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DIRECTORATE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

REPORT

Evaluation of the implementation of distance and guided training in the vocational education and training sector of Viet Nam according to Circular 33/2018/TT-BLDTBXH

Hanoi, November 2021

General Information

This document was developed with the support of the Vietnam-Germany Cooperation Program "Program Reform of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Vietnam". The program is authorized by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), implemented by the German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ) in collaboration with the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training, under the Ministry of Labour, Invalides and Social Affairs. The program aims at an enhanced, better aligning TVET in Vietnam to the changing world of work, towards a greener and digitized future.

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First version

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Report on evaluation of the implementation of Distance and guided training in the vocational education and training sector of Viet nam according to Circular 33/2018/TT-BLDTBXH is officially developed

by the Consultants and cooperation partners of the Program Reform of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Vietnam.

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The consultant team would like to especially thank leaders and staffs of the Continuing Training Department (DVET) and staff of the Program on Reform of TVET in Viet Nam (GIZ) with supports to complete this report.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBT	Computer-Based Training
DOLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
DVET	Directorate of Vocational Education and Training
DX	Distance and guided training
GIZ	German Federal Organization for International Cooperation
IT	Information technology
ILO	International Labor Organization
LMS	Learning Management System
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WBT	Web-Based Training

Executive Summary

The report presents an assessment of the status and results of implementation of distance and guided training according to Circular 33/2018/TT-BLDTBXH from information gathering activities through group discussions, in-depth interviews and large-scale quantitative surveys conducted by the consulting team from October 15 to November 20, 2021. The main findings of the report are as followed:

- ***The role of Circular 33 of Distance and guided training***

- Circular 33 has created a legal corridor for VET institutes to deploy new forms of training to meet diverse needs, create favorable conditions for learners and at the same time bring benefits to many parties not only for learners but also VET institutes and society

- The Circular is humane, reflecting the philosophy of Vocational Education and training, but in the process of implementation, due to many difficulties, the circular has been slow to be put into practice.

- ***Organize distance and guided training & online training***

- The Covid pandemic is an important reason to push institutions and enterprises participating in vocational training to switch from face-to-face training to the form of distance /online training and the transition is passive, but institutions have adapted quite quickly to this form of training.

- The implementation of online training has helped VET institutes maintain training activities, minimize learning interruptions for trainees, and initially form a new training method in vocational education.

- Currently, there is no VET institute that fully implements the form distance and guided training, but mainly uses a mixed training form (online training combined with face-to-face training). Theoretical content will be taught first and practical exercises will be carried out when students are eligible to go back to school.

- The form of distance/ online training is suitable for most students, can be deployed at all 3 levels; The professions suitable for this form of training are

Information Technology, Foreign Languages and Accounting because both theoretical and practical content can be trained online with a large duration (from 80%-100). %).

- Enterprises/companies that participate in vocational training are mainly in the 3 industries mentioned above, so they can also switch quite flexibly to online training and the trend will maintain this form of training for a long time.

- ***Assess the current situation of factors in implementing online training***
  - *Technology infrastructure and software used:*

- Most VET institutes invest at a basic level in equipment (and use software (free or low cost) to carry out online teaching, the most popular ones are: Ms Team, Google Classroom, ZOOM..

- Only a few institutions (large vocational schools, GIZ project partner schools) are relatively synchronously invested in information technology infrastructure, LMS training management software and virtual classrooms, together with devices and software.

- However, during the quarantine period, many teachers do not go to school but teach at home, so the quality of lectures depends a lot on each teacher's computer equipment and transmission lines, internet connection. Therefore, the investment in technology is not only focused at the school but also "synchronously" for each staff member and teacher.

  - *About the content and training program:*

- Online training content and programs remain the same as before and have been adjusted to be more suitable for online teaching.
- For the theoretical contents, it be edited and refined to make it shorter and suitable for the duration of online lectures
- Increase references and home work

  - *Digital learning materials:*

- Digital learning materials are one of the contents that receive a lot of attention from institutions, especially teachers. Currently, the development of digital learning materials is still "spontaneous" - mainly depending on the capacity, positivity and creativity of the teachers.

