

## **REALITY AND SOLUTIONS TO BUILD THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF STUDENTS IN VIETNAM: A CASE STUDY IN HO CHI MINH CITY**

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### **Abstract**

Building the spiritual life of students in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is the activity of contributing to training, cultivating the virtue and essential ability of students in HCMC that leads to building high-quality human resources to serve the society. The researcher analyzes the achievements as well as the limitations in building the spiritual life of students and their causes in the past years. Through those results, the researcher proposes basic solutions to develop the spiritual life of students in HCMC more and more comprehensively towards the truth, the goodness, and the beauty.

**Keywords:** Ho Chi Minh City, spiritual life, students, Vietnam

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the process of socio-historical development, together with other factors, such as economy, politics, science, religion, law, security, national defense, etc., the construction of the spiritual life of people Students have an important role in the development of society, because building a student's spiritual life not only creates people with good knowledge and professional qualifications but also trains people with good spirit, consciousness, moral and physical qualities, effectively serving the socio-economic development of each country and each people.

HCMC is an economic, cultural, science-technology, education, and training center with an important position in the country; with a natural land area of about 2,095.03 km<sup>2</sup>, accounting for 6.36% of the national area, a population of about 8.5 million people, accounting for about 9.2% of the country's population (HCMC Statistical Office, 2019, p. 47); the South and Southeast are adjacent to the Mekong Delta provinces, rich in agricultural products; The North and the Northwest are contiguous to the Southeast and the Central Highlands, and the area of industrial crops is diversified; There are convenient roads, waterways, and air routes to domestic regions, as well as countries in the region and the world. With unique historical features; It is the place where early contact with the Western modern technology industry, with the abundant labor force, dynamic thinking, creativity, and quickness to reality, HCMC soon becomes an economic and cultural center society has created about a quarter of GDP, a third of the value of industrial products, 30% of the total national budget revenue, and 30% of the total export turnover, attracting about a third of the total project.

During the development process, HCMC has deeply realized the important meaning of the task of building the spiritual life of students in HCMC to build a young generation rich in patriotism, and steadfast in the ideal of independence establishing nationalism and socialism, having revolutionary ethics, and live a healthy lifestyle; develop physical, knowledge, skills, industrial style, and ability to start a business, have the ability and bravery in international integration and contribute to the development of the city. However, there are still limitations. Therefore, it is an urgent requirement to have a solution to build the spiritual life of students in HCMC today.

### **Research question**

- What is the overview of students in HCMC?
- What is the status of building the spiritual life of students in HCMC?
- What is the solution to building the spiritual life of students in HCMC today?

### **Material and Method**

Theoretical basis: The article is made based on the worldview and methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, and the views of the Communist Party of Vietnam on building a spiritual life. The content of the thesis is developed according to the approach of Marxist - Leninist philosophy on culture and society.

Research methods: The article uses a combination of research methods, such as historical and logical methods, comparison and comparison, analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, and statistical methods from sources references, sociological investigations, etc., to serve in the research and presentation of the article.

### **Results and Discussions**

#### **Overview of students in Ho Chi Minh City**

HCMC is one of the localities with the highest concentration of universities, colleges, and students in the country. In the city, there are “88 universities, academies, institutes, 28 colleges” (HCMC Statistical Office, 2018, p.241). According to the General Statistics Office, in 2018 the whole country had 1,695,922 university students, 315,002 college students, of which HCMC had 462,522 university students (accounting for 27.2% of the number of university students in the country nationwide), 34,092 college students (accounting for 10.8% of college students in the whole country), ranking second in the country in terms of the number of university and college students (General Statistics Office, 2019, p. 783).

Regarding the structure of professions and fields of training, universities and colleges in HCMC provide multidisciplinary and multi-field training such as natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, engineering, medicine, security, military, police, law, information technology, economy, banking, sport, culture, art, pedagogy, etc. Diversity of training types, from formal training to regular training. In regular training, there are types of on-the-job training, distance learning, international training cooperation, and joint training. Diverse in

training institutions, students can study at public training institutions, private training institutions, and foreign-invested training institutions. In addition, universities and colleges in HCMC are very active in international cooperation in many fields, professions, and training forms such as international cooperation in accrediting training quality according to standards international; Training links with international universities, according to statistics, in HCMC, there are “27 universities and colleges licensed to train foreign joint programs, of which colleges have 9 programs. programs, universities have 43 programs” (HCMC Party Committee, 2015, p.87), creating favorable conditions for students to have many choices for a good, high-quality learning environment and create opportunities for students to exchange and learn with friends from all over the world.

