

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES AMONG CHAM PEOPLE IN NINH THUAN AND BINH THUAN PROVINCES\*

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The Cham is one of the ethnic minorities in Vietnam. The Cham people have an important role in constructing and defending the nation, and usually joined in the resistance against the French colonialist and the American war as well as today.

In recent times, thanks to their efforts as well as the investment of Vietnamese Party and Vietnamese Government,<sup>1</sup> Cham people have reached remarkable achievements in many fields. However, the rate of socio-economic development is not correlated with their potential. The political system in some places is not strong enough; the number of Communist Party members and core cadres is too few. Some Party leaders, authorities, and local unions have not implemented the policy of the Communist Party and the Government well. They have not spread propaganda or mobilized the public to avoid the exploitation and stimulation of hostile forces that are the disadvantages for the solidarity of the nation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The 22-NQ/TW Resolution of Political Bureau, November 1989; The 72-QD/HDBT Decision of the Council of Ministers, March 1990 on the development of socio-economic in mountainous area; The 121-CT/TW Instruction, March 1981 and the 03-TT/TW Circular Letter, October 1991 of Central Committee of the Communist Party on the tasks for Cham people.

<sup>2</sup> The 06/2004/CT-TTg Instructions dated 18 February 2004.

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The above disadvantages and insufficiencies have many causes, and the awareness of the executives about ethnic characteristics is limited when they implement policies. These limitations create a gap between targets and achievements of socio-economic development. This is especially apparent in building the political system at the grassroots level as well as in building up the number of Party members and key cadres who are Cham people.

This situation should be solved immediately. This article will help to clarify the key factors that influence the training and utilization of Cham human resources.

### 1. The Influences of Training and Utilization Policies for Ethnic Minorities

#### *1.1. Training the Cham Cadres and Cham Intellectuals*

From 1975 to now, along with building up the political system at the grassroots level, the development of the Cham human resources and the training of Cham cadres have been noticeable. Before 1975, most of the Cham people were illiterate. The majority of Cham youth had not finished the second grade, and about 80% of children could not go to school. After 1975, the number of children going to school increased rapidly: in 1977, the number of Cham pupils occupied 10.4% of the total number of pupils in Thuan

Hai province. In 1985, the Cham pupils made up two thirds of the school age children (Phan An, 1989, p. 358-359). At this time, 100% of the communes of Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces have eliminated illiteracy and mandated compulsory primary education. These communes are planning to make secondary school compulsory as well.<sup>3</sup> Cham pupils occupy 95% of the number of pupils in the boarding school for the ethnic minorities.

The improvement of the school system is one of the important factors that made the above achievements possible. Under the French domination, there were only three primary schools in Binh Thuan province. Today, 100% of communes of Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces have a primary school and a secondary school. Every district in these provinces has a high school. The system of boarding schools is developing (Ninh Thuan province has two primary boarding schools and one secondary boarding school. Binh Thuan province has three primary boarding schools and one secondary boarding school). In primary school, the pupils learn Cham language. During the 2002-2003 school year, Binh Thuan province had 95 classes with 3,500 pupils learning Cham language, and Ninh Thuan had 318 classes with 9,695 pupils learning Cham language. Every year, there are pupils who complete high school and enroll in pre-university or university. Up until to 2003, 650 students in Ninh Thuan had graduated from university or were studying at universities. From 1993 to 2004,

<sup>3</sup> Phuoc Thai commune, Ninh Phuoc district has made

Binh Thuan province had 128 students who were recruited to universities.<sup>4</sup> However, the educational quality is still not good, the rate of weak learners is high, and the rate of “good” learners is 22.5%.<sup>5</sup>

The number of Cham people who have a bachelor’s degree is not small, but most are concentrated in the medical and educational fields. In Binh Thuan province in 2004, the rate of Cham people who worked in the educational sector was 70.9% and 22% worked in the medical sector.<sup>6</sup> In Ninh Thuan province, the rate of Cham people who work in the medical sector is 23%, who work in the educational sector 21.7%, who work in other sectors 32.9%, and who work at the communal level 11.2% (Dong Van Dinh, 2005, p. 59-63). In Ninh Phuoc district, where has 80% of the Cham population of Ninh Thuan province reside, the rate of Cham people who work in the educational sector is 80.1%, and in the medical sector 13.6%.<sup>7</sup> In Ninh Thuan province, the disciplines chosen by Cham people are more diversified compared with

secondary school compulsory.

