

Policies on Support of General Education for Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam in the Current Content

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Received November 29, 2018; Revised December 22, 2018; Accepted December 25, 2018

Abstract Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country comprising 54 ethnic groups with different levels of socio-economic development, language and cultural life characterized by each ethnic community. 53 ethnic minorities in Vietnam accounting for about 13% of the country's population live mainly in the most difficult, divided terrain, poor transportation areas and sparsely populated area. The Government of Vietnam has issued many documents and policies, devoted a lot of investment resources to ethnic minority and mountainous areas, including the policies on the general education for ethnic minority people. These policies have contributed to improve people's intellectual standards, the quality of human resources for ethnic minority people, and socio-economic development for ethnic minority areas in Vietnam in the current context. However, the general education for ethnic minority people still faces many difficulties and challenges, which requires the policy renewal and implementation of general educational policies for ethnic minority people to raise the level of human resources in ethnic minority areas in order to meet the requirements of national renewal in the new period.

Keywords: *educational policies, policies on support of general education, ethnic minority people in Vietnam*

Cite This Article: Le Van Loi, "Policies on Support of General Education for Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam in the Current Content." *American Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 6, no. 12 (2018): 1678-1687. doi: 10.12691/education-6-12-14.

1. Introduction

Educational policies are concerned and researched at different levels. In general, the studies mention the education, training and development of human resources in ethnic minority areas as a solution (or solution system for ethnic issues). In a number of studies, the authors have profoundly analyzed and explained the policies and the actual situation of implementing the policies on education, training and human resource development, proposed many solutions for strengthening and improving the implementation effectiveness of educational policies in Vietnam at present. In *Education Modernization*, Vuong Ban Thai has mentioned the importance of the education for the construction and development of the country in the countries of the world and in China's Jiangsu province. The author has analyzed many aspects of the goal and method of education modernization in China [1]. Nolwen Henaff and Marie France Lange researching *Relationships between education and poverty, theory and influence on educational policies* have shown that the poverty is a difficult barrier for developing and implementing the educational policies. The results of implementing educational policies are closely related to the poverty, so it is essential to invest appropriately in the education, consider the education as a key of sustainable development. At the same time, the authors provide some evidences in the

successful implementation of the educational policies in some countries around the world [2]. Pham Van Linh in *Strategic orientation and breakthrough solutions for fundamental innovation of the education and training in Vietnam* has researched the theoretical and practical issues on fundamental and comprehensive innovation of education and training; the actual situation of Vietnamese education before the requirement of fundamental and comprehensive innovation; the strategic orientation and development solutions for Vietnam education in the coming time. The author also provides some limitations in the general education in the current context and proposes the solutions in order to overcome these limitations [3]. Le Quoc Hoi in *Education and Training Policy in Vietnam, the actual situation and proposal* has mentioned the advantages and limitations of education in Vietnam at present. Therefore, the author proposes the solutions for the general education in the coming years [4]. Pham Tat Thang in *Completion of education and training policy for human resources development in order to serve industrialization and modernization* has shown that learning opportunities of children are uneven between regions, areas and even in each community due to the wide rich and poor gap [5]. *Current socialization policy of education and health in Vietnam: Some theoretical and practical issues* of Cao Thu Hang have shown that the actual situation for implementing the policy of educational socialization in Vietnam at present still has inadequacies and limitations. The main reason is that the implementation

of ineffective educational policies makes the quality of education change slowly, the lack and weakness of the effective use of human resources for education and training. Therefore, it is necessary to promote the policies to develop non-public education systems, enhance self-control regime and social accountability [6].

Studies on the educational policies for ethnic minority people in Vietnam are mainly concerned with the policies of supporting the education, training and human resource development in ethnic minority areas, assess the actual situation and propose the solutions to improve the quality of education, training and human resources of ethnic minorities in Vietnam at present. *Supervising the implementation of ethnic policy in the field of education and training, fostering and using, management of ethnic minority cadres in our country at present* of Council for Ethnic Minorities of National Assembly is researched meticulously, based on objective data and facts on the process of implementing ethnic policies in the field of education, training and use of the ethnic minority cadres at present. The study has a comprehensive assessment of the achievements, inadequacies, limitations and specific recommendations to the State of Vietnam, the requirements for local government levels for improving the effectiveness of implementing the ethnic policies in the field of education and training, fostering and using, management of ethnic minority cadres [7]. Nguyen Dang Thanh in *Some issues on developing ethnic minority human resources for the promotion of industrialization and modernization in Vietnam* deals with the issue of the scale and quality of ethnic minority students, which increases over the years. The author refers to the policies of the Vietnamese State for ethnic minority general education [8]. In *Human resource development in ethnic minority areas in Vietnam meeting the requirement for promoting industrialization and modernization of the country*, the author has researched the bases of theory and practice for developing the human resources of ethnic minorities and the solution of the State of Vietnam for developing the ethnic minority human resources, meet the requirements of promoting industrialization and modernization of the country [9]. In *Socio-economic development of ethnic minority and mountainous areas according to the direction of industrialization and modernization*, the authors have analyzed the actual situation, difficulties and inadequacies in the process of socio-economic development in the ethnic and mountainous areas at present. Thence, the authors propose the solutions for socio-economic development in the areas mentioned in the direction of industrialization and modernization. Particularly, strengthening the education, training, fostering and improvement of the intellectual standards for ethnic minorities, especially training workmanship for ethnic minority objects to serve the process of industrialization and modernization in ethnic minority areas [10]. Pham Van Son in *Training and improving the quality of human resources in ethnic minority and mountainous areas - Actual situation and solutions* has analyzed and clarified the actual situation, achievements and weaknesses and limitations of the training and fostering of human resources in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in recent years. In the opinion of the author, with the right and proper guidelines and policies of the State of

