

Solutions for Developing Lecturer Staff in the Context of University Autonomy: A Case at UFLS-UD

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Abstract: *Lecture staff is the factor determining the quality of education, training, scientific research and development of universities. This is considered "a special productive force that creates products as human resources", and is also the subject of orientation to create sustainable development of the society. Besides, in the context of higher education in Vietnam today, autonomy is an inevitable trend to promote the development of higher education, which is a necessary condition for universities to survive and develop. When the university autonomy is implemented well, it helps to open up great development opportunities for universities in general and regional universities in particular. However, in order to realize the issue of university autonomy, universities need to have a strategy of university management, especially the development of lecture staff. From the assessment of the current status of the lecture staff, the management of them at the University of Foreign Language Studies -the University of Danang, Vietnam and the study of university autonomy issues in terms of personnel, the article proposed solutions to develop lecture staff at University of Foreign Language Studies -The University of Danang in the context of university autonomy.*

Keywords: Lecture team, university autonomy, measure, development, UFLS

1. Introduction

University of Foreign Language Studies (UFLS) is a member higher education institution of the University of Danang (UD), with the mission of training to improve knowledge of languages and cultures to serve the national construction, development and international integration. UFLS is one of the first nine higher education institutions in Vietnam to meet educational quality standards, and at the same time, it was selected by the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the National Foreign Language Project Management Board for training English teachers. UFLS also is one of five regional Foreign Language Centers with the task of training, fostering, surveying foreign language competence, fostering pedagogical skills, and deploying information technology application in teaching and learning foreign languages. In order to accomplish that important task, along with other conditions and resources such as finance, facilities, etc., the lecture staff is the direct force to realize the educational and training objectives of universities.

Recognizing the importance of developing this staff, over the years, universities have fully implemented the regulations of the MOET on training content, fostering and improving the quality of the staff. However, there are still many shortcomings and difficulties that require the drastic management and direct measures from leaders of universities as well as educational managers.

At the same time, in the current higher education trend, universities are required to build a roadmap for autonomy, if not, it is difficult for universities to promote their internal resources and it is difficult to adapt to the rapid changes of the world. Although the opportunities for foreign language

learning has been being achieved, it has also faced many challenges. Therefore, university autonomy requires a suitable roadmap, especially a strategy to develop teaching staff to meet the requirements of educational innovation in the context of learning new languages.

Developing teaching staff is the solution of the management entity to build a teaching staff that is sufficient in quantity, strong in quality and structurally synchronous as a key task and priority at the forefront of the university's comprehensive development strategy. The term "developing lecturer staff" is understood as an integrated concept including: planning, selecting, using; training and retraining, implementing of regimes and policies.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Lecturer Staff

Lecture staff is a force who gets involved directly in the educational process in order to train learners with good moral qualities, capable and qualified skills meeting the requirements of society, fostering and developing human resources to make the wealth for the country. They stick together through material and spiritual benefits within the framework of laws and social institutions. The teaching staff is an important factor that directly affects the quality of higher education. Teaching staff and educational administrators are one of the largest forces in the contingent of officials and employees.

Thus, it can be understood that the lecturer staff is a collection of lecturers who are in charge of teaching and educating in universities and colleges, they are linked together to realize the common goal of the education and

training industry train and fulfill the goals of universities and colleges where they work. The teaching staff's labor is intellectual labor, scientific labor, and specific labor to create products, especially educated and trained people.

2.2. Developing lecturer staff

Lecture staff is the core force that plays a very important and decisive role in the education and training process. The lecturer staff has a pivotal role in the development of the school because they determine the quality of the products created and the reputation of the school in the society. Therefore, in management work, focusing on the development of lecturer staff is a central task of all levels of management, of all management units in the university. It can be said that the development of the lecturer staff must be ahead and to take the lead, they are not for making up for their gaps and shortcomings in the process of being trained.

Thus, it can be said that developing lecturer staff is building a team who is sufficient in quantity, reasonable in structure, and good in quality; at the same time creating an excitement about their attachment to the training career.

