

**HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

**NGUYEN THI HA**

**SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES  
IN HANOI TODAY**

**(Through a survey of Hanoi National University of Education,  
University of Transport and Communication and Foreign Trade University)**

**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS**

**SECTOR: CULTURAL STUDIES**

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***Supervisor: Dr. Nguyen Huy Phong***



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**The thesis will be defended before the Thesis Judging Committee  
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**The thesis can be found at the National Library of Vietnam  
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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Reason for choosing the topic

*First*, school culture increasingly affirms its important role in the development of universities in particular and education and training in general. In addition to focusing on improving the quality of teaching, learning and scientific research, schools are always interested in building school culture to create values, standards, traditions, and create a healthy and humane learning environment. Researching school culture in universities helps us identify values, standards in schools and especially the transformation of these values and standards in the context of the current influence of globalization, thereby solving existing problems with culture in universities today.

*Second*, in recent years, the Party and the State have made many decisions to promote the building of school culture in schools, including universities. We aim to build a school culture as an environment to train personality and educate the young generation to become people with comprehensive development in morality - intelligence - physique - aesthetics, patriotism, national pride, awareness and responsibility for the country, community, family and themselves. Thanks to that, the work of building school culture in schools in general and universities in Hanoi in particular has many positive changes; creating trust for society in the quality of education, improving people's knowledge, training human resources, nurturing talents, contributing to training generations of good citizens, with qualities, abilities, ethics, and culture to meet the requirements of society.

However, in addition to the achievements and results, forming and exercising school culture in some higher education institutions in the capital still have shortcomings and limitations. Manifestations include that there are still a number of students and teachers who show deviations in ethics, cultural lifestyle, social behavior and school environment, etc. These shortcomings greatly affect the quality of teaching and learning, the image, brand, reputation and tradition of the school. At the same time, in the context of globalization, digital transformation and international integration, school culture in universities in Hanoi has undergone many dramatic changes, therefore, school culture needs to be researched, identified and evaluated to have appropriate policies.

In order to contribute to identifying and clarifying theoretical and practical issues of school culture in universities in Hanoi from the perspective and approach of cultural studies, the PhD student chose the topic "Current school culture in universities in Hanoi (Through a survey of Hanoi National University of Education, University of Transport and Communication and Foreign Trade University) as the research topic for the thesis in Cultural Studies at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics..

## **2. Research purpose and tasks**

### ***2.1. Research purpose***

On the basis of clarifying theoretical issues about school culture, the thesis identifies the current situation, determines the influencing factors, and issues related to school culture in universities in Hanoi in order to build and develop school culture in universities, aiming to improve the training quality of universities in Hanoi.

### ***2.2. Research tasks***

To achieve the research objectives, the thesis carries out the following tasks:

*Firstly*, overview of research on school culture, school culture in universities to serve as a basis for identifying issues that need further research.

*Secondly*, clarifying some theoretical issues about school culture and school culture in universities.

*Thirdly*, identify the current status of school culture in universities in Hanoi through a survey of Hanoi National University of Education, University of Transport and Communication and Foreign Trade University.

*Fourthly*, analyze some influencing factors, issues and recommend some solutions in building school culture in universities in Hanoi today.

## **3. Research subject and scope**

### ***3.1. Research subjects***

The research subject of the thesis is school culture in universities in Hanoi capital.

### ***3.2. Scope of research***

- In term of content: Within the scope of the thesis, the researcher surveys the school culture in universities through the perception, assessment and

cultural practices of students, staff, lecturers and employees studying and working at the schools. These are important subjects of school culture in universities.

School culture is a specific type of culture associated with specific agencies, organizations, and institutions, and is composed of many elements. Within the scope of the topic, the thesis focuses on studying school culture in the following aspects: School cultural value system; School cultural standards; cultural activities in schools and symbols, architecture, and landscapes in universities.

- In term of space: Three universities include Hanoi National University of Education, University of Transport and Communication and Foreign Trade University

The researcher chose the above three universities for research because of the following reasons: these are three universities representing three different training fields, with a long history of establishment and development, associated with the ups and downs of the capital Hanoi, therefore they are highly representative of universities in Hanoi. These three universities have differences in tradition, philosophy, mission, and training goals, there should be distinct identities that create the school's brand. In addition, the three universities have important roles and great influence on the university system in Hanoi in particular and the Vietnamese higher education system in general. Researching school culture in the three schools is not only meaningful within the school but also has great impacts on other universities in Hanoi and across the country.

- *In term of time:* From 2018 to 2025 (in 2018, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 1299/QĐ-TTg approving the Project "Building a culture of behavior in schools for the period 2018 - 2025")

## **4. Methodology and research methods**

### ***4.1. Methodology***

The topic is conducted based on the dialectical materialism and historical materialism methodology, studying and evaluating the research object in an objective and scientific way. At the same time, it is based on the viewpoints, policies, and guidelines of the Party and the State's policies on building culture,

education, and school culture in schools today. The topic is also based on research viewpoints, research theories on school culture, school culture in universities, and interdisciplinary approaches of domestic and international researchers.

#### ***4.2. Research methods***

From the perspective of cultural studies, the thesis uses a combination of different research methods and techniques, including the following main research methods:

- *Analysis and synthesis method*: used throughout the thesis, from an overview of documents related to school culture, school culture in universities, building the theoretical framework of the thesis to analyzing and synthesizing survey data, evaluating the current situation of school culture in universities in Hanoi.

- *Comparison and contrast method*: Compare the studies of domestic and international scientists, compare the data collected from the survey, to highlight the differences in the status of school culture between the three surveyed universities.

