

# **Current situations of educational management according to the quality assurance movement at universities: Students' perceptions**

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## **Abstract**

This study aims at investigating students' assessment on the current situation of quality assurance management for the postgraduate training program from. A total of 103 students participated in this study. The data were collected through survey questionnaire. The results showed that students were quite satisfied with the quality assurance management of the postgraduate training at the Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city in terms of postgraduate admissions, using facilities for teaching, learning and scientific research, lecturers' teaching process and procedure of testing and assessment during the training program. This study revealed the actual phenomena of quality management at higher education, and then helped the educators have appropriate policies to make common decisions in the pursuit of quality.

**Keywords:** *quality assurance, educational management, postgraduate training*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The twenty-first century is marked by remarkable achievements in many fields: economic globalization, international relations, science, industry, health and education have many changes. Along with the explosion of information technology, people in the new century have a constant need to exchange their experiences in order to contribute to the world development process.

In Vietnam, the Resolution No29 of the 8th Central Conference (Session XI) on fundamental and comprehensive reform of education and training also affirms the viewpoint of quality assurance in education and training: "Development of education and training is to raise people's knowledge, train human resources, and foster talents. To strongly shift the educational process from mainly equipping knowledge to comprehensively developing learners' capabilities and qualities. Shifting education and training development from primarily quantity-based to focusing on quality and efficiency, while meeting quantity requirements." (MOET, 2014)

After many years of renovation and implementation of the 2001-2010 Education Development Strategy and the 2011-2020 Education Development Strategy, Vietnam's higher education has markedly developed in terms of scale, diversified in terms of education and training. types and forms of training, initially adjusted the system structure, improved training programs and processes, and mobilized many social resources. The quality of higher education in a number of branches, fields and higher education institutions has made positive changes, gradually meeting the requirements of socio-economic development, approaching the quality of higher education of the country. area. The majority of staff with university and post-graduate degrees, accounting for the vast majority of them, were trained at domestic educational institutions, making an important contribution to the renovation and construction of the country (Thai, 2015)

The development of the knowledge-based economy, the important role of experts and high-level human resources, has made countries attach importance to postgraduate training. "Winning in education is winning in economic development" is not just a lesson of the "Asian dragon" Singapore (Karkoszka, 2009). Postgraduate training plays an important role in training highly qualified and quality human resources to meet the requirements of industrialization - modernization and socio-economic development for each individual. locally and nationally. Postgraduate training is also the basic nucleus for building a knowledge economy. The technological revolution and the trend of knowledge economy from the past few decades have emphasized the role of postgraduate training, not only for advanced countries but also for all countries in the world.

Therefore, the development of graduate training has become a profoundly revolutionary strategy of the times, and the management of education and training plays an important role, decisively determining the success of the cause of development and educational innovation. education and training, contributing to the development of the country.

Quality management is an advanced management method, which has been successful in the fields of production, sales and service application. In the field of education, especially graduate education, although it is a very diverse service sector in the organization as well as in the provision of products, facing increasing quality requirements, the transportation Using new management methods is becoming urgent.

The quality of an educational institution in general and the training process in particular is determined by its management mechanism. Quality assurance is used as a management method to maintain standards throughout the training process to continuously improve the quality of education. Therefore, in the trend of internationalization and globalization, managing the university training process in general and postgraduate training in particular according to the quality assurance approach is a matter of top concern to society (Dung, 2018; Giao, 2017)

