism of quality assurance has not created independence between 3 activities: self-assessment (performed by universities), external assessment (performed by an independent agency outside universities) and recognition of results (by a government agency in higher education or a university association); (4) Quality standards have not yet shown a classified view of the Vietnamese higher education system; (5) There is no quality standard system to implement training program accreditation; the role of professional associations in accrediting training programs is not popular; (6) Human resources working in the whole national quality assurance system is insufficient in quantity and weak in capacity; (7) The information system serving the assessment is still weak; transparency of information is low, etc. [26]. The report on “*Ensuring the quality of higher education – Considering several pairs of categories*” by Nguyen Quy Thanh (2005) gives noticeable observations: quality assurance is in the formative stage; quality assurance in Vietnam is integrating with the world but it still has many distinctions; Society’s perception of the nature of

quality assurance is changing but still slow; there is still inappropriate approach to the nature of quality assurance; The activities with pharisaic manner are sometimes emphasized rather than the true content of quality assurance; The quality of education is inevitable, but the potential has not been clearly developed, the connection and sharing is necessary, etc [27].

- Applying the quality assurance model of the world into the practical of Vietnamese higher education

According to The author Pham Xuan Thanh (2005), Vietnam's quality assurance model includes 3 components: The system of quality assurance in the internal; external universities (the external assessment system includes guidelines, processing and tools to assess) and the system of quality assurance organizations (external evaluation organizations and independent accrediting organizations). From that point, "developing a quality assurance system within universities should be a priority, because it is the cradle to take form the quality of education, at the same time it is also the first step of forming a culture of educational quality on every university" [23]. According to The authors Nguyen Thanh Trong and Mai Thi Huyen Trang (2011) studied the quality assurance model in ASEAN universities; In the context of Vietnam's higher education still exists shortcomings, the selection and application of the quality assurance model from other countries with developed education, including AUN-QA model is necessary [28]. Le Van Hao (2012) also recommended that Vietnamese universities should select the quality assurance approach of AUN-QA or ENQA. However, the AUN-QA model focuses more on the quality assurance within universities (including self-assessment activities, developing the document system of quality assurance and internal audit, etc.) should be more suitable for Vietnam [29]. According to Dao Van Khanh (2012) deeply studied the ISO and the EFQM model in ensuring the training quality of the university, the combination of the 2 models, at the same time adjusting to correspond with conditions in Vietnam is vital. Nevertheless, it is necessary to base on the conditions and the quality management capacity of universities to choose the appropriate model/combine the existing quality assurance model to build up a model of quality assurance of higher education in Vietnam

- Solutions to improve the quality assurance activities in universities

The author Nguyen Tien Hung (1998) pointed out that the quality assurance is an important mission for higher education in our country, it is necessary to promptly apply the quality assurance system in Vietnam's higher education. Accordingly, solutions need to be implemented to put the quality assurance system into operation [30]. According to Nguyen Duc Chinh (2002) with the work "Quality accreditation in higher education" identified the quality standards and performance indicators as indispensable tools and means for ensuring quality in educational institutions. The study also expresses the concepts of quality assurance and the methods of applying the quality management content in production to the quality management innovation in education. At the same time, developing a set of criteria for quality assessment in 8 areas: Management of universities, teacher staff, students, teaching and learning, scientific research, facilities, finance and international relations with 26 criteria to guide the quality assessment and training quality assurance conditions for Vietnamese higher education institutions [31]. The