Vietnam, until now, basically, the elimination of illiteracy and universal primary and secondary education have been successfully implemented; the scale of university, college, professional and vocational training continues to increase at high speed. There are many models of schools for ethnic minority children at present [11]. Dang Xuan Hoan in *Human resource development to meet the requirements of industrialization, modernization and international integration* have researched the human resources in general, explanations on characteristics, requirements and development solutions for the human resources are valuable suggestions for researching the human resource development in ethnic minority areas in the current context [12]. Nguyen Trong Dam in *Promoting social security policies to ensure social progress and justice in our country in the current context* affirms that the programs and policies of supporting the education for ethnic minority children are developed effectively, the children go to school at the right age at the primary level. The author has proposed the solutions to promote policies for general education for ethnic minority students [13]. Ha Thi Khiet in *Strengthening the educational development in ethnic minority areas - an important basis for the implementation of equality among ethnic groups* has affirmed that the State of Vietnam always pays attention to the education in ethnic minority areas and establishes many models of schools for ethnic minority children. The general education system is improved and developed, the number of ethnic minority people at the age of 15 and over who can read and write increases rapidly. The author also clarifies some shortcomings and limitations in the implementation of the educational policies in ethnic minority areas and gives some proposals for solutions to strengthen the education in ethnic minority areas [14]. Dang Thanh Phuong in *Bilingual development in ethnic minorities in our country from policy to practice* has analyzed the guidelines of the Vietnamese State for respecting the equal rights of languages; language development of ethnic minorities. At the same time, developing Vietnamese into the common language of all ethnic groups in the country [15]. Ngo Thi Trinh in *Improving the quality of ethnic minority human resources - the strategic task of ethnic affairs* has analyzed and clarified the achievements in implementing the policy of training and developing Vietnamese human resources and also pointed out the current limitations and inadequacies. Thence, the author proposes some solutions to improve the quality of ethnic minority human resources [16]. Nguyen Quynh Hoa in *Ethnic Policy in Vietnam: Achievements and challenges to overcome* have analyzed and clarified the content of national policies and guidelines of the State of Vietnam. In particular, the author refers to the social policies focusing on issues of education - training, culture, health, etc. in order to improve the capacity, implement the equality between ethnic groups, create prerequisites and opportunities for the ethnic groups to have full conditions to participate in the development process, basing on that basis to constantly improve the material and spiritual life of ethnic minorities [17]. In the *Report on some policies on education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas*, the research team has focused on the subsidies for learners, tuition exemption and reduction, priority policies in

enrollment, training, policies for teachers, policies to build schools and classes, budget allocation norms for the education and training, credit training policies and other policies related to ethnic minority pupils and students. The research team has pointed out some advantages when implementing the policies for general education such as tuition reduction, investment in construction of schools, the number of students going to class to be maintained and developed and proposal of solutions, methods for implementing some policies on funding for general education to be more practical and effective [18]. In *National Conference on Education in ethnic minority areas* organized by the Ministry of Education and Training, there were many speeches with research contents focusing on the issue of general educational policies for ethnic minority people in Vietnam at present. Articles on implementing the policies for the education in ethnic minority areas such as: *Primary education for ethnic minority students* of the Department of Primary Education, *Development of secondary education in mountainous and ethnic minority areas* of the Department of Secondary Education, *Priority and equality policies in education for ethnic minority students and pupils* of the Department of Student Affairs, *Investment and support of the State on finance, facilities for the national education* of the Department of Planning and Finance. The articles focused on presenting the actual situation and results of policies for the general education on facilities, supporting for learning expenses, improving the educational quality of student [19]. In the report, *Some issues on implementing educational policies in ethnic minority areas* of Council for Ethnic Minorities of National Assembly focused on analyzing some specific policies in the development of specialized schools and nomination policies and highlighting some inadequacies such as the lack of facilities, the support for learning expenses for the students does not meet the requirements of the practice [19]. Report of *Situation of ethnic education in the current context and the development orientation until 2020* of the Ministry of Education and Training has provided a number of solutions to develop the educational policies for ethnic minority areas. In particular, the focus is on continuing to improve the facilities, develop the system of schools, classes and educational institutions; develop teachers and educational managers; increase the proportion of budget for the education in ethnic minority areas. Develop and supplement appropriate financial policies and mobilize investment resources for educational institutions [19].