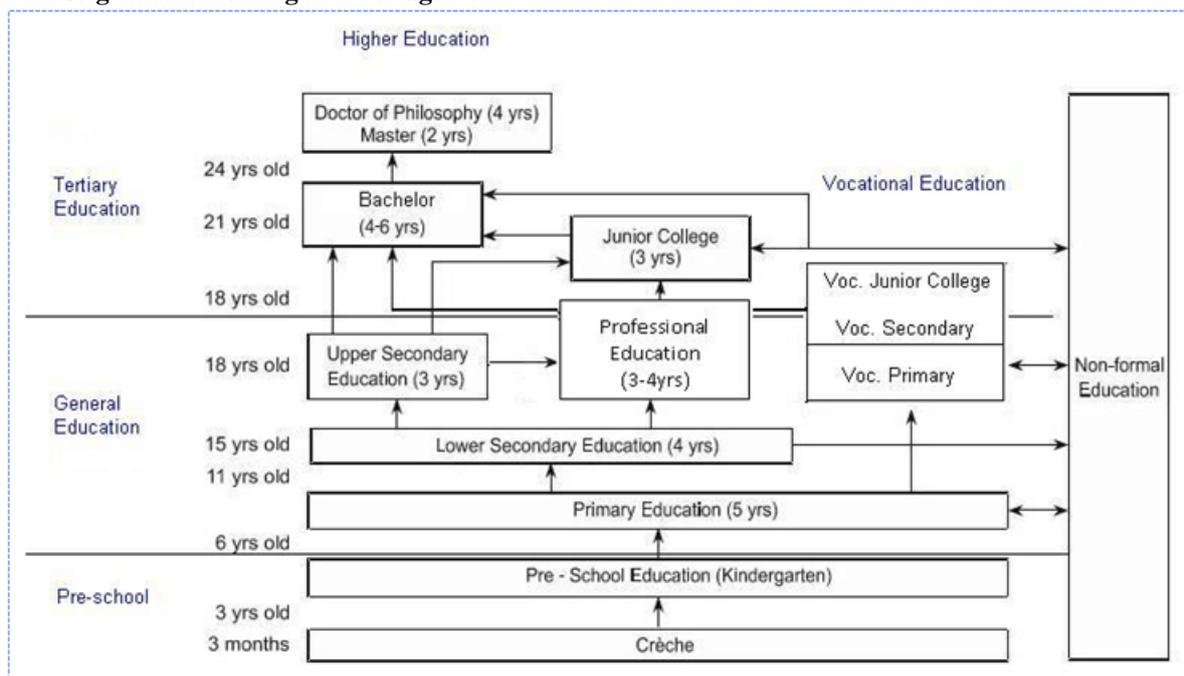
It is also a necessary condition to improve the quality and effectiveness of postgraduate medical training in general and of medical graduate training institutions in Ho Chi Minh City. Ho Chi Minh in particular. Operating in an area with the highest and fastest growth in the country, medical graduate training institutions in HCMC Ho Chi Minh City has made fundamental achievements, contributing to the supply of highly qualified human resources for the cause of care and protection of people's health as well as specialized scientific research. However, in the context of extensive international integration, the development of medical science and technology, medical graduate training institutions in Ho Chi Minh City, etc. Ho Chi Minh City needs to continue to fundamentally and comprehensively innovate to meet the current requirements, including the implementation of the management of the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach.

Management of the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach of medical universities in Ho Chi Minh City must derive from theoretical and practical bases to propose effective solutions. necessary and feasible. Therefore, the author goes into understanding the theoretical issues of the management of the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach of medical universities.

The objectives of the study are to determine the theoretical basis of the management of the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach of medical universities, to evaluate the current status of the management of the postgraduate training process. medical universities in Ho Chi Minh City, as a premise for proposing solutions to manage postgraduate training activities according to the quality assurance approach in medical universities in Ho Chi Minh City. Ho Chi Minh City, in order to contribute to improving the quality and effectiveness of training human resources in health to meet the development needs of the country and the locality. The study aims to investigate to students' assessment on current situations of postgraduate medical training activities in terms of postgraduate admissions, using facilities for teaching, learning and scientific research, lecturers' teaching process and procedure of testing and assessment during the training program. It is hoped that the present study sheds light on the review of literature on quality assurance management at universities

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Postgraduate training and management



**Figure 1: Structure of Vietnam national education system**

As can be seen from Figure 1, it is clearly said that the structure of Vietnam national education system is diverse in which post-graduate training helps learners to supplement and improve the knowledge they have learned at university; modernize specialized knowledge; strengthening interdisciplinary knowledge; have the capacity to carry out professional work and scientific research in the training major (MOET,2014).

