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Analyzing the Social Impact of Informal Education in Vietnam in the Early 20th Century

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Abstract

In the early 20th century, the Confucian intellectual elites in Vietnam developed the informal education into a movement to fight against the contemporary government. Surpassing the goal of the cultural and social struggle between the intellectuals and the ruling government, the informal education activity became a large movement, evoking a variety of issues that need to be researched in reference to education. The article collects documents and presents the course of this informal education, from the explosive premises making its heyday in Vietnam, such as the new breeze of Journey to the east movement, the unprecedented hallmark of Modernization movement. From the results, the informal education left the wide range of valuable experiences of academical ideas, organizational levels, learning and teaching principles, guidelines for developing national education. Vietnam's informal education in the early 20th century needs to be researched more deeply from the educational perspective.

Keywords: Informal Education, Movement, Early 20th Century, Vietnam

1. Introduction

In the history of Vietnam, before 1945, there existed simultaneously two types of education. The formal education was organized and managed by the government with the object of filling the staff of governmental officials or bureaucrats for the governance of the country. The informal education was opened up for people's learning needs. While the formal education, organized by the government and dedicated to the rich and the powerful, from the court to provinces and districts, the informal education was considered as an ideal space for the poor and for peasants to learn certain knowledge to maintain life and labor. Therefore, informal education got favorable conditions to exist for long time in the society.

In the early 20th century, in a special historical context, informal education developed in a groundbreaking way in Vietnam, forming an unprecedentedly large social movement. The growth of informal education took place across the country, focusing on big cities and creating a social wave as a premise for social reforms, to the point of forcing the contemporary government to feel confused, worried and to prohibit it. How was informal educational activity performed? How special were its structure and content? How did it impact the Vietnamese society? Up to now, no research has yet clearly answered such complicated questions. The article concentrates on the evolution

of informal education during the years of 1906-1908 and analyzes the social impacts and some historical values of this movement as lessons of experience for current education improvement.

2. Theoretical basis and research data

Concerning theoretical basis, the article focuses on Illich's (1971) concept of informal education developed around the 16th century. Accordingly, informal education is a type of education that takes place outside the formal educational system governed by the State. The phrase of 'informal education' is often used interchangeably with the following terms: community education, adult education, lifelong education. Such type of education was initiated in the community, from home learning to other manners of public education, including accredited courses managed by reputable organisations, with voluntary funding, sponsored funding and non-profit activities.

For Illich (1971), informal education changes the characters of the related organizations and training facilities, and the changes could help all institutions to be more convenient for learning.

As regards research data, the article applies Vietnamese historical sources through publications, including books on history of Vietnam, history of Vietnamese education during this period (Giau, 1957; Khanh, 1985; Bau, 1996); some publications about life and career of the educational activists, about the cultural social movements in Vietnam in the beginning years of 20th century (Nhat, 1937; Le, 1968; Xuan, 1970).

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Prerequisites for the development of informal education in the early 20th century

From the late 19th century, immediately after the invasion of Vietnam, the French colonialists abolished Vietnamese traditional education to replace with French education. The French colonial government's dismantling of Vietnamese traditional education caused rather strong reactions among Vietnamese people, especially the Confucian class. Based on the arguments of the patriots and Confucians, the Vietnamese teachers decided not to cooperate with the French colonial government, not to learn the national language script and French language, and prohibited their children from going to schools opened by the French colonialists.

The informal education originated from patriotic scholars' expressions of resistance to the invaders. The Confucians at that time such as Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Phan Van Tri, Nguyen Thong, Truong Dinh, Ho Huan Nghiep, Phan Van Dat were patriotic teachers and poets, together promoting righteousness and encouraging the spirit of killing the country's enemy. They wrote proses and verses and, through their students, distributed those works widely among the people, encouraging everyone to fight the enemies. When the ancient Confucian scholars taught their students, they first taught human ethics. The teachers must be models for their students to follow, the students looked at themselves in their teachers' example to correct themselves and to deal with others. When the nation was occupied by the enemy, the Vietnamese teachers suggested the movement of "avoiding the enemy's land", (tị địa) temporarily left their homeland, came to the countryside to open schools, teaching and writing to circulate the spirit of patriotism against aggressors.