In addition, there are many studies and articles on the educational policies and general educational policies for ethnic minority people in different ethnic minority areas of Vietnam: Pham Thanh Nghi in *Human development in the Northwest region* has assessed the development of human in the Northwest region based on the theory of human development of some scholars and the human development index of the United Nations. The author has shown the advantages and disadvantages as well as the causes of limitations, proposed some solutions in order to promote the development of people in the Northwest region in the coming time [20]. Bui The Cuong and Vuong Xuan Tinh in *Vietnam Report - The health and education need of ethnic minorities in the Mekong*

sub-region have assessed the actual situation, the health and education needs of ethnic minorities in the Mekong sub-region. Thence, the authors propose some solutions to meet the needs and improve the quality of health and education for ethnic minorities in the Mekong sub-region [21]. Nguyen Hong Hai in *Some issues for the training of ethnic minority human resources in the Northwest region at present* believes that the ethnic minority human resources in the Northwest region are now large in number but weak in quality, especially the qualifications of the leaders and managers. In order to develop the Northwest region, the training of ethnic minority human resources is one of the most important and urgent tasks in order to contribute to the efficiency improvement of socio-economic development and raise the intellectual standards. The author offers a number of recommendations and solutions to the training of minority human resources in the Northwest [22]. Nguyen Ngoc Thanh in *Some issues of educational policy in Northern mountainous Vietnam* has assessed the actual situation of educational policies for some ethnic groups (Cong, Mang, Si La, Tay, Hmong, Dao) in Northern highland and mountainous Vietnam, clarified the inadequacies between the policies and practices of living of ethnic minorities at present, on that basis, there are recommendations on the policies for building the facilities for the schools; preparing the suitable contents of teaching to the characteristics of ethnic minority students; specific bilingual and professional educational policies in ethnic minority areas; specialized education in high schools in ethnic minority areas [23].

Studies on educational policies and educational policies for ethnic minority people have been analyzed in terms of training policies and specific policies related to human development. Many studies have analyzed and clarified the achievements, limitations for implementing the policies as well as the current issues. In some studies, the scholars have proposed the basic solutions to contribute to further innovation and improvement of the policy system of education and training, the development of ethnic minority human resources, the promotion of the great role of ethnic minority communities in the industrialization and modernization. This article mainly focuses on the general educational policies and the implementation of the general educational policies for ethnic minority people in Vietnam. Therefore, some recommendations on the general educational policies for ethnic minority people in Vietnam at present are proposed.

2. Content

2.1. Achievements in Building and Implementing the Support Policies of the General Education for Ethnic Minority People in Vietnam in the Current Text

The general education is understood as an educational sector that teaches common knowledge to the students. [24]; 394] In Vietnam, the general education includes: Primary education is conducted for five years (from grade 1 to grade 5) and the students begin to attend grade 1 at

the age of 6. Secondary education is carried out in four years (from grade 6 to grade 9), the students must complete the primary program before attending grade 6 and attend the grade 6 at the age of 11. High education is implemented for three years (from grade 10 to grade 12), the students must have Secondary diploma before attending grade 10 and attend the grade 10 at the age of 15 [25]. According to Circular No. 14/2017/TT-BGDĐT (article 2, clause 1) on regulating the standards, procedures for building and adjusting the general educational programs; the organizations and activities of the national council for the appraisal of general educational programs promulgated with the Circular, the general education includes: primary education and secondary education (the basic education) and high education (oriented education for career) [26].

The general educational policies are collection of specific guidelines and plans of the State and the Government in order to promote the development of all aspects of the school. The general educational policies for ethnic minorities are the collection of specific plans and action programs of the Government to support and promote the development of general education for ethnic minorities in order to achieve the general education level of the countries. Specifically, the Government and Ministries issued the documents regulating the support policies and methods of the education for ethnic minority people in order to support ethnic minority people to go to school and achieve the general education level of the whole country.

With the view of education as a national policy to raise people's intellectual standards and develop high-quality human resources for the country, *Vietnam's 2013 Constitution* stipulates that "Citizens have the right and obligation to study", "The country prioritizes the development of education in mountainous, island, ethnic minority and extremely difficult socio-economic condition areas" [25]. By these regulations, all Vietnamese citizens regardless of populous ethnic groups or ethnic minorities have the right and the obligation to study and enjoy the educational policies prescribed by the State. In particular, ethnic minority people are benefited the specific support policies and regimes in order to ensure the equality between ethnic groups, promote the educational development in ethnic minority areas to improve the intellectual standards, the quality of human resources for socio-economic development in localities.

Vietnam is a nation consisting of many ethnic groups with different levels of socio-economic development, language and cultural life that are characteristic of each ethnic community. Particularly, ethnic minorities with low population, ethnic minority and mountainous areas in Vietnam currently consist of 5,259 communes, in 457 districts of 52 provinces and cities with 13.4 million people [27], living mainly in the most difficult, divided terrain, poor transportation areas and sparsely populated area. At present, there are many difficulties for ethnic minorities in accessing necessary resources for production, lack of infrastructure, poor infrastructure and difficult access to social, health and educational services. [28]. For socio-economic development and improvement of the intellectual standards, the State of Vietnam has issued many policies on the general education for ethnic minorities:

2.1.1. Investment and Support Policies for the Educational Development in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas

The Government and Ministries of Vietnam have issued many Decrees, Decisions, Circulars on guiding the implementation of programs, projects and policies according to the law to support the education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. In particular, there are the educational target programs, the project of solidifying the facilities of the schools and public houses for teachers to serve the education for ethnic minority people. Project of *Consolidating and developing the system of semi-boarding ethnic high schools and high schools with semi-boarding students in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in the period of 2016 - 2025* invested in the facilities for the boarding high school system, contributing to improve the educational quality of this school system. Decision No. 85/2010/QĐ-TTg dated 21 December 2010 of the Prime Minister on promulgating some policies to support the semi-boarding students and semi-boarding ethnic high schools in order to determine the beneficiaries of support policies for ethnic minority students studying in boarding ethnic schools in extremely difficult socio-economic condition areas and other public elementary and secondary schools in this region because the house is far away from school, the terrain is difficult to access, the transportation is difficult, it is impossible to go to school and return home during the day. Decree No. 116/2016/NĐ-CP dated 18 July 2016 of the Government on stipulating the policies to support the students and high schools in extremely difficult communes, regulating the investment in the facilities and equipment, including: housing, bed, kitchen, bathroom, sanitary facilities, clean water projects and attached equipment for the semi-boarding students according to the current school design standards; to additionally purchase, repair the gymnastics, sports equipment, musical instruments, television sets, serving for cultural, gymnastics, sports activities and others for the semi-boarding students; to set up medicine cabinets for general use in the semi-boarding area, to buy common medicines in sufficient quantities in order to meet the requirements of disease prevention and treatment of the unexpected emergencies, etc. [29].

With investment and support policies for educational development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, in recent years, the Government of Vietnam has invested the trillions of Vietnamese dong for the education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, contributing to change and improve the quality of education and training, human resources of ethnic minorities. From 2010 to 2017, the central and local authorities and others invested VND 52 billion in educational infrastructure, building nearly 11,000 items for the education, etc. Therefore, the general education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas has developed strongly at all levels and fields of study. In the school year of 2014 - 2015, there were 304 boarding ethnic high schools with nearly 64,697 students from 45/53 ethnic minorities, including 215 district schools, 89 provincial schools [30]. The solidification projects of classrooms and public houses for the teachers are increasing in the following years. In 2015, the total number of schools of ethnic minority communes is 17,722 schools (preschools are 5,420 schools, primary schools are

5,968 schools, secondary schools are 3,652 schools, high schools are 597 schools and schools integrated by primary and secondary education is 293 schools). Comparing to the school year of 2010 - 2011, in the school year of 2016-2017, ethnic minority and mountainous areas had nearly 8,000 preschools (increasing 483 schools), more than 7,000 primary schools (increasing 713 schools), nearly 5,000 secondary schools (increasing 429 schools), more than 1,000 high schools (increasing 71 schools), 314 boarding ethnic high schools for ethnic minority students (increasing 22 schools), more than 1,000 semi-boarding ethnic high schools (increasing 886 schools) [31].

2.1.2. Direct Support Policy for Learners

Reduction and exemption policy of tuition fees for the ethnic minority people: Decree No. 49/2010/NĐ-CP dated May 14 2010 of the Government, on reduction and exemption of tuition fees, support for learning cost, collection and use of tuition applicable to educational institutions belonging to national education system from school year 2010 – 2011 to 2014 - 2015; Decree No. 86/2015/NĐ-CP dated October 2, 2015 of the Government regulating on mechanism for collection and management of tuition fees applicable to educational institutions in the national education system and policies on tuition fee exemption and reduction and financial support from academic year 2015 – 2016 to 2020 – 2021, determining the subject entitled to tuition exemption that includes 15 target groups, including the ethnic minority pupils, students studying at vocational education and higher education institutions, who are the ethnic minority people belonging to poor households and pro-poor households as stipulated by the Prime Minister. The subjects exempted from tuition fees include: children in kindergartens and the ethnic minority students living in areas with extremely difficult socio-economic conditions according to the appropriate authorities' regulations [32]. For the students in the ethnic minority boarding school, shall comply with the provisions of Joint Circular No. 109/2009/TTLT/BTC-BGDĐT dated May 29, 2009 of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and Training instructing some financial regimes for the students in the ethnic minority boarding school and national university preparatory school, are exempted from tuition fees.

Support policy for learning cost: Decision No. 36/2013/QĐ-TTg dated June 18, 2013 stipulating the rice support policy for the students at schools in areas with especially difficult socio-economic conditions. The document clearly stipulates that the beneficiaries of the Government's rice support policy are the ethnic minority students who have a father, mother or legal guardian having permanent residence in the commune or village with especially difficult socio-economic conditions, non-boarding, having a home away from school or rough terrain that the students are unable to go to school and go home during the learning days in the high school and combined secondary school [33]. Decree No. 116/2016/NĐ-CP dated July 18, 2016 of the Government regulating the support policies for the students and schools in communes with special difficulties. Under this regulation, each student is supported with meals and rice each month; housing support for the students who are self-sufficient accommodation because the school is unable to arrange

accommodation in the school. Decree No. 116/2016/NĐ-CP dated 18 July 2016 providing support policy to school students in communes and villages of special difficulty. Under this regulation, each student is supported with meals and rice each month; housing support for students who must be self-sufficient in accommodation because the school cannot arrange accommodation in the school [29]. According to the Joint Circular No. 109/2009/ TTLT/BTC-BGDĐT on May 29, 2009, the students in the ethnic minority boarding high school are entitled to a policy scholarship equal to 80% of the minimum salary of the State, and enjoyed 12 months of the year; provided the personal belongings; supported on New Year holidays, provided with train fare according to the common fare of public transport so that they can visit their family on Tet holidays or summer holidays; moreover, they also is provided the learning tools. In addition, students are supported to buy health check books and organize health examinations, buy health insurance, and buy regular medicine for students located in school medicine cabinets. They are also supported to participate in the school's cultural activities, performances, sports, public propaganda and advocacy activities, as well as the entrance exam and graduation costs, utility prices, and expenses for studying and living. Classes are mentioned in local newspapers, newspapers for young people or "Education and Age", cultural journals for the ethnic groups is aims to serve the specific educational activities of the school [34].