This means that the staff development must be associated with training and employment, which can only be done when there are appropriate remuneration policies and mechanisms. Because, lecturers are also employees who must have remuneration and be properly fostered both materially and spiritually.

2.3. University autonomy

In Vietnam, the autonomy of universities has been recognized by the Education Law with content similar to the concept of developed countries since 2005: "Middle schools, colleges, universities have autonomy and take self-responsibility in accordance with the law and the School's charter for the following activities: (1) Developing programs, textbooks, teaching and learning plans for the professions that are allowed to be trained; (2) Setting enrollment targets, organizing enrollment, organizing the training process, recognizing graduation and grant diplomas; (3) Organizing of the University apparatus; recruiting, managing, employing and treating teachers, officials and employees; (4) Mobilizing, managing and using resources; (5) Cooperating with domestic and foreign economic, educational, cultural, physical training, sports, medical and scientific research organizations in accordance with the Government's regulations.

To promote the university autonomy, the MOET have issued the guidelines, policies and legal frameworks for this issue. In particular, the law of higher education issued in 2012 affirms that higher education institutions are autonomous in activities mainly in the fields of organization and personnel, finance and assets, training, science and technology, international cooperation, ensuring the quality of higher education.

Thereby, university autonomy can be the university's independence from the State's control, limited by laws and

agreements between the State and the higher education sectors and individual universities. University autonomy can be the freedom to make decisions about how the institution operates, as well as its goals and mission. University autonomy can also be expressed at two levels: the level between the university and the State and the level between the university and its departments. University autonomy can also be only procedural, formal-the right to decide the means and ways to achieve a predetermined goal and the right to decide on the objectives as well as the program of activities. University autonomy can also be seen as conditional powers: universities can only have autonomy when they have met national standards or established standards under public policies.

3. The situation of developing lecturer staff at UFLS-UD

3.1. The situation of lecturers at UFLS-UD

The total number of staff of the University is 325, of which 225 are lecturers (8 Associate professors, 37 doctors, 180 Masters). At present, the University has 34 lecturers taking part in doctoral programmes, and 3 lecturers in master programmes. Besides, experienced experts and volunteers are involved in teaching and training at the University. However, there are 21 training programs in undergraduate, 6 ones in Post Graduate. This means that the University needs a large number of qualified lecturers to meet the development of the University.

The current average student/lecture ratio: 20.8 students/lecturer for undergraduate majors and 25.4 students/lecturer for Post Graduate majors, ensuring the standards set out in the Circular on national standards for higher education institutions and member universities of UD.

About meeting standards of professional qualifications, the number of lecturers with master's degrees is concentrated between the ages of 24 and under 40. The percentage of lecturers with master's degrees or higher accounts is more than 99%. The number of lecturers with associate professor and doctorate degrees is 45, which is quite modest in comparing to a university training institution. However, after only two to three years, the number of lecturers with doctorate degrees will increase to about 80 (the rate is around 30%), contributing to improving the quality of the teaching staff.

About the qualification in pedagogy, professional qualification in pedagogy is one of the criteria for appointment of lecturers, according to the data of the Organization and Administration Department; most of the lecturers have been trained through professional classes pedagogical service.

About the satisfaction of professional qualities, the moral qualities of the lecturers are reflected in their lifestyle, manners, and respect for honor to perform the mission of the University in training, improving knowledge of language and culture in order to serve national construction and

development as well as international integration.

About the capacity of the teaching staff, they are reflected in the following two groups of competencies: Group of Teaching capacity, scientific research capacity, self-study ability; and Group of competencies for professional development, professional development and social knowledge.

Regarding the structure, the ratio between the number of lecturers and the number of leaders, administrative managers and service staff is quite reasonable, the rate of lecturers' accounts for 69%; officers and employees of the department accounted for 31%.