<sup>4</sup> The report of Public Relation Committee of Ninh Thuan province 03 BC/DV, dated 22 May 2003; The report of People’s Committee of Ninh Thuan province 2887/KH – UB, dated 18 October 2004; The report of People’s Committee of Ninh Thuan province 75/UBBT – NLN, dated 07 November 2003; Summary on the recruited students in 1993-2004 from the Ethnic Committee of Binh Thuan province. The report of Education Department of Ninh Thuan 153/THPT, dated 5 July 2000.

<sup>5</sup> The report of Ethnic Committee of Binh Thuan province 30 BC/DT – CSDT, dated 20 March 2005; The report of Provincial Committee of the Party of Ninh Thuan province 127 - BC/TU, dated 28 December 2000.

<sup>6</sup> The report of Ethnic Committee of Binh Thuan province in 2005.

<sup>7</sup> The report of People’s Committee of Ninh Phuoc district in 2005.

Binh Thuan province. Hence, the rates of staff in the medical and educational fields are higher than in other fields.

Regarding education level, by 2003, Cham people in Ninh Thuan province had attained three doctoral degrees, four masters degrees, six degrees of teaching in college and vocational school, sixty degrees of teaching high schools, 827 degrees of teaching in primary and secondary schools, 57 medical doctor degrees, and 200 physician and nursing degrees. Up to 2003, Binh Thuan province has had 190 people who have graduated from vocational schools (occupying 0.64% of the Cham population), 20 skilled workers, and 93 medical staff (23 doctors, 35 physicians, 15 nurses, and 16 midwives).

### ***1.2. Using Cham People among the Trained Staff***

The number of Cham staff working in positions of authority: One vice chairman of the Ethnic Council of the National Assembly, one vice director of the Overland Bureau, two members of the Provincial Committee of the Party, four representatives of the People's Council, six leaders of Provincial Departments, sixty-nine staff of Provincial Departments, one district Party Committee Secretary and People's Council, one leader of the People's Council, one District Standing Committee of the Party, and five leaders of District Departments.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding the structure of civil servants in these provinces, the Cham people have the highest rate among minority groups of people in the civil service (62.8% in Binh Thuan, and 72.9% in Ninh Thuan). The percentage of Cham civil servants is 2.3% in Binh Thuan and 4.35% in Ninh Thuan.<sup>9</sup> The imbalance of civil servants is obvious in the different distributions of Cham staff in different places (See Table 1).

When assessing the development of human resources, not only the number of staff but also the rate of staff compared with the total number of labors should be considered. For instance, Ninh Phuoc district in Ninh Thuan province has the highest rate of Cham staff compared with other districts in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan province, but the rate of Cham people among the total population of those provinces is also high. Cham people in Ninh Phuoc district make up 81.8% of the total Cham population in Ninh Thuan and 33.2% of the population of Cham people in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces.

By considering Ninh Thuan province's rate of Cham staff, we suggest that Ninh Thuan should improve the training of Cham staff in order to fulfill their missions. In addition, Cham people have not been trained in a diversity of disciplines. With the exception of the medical and educational fields, they have not taken part in other fields in large numbers.

<sup>8</sup> The report of Provincial Interior of Binh Thuan province, June 2004.

<sup>9</sup> The report of Ninh Thuan People's Council, No. 47/BC-UB dated August 16, 2004.

Table 1: Staff distribution and population distribution of the districts having Cham people in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces

Unit: %

Structures	Ninh Thuan						
	Total	Ninh Phuoc		Ninh Hai		Ninh Son	
Staff	100	86.9		11.1		1.96	
Population	100	81.8		14.8		3.42	
Structures	Binh Thuan						
	Total	Bac Binh	Tuy Phong	Ham Thuan Bac	Ham Thuan Nam	Ham Tan	Tanh Linh
Staff	100	58.0	36.3	3.61	0.00	2.58	0.26
Population	100	59.0	14.3	12.9	6.27	4.09	3.33

Source: - The Ethnic Committees of Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces, 2005.  
 - The fieldwork data 2005.

