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**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS EDUCATION
FOR STUDENTS AT VOCATIONAL COLLEGES
IN THE MEKONG DELTA**

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INTRODUCTION

1. Reason for choosing the topic

Currently there are thousands of jobs in the society; each one has its own professional ethics standard. Professional ethics are “the most precious intangible asset of a job holder”. No matter what job they hold, the employee *must accept the general values of human beings and their people*, and these are *the general professional ethics* that everyone must have. In particular, we can name some, such as: *devotion, achieving the assigned tasks, working hard for better skills, active and creative for better capacity, solidarity with the organization, abiding by the regulations and law, and protecting the environment.*

With the new demands of industrialization - modernization and international integration, Resolution No. 29/NQ-TW dated 4/11/2013 of the 8th Plenum of the 11th Party Central Committee on comprehensive changes for education and training. Besides, Resolution of the 12th National People’s Congress of Party has identified one of the key priorities now is basic and comprehensive change for education and training, upgrading the quality of human resources to satisfy the demands of employment market, developing education and training together with socio-economic development and science-technology advances.

In addition, Professional Education Law 2014 also emphasized that “*The common objective of vocational education is to educate the direct human resources for production, business, and services, with equivalent professional capability, ethics, and health, with professional responsibility, creative, adaptive to the working environment in the international integration situation, ensuring the high productivity and quality, creating conditions for learners to be able to find their jobs after finishing the courses, or creating their own jobs, or studying higher*”.

Among the above-mentioned qualities and capabilities, ethics is one of the most important factor influencing the success and happiness of each person; therefore, it has a special attention of everyong in the society. As a result, before starting their working life, each young person should be trained in moral ethics and professional capability, especially training in professional ethics at colleges and universities. It is the issue to be researched carefully and scientifically nowadays to organize professional ethics education for students during their study at colleges, universities, and vocational schools, to upgrade the the human resources quality and satisfy the demands of employment market, in accordance with the socio-

economic development and scientific advancement.

The Mekong Delta area is the center of rice and seafoods production and processing, contributing to the agricultural and aquacultural export of the whole nation. On 12/2/2014, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 245/QĐ-TTg on approving the general socio-economic development planning of the strategic area of Mekong Delta until 2020 with the orientation until 2030. In this document, the orientation of developing education and training is that: *“Developing education and training and vocational training is to create a breakthrough in upgrading the comprehensive education quality, satisfying the demands of human resources for socio-economic development of the region and country; prioritizing the high-quality human resources training, satisfying the needs of major sectors and international integration demands; prioritizing the investment and development of vocational training colleges and centers so that they can have capacity to train the major professions at regional and international levels”*. It can be seen that the role and responsibility of vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area in training high quality human resources for socio-economic development during the integration and development period is very important and necessary.

However, in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area nowadays, *the focus is mainly on skill training; educating professional ethics is not receiving sufficient attention*. This leads to sad consequences reflected in a recent student survey, which shows: the number of students *preferring money than study* account for 54.42%; bad discipline: students absent from classes (78.32%), absent without approval (77.62%), late for school (73.43%); dishonesty: minor thief 50.3%, etc. In addition, the evaluation of enterprises on moral qualities in professions that student often breach also includes the *low labour discipline* (53.6%). All of these lead to the result that human resources trained in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area have not satisfied the demands of socio-economic development.

On the other hand, in recent years, there are no research works on professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area. Therefore, it is very necessary and meaningful in theories and practice to find a methodology and way to organize the professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges to ensure a good professional ethics education for all professions.

For the above reasons, we have chosen the topic ***“Professional ethics education for students at vocational colleges in Mekong Delta”*** with the hope to contribute to the upgrading human resources quality for the

Mekong Delta.

2. Research objective

On the theoretical and practical research, activities for organizing professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta are recommended.

3. Research object and subject

3.1 Object: The vocational training for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.

3.2 Subject: The education of professional ethics for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.

4. Research theories

Ethics of students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area are still low. If we pay attention to the cultural characteristics and personalities of students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta, we can design suitable activities for organizing the professional ethics for students in vocational colleges so that they are effective and can contribute to the quality of human resources for the development of Mekong Delta area.

5. Research tasks

- Research the methodologies on professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges and cultural characteristics of Mekong Delta area.
- Surveying the current ethics of students and professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.
- Organizing the professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area.
- Organizing the pedagogical practices.

6. Research scopes

- Focus on professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.
- The research is assessed via the surveys to management officials, lecturers, and students in some vocational colleges in some provinces representing the Mekong Delta region, such as: Can Tho, Kien Giang, An Giang, Soc Trang, Tien Giang; plus the enterprises and production organizations in these cities and provinces.
- Pedagogical practices are carried out in Can Tho Vocational College.

7. Research methodologies

7.1. Methodology: to implement this thesis, we have based on the research methodology with practical viewpoints, historical approach, and system-structure approach.

7.2. Research methods: we use research methods such as: researching the theories, practical research, researching current situation, observing the activities, consulting experts, pedagogical practice, and mathematical statistics analysis.

8. Thesis theoretical point

1. Professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta should be based on cultural characteristics and personalities of people in Mekong Delta.

2. Professional ethics education for students is a series of activities during the vocational study process, which needs the collaboration of many educational methods, ensuring the organization of educational activities via three main ways: class lectures, professional practice, extra-curriculum activities and graduation internship at enterprises. At the same time, these activities should be combined with ones from the family, school, and society.

