



Opportunities and Challenges in Developing a Learning Society in Vietnam in the Current Context of Digital Transformation

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Abstract

The strong explosion of the current Industrial Revolution 4.0 has had a comprehensive impact on all aspects of social life. In particular, the issue of digital transformation is the main trend of society in general and education. This has opened up many new, smart, scientific, effective educational methods, reducing costs and meeting the increasing needs of learners in the new context. To keep up with the globalized educational development trend of the world as well as the current level of digital development, the application of digital transformation in open education in Vietnam is an urgent and top priority issue. Therefore, leaders and commanders of management-training organizations, teachers and learners need to change their awareness in building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning. However, in the face of new movements and developments, digital transformation in open education is both an opportunity and a huge challenge for our entire Party and people in the current educational reform in our country.

Keywords: Industrial Revolution 4.0, Open education, learning society, lifelong learning, digital transformation

1. Introduction

A learning society is a society where everyone is educated, motivated, passionate about learning, and self-motivated to learn regularly and learn for life. In it, everyone has all the conditions and favourable opportunities to access basic knowledge sources, necessary to meet individual and community needs. In other words, learners based on self-study with their will and perseverance are the main fundamental factors to bring benefits to themselves, their families and society; everyone regardless of age, profession, or level sees learning as a need of life, always needing to learn and learn for life, learning "anywhere, anytime". Digital transformation in open education at the present stage has brought our country many great opportunities in improving and developing education towards modernization and globalization, meeting the learning needs of people in the digital age, especially in the work of building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning in our country today. The article focuses on studying the role of open education in building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning, on that basis clarifying the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation in open education in building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning in Vietnam today.

2. Theoretical basis

The article uses the method of analysis and synthesis to analyse and process secondary documents, thereby clarifying the problems that have been solved, the problems that have not been satisfactorily solved, and the problems that need further research... After analysis, use the synthesis method to systematise and propose solutions.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Open Education and Its Role in Building and Developing a Learning Society and Lifelong Learning

Open education is a concept to describes an educational system designed to expand access to learning compared to traditional,

conventional forms of education. It focuses on the use of diverse means, especially the development of open educational resources, built on modern technology platforms, to provide diverse and flexible learning environments in different educational institutions.

Open education is the result of the belief that learners want to manage their learning process. They want to be able to: identify important topics that they want to learn; experience real learning instead of just receiving information from books; take responsibility for decisions related to their learning; be aware of the importance of learning in the community; and have the freedom to choose the issues they want to focus on when participating in the learning process. Thus, the belief is that freedom of choice and guidance for learners will improve the quality of education. The philosophical basis of open education is similar to the ideas of educational reformers such as John Dewey (1859-1952) and developmental psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980). Dewey believed in the effectiveness of learning through solving practical problems and the view that schools should be part of the community, closely connected to family and society. Meanwhile, according to Piaget, learners are the architects of their knowledge development. Therefore, education should not only be open to everyone but also open to learners to actively participate in the learning process.

The International Council for Education of UNESCO stated that: "Lifelong learning is one of the key elements to open the door to the 21st century". The Council also emphasized another important idea: "The need to move towards a learning society". By emphasizing lifelong learning and a learning society, the idea of open education has become more universal, not only as a specific educational model but also as a comprehensive educational system. The concepts of lifelong learning, education for all and a learning society have emphasized that every individual should be provided with the opportunity to learn and receive a continuous educational system. UNESCO has strongly affirmed the concept related to open education: Education is a fundamental human right, a universal human value, and should be realized throughout the life of each individual.

The development of open education is being guided by a philosophy of educational methods that use pre-prepared standardized materials to achieve economies of scale. This philosophy provides opportunities to expand access to education while meeting the needs of learners for autonomy. Open education initially appeared at the university level but has now expanded to other levels of education, especially in many programs that do not require a degree. Open education plays an important role in creating lifelong learning opportunities, realizing the mission of education for all, and shaping the future of education. Nowadays, lifelong learning has become a concept that is not only a principle or idea in the field of education but also one of the key factors in promoting economic and social development in many countries around the world. Building a learning society means building a comprehensive and integrated education system, a community where everyone's learning needs are met everywhere and at all times. To meet the lifelong learning needs of people, organizations and individuals in society, including schools, government agencies, economic organizations, residential communities, the military, the media, and everyone is responsible for providing learning opportunities and creating favourable conditions for people to continue learning throughout their lives. According to

UNESCO, lifelong learning refers to all learning activities that an individual engages in with a goal throughout their life, from birth to death, through formal, non-formal and informal education methods. In the current digital age, lifelong learning is inevitable.