The informal education then did not have concrete content, yet mainly literary works encouraging patriotism and expressing Vietnamese teachers' responsibility in the face of invasion. With the original function of teaching children, the teachers used their own forte to impart to their young students the highest human decency at that time, which was to fight against aggressors. Truong Khac Can, for example, had occasion to express his thoughts and emotions touching human heart: Everyone does not tolerate plunderers, everyone has rights to wipe them out; human mind originally has sufficient power, seeing good but undoing good and then not having any courage. Or: Carry the sword and follow Emperor, then or now, go to the front area. Swing the sword to destroy aggressors, hoping to satisfy human heart to strive to do good. (Nhat, 1937).

From the initial scattered activities, a movement was awakened to promote the new manner of learning to form practical education for renovating the country. Exposed to the modern ideas and the Western civilization, Nguyen

Truong To, a prestigious Confucian scholar in educational activity, tried to combine between tradition and modernity in a creative way in any field, including in education, for the purpose of building a rich and powerful nation likely to resist foreign invasion. Academical modification with emphasis on empirical experience was the dominant ideology that Nguyen Truong To endeavored to call on the whole society to participate in.

Nguyen Truong To analysed the mistakes of the royal court's education, proposing the necessary contents for the reform curricula at that time, such as military, penal system, law, finance, commerce, construction, agriculture in order to gradually make the country strong and the people rich. Regarding examinations, Nguyen Truong To demanded that any test paper in the *prefectural examination* (Huong examination) or the *metropolitan examination* (Hoi examination) had to focus on the present situations: calendar law (i.e. issues relating to astronomy, meteorology, and calendar), military power, politics of organization, law, human beings (i.e. the ruling apparatus of the royal court). Additionally, everything must be said frankly, without covertness. According to Nguyen Truong To, education must pay attention to practical issues for social life, while old historical scriptures were only secondary.

To convey the contents of such great educational reform, Nguyen Truong To boldly proposed to use national sounds in teaching and in official documents from the royal court to districts and communes. He recommended the principles of converting Chinese characters into national sounds as follows: 1) take Chinese characters as sample sounds, pronounce a national sound the same as the matching Chinese character without interpretation, due to concurrency of reading and understanding; 2) for Chinese characters pronounced nearly the same as national sounds, add secondary strokes to the Chinese character and pronounce the Chinese characters with added strokes as suitable national sounds; 3) for absent national sounds, choose the Chinese character to pronounce like the absent national sounds without distinguishing the meaning (Can, 2002). Although Nguyen Truong To's point of view about workable education stopped only in theory and was not tested in reality, his plans and other contemporary patriotic Confucians' activities created the first seeds for prodigious development of informal education in Vietnam.

3.2. *Journey to the east – a new breeze for informal education*

In the early 20th century, when Vietnam completely fell in the hands of French colonialists, the Vietnamese patriots were still continuing to lead the people to struggle for independence. In that period, the world experienced new changes which greatly influenced the movement for national liberation of our people. The trends of bourgeois democratic ideology through the new books of Luong Khai Sieu, Khang Huu Vi, as well as the theories of civil rights of Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu started to spread in Vietnam. The interesting example of Japan's innovation also expressed great attraction for patriotic scholars. In such situations, the Vietnamese intellectuals showed the general judgment, "Vile education, as Nguyen Truong To said, was one of the reasons why we lost the country." Phan Boi Chau wrote, "about the causes for our country's decline, causes for our people's grief, there are two diseases: stupidity and weakness" (Chau, 1990). To raise civil knowledge and awaken the spirit of self-reliance, there is no other way than to have to "study." Yet where to study and what to study? Certainly the answer is not based on French schools and feudal court's schools, because those schools only "train the slaves." Phan Boi Chau advocated another way, which was "going abroad to study."

In the direction to take Vietnamese people to study abroad, in 1904, Phan Boi Chau formed Duy Tan association and in 1905, he began to take students to Japan. This was an extremely difficult and dangerous work because they had to overcome the secret French agents' network densely deployed in many places and the funding was so little. Although on the path of studying abroad, "children from rich families do not dare to take a step out of door," while the young from poor families felt as their feet tied. Therefore, after several months of campaigning, only 3 students were adopted to study: Nguyen Thuc Canh, Nguyen Dien from Thanh Chuong (Nghe An province) and Le Khiet from Thanh Hoa. After coming to Japan with the help of Luong Khai Sieu, Phan Boi Chau wrote an article entitled 'Encouraging the nation to sponsor studying abroad' and sent it back, calling on fellow citizens to contribute money to the students studying abroad. In the article, in addition to analysing the reasons why Vietnamese people were stupid and had to find a way to study abroad to save the country, he also stated the reasons why so few Vietnamese students studied abroad and they lacked the funding.