Regarding gender, the total number of lecturers is 225 people, of which the number of female lecturers is 192 people, accounting for 85.33%. With this ratio, we find that the gender structure of the lecturer staff is not reasonable, the number of women accounts for more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the number of cadres and lecturers. Therefore, in the development of the lecturer staff, it is necessary to pay attention to the conditions and capabilities of the gender in order to have appropriate training and retraining measures.

Regarding age, there are 122 lecturers aged from 24 to fewer than 40, accounting for 54%. Theoretically, a reasonable age-based structure of the staff involved in lecturing will give the faculty an advantage: high succession, promoting the strengths of each age group.

3.2. Developing the lecturer staff at UFLS-UD

a. Building strategies in staff plan

The staff plan for the 2014-2019 and 2019-2024 periods has been carried out synchronously in accordance with principles and processes. The quality of staff included in the planning has been significantly improved in terms of education, political and professional qualifications. The strategies ensured the quantity, reasonable structure, especially the proportion of female cadres and young cadres increased significantly. On the basis of the results of staff plan, the development of training, promotion, appointment, arrangement, and transfer and rotation plans of cadres is carried out in a more active manner, basically overcoming formalism in this activity. However, in the plan, the proportion of female cadres and young cadres has not still been successful as expected; in some cases the planning is not feasible.

b. Planning for the lecturer staff development

Over the years, the University has implemented the plan to develop the teaching staff in accordance with the provisions of the law and the University's regulations, starting with the scale of the University's development, the training created annually to determine the need for the quantity, structure and quality of the lecture team to develop an overall strategy for the development of the University.

c. Recruiting and inviting lecturers

The recruitment of lecturers is a key activity in the management of education. This work must be fully implemented in terms of recruitment process and standards of lecturers. The recruitment of lecturers of the University in recent years has always been carried out in accordance with the law, the MOET as well as UD. From 2017 to 2021, UFLS-UD has recruited 45 qualified lecturers.

d. Arranging and using of lecturer staff

With a team of young lecturers and most of them are female, the University faces many difficulties in arranging and using this staff. Many lecturers have to teach many periods and prepare many subjects; some people hold many positions and many teaching hours, greatly affecting the scientific research, lesson-plan preparation or updating new knowledge of the lecturers.

Over the years, the use of lecturers of the University has achieved certain results, from the point of view of using "the right people, right jobs" has brought into the capacity of officials and lecturers in completing of the mission.

Periodically at the end of the school-year, the University, on the evaluation of the heads of the subjects, will have a plan to use teachers in the following year. The plan on work arrangement is announced before the summer break so that each lecturer knows his or her work for the following year (except for unexpected requests). This helps them to be proactive in preparing work plans. During the implementation process, there is close direction, inspection and evaluation, and adjustment to suit the reality.

e. Training and retraining lecturers

The work of training and fostering teachers in recent years has been done quite well. The qualifications and capacity of the teaching staff have been significantly improved, ensured to meet the teaching requirements.

f. Testing and evaluating lecturers

Examination and evaluation of lecturers are important activities to assess the quality and capacity of them. Thereby, identifying strengths, weaknesses and outstanding aspects that need to be overcome in the coming time and having orientations for the development of lecturers in the future. Thanks to the examination and evaluation of each lecturer, the University has a plan, a plan to arrange suitable work, train and foster to improve the qualifications of the lecturers. The examination and evaluation of the teaching staff are carried out regularly and continuously. With the innovation of teaching methods, the innovation of testing and evaluation methods of the teaching staff should be focused. Over the years, the University has examined and evaluated the teaching staff in many forms such as: inspecting the implementation of the curriculum in professional groups, organizing feedback from students.

The organization of collecting feedback from students is held

periodically, twice a year, in the first 6 months and the last 6 months of the year, the results over the years have nearly 100% of lecturers rated as excellent or good bands.

Through the exams, evaluation and year-end review, the University has promptly implemented the work of emulation and commendation of lecturers in accordance with regulations.