- *Questionnaire investigation method*: with two survey forms, the first form for students, the second form for school staff, lecturers and employees. The total number of valid forms is 804, of which 640 forms are for students; 164 forms are for school staff, lecturers and employees. The researcher processed the survey results using SPSS 26 software.

- *Field survey and semi-structured in-depth interview methods*: The researcher observed activities in universities and conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with students, staff, lecturers and employees in universities; helping the research have a practical basis, a realistic and clear view of theoretical issues, and identification of the current state of school culture.

#### **5. Theoretical and practical significance**

*Firstly*, the topic contributes to clarifying theoretical issues about school culture and school culture in universities.

*Secondly*, the topic contributes to identifying the current situation and issues of school culture in universities in Hanoi today. The research topic

points out the need to build and develop school culture in universities in the new context.

*Thirdly*, the research results of the topic are useful reference materials for higher education institutions in developing school culture to affirm the identity and brand of the school, demonstrating the philosophy and educational traditions of the Vietnamese people, contributing to improving the quality of school training, thereby providing high-quality human resources for the country. The results of the topic provide reference materials for students majoring in Cultural Studies.

### **6. New contributions of the thesis**

- The thesis develops a number of theoretical issues on school culture, clarifies the concept, structure, and role of school culture in universities today.

- The thesis identifies the current status of school culture in universities in Hanoi through the results of practical research on school culture in the following aspects: school cultural values, school cultural standards, school cultural activities and school symbols, landscapes and architecture.

- The thesis analyzes the factors affecting school culture in universities in Hanoi, thereby clarifying the issues and recommending some solutions for school culture in universities in Hanoi today.

### **7. Structure of the thesis**

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, and list of references, list of author's published works related to the thesis topic and appendix, the thesis consists of 4 chapters and 18 sections.

*Chapter 1:* Literature review of researches related to the thesis topic.

*Chapter 2:* Theoretical basis of school culture in universities and overview of research area.

*Chapter 3:* Situation of school culture in universities in Hanoi.

*Chapter 4:* Influencing factors, issues and recommended solutions for building school culture in universities in Hanoi.

## **Chapter 1**

### **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH SITUATION RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC**

#### **1.1. RESEARCH ON SCHOOL CULTURE**

##### **1.1.1. Research by foreign authors**

The thesis has reviewed groups of foreign research works related to school culture from many different approaches such as sociology, psychology, education, cultural studies... No matter from which perspective, researchers all affirm the importance of school culture in the development of education in general and the success of a school in particular. What makes an effective school is not only an attractive training program, good and dedicated teachers, and receptive students, but also depends on the learning environment and school culture of that school. It is the values, beliefs, standards, school stories, school traditions... that create success for students, teachers and affirm the position of the school.

##### **1.1.2. Research by domestic authors**

The thesis has reviewed domestic research groups related to school culture. Studies have shown that school culture not only creates good academic performance for learners but also plays an important role in education, creating a generation of students, young people with enough "virtue" and "talent", which is a high-quality human resource for the country in the future. Moreover, the authors believe that building a school culture in schools helps affirm the school's own culture, enhancing the school's position, brand, and competitiveness.

#### **1.2. RESEARCH ON SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITY**

In Vietnam, research on school culture in universities is also of interest and importance. The thesis has reviewed a number of works on school culture in universities, from which it can be seen that the studies are all interested in the awareness of students, lecturers, and school staff towards school culture, the importance of school culture in the current integration context; at the same time, the articles focus on students in the relationships inside and outside the school because after all, students are both the subject and the target of building school culture in universities, how to help students graduate and develop comprehensively, with "morality - intelligence - physical - beauty", to make an important contribution to the construction and development of the country.



### **1.3. RESEARCH ON SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI**

Studies on school culture in universities in Hanoi show that universities have paid attention to educating about behavioral culture, lifestyle, and forming a Code of Conduct for students, lecturers, and school staff to move towards a healthy educational environment, ensuring the quality of education of the school. School culture in universities not only creates a healthy environment for students in the school, creating the position of the school in the national education system, but also has a profound impact on the process of forming and orienting the personality and lifestyle of students and the young generation of Vietnam.

### **1.4. GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE TOPIC**

#### **1.4.1. Issues clarified by researchers**

- School culture is not a new issue in the world and in Vietnam, however, in recent years, school culture has become a "hotter" issue and has received much attention from researchers, educational managers, culturalists, policy makers and especially the whole society. Because school culture in particular and educational issues in general are always the top priority issues in the development process of the country.

- Studies on school culture originated from the search by sociologists and educators for factors and causes that help create an effective school; then they were expanded and approached from different perspectives, include from sociology, psychology, education, education management, economics, political science to cultural studies, includes theoretical studies to practical studies, associated with each specific school and specific city which creating a richness in the approach to school culture.

- Researchers all affirm that school culture plays an important role in educational reform, and is the key to opening the door to deciding whether educational reform can be successful or not. Because school culture contributes to improving the teaching and learning performance of lecturers and students, creating a healthy and safe educational environment, and improving the quality of education for schools.

- Initial studies have provided definitions and perspectives on school culture, the basic elements of school culture, the interactions between elements in school culture from the perspective of educational management, sociology, psychology... Researchers divide school culture into many types, with different

structures, but all believe that school culture revolves around two important subjects of the school: learners - teachers, including a system of core values and norms and expressed through relationships between members inside and outside the school; expressed through activities, rituals, school landscape...

- Studies on school culture in universities, school culture in some universities in Hanoi have shown that the goal of universities is to train talents, the output is high-quality human resources, serving the process of industrialization and modernization of the country. Therefore, affirming the importance of school culture in creating an educational environment, perfecting lifestyle, personality, ethics, physical strength, intelligence..., not only for students but also affecting the young generation and human resources of the country.

