

# Higher Education in South Vietnam in 1965-1975: An Approach from The Impacts of The Us Education Aid

Luu Van Quy<sup>et</sup><sup>1</sup>

University of Social Sciences and Humanities,  
Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City  
[luuvanquyet@hcmussh.edu.vn](mailto:luuvanquyet@hcmussh.edu.vn)

Nguyen Thi Mai Huong<sup>2</sup>

Ho Chi Minh City Industry and Trade College,  
Vietnam

## Abstract

The signing of the Geneva Accords in 1954 paved way for the large-scale intervention of the US in Southeast Asia in general and in Vietnam in particular. The US strongly supported Ngo Dinh Diem to sabotage the Geneva Accords and establish in South Vietnam the government of the Republic of Vietnam (ROV) (October 26, 1956) with Ngo Dinh Diem as President; the existence of which is maintained by direct aids from the US. In terms of education, with the desire to "Americanize" the education in South Vietnam, the US provided aid to the ROV government for the development of education - including higher education, to solve problems of training human resources to serve the regime and to study practical issues of social life in South Vietnam for the long-term intervention of the US. Although the aid was unstable over the years due to its dependence on war plans in South Vietnam, it is noticeable that higher education in South Vietnam, in many aspects, was increasingly dependent on American aid policy. From 1965, along with the implementation of the "joint warfare" in South Vietnam, the education aids from the US to the ROV government increased many folds compared to the previous period. The fact that the US increased education aid had a strong impact on education in South Vietnam, making universities in 1965-1975 transform towards gradually eliminating the influence of French education and increasing the influence of American education in many fields. One of the most obvious manifestations was that the system structure, goals, programs, and methods of training of universities in South Vietnam were increasingly influenced by American education, which brought along positive factors and at the same time contained negative factors for higher education in South Vietnam.

## Keywords

Aid, Impact, Higher Education, South Vietnam, The US.

**To cite this article:** Quy<sup>et</sup>, L. V.; and Huong, N. T. M. (2021) Higher Education in South Vietnam in 1965-1975: An Approach from The Impacts of The Us Education Aid. *Review of International Geographical Education (RIGEO)*, 10(4), 804-814. doi: 10.33403/rigeo.791622

**Submitted:** 03-07-2020 • **Revised:** 01-09-2020 • **Accepted:** 08-11-2020

## Introduction

In the eyes of American strategists, Indochina in general and Vietnam has a special position in the implementation of the US global strategy. After World War II, the US considered Indochina as a necessary part of the US containment policy, and an important wall in the Cold War (Robert S. McNamara, 1995). To the US, "Vietnam is the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia, ... This is our off springs - we cannot abandon it, we cannot ignore its needs" (Robert S. McNamara, 1995). This was one of the reasons why American strategists were determined to implement the policy of providing aid to the ROV government to turn South Vietnam into an "anti-communist outpost". In 1948, with the "Point Four Program" announced by Truman, the US expanded its aid plan for Southeast Asia (Edward Garvey Miller, 2004). Since then, it began a process of more and more deeply intervening in Southeast Asia, especially South Vietnam through many different methods, especially through huge amounts of aid (including education aid) accompanied by political motives associated with its strategic intentions. President Truman decided to increase the aid to France in the Indochina War from 19.5% in 1950 to 73.9% in 1954 (Pham Thi Hong Ha, 2017). This was the first step of the US in getting directly involved in the war.

In 1954, as the French was defeated in the battle of Dien Bien Phu (Vietnam) and was forced to sign the Geneva Accords on the restoration of peace throughout Indochina and acknowledgement of French defeat, the US, from being a strong supporter of France, quickly took the next steps in replacing the French and directly intervening in South Vietnam. On August 20, 1954, President Eisenhower endorsed a resolution of the US National Security Council with a critical change in US policy towards Indochina: "The President do hereby approve the policy of direct aid to Indochina rather than having to distribute aid through the means of the French government" (Pentagon-Department of Defense, 1971) and provided cadre training to Ngo Dinh Diem (Tran Duc Cuong ed., 2014). With this resolution, the US openly and directly intervened in Indochina, including Vietnam. On October 26, 1956, the US backed Ngo Dinh Diem to establish and lead the government of the ROV in South Vietnam; as well as provided direct aid to maintain the existence of this administration. Under American sponsorship, the ROV administration improved its military, political and economic strengths, and at the same time focused on developing education, including higher education. Based on taking over the higher education institutions left by the French and with the aid from the US, the ROV government took fundamental steps to shape the views and policies of developing higher education in South Vietnam, with the aim to train qualified personnel to serve the national construction and to study practical issues of the social life in South Vietnam. The higher education built by the ROV government in South Vietnam is a wartime education whose mission is to serve the American war of aggression directly or indirectly in Vietnam. Under the influence of the US aid, higher education in South Vietnam had had certain development and gradually proved to be clearly influenced by American higher education model, especially in 1965-1975.