Evaluating lecturers is a necessary activity for the Board of Directors to have feedback from lecturers so that appropriate direction and management decisions can be made. Therefore, teacher evaluation is an activity of interest and regular implementation of the University. However, overall there are still some limitations in the examination, evaluation and classification of lecturers such as some points of evaluation content is not reasonable, the regulation is still formalistic, does not motivate and encourage the lecturers. The criteria for evaluating include many contents causing difficulties in the evaluation process. To evaluate the professional capacity of lecturers, it is necessary to base on the teacher's educational activities and the effect of that activity on the students to evaluate objectively and accurately. This requires a certain amount of time, so it will significantly affect the time to invest in teaching. Evaluation by job quality has not been applied thoroughly, it is still administrative.

g. Remunerating and making policies for lecturers staff

Evaluating the actual implementation of policies and regimes for lecturers in recent years has been seriously carried out, ensured compliance with the regulations of the MOET and UD. For the cases of achieving excellent results, it is basically good, but there are some cases that have not been paid attention at the right time. It is possible that the coordination between the Trade Union Organization and the managers of the departments did not cooperate well, so it is necessary to pay more attention to go deeper into the masses to promptly to make encouragement and reward at the right time. Thus, it has not motivated lecturers to work with peace of mind, to strive to their best, to believe in the leadership of the leaders.

Facilities and technical equipment for teaching are given the second priority by the University for lecturer staff. Classrooms have been equipped with modern machinery and equipment to create a favorable environment and effective service conditions for the teaching staff to fulfill the educational and training tasks of the University.

3.3. Discussion

a. Strengths of lecturer staff management

In the past years, along with the efforts of all leaders and managers, especially the teaching staff in the University, some fundamental and solid achievements have been achieved, which are favorable premises for the upgrading and development of the University as follows,

- The teaching staff has good qualities, good ethics, solidarity, love for the profession and sense of

responsibility in their work. Most of the teaching staff has a sense of striving to rise up in their work, always consciously preserve, protect and build the school's tradition, which has a history of more than 35 years.

- The teaching staff is highly dynamic, easily adapting to new requirements, tasks and demands in the process of educational reform, especially innovating educational methods.
- The professional qualifications and pedagogical capacity of the teaching staff are relatively equal; most of the lecturers have good teaching capacity.

b. Weaknesses of the lecturer staff management

In general, the teaching staff basically all had the right awareness of the requirements and tasks of building and developing the University, most of the lecturers had a change in their perception, but in reality, the management of teaching staff is not synchronized, such as:

- There is a clear difference in the number of students' input between lecturers, so the structure of the management staff and the lecturer staff between the faculties is also different.
- The qualifications and professional knowledge of some pre-trained lecturers are still inadequate and backward compared to the current progress of science and technology. The number of doctors is still small, and at the same time, the university has a female structure of more than 80%, so some lecturers are still afraid to study and research to improve their qualifications for family reasons.
- There is a difference in the number of lecturers in the faculties and subjects. Some faculties and subjects have an excess of lecturers, but conversely, there are faculties and subjects that lack a contingent of young and complementary teachers.

4. The solutions to develop lecturer staff at UFLS-UD in the context of university autonomy

4.1. Organizing to raise the awareness of lecturers' responsibilities

This measure is intended to create a deep awareness among the management staff and lecturers about their own role and the urgency of developing the teaching staff on the development path of the University in this period to create a clear and unified awareness from all levels of management. Each lecturer has the way of seeing and changing in action at all stages of recruitment, using, training, retraining, assessment and promotion opportunities in order to improve political bravery, ethical quality, professional conscience, and professional expertise to meet the development requirements of the University. Lecture team must be strengthened the faith and love of the profession, helped to feel secure in their work and enthusiastic about the profession. At the same time, they also need improving the quality, lifestyle and ethics.

4.2. Adjusting strategies and plan to develop lecturer staff in the direction of university autonomy

The University should review and perfect standards for professional competence assessment. Besides, building a contingent of lecturers should be ensured about sufficient quantity; be synchronous and reasonable in structure. Moreover, improving the professional and ethical qualifications of lecturers is the task of the management levels to meet the development requirements of the University and of higher education.