However, studies on school culture in universities and school culture in universities in Hanoi are still lack of, there has not been any work that systematically approaches school culture from a cultural perspective. In addition, previous studies have not highlighted school culture in universities in the capital compared to other localities to find out the characteristics of school culture in universities in Hanoi.

#### **1.4.2. Issues that the thesis continues to research**

Inheriting the research results of previous works, the thesis continues to study the following issues:

(i) Deeper and more comprehensive awareness of school culture and school culture in universities in the current context. Absorbing theoretical studies on school culture and school culture in universities, the PhD student presents the concept of school culture and the understanding of school culture in universities in the thesis. At the same time, the PhD student affirms more deeply the role and function of school culture and school culture in universities; clarifies the structure, content of school culture and factors affecting school culture in the current context.

(ii) Identify the current status of school culture in universities in Hanoi. Based on the application of theory, the researcher surveyed the situation of school culture in some universities in Hanoi to provide a comprehensive picture of current school culture, pointing out the positive and negative points in that overall picture.

(iii) Identify the issues raised for school culture in universities in Hanoi today. From the above identification, the thesis identifies the factors affecting school culture in universities in Hanoi and proposes the issues raised and recommends some solutions in building school culture in universities in Hanoi today.

## **Chapter 2**

### **THEORETICAL BASIS OF SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA**

#### **2.1. SOME CONCEPTS**

##### **2.1.1. Concept of culture**

In the scope of the thesis, the researcher uses the concept of "culture" of the American anthropologist F. Boas who said: "Culture is the totality of mental and physical reactions and activities that shape the behavior of individuals, constituting a group of people that is both collective and individual in relation to their natural environment, to other groups of people, to members of the group and to each other" and of UNESCO: "Culture can be considered as the whole of the distinctive spiritual and material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group, and in addition to art and literature, culture includes lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs".

##### **2.1.2. Concept of school culture**

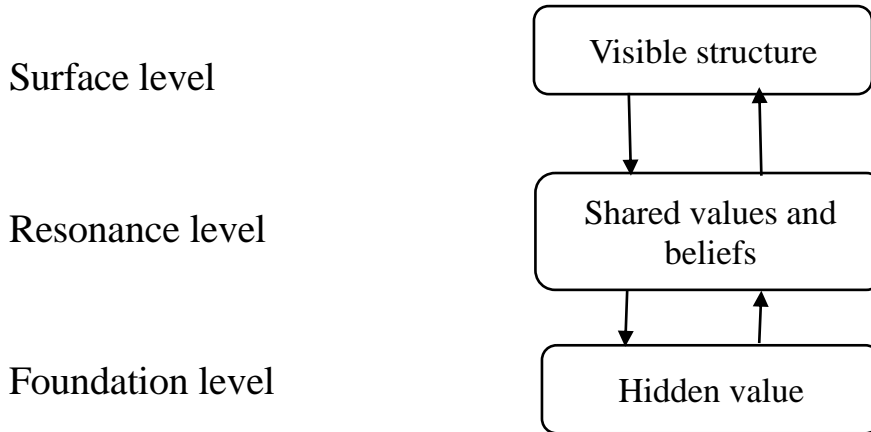
From the researchers' perspective, within the framework of the thesis on school culture in universities in Hanoi, the thesis author believes that: School culture is a system of values and standards formed in the development process of the school, expressed through behavior, through cultural activities, cultural landscapes, aiming to create a safe, healthy, humane, happy learning environment, contributing to building the school's brand and identity as well as educating and forming good personality and lifestyle for people.

School culture is closely linked to the traditional history of the school, formed along with the school's development process, both continuing traditional values and accepting and selecting new values of the times, aiming to build the school's brand, develop and educate people.

## 2.2. VIEWPOINTS APPLIED IN THE THESIS

### \* Edgar H.Schein's organizational culture theory

Edgar H.Schein has proposed three levels of expression of organizational culture as follows:



### \* Theory of school culture by Kent D. Peterson and Terence E. Deal

School culture in Deal and Peterson's study is a network of rituals, traditions, norms and values that influence all aspects of school life, expressed through layers of school culture elements, including: (1) ***Vision and core values***: In which the author emphasizes the elements of mission and core purpose, Values, Beliefs, Norms, Assumptions and Activities to explore values, beliefs, norms and assumptions. (2) ***Rituals, traditions, rituals*** including Rituals, Traditions, Rituals and Activities to evaluate, reinforce, and perform rituals, traditions, rituals; (3) ***History and stories*** are and (4) ***Architecture, artifacts and symbols***

Deal and Peterson's viewpoints are both general and specific in identifying the levels and components of school culture. Within the framework of the research topic, the thesis uses the method of dividing the structure of school culture according to Deal & Peterson's viewpoint. In each element of school culture, Deal & Peterson show the content and activities of school culture associated with that specific content, such as the value element will have value discovery activities, the norm element will have norm discovery activities, etc.

### \* The Party's viewpoints and policies on education and school culture in schools

- Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW dated November 4, 2013 at the 8th Central Conference of the 11th Party Congress on "Fundamental and comprehensive innovation of education and training to meet the requirements of industrialization

and modernization in the context of a socialist-oriented market economy and international integration".

- Directive No. 08/CT-TTg dated June 1, 2022 on strengthening the implementation of school culture building; Decision No. 1299/QĐ-TTg approving the project "Building a culture of behavior in schools for the period 2018 - 2025".

- Directive No. 42-CT/TW dated March 24, 2015 of the Secretariat on strengthening the Party's leadership in educating revolutionary ideals, ethics, and cultural lifestyle for the young generation in the 2015-2030 period.