3. In order to have a sufficient professional ethics education for students at vocational colleges, it is necessary to have a good understanding of psycho-biological characteristics of students and factors influencing the professional ethics of students.

9. New contributions of thesis

9.1 Theory:

- Systemize basic theories on professional ethics and professional ethics education, and state 7 major components of professional ethics.

- Clarify the psychological characteristics of students in vocational colleges and factors influencing the professional ethics education for students.

- Analyze the typical characteristics of people in Mekong Delta area, and link to the professional ethics characteristics of students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.

- State the educational way of professional ethics for students in vocational colleges and recommend the new graduation practicum process for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta, ensuring a high quality education for professional ethics.

9.2 Practice:

- Survey, analyze, and evaluate the current situation of ethics in students in vocational colleges, current situation of professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.

- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of graduation practicum process for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.

- Design educational activities of professional ethics via three main ways: class lectures, extra-curricular activities, and graduation practicum; utilize the feasible educational methods to teach professional ethics for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta in the background of market economy and international integration, contributing to the educational effectiveness for a comprehensive educational goal.

- Pedagogical practicum has proved the positive changes in awareness, attitude, and behaviour of students regarding professional ethics when they are taught at college.

10. Thesis outline

Chapter 1: theoretical basis of professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges.

Chapter 2: current situation of professional ethics for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta.

Chapter 3: organizing the professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area

Chapter 4: organizing the pedagogical practicum.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BASIS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Research on professional ethics

In countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia, the definition of “professional ethics” is often defined as “attitudes”. Educators in these countries express the connotation of this definition as the occupation devotion, love to children, and high responsibility in teaching. At Douglas Mauson Institution, Adelaide, Southern Australia, some scholars say that: professional ethics is a indispensable requirement for any occupation. Each different occupation asks the job holders to have all of the following: knowledge, attitude, and skill.

In Vietnam, there are several different regulations on professional ethics standard for each professional society in the country, behavior code in medial sector, professional ethics in journalism, ethics in business, professional ethics criteria for court officials, moral regulations for teachers, etc.

On researching the situations in Vietnam and other countries in the world on professional ethics, it is confirmed that professional ethics is a crucial part in the society. Human beings must work to live, and in order to

work with best results, people must obey professional ethics. Socio-economic development in any time also depends on the production methods and professional ethics is the true motivation. However, in order to abide by professional ethics in study, labour, and production, first of all, people must have a general foundation for social ethics, participate actively, utilize the ethics standard in professional relations, enhance moral values and implementation, and abide by the ethics will increase the economic benefits.

1.1.2 Research on professional ethics education

Moral education in general and professional ethics education in particular are important issues and they are necessary for human beings to form a complete personality in their occupation.

In many countries, education includes moral education or civic education. For example, in Scotland, the emphasis is on how to form the values of basic beliefs and exchange values for students; New South Wales has mentioned the orientation of enhancing the educational quality for attitude and behavior with 3 types of values: values of study, values of oneself and others, and values of civic responsibilities.

The model of moral education in China is educating the socialist republic ideals, national self-strengthening, discipline in labour, study and social activities. Meanwhile, the model of moral education in Japan is built on the basic values of family and traditional culture, and it is taught in priority compared to other subjects in public education system.

In Vietnam, there are several researches on professional ethics for employees and students at colleges and universities, for example:

Author Nguyen Canh Toan said that: *“Knowledge can be achieved in crash, but professional personalities cannot be attained in one or two days. These characteristics must be educated firmly once students get to school”*. The process of professional ethics education is divided into several stages, and it is very important to identify the stages of forming professional ethics in education for students.

In the scientific seminar of “Moral education for students in our country” current situation and solutions” in July 2008, author Nguyen Huu Thu said that moral education is not only about morality but also about the enhancement of educating professional ethics principles for students. It is also important to appreciate and train the knowledge, capacity and attitude towards social behaviour and professional activities suitable for the current demands.

Some doctorate dissertations also share the same findings. The dissertation of author Nguyen Ba Hung recommended 4 ways for professional ethics education for pedagogical students in military; dissertation of author Nguyen Thi Truong Giang affirmed the positiveness is the main trend in Vietnamese journalism, and pointed out negative changes in some journalists these days; dissertation of author Nguyen Thanh Phu suggested 7 ways of educational management for professional ethics education in pedagogical students, etc.

In general, there are many researched on moral education and professional ethics education. However, these researches are carried out in some particular professions, such as pedagogy or journalism. The fact is that in any profession, the professional ethics education via practical trainings or social experience always brings high effectiveness, proving that professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges should be via this way.

1.2 Some basic definitions

1.2.1 Morality

Morality is the standard in the social relations, it is the basic component of personality which is socialized. Therefore, morality is an important part in the system and management methods, and it regulates the behaviours of individuals in the group based on the strength of social opinions and traditional customs.

1.2.2 Professional ethics

Professional ethics is the special moral standard, related to the implementation of one particular profession. It is the summary of principles, standards of an occupation in life. Based on that, every member of this particular occupation can adjust their behaviour so that it is appropriate with the benefits and advancement of itself in the relationship among the individuals, between individual and group and society.

