

University of Technology Sydney

**Pedagogical Practices of  
Vocational Education and Training in Vietnam**

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School of Education

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## **Certificate of Original Authorship**

This thesis is the result of a research candidature conducted jointly with another University as part of a collaborative Doctoral degree. I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as part of the collaborative doctoral degree and/or fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student:

Date: 20 June 2016

## List of Publications

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## Abstract

This thesis investigates the pedagogical practices of vocational education and training (VET) in Vietnam, at a time of significant economic and educational reforms. As Vietnam moves to engage more fully with the global economy, VET policies, which enhance the skills of the workforce, have become a key focus of government policies and initiatives.

In this context, the study of the pedagogical practices of three different sites of vocational education practice – a Vietnamese government vocational college, a foreign-funded vocational college, and a Family Workshop – contributes significant new knowledge to the field of vocational education and training in Vietnam. Using a qualitative methodology, data was collected through document analysis, observations in classrooms and at workshops, and in-depth interviews with participants including leaders, Masters, teachers, skilled workers and learners. An adapted conceptual framework, *Investigating Vietnamese VET Pedagogical Practices Framework*, was developed to be more appropriate to the context of a developing country.

The study highlights the tensions and challenges faced by VET administrators, teachers and students as they contend with the Vietnamese government's dual goal of integrating VET with the international and regional community through modernisation and industrialisation, while still preserving Vietnamese traditional values and culture. Within VET, these tensions and co-existing goals are reflected in VET pedagogical practices, such as teachers' attempts to include ICT in their teaching and become more learner-centred, while continuing to work in a highly centralised and teacher-focused system.

The application of the concept of Vietnamisation (based on Tran Hoa Phuong's (1998) research into university education) to VET research for the first time opens up new ways of understanding these layers of historical influences over centuries. The Vietnamese VET pedagogical practices examined across the three sites showed legacies of Confucian, French, Soviet and more recent Western influences.

Significantly, Vietnamese vocational education and training systems have incorporated these influences but at the same time have maintained the Vietnamese character – evidence of “integration without dissolution” (Anh Huyen 2014, p. 1), a slogan widely used in Vietnam.

The findings of this research suggest the need to improve VET pedagogical practices by developing a “Vietnamese VET pedagogy” which adopts and adapts the new international influences along with making changes to the policies and systems that support its implementation. Importantly, the study calls for a fluid and efficient combination of didactic teaching – emphasising theory over practice – with a more facilitative pedagogy, developing the needed employability skills for the global economy.