- Circular No. 26/2017/TT-BGDĐT dated October 18, 2017 regulating the organization of cultural activities for students in educational institutions of the Minister of Education and Training.

### **2.3. SCHOOL CULTURE STRUCTURE**

Based on the viewpoint of Deal & Peterson, combined with the practical situation and suitability with the research object, the thesis argues that the structure of school culture includes the following components: (1) School cultural values; (2) School cultural norms; (3) Cultural activities in schools; (3) System of school symbols, architecture and landscape.

### **2.4. SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITY**

#### **2.4.1. Universities and the role of universities**

According to the Law on amendments to the law on higher education 2018: "A higher education institution is an educational institution belonging to the national education system, performing the function of training at all levels of higher education, scientific and technological activities, and serving the community".

Some main characteristics of universities, reflecting the specialized, unique nature of universities compared to other levels of education:

- University is a place to train at different levels, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and specialized.

- Universities have autonomy and independent management.

- The university has diverse training subjects and methods; focuses on academics, research activities, and innovation.

- The university has many extracurricular activities.

- The university is a multicultural and highly internationally integrated environment.

- Universities that contribute to the community and society

#### **2.4.2. The role of school culture in universities**

- School culture contributes to improving the quality of education,

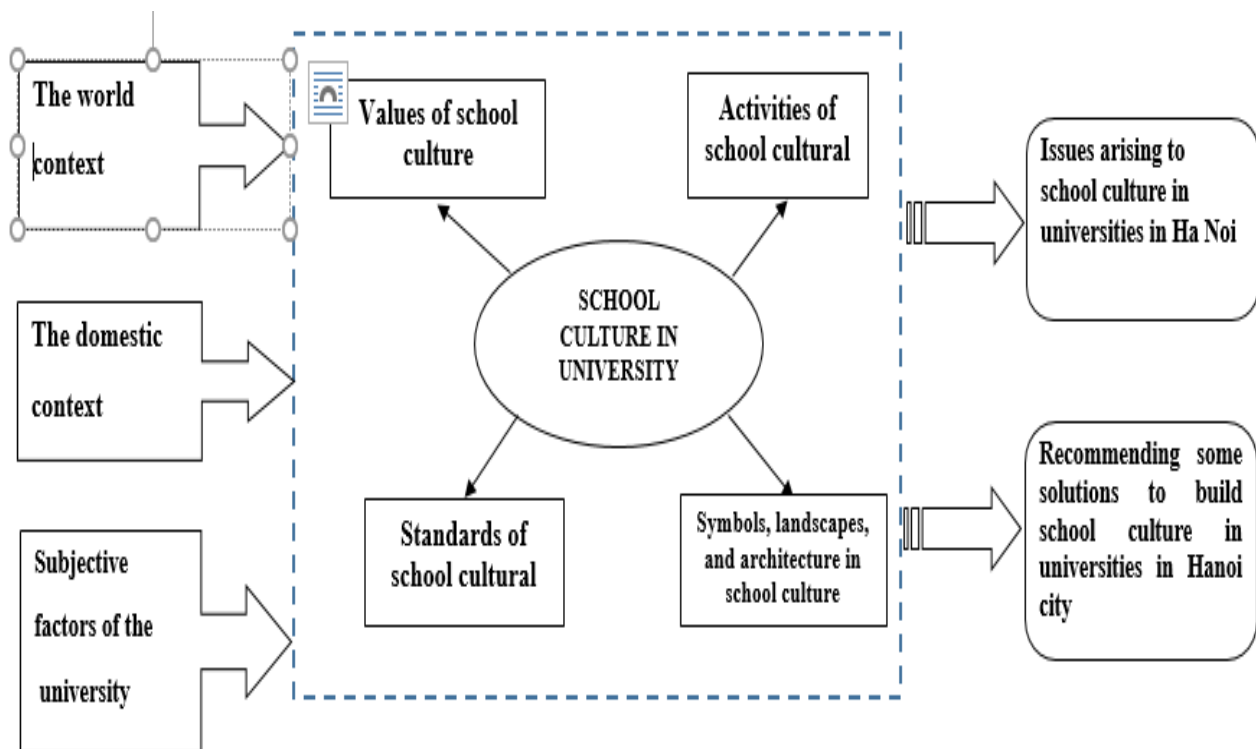
developing comprehensive human resources, and training high-quality human resources for society.

- School culture creates connections between subjects in the school community and society.
- School culture helps regulate behavior and resolve conflicts in college.
- School culture is the foundation for building the brand and reputation of a university.
- School culture is the foundation for school development, aiming to build a sustainable university.

## 2.5. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS

Based on the above theoretical issues, the researcher builds an analytical framework for the basic contents that the thesis will deploy as follows:

In the context of globalization and international integration today, school culture in universities in Hanoi is also affected by factors from the world and domestic contexts to subjective factors of the university. Applying the selected research perspectives, the thesis identifies school culture in universities in Hanoi based on the identified structure: School cultural values; School cultural standards; School cultural activities and School symbols, architecture, and landscape. Based on the analysis of influencing factors, identifying the situation of school culture in universities in Hanoi, the researcher points out a number of issues arising for school culture in universities in Hanoi.



## **2.6. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA**

The number of universities in Hanoi is 105, accounting for nearly 1/3 of the total number of universities in the country and more than 40% of the total number of students in the country. There are many universities in Hanoi because this is the capital of the country, has a long-standing historical and cultural tradition with many advantages for developing the education and training system.