## Materials and Methods

The research on the ROV government in general and higher education in South Vietnam includes the works which are mainly based on sources of documents, including: First, archived documents - a system of documents on directives, decisions, undertakings, policies, directions, and administrations of the ROV government and the US regarding the education system. Those documents were produced during the existence of the ROV government and are being archived at Vietnam National Archives Center II; Second, memoirs and narratives of education administrators, lecturers and students participating in the teaching, learning and management in universities and colleges at that time; Third, research works of Vietnamese and international scholars related to education in South Vietnam, and the US education aid for ROV government. This article also approaches the documents stated above and pays special attention to the collection and use of archived documents. Regarding archived materials, the article collects and uses documents, directives, decision, etc. of Ministry of National Education of the ROV, Dac Lo Department of Psychology and Vocational Education, ROV Council of Culture and Education, etc. The content of those decisions, documents, orders, directives, etc. mainly focuses on the policies of the ROV government for education, the US aid, the development and reform of higher education, and the structure and content of training programs. Regarding memoirs, the article uses the writings of authors who were directly engaged in the teaching, management or learning



in the higher education system at that time, such as: Doan Viet Hoat (1972), Pham Dinh Thang (1972), Phong Hien (1978), Do Ba Khe (1972), Viet Lien (1962), Tran Ngoc Dinh (1975), etc. In addition, the article also employs information in research works on higher education of Vietnamese and international scholars, such as: Long Dien (1977), Nguyen Khac Viet (1982), Tran Thanh Nam (1995), Pham Thi Phuong (2010), Hoang Thi Hong Nga (2016), Pham Thi Hong Ha (2017), Ngo Minh Oanh (2018), Luu Van Quyet (2018), Vo Van Sen and Luu Van Quyet (2019), Dang Phong (2005), Lilienthal, D.E (1970), Reich, Thomas Charles (2003), Scigliano, Robert and Guy H. Fox (1965), Statler, Kathryn C, (2007), Dodd, Joseph W. (1972), Lagow, Larry Dwane (1978), etc.

Through the original sources (archives) as well as the research works of Vietnamese and international scholars in the same field of research, we define an approach to researching history of education, which is using historical, logical, and interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary research methods such as: statistics, comparison, and contrast, etc. to answer the research questions of this article: What were the factors affecting the US education aid policy to the ROV government? How did the US education aid to the ROV government work? What impacts did the US education aid have on higher education in South Vietnam, especially in 1965-1975, on both positive and negative aspects? And how did the South Vietnamese administrators and educators deal with higher education in the 1965-1975? On that basis, the article presents its own comments on these issues.

## Results and Discussion

### The US Education Aid to The Government of Republic of Vietnam in South Vietnam

As early as the late 1950, the US established in South Vietnam a military advisory group called the United States Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG). In addition, the United States Operations Mission (USOM) - an economic aid agency - was also established in South Vietnam by the US. By 1961, the above organizations were replaced by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Long Dien, 1977). On October 26, 1956, the US backed Ngo Dinh Diem to establish the government of the ROV in South Vietnam; as well as provided direct aid to maintain the existence of this administration (Vo Van Sen, Luu Van Quyet, 2019). In parallel with military and economic aid, in the field of education, the United States provided different forms of aid to the ROV government, such as through activities of organizations, implementation of programs and projects of providing financial support and aid, facilities and scholarships for many students and education staff in South Vietnam, sending of US education advisory delegations to South Vietnam to develop education programs for the ROV government in order to "Americanize" Vietnamese education. The US education aid policy to the ROV government was changed from time to time and shown on the following aspects.

In 1955, the United State Operations Mission (USOM) helped the government in South Vietnam formulate the curriculum for teaching English as a foreign language, by publishing teaching materials and organizing English exams for Vietnamese students, compiling and publishing teaching materials to distribute to education departments in universities, military academies, technical vocational schools and in-service training programs for secondary school teachers across South Vietnam. The goal of this education aid was to replace the influence of French education on Vietnamese education. USOM and later USAID implemented a series of educational improvement programs with the aim of establishing an education tailored to the needs of the developing ROV government (USAID, 1975). In 1955, a survey team of scientists from Michigan State University was sent to South Vietnam to find out the needs and potential development of education, namely the higher education system here. After this survey, the university's research team proposed several policies to support the ROV government in the training of human resources and the construction of facilities (Scigliano, Robert and Guy H. Fox. 1965). Since 1957, experts from Michigan State University began to focus on the long-term goals of higher education in Vietnam. These experts made their activities more concrete by expanding the range of education programs in South Vietnam and other supporting programs (Scigliano, Robert and Guy H. Fox. 1965). In 1957, the USOM Office in Saigon identified the American education assistance program in South Vietnam as the biggest education assistance program of the US in the world by the amount spent on education projects during the year, which was up to \$9.3 million (USAID, 1975). In September 1958, Michigan State University signed a contract with USOM Saigon to develop English teaching and testing materials under the Southeast Asia Regional English Project – SEAREP (USAID, 1975).