At the same time, the University should arrange a reasonable lecturer staff in each development stage create a strategy in the development of the teaching staff and have a plan to standardize the teaching staff according to regulations of the MOET and the UD.

4.3. Renovating the selection of lecturers according to the Job Position Scheme

The objective of the selection of lecturers is to make the lecturers constantly increase in size, meet the requirements in terms of quantity, ensure a reasonable structure, meet quality standards (quality, level, capacity to perform tasks) in which the teaching staff follows each stage of the University's development.

The selection of lecturers also aims to actively implement the planning goals as well as the development strategy of the University. At the same time, the selection of lecturers also aims to constantly replace and supplement qualified human resources with standards in all aspects, meeting training tasks according to social needs. Especially in the selection of lecturers in order to actively promote the development of the teaching staff. This is a key goal contributing to the implementation of fundamental and comprehensive innovation in education and training in general, in higher education in particular.

The purpose of recruitment is to have a sufficient number of lecturers who are strong in expertise, professional, ideologically stable, ethical and healthy to be ready to perform the tasks of training and fostering future generations.

4.4. Arranging, using lecturer staff rationally and effectively

Assigning and using lecturers is to arrange, appoint, and promote them to specific tasks and titles which are suitable to bring into the inherent abilities and capacities of lecturers towards the performance of the school's overall mission. Assigning and arranging to use lecturers also aims to actively place lecturers in assigned work positions and tasks in accordance with the lecturer's ability, capacity and forte. The general mission of the school follows different stages of the development.

Assigning and using lecturers are organic links with other stages in the chain of management and development activities such as recruiting, training, fostering, evaluating and creating a working environment. These activities will improve the quality and effectiveness of the development of the University's teaching staff in the current context of university autonomy.

4.5. Innovating training and fostering lecturer staff in line with developing the orientation of the University

Methods of training and fostering lecturers is the process of organizing learning and self-training opportunities for them in order to equip, update and improve their knowledge, skills and working attitudes so that they can perform their jobs. The assigned work is better, more efficient and meets the needs of learners.

The training and retraining to improve the professional qualifications, pedagogy, foreign languages, and informatics for the teaching staff must really have practical effects and serve positively for improving the quality of teaching and scientific research as well as meeting the current educational innovation needs. The teaching staff are also trained and fostered on political qualities and professional ethics to ensure that all lecturers have sufficient qualifications and capacity to perform assigned tasks, contributing to the implementation of political tasks of the University and civic responsibility.

The training to improve the qualifications of lecturers must be associated with scientific research. These are two closely related tasks, aiming to improve the quality of professional activities of the University's lecturers. Promoting scientific research also means that the University knows how to create internal motivation to improve the quality of training.

4.6. Renovating testing and evaluating lecturer staff

Examination and evaluation is an important part and function of school management; is an important control tool of manager. It provides the necessary feedback, creates the connection and connection of the School with all levels of management. Managers use the professional and professional system of testing and assessment to identify the current situation of the University in terms of teaching quality of lecturers and students' learning; the implementation of goals, plans, programs, contents and methods of education, the implementation of professional regulations, examination regulations, the implementation of regulations on necessary conditions to ensure the quality of education. Examination and assessment focusing on lecturers, students and the learning process will strengthen accountability, develop team and strengthen cooperation of lecturers, as a basis for making appropriate policies in the University's administration.

5. Conclusion

Education development is a part of socio-economic development, an indispensable work in educational management today. The development of education in general and the development of lecturer staff in particular always occupy a particularly important position in the orientation and development of the University. It helps education managers plan the direction and plan for future educational development. The above solutions also create motivation for lecturer staff to have the opportunity to promote their abilities, to work hard with the best quality. In education and training in general and higher education in particular,

lecturers are an important factor determining the quality of higher education. Therefore, in order to develop higher education in the context of university autonomy, the presented appropriate solutions must be taken in managing and developing lecturer staff.

Author Profile

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