Most of the universities in Hanoi are long-standing, diverse in majors and rich in training fields. Moreover, Hanoi is the place where political, diplomatic, cultural activities and major events of the country regularly take place, so it has a great impact on the educational and training activities of universities. The implementation of the Party and State's policies and guidelines in schools are also quicker than other training institutions. At the same time, the influence of national culture in general and the culture and civilization of the capital in particular also creates unique characteristics of the culture of universities in Hanoi.

Universities in Hanoi have many favorable conditions in acquiring values, quintessence, and national cultural identity, while receiving the latest waves of science and technology, but they are also places with many challenges in the face of the massive development of cultures as today. It requires tasks in building and forming school culture in universities in Hanoi. In this thesis, the researcher selected three universities for survey, namely Hanoi National University of Education, Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment, and Hanoi University of Transport and Communications - three leading universities in the fields of pedagogy, economics, and engineering. Each school in general and each university in particular has its own vision, mission, and educational philosophy, so the school culture in each school also has its own unique features.

## **Chapter 3**

### **IDENTIFYING SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI CITY**

#### **3.1. CULTURAL VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY**

The cultural values of each university are the values accumulated through the development process of the school, associated with the historical tradition, the mission, strategy, and educational philosophy of the school. In a specific context, the university determines the core values of the school that create the identity and brand of the school. The core values that Hanoi National University of Education, University of Transport and Communication and Foreign Trade University determine are all based on the traditional values, training characteristics according to the professions of the schools, and at the same time,

there are updates of new values in the context of global integration and international exchange today.

The awareness of core values in universities is uneven, among cadres, lecturers, school staff and students, and among universities, leading to differences in the practice of core values among subjects and universities.

### **3.2. SCHOOL CULTURAL STANDARDS**

Standards for cadres, lecturers, staff and students in universities are general regulations about what to do, what should be done and what should not be done to regulate the attitudes and behaviors of each person in communication, conduct and activities in the school environment. These are values that guide the thinking and actions of members of the school. The cultural standards of the university for cadres, lecturers, staff and students are expressed through three main aspects, which are standards in teaching and learning, standards in behavior, and standards in style.

Standards in teaching and learning are reflected in the positivity, creativity, and progressiveness; the exemplary nature, responsibility, innovation in content and teaching methods, and dedication to students of university staff, lecturers, and employees; and at the same time, the proactiveness, positivity, and awareness of learning, progressiveness, and creativity of students.

Standards of conduct of the school's staff, lecturers, employees and students are demonstrated through the following relationships: (i) For lecturers: expressed in respect, fair treatment, and helping students; cooperation and solidarity with colleagues; polite attitude, helping students' parents and school partners; being aware of preserving and promoting national cultural values; (ii) For students: expressed in respect and politeness towards staff and lecturers; solidarity and mutual love with students; having an honest, spiritual and responsible attitude towards oneself, family and society; actively participating in community activities; being gentle and helpful to guests and partners visiting and working at the school and behaving civilly on social networks.

Standards of manners are demonstrated through the dress code, punctuality, and language of university staff, lecturers, employees, and students.

### **3.3. CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOL**

Cultural activities at universities have many forms of activities such as reading, speaking, propaganda, cultural exchange, performing arts, gratitude... each activity is participated in by students with different frequencies at universities.

The content of the activities is quite rich with the content of propagating the Party's guidelines and policies, the State's policies and laws; praising the nation's



fine traditions, cultural and ethical values; praising the homeland, country and Vietnamese people; reflecting the thoughts, aspirations, feelings and responsibilities of young people towards themselves, their families, homeland and country; strengthening solidarity and friendship between generations of students and criticizing deviant, negative, competitive, playful, violent and unequal behaviors in schools...

### **3.4. SYMBOLS, ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE OF SCHOOL**

Symbols, landscapes, and architecture of school convey messages and represent certain values of school culture. This is considered the most recognizable part to distinguish between schools because of the symbols, architecture, and landscapes that are unique to the university.

When mentioning university symbols, we must mention the logo and slogan of the school. The logos of the three universities, Hanoi National University of Education, University of Transport and Communication and Foreign Trade University have their own unique characteristics, from images, colors to shapes, representing the historical traditions, educational philosophy, and cultural values of the school. In addition, we must also mention the commemorative works, memorial areas, and traditional rooms of the universities, representing the brand of the school.

### **3.5. GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI TODAY**

Through identifying the current situation, the thesis draws general conclusions about school culture in universities in Hanoi:

#### **3.5.1. On school cultural values in universities**

The cultural values of schools in universities in Hanoi are influenced by traditional national cultural factors and the history of the university, so they are deeply traditional. At the same time, to adapt to the current context, the cultural values of schools tend to reach for autonomy and creativity in the modern university environment.

The traditional values that have the most influence on the school cultural environment include the tradition of studiousness, respect for teachers, and emphasis on academics... Currently, with the impact of the internationalization process and the digital transformation trend in education, the system of school cultural values in universities has changed and adapted, not only the traditional factors as above, but also accepting global values of critical thinking, creativity, adaptation, modernity, integration, cultural diversity...

The values of school culture in universities in Hanoi are quite diverse in content and rich in expression. The values of school culture in universities in the

area are influenced by the historical tradition of the school, geographical location, and development conditions in the capital city of Hanoi, so they tend to focus on values of quality, integration, responsibility, adaptability, pioneering, and creativity in response to new requirements. Meanwhile, local universities pay more attention to the values of community engagement, for the community, tradition, and friendliness; schools under the National University tend to aim for pioneering, creative, professional, outstanding, and integrated values, etc.

