

## IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHING STAFF OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITIES IN VIETNAM

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The teaching staff has a very important position and role, is a factor that plays a decisive role in the quality of teaching National Defense and Security Education at universities. However, the quality of the teaching staff in charge of National Defense and Security Education, besides the advantages, still exists some certain limitations. Through analyzing and explaining theoretical and practical issues about the quality of the teaching staff, some key solutions have been proposed to improve the quality of these lecturers, meeting the current requirements of education and training innovation.

**Keywords:** Quality; teaching staff; National Defense and Security Education, university.

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### 1. Introduction

The current context of the world and in Vietnam, with intertwined opportunities and challenges, is posing new requirements and missions on national defense and security, as assessed in the Vietnam National Defense White Book in 2019: “In the coming years, the world, the regional and domestic situation will continue to be complicated and hard to forecast. Many new unstable factors appear in the political, security, and economic environment, which have rapid, strong, and unexpected impacts. Besides opportunities and advantages, the causes of national construction and defense face many difficulties and challenges” (Ministry of Defense, 2019, pp. 2). National Defense and Security Education are essential, equipping students with knowledge about national defense and security, arousing and promoting patriotism, national pride, and precious traditions in the history of nation-building and protection. The 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam continued to affirm: “Well implementing the education of defense and security, raise the awareness and sense of responsibility for the people on the duty of national defense, strengthen national defense and security education. They are exploiting all resources, potentials, and advantages to build up the potentials of defense and security associated with economic, cultural, and social development” (Vietnamese Communist Party, 2021, p. 278).

Therefore, strengthening and improving the quality of teaching Defense and Security Education for students is an urgent need for current practice. The teaching staff is one of the critical factors affecting the training quality. On the other hand, the development of education and training, with the increase in university students, led to more prosperous and heavier content and missions of National Defense and Security Education within the new circumstance. Since then, practical orientations and solutions have been needed to improve the quality of the defense and security education teaching staff at universities.

The primary data for this study were compiled and analyzed from various sources. A secondary data system on the need to improve the quality of National Defense and Security Education lecturers to meet the requirements of current political tasks has been collected and synthesized from Reports No. 2095/BC-BTT of the Standing Board of the Central Council of National Defense and Security Education on the implementation of regulations on organization and operation of the Defense and Security Education Center; on the joint training on defense and security of higher education and vocational training institutions. In addition, reports, topics, and research projects conducted at universities and colleges have also been consulted, along with articles related to the current situation of the teaching staff of Defense and Security subjects.

To clarify theoretical issues about improving the quality of defense and security education lecturers at universities, theoretical research methods such as analysis, synthesis, generalization, and comparison have been used. In addition, survey and investigation methods have been applied to evaluate the advantages and limitations, thereby proposing solutions to improve the quality of the current defense and security education teaching staff.

## **2. Research content**

### ***2.1. The current role of the teaching staff of defense and security education at universities***

National Defense and Security education quality in universities depends on various factors such as teaching content and methods, teaching staff, equipment, training ground, etc. In particular, the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education plays a decisive role in the quality of teaching. The role of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education is represented as follows:

Firstly, the role of lecturers in directly carrying out teaching, scientific research, and service to the community. The teaching staff holds a very important position and role in carrying out the university's political tasks through the administration and management of the faculties, departments, and the National Defense and Security education center. The main responsibilities and missions of the teaching staff are to conduct scientific research to teach and foster knowledge of defense and security for students, in which the quality and effectiveness depend on promoting the roles and performing the responsibilities and duties of the teaching staff.

Secondly, the lecturers are ideologically oriented, helping students promptly grasp the viewpoints, revolutionary lines, policies, and laws on National Defense and Security of the Party, the State, and the obligation of national defense. With a mentor, the

value of the materials and the curriculum will be practical. The main responsibilities and missions of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities are to teach and foster National Defense and Security knowledge for students. Specifically, learners have imparted knowledge of national military lines, the Party's national defense and security, state legislation, resolutions, and instructions of the superiors on socio-economic development, strengthening national defense and security, building socialism, and protecting the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Law on Education for National Defense and Security has clearly defined educational objectives as follows: "Ensure learners have basic knowledge of the Party's viewpoints, State policies and laws on National Defense and Security; building all-people national defense in association with the people's security; building up the people's armed forces; supplement knowledge about civil defense and military skills; ready for military missions to protect the country" (National Assembly, 2013).