1.2.3 Professional ethics education

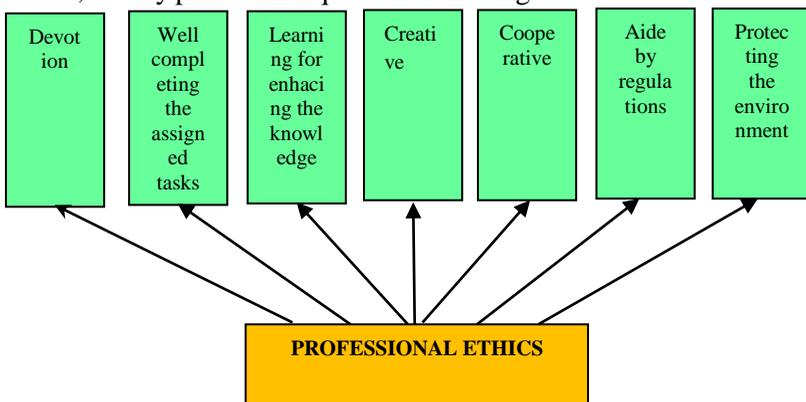
Professional ethics education for students is an activity which has complicated social characteristic. Professional ethics education is a system of activities and solutions to educate the professional ethics standards for students so that when they do their jobs, students know how to combine harmoniously between professional capacity and professional ethics. Therefore, professional ethics education for students is a process of organizing the activities and exchanges in the occupation for students to be self-aware, active, and independent in transforming the value system of

professional ethics into value orientation and personal behavior, developing in a correct way regarding professional ethics in their occupation and employment.

1.3 Professional ethics of students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta

1.3.1 Main components of professional ethics

Professional ethics is a part of social morality, it is the specific morality of the society. Like morality, the working mechanism of professional ethics is formed on the relationship basis and mutual impact of components forming morality. Basic components of professional ethics are regulated more clearly in particular professions, but any profession requires the followings:



Model of main components of professional ethics

1.3.2 Psychological characteristics of students in vocational colleges

These characteristics include awareness, emotional, and behaviour. Because of the age characteristics, vocational students often have their own interests, among which is the awareness interest. Students prefer new things; they are also sharp and adapt easily to the changes of the external world. Another characteristic is that vocational students like collective activities very much. They have the trend of expressing their abilities in public. They are also sociable, which is the active personality of young people.

In general, vocational students have several good characteristics, and their personalities are formed quite clearly. It can help us to enhance their strong points, and limit the weaknesses of the youth. However, it must be understood that psychological characteristics of each specific age group depend a lot on specific historical and social conditions. Therefore, these characteristics always change in accordance with each historical period in

spite of the same territory, land, or social regime. As a result, the education of vocational students should consider the changes of psychological characteristics in different social-historical periods and each individual.

1.3.3 Positioning vocational colleges in the public education system

Vocational colleges are places with mission of providing learners with high-quality training programs in economics, engineering, and services. At the same time, the school will research and apply scientific advancements in teaching activities, contributing to the human resources development for the national industrialization – modernization and international integration. Therefore, it can be seen that vocational colleges play a very important role in the professional education system.

1.4 Professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges

1.4.1 Objectives of professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges:

Forming moral characteristics in students in a harmonious way among moral knowledge, moral belief, behavior, and professional ethics habit, in order to form new employees, workers, technicians who are qualified and with professional ethics to meet the requirements of the industrialization and modernization.

1.4.2 Contents of professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges:

- Forming the awareness of professional ethics;
- Forming belief, demand, and motivation for professional ethics;
- Forming professional ethics behavior and habit.

1.4.3 Methods of professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges:

In order to carry out professional ethics education for students, it requires the combination of several different methods in the implementation. The following methods can be used in professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges:

- Discussion
- Games
- Identifying values
- Problem solving
- Approaching life skills

1.4.4 Ways of professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges:

1.4.4.1 Via basic and specialized subjects

Through basic subjects, there is a lot of knowledge relating to moral value, attitude, and behaviour in the society as well as the profession. Through specialized subjects, teachers must educate students the job devotion and passion, which is the motivation for them to move further in the profession. Teachers should show students the good, beauty and position of their chosen jobs in the economy, so that their love to the job can be formed gradually.

1.4.4.2 Via extra-curricular activities

Extra-curricular activities are designed to help students to approach and join in the social life in an active way. Students can form the relationship with different people in the society, participate in social areas with different functions, and experience life. Students will not only develop their own capacities, but also have the opportunity to apply what they have learned at school in the real life at a specific level. That is the outstanding strength of extra-curricular activities in comparison to other educational activities in the training process at vocational colleges.

1.4.4.3 Via internship at enterprises

Internship at enterprises is the bridge between professional theory and social real life. The internship with its practical demands asks students to combine several different factors to form professional skills. In order to have a good internship, vocational colleges should build a practicum process and supervision tools for students, and close and harmonious management from the college so as to have a quality internship for students.

1.4.4.4 Via self-study

The moral self-training is a voluntary and systemic action that each individual does to oneself to overcome the wrong moral awareness, habit, and behaviour, and strengthen their moral behaviors for a better personality.

The forming of morality in vocational students, which is influenced by external factors such as family, school, group, will gradually be transformed into internal factors such as self-study.

1.4.5 Evaluation of professional ethics for students in vocational colleges

The evaluation of professional ethics for students is the use of a specific method to discover and identify the level of morality in students, based on the content and criteria regulated by educational objectives of the school.