Lifelong learning is not only a right but also a responsibility of every citizen. Citizens have the freedom to choose the learning method that suits their abilities, interests, and personal circumstances to improve their knowledge and understanding, to meet the requirements of the new era and the process of international integration. They learn to have career opportunities, to be able to participate in work effectively, and to meet the increasing demands of the labour market. They learn to be able to contribute more to the community and to create happiness for themselves and everyone around them. Finally, they learn to contribute to the development of the country and all of humanity. In the world, countries are increasingly interested in building a "strong education system". In particular, lifelong learning is given special attention, because lifelong learning provides a solid framework for developing sustainable human resources, thereby creating economic growth, and social welfare and encouraging and motivating individuals to pursue learning opportunities at all stages of life. The reality in many developed countries has proven that lifelong learning plays an important role in building and improving the quality of common resources for development, creating improvements in the socio-economic environment for the community, changing the cultural picture of the community and improving the quality of life of the people. Thanks to lifelong learning, each individual has the opportunity to improve their ability to adapt, integrate and develop themselves. For sensitive groups such as children, women, and ethnic minorities, lifelong learning is extremely important, supporting the creation of opportunities and motivation for them to update their knowledge and skills, increase labour productivity, generate more income, improve their quality of life, change the situation and social position, and contribute to creating more equality and progress. To develop education in both the present and the future, building a learning society is the core and important foundation. In particular, creating lifelong learning opportunities is not only a motto but also a top solution and goal of the education sector. This requires establishing an education system where all citizens can easily find and access learning opportunities that are suitable to their conditions, situations, and requirements in all different situations and spaces.

In Vietnam, education and training are identified as the top national policy; investment in education and training is an investment in development. Activities to encourage learning and talent development, along with building a learning society, have attracted the attention of the entire society and have developed strongly in both scope and depth throughout the country.

From the 9th National Congress to the 11th National Congress, the Party has continuously affirmed the viewpoint of implementing education for all people and building a learning society, creating conditions for everyone to continue learning throughout their lives. This Party view has concretized a philosophy of a learning society, combining the initial education system (including levels from preschool to university) with the continuing education system by providing formal and informal forms of education.

The 11th Party Congress documents affirmed:

Fundamentally and comprehensively innovate education and training according to the development needs of society; improve quality according to the requirements of standardization, modernization, socialization, democratization and international integration, effectively serving the cause of building and defending the Fatherland. Promote the building of a learning society, and create opportunities and conditions for all citizens to study for life. Recognizing the role, position and significance of building a learning society, on May 18, 2005, the Prime Minister approved the Project "Building a Learning Society for the period 2005 - 2010" with the general criteria of creating opportunities and favourable conditions for people of all ages and levels to study regularly, continuously and for life at any time, any place, any level; mobilize the combined strength of the whole society to participate in building and developing education; Everyone and every organization has the responsibility and obligation to study and actively participate in building a learning society. The Politburo issued Directive No. 11-CT/TW, dated April 13, 2007, on strengthening the Party's leadership in the work of promoting learning, talent, and building a learning society. Following that, the Prime Minister issued Directive No. 02/2008/CT-TTg, dated January 8, 2008, on promoting the movement of promoting learning, talent, and building a learning society. On January 9, 2013, the Prime Minister continued to approve the Project "Building a learning society for the period 2012 - 2020" (Project) to continue implementing the task of building a learning society. The Project clearly stated: "Every individual has the responsibility to study regularly, throughout life, taking advantage of every learning opportunity to become a good citizen; have a job, work with increasing efficiency; study for yourself and those around you to be happy; study to contribute to the development of your homeland, country and humanity". In 2021, the Project "Building a learning society for the period 2021-2030" was approved by the Prime Minister. The implementation of these Projects has brought about many important results. The network of continuing education institutions has been consolidated and developed rapidly in quantity, diversified in models, and activities have brought about practical results to better meet the learning needs of the people.