Through proper and appropriate guidelines and policies, there have been many school models for the ethnic minority people such as the ethnic youth school, working and studying school, the ethnic minority boarding high school and semi-boarding, and national university preparatory school. Thanks to the investment, exemption, reduction policies of tuition fees, support for learning costs for the ethnic minority boarding and semi-boarding schools, national university preparatory school, and education on the ethnic minority and mountainous areas, which have created conditions for the ethnic minority students in order to have better study conditions, to reduce the situation of dropout rates, the quality of education has been gradually improved and developed comprehensively across all disciplines and levels. The scale of the school and the number of the ethnic minority students, is increasing. The rate of children going to school next year is higher than the previous year, the work of universalizing education for 5-year-old children, universalizing primary and lower secondary education is maintained and solidified. In the 2014-2015 school year, the number of primary schoolchildren who is the ethnic minority children with 1,316,048; junior high school has 816,995 children; high school has 296,868 children [30]. In 2015, literacy rate of ethnic minority people aged 15 and above who can read and write with 7,465,062 people, reaching 79.8%; literacy rate of ethnic minority people aged 15 and above who can read and write in Vietnamese having 7,416,732 people, reaching 79.2%; the proportion of ethnic minority people aged 15 years and above who have been employed and trained, reaching 6.2%; and 70.2% of the school-aged students (including 88.9% of primary school level, 72.6% of junior high school level and 32.3% of high school level) [35]. In the 2016-2017 school year, elementary school students from the ethnic minorities and mountainous areas,

reaching 95% with the completed primary school programs, the ethnic minority students at lower secondary schools have good and excellent academic performance with over 38%, high school level is nearly 35% [36]. The results of the high school examination in 2017 of the ethnic minority boarding high school nationwide have a graduation rate of 98.4%, of which 56/98 the ethnic minority boarding high school have a graduation rate with 100% [37].

2.1.3. Policy for the Teachers and Educational Managers Working in the Ethnic Minority Areas

To improve the quality of education and attract teachers and educational managers working in the ethnic minority areas, the Government of Vietnam has issued many preferential policies for teachers and educational managers in the ethnic minority and mountainous areas. Decree 61/2006/ NĐ-CP dated June 20, 2006 of the Government on policies for the teachers and educational managers working in special schools, in the areas with specially difficult socio-economic conditions, stipulated preferential policies for the teachers and managers at the specialized schools, especially the ethnic minority boarding high school: allowance for visits, study and professional training, "Allowance level with 50% of current salary and leadership position allowance, beyond seniority allowance (if any)" that are applied to the teachers working at the ethnic minority semi-boarding high schools, university preparatory school; "Allowance level with 70% of current salary and leadership position allowance, beyond seniority allowance (if any) applied to the teachers and educational managers working in the ethnic minority boarding high school" [38]. Decree No. 19/2013/NĐ-CP dated February 23, 2013 of the Government amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Government's Decree No. 61/2006 / NĐ-CP of June 20, 2006, on policies for the teachers and educational managers working in specialized schools, the areas with specially difficult socio-economic conditions, the beneficiaries are added as "particularly difficult communes in the ethnic minority regions. ", the allowances aim to attract the teachers and educational managers working in ethnic minority areas, ...

The Ministry of Education and Training issued Decree No. 27 /VBHN-BGDĐT dated December 23, 2014 on the policy for the teachers and educational managers working in specialized schools, in the areas with specially difficult socio-economic conditions, regulating teachers and educational managers in the ethnic minority schools, who are entitled to preferential policies on visit allowance, allowance of professional training; first allowance; incentive allowances, responsibility allowances "Entitled to a liability allowance coefficient of 0.3 compared to the minimum wage"; attraction allowance "equal to 70% of current salary and leadership position allowance, beyond seniority allowance (if any). Duration of receiving attraction allowance is no more than 5 years "; allowance for buying and transporting fresh and clean water; travelling allowance; allowances of teaching the ethnic minority people's language [39]. Besides, there are separate preferential policies for the teachers teaching in the ethnic minority areas at the localities. Thanks to support policies on the allowances for the managers and teachers in the ethnic minority areas, a mountain of

teachers have been attracted to work in the ethnic minority and mountainous areas, and it is necessary to encourage them and to keep their mind on their work as well as to fulfill their tasks well.