On November 3, 1961, President Kennedy established USAID to replace USOM and from then, US education aid to the ROV government was provided through the US base aid agency in South Vietnam, USAID. The functions and duties of USAID's education division in Saigon are: (1) Maintaining a viable economy: it is axiomatic as the educational level of a nation rises, so does its economic level; (2) Pacification: The education sector contributes directly to pacification through its elementary and adult education programs; (3) Nation building: The education sector contributes to the objectives of nation building by helping to plan and put into operation a strong, viable school system which can stand on its own,... (Long Dien, 1977). President Kennedy emphasized that providing foreign aid through USAID is at the forefront of foreign policy, as it provides expertise by funding teams of experts and university professors abroad and help with country-by-country development with the long-term goals of "economic growth, political stability and democracy in developing countries to counter the spread of ideological threats such as communism" (USAID, 2003). In addition, USAID seeks to create changes in Vietnamese higher education through two measures: (1) conduct surveys and research on Vietnamese higher education system and make recommendations for improvement; (2) Universities in the US provide direct funding to Vietnamese educational institutions through teacher training, scholarships, supply of books and textbooks, and construction of facilities for training institutions. To implement the above plans, USAID relies on specialized educational and cultural organizations to operate, mainly through two organizations associated with education of the ROV, namely Southeast Asian Ministers of Education (SESAMO) and Innovation Technology (INNOTECH). Through these two organizations, the US had control over some aspects of education activities of the ROV government (Hoang Thi Hong Nga, 2016) and further influenced specific activities of higher education in South Vietnam.

In terms of budget for education aid, from 1954 to 1964, the US spent about 1 to more than 2 million USD as education aid for the ROV. From 1955 to 1966, the US government contributed a total of 17,412,000 USD to meet the education needs of South Vietnam (Statler, Kathryn C., 2007). However, US education aid to the ROV government during this period was of petty nature and subject to annual reductions by the US Congress (Doan Viet Hoat, 1972), thus limiting the implementation of South Vietnam's long-term education development plans. In fact, until 1963, policies and projects of higher education reform in the ROV had not been implemented effectively (Ministry of Education, 1965), thus had not created enough an impact to change the education of the ROV towards the model of American education.

From 1965, the political and social situation in South Vietnam had many changes, and the "special warfare" strategy of the US in South Vietnam was facing many difficulties and on the verge of failure. To salvage the situation, the US carried out the "joint warfare" strategy by sending tens of thousands of soldiers in expeditionary troops and troops of US allies to South Vietnam to destroy the revolutionary forces and pacify the region. From 1965 to 1969, the US increased aid to the ROV government to an average of 700 million USD/year (an increase of about 10 times compared to the previous period) (Dang Phong, 2005). Especially during the period of "Vietnamization of the war" (1969-1973), the amount of aid to the ROV increased to the highest level, up to 4 billion USD (Pham Thi Hong Ha, 2017). In the field of culture and education, with the goal of "understanding psychological characteristics, sentiments, customs and tastes of Vietnamese people to be able to appropriately disseminate American culture" (Phong Hien, 1978), the US further provided for the ROV government to win the "hearts and minds" of people in the South. Through many different channels, the US government was increasingly involved in influencing and supporting higher education in South Vietnam to help train human resources for the ROV government to serve US military purposes.

During this period, through USAID Saigon, the US continued to grant many scholarships to Vietnamese students and arranged for lecturers and managing officers of universities in South Vietnam to come to the US for short-term and long-term training courses. A report in 1964 said that there were about 127 Vietnamese students who attended training courses in the US and were awarded the degree of B.A (Bachelor of Arts) or B.S (Bachelor of Sciences), 45 had M.A (Master's) degree and 35 had Ph. D (Doctor of Philosophy) degree (Doan Viet Hoat, 1971). By 1968, the number of South Vietnam's students and officers studying in the US was 4,809 (JUSPAO, 1969). In 1969, the US offered a scholarship program worth about 2,385,000 USD to Vietnam (Doan Viet Hoat, 1971). In which, the long-term scholarship program is worth up to 1,325,000 USD (Doan Viet Hoat, 1971). With this program, thousands of Vietnamese students and some lecturers and administrative officers of the ROV were sponsored to study in the US and some other countries. In addition, many managing officers and lecturers at universities were also sent to observe training