The thorough implementation of the Party and State's policy on building a learning society, ensuring that all citizens have equal opportunities in learning and training has achieved significant progress in recent years. The expansion in scale and diversification of training types have created learning opportunities for people of all ages. The work of building a learning society and the lifelong learning emulation movement has brought opportunities for each individual to continue learning anytime, anywhere. In particular, many specific programs and plans have been deployed to effectively implement the project of Building a Learning Society for the period 2021-2030, contributing to gradually improving the people's knowledge, the quality of human resources and meeting the requirements of socio-economic development, as well as ensuring national security and defence. Currently, the country has 17,459 continuing education facilities, including 71 provincial continuing education centres; 619 district-level vocational education-continuing education centres; 10,469 community learning centres; 5,642 foreign language-information technology centres; and 658 facilities and centres implementing life skills education. The number of private continuing education

institutions is increasing rapidly, especially the system of IT and foreign language centres, which has actively contributed to improving foreign language and IT proficiency for everyone, from students, cadres, civil servants, and teachers to the entire community in the direction of socialization¹.

To date, 63/63 provinces and cities have achieved level 1 literacy standards, of which 46/63 provinces and cities have achieved level 2 literacy standards. 63/63 provinces and cities have achieved universal preschool education for 5-year-old children, universal primary education standards level 2 and universal lower secondary education standards level 1. An important result of the Project implementation is forming a learning society model at the commune level. This is a strategic step that only exists in Vietnam. While other countries build learning societies at the city level and above, Vietnam has reached the smaller grassroots level created motivation and mobilized people to participate in learning. This unique approach has been recognized by UNESCO and other countries.

3.2. Opportunities and challenges of digital transformation in open education in building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning in Vietnam today

Digital transformation in open education at the present stage has brought our country many great opportunities in improving and developing education towards modernization and globalization, meeting the learning needs of people in the digital age, especially in the work of building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning in our country today. *First of all*, digital transformation in open education opens up great opportunities to strengthen digital infrastructure, contributing positively to building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning.

The advancement of information technology and the internet has created favourable conditions for the development of online education and distance education. Leaders and managers in the education and training sector have the opportunity to expand access to technological resources, ensuring that learners, teachers and educational institutions can use new technologies and apply digital tools to enhance the quality of education. Based on the attention and investment in digital science and technology infrastructure, education and training management organizations and units provide favourable conditions to promote, encourage and attract learners and citizens to actively and voluntarily learn through a system of increasingly high criteria and requirements suitable to the level of development of digital technology. Learners and citizens have great opportunities to access modern digital technology achievements: cloud computing, large traffic, etc., thereby forming the need for essential learning to conquer "new things", equipping themselves with knowledge shortcomings. At the same time, lifelong learning becomes an effective and important solution for learners to transform into successful citizens and global citizens.

Second, digital transformation in open education contributes to the development of digital content. To meet the purpose and requirements of multi-stakeholder, multi-object education with a large amount of diverse knowledge in various professions, digitalizing learning content and knowledge is inevitable. Because only digital content is suitable for modern teaching and learning needs. Digital transformation of all knowledge content in various

professions and human knowledge through cloud computing applications, stored in big data, etc. helps learners easily access knowledge content quickly, accurately, promptly, and scientifically, saving both money and time. This is also a great and important opportunity to help learners and citizens learn for life be self-aware and maximize their subjective internal strength.

Third, digital transformation in open education helps develop online learning systems and attract investment from governments and organizations. Online learning platforms and open online courses are provided richly and diversely for learners, helping learners to access the education system easily, conveniently, and flexibly to suit their individual needs, regardless of gender, geographical distance or economic status.

The government and educational institutions play an important role in promoting digital transformation in open education. These include financial support, investment in research and development projects on educational technology, as well as building appropriate policies to help create a favourable environment for digital transformation in education; having regulations, sanctions, and criteria that meet the requirements of digital transformation, criteria of "global citizens", "digital citizens", etc. These objective factors will be transformed into the internal subjective needs of learners, thereby urging learners to proactively develop their own self-study and training plans and programs to ensure that they are suitable for the needs of individuals and society.