The data in the Table 1 show that the rate of Cham staff in Ninh Thuan province is correlated with the rate of Cham people in the total population of the province. On the other hand, the rate of Cham staff in Tuy Phong district, Binh Thuan province is 254 times higher than the rate of Cham people in this district. Conversely, the rate of Cham staff in Ham Tan and Tanh Linh district, Binh

Thuan province is lower than the rate of Cham people in those districts. In Bac Binh district, Binh Thuan province, the rates are correlated.

The imbalance mentioned above has been alleviated by student recruitment policies. The 1993-2004 student recruitment data in Binh Thuan province presents this change.

Table 2: Cham student recruitment structure in Binh Thuan province from 1993 to 2004

Unit: %

Provincial level	Bac Binh	Tuy Phong	Ham Thuan Bac	Ham Thuan Nam	Ham Tan	Tanh Linh
100	23.2	28.6	20.5	6.25	8.93	12.5

Source: The Ethnic Committee of Binh Thuan province, 2005.

This adjustment is not totally adequate; however it does create an impetus for the districts that have weaknesses in the development of human resources.

Considering Cham staff structure divided by their religions, we see a remarkable difference, shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Structures of Cham staff and intellectuals divided by religions in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces

Unit: %

Provinces	Total	Balamon	Bani	Islam
Ninh Thuan	100	77.0	21.7	1.24
Binh Thuan	100	74.5	25.5	0.00

Sources: - The Ethnic Committees of Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces, 2005.

- The fieldwork data 2005.

The above data indicate that Cham staff people who belong to the Balamon religion make up three fourths of the total Cham staff. This rate is different than the corresponding rate of believers in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces (Balamon: 56.5%, Bani: 39.3%, Islam: 3.44%).

### ***1.3. The Executives of the Political System at the Grass Roots Levels***

The nucleus of the political system is the Party members. The total number of Cham Party members is 254 persons in Ninh Thuan province, and 136 persons in Binh Thuan province. The number of Party members has been mainly developing since 1975.<sup>10</sup> In comparison with the total population, the number of Party members only occupied 0.4% in Ninh Thuan province and 0.4% in Binh Thuan province. This rate

is lower in rural areas. For example, in Binh Thuan, there are 49 Party members in rural areas among 136 Party members in total, whereas, the percentage of the population living in rural areas is 91%.<sup>11</sup>

The percentage of key officials at the grass roots levels<sup>12</sup> (commune/ward/town) who are Cham is 8.05% of the total number of key officials in Ninh Thuan province, and is 2.27% of the total officials in Binh Thuan province.<sup>13</sup> The rate of Cham officials compared with total Cham population is 6% in Ninh Thuan province; this rate is 16% in Binh Thuan province.

<sup>11</sup> The Ethnic Committee of Binh Thuan province, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Including the titles: Communal/Vice Communal Secretary of Party Committee, Chairman/Vice Chairman of People's Council, Chairman/Vice Chairman of People's Committee, Chairman of Communal Fatherland Front, Chairman of Veteran Association, Chairman of Farmer Association, Chairman of Women Union, Secretary of Youth Union.

<sup>13</sup> Statistical table on the key staff being ethnic minorities of grass root level up to July 2004 of People's Committee of Ninh Thuan province dated 16, August 2004, Internal Department of Binh Thuan province, July 2004.

<sup>10</sup> The report of Public Relation Committee of Ninh Thuan province 03 BC/DV, dated 22 May 2003; The report of People's Committee of Binh Thuan province 75/UBBT — NLN, dated 7 November 2003.

Hence, the main issue of politic system at the grass roots level for Cham people is the development of Party members and improvement of their capacities.