Thirdly, lecturers play a very important role in the country's future generations' comprehensive education and training process. National defense and security education aims to ensure the self-awareness of learners' own civic responsibility in the construction and defense of the country. The National Defense Law clearly states: "Citizens must be loyal to the country; must perform military duties; obliged to join the Self-Defense Force, building all-people national defense; perform national defense tasks by other relevant laws and regulations" (National Assembly, 2018).

Currently, societal needs are placing high requirements on the quality of human resources, requiring comprehensive educational reform. National defense and security education is also transitioning to learner-centered; the teaching staff must urgently standardize their knowledge and professional skills and regularly innovate teaching methods.

Fourth, lecturers build a pure, strong Party organization and contribute to the comprehensive development of universities. National defense and security education lecturers at universities are the binding force in constructing Party committees at all levels and forming a pure and robust Party organization. This contributes to building strong and comprehensively strong faculties, departments, and National Defense and Security education centers.

## ***2.2. The need to improve the quality of the teaching staff of defense and security education in universities***

Currently, improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education in universities is very essential, mainly for the following reasons:

Firstly, improving the quality of the teaching staff comes from the current international and regional context. In the current period, with the rapidly evolving and complicated situation in the region and the world, there are potential, unpredictable factors. Hostile forces still vigorously oppose the revolutionary cause of Vietnamese people through the strategy of "peaceful evolution", aimed at abolishing the socialist regime in Vietnam, abolishing the leading role of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and diverting our country's revolution from the direction of socialism. The 2019 Vietnam National Defense White Paper affirmed: "In the context of the world and regional security situation with complex, unpredictable events, the interweaving of opportunities

and challenges, Vietnam advocates for maintaining and developing a robust national defense, upholding the defense policy of peaceful and self-defense nature with the focus on building the all-people national security (Ministry of National Defense, 2019, pp. 6).

Therefore, the Party and State of Vietnam always uphold national defense and security education for the people, in which National Defense and Security education for students is a top priority. To contribute to completing the national defense and security education task for students, enhance revolutionary awareness and military skill training, and voluntarily participate in the construction and defense of the nation, the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education holds a critical position and role.

Secondly, improving the quality of the teaching staff comes from the goals and missions of National Defense and Security education of the universities. National defense and security education must be carried out comprehensively, synchronously and in-depth; focus on propagating and disseminating the Party's policy guidelines, the State's policies and legislation on National Defense and Security; meeting the requirements of building and protecting the Socialist State of Vietnam. That requires national defense and security education lecturers to be equipped with integrated knowledge from many different fields and specialties. From the practical experience of 10 years in the implementation of National Defense and Security education, Law on Education for National Defense and Security 2013, the project on training the contingent of teachers and lecturers in defense and security education at training institutions has been approved by the Government (Prime Minister, 2014).

The training of lecturers in National Defense and Security education is implemented in order to gradually standardize the teaching staff according to regulations, strive to have enough lecturers to undertake all the contents of National Defense and Security education subjects, in order to improve the quality of training. One of the key tasks of National Defense and Security education according to the Official Letter guiding the educational tasks of National Defense and Security in the school year 2022-2023 of the Ministry of Education and Training is: "Improve the quality of the contingent of management staff, teachers and lecturers to ensure sufficient quantity and quality to meet the requirements of National Defense and Security education" (Ministry of Education and Training, 2022).

Third, improving the quality of the teaching staff comes from the actual quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education. In the past years, the guidelines, solutions, policies, etc. aimed at building a contingent of lecturers in National Defense and Security education in universities have initially achieved certain results. Up to now, National Defense and Security education's teaching staff have been gradually consolidated and enhanced nationwide. Some localities have been proactive and sensitive in the training, arrangement, and staffing of lecturers and have partly met the needs of National Defense and Security education for students. However, the current teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at higher education institutions still needs to be improved in quantity and quality. The Standing Board of the Central Council for National Defense and Security Education assessed: "The contingent of teachers and lecturers who meet the standards of National Defense and Security education is still short of demand; Visiting lecturers are mostly retired military officers who are the elderly, having difficulty in teaching, especially the content of military skills and practice,

affecting the training quality” (Central Council for National Defense and Security Education, 2018).