Fourth, digital transformation in the field of open education means integrating technology into the teaching process and developing digital skills for participants. Digital technology not only helps improve teaching methods but also creates a more interactive and engaging learning environment. Traditional tools such as boards, chalks, etc. have been completely replaced by smart whiteboards, educational software, educational management software, and mobile applications, thereby enhancing the interaction between teachers and students, while promoting their motivation, creativity and thinking skills. To effectively implement this issue, it is urgent to develop the necessary digital skills for educators and educational management subjects to fully exploit the effective features of digital technology. In particular, the development and application of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in open education, including personalized learning systems, learning management data analysis, training, and supporting teachers in teaching to meet the needs of learners.

Fifth, Digital transformation in the field of open education creates a great opportunity to promote research and innovation in education. Research and innovation in education are necessary conditions for developing new teaching tools and methods, thereby improving the quality of education. Encouraging research and innovation in distance education and online education will create an advanced and flexible environment for assessing the quality of teachers and learners, while teachers have many bases to obtain "reverse evaluation" information from learners, thereby having the right orientation on how and how to maintain learners' self-learning, overcoming cognitive shortcomings. This is also one of the important factors contributing to the formation and development of lifelong learning habits of learners.

In addition to favourable opportunities, digital transformation in open education also poses challenges and difficulties for

the entire education system of our country in the process of building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning; awareness of educational institutions; the process of accessing online knowledge in remote and isolated areas is still difficult; lack of knowledge and skills in digital transformation; lack of high and comprehensive control of digital learning materials; legal regulations on open education are still incomplete and unsystematic.

Firstly, the awareness of some educational institutions about digital transformation is still inadequate. Faced with the strong impact of science and technology 4.0, educational institutions will have certain concerns about technology replacing the traditional education system, being afraid of change, and being afraid to step out of the "safe zone". This is also a common global challenge in countries undergoing digital transformation today.

Educational subjects and educational managers are familiar with the real environment formed over many centuries. Therefore, the transformation from a traditional environment to a digital environment is a cognitive challenge to change habits. This depends largely on the leadership thinking of the leader in the specific context of an organization. Therefore, this is the most important challenge, not just a technological issue. If the awareness of subjects about digital transformation in open education is inadequate, it is impossible to build and develop a learning society and lifelong learning.

Secondly, the process of accessing online knowledge in remote areas is still difficult. In mountainous forests and remote areas, internet infrastructure and information technology equipment are inadequate and not guaranteed. This situation is deeply affecting education management and the teaching and learning process. This is an issue that needs to be prioritized to successfully implement the digital transformation process in education nationwide. At the same time, meeting the needs of online teaching in cases where direct learning is not possible due to geographical and weather conditions is an important requirement.

Thirdly, lack of knowledge and skills for digital transformation. One of the great challenges of digital transformation in open education is the lack of knowledge and technology skills. Therefore, educational institutions that have created favourable conditions and set high requirements for the quality and capacity of digital transformation cannot effectively implement it for learners. On the contrary, learners who are not equipped with digital knowledge and skills cannot form a unified learning society. Therefore, subjects need to be trained and continuously updated in knowledge, especially some basic technology skills that can help them set up online learning platforms, distribute digital exercises create motivation and stimulate internal resources.

Fourthly, there is no high and comprehensive control of digital learning materials. This challenge is also a big problem for educational subjects and educational managers. Because, only accurate, rich and diverse digital document warehouses can meet the large number of learners' needs for learning and research. However, our country's resources and budget are still limited and cannot meet this requirement. Reality has shown that the situation of digital learning materials being widespread, lacking authenticity, and not being strictly controlled and censored in terms of quantity and quality has caused inconsistency in content, even conflicting knowledge content, causing negative impacts on learners in promoting the spirit of self-learning and lifelong learning.

Fifthly, legal regulations on digital transformation in open education are still incomplete and systematic. Legal regulations related to digital transformation in the field of open education are still lacking, causing impacts on intellectual property rights and information security. This also creates one of the barriers to building a learning society linked to lifelong learning.

Digital transformation in open education can be seen as an opportunity to improve regulations on duration, assessment methods, and recognition of online learning results. However, reality shows that these issues have not been implemented comprehensively, consistently, and specifically, causing many shortcomings in the digital transformation process. Educational institutions currently do not have flexible policies and are not ready to accept and test new methods in a controlled manner.