models and attend short-term training courses in the US and other countries. By 1970, "most Chancellors and Deans of five Universities in South Vietnam have visited and observed higher education in the US" (Phong Hien, 1984). In addition, through USAID and under the sponsorship of WSU-SP Foundation, many South Vietnam educators participated in research trips jointly organized by WSU-SP/UWSP in the US. The main purpose of these trips is for educators to have a better understanding of education policies at American universities, to observe the operation and administration of universities in the higher education system of the US, thus draw out evaluation regarding the research and progress of reforming and restructuring higher education in South Vietnam (ROVCCE, 1974). It can be said that the programs for students to study abroad and for education administrators of the ROV to visit and study in the US all aimed to have more university professors in South Vietnam that know how to manage education activities according to the American model (USAID, 1967).

Since 1965, the US had helped the ROV to initiate a series of projects to equip and expand the school system at all levels, establish curricular laboratories, support teacher training centers, and organize workshops to improve teaching skills. The education division of USAID supported the National University and teacher education departments of many other universities in upgrading teacher training programs. The initial objective of developing teacher training programs was to comprehensively implement and promote primary and secondary education across the ROV. In addition, the US continued to send many higher education advisors and experts to Vietnam to directly research, work and propose reform projects to assist higher education institutions in South Vietnam. The researcher Dang Phong likened this advisory system to a state within a state (Dang Phong, 2004). From 1956 to 1975, advisory delegations from 8 universities and organizations, namely: Michigan State University, Southern Illinois University, Ohio University, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, University of Florida, Missouri University in Rolla, American Medical Association (AMA), and Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) were sent to survey the current status of education in South Vietnam, and based on which develop programs and propose to reform the model of education there (Reich, Thomas Charles, 2003). In 1967, USAID signed a contract with University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point; accordingly, the university would regularly send 6 consultants to advise the ROV government on education in terms of basic curriculum, student affairs, office services and general university administration, with the aim of restructuring the public higher education of the ROV following the model of higher education system in American states (Reich, Thomas Charles, 2003). In January 1967, a group of experts from University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point came to South Vietnam to survey, and after a few months of work, they proposed to reform the higher education system of the ROV. In a report to the ROV government, American experts expressed their hope that with the introduction of education reform measures inspired by American education to the ROV, a new higher education with three characteristics, namely: ubiquity, specialization and conformity will be formed in Vietnam (Reich, Thomas Charles, 2003). In particular, the proposals emphasized the granting of autonomy to higher education institutions as a key element of the reform process (Ministry of Education, 1971).

Thus, during its existence from 1955 to 1975, Vietnamese higher education received great assistance from the US, in which from 1965 to 1975, the US education aid for South Vietnam increased a lot compared to the previous period. In terms of projects, from 1954 to 1975, the US spent more than 85,000,000 USD for education projects in South Vietnam (Reich, Thomas Charles, 2003). Regarding personnel, in the period of 1954-1960, 729 experts were sent to the US for training (including 222 in the field of education research) and 1,778 high-ranking officials of the ROV government were trained by the working group of University of Michigan from 1957 to 1973 (Nguyen Khac Vien, Phong Hien, 1982). Financially, in 1956-1974, the US provided US\$76,000,000 of education aid to South Vietnam (Nguyen Khac Vien et al. No 69:81). This amount was used mainly for publishing textbooks, building, and expanding higher education institutions and research centers in South Vietnam (Do Ba Khe, 1995). According to many researchers, through the aid and training programs provided by the US to students, lecturers, and education officers of the ROV government, from 1965, the US had partly defeated the influences of French education on higher education in South Vietnam. In the leadership program, the US provided the ROV government with "A nucleus of American trained personnel" (Tran Ngoc Dinh, 1975).



## Higher Education in South Vietnam Under the Influence of US Education Aid In 1965-1975

From the 1950s, the US provided education aid to the ROV government with the desire to develop a system of higher education with characteristics of American education in South Vietnam to serve the political and military goals of the US. However, due to the obligations in the culture and education treaty signed between the "State of Vietnam" and France, the fact that the foundations left by French education were not easy to be changed, and that the ROV government in its early stage was unable to build a higher education system bearing its own identity, etc., the influences of French higher education model in South Vietnam still prevailed with clear traits in the organizational structure as well as the training programs and methods before 1964. From 1965, as the war waged by the US in South Vietnam was expanding, the US advocated developing capitalist relations to bring the South into a trajectory of capitalist economy by means of economic aid. To have human resources for the development of capitalism in the South and for the invasion, the US defined the goal of helping the ROV government to form a contingent of intellectuals in science and technology. This contingent can only be formed by using American higher education model. Therefore, the US further increased education aid to the ROV government in terms of finance and facilities; granted scholarships for students, lecturers, and education administrators of South Vietnam to attend short-term and long-term training courses in the US; sent American education advisors and experts to South Vietnam to survey and develop programs of higher education reform towards the American model, etc. With the impacts of the US education aid, higher education in South Vietnam in 1965-1975 shifted from being influenced by French higher education to being influenced by American one in many aspects. In this section, we focus on presenting two typical impacts of the US education aid policy on higher education in South Vietnam, namely the impact on system structure, and the impact on training objectives, programs, and methods.