Post-graduate training is training for those who are already working and need deep and highly specialized knowledge. Therefore, if we do not do well in the management of the postgraduate training process, we will produce unskilled human resources that cannot meet the needs of society. Therefore, in graduate training, it is necessary to implement innovation, content, programs, teaching and learning methods, and activities to assess training quality in order to train highly qualified human resources to meet the needs of students. development needs of society

According to the 2018 revised Law on Higher Education (effective July 1, 2019) provided for in Clause 23, Article 1: recognition of higher education degrees belonging to the national education system, including bachelor degrees, Master, PhD.

Master holders must have solid professional knowledge, practical ability and high adaptability to the development of science, technology and economy; Ability to detect and solve problems in the field of training. The training period is from 2 to 3 years.

Doctoral holders must have a high level of theory and practice; have creative capacity, independent research; capable of guiding scientific research and professional activities; Discover and solve science and technology problems. The training period is from 2 to 4 years (MOET, 2014)

### 2.2. Researches on medical postgraduate training management

Currently, there are about 2420 medical universities in the world, annually training 389,000 doctors and 541,000 nurses. Medical universities are unevenly distributed, often concentrated in developed countries and very few in less developed countries. The medical training system in the world is extremely diverse. Can be divided into 3 groups

Group 1: the admission offers high school graduates, the training time is from 5-7 years. This group includes countries such as: Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Scotland and Malaysia, Japan. The main training purpose of Group 1 schools is clinical training. Upon graduation, medical students are awarded a bachelor's degree in medicine. After that, learners have to take the national exam to study Postgraduate with a training period of 5-6 years.

Group 2: the admission offers graduates who have obtained a degree and trained for 4 years. This group includes the United States and Canada. In order to be considered for admission, students must take the Medical College/Association Admission Test (MCAT) and submit academic scores from the university/college from

which they graduated. In addition, a personal interview is also available. was conducted to assess motivation and determination to study medicine. Once accepted, students enter a 4-year medical training program, graduating with a bachelor's degree in medicine. Then, students must attend a hospital residency. The residency program lasts from 3 to 7 years depending on the major. All doctors who want to practice in the United States must attend specialty residency.

Group 3: This group is the combination of the two groups mentioned above. This group includes the countries of Australia, Great Britain, Ireland, South Korea, Singapore.

In Vietnam, medicine has been trained since colonial times. Over the course of many stages along with historical events, medical training programs and goals have undergone many changes. According to statistics of the Ministry of Health, the whole country currently has 15 specialized medical training institutions (both public and private) and 43 training institutions at university level in health sector.

Postgraduate medical training in Vietnam in addition to the Master and Doctoral training program managed by the Ministry of Education and Training, it also exists in parallel with the specialized training program (Specialty 1, Specialization 2). , Resident Doctor) managed by the Ministry of Health. According to the training regulations of Specialist 1, Specialty 2, Resident Doctor issued by the Ministry of Health we can see that Specialization 1 which is a type of postgraduate training specific to the medical industry, applicable to all clinical specialties and professional practice in the field of health sciences for the purpose of training medical personnel. , having the ability to practice in a wide field, supplementing some basic scientific knowledge and basic medicine and pharmacy learned in university to be able to self-study and rise to become specialized practicing medical experts. Department. Specialization 2 is the follow-up to Specialty 1 and Resident Doctor, the highest level of practical training applicable to all clinical specialties and professional practice in the field of health sciences, aims to train high-level medical professionals who are able to practice (skill) well in a specialty. Moreover, resident doctor is a specific type of postgraduate training in the health sector, aiming to train specialist doctors with solid basic scientific knowledge, systematic specialized knowledge, and practical skills. high level, proactively and competently solving basic professional problems in the training major. BSNT training is one of the methods to train talented young professionals and talents in the health sector, applied to clinical specialties.