The awareness and implementation of core values in universities in Hanoi are highly appreciated. From the perspective of staff and lecturers, the expression of school values has been partly integrated into the training program, lectures, activities of leading and guiding scientific research or extracurricular activities of the school. The absorption of school values gradually becomes ingrained in the subconscious of school staff and lecturers, passed from generation to generation, becoming the foundation for all activities. School values are like a mirror that helps school staff and lecturers reflect on their teaching, research or community activities, to self-assess, evaluate and adjust accordingly. From the students' perspective, they are quite proactive in learning about the school's core values, along with being conveyed through lectures by lecturers and speeches by school leaders, so they can also be demonstrated through learning activities, extracurricular activities or scientific research, thereby helping to raise students' awareness of school cultural values. This is also understandable because students from schools in Hanoi always have higher university entrance scores than local universities, with many universities ranking "top" in terms of scores.

However, the survey process shows that the awareness of students, staff, lecturers and employees is not really uniform. The awareness of students still has many gaps, leading to the unclear expression of school cultural values through learning, research and extracurricular activities. The indifference of a part of students, staff and lecturers of the school towards school cultural values and school culture is an alarm bell for universities. In addition, the implementation of transmitting school culture still faces many difficulties, not as expected and expected by the school, and can even turn it into boring lectures and leave a bad impression on students.

### **3.5.2. On cultural norms in universities**

The standards of school culture for staff, lecturers and students both have traditional elements, reflecting the identity of the university and the national cultural values; at the same time, there is a selective absorption of the quintessence of human culture, aiming to realize the core values set forth by universities.

The standard values of school culture expressed in teaching and learning are highly appreciated at all three universities, because these are all key universities in the country in education, economics and technology.

The standards of conduct in schools all reflect the traditional nature of conduct between university members and with partners and the community. The relationship between lecturers and students has gradually changed towards a more open direction, teachers and students respect, listen, cooperate, and exchange with each other in two ways. However, in some cases, there is still a fear of students, not daring to debate with lecturers or too much intimacy leading to inappropriate behavior between teachers and students.

The standards of manners at each school expressed the school's own mark, with neatness, seriousness, and standards at Hanoi National University of Education, openness, dynamism, and confidence at the Foreign Trade University, and precision at the University of Transport and Communications. The differences are due to the specific nature of the training profession and the traditions of the schools. In addition, students tend to emphasize their individuality, expressing their personality through language, dress, and lifestyle, reflecting the trend of individualization and freedom in the student's lifestyle. Although there are general regulations on language and dress, it is inevitable that students will have inappropriate actions and words.

### **3.5.3. On cultural activities in universities**

Cultural activities in universities meet the requirements and principles of organizing cultural activities in schools: In accordance with the Party's guidelines and policies, the State's laws and policies; Ensuring aesthetics, in accordance with cultural values, social ethical standards; Respecting regional cultural characteristics, customs and traditions of Vietnam; Suitable for the age, psychology of students; close to students... In recent years, universities have organized many cultural activities with attractive forms, rich content, attracting a large number of students to participate. With the vision and strategic orientation of training a generation of students to develop comprehensively in "morality - intelligence - physical - beauty", universities increasingly encourage and create conditions for the organization of cultural activities, at the same time, school staff and lecturers enthusiastically participate in supporting students in club activities, volunteer activities, social activities...

Cultural activities at universities in Hanoi clearly demonstrate diversity thanks to the blend of regional cultures, but the Northern cultural imprint plays a leading role with many traditional rituals and sports and cultural activities. However, cultural activities at universities still have many limitations: these activities are often repetitive, lacking innovation and creativity, leading to

boredom; lack of strict control leads to many unhealthy trends, excessive influence of foreign cultures, the tendency to trample on traditional national values; some activities are still formal, without educational value, not really connected with core values, traditions and national identity; some cultural activities at universities are only suitable for a group of students, so they are not popular, not mobilizing the response of students in the whole school; most activities have not fully utilized the effectiveness of information technology, not keeping up with the trend of cultural development in the new context...

#### **3.5.4. On symbols, landscapes, and cultural architecture of university**

The system of symbols and ceremonies in universities in Hanoi are still maintained, such as events welcoming new students, opening ceremonies, graduation ceremonies, celebrating Vietnamese Teachers' Day... but with a tendency to be more innovative, creative and diverse.

The landscape and architecture of universities in the capital always combine the traditional identity of the school with modernity. Besides the ancient architecture that needs to be preserved as a symbol of the school, the classrooms, multi-purpose buildings, stadiums, sports and entertainment areas... are of interest to the schools, built to create a new face for the schools.

From the above analysis, the researcher draws out some characteristics of school culture in universities in Hanoi with a combination of tradition and modernity, diversity, and international exchange.

## **Chapter 4**

### **AFFECTING FACTORS, ARISING ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS TO BUILD SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI**

#### **4.1. FACTORS AFFECTING SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI TODAY**

##### ***\* Impact of world context***

The world context with the impact of global exchange and integration, the development of science and technology, the development of market economy and university education trends both brings opportunities and creates challenges for school culture.

The process of global exchange and integration creates a multicultural environment in universities, at the same time the development of science and technology, the development of market economy bring opportunities for universities in Hanoi to expand with international educational organizations, both to exchange and transfer advanced and modern teaching programs and methods,

and to create opportunities for student exchange, research and teaching capabilities, helping to improve the capacity of staff, lecturers and students of the school. However, the new context of the world also poses for universities the problem of how to integrate without being dissolved, develop while still maintaining their own identity. The focus on global factors and values can obscure the national cultural identity in the school culture of universities, the competitive pressure in innovation and integration easily makes the core values of the school forgotten.