Fourth, the improvement of the quality of the teaching staff is necessary because of the strong impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (FIR), which not only had a significant effect on economic-social sectors but also affected the educational environment, significantly higher education, leading to substantial and comprehensive innovation to adapt to new circumstances. For higher education, with the dual effect of FIR, finding the most effective adaptation solutions to the impact of FIR is very urgent. Identifying and providing solutions to anticipate and innovate the management, training, and scientific research meeting the requirements of FIR have been implemented in several major universities. However, there is a lack of synchronization, and it has yet to attract the attention of the entire higher education system. In particular, the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education must continuously improve the quality to adapt to the impact of FIR.

Fifth, improve the quality of the teaching staff to meet the requirements to fulfill the task of building socialism and protecting socialist Vietnam in the new situation, two strategic tasks of the Vietnamese revolution. To accomplish these strategic tasks, it is necessary to strengthen defense and security education to build the all-people national defense and people's security. The quality and efficiency of National Defense and Security education for students depend on the quality of the teaching staff.

### ***2.3. The current situation of the teaching staff of defense and security education in universities***

First, regarding the common characteristics of the teaching staff: The teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities include full-time lecturers, visiting lecturers, seconded military officers and polices, which are sourced, trained and fostered from many different higher education institutions with basic, systematic and intensive training programs mainly from two main branches, including political officers and staff commanding officers. The rest are full-time and visiting lecturers with short-term training (6 months), bachelor's degree in National Defense and Security education, bachelor with 2nd degree in National Defense and Security education, bachelor's degree in combining defense education with physical education, bachelor's degree in combining defense education with political education in higher education institutions inside and outside the military. That shows the diversity and complexity in terms of types, origins, training and foresting institutions of National Defense and Security education lecturers at universities.

Second, in terms of quantity and the age of the teaching staff: Through the construction and development process, the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities have made significant changes, which is reflected in the number of lecturers, as well as the number of highly qualified lecturers. However, the average annual growth rate has not really met the requirements of the teaching task of National Defense and Security education of universities.

The teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities have a relatively reasonable age structure, with 62.2% of lecturers aged from 35 to 50 (Central Council for National Defense and Security Education, 2018). This is not a very

young age, has a relatively high professional qualification, with a lot of accumulated teaching experience. In particular, this is the age of enthusiasm, capable of adapting to new things and absorbing new technologies quickly. However, lecturers at this age often do not have high academic titles and limited in practical experience.

Third, regarding the structure of training qualifications and professional expertise of the teaching staff: According to the Law on National Defense and Security Education, National Defense and Security education lecturers at universities are full-time lecturers, visiting lecturers, seconded military and police officers. However, a part of lecturers in National Defense and Security education at universities are recruited from leaders and commanders in agencies and military units, has not been trained and fostered in basic and specialized pedagogical skills. Educational qualifications, foreign languages, informatics, political theories, military professional expertise, national defense, security, pedagogy, practical experience, military age, lifetimes, career age of lecturers in National Defense and Security education is uneven and constantly fluctuating. Most of the lecturers in National Defense and Security education at universities have just attained university education.

Fourth, moral qualities and lifestyles of the teaching staff: The teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities are officers and employees, some are military and police officers. Therefore, the teaching staff all meet the requirements of quality, capacity, methods and working style like lecturers teaching other subjects at universities. At the same time, the requirements of quality, capacity, methods and working style as those of the Party and State cadres in the people's armed forces must also be met.

Notice No. 1127/TB-BGDDT on the conclusions of Deputy Minister Le Hai An at the Conference on Preliminary Review of 5 years of implementation of Decision No. 607/QĐ-TTg dated April 24, 2014 of the Prime Minister affirmed: “The teaching staff is qualified and has firmly professional expertise; High pedagogical skills, innovative teaching methods aimed at promoting learners' capacity, active self-study, self-research to level up their qualifications” (Prime Minister, 2019). Besides the advantages, the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education still have some shortcomings and limitations: “practical capacity as well as the application of theory to practice is not close; Limited physical strength, shooting techniques, teaching methods, collective living skills, and movement activities” (Prime Minister, 2019).

From the above situation, it is necessary to have solutions to further improve the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education in universities in terms of quantity, quality, moral quality and political courage as well as in terms of relevant policy mechanisms.

#### ***2.4. Some solutions to improve the quality of national defense and security education lecturers at universities***

Firstly, to create a strong change in awareness and responsibility of leaders, managers, officials and lecturers for improving the quality of the teaching staff. This is the basic solution, which is decisive because awareness always directs human actions. Right perception leads to right action. The right awareness and high responsibility of leaders, managers and officials and lecturers will create a strong motivation and

determination in improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education.