### Impact On System Structure

In November 1954, the Indochina University (Université Indochinoise) moved from Hanoi to Saigon. Then, the French transferred this university to the government of the "State of Vietnam" under an additional agreement of the Vietnam - France Cultural Treaty signed on January 8, 1951, and renamed it the Vietnam National University. After taking over the institution from France, in 1957, the government of the Republic of Vietnam issued Decree No. 45-GD to change the name of Vietnam National University to Saigon University. Also, under Decree No. 45-GD, the ROV government established a new university, Hue University (PPMROV, 1957). Sai Gon University and Hue University were both based on the stereotype of Indochina University as multidisciplinary universities. In addition to the two universities above, to train engineers, agricultural and industrial workers, the ROV government also established several post-secondary schools and Vocational schools in the public education system (Luu Van Quyêt, 2018). In this period, besides the public education system, the higher education in South Vietnam also had a private education system which operates under the supervision and control of local government and Ministry of National Education. From 1957 to 1964, the first two private universities were established by two major religions, Christianity, and Buddhism under the management of the ROV government: Da Lat University (1964) and Van Hanh University (1964) (PPMROV, 1965). The basic characteristic of higher education in South Vietnam from 1956 to 1964 is that it was still strongly influenced by the French higher education model, which had already been shaped in Vietnam since the beginning of the twentieth century. In which, engineering disciplines were mostly trained at post-secondary and vocational level, and there was no School/College of engineering established during this period. Compared to the French higher education model, the new point in the ROV higher education model at this time is the establishment of private universities.

From 1965, due to the US education aid, the higher education system of South Vietnam had some new training institutions with the characteristics of American education. In 1966, Can Tho University be established with 4 faculties: Science, Pedagogy, Literature, Law and Social Sciences (PPMROV, 1966); In 1973, Thu Duc Polytechnic University was established with 3 faculties based on merging the existing post-secondary schools and institutes of engineering. Thu Duc Polytechnic University is modeled after the California Polytechnic State University of the US, which is a multidisciplinary

university, with new characteristics as a polytechnic university, focusing on practical disciplines that are necessary for the economy of Saigon and neighboring provinces (Ngo Minh Oanh, 2018). If the establishment of Can Tho University was aimed to attach higher education to the local development program (Pham Thi Phuong, 2010), the establishment of Thu Duc University of Technology marked the birth of a polytechnic university, a turning point in technical and professional education with the restructure of post-secondary and vocational schools in the higher education system of the ROV government. For the first time in South Vietnam, a university did not follow the pattern of faculties like Sai Gon University (Dac Lo DPC, 1974). These two universities are characterized by the American higher education model - being practical and associated with the development of each locality.

In the 1970s, to meet the needs of economic, cultural and social development of localities, Community Colleges were established in the system of higher education in South Vietnam. Community college is a model originated from the US which provides preliminary and multidisciplinary training courses of 2 years. After graduating from these colleges, students can advance to major universities, or expand their professional knowledge to work. Although the idea of community education in the public education system of South Vietnam was introduced as early as 1954, starting with some primary schools (PPMROV, 1971a), however, it was not until 1971 that the ROV government issued a Decree on the establishment of a community colleges in South Vietnam (PPMROV, 1971b). As thought by the higher education policy makers at that time: "A community college is the combination of classic university and post-secondary school, where the future masters and workers will study under one roof and live the democracy at school in order to build a just society in the future" (Do Ba Khe, 1972). From 1971 to 1974, 4 community colleges were established in South Vietnam: Tien Giang Community College (founded in 1971 in Dinh Tuong); Duyen Hai Community College (founded in 1971 in Khanh Hoa); Quang Da Public University (founded in 1974) (CCEV, 1974); Regina Pacis College for female students, established by the Christian Church in Saigon (1973). Community colleges with the characteristic of being multidisciplinary were established with the participation, contribution, construction, and administration of localities (Ngo Minh Oanh, 2018). These schools focused on training professions associated with localities, such as: Agriculture, fishery, economic management, etc., and proved to be useful in training professionals of many industries, in line with local developments (CCEV, 1974). Later, many other localities in South Vietnam also planned to establish community colleges but failed to do so due to the fall of the ROV government (1975).