The impact of current trends in higher education in increasing university autonomy, internationalization, multiculturalism in education, digital transformation in education, lifelong learning and comprehensive education, practice-oriented education, soft skills development in education has changed the face of higher education in Hanoi: on the one hand, it helps universities expand relationships, cooperation, autonomy in resources, have their own directions in school development strategies, use technology in the education sector, fundamentally change the way of operation, education models and provide new values for teachers, learners...; On the other hand, it brings challenges to higher education in Hanoi with the balance between educational tasks and financial goals, competitiveness between universities, between expanding the educational environment and the issue of preserving and promoting the values of school culture, traditional national values, between changing the learning environment and changing school values and standards, between balancing theoretical and practical foundations, the role of lecturers in the classroom... These trends in higher education not only change the face of higher education, fundamentally change the mission, vision, strategy and policies of universities but also lead to fundamental changes in the school culture in universities.

#### ***\*Impact of domestic context***

School culture in universities in Hanoi is influenced by the domestic context with the Party and State's policies on culture, education and higher education; the socio-economic situation of the country and locality and the impacts of traditional cultural factors of the nation, locality and family.

The Communist Party of Vietnam's policies and guidelines on school culture are part of the overall policy of building and developing the country's culture and education, expressed through the Law on Higher Education, resolutions and directives aimed at building a healthy and positive learning environment, aiming at training high-quality human resources for the country, which has a great impact on school culture and building school culture in universities. At the same time, the economic and social situation of the country and Hanoi has many

improvements, creating many opportunities for developing school culture in universities, while at the same time posing new requirements on the quality of human resources to be flexible, creative, and quickly adaptable to changes in science, technology and global changes.

Traditional national, local and family cultural factors have a great impact on school cultural values and norms, from traditional national cultural values, culture of the thousand-year-old capital to family culture, contributing to the formation of school cultural values, school cultural norms and influencing the awareness, ideology, lifestyle and behavior of students in Hanoi.

*\*The impact of subjective factors in universities*

The appearance of school culture in a university is formed and constructed under the influence and impact of factors in the university with the subject of school culture being the staff, lecturers, employees and students; the philosophies, strategies, facilities, and traditional history of the university. The subject of school culture in a university is the one who creates school culture in the university, together with the philosophy, strategies, traditional history of the university... creating the identity and unique brand of the university.

**4.2. ISSUES ARISING TO SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI**

*First, the challenge of preserving and innovating cultural values in universities.*

Preserving and promoting cultural identity is always an urgent issue in the process of international integration, how to make our country's culture "reach out to the ocean", only integrate but not dissolve, how to keep the national origin in the wave of hybrid culture that is sweeping everywhere. That is also the problem of school culture in universities, especially when universities in Hanoi are most affected by the integration and internationalization process. How to preserve and promote school cultural identity - endogenous resources and absorb exogenous resources to create overall strength for universities in the new context is a big challenge for school culture in universities today.

*Second, the challenge of digital transformation and cyberspace to school culture in universities*

It is undeniable that digital transformation has positive impacts on university culture because digital transformation as well as cyberspace helps students' learning process. However, this is also a big challenge for developing university culture in Hanoi in that digital transformation and the development of cyberspace have reduced direct interaction and connection between the student community and lecturers in universities; the development of digital technology creates

distance between student groups and challenges in controlling student activities in cyberspace.

*Third, challenges in organizing cultural activities in universities*

With the advantages of being located in the political - administrative - cultural center of the country, universities in Hanoi have many advantages in organizing cultural activities for students, but there are also many challenges: problems with facilities and space for organizing cultural activities for students; difficulties in attracting students to participate in cultural activities at universities; difficulties in changing students' cultural approach trends.

*Fourth, the issue of policy and management of school culture in universities*

Although universities have issued a Code of Conduct in schools to regulate the cultural standards of behavior of students and teachers, regulate what must and must not be done, in accordance with customs, social ethics, and general regulations of the school; contributing to creating a civilized, modern, and integrated school environment, the actual implementation still faces many challenges. There is still a gap between the regulations and the actual implementation when some rules are formalistic, not really entering the lives of students, lecturers, and school staff, and have rigid requirements that are no longer suitable for current reality.

The implementation of school culture policies in universities currently lacks coordination among school members, between schools, families and society. The management of school culture in universities must rely on guiding documents and regulations on school culture. However, the implementation of these documents is still slow, uneven, and not drastic, causing difficulties in management practices, and also facing many difficulties, especially in the scope of cyberspace.

*Fifth, awareness of school culture in universities*

Changing the perception of university subjects about the school culture plays a very important role. President Ho Chi Minh once said, "Clear thinking leads to good work, confused thinking leads to failure". Changing the perception of school, the importance of school culture as well as positive thinking in building school culture is the driving force leading to changes in other aspects of school culture in universities.

#### **4.3. RECOMMENDING SOME SOLUTIONS TO BUILD SCHOOL CULTURE IN UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI**

*Firstly, to raise awareness of school culture in universities for students, staff, lecturers and school employees.* Currently, the awareness of cadres, lecturers, staff and students about school culture and the role of school culture is

not good enough and not uniform. This stems from the lack of uniformity and unity in conveying school cultural values, and school culture propaganda programs have not created a strong impact on members of the school. Therefore, propaganda work to raise awareness of school culture needs to be strongly and extensively deployed to the team of cadres, lecturers, staff and students of the school with more diverse and rich forms. Universities should increase learning and exchange with experts and researchers in academic exchanges, theories about school culture, and experiences in building school culture among universities in the new context to enhance the vision and awareness of school culture; At the same time, strengthen the organization of cultural exchanges of lecturers and students of universities in Hanoi as well as the whole country to change thinking and actions about school culture and build school culture.