The evaluation of professional ethics for students regarding structure of personality should mention the followings:

1. Awareness, attitude, and behaviour expressing civic characteristic, attitude, and behaviour on traditional moral personalities of the race;

2. Worldview of students and the application of these viewpoints in study, work, life, and self-training.

3. Professional personalities: motivation, attitude towards profession; positive attitude in study, research; applying theories into practice; awareness to abide by regulations;

4. Personal characteristics in communications and relations: having the right awareness, attitude, and behaviour in communications with teachers, friends, partners, and family; awareness in fighting against negative issues in the group as well as combatting against social evils; having healthy daily activities, etc.

5. Some regulations which are specific in each occupation.

1.5 Factors influencing the education of professional ethics for students

1.5.1 Objective factors:

- + Society-law;
- + Family;
- + Regional culture.

1.5.2 Subjective factors:

- + Lecturers;
- + Self-study awareness of students;
- + Activities of youth union;
- + Facilities.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 1

Moral education in general and professional ethics education in particular are very important in vocational colleges. In order to form the moral personalities, students should be through a process, in which school plays a crucial part. Therefore, it is necessary to research the theoretical basis for a strong foundation for professional ethics education for students, especially for those in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area.

CHAPTER 2: CURRENT SITUATION OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL COLLEGES IN MEKONG DELTA

2.1 Overview on Mekong Delta area

2.1.1 Position and characteristics of Mekong Delta

Mekong Delta area of Vietnam is also known as the southern lowland or southwestern area. In the popular saying of people in the south of Vietnam, it is called “the west”, which is a part of Mekong Delta, bordering the southeastern part, Cambodia in the north, Gulf of Thailand in the southwest, and South China Sea in the southeast.

There are 12 provinces and 01 central city in Mekong Delta area, including: An Giang, Ben Tre, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, Dong Thap, Hau Giang, Kien Giang, Long An, Soc Trang, Tien Giang, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long, and Can Tho City. Total area is 40,553.1 km², with population of 17,478,900.

2.1.2 Mekong Delta culture

Mekong Delta area is the new land of the south of Vietnam with several ethnics, resulting in the cultural exchange. Among the ethnics, the majority is the Viet, the remaining includes Chinese, Khmer, and Cham.

The cultural characteristics of southern Vietnam people include: water-related, generous, active, appreciate moral principles, and practical. These characteristics can be summarized in the following table:

Summary of characteristics of people in the south of Vietnam

Characteristic	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Water-related	Using a lot of images and characteristics related to rivers, canals, and water as metaphor or metonymy in communications.	Having a romantic life, relying too much on the generosity of nature, not saving, too generous resulting in not having a long-term sustainability.
2. Generous	Live harmoniously, respect each other in the community of several races and religions	Easy-going, leading to simple thinking, lack of depth, wrong put in belief resulting in too trusting, having no principle in dealing with tasks.
3. Active	+ Easy to adapt and receive new things + Creative + Highly appreciate the development of trade, having tendency of big business	+ Easy to change lifestyle + Easy to change living place + Easy to change jobs
4. Appreciate moral principles	+ Respect moral principles, generous, live one's life, sharing, caring. + Disregard money and physical values + Hospitable + Open-minded, straightforward + Clear-cut	Extraordinarily proud, leading to don't care attitude when having conflicts in collective activities. Disordered way of living, lack of delicacy in communications Easily lead to bad-tempered, and extreme when dealing with tasks, lack of calmness when dealing with conflicts
5. Practical	+ Simple and plain in living	+ Can be pragmatic

	and thinking + Expressing in a vibrant and picturesque way in communications + Highly appreciate business rather than academics + Prefer light sense of humour rather than profound philosophy	+ Tend not to save for the future + Study enough, very few want to study higher
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2.1.3 Characteristics of professional ethics of students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta

From the cultural characteristics of Mekong Delta area, it can be understood that professional ethics of students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area also have the following characteristics:

+ *Devotion*: the emotions of people in Mekong Delta will be upgraded when they work with jobs that are close to their culture, such as ones in agriculture, aquaculture, seafood processing, and water-related services, etc. People in Mekong Delta area really appreciate the moral principles, especially in the environment of vocational education, if there are sharings in the communications between teacher and student, the student will feel the care of teacher, then their devotion and professional attitude also increase considerably.

+ *Having determination in completing the assigned tasks and the chosen job*. Students in Mekong Delta area highly appreciate moral principles. In their chosen jobs, they will sacrifice their personal benefits for the job. However, they are also very frank, resulting in bad-tempered when dealing with tasks, and having simple thinking, easy to change in occupation so they are very responsible.

+ *Patient in study, practice for better skills*. This is a weakness of students in Mekong Delta. People in the area live in a practical way, with temporary point of view; therefore, they rarely want to study higher or try their best.

+ *Active, creative, innovative for better productivity and high-quality products*. With this professional ethics characteristic, this is an outstanding trait of Mekong Delta people. Students in Mekong Delta area are very active, easy to adapt, easy to receive new things, creative in making supporting things for better productivity.

+ *Solidarity and connect with the collective and other peoples for a peaceful and happy world*. People in Mekong Delta live in a place with several different ethnics, so they are easy to connect with other people from different cultures, religions, and races.

+ *Abide by regulations and disciplines of the organization and the law*. It can be said that people in Mekong Delta have limitations in abiding by regulations because

they are too free, respect moral principles and generous. Therefore, it is easy to lead to no-discipline attitude, don't-care attitude when having conflicts in the group.