The rich felt afraid of plagues, so they did not dare to move forward, the poor lacked wealth so they could not stand up. After confirming that the people inside the country were likely to help and the funding problem could be solved, Phan Boi Chau set the standards for Vietnamese students: among young students, it was best to choose those who were smart, energetic and enduring; if not, it was also good to choose those who were not quite smart, but persistent, long-suffering, and the younger they are the better. As for the students studying abroad, they must have to suffer difficulty, to go straight ahead without retreating. All the bad thoughts such as alcohol, gambling, sex, prostitution... were strictly prevented. All the practical issues mentioned in the school curriculum had to be studied with great effort. To attentively study so as not to disappoint the fellow citizens' enthusiastic help (Chau, 1990). While waiting for funds sent from the country, some more overseas students came to Japan, without money, they had to live very painfully. Despite only 9 students, they had to live together in a narrow room, to eat steamed rice with white salt, to suffer the terrible cold in Japan. It is true that "to eat bland rice fights the cold," but no one was down-hearted and sad. They tried to earn their living and to teach themselves Japanese to prepare for coming to school later, which was in 1905 (Bau, 1996).

Thanks to citizens' patriotism from 3 regions of the country and the enthusiastic advocacy of Phan Boi Chau's comrades such as Tang Bat Ho, Tieu La Nguyen Thanh. In 1907, the number of overseas students going to Japan reached 100 and by 1908, up to 200 students, among them, some people were just 9 or 10 years old such as Tran Van An, Tran Van Thu, Hoang Vi Hung. Thanks to the help of some Japanese politicians such as Phuc Dao and Khuyen Duong Nghi, all the Vietnamese students could study at Dong A Dong literature library. Here, in the mornings, students learned the cultural subjects, including: linguistics, literature, mathematics, history, geography, chemistry, physics, self-cultivation, ethics, etc. all were taught in Japanese; in the afternoons, they learned military. Japanese teachers taught in the classes and Vietnamese teachers undertook the teaching outside. To strengthen student management, by mid-1907, Phan Boi Chau organized the Vietnam Cong Hien Association with Ky Ngoai Marquis Cuong De as President and Phan Boi Chau as General Manager and Director. All the students lived on funds sent from the country without any other incomes (Bau, 1996).

From the late 1907 to the autumn 1908, the situation was very positive, some parents who visited their children learning in Japan were very excited and confident of the national future. That was Phan Boi Chau's most "satisfactory" period. The work was progressing favourably, then in the late 1908, French secret agents discreetly observed and discovered Phan Boi Chau's activities in Japan. They made an agreement with the Japanese government to disband the school and force the students to return home.

The school in the Dong Du movement led by Phan Boi Chau did not exist for long time, but it was the first school to train the revolutionary cadres for our country. The learning content was still based on the educational curriculum of Japanese school, the difference was the strict method of student management and the ideological work concerned to make students sense their own responsibilities to study abroad in return for the citizens' wish.

Although there were not a large amount of achievements, the spirit of patriotism was raised to a sufficient level. After the school was closed, the students had to disperse and return home, but some people such as Luong Lap Nham (alias Luong Ngoc Quyen), Hoang Trong Mau (alias Nguyen Duc Cong), etc. stayed behind to find ways to study on their own and plotted an uprising to fight the French invasion. However, the opportunity did not come yet and the organization was unscientific, the efforts failed. Some others, such as Tran Huu Luc (alias Nguyen Thuc Duong) and Nguyen Quynh Lam, went to China to find how to train at technical martial arts schools to continue revolutionary activities and finally, they died abroad. In 1911, when Phan Boi Chau established Restoration Society of Vietnam Association, some old students of the school took part in this organization (Bau, 1996)

3.3. Modernization movement – the unprecedented hallmark of informal education

This movement was under the leadership of the patriotic scholars such as Phan Chau Trinh, Tran Quy Cap, Huynh Thuc Khang. While Phan Boi Chau was trying the best to maintain the existence of Đông Du movement and the activities of nearly 200 overseas students in Japan, the Duy Tân movement was widely launched and quickly spread across the country. This movement focused on cultural social reforms accompanied with encouraging

patriotism and arousing hostility toward the country's enemy to fight for national independence. One of the important activities of the movement was to open up schools for propaganda purpose of other social reforms. The typical activities of the movement were the establishment of the schools in Quang Nam and Tonkin Free School in Ha Noi (Bau, 1996).