In some communes, the rate of Cham cadres is higher than the rate of Cham population. For instance, in Phuoc Thai commune (Ninh Phuoc district), the percentage of Cham people is 61.4%, and the percentage of Cham cadres is 72%. In Phuoc Nam commune (Ninh Phuoc district), the percentage of Cham people is 72.5%, and the percentage of Cham cadres is 85.7%. In Xuan Hai commune (Ninh Hai province), only one of the 113 accredited families in the commune is a Cham family. The percentage of Party members who are Cham people in Phuoc Nhon and An Nhon villages is 11.8%, but the percentage of Cham cadres is 42%. Also in this commune, Kinh people occupy 47.5% the total population, and 99% of the accredited families are Kinh. In Phuoc Thai commune, the Kinh people make up 32.7% of the population, and the percentage of cadres who are Kinh is 28%.<sup>14</sup>

The above data indicates that the Government and the local authorities consider the interests and beliefs of the Cham people as the foundation and the aim to contribute the politic system at the grass roots levels. The data reflect the strategy of the Communist Party and the Vietnamese Government that: “people are the root.”

## **2. The Influence of Traditional Fondness for Learning on the Development of Cham Human Resources**

In terms of educational achievements, together with investment from the Government, the efforts of Cham people have also been an important internal force. One of these efforts is the Study Encouragement Association. All Cham villages have a Study Encouragement Association made up of kinship and the village. Three pure Cham villages in Bac Binh district, Binh Thuan province - Phan Thanh, Phan Hiep, and Phan Hoa - have these Study Encouragement Associations.

Noticeably, in some of the villages that have Cham and Kinh living together, such as Phuoc Thai, and Xuan Hai, only the Cham people have Study Encouragement Associations. It indicates the Cham people's fondness for learning and their encouragement of studying.

The funding for the Study Encouragement Associations was contributed by parents and graduates. For example, the fund for the Study Encouragement Association of Nhu Binh village has 160 million VND. The agricultural cooperative borrows this budget with 2% interest/month. The loan interest has been used to support for the pupils and students as follow:

- To assist pupils in attending the graduation exam (from primary school to high school): 10,000-15,000 VND/pupil.
- To assist: (traveling expenses for the university and college students as well as

<sup>14</sup> The report of Party Committee and People's Committee of Phuoc Nam, Phuoc Thai, Xuan Hai, 2005.

for students who are studying at the technical secondary schools).

+ Students who are studying outside the province: 50,000 VND/student/year

+ Students who are studying in the province: 40,000 VND/student/year

- To provide rewards for good pupils:

+ Primary school: 30,000 VND/pupil/year

+ Secondary school: 40,000 VND/pupil/year

+ High school: 50,000 VND/pupil/year

- To assist students who are studying in universities, colleges, and vocational schools:

+ Masters candidates: 150,000 VND/person/year

+ Students in universities: 100,000 VND/person/year

+ Students of colleges and vocational schools: 80,000 VND/person/year

- Students who achieve average annual mark 6.5 points are awarded 80,000 VND/student/year for their good results.

- To assist pupils who are in poor families or accredited families to be good pupils:

+ Primary school: 20,000 VND/pupil/year

+ Secondary school: 30,000 VND/pupil/year

+ High school: 50,000 VND/pupil/year

The awards are not much, but they encourage and stimulate the learners. Therefore, the awards' role is very important.

### 3. Conclusion

In order to manage and develop human resources, the Government has trained a number of Cham staff and intellectuals. These people's qualifications, however, are limited because of the student recruitment resources. In addition, their disciplines are not diversified, but are instead concentrated in medical and educational sectors. This fact limits the participation of Cham staff in the socio-economic development of the country.

Regarding the structure of Cham staff compared with the population that is disaggregated by locality and religion, the percentage of staff people who are Cham in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces is higher than this percentage among other ethnic groups. However this percentage is still lower compared with the percentage of Cham people in the total population. For instance, in Ninh Thuan province, the percentage of staff people who are Cham is 4.35%, whereas, the population of Cham people is 12.2%. The rate of Cham staff is also not equal between the areas and religions.

Hopefully with the traditional fondness for learning, the support of the Government, and new training and utilization policies, the number of Cham staff and intellectual resources will develop more and more.

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A buffalo - stabbing festival of the Co-tu in Tay Giang district, Quang Nam province.

*Photo: Nguyen Thanh Huyen*