2.1.4. Policies on Teaching and Learning the Spoken and Written Languages for Ethnic Minority

Currently, among 53 ethnic groups in Vietnam, there are nearly 36 ethnic minorities with their own spoken languages and 27 ethnic groups with their own writing set such as: Tay, Thai, Hoa, Khmer, Nung, Dao, Hmong, Jrai, Ede, Bana, Xodang, Koho, Cham, Hre, Mnong, Raglai, ... [40]. The Vietnamese government always puts the mission of education development as the top national policy, in particular, a special attention is given to the preservation and promotion of the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities. On February 22nd, 1980, the Council of Ministers (currently known as the Government) issued Decision No.53/CP on the policy for written language of the ethnic minorities stating that: "Spoken and written languages" of each ethnic minority in Vietnam is its own precious asset and a common property of the whole country". The 1992 Constitution of Vietnam stipulates that: "The peoples have the right to use their spoken and written languages in order to preserve their national identity and promote their fine customs, practices, traditions and culture". The Universal Primary Education Law passed by the National Assembly dated June 30th, 1991 (Article 4) states that: "Primary education is implemented in Vietnamese. Ethnic minorities have the right to use their own spoken and written languages together with the Vietnamese language of their nation to implement primary education". In Article 4 of Decree No.72/NĐ-CP dated August 6th, 2002 of the Government detailing the implementation of the Library Ordinance, the investment in books and newspapers with ethnic minority languages is mentioned. Order No.38/CT-TTg dated November 9th, 2004 of the Prime Minister on promoting the training and fostering of ethnic minority languages for cadres and civil servants in the ethnic minority areas. In Article 7, Clause 2 of the Law on Amendment and Supplementation of the 2009 Education Law, it is affirmed that: "The State facilitates ethnic minority people to learn the spoken and written languages for preserving and promoting the national cultural identity, helping ethnic minority students easily absorb knowledge when studying in schools and other educational institutions. The teaching and learning of spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities is implemented in compliance with the Government's regulations". Decree No. 82/2010/NĐ-CP dated July 15th, 2010 of the Government regulating the teaching and learning of spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities in general education and continuing education centers states that: "Ethnic minority people have expectation, demand for learning the ethnic minority languages. The alphabet of ethnic minority taught and studied in schools must be the traditional one used by the community, defined by professional agencies or approved by competent authorities. Programs and textbooks of ethnic minority languages are compiled and appraised according to the regulations of the Minister of Education and Training. Ethnic minority language teachers satisfy the training standards of the corresponding educational

level and they are trained in ethnic minority languages at colleges, pedagogical universities, and pedagogical faculties. Material facilities and equipment for teaching ethnic minority languages are in accordance with the regulations of the Minister of Education and Training". Decree No.05/2011/NĐ-CP dated January 14th, 2011 of the Government on Ethnic Minority Affairs affirms that: "Ensuring the preservation of the spoken and written language, national identity, promoting customs and practices, tradition and culture of each nation". Therefore, it is necessary to develop education and training policies for ethnic minorities: "The spoken and written languages and cultural traditions of ethnic groups are included in the curriculum in the high schools, ethnic minority boarding high schools, ethnic minority day-boarding high schools, continuing education centers, community learning centers, vocational schools, professional secondary schools, colleges and universities in consistence with ethnic minority areas".

The implementation of policies on teaching and learning of spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities is consistently and synchronously implemented from the central to local levels. Currently, there are a number of spoken and written languages used on mass media from the central to local levels such as: Tay, Thai, Dao, Khmer, Hmong, Jrai, Ede, Bana, Cham, etc. A number of ethnic minority languages have been used to print traditional art works, new compositions, compile bilingual reference dictionaries, books of grammar description, textbooks, etc. The implementation of ethnic minority language teaching and learning policies has also been seriously implemented in high schools and supplementary schools in ethnic minority and mountainous areas throughout the country. Currently, the Ministry of Education and Training has developed a bilingual teaching program in 8 ethnic minority languages (including: Thai, Hmong, Bana, Jrai, Xơđang, Cham, Khmer, Hoa, Ede) for primary schools and ethnic minority boarding high schools in ethnic minority areas. From the 2010 – 2011 school-year, teaching the ethnic minority language is carried out for six ethnic languages: Hmong, Ede, Jrai, Bana, Cham, and Khmer. Teaching the spoken and written languages for ethnic minority has been implemented in 20 provinces and cities for nearly 110 thousand students of ethnic minority groups of Hmong, Ede, Jrai, Bana, Cham and Khmer. In this implemented plan, there are 740 schools with 4,789 classrooms, 110,862 students who are taught ethnic minority language. In the following years, teaching the ethnic minority languages has been expanded in scale. In 2015, there were 11,396,365 ethnic minority people who knew their ethnic minority language, reaching 95.8% [41]. As of the 2016-2017 school year, the number of schools and classes increased to 782 schools and 5,515 classes, including 21,020 students who were taught ethnic minority languages [42].

In addition, many localities, based on the actual situation, take appropriate policies in the detection, preservation and development of the spoken and written languages of many ethnic minorities. In which, about 30 provinces that are implementing the teaching of the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities for students in high schools have achieved good results: Since 2004, Son La province has directed research and compilation of curriculum, teaching materials of local