Thus, from 1965 to 1975, in the higher education system of South Vietnam, there had been a process of restructuring technical post-secondary and vocational schools in South Vietnam, which led to a new higher education model at Can Tho University and Thu Duc Polytechnic University - the first polytechnic university whose characteristics are essentially different from French-style universities in the previous period, and the establishment of American-style community colleges. In addition, there was the establishment of community colleges with characteristics of American higher education.

## Impact On Training Objectives, Programs and Methods

The training programs and methods of higher education in South Vietnam before 1964 still took after the French model, which mainly revolves around academic year and credit system; heavily focuses on theory and takes science and technology lightly, with giving classic lectures as the main teaching methods (Luu Van Quyet, 2018). However, from 1965, universities in South Vietnam entered a transition period in terms of training programs and methods towards being more flexible, multidisciplinary, and especially more associated with the practice towards the American orientation of being popular and pragmatic. According to author Pham Dinh Thang, the transition from the classical European (French) higher education model to the American model will reduce unnecessary costs and help to train professionals at immediate and advanced levels according to national development needs. In addition, the encouragement of the establishment of community colleges with the investment from the private sector will focus on being scientific and pragmatic (Pham Dinh Thang, 1972). The 1971 Education Policy of the ROV also stated: "The central and multifaceted mission of higher education is to value innovative research and promote kinds of cultural and scientific knowledge necessary for the development and progress" (PPMROV, 1971a).

Starting from the academic year 1970-1971, training under credit system (Crédit) following the US model of higher education was applied in the training program of Can Tho University, then spread

to other universities in South Vietnam, such as Thu Duc Polytechnic University, community colleges and some pedagogical schools. "This is a new reform which is very convenient for students to study" (Pham Thi Phuong, 2010) since learners can freely choose between certificate or credit systems in accordance with their personal plan to study. The curricula of schools during this period shifted to be closer to the practice; subjects were not put in frame or impacted by the same stringent regulations as in the previous period but were always adjusted and updated to ensure that students have access to new and practical scientific knowledge that are associated with the real world. According to Doan Viet Hoat, "Some subjects and some teaching methods in some schools are clearly influenced by American education" (Doan Viet Hoat, 1971). The teaching methods in this period are also more flexible; depending on each subject, the teacher can apply different methods, if the highest efficiency is achieved: giving lectures, presentations, discussions, group study, research, practicum, etc. Such teaching methods gave students opportunities to "really lay their hands on administrative works, and at the same time observe the organization and working style in the administrative office and compare theory with the experience gained during practice" (Dac Lo DPC, 1974).

Thus, under the influence of the US education aid policy, imprints of the pragmatic and practical philosophy of American higher education quickly appeared in the curricula of many universities in South Vietnam. The objectives, programs, and methods of higher education in this period had shifted to being closer to the practice, changing from the French model which heavily focused on general theory to the popular American trend which focuses on practical disciplines, especially economics, towards specialization to serve the masses. These disciplines are also associated with the practice, with new, rich, and practical teaching and learning methods; and the autonomy of universities was increasingly emphasized... These are the manifestations of the influence of US education aid on higher education in South Vietnam.

## Conclusion

In the competition between powerhouses, the US used aid to maintain its influence and control the world. The government of the ROV became an ally of the US and received abundant assistance (Pham Thi Hong Ha, 2017) including education aid. A remarkable point is that many aspects of the higher education in South Vietnam depends more and more on the aid policy of the US. From 1965, along with the implementation of the "joint warfare" in South Vietnam, the US aid to the ROV government (including education aid) increased by more than tenfold compared to the previous period, followed by the increasing pace of "Americanization" in all fields in South Vietnam. The increase in education aid from the US to the ROV government has a strong impact on the higher education in South Vietnam, leading to the transition towards gradually eliminating the influence of French education and increasing influence of American higher education in 1965 - 1975. At that time, higher education institutions and school system in South Vietnam developed rapidly in terms of size to meet the increasing learning demands of people (Ngo Minh Oanh, 2018). During this period, the higher education in South Vietnam operated based on high autonomy, both public and private universities were quite independent and autonomous in terms of organizational structure and operation and were free to set up teaching and learning programs following the "self-governing university" model (equivalent to the current university autonomy). The curricula at universities began to shift to applying those of American universities; the learning contents had their burden of theory reduced; and the training methods focused on being practical and meeting requirements for effective economic development.