With the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation in open education to build and develop a learning society and lifelong learning, educational entities and educational managers need to implement well some of the following basic solutions:

Firstly, changing the awareness of some subjects about the importance of digital transformation in open education in building and developing a learning society and lifelong learning.

Changing the awareness of the mission, necessity, and urgency of digital transformation in open education in society, spreading from an individual, group, or organization to the community. Therefore, it requires a change in the thinking and awareness of subjects to build a digital culture in education. Building and developing a learning society is closely linked to learning citizens, taking lifelong learning as the "key" to practical activities to maintain the dialectical relationship between building and developing sociology and learning citizens. To do so, the head must be directly responsible for digital transformation in his/her agency, unit, organization, or field; organizing the dissemination and dissemination to everyone about the Party's guidelines and policies on digital transformation, taking learners as the centre of digital transformation. Each individual and organization must promote the spirit of self-awareness, promote personal will in building a study plan, and gradually form a study habit.

Organize education and propaganda for teachers to be aware of the importance of a learning society and lifelong learning in the context of digital transformation in open education. Teachers are an important link in conveying the transformation of learners' self-awareness from the perspectives, goals, and requirements of a learning society into the needs and motivation for lifelong learning of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

Secondly, improve the database, and focus on building a network infrastructure system and modern technological equipment.

Education subjects and education managers must focus on implementing system management, sharing data to synchronize in education, and converting all documents from paper to electronic documents. Completing network infrastructure, and equipment serving the teaching and learning process, creating equal learning opportunities for everyone, in all regions with different socio-economic conditions.

Activities such as promoting the deployment of digital learning materials, forming an open learning material

repository for the entire industry, and cooperating and linking with organizations around the world, narrowing the gap between regions, encouraging and supporting the deployment of new education and training models based on digital platforms.

Expanding Internet connection, bandwidth, mobile network infrastructure, especially the Internet of Things (IoT) connection infrastructure; building a roadmap and implementing the integration of sensors and applying digital technology to essential infrastructure in education management, teaching and learning. This is the basic condition of a learning society that creates and promotes learning citizens to effectively promote the trend of lifelong learning and self-awareness.

Thirdly, organize training and equipping knowledge and digital technology skills for subjects.

Educational organizations need to focus on and pay attention to organizing training sessions to guide and improve professional skills in applying digital technology for all those working in teaching, educational management, and learners such as information technology skills, information security, etc. in the digital environment.

Promote international cooperation to absorb and inherit the achievements of digital transformation in open education of modern education systems in the world, thereby making adjustments and creative applications in our country. Because international cooperation is an important solution for digital transformation, especially promoting digital transformation in education in general and open education in particular, creating a driving force for the digital transformation process throughout the entire education system to be synchronous and scientific.

Fourthly, perfect the legal system for digital transformation in open education.

First of all, it is necessary to create trust and ensure safety and network security in the process of digital transformation of open education through the formation of digital culture, protecting basic ethical values in the learning and teaching process.

Perfecting the legal system and policies on exploiting and sharing data and information; teaching methods; managing online courses; necessary and sufficient conditions for expanding schools; procedures and legal bases for assessing the quality of teachers and learners.

Strengthening decentralization of management at vocational education and continuing education centres through assigning autonomy and self-responsibility to community learning centres, by the specific conditions of each facility, as stipulated in Decree No. 16/2015/ND-CP dated February 14, 2015, of the Government on the autonomy mechanism of public service units. At the same time, build policies to encourage, attract and promote learners' autonomy, creating conditions for them to promote their creativity.

4. Conclusion

Digital transformation is a higher level of computerization, achieved thanks to the remarkable progress of breakthrough technologies, especially digital technology. Computerization or in other words, the application of information technology is the digitization of existing business processes. Normally, computerization does not change existing processes or operating models. When computerization is at a high level, leading to changes in processes, procedures or operating models, it is called digital transformation.

Therefore, to effectively promote digital transformation in education and training, the application of digital transformation in open education is extremely important in the face of today's increasingly high requirements and demands. Digital transformation in open education is the application of digital science and technology and internet information systems to the field of open education to improve the quality of teaching, learning and educational management.

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