+ *Protecting the environment and ecology.* As the living conditions of Mekong Delta are so favourable from the nature, people here do not have high awareness to protect the environment. They tend to have temporary life, easy to move house; therefore, they tend to breach regulations when working in the organizations.

2.2 Number of vocational colleges and vocational training in Mekong Delta

Currently, in the Mekong Delta, there are 189 vocational institutions, among them there are 17 vocational colleges with 1,665 teachers.

The whole region has trained more than 1.2 million people, creating jobs for more than 1.58 million people through regional trainings in 2015 (35.2%). The annual enrollment is at 56%. In the plan for development until 2020, there will be at least 2 high-quality vocational schools, 3 vocational boarding schools for ethnic minorities, 100 major jobs at all level with minimum standard, contributing to the human resources development for the whole region.

2.3 Survey on current situations of professional ethics and professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area

2.3.1 Current situation on morality for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area

Study awareness is not right yet. Most students think that “*Studying well is not as good as bad study with lots of money*”: (54.42%), or there are 53.41% think that “*Studying is a whole-life process, you should utilize your time to enjoy your youth*”, and there are 56.63% say that “*You’d better study just enough, it is easier to be outstanding if you join in extra-curricular activities*”. These examples are very worrying in students’ awareness.

On the contrary, honesty and modesty are disregarded by students. 53.61 – 56.83% students say that “*In these days, honesty is outdated and stupid, even harmful for yourself*”, “*Honesty becomes ridiculous, you should know how to exploit relationships*”, or “*Honesty and straightforward often make yourself a loser*”. There are 55.02% say that “*Modesty is lower your own status, and lose others’ trust to you*”. Besides, students consider that parents give birth to children but it is the God who gives them the characteristics (50.80%), or they just let the society to form their personal morality (57.23%). It can be seen that due to social changes, students also form negative thoughts in their minds, do not have trust in themselves lose precious moral personalities in themselves, resulting in incorrect attitude in their actions..

During the practice and internship, students often breach the followings: *late arrival* (68.5%), *carefulness in work* (56.6%), *concentration in work* (54.5%), *neatfulness in work* (60.8%), *minor thief* (50.3%), *keep the surroundings clean* (46.2%). When interning at the enterprises, students often breach: *care for others' needs and benefits, responsibility, discipline* (53.6%).

It can be easily seen that there are a lot of students who breach moral personalities, which are all important and necessary in their future occupations. With the breaching rate of more than 50%, the situation is really worrying. Therefore, vocational colleges need to enhance educating students the moral personalities in general and professional ethics in particular so that students can participate well in the production and employment.

2.3.2 Current situation on professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area

Currently, in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta, there are some activities of professional ethics education. However, they focus only on some main methods, such as cultural and musical performance, and voluntary activities. These are collective activities, but they are not enough to form moral behaviors and habits in their professions. Vocational colleges have also combined the moral education in class lectures, practices, and internships, but the main focus is still on specialized subjects. Besides, the enterprises also tell their opinions on necessary and important methods for professional ethics education for students. The most important method to form professional ethics habits is teaching morality via practives and internships. In addition, we identify the causes that affect professional ethics education for students.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 2

Through the awareness of management officials, lecturers, and students at vocational colleges in Mekong Delta, and through professional ethics activities at these institutions, we have drawn some of the following issues:

- + Some students still have incorrect awareness, attitude, and behavior, and breaching the regulations in their study process. They disregard the study, personal morality. In particular, they often breach the regulations in working, and do not have responsibility to themselves and society.

- + Current vocational colleges still pay more attention to teaching specialized subjects rather than professional ethics education. Teaching methods of moral education are still formalism, ineffective, and focusing only on some main methods such as organizing cultural and musical performances and voluntary activities for students.

Therefore, in order to form the right awareness, attitude, and behavior in students, it requires a process of teaching morality and professional ethics, together with teaching specialized subjects. It can be done via different forms of educational activities, collaboration with family and social associations, with the final goal to create a series of staff with high quality capacity, good morality for the society.

CHAPTER 3: ORGANIZING PROFESSIONAL ETHICS EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL COLLEGES IN MEKONG DELTA

3.1 Orientation of teaching professional ethics for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta

To achieve high results in organizing the activities for professional ethics education in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta, it is necessary to ensure the following orientation:

- Organize activities to enhance the awareness of officials, lecturers, and students in professional ethics to meet the demands of current society.
- Ensure the leadership of communist organizations and activities of youth union in professional ethics education for students.
- Ensure a healthy educational environment to enhance the professional ethics education quality.
- Bring into the activeness, creativeness, independence of students, as well as the self-management ability of student community in professional ethics education.
- Prove the positive characteristics and amend limitations in characteristics of people in the Mekong Delta.

3.2 Organizing activities for professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta

3.2.1 Via class lectures and professional practices

The combination of professional ethics education with specialized subjects class lectures allow students to enhance their awareness on occupation and necessary professional ethics personalities. Teachers can teach students the following professional ethics personalities: devotion, responsibility, honesty, solidarity, cooperation, activeness in thinking, creativity, right attitude in profession, etc.

In addition, lecturers can use some of the following forms to teach professional ethics for students: class discussion, group discussion, multiple-choiced questions, small games, quizzes, and other activities.