About the living, living, and studying conditions of students in HCMC. As a special city, a major economic center of the country, HCMC has a dynamic, vibrant, and strong development of the processes of industrialization, modernization, market economy development, and international integration. These are favorable conditions for building the spiritual life of the people of the City in general and the students in the city in particular. Along with that, HCMC is home to many prestigious and quality universities and colleges, many highly qualified, reputable, and ethical lecturers, and has a system of cultural institutions serving The students are quite comprehensive and modern such as the library, the Student Culture House, the bookstore, the publishing house, the magazine, etc., and many amusement parks, entertainment, etc., helping students have a convenient environment beneficial for learning, living, playing, and entertaining.

HCMC has the largest number of enterprises compared to the whole country, many of which are large foreign companies and corporations, which are favorable conditions for schools to connect with businesses and find internships and introduce jobs, at the same time, city students easily connect with businesses, search for scholarships, and receive support from businesses for scientific research and start-up activities. HCMC is home to the second largest number of students compared to the whole country, the majority of students in the city come from different regions and localities both nationally and internationally a part of the school's dormitory, which is built and sponsored by benefactors and businesses. Living in a dynamic city with a developed economy, the cost of living and services for students in the city is also quite high compared to other localities. To ensure life and study, a part of students in the city, in addition to studying, also work part-time to cover their living expenses, when working part-time, in addition to helping students earn income, it also helps students accumulate more experience, practice life skills and appreciate the value of labor. HCMC is home to many domestic and foreign organizations and agencies operating in all fields, many international tourists come to visit, and many international students come to study. The city has conditions to exchange, absorb an active, creative, open-minded lifestyle, easily carry out extracurricular activities, and practice soft skills.

However, living and studying in such conditions also has its downsides, negatively impacting the spiritual life of students in the city such as: being affected and dominated by the negative side of the process. Industrialization, modernization, the negative side of the market economy,

and international integration have affected the fields of students' spiritual life in terms of ideology, morality, lifestyle, study, scientific research study, entertainment; the impact of cultural trends, unhealthy lifestyles, incompatible with the nation's traditions and ethics imported from abroad into the city; the social evils of the city, the negative phenomena of the city that have not been prevented and handled promptly also negatively affect the spiritual life of students in HCMC; along with the change of values, standards and ethics in the city happening faster and stronger, it directly affects students, causing many students to have distorted expressions in thinking and acting a part of students in HCMC cannot keep up with the vibrant development pace of the city, becoming passive and slow to progress; some part of students, because they focus too much on getting a part-time job, did not focus on studying, less participating in movement activities, and the quality of the study was reduced.

### **The reality of building the spiritual life of students in Ho Chi Minh City**

About ideology, morality, and lifestyle. HCMC has equipped students with a worldview, scientific methodology, and revolutionary outlook on life, building beliefs and revolutionary ideals for students. According to the survey results of the author, 75.5% of the students asked if they have faith in the leadership of the Party and the management of the state. At the same time, educate students in the spirit of patriotism, enhance grasping of students' thoughts, thoughts, feelings, and aspirations, promptly answer students' concerns and questions, and provide key information systems to students. Educating students on traditional national values, love for the motherland, and national pride; lifestyle education for students about building a positive, healthy, friendly educational environment, living responsibly with the community, and having order and manners. As a result, the vast majority of students in HCMC have a worldview, scientific and revolutionary methodology, belief and revolutionary ideals, respect for traditional national values, and a sense of organization, discipline, implement rules, regulations, and laws in daily life, and lead a healthy lifestyle for the community. Besides the achievements, the task of building the ideology, morality, and lifestyle of students in HCMC also has limitations in the stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and implementing.

Regarding education, the Party Committee, Government, Youth Union, Association, universities, and colleges in Ho Chi Minh City have been interested in implementing many activities to build the spiritual life of students in HCMC in the field of education. Education helps students to accumulate knowledge, ability, and quality to become a high-quality resource for the socio-economic development of the city and the whole country. To well perform the task of educating and equipping students with knowledge, universities, colleges, and unions have organized many clubs, teams, academic groups, and meetings academic competitions, equipping students with effective learning methods to help students learn actively, and proactively, and creatively. In the 2017-2018 school year, the HCMC Student Union organized "787 academic activities at all levels, attracting 188,172 students to participate" (Vietnamese Student Association HCMC, 2018, p.17). Not only educating students about knowledge and vocational training, schools and mass organizations are also interested in educating students on how to be human, equipping city students with skills to live and work in the city society through forms of soft skills education, creating an environment for students to practice soft skills and

connect with businesses. In the 2017-2018 school year, “663 classes equipped with social practice skills were organized, attracting 233,203 students to participate” (Vietnamese Student Association HCMC, 2018, p.21); foreign language education, informatics as a means of communication and connection in the process of learning, training and cultural exchange; closely coordinate with families in the education, training, and learning of students through forms of contact with families, providing information about students' learning and training situation to their families. However, in the field of education, there are still inadequacies, some part of students learn passively, there is no effective learning method, and a part of students have not actively participated in academic clubs or group work, thereby adversely affecting the learning quality of students.