In the opening 1905, Phan Chau Trinh, Tran Quy Cap and Huynh Thuc Khang made a "travel to the south") to examine public situation and propagandize and promote the Duy Tân policy. When the three people came to Binh Dinh province for a control examination, they got pseudonyms to participate in the examination and on their exam papers they condemned the way of learning in classical style, criticized the education to make stupid and ignorant, heightened modern education and promoted the Duy Tân policy. After that, all the three continued to go to Binh Thuan and together with other advanced Confucian scholars such as Nguyen Trong Loi, Nguyen Quy Anh (two sons of the patriotic poet Nguyen Thong) organized the school of Duc Thanh in order to teach the young in the advanced way. After more than 1 month, Huynh Thuc Khang and Tran Quy Cap returned to Quang Nam, Phan Chau Trinh stayed in Phan Thiet to organize a lecturing class of modern literature at the top of Phu Tai. Duc Thanh School could be considered as the first facility of schools in the Duy Tân movement in the South Central Region. After Duc Thanh School, another new type of schools was born. In the early 1906, only in Quang Nam province, there had been up to 40 schools, big and small, the most famous of which were the three schools named Phuoc Binh, Phu Lam and Dien Phong (Xuan, 1970). Phuoc Binh School was near Que Son commune, beside Trung Loc village, adjacent to Tan Tinh area of Nguyen Duy Hieu (1847-1887), a leader of Can Vuong movement in Nam Ngai region in the late XIX century. This school was established by Tran Hoanh, originally an employee of Nong Son coal mine, but for the influence of Duy Tân movement, he left Phuoc Binh school and returned to open another school. His new school attracted the famous teachers in Quang Nam province at that time such as Mai Di, Phan Thanh Tai. The school had the initiative of cooking gracilaria for gelatin to print textbooks and distribute to students.

Phu Lam School was led by Le Co, who was born in 1859 in Phu Lam village, Tien Phuoc district. Although he was not a great academic, he boldly stood up to struggle against regional tyrants, to resist eliminative tax collection. With strong support from many inhabitants, he got the position of Chief of Village and opened the school to teach following the Duy Tân educational program. Outside of the school for male students, he established a class for female students and trained two female teachers to teach this class. The total students weren't yet listed, but according to Huynh Thuc Khang, the pre-qualifications received up to two or three hundred exam candidates. Phu Lam School was one of the famous schools then, in the singing hour, while some schools just knew to teach the old songs, Phu Lam school chose the songs the content of which was close to the movement, encouraging education, commercial firms, unity (Xuan, 1970).

Dien Phong was a more disciplined school in Quang Nam regarding organization and curriculum. The school had two facilities: one at commercial firm and one at Phong Thu Pagoda, led by the two patriots Mai Di and Phan Thanh Tai. The school was composed of two departments: one for teenagers and one for adults, with a total of 200 students.

The textbooks of Grade One consisted of the books such as *New Chinese Literature* of China (beginning with the sentences "Thiên địa anh khí, chung nhi vi nhân, nhĩ mục thông minh, vi nam tử thân..." (that means: The sacred air of heaven and earth, together molded into human, intelligent with bright eyes and ears, becoming men), "Bác vật chí" of Pham Phu Thu, which taught the physics subjects such as electricity and trains, explained the natural phenomena such as thunder, lightning..., "Dinh hoàn chí lược" which taught the subjects of geography, world history, some books or textbooks about Vietnam chorography such as *Đại Nam nhất thống chí*, Geography and History of Quang Nam. The textbooks of Grade Two applied the curricula mainly from the books of Khang Huu Vi, Luong Khai Sieu and the theory of civil rights of Rousseau and Montesquieu (Bau, 1996).

While the new schools led by patriots were ardently working in Quang Nam, a big school called Tonkin Free School came into being at 4 Hang Dao Street, Hanoi, in March 1907, after Duc Thanh School and other schools in Quang Nam for more than 1 year. Tonkin was the name of Ha Noi in the reign of Ho dynasty and Nghĩa Thục meant "school for righteousness, not for money," so the name of Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục could be understood

more broadly “a school for great righteousness” (great virtue or morality) for the noble purpose suggested by leaders: To study to make the country strong and the people rich, for reform and self-reliance. Thanks to the advantage of being in Hanoi, the land of thousand years of literature, Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục brought together wisdom and talent of the wide range of Confucians and neo-educational academics, so the school was far superior to even large schools in the southern Vietnam (Bau, 1996).