literature and written language of Thai ethnic minority people for cadres, civil servants in ethnic minority areas. A great effort is being made to yearly open five classes of Thai and Hmong languages for 200 cadres, civil servants and four classes for 200 education managers and teachers working in extremely difficult communes [43]. Dien Bien Province has developed a project on teaching Thai language for primary and secondary students in the whole province under implementation scale in the 2011-2015 period, with the orientation to 2020 in order to preserve, promote and develop traditional culture source as well as identity of ethnic minorities. In order to implement the scheme, Dien Bien province has opened a Thai written language teaching class for teachers of primary and secondary schools in 9 districts in the province. In the 2016-2017 school year, Dien Bien province has 58 primary schools, with 424 classes and 5,767 students studying Thai written language [44]. The Central Highlands provinces increasingly focus on expanding the teaching of spoken and written language of ethnic minority groups in boarding primary schools and high schools for ethnic minority in the areas where many ethnic minority people live and ethnic minority boarding high schools. In Kon Tum and Gia Lai provinces, the spoken and written languages of the Bana ethnic minority group are introduced to be taught in 121 elementary schools from grade 3 to grade 5. Gia Lai province has 106 primary schools where Bana and Jrai ethnic minority languages are taught for more than 11,000 students from grade 3 to grade 5. There are 286 teachers who teach Jrai and Bana written languages, all of whom are ethnic minorities. 100% of teachers are formally trained in primary education from pedagogical schools [45]. In Dak Lak province, Ede language is taught at 92 primary schools, 13 ethnic minority boarding high schools. The Central Highlands provinces also provide free textbooks and materials on ethnic minority languages and notebooks, attracting more and more ethnic minority students to learn their own spoken and written language. In addition, the provinces also attach importance to coordinating with ministries and sectors to organize research, compilation and publication of bilingual books and dictionaries such as Vietnamese - Ede, Ede - Vietnamese, Bana - Vietnamese, etc, which are widely issued to hamlets and villages in the area. At the same time, on the mass media, there are more specialized pages, categories that improve the quality and quantity of radio-broadcasting and broadcasting in ethnic minority languages of each locality [46]. In Binh Thuan, all primary schools spend 4 periods per week to teach Cham language to students from grade 1 to grade 5. So far, every school-year, Binh Thuan province has about 3,000-4,000 students learning Cham language, accounting for 90% of Cham students in the province [47]. In the 2010 – 2017 period, Tra Vinh province yearly spends more than VND 2 billion to support the Khmer written language teaching and learning in 134 Khmer pagodas in the province. In the summer, Tra Vinh province yearly has about 2,000 students in three levels of high school education, supplementary courses, courses of improving the qualification of Khmer literacy at Khmer pagodas. Tra Vinh province has 8 ethnic minority boarding high schools, 121 primary and secondary schools, 8 Pali-Khmer intermediate schools where Khmer language

is taught and there are about 19,000 students every year. The province has provided over 123,000 Khmer textbooks for students with a total budget of over VND 1.5 billion [48]. Soc Trang city currently has eight Khmer language schools, including 71 classes and 1,353 students; the non-public Chinese language school with 7 primary grades, 184 students, of which, there are 04 classes with 79 students at the secondary school [49]. In Kien Giang province, learning Khmer language is applied for all ages, including children and the elderly. Every year, Khmer pagodas in the province hold an average of 260 Khmer language classes on the summer occasion for over 6,000 Khmer children. Teaching Khmer language is also organized in public schools, mainly in primary schools and ethnic minority boarding high schools. The province has 25 schools, including 500 Khmer students. Apart from public schools, the teaching and learning of Chinese characters are organized by the Chinese Mutual Assistance Association and there are currently 20 classes of Chinese language, including 170 students every year, etc. [50].

2.2. Limitations and Recommendations for Developing and Implementing the General Education Assistance Policies for Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam Today

In recent years, the Government of Vietnam has issued many guidelines and policies to support and invest in the development of general education for ethnic minority people. In the process of implementing such policies, in addition to the achieved results, there are still many shortcomings, requiring amendments and supplementation to general education policies for ethnic minority people in order to be consistent with current reality. Details:

The development and promulgation of legal documents on general education in ethnic minority areas, especially documents guiding the implementation of educational assistance policies are still slow compared to regulations and practical requirements. Some policies are issued with its validity in a short time, with no long-term and continuous forecast; policies are slowly and inconsistently issued; policies are not suitable with reality; Some policy contents are inadequate and inconsistent with the provisions of the Education Law and the Decrees and Circulars guiding the implementation.

A number of investment policies and financial mechanism assistance for ethnic minority boarding high schools under Circular No. 109/2009/TT-BTC issued from 2009 have been backward. Most of the assistance levels compared to the current price are too low, which is unsuitable with reality. Investment resources from the state budget for the characteristics of mountainous areas are unsatisfactory, and equipment for teaching and learning activities is inadequate. Many general education assistance policies for ethnic minorities are still sparse and there is no integration, coordination and consistence among ministries, sectors, leading to overlap in beneficiaries. In the 2010 – 2017 period, a number of educational assistance policies are not close to the objects and practical conditions of regions such as: the policy of equally supplying rice: 15 kilos of rice/student/month for students from warm clothes to the ethnic minority students in the Mekong River delta;

Regarding on the provision of rice twice a year, rice is received with a huge quantity at one time, without storage, consequently, its quality is affected; lunch assistance policies for 3-5 years (Decree No. 06/2018/NĐ-CP dated January 5th, 2018 of the Prime Minister) lead to inequality; some regulations become barriers affecting the interests of children who are children of families belonging to the group of free migrants; The level of support in kind and uniform for boarding students with 1 uniform set/student/4 years of study is outdated and no longer suitable for development practice. These shortcomings have made the education improvement for ethnic minorities slow. In 2015, there were reading and writing national language, which is nearly 4 times higher than the average of the whole country (5,3% in the whole country). The rate of enrollment of ethnic minority children at the right age is only 88.9%; the dropout rate of ethnic minority children after completing secondary school is 35% [28]. At present, the literacy rate of ethnic minority children is only 78% of the general literacy rate. The rate of illiteracy and re-illiteracy among peoples is quite high while the rate of people with high education is very low [51].