3.2.2 Via extra-curricular activities

Via the extra-curricular activities, students will apply their knowledge on moral values and professional ethics that they have learned into practice, helping them to experience and self-adjust and train their moral behaviours so that it will be suitable with social moral standards and professional ethics standards. Through these activities, students will be taught the followings: devotion and respect to their jobs, responsibility to their jobs and community, solidarity, discipline, creative, carefulness, henerous, friendly, care for others' benefits, abide by regulations, traditional customs, right attitude and behavior towards the profession.

In the scope of this thesis, we have some recommendations for activities to apply professional ethics education for students in accordance with culture and personality of people in Mekong Delta area. Depending on features of each vocational college in Mekong Delta, these activities can be added or modified, such as: seminar, site visit, musical performance, problem-solving, soft skills training, etc.

3.2.3 Via internships at enterprises

The graduation practicum will train and teach students profound devotion to their job, solidairty in community when working and solving the tasks, responsibility, completing the assigned tasks, protecting the environment, abide by labour regulations, and industrial working style. Besides, students also get to know specific regulations on discipline and working style when they participate directly in the production process.

Through the thesis, the author suggests the adjustment and supplementation of the graduation practicum process in vocational colleges in Mekong Delta area. These changes in the process will ensure a close supervision on the students' practicum, and the colleges will adjust and guide their students on time on the vocational skills and professional ethics. The recommended process can be summarized in the following table:

Comparison table of the recommended process and current process in vocational colleges

Step	Curernt process	Recommended process	Meanings in profesional ethics education for students
Step 1	Teacher guides the outline and structure of the practicum report, and introduces some practicum topics.	Teacher guides the outline and structure of the practicum report, and introduces some practicum topics	

Step 2	Students arrange their place for internship by themselves	Teachers contact and allocate students to intern at the enterprises or production organizations (students receive the introducing form at Faculty 1 week before the internship)	Teachers are pro-active in collaborating with enterprises to organize the internship for students, with a focus on professional ethics
Step 3	Students register for their interned organizations and do their internship under the supervision of teachers	Students intern at the enterprises under the guidance of officials at the interned organization. Teachers supervise the internship and daily life at work of students via the “Daily work evaluation sheet” and direct supervision at the organization.	The supervision via the evaluation sheet will help teachers to adjust the incorrect actions of students, help students realize they should have the right attitude and behaviours. In this step, students are trained characteristics such as labour discipline, punctuality, respect the products made by themselves, precision, responsibility in work and towards community, team work, collaboration and cooperation, especially recognizing the importance of labour safety, resulting in job deveotion and love.
Step 4	Students improve their reports on graduation practicum	Students improve their reports on graduation practicum as regulated. Submit the reports and evaluation sheets with signature of enterprises to Faculty	The new practicum report will help students to review their work, and express honesty in evaluation. The evaluated contents are in details, so it helps students to practice professional ethics for themselves as well as high quality professional skills.
Step 5	Organize the marking of graduation practicum report.	Organize the marking of graduation practicum report for students	

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 3

In chapter 3, we have stated the educational activities for professional ethics for students in vocational colleges in accordance with cultural characteristics of the Mekong Delta area, bringing into the positive points, and minimizing the limitations of these characteristics. In each type of educational activity, the thesis has stated the organization way so as to achieve the best result for vocational colleges in Mekong Delta to apply and scale up. In particular, the thesis has suggested the adjustment and amendment of practicum process for students, which is necessary and practical for them to have more opportunities to train their skills and professional ethics, and have more experience at work.

CHAPTER 4: ORGANIZING PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIMENTS

4.1 Starting the experiment activities

- Class hours:

We have guided teachers in the experimental classes how to combine moral education in general and professional ethics education in particular in their class lectures. The control classes still have usual way of teaching.

After each lecture, students have the chance to evaluate that lecture. The evaluation can be done regularly or suddenly. The objective of evaluation is to help teachers adjust their lecture for the next class, and it also helps students to participate more actively in class.

- Extra-curricular activities

During the experimental period, we work with the youth union and college to organize the activities educating morality for students. A special feature is the collaboration with the Department of Enterprise Relations to organize the plan for students to visit companies, factoris, and production enterprises suitable with the majors students are studying. In addition, we also have senior students to participate in the trainings of soft skills, and organize seminars to equip studens with basic knowledge when working at the enterprises and production organizations. From these activities, professional ethics will be formed gradually in students. All students participate in these activities equally.

- Graduation practicum in the suggested process

In this activity, when students prepare for their graduation practice, we apply the recommended practicum process and use supervision and evaluation tools for experimental classes. Control classes have the current practicum process.