Although the US education aid had had positive impacts on higher education in South Vietnam, it also had negative impacts. Due to too much dependence on US aid, the government of the ROV was almost "passive" in plans to reform, administer and develop higher education. The ROV government and intellectuals in South Vietnam were almost not involved in the development and implementation of higher education reform plans created by the US. Due to being prepared in a short time, the higher education reform projects deployed by the US in South Vietnam mostly applied US experience mechanically, without having flexible adjustments based on the conditions, circumstances, and traditions of Vietnamese people. Author Doan Viet Hoat, who participated in the management of universities in South Vietnam at that time, commented: "Technically, almost all university experts from the US had an "exclusive" voice in reform projects. Education researchers of the government of the ROV were almost not allowed to comment, supplement, or modify those reform proposals" (Doan Viet Hoat, 1971). It can be said that, besides



the limitations, higher education in South Vietnam under the impacts of US aid still left many useful lessons for education policy makers in the management and use of foreign aid in the modern era, so that not only to use this aid for development but also ensure and enhance the autonomy of the nation's education in the current context of integration.

## References

- Brown, James W., James W. Thornton. (1963). *College Teaching: Perspectives and Guidelines*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Buttinger, Joseph. (1958). *The Smaller Dragon, A Political History of Vietnam*, New York: Frederick. A Praeger.
- CCEV (Council for Culture and Education of Vietnam). (1974). *Problems of Community Education*, April 20, 1974, File No. 91, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- Dac Lo DPC (Dac Lo Department of Psychology and Career). (1974). *Guideline for Higher Education in Vietnam*, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City, 616.
- Dang Phong. (2004). *Economy of South Vietnam in the period 1954-1975*, Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House, 111.
- Dang Phong. (2005). *Economic History of Vietnam 1945-2000, Vol. 2 (1955-1975)*. Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House, 733.
- Do Ba Khe. (1972). *Community College*, *Journal of Social Development*, No. 4.
- Do Ba Khe. (1995). *The Difficult Path Toward an Integrated University and Community College System in Vietnam (East Asia Higher Education: Traditions and Transformations)*, Oxford: Pergamon, 135-154.
- Doan Viet Hoat. (1971). *The development of modern higher Education in Vietnam: a focus on cultural and social-political forces*, PhD dissertation, the Florida State University, United States, 269-270, 462.
- Doan Viet Hoat. (1972). *Southern University fever*, *Thought Journal (Van Hanh University)*, Vol. 2, 89-100.
- Dodd, Joseph W. (1972). *Aspect of Recent Educational Change in South Vietnam*, *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 6, 555-570.
- Hoang Thi Hong Nga. (2016). *Higher Education under the Republic of Vietnam Regime (1955-1975)*. History Doctoral thesis, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, 29.
- JUSPAO (Joint United States Public Affairs Office). (1969). *Higher Education in Saigon*, Copy of unclassified message from Joint United States Public Affairs Office, Saigon, No.52, August 23.
- Lagow, Larry Dwane. (1978). *A History of the Center for Vietnamese Studies at Southern Illinois University, 1969-1976*, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Ph.D. Dissertation.
- Lilienthal. D. E. (1970). *American Economic Development Plan for South Vietnam 10 years after the war*, Translation by the Southern Economic Research Group, Ministry of Foreign Trade, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City, 6.
- London, Johnathan. (2011), *Education in Vietnam*, Singapore: ISEAS.
- Long Dien. (1977). *United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Organization and Activities in the field of Education in the former South Vietnam*, *Journal of Historical Studies*, No 2, 74-79.
- Luu Van Quyét. (2018). *A Change in Model of the Higher Education in South Vietnam (1956-1975)*, *Thu Dau Mot University Journal of Science*, No.1 (36), 134-143.
- Ministry of Education. (1965). *Report of the Ministry of Education to the Prime Minister's Office on the Development of Higher Education in the National Territory*, No. 326-GD/TT/BC, August 13, 1965, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- Ministry of Education. (1971). *Proposals for reforming Vietnamese universities*, *Journal of Administrative Studies*, No. 3, 32-70.
- Ngo Minh Oanh. (2018). *General in the South (1954-1975)*, Ho Chi Minh City: General Publishing House, 39-42.
- Nguyen Huu Phuoc. (1975). *Contemporary Education philosophy in Vietnam 1954- 1975: a comparative analysis*, PhD education dissertation, University of Souther California, United States.
- Nguyen Khac Vien, Phong Hien. (1982). *American neo-colonialism in South Vietnam (1954-1975)*, No 69, *Xunhasaba*, 76-77.
- Pentagon-Department of Defense. (1971). *United States - Vietnam Relations 1945-1967: Part IV. A.*