However, the inadequacies in training human resources for health are clearly pointed out: the two training directions (academic and practical) have not been clearly defined, so the Master and Doctoral training programs have many contents mixed with the training programs. create a specialty. And also because there is no output standard for specialized training, leading to the overlapping of specialized training programs for specialization 1 and specialization 2. The training scale has not been linked to the human resource needs of the health system and has not corresponded to the reality of the training institution.

Some articles refer to quality assurance in master's degree training in some specific specialties or assurance in master's degree training. Author Dang Ngoc Phuc, when researching on "renovating and perfecting the master's degree training process at Hanoi National University of Education in the direction of quality assurance", affirmed that, in order to contribute to improving quality training requires innovation and improvement of the management of the training process; The training and management of master's degrees at Hanoi National University of Education has effectively applied the advantages of the current training and training management models in Vietnamese universities, in which Pay attention to different types of quality control and quality assurance models, and initially implement the application of the total quality management model.

However, research on the management of the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach of medical institutions has not been much implemented. It is due to the fact that firstly, research on the quality of higher education has been carried out in many different aspects and is of particular interest in the field of educational management, higher education institution management. Secondly, research on the quality of higher education focuses mainly on solutions to improve the quality of higher education, the issue of quality accreditation; Management of training quality in universities . Another thing is that quality assurance inside universities is a relatively new issue, the research on building a quality assurance system in universities has not been fully and systematically studied. Last but not least, there have been quite a few domestic and foreign research projects on the quality and quality of higher education, and the quality management of higher education.

In the light of these considerations, the study aims to determine the theoretical basis of the management of the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach of medical universities, to evaluate the current status of the management of the postgraduate training process. medical universities in Ho Chi Minh City, as a premise for proposing solutions to manage postgraduate training activities according to the quality assurance approach in medical universities in Ho Chi Minh City.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Participants

103 students participated in the survey of which 63% of them were females and 40% were males, aged between 25 and 35. They are postgraduate students who are currently doing the research at Medical University

#### 3.2. Instruments

The popular method to investigate the characteristics and status of quality assurance management in Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city is to use the questionnaire survey to get perceptions from a large population (Cesur & Korsal, 2012; Fulcher, 1997; Kucuk & Walter, 2007; Winke, 2011). Therefore, in this study, the questionnaire was used for gathering data from 103 students in order to get their opinions about characteristics of postgraduate medical training activities and status of postgraduate training management.

The questionnaires for the participants consisted of three sections. Section A aimed to ask for lecturers' background information in which 7 questions were designed to get information about their full name, gender, age, email, cell phone number, research majors and year of studying in Medical University. Section B aimed to gather information on the current situations of postgraduate medical training activities in terms of postgraduate admissions, using facilities for teaching, learning and scientific research, lecturers' teaching process and procedure of testing and assessment during the training program. Section C aimed to collect further suggestions on improving the postgraduate training management at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam.

#### 3.3. Results

Actual situation of enrollment organization, facilities, teaching, clinical practice, examination, thesis defense, graduation exam organization of graduate students. These contents were assessed by 103 postgraduate students with different specialties (internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, infectious diseases, ophthalmology, maxillofacial, public health, nursing and medical engineering) by 4 Likert scales: 1-Strongly disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4- Strongly disagree.