Implementation of a number of educational assistance policies have not yet reached the given objectives. In the Education Target Program for mountainous, ethnic minority and disadvantaged areas, with the focus on strengthening and developing the system of ethnic minority boarding high schools for the 2011-2015 period in Decision No.1640/QĐ- by Prime Minister dated September 21st, 2011 establishing the target of building 48 new boarding schools, only 10 schools were completed in this period; 22 schools are being built and 16 schools has not been invested for new construction. At the same time, many projects and investment items must be converted to investment in the 2016-2020 period. In addition, the Program for consolidation of school and teachers' civil accommodation that is expected to be completed in the 2008-2012 period has not reached the target. Specifically, more than 48,000 classrooms and nearly 22,000 civil rooms for teachers have not been invested in construction and moved to the next 2014-2015 phase [52]. In the mountainous and remote areas, in specialized schools in ethnic minority areas, there is still a significant shortage of many classrooms, day-boarding houses, kitchens, sanitation facilities and other living and learning conditions; The rate of re-illiteracy is still high, and the percentage of school dropouts is still high, especially female students of poor families. Some ethnic minority communities have a small number of people and no-one have not graduated from high school. Until now, there are still more than 95% of the workers who are ethnic minorities with no technical qualification and training, etc.

Currently, the typical educational programs and contents for ethnic minority people are slowly reformed; The policy of teaching and learning the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities still has some limitations and the risk of oblivion may happen in some languages. Specifically, some languages can be completely lost, and some languages are currently used by very few people such as Pu Peo, Co Lao Thang and La Chi in Ha Giang province; Ruc, May, Sach, Aem languages in Quang Binh province, etc. Teachers and educational managers in ethnic minority areas are still lack

in quantity and restricted in quality; The assistance policies for teachers and education managers in ethnic minority areas have many shortcomings, specifically, they are overlapped in the allowance regime, the period of labor turnover among regions, etc. The lives of teachers have difficulties; therefore, they are not assured of long-term working in ethnic minority areas.

In order to improve the quality of education and training for ethnic minorities and mountainous people, all levels and sectors need to pay attention to renew investment policies, support high education, innovate the implementation policies to promote education in ethnic minority areas today. Specifically:

Reviewing and re-studying the system of guiding documents related to the regime for teachers and learners to adjust the shortcomings, backwardness and overlap such as the rice supply regime and the equipment regime for students from ethnic minority boarding schools, etc. And then new policies will be revised, supplemented and issued to be consistent with the reality.

The specific policy should be taken for ethnic minority children after they graduate from lower secondary and upper secondary schools and the do not learn at higher level, such as vocational training and job settlement after graduation, etc, which helps to increase human resources for the development of ethnic minority areas in the current context of international integration.

The educational assistance policies at the general education levels should be innovated. Organizing and implementing the programs and policies of general education for ethnic minority people in a comprehensive manner. Increasing investment capital, supporting the development of high education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas with a small population. It is necessary to take policies for mobilizing all investment capital sources to build infrastructure, school equipment and improve the quality of teachers' teams in order to meet the task requirements in the new situation. It is necessary to have a coordinated coordination between the State's policies and the education sector's activities and enhance the socialization of education in order to promote the contributions of the entire population to the educational cause in ethnic minority and mountainous regions.

It is important to rearrange the force of teachers and education managers in ethnic minority areas. It is necessary to train the ethnic minority teachers with qualifications in both pedagogy and knowledge for each region and ethnic minority group. Strengthening to foster qualification for ethnic minority language teachers. Developing remuneration regimes and using teachers and education managers who are assured to attach to education in the locality.

For the teaching and learning of spoken and written languages of ethnic minority people, the education sector should develop suitable programs, textbooks and teaching methods for learners of each ethnic community, each region based on two languages (native language and common language). It is necessary to expand the teaching and learning of ethnic minority languages in high schools. At the same time, the forms of teaching and learning the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities should be diversified through mass media, etc.

3. Conclusion

The Government of Vietnam always considers education as the top national policy that plays an important role in improving people's intellectual standards, training qualified human resources for socio-economic development and paying special attention to investment in education and training development for ethnic minority and mountainous areas. Up to now, the general education policies for ethnic minority people related to investment and assistance in building material facilities of classrooms, teaching and learning equipment, assistance policies for support tuition fee exemption and reduction, learning costs and treatment policies for teachers and education managers, teaching and learning the spoken and written languages of ethnic minority people have achieved good results and school facilities are constantly consolidated and improved; the proportion of ethnic minority students is increasing (It is higher in this year than the previous year), teachers and education managers are assured of working and attaching to their careers; the proportion of people who speak and write in ethnic minority languages is high, etc. However, there are still many challenges and limitations in the implementation of general education policies for ethnic minority people. Therefore, it is necessary to revise and supplement policies and innovate how to implement policies to be consistent with the reality and achieve the goals of improving people's intellectual standards for ethnic minorities, developing human resources and achieving sustainable development in the ethnic minority areas today.

Acknowledgements

The article is a product of the topic "Ensuring the rights of ethnic minorities in Vietnam in the context of globalization and international integration" (Code CTDT.10.17/16-20) under the Science and Technology Program at the national level in period of 2016-220, Code: CTDT / 16-20.

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