Leaders, managers, officials and lecturers need to be deeply aware that the quality of lecturers is a decisive factor in the quality of education and training. Building and improving the quality of lecturers is part of the university's development strategy. Universities and training units need to have practical solutions in training and fostering in order to improve the quality of the teaching staff, to meet the requirements of renovation of National Defense and Security education in the new situation.

Second, strengthen the leadership, direction and management of the Party Committees and Board of Directors of universities in training, fostering and improving the quality of lecturers. All activities of building and improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education depend on the leadership and direction of the Party committees and organizations at the centers, faculties and departments. Therefore, strengthening the leadership and direction of the Party Committees, the Rector Boards of universities and all levels of Party committees, party organizations at centers, faculties and departments to improve quality is one of the basic and key solutions, directly contributing to building the current quality improvement teaching staff.

Third, improve the quality of recruitment, training and fostering of National Defense and Security education lecturers. Recruiting, training and fostering the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education is an important content of building the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities. To ensure that the recruitment, training and fostering of National Defense and Security education lecturers are in order, proactive, foresight, meeting both immediate and long-term tasks, must come from the political mission of the university. It is necessary to assess the current National Defense and Security education teaching staff, anticipating the needs and growth potential of the staff to proactively develop training and fostering to promptly meet the requirements.

In order to improve the quality of recruitment, training and fostering of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education, it is necessary to develop specific standards of lecturers. All lecturer titles must have clear standards and regulations on political qualities, ethics, lifestyle, capacity, qualifications, responsibilities and duties. Formulate, modify, supplement and complete the necessary regulations for the construction and development of the teaching staff, and at the same time further promote the quality of recruitment stages.

The 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam has paid special attention to the content of continuing to make breakthroughs in the renovation of educational contents and methods, fostering of National Defense and Security. The congress emphasized: "Renovate and improve the quality and effectiveness of education and training on national defense and security knowledge for cadres and civil servants and for the entire people, ensuring suitability for each object. Focusing on education, unification and awareness raising about partners and targets, grasp the guidelines, viewpoints, requirements and tasks to protect the country in the new situation (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, pp. 159). Based on such a spirit, the Ministry of Education and Training shall assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with the

ministries of National Defense, Public Security, Home Affairs, Finance, Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs together with universities in proposing solutions to actively implement according to the project approved by the Prime Minister, step by step research and train the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education with increasingly high qualifications to meet the requirements as prescribed by the Law on Education and the Law on Higher Education.

Fourthly, renewing and perfecting the policy system for the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education. For training and fostering policies, it is necessary to invest appropriately in training and fostering the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education, providing financial support to ensure the reassurance of the lecturers. With regard to the policy on using and managing, the arrangement and use of teaching staff must ensure the right standards in accordance with their abilities and interests. Promotion of cadres must be at the right time, with the right people, with the right positions. It is necessary to have an appropriate management policy in order to maximize the potential of each individual and the faculty. For the policy of ensuring material benefits and encouraging morale, it is necessary to fundamentally reform the policy to ensure material benefits for the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education, first of all, the salary, allowance and incentive. Salaries must truly become a basic part of the income of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education. Along with encouraging material benefits, focusing on education and raising revolutionary ideals is the greatest motivation to promote the striving of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education.

Implementing the renovation and improvement of this policy system is of great significance to improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities. Universities need to proactively set out their plans year after year, each term and have a broader vision in construction and development, contributing to improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education at universities to meet revolutionary tasks in the coming time.

Fifth, promote the positive and self-discipline of the teaching staff in learning and fostering in terms of quality and capacity. Improving professional qualifications and pedagogy has become the main solution to meet the requirements of national defense and security education in the new situation. The 2013 Law on National Defense and Security Education clearly states that the professional qualifications of National Defense and Security education lecturers are: “Teachers and lecturers of National Defense and Security education must have a bachelor's degree in National Defense and Security education or higher; In case of having an university degree or higher in another major, certificate of professional training in pedagogy and certificate of training for teachers and lecturers of National Defense and Security education are a must” (National Assembly, 2013); and “National defense and security education teachers and lecturers are periodically fostered and trained at schools of the people's armed forces, and at national defense and security education centers” (National Assembly, 2013). The Law on National Defense and Security Education has affirmed that it is legal to compel the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education to improve their professional qualifications, improve their pedagogical skills, and apply information technology in teaching to meet the requirements of the task in the new situation.