Statistical analysis was performed by comparing the actual survey data on the students with the mean score and standard deviation according to the standard distribution of the population. The status of the assessment on actual situation of postgraduate admissions from students is shown in Table 1

**Table 1. Students' assessment on actual situation of postgraduate admissions**

Question	Content	Mean	Standard deviation
Q1	The goals of postgraduate studies, that are to improve professional qualifications and work better, meet the demands of the learners	3.47	0.59
Q2	The goals of postgraduate studies, which are to increase salary, get promotion, as well as receive conditions for job transfers, meet the demands of the learners	3.20	0.67
Q3	Specialization in enrollment meets individual learning needs and high-level human resource development requirements in the medical field	3.50	0.55
Q4	Regulations and enrollment processes are clear and widely publicized	3.61	0.54
Q5	The implementation of the enrollment process assure objectively, fairly, and be compliance with regulations	3.49	0.59
Q6	The enrollment results are announced promptly and widely; the complaints related to the enrollment are handled in accordance with regulations.	3.56	0.54
Q7	The number of enrollments is suitable to the training capacity of the training institution and to the needs of the society	3.09	0.82
Q8	Students' selection process of the University is publicized widely	3.43	0.70
<b>Total</b>		3.41	0.62

Table 1 shows that the evaluation of postgraduate students on quality assurance management is quite good with the averaged mean score of 3.41, indicating the satisfaction on actual situation of postgraduate admissions from students' assessment . In particular, the item (Q4) on regulations and enrollment processes which were clear and widely publicized took the first place with the highest averaged mean score of 3.61. Then it is followed closely by the item on the enrollment results which were announced promptly and widely; the complaints related to the enrollment were handled in accordance with regulations (Q6) with the mean of 3.56. In contrast, the item on the goals of postgraduate studies (Q2) with the lowest mean of 3.20.

**Table 2: Students' assessment on using facilities for teaching, learning and scientific research**

Question	Content	Mean	Standard deviation
Q9	Teaching and medical equipments meet the requirements of teaching, practice and scientific research	3.04	0.75
Q10	The numbers of functional rooms, classrooms, laboratories, practice rooms and clinical practice facilities are sufficient to ensure the area and space for teaching, studying and practising	2.93	0.88
Q11	Facilities are periodically inspected, evaluated and improved for training	2.88	0.90
Q12	The university has developed concrete criteria on improving facilities to meet the requirements of teaching theory and clinical practice	2.96	0.77
Total		2.95	0.82

Table 2 shows that the students seem to be fairly satisfied with the current situation of using facilities at the university with the overall mean scores of 2.95. More precisely, the highest mean score is accounted for Q9 (M=3.04) indicating that the university has met the requirement of facilities for teaching, learning, professional practice and scientific research. Then it is followed closely by Q12 in which the university has developed concrete criteria on improving facilities to meet the requirements of teaching theory and clinical practice (M=2.96). In contrast, the lowest mean score is for Q11 (M=2.88) which is about the frequency of periodically updating, evaluating and improving facilities for training.

**Table 3: Students' assessment on lecturers' teaching process**

Question	Content	Mean	Standard deviation
Q13	Lecturers convey content clearly, easily understand and be able to inspire learning for students.	3.52	0.67
Q14	Lecturers fully and effectively implement regulations, rules and regulations on teaching activities; strictly follow the detailed teaching schedule that is assigned by the university	3.35	0.76
Q15	Lecturers often relate the knowledge of the subject to students' professional practice	3.59	0.62
Q16	Lecturers' teaching methods are diverse, suitable for teaching goals and contents, and help to promote students' creativity, positivity and initiative.	3.49	0.76
Q17	All information such as timetable, objectives, content, specific requirements of the course, subjects, learning methods, exam format, assessment criteria and learning outcomes are notified to students before the course or the subject	3.56	0.63
Q18	The assessment of students' learning results is carried out in accordance with current regulations, ensuring the requirements for developing learners' quality and capacity.	3.51	0.67
Total		3.50	0.68

As can be shown from Table 3, it is clearly seen that students have greatly positive comments on lecturers' teaching methods with a high overall mean scores of 3.50. This indicates that lecturers put in great effort to prepare their lectures and teaching methods in the classroom. More specifically, all students claimed that when teaching, lecturers always related the knowledge of the subject to students' professional practice (M=3.59) and they conveyed the lecture content clearly in order to help students to easily understand and inspire them in learning (M=3.52). Moreover, lecturers' teaching methods were diverse, suitable for teaching goals and contents, and help to promote students' creativity, positivity and initiative (M=3.49). Particularly, students were notified or provided all information such as timetable, objectives, content, specific requirements of the course, subjects, learning methods, exam format, assessment criteria and learning outcomes before the course or the subject (M=3.56).