authors Nguyen Minh Duong and Phan Van Kha (2006) in the book named "Training human resources in accordance with the requirements of industrialization, modernization in market economic conditions, globalization and international intergration" show that the quality assurance is the quality management under the model of "quality assurance" [32]. The authors Nguyen Duc Tri and Phan Chinh Thuc (2010), authors of the book "Several issues of vocational institutions management" stated that there are 3 main methods of the quality assurance applied in the world, consisting of assessment, auditing and accreditation. Besides, at some private universities in Asia, there is a tendency to assess following to ISO certification. Of these forms, the quality accreditation is the most widely and effectively used in countries in the region and around the world when serving the development and capacity building for a training institution and whole quality assurance system selected to deploy. According to Nguyen Van Tuan (2011), the quality of higher education is assessed by inputs, processes and outputs. Hence, when recommending solutions to ensure quality in higher education is essentially proposing solutions to ensure these factors [6]. The author Le Van Hao (2012) gave several solutions and the role of each solution for enhancing the quality assurance in universities: Developing a quality culture in the university is a priority requirement to ensure the internal quality assurance; Improving the quality of educational programs is central to internal quality assurance activities; Disclosing of information is a regular requirement of internal quality assurance, etc [29]. The author Nguyen Quang Giao (2013) recommended 8 measures to promote the quality assurance activities in universities: (1) Developing the quality assurance system inside universities; (2) Raising awareness of staff, lecturers and students about the importance of quality assurance activities; (3) Developing the quality assurance plan which is suitable and feasible with universities' conditions; (4) Implementing the quality assurance for educational institutions and training programs; (5) Regularly carrying out surveys, investigations and feedback of stakeholders; (6) Strengthening the professional training for the staff relating to the quality assurance; (7) Ensuring the funding, facilities and equipment to implement the quality assurance activities; (8) Developing culture and improving the university's ranking [24]. According to Pham Thanh Nghi (2013) in the book with title "Education quality management" summarized that higher education institutions are diversity in service provision. Specifically, from institutions have to follow a general checking process, same standard system up to now each institution presents its own performance indicators. Besides, the institution also builds up the quality assurance processes and mechanisms to get that index. He recommends applying the quality assurance system to higher education in our country after clarifying the nature, model and process of quality management levels [22]. Nguyen Tien Hung (2014) in the book named "Quality management in education" expresses that the nature of quality management in educational institutions is defined as the establishment and operation of the quality assurance system through continuously improving based on the values so as to achieve the goals, missions, values and vision of the educational institution system [30]. Besides, the doctoral thesis such as "Building up a system to ensure the quality of teaching process in specialized subjects at the University of Foreign Languages" by Nguyen Quang Giao (2013); "Ensuring the training quality of the Public Vocational Training Center in the Southeast" by Ngo Phan Anh Tuan (2013); "Managing the university training program in Business Administration at Hanoi National University following to the quality

assurance approach of the network in Southeast Asian universities” by Sai Cong Hong (2014), etc. A series of research papers mentioning many issues of quality assurance in higher education by the author Nguyen Huu Chau (2008) with the name “Quality in education – Theoretical and practical issues”; Nguyen Duc Chinh (2002) with the paper “Quality assurance accreditation in higher education”; Tran Khanh Duc (2004) “Management, quality accreditation of human resources training according to ISO and TQM”, etc.

In summary, the issue of quality assurance in higher education and abroad has been concerned for more than 30 years in term of both theory and practice. However, this is a new issue in my country, especially for the construction of a quality assurance system for each training sector.

On the basis of the study results on the Quality Assessment Standards at the National University chaired by Nguyen Duc Chinh, the criteria have been tested, evaluated, adjusted, supplemented and revised to become an official set of standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Training in November 2017 and adjusted in 2014 [31]. The set of standards for evaluating the quality of Vietnamese higher education institutions in accordance with the current regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training includes 10 standards and 61 criteria. The researches on the quality assurance on higher education contain the scientific assurance that can be inherited in the research on the quality assurance of universities as follows:

- The quality assurance system can be applied from business to education and training;
- The quality assurance can be related to a training program, an educational institution/a higher educational system;
- The quality assurance is the total number of mechanisms and procedures applied to ensure predetermined quality or continuous quality improvement;
- Each higher education institution should have its own internal process and can use its own characteristics to manage, improve and develop but it had to meet the basic needs of supervision, assessment and improvement.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

On the basis of the research results and the analysis of the research results of the articles given above, we give recommendations to enhance the quality assurance activities at universities so as to meet the requirements of education innovation. Current education in Vietnam is as follows:

- 1) Developing a set of standards to ensure the quality of higher education of Vietnamese universities.
- 2) Developing strategy and plan on training quality and training quality policy for Vietnamese universities.
- 3) Completing the system to ensure the quality of internal training of Vietnamese universities.
- 4) Developing quality standards as a basis for continuously improving the quality of higher education of Vietnamese universities.

- 5) Cultivating capacity building for the quality assurance staff of Vietnamese universities.
- 6) Organizing and guiding the development of processes to ensure the quality of higher education of Vietnamese universities.
- 7) Improving the operational capacity of training quality assurance system of Vietnamese universities.
- 8) Organizing the conditions to meet the requirements of ensuring the quality of higher education of Vietnamese universities.

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