The training programs of many universities and colleges have not paid attention to comprehensive training in professional knowledge, ethics, and skills for students. A part of students also do not pay attention to comprehensive learning, practice ethics, and skills, but only care about professional knowledge, disregarding or not paying attention to general knowledge, leading to skewed learning, and a lack of knowledge training in skills and ethics, paying little attention to movement activities. In addition, students' foreign language and computer skills are still low, not meeting the requirements of international integration, especially students' ability to communicate in foreign languages is still weak.

Regarding science, scientific activities are one of the main activities of universities, colleges, and students. Therefore, the Party Committee, Government, mass organizations, universities, and colleges in HCMC are very interested in implementing many measures to create conditions for students to do scientific research, contributing to improving the quality of science quality of study and creating conditions for students to disseminate scientific knowledge to the community and society.

To create favorable conditions and environments for students to do scientific research, universities, colleges, and mass organizations in HCMC have organized scientific seminars, scientific research forums, and awards. scientific research students, in the 2017-2018 school year, the Vietnam Student Association of HCMC organized “787 academic activities at all levels, attracting 188,172 students to participate... there are 5,211 scientific research topics in various fields of science and technology grant” (Vietnamese Student Association HCMC, 2018, p.17), to help students have good conditions for scientific research, many schools have activities to support students such as supporting reference materials, building a digital library bank, connecting businesses to support students in scientific research. In addition, to help students disseminate scientific knowledge to the community through student volunteer activities, organize specialized volunteer teams associated with carrying out scientific research projects, and transfer scientific knowledge to the community science and technology, supporting students to start a business, and in the 2017-2018 school year, “there were 279 activities to support 59,572 students starting a business” (Vietnamese Student Association HCMC, 2018, p.18). These activities have helped the city's students to become more active, creative, and able to apply what they have learned in practice.

In addition to the above remarkable achievements, limitations in this field are inevitable, students are not active and actively participate in scientific activities, and they are afraid, self-deprecating, and afraid to participate or participate in scientific activities. join for their movement so the quality is not high; Scientific research products of students have low applicability and have not received much practical attention from businesses; The issue of student entrepreneurship is of great interest to schools, but the rate of students starting a business is still low, most students after graduation tend to apply for jobs.

In terms of art, HCMC has invested heavily in cultural and artistic activities, especially organizing student art performances every year through programs such as a student singing festival, a cultural program to celebrate the holidays of the year, a student film festival, student beauty contest, organization of art and culture clubs, in the 2017-2018 school year, “431 playgrounds” were organized arts and culture, attracting more than 191,482 students to participate” (Vietnamese Student Association HCMC, 2018, p.47), creating a space for regular, joyful, and healthy cultural and artistic activities for students.

The system of cultural institutions in service of the production, exchange, dissemination, consumption, and enjoyment of culture and art of the city's students has been invested and built quite comprehensively. Many big projects have been invested by the city government such as the student culture house in District 3 and Thu Duc, Student Support Center; library system in districts and schools, in addition, there are many public and private cultural centers and venues serving the city's residents and students. Building a reading culture for city students is also interested in building by the Party Committee, Government, mass organizations, universities, and colleges in HCMC with activities such as opening the city's book street. HCMC to honor the reading culture voted to introduce 100 books that Ho Chi Minh City's children need to read, diversify and upgrade utility services at the library to attract students, etc., cheered and attracting a large number of students to read books, forming a reading culture for city students. However, there are certain limitations in this area. The programs of cultural and art activities are not attractive enough to attract students to participate. Although HCMC is very interested in building a reading culture for its citizens, the percentage of students reading books is still low.

In general, in all fields, the process of building the spiritual life of students in Ho Chi Minh City, besides the achievements, there are still many limitations and inadequacies, and they all have causes certain. The reasons for these achievements are: the achievements in socio-economic development that HCMC has achieved in recent years have effectively contributed to building the spiritual life of the city's people in general as well as the living standard of the city. members in HCMC in particular; the leadership and direction of the Party Committee, the Government, mass organizations, families, especially the Youth Union, Student Union, and universities and colleges for the task of building a better life spirit of students in HCMC. This is the place where many universities and colleges gather, including many prestigious and quality training schools at home and abroad, training a large number of capable and qualified students to serve the development of the country's economy - society, international integration of HCMC as well as of the whole country.