**Table 4: Students' assessment on the procedure of testing and assessment during the training program**

Question	Content	Mean	Standard deviation
Q19	Forms of exams on theory and clinical practice are diverse and suitable for students' level of knowledge	3.41	0.58
Q20	The examinations on theory and clinical practice are strictly and objectively organized	3.67	0.52
Q21	The University has regulations and procedures on the end-semester and end-course examination and evaluation	3.54	0.59
Q22	Forms of student assessment and evaluation are in accordance with the nature and characteristics of the subjects and training majors.	3.54	0,63
Q23	The content of the test and assessment reflects the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students and is in accordance with the learning outcomes	3.54	0,66
Q24	The University has regulations on re-sit needs to test those assessments in the subject that have been failed	3.45	0.59
Q25	Students' assessment and evaluation results are pronounced individually on students' academic reports	3.64	0,53
Total		3.54	0.58

Table 4 shows that students have good impression on the procedure of testing and assessment during the training program with a very high averaged mean score of 3.54. This means that the procedure of testing and assessment at the Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city was organized fairly and objectively (M=3.67). The University has regulations and procedures on the end-semester and end-course examination and evaluation (M=3.54) and all forms of exams on theory and clinical practice are diverse and suitable for students' level of knowledge (M=3.41). At the end of the examination, students' academic achievements are pronounced individually and confidentially (M=3.54).

In general, the average scores of students' assessment on the current situations of postgraduate medical training activities in terms of postgraduate admissions, using facilities for teaching, learning and scientific research, lecturers' teaching process and procedure of testing and assessment during the training program are quite high, ranging from 3.0 to 3.59. This is the evidence to prove that students are quite satisfied with the quality assurance management of the postgraduate training at the Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Based on the evidence from the questionnaire surveys, it can be concluded that the Medical University has been fully awareness about the position and role of postgraduate training management; as a results the University has developed a set of criteria to ensure the quality of the postgraduate medical training management by using self-assessment in order to supplement and complete its quality assurance system, developing highly qualified human resources and raising up the cooperations in the management of postgraduate training programme between medical universities and institutions.

As a conclusion, it is undeniable the fact quality assurance at higher education has received considerable attention in most countries of the world as one of the fundamental pillars of education systems that must keep pace with global changes and adaptation (Chinh, 2015). It is also considered as the starting point of human resources scientifically qualified to participate in the development of different dimensions, and confront the negative impact caused by the engines of change down to practical solutions that will benefit the communities (Giao, 2017). In order to achieve this, the quality assurance process should work to apply advanced methods so as to improve the higher education, activation of existing practices with its development, and achieve the highest possible level at the output of higher education institutions to satisfy the local, regional, and global needs, The application of quality assurance standards causes the higher education institutions to review their messages and objectives which will enable them keep pace with the rapid changes in the globalization and the knowledge economies, and meet the requirements of comprehensive development.

In Vietnam, the institutions have understood that implemented education system in higher education institutions are inadequate in terms of quality. Therefore, it is expected that higher education institutions as the greatest firebrand of the educational area work for quality education. Increasing in the quality problems has led to change in administration understanding in university institutions and it is understood that higher education institutions should try different models in their administrative systems. It is also understood that quality should not be only achieved with the decisions of the higher education institutions; it would be more appropriate for

quality to be achieved with various government-supported institutions and foundations with higher sanction power. In the present study, it also observed that students' assessment on current situations of quality assurance will reveal the actual phenomena of quality management for postgraduate training program, and then based on the fact that the educators will have appropriate policies to make common decisions in the pursuit of quality.

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