3. Evolution of the War. U.S. and France's Withdrawal from Vietnam, 1954-56. Gravel Edition, Boston: Beacon Press.
- Pham Dinh Thang. (1972). Presentation on Education for life, the philosophy of ROV education reform policies by doctor Nguyen Luu Vien, Education Philosophy, Master's Course II, School of Pedagogy, Sai Gon University, File No.41, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City, 9.
- Pham Duc Chinh, Nguyen Tien Dung. (2014). Higher Education in Vietnam from the Modern Finacial – Economic Theory, Hanoi National Political Publishing House.
- Pham Ngoc Bao Liem. (2019). Influence of U.S. Aid on the Development of Higher Education in Southe Vietnam 1954-1975. Hue University Journal of Science, No.6A, Vol. 128, 49-62.
- Pham Thi Hong Ha. (2017). Economy of the Republic of Vietnam under the influence of US aid (1955-1975), Hanoi: Public Security Publishing House, 64, 69.
- Pham Thi Phuong. (2010). History of Establishment and Development of Can Tho University, Master's Thesis of History, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
- Phong Hien. (1984). New American Colonialism in South Vietnam: Ideological and Cultural Aspects (1954-1975). Hanoi: Theoretical Information Publishing House, 90.
- Phong Hien. (1978). Some ideological tools for the American neo-colonialism in South Vietnam, In "Collection of topics on American neo-colonialism in South Vietnam", Vol.3, Hanoi: Publishing House, 172.
- Pike, Douglas ed. (1990). The Bunker Papers, Report to the President from Vietnam, 1967-1973, The Asia Foundation, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley.
- PPMROV (Palace of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vietnam). (1957). Decree No. 45-GD March 1, 1957 of the President of the Republic of Vietnam, File 1866. Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- PPMROV (Palace of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vietnam). (1965). Policy for Cultural Development - Education, October 21, 1965, File 1929, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- PPMROV (Palace of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vietnam). (1966). Can Tho University (Dispatch sent), December 26, 1966, File 31584, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- PPMROV (Palace of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vietnam). (1971a). Development the Community Education system, November 26, 1971, File No. 9132, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- PPMROV (Palace of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vietnam). (1971b). Decree on the Establishment of Community Colleges in the National Territory, No. 503-TT/SL August 15, 1971, File No. 5954, Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- Reich, Thomas Charles. (2003). Higher Education in Vietnam: United States Agency for International Development Contract in Education, Wisconsin State University - Stevens Point and Republic of Vietnam, UWSP, 4, 141, 168.
- Riley, Myrne R. (1971). Report on the School of Mechanical Engineering National Technical Center Saigon, South Vietnam, University of Missouri-Rolla.
- Robert S. McNamara. (1995). In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam, Hanoi: National Political Publishing House, 43, 28.
- ROVCCE (Republic of Vietnam Council for Culture and Education). (1974). Law No. 05/69 May 2, 1969 regulating the organization and administration of Council for Culture and Education, Yearbook of Council for Culture and Education of the Republic of Vietnam, term I (1970 - 1974), Vietnam National Archives II, Ho Chi Minh City.
- Scigliano, Robert and Guy H. Fox. (1965). Technical Assistance in Vietnam, the Michigan State University Experience, New York-Washington-London: Frederick A. Praeger Publisher, 2, 5, 8.
- Statler, Kathryn C.. (2007). Replacing France: The Origins of American Intervention in Vietnam, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 205.
- Tran Duc Cuong ed.. (2014). History of Vietnam 1954-1975, Vol. 2, Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House, 165.
- Tran Ngoc Dinh. (1975). New American colonial higher education in South Vietnam before liberation, Journal of Historical Studies, No. 11, 12, pp.17-25, tr.21
- Tran Thanh Nam. (1995). Map of thirty years of education in the South (1954–1975), Hanoi Education Publishing House.

- Tran Van Chanh. (2014). Education Program and Textbook of the Republic of Vietnam, *Journal of Research and Development*, No. 7, 8, 184-241.
- USAID (United States Agency for International Development). (1967). Participant Training: Objectives and Returns, Saigon: October, 231.
- USAID (United States Agency for International Development). (1975). U.S. Economic Assistance to South Vietnam, 1954-1975, Washington D.C: Report by Asia Bureau Office of Residual Affairs Vietnam Desk, Vol. II, 73-83, 502, 516-517.
- USAID (United States Agency for International Development). (2003). "A History of Foreign Assistance", <http://www.usaid.gov/about/usaidhist.html>, Accessed August 20, 2019.
- Vo Van Sen, Luu Van Quyet. (2019). The Print of the French system in the higher education in the South of Vietnam during the Period of 1955-1964, In *Issues of Teaching Vietnamese and Studying Vietnam in the today's world*, Ho Chi Minh City: National University Publishing House.