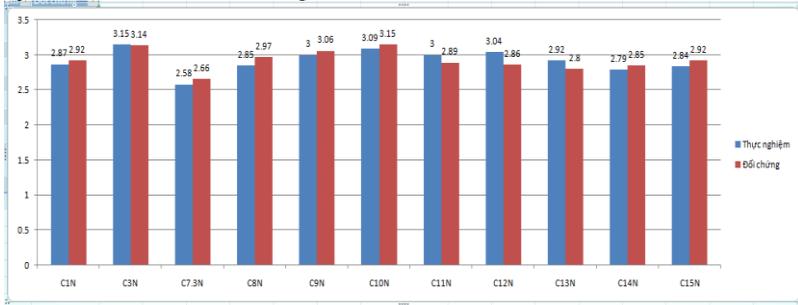
4.2 Experiment results

- **Awareness, attitude, and behavior of 2 groups in the input survey**

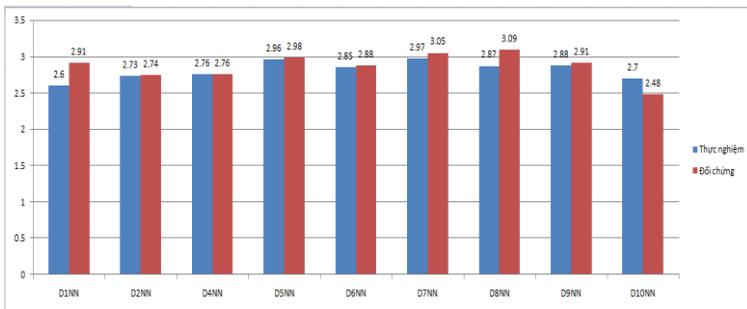
+ **Awareness:** The input survey shows that the average score of the control group fluctuates from 2.66 to 3.15 on the 5-score scale, while the average score of

the experimental group is from 2.58 to 3.15. In this case, the level-3 asymptotic point equals the scale of “sometimes right”.

It can be easily seen from the average score of 2 groups in the graph that there are almost no differences in the 2 groups (experimental and control) in the input survey on student awareness of professional ethics.

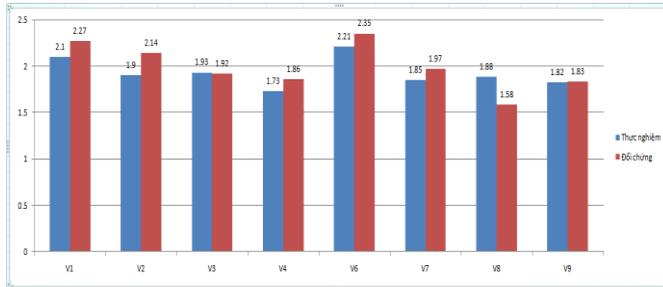


+ **Attitude:** With 9 questions all with $\alpha > 0$, the average score of 2 groups in each detailed question is not so much different. There are 6/9 with the equal average score. For the 3 remaining questions, the average score of the control group is higher than that of the experimental group from 0.17 to 0.31 on the 5-score scale. The difference is not much.



The result proves that there are no initial differences on student attitude on professional ethics in the 2 groups.

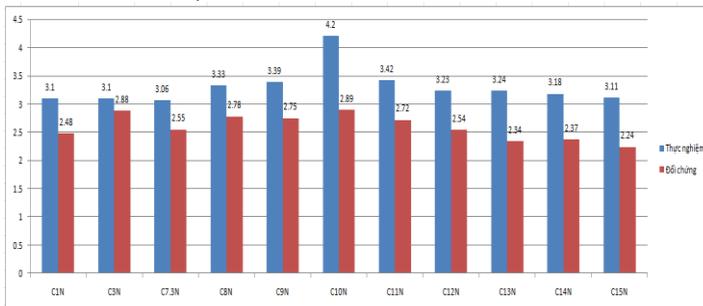
+ **Behaviour:** With 8 questions with $\alpha > 0.05$. Average score of 2 groups fluctuate from 1.58 to 2.35 on the gradually decrease score scale of 3.



The graph shows that the biggest gap in average score of 2 groups is 0.33 in the question of V8 – “Suppose that there is an incident (not caused by you) during work, you often...” Most students choose the option of “Just stand there watching, as this is not my business”, few students choose the option of “Come to help, stop the power sources, and inform the management”. Awareness and attitude of students often come from the not-interest and passive in student behavior. This is the question with the most positiveness in 8 surveyed contents, showing an initial picture of choosing the behavior of negative more than positive.

- **Awareness, attide, and behavior of 2 groups after the experient:**

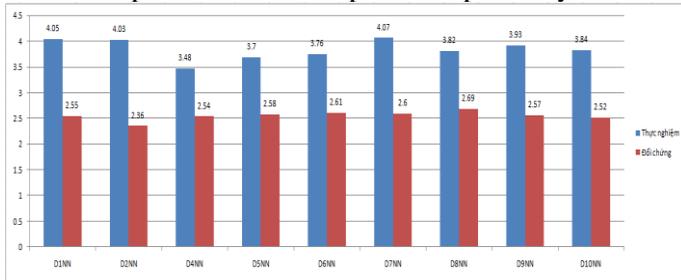
+ **Awareness:** the result shows all 11 sig α with value of ≤ 0.05 , average score of the control group fluctuates from 2.24 to 2.89 on the 5-score scale, while the score of the experimental group from 3.1 to 4.2. We can see there is a clear-cut difference in the 2 scores. The score of the control group in the awareness is close to level 3, which is “sometimes correct”, while the score of the experimental group tends to be close to level 4, which is “correct”.



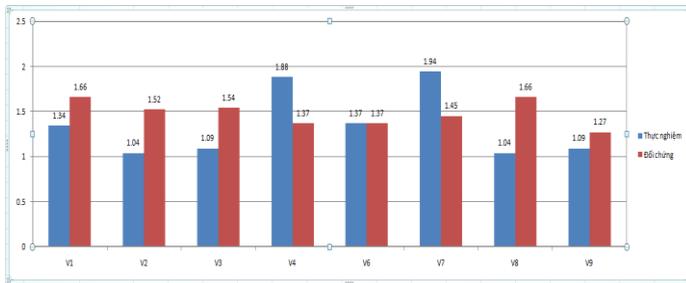
In addition, the graph shows the difference in average scores of 2 groups in the awareness evaluation, fluctuating from 0.5 to 1 on the 5-score scale. This is a big difference and shows that there are influences when applying 2 different educational methodologies on the objects that have similar inputs.