Whenever Tonkin Free School was mentioned, one textbook recalled the most was *Neo-Educational Civilization Book*. As a guideline for all the activities of the school, this textbook was also considered credos of any politic organizations which wanted to reform the country at that time. In *Neo-Educational Civilization Book*, the author proposed that the deadlock cause of our civil education was the “static” nature of Vietnamese civilization, while the West advanced more quickly because their civilization was more “dynamic.” After demonstrating the harms of “static” civilization and the profits of “dynamic” civilization, the book analysed the issue across 5 domains (which the book called “five precepts”): ideology, education, economy, temperament and customs, and 4 “starting causes” or “4 main conceptions” were found to prevent the progress of the people in Vietnam:

- 1) Only we are civilized, there’s no need to study skills from other countries;
- 2) The gentle way of life in Confucianism is the best, there’s no need to learn how to be rich and strong and exquisite from other countries;
- 3) The ancient time is better than the present time, the present time is inferior to the past time, there’s no need to examine, study and discuss with the people of the later generations
- 4) To respect mandarins and disrespect civilians, there’s no need to understand the good or bad situations of the common places.

To overcome depression and stagnancy caused by “static” civilization, the textbook suggested “6 paths” or “6 measures” as follows:

- 1) Using the country's written language, or national language script, is the first step in expanding intelligence;
- 2) Editing books: Southern history as the main focus, Northern history read only for understanding, Western history learned only with a few main books;
- 3) Modifying examination procedures: using only texts and essays, setting exam questions from scriptures in classic works and the three histories above mentioned, allowing exam candidates to freely discuss without any restriction on style; in addition, performing to test math and writings in national language script;
- 4) Promoting the talents, trying to make good use of all the students trained in Giám schools and Quốc học schools;
- 5) Invigorating technology: Vietnamese technology is poor and the trained students cannot apply technology properly, having to open schools, encourage and invite teachers in many ways, especially smart, intelligent people, so that everyone can show off their skills;
- 6) Opening a newspaper office: the whole country has only several newspapers, so Vietnamese newspapers should print both in national language script and Chinese characters, the articles’ contents have to be very rich in all the aspects of politics, economy, culture and society in the country and the world to inform everyone.

Concerning the organization, Tonkin Free School was led by Luong Van Can, a prestigious Confucian that was the oldest among the scholars at that time. He was called Thục trưởng (similar to the position of Principal), Giám học (Vice-Principal) was Nguyen Quyen, the training officer in Lang Son province having experiences in organizing education. Under the Principal and Vice-Principal, the working committees could have close relationship together, including Finance, Shareholding, Education and Textbook Editing:

- Finance Committee undertakes revenue and expenditure, salaries for teachers.
- Shareholding Committee mainly organizes every month two rounds of literature commentary and oration delivering
- Education Committee mainly organizes the teaching

- Textbook Editing Committee, directly directed by Principal Luong Van Can was very active and produced the textbooks in harmony with the school's policy.

Tonkin Free School, like other schools in Quang Nam, taught all the three languages: Vietnamese, French and Chinese. The teachers in Tonkin Free School were trained very basically: Nguyen Van Vinh and Pham Duy Ton, graduates from Northern Translation School School, taught French and Vietnamese, together with Nguyen Ba Hoc and Bui Dinh Ta. The subject of Literary Chinese was taught by famous Confucian scholars at Thang Long at that time, such as junior bachelor Nguyen Quyen, senior bachelor Dao Nguyen Pho and Luong Truc Dam, junior doctor Hoang Tang Bi, etc. Furthermore, Tran Dinh Duc and Pham Dinh Doi taught the subjects of History, Geography and Mathematics. Tran Dinh Duc was the first person to draw a large Vietnam map hung in class so that the students could visualize their own country, Pham Dinh Doi was the person to bring the originally strange subject of geometry into the curriculum of the school (Bau, 1996).

The thread going through the educational content of Tonkin Free School was patriotism, so any subject, whether literature or history, geography, mentioned the theme. Nguyen Quyen, Principal of Tonkin Free School, said clearly: "Secondary and high school learn French and Chinese characters, from primary education and lower, all male or female students learn the national language, but for students in upper and lower schools, to study only for being civil people (the author emphasizes), not to study for theories and exams.

Reading Manuals in National Literature – a "primer" of Tonkin Free School's students, whose aim was to open people's wisdom to promote basic elements for a new learning system, explained that "To learn to be a human being, to be a citizen, that means, to direct one's heart and know how to treat familial, social and national matters. Reading Manuals in National Literature also laid responsibility to a citizen to know how to follow national law, to love his country's fellow human beings, to view the country's affairs as household work, while the nationalists, whether strong or weak, who ignored to ask, even forgetting their nation, worshipping their nation's enemies, accepting to enslave other nations, could not be called citizen. This book also talked about other issues, such as love for others, pride in long-standing civilization, loyalty, will to advance. Thus, to learn to be a human being means understanding citizens' rights and obligations associated with the country's losing or living, prosperity (Thau, 1982).