Renovation of teaching methods is a breakthrough step in improving the quality of national defense and security education. The teaching staff needs to deploy many innovative solutions to teaching methods and application of information technology in teaching and learning, with a learner-centered perspective. It is necessary to reform the method of testing and evaluating students, using a variety of methods and forms to influence students' perception on the goal and meaning of the National Defense and Security Education, realizing their own roles in the task of national construction and defense.

Improving political courage is an important content contributing to improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education. To do this, it is necessary to focus on renewing political and ideological education; regularly foster knowledge of political theory; well performing self-criticism and criticism; Assigned tasks in accordance with capacity; and perform the responsible duties of Party members as lecturers of National Defense and Security education.

Improving revolutionary ethics for the the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education is to foster loyalty to the country, the Party, and the people, raising patriotism, proud of the nation, loves and attaches to his homeland, ready to receive and complete assigned tasks. Lecturers must lead a humble, simple life, unite with everyone, with comrades and colleagues, be honest, straightforward, actively self-criticize and critique.

Sixth, strengthen the inspection and evaluation of the performance of duties and responsibilities of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education. This is a content of state management of National Defense and Security education, which is specified in the Law on Education for National Defense and Security. The Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Public Security, the National Defense and Security Education Council at all levels, together with universities need to promote their roles well, and at the same time regularly coordinate, conduct inspection and seriously evaluate the performance of duties and responsibilities of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education. It is necessary to flexibly combine regular, periodic and extraordinary inspection and assessment. Inspection and evaluation activities must ensure practicality, efficiency, must not cause trouble, obstruct, ocusing on properly assessing reality, resolutely overcoming the achievement disease.

The examination and inspection aim to detect and overcome limitations and weaknesses, and at the same time promote the advantages of lecturers in performing their responsibilities and tasks, creating motivation for lecturers to practice and strive to improve. Through the examination and evaluation of lecturers, it is also necessary to point out the inappropriate points of the current mechanism and regulations for the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education, thereby promptly advising the Party, the Government, functional departments, ministries and universitites to supplement, perfect and standardize regulations on responsibilities and duties of teaching staff.

Strengthening the inspection and evaluation of the performance of duties and responsibilities of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education should be associated with the reform of administrative procedures, improvement of management

tools, application of information technology, digital transformation in the examination and evaluation of lecturers.

### **3. Conclusions**

At universities, the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education have a very important role, directly imparting National Defense and Security knowledge to students, forming students' self-consciousness about the performance of civic obligations in the building and protecting of the Socialist Vietnam.

Under the new conditions, the task of National Defense and Security education will be increasingly complex and heavier, requires teaching staff to self-educate and improve their quality, professional qualifications and skills to fulfill their assigned responsibilities and tasks. Therefore, it is necessary to have comprehensive and synchronous solutions to build the teaching staff, improving the quality of the teaching staff of National Defense and Security education, an important and urgent issue that is being raised in universities today.

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## TÓM TẮT

### NÂNG CAO CHẤT LƯỢNG ĐỘI NGŨ GIẢNG VIÊN GIÁO DỤC QUỐC PHÒNG VÀ AN NINH Ở CÁC TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC Ở VIỆT NAM HIỆN NAY

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Ngày nhận bài 28/12/2022, ngày nhận đăng 03/02/2023

Đội ngũ giảng viên giáo dục quốc phòng và an ninh có vị trí, vai trò rất quan trọng, một nhân tố quyết định chất lượng giảng dạy môn Giáo dục quốc phòng và an ninh ở các trường đại học. Tuy nhiên, chất lượng đội ngũ giảng viên quốc phòng và an ninh, bên cạnh những ưu điểm vẫn còn tồn tại một số hạn chế nhất định. Trên cơ sở phân tích, luận giải những vấn đề lý luận và thực tiễn về chất lượng đội ngũ giảng viên giáo dục quốc phòng và an ninh (QP-AN), bài viết đưa ra một số giải pháp chủ yếu nhằm nâng cao chất lượng đội ngũ giảng viên, đáp ứng yêu cầu đổi mới giáo dục và đào tạo hiện nay.

**Từ khóa:** Chất lượng; đội ngũ giảng viên; giáo dục quốc phòng và an ninh.