+ **Attitude:** With 9 questions with the result of $\alpha \leq 0.05$. The average score of 2 groups in each question shows a big difference on the graph. The input survey

result has 6/9 contents with equal average scores, while in the output result, the difference in average score fluctuates from 0.96 to 2 on the 5-score scale. In particular, the average score of the experimental group is from 3.48 to 4.07 on the 4-score scale of the survey questions on student attitude on professional ethics. It can be seen that there are clear changes in the attitude influencing professional ethics of students, when compared the results of input and output surveys.



+ **Behaviour:** With 9 questions with value of $\alpha \leq 0.05$. The average score of 2 groups on the gradually decrease scale of 8 questions fluctuate from 1.94 to 1.04 on the 3-score scale. When comparing this result with the input survey, it can be seen that students have changed a lot in the trend of choosing more correct behaviors in accordance with social standards.



The above graph shows the biggest gap when comparing the average scores of 2 groups is 0.54, which is the content of V8 – “Suppose that there is an incident (not caused by you) during work, you often. . .”. In the output result, students tend to choose “Come to help, stop the power sources, and inform the management” more than the number of students choosing “Just stand there watching, as this is not my business”. In the input survey, this question has the most negative trend among 8 surveyed contents. In the output result, there are more positive behaviors than negative ones.

We can affirm that the application of professional ethics education is feasible and can change the student behavior on professional ethics than the current educational way used by many institutions.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 4

In chapter 4, the author has stated the organization of pedagogical experiments in professional ethics education for students, and received feasible results, which are the positive changes in awareness, attitude and behavior of students towards professional ethics. No matter what form of evaluation, either rating the moral training score or considering the changes in awareness, attitude, and behavior, it can be seen that students have positive changes, better morality, and higher professional ethics.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusion

From the research results of the thesis, we can draw some following conclusions:

1. Professional ethics is a special moral standard, related to the implementation of one specific profession. It is the combination of principles, standards of that profession in life. From that, every member of the profession must voluntarily adjust their behaviours so that they are appropriate to the benefits and progress in the relations among individuals, individuals with society and groups.

2. Vocational colleges play an important role in training the high quality human resources, contributing to the socio-economic development of the locality and region. The education of professional ethics for students in vocational colleges plays a crucial role in satisfying the demands of human resources, and contribute to the socio-economic development in the era of industrialization – modernization and international integration.

3. Professional ethics education for students in vocational colleges is a complicated process that requires the participation of relevant stateholders, such as: family, social associations, etc. During the training process, the professional ethics must be carried out regularly via different educational ways.

4. In order to organize good professional ethics education activities for students in vocational colleges, it is necessary to have a resarch on the characteristics of culture and people in Mekong Delta area, especially the professional ethics characteristics of students in Mekong Delta through moral personalities in the job, such as: devotion, accomplishing the assigned tasks, study to upgrade knowledge, creative, solidarity, abide by regulations, protecting the environment.

5. The thesis also shows there are changes in a positive way on the awareness, attitude, and behaviour of students to professional ethics, with higher morality and better awareness in professional morality.

2. Recommendations

- ***To management organization in vocational education***

Adjust, supplement the evaluation regulations of moral trainings for vocational students, focusing on the evaluation of professional ethics values. Build and issue the suitable policies for the staff members participating in the management and education of morality for students in vocational schools. Issue the regulations of collaboration among social task forces in moral education for vocational students.

- ***To vocational education institutions***

Pay more attention to professional ethics education for students besides teaching them professional subjects. Regularly organize extra-curricular activities for students. Provide them with traditional moral norms and professional ethics for students. Organize study movements to enhance the professional skills, facilitating the professional ethics and emotions towards their chosen jobs. Invest in new facilities and new methodologies, adding professional ethics education in a separate subject or via seminars and workshops. Adjust the graduation practicum process, enhance the supervision during study. Work along with other educational stakeholders from the society to educate professional ethics for students, especially their families.

- ***To teachers/ lecturers at vocational institutions***

Teachers should combine professional ethics education program in their teaching lectures, provide students with necessary knowledge of professional ethics. During the practical periods, pay more attention to professional ethics training via the guided activities of teachers, each action and problem solving. Teachers also need to improve themselves in personalities, update the new technology for social demands. The teacher-in-charge should watch the class closely in moral development, changes in behavior, attitude, and awareness of students so that they can correct, encourage, and adjust punctually for students to become good citizens in the society.

- ***To students and students' families***

- *To students:* each student should have the self-awareness of moral improvement, abide by the school regulations, actively participate in class activities and social activities.

- *To students' families:* be aware of the goal to form basic moral personalities for students in their lives, pay attention to the study process of students and keep in touch with the school to correct the wrong behaviors promptly.

LIST OF PUBLISHED SCIENTIFIC WORKS

1. Kieu Thi Kieu Thanh (2013), “Education of professional ethical values for vocational students in the MeKong Delta”, *Journal of Education* , No 317, 9/2013.
2. Kieu Thi Kieu Thanh (2015), “The situation of the ethics education for students at vocational college in the MeKong Delta”, *Journal of Education*, No 366, 9/2015.
3. Kieu Thi Kieu Thanh (2016), “The personalities of the teacher are a special tool of teaching in the process of vocational education”, *Educational Equipment Magazine*, No 128, 4/2016.