*Secondly, solution on mechanisms, policies for management and development of school culture in universities.* Universities need to develop a set of criteria for assessing school culture based on the specific characteristics of each university, reflecting the identity and brand of the school; Increase experiential activities and forums so that students have the opportunity to understand, leading to proper implementation of regulations on school culture; develop a fair and transparent reward and supervision mechanism for the implementation of regulations on school culture to raise awareness of implementation among cadres, lecturers, staff and students of the university. In order to become an essential part of the university, it is necessary to enhance the role of leaders of Party committees at all levels, the school's Board of Directors, functional departments, political organizations in the school, especially the Youth Union - Student Association in managing school culture in the university: improve the implementation and supervision mechanism, have a set of criteria for assessing school culture to ensure transparency, clarity, with appropriate rewards and handling of violations; Strengthening the application of technology in school culture management with online platforms to promote, support and monitor student activities in practicing school culture; strengthening the coordination between schools, families and society in managing school culture activities of students, staff and lecturers.

*Thirdly, solutions to improve resources for building academic culture in universities.* With the current financial, human resource and infrastructure difficulties in many universities, building a school culture in universities is facing many challenges. Therefore, the solution to improve resources for building a school culture is very necessary. First, it is necessary to increase financial investment in school culture with appropriate budget allocation, encourage



funding sources from businesses and alumni to organize programs and cultural activities in schools. Next, it is necessary to pay attention to and develop a team of specialized human resources for school culture in each university, trained in skills to develop school culture, and train each school staff and lecturer in conveying school culture values to students in the school. After that, universities must improve physical facilities, update appropriate school construction standards, have solutions to mobilize the participation of the community and society; increase the application of technology in building school culture. That is also part of the reason why universities in Hanoi are promoting university autonomy. “Self-determination” in some areas, including financial autonomy, helps universities balance the provision of additional facilities, adjust spending sources, including investment in cultural activities for students. Changing the architecture and landscape of the university helps the school “put on a new coat”, inspiring lecturers and students to teach and learn, creating a safe, healthy, humane and happy learning environment.

*Fourthly, solutions to organize effective cultural activities in universities.* To enhance cultural activities in universities, schools need to innovate the form of cultural activities with a combination of online and direct to attract students, organize activities related to trends that are loved by young people; at the same time, encourage students to participate by arranging appropriate learning activities for students, not creating time pressure, having a policy to recognize participation in cultural activities in schools as part of the learning process; at the same time, it is necessary to improve cultural facilities for students, coordinate with local authorities and units outside the school to take advantage of spaces for students to participate in cultural activities.

*Fifthly, solutions to promote international cooperation and exchange, and apply digital transformation to preserve and promote the cultural identity of universities in the era of international integration.* In order to maintain traditional cultural values while updating new values, and not to fall behind, universities need to balance between preserving and innovating cultural values, based on determining the core values that make up the identity and brand of the school, which need to be maintained, and the values that can be flexibly changed, in accordance with the changes in the current context. Universities need to have plans and strategies to maintain and develop cultural identity, periodically evaluate and adjust values, standards, and cultural activities accordingly. At the same time, to spread the values of school culture, the school needs to use modern technology applications with official social networking sites, electronic information pages, and the school's own applications to promote the values of school culture to students, staff, lecturers, and employees of the school, especially the first-year generation of students and newly recruited staff and lecturers.

## CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the researcher clarified the following contents:

*Firstly*, literature domestic and foreign research works on school culture, on school culture in universities and in Hanoi, with approaches from the perspectives of sociology, education, education management, psychology, political science... Based on the research results of previous scientists, the PhD student has identified the issues that need to be researched in the thesis.

*Secondly*, systematize basic theoretical issues on school culture; identify applied perspectives in the thesis, clarify the structure and role of school culture and provide an analytical framework for the thesis.

*Thirdly*, identify the situation of school culture in universities in Hanoi on the following aspects: (1) school cultural values; (2) school cultural standards; (3) school cultural activities and (4) school symbols, landscapes and architecture. From there, draw general conclusions about school culture in universities in Hanoi today.

*Fourthly*, analyzing and evaluating the positive and negative impacts of factors affecting school culture in universities such as: world context; domestic context and subjective factors of universities, the thesis has identified the issues and recommended some solutions, which have reference value for developing school culture in universities to meet the requirements of the new context.

Through the research results of the thesis, it can be seen that the school culture in universities in Hanoi has many changes, with (i) traditional school cultural values combined with modernity, to both preserve traditional national culture, traditional school culture, and catch up with the development trend of higher education in the region and the world; (ii) cultural standards in universities have also changed to adapt to the changes in school cultural values, teaching activities have changed from passive to active, the teacher-student relationship has changed from distant to more open and close, the learned manners are still maintained but tend to respect personal preferences more; (iii) school cultural activities have changed from purely recreational activities to highly educational activities, developing skills for students and aiming at the responsibility of developing the community and society; (iv) The symbol, landscape, and architecture of the school from the traditional to the open, modern space, representing creativity and innovation. As such, it can be seen that the school culture in universities in Hanoi has improved a lot, initially bringing positive signals, but there are still certain limitations. Therefore, it is recommended to provide solutions with orientation to build a school culture in developing universities to improve the quality of university education, affirming the position and brand of universities in Hanoi in and outside the country.

## **LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS OF THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC**

1. Nguyen Thi Ha (2024), "School culture in the context of digital transformation of higher education", *Journal of Culture and Arts*, (572), pp.55-58.
2. Nguyen Thi Ha (2024), "Characteristics and basic functions of school culture in universities", *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, (13), pp.42-46.
3. Nguyen Thi Ha (2024), "On factors affecting school culture in universities today", *Journal of Cultural Studies*, 4 (74), pp.81-89.