Patriotic poetry such as the poems "National anthem awakening citizenship" (Đề tỉnh quốc dân ca), "National anthem awakening souls" (Đề tỉnh quốc dân hồn), "Heartfelt words from overseas" (Hải ngoại huyết thư)... were all taught in the school with aim of introducing Japan's example of self-reliance, or exposing enemy' barbaric crimes, or thinking about Vietnam's future:

The genocide, one side loves, the other side fears. Is our race still alive?

Call on the people to stand up:

Think about it and many times feel bruising, broken-hearted. Call out to the sky and unleash the sword

To liberate the country, liberate the people:

Raise the flag of independence, of self-reliance. Get a group of slaves to make a civilized fellowship.

According to Thau (1982), history is a subject having the advantage of teaching patriotism, because the examples of ancient people could be taken to educate present people, so the editors of textbooks also paid much attention to this subject. In the introduction of the textbook "Reading manuals in national history", a part of writing was as follows: "Having vast knowledge, having wise talent but not knowing the national history, that's not helpful for Vietnam. Thus, reading Vietnam history is the first duty at this time. In the song of "Historical Geography of the nation," after introducing heroic historical events of ancestors who "were worthy to set examples for us." Ngo Quy Sieu also called on:

Born is the real chip off the old block

Also in the country are relatives

Must love, must feel pity closely

*Gathering together
To enjoy happiness, to share disaster
The word “together” is cast in the same furnace*

Geography subject taught a general outline of rivers, mountains, resources, inhabitants but in the item of “characters” in “Geography of Vietnam,” beside the heroes saving the country from ancient times such as Ngo Quyen, Tran Quoc Tuan, Le Loi...the author also mentioned the leaders of the uprisings against French invasion in the late 19th century, such as Truong Dinh, Nguyen Huu Huan, Phan Dinh Phung, Cao Thang. The French-Vietnamese schools or the schools teaching Han characters certainly never dared to mention these persons (Thau, 1982).

However, patriotism education is not only to say about daring to sacrifice for the country, but to always concern a strategic task, that is, having to learn how to make the country rich and strong. The book “Reading Manuals in National Literature,” after discussing a lot about civic duty, advises learners to “strive for practical education.” “Neo-Educational Civilization Book,” as mentioned above, many times emphasizes technology promotion. With such movements, natural resources are not exploited, people can be richer, compete more to produce wealth, and that also expresses patriotism.

With the schools in Phan Boi Chau’s Đông Du movement, the “schools for righteousness” in Quang Nam and the provinces in North Vietnam, and on the top was Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục in Hanoi, aim and content of the educational tide were formed. However the French government could not let such tide grow openly in contrast to French-Vietnamese education at that time, so they carried out severe repressions. The patriotic schools were shut down in 1908 (Bau, 1996).

4. Conclusion

Informal education in Vietnam in the early 20th century outstood ardently, from the North to the South, into a large social movement deeply influencing in many respects in social life. On the educational level, this was the period in which informal education developed the most strongly in the Vietnamese educational history. Originated from the cultural social movement with the aim of patriotic struggle against the French colonial government, actually this was a political campaign. Most of the people leading informal education activity were not professional educationist, they were only patriotic scholars. However, informal education which expressed the efforts relating to ideology, academy, level of organization, skills of campaigning and motivating Vietnamese people gave rise to a large number of profound hallmarks in the educational tradition of Vietnam.

The success of informal education was that the educational target was affirmed to save the country, to help the people, to motivate the people on the path of civilization and advancement. The organization and content of informal education at that time also aroused the proper opinions about teaching and learning purposes, about the principles and guidelines of the popular education. The outcome of ground-breaking development of informal education also left a wide variety of lessons of experiences about teaching methods and the measures of mobilizing the socialized resources for education. A significant success was that such informal education introduced a new model of human beings, the people in the period of modernization. Although this new model was not yet complete in our way of thinking in the present time, but also suitable to the society at that time. The success of informal education is also the success of passionately patriotism, a honest consciousness to learn for progress exactly as in the motto of a famous patriotic Confucian scholar at that time, “new day by day, newer day by day, having to be new day by day” (Chau, 1990).

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