At the same time, the movements of students and students in the city always show dynamism, and creativity, and spread to other localities in the country. About the causes of these limitations are: A part of Party organizations, Government, mass organizations, universities, colleges, and students in HCMC is not fully aware and unclear about their tasks. building the spiritual life of students; Based on the specific characteristics and situation in HCMC, there are inadequate policies, a lack of synchronization in infrastructure development, especially the planning of the network of universities and colleges, and a lack of funds land for investment in construction and development of schools or concentrated relocation to one term, lack of land funds for the construction of amusement parks, cultural activities, health care, transportation, inns, and dormitories; the lack of self-awareness and the spirit of striving for a part of HCMC students in building their own spiritual life.

### **Solutions to build the spiritual life of students in Ho Chi Minh City today**

First of all, raising awareness of the whole society. This is a measure that holds the leading position in building a cultural lifestyle for students because the structure of human action always goes from awareness to feelings, beliefs, and images motivation, willpower. On the other hand, it is necessary to raise awareness and responsibility for education administrators and lecturers, create high unity, create synergy, and ensure the process of building a cultural lifestyle for students members are conducted positively and proactively, overcoming limitations and shortcomings. The school needs to do well in propaganda, education, and awareness raising for educational administrators and lecturers about the position and role of cultural lifestyles in daily life as well as in improving the quality of life student personality. To do this, the school needs to build a system of cultural lifestyle criteria, which, clearly define values and standards (Tri, 2022). On that basis, identify ways and educational measures to transform the system of values and standards into internal requirements for each student. At the same time, the work of leading and directing educational activities must be scientific, specific, realistic, and stick to the defined criteria; regularly check, shape, and ensure that the process of building a cultural lifestyle for students takes place in the right direction.

Second, building a healthy school culture environment, creating conditions for students to study, practice, strive and grow. A healthy cultural environment plays an important role in people's spiritual life in general and in building a cultural lifestyle in particular, making students' spiritual life a positive factor. Promote people to perfect their personality and lifestyle. To do so, first of all, the school needs to raise awareness among lecturers, officials, civil servants, and all students about the position and role of students' spiritual life. In addition, improving the quality of cultural activities, such as libraries, reading books, mass arts, clubs, physical training, sports, entertainment, learning contests..., direct all those activities to raise awareness about cultural lifestyle for students. At the same time, expand and diversify cultural exchange activities between classes, courses in schools, and schools together; consolidate, build and develop healthy cultural relationships between teachers and students, friends, and class collectives. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of resources and facilities for activities of building a cultural environment in the school, to closely coordinate with local authorities, mass organizations, and people to manage, educate and train students.

Third, actively and actively struggle to prevent negative influences on Western lifestyle and social evils. This is a measure that plays an important role in building the spiritual life of students in HCMC today. Because, lifestyle is a broad social category, covering many aspects, fields, classes, and social classes. On the other hand, under the impact of globalization, the negative side of the market economy, the negative effects of new lifestyles such as pragmatic, existentialist ideas, chasing money, virtual living, cohabitation, and loose living... are creeping into all aspects of social life. Therefore, schools need to actively and proactively overcome the remnants of the old way of life, and social evils, fight against the negative influence of the bourgeois lifestyle by many measures and forms such as propaganda, educate new lifestyles, setting typical individual and collective examples.

### **Conclusion**

The current situation of the spiritual life of students in HCMC shows that students in HCMC are equipped with a worldview and scientific methodology, have revolutionary ideals and cherish traditional values. ethnicity, have good manners and a healthy lifestyle; students have a comprehensive education, are capable and qualified, and interested in connecting the school with family and business in education; students actively participate in scientific research and disseminate scientific knowledge to the community; Students' art activities are organized periodically and regularly to help students have an environment to live, enjoy, entertain and create art.

However, in the spiritual life of students in HCMC today, there is still a part of students who have manifestations such as wavering in thought, indifference to social events, and being away from traditional values and ethnic system; passive learning, no effective learning methods, no interest in comprehensive training in knowledge, skills, and attitudes; not yet active in scientific research; students rarely participate in cultural and art club activities, rarely use the library for study. From the current situation of the spiritual life of students in HCMC, we propose solutions to build the spiritual life of students, contributing to building a workforce with professional and political qualities to serve the target of socio-economic development in HCMC today.

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