-The majority of VET institutions expect that the DVET will build a platform with "standard" digital learning materials to be shared and to save resources.

- *Training method*

- Most teachers are aware of the need to adjust the role of the teacher in the form of distance learning, which is to focus more on guiding and encouraging students to learn on their own.

- The time to teach theoretical content is reduced, instead, teachers use video clips to illustrate the lesson vividly and attractively.

- Enhance Q&A content and quick test forms (using online test applications) to promptly grasp the ability to absorb as well as create interaction with students.

- *The manager staffs and teachers*

- In fact, VET institutes have no change in size or personnel structure for the implementation of distance training. The school focuses on capacity building of staffs in charge of technical and IT infrastructure by appointing these staffs to study and transfer technology from equipment suppliers or ask these staffs to learn and update new knowledge and technology themselves..

- For knowledge and technology teachers: the majority of teachers self-study in improving their skills in using software, IT applications and with the support of colleagues (technical staff and teachers of IT department) to design and innovate lectures. With the basis of technical knowledge and experience available, teachers can convert relatively quickly and have adapted to the new form of training.

- The DVET, with the support of international organizations such as the ILO, GIZ and the Organization of Francophonie International (OIF), has organized a number of digital pedagogical training courses for teachers. However, there are still many teachers who wish to be trained in modern teaching methods and digital pedagogy so that they can teach online in a "professional" way and improve the quality of their lectures.

- *About learners:*

- The effectiveness of the distance learning method mainly depends on the students' learning attitude. Students with a positive learning attitude combined with teachers with good and interesting lectures, the effectiveness of online learning is absolutely no less than face-to-face learning.

- College level students are assessed to have better ability to absorb and self-study compared to students who have just graduated from middle school or elementary vocational school, but this does not mean that the students have low level face disadvantages with this form of learning.

- The employees participating in online learning often have an active, positive spirit as well as quite diligent (participating in learning and doing homework fully) although their time is more limited compared to the trainees.

- ***Advantages and disadvantages, challenges for the implementation of distance, online training***
  - ***Advantages***

- Science and technology progress, especially in the IT industry, digital technology and the impact of Industry 4.0 create favorable conditions for knowledge and technology institutions to carry out digital transformation, including the form of distance training.

- The Covid pandemic has created a push for most institutions and enterprises participating in vocational training to quickly transform into the form of distance/online training.

- Besides the advantages, the implementation of the form of distance/online training encounters many difficulties and challenges:

  - ***Disadvantages, challenges***

- First of all, there are still opinions, doubts, and distrusts about the effectiveness of this form of training. However, the fact that institutions have been able to deploy online training in the past 2 years is a concrete proof of the feasibility and applicability of this form of training on a large scale.

- Technical infrastructure of VET institutes is still not sufficient, many institutions do not have the conditions to invest in virtual reality classrooms as well as

specialized software to support practical teaching and professional learning management systems. , lack of human resources to support technology for VET institutes .

-The content of the training program has not been reworked in accordance with the "spirit" of the form of distance training; Materials for distance training have not been digitized yet.

-The teachers have not been carefully prepared and trained to deploy the new form of training in a professional manner.

- The conditions for online learning of learners in many localities still face many difficulties (lack of learning equipment, unsecured internet connection, etc.)

-Difficulty in assessing learning results, limits in controlling students' actual learning attitudes.

- Opportunities for implementing distance/online training are uneven across institutions. Vocational colleges and intermediate schools in big cities have more advantages and advantages compared to small institutions/ vocational education centers in remote and isolated areas.

Some suggestions and recommendations to promote the implementation of Circular 33 and effectively implement the form of guided self-study

- ***For VET state management agencies***

- Complete the policies, regulations and guiding documents related to the implementation of circular 33/2018

- Strengthen and renovate propaganda activities; raise awareness about the position of distance and guide traininng in the field of TVET

- Build a digital platform, then gradually replicate to deploy to the whole TVET system (pilot model to multiply)

- Continue to train and foster the development of staffs and teachers in IT and digital pedagogy.

- Create equal opportunities to access and implement distance education among TVET institutions in regions with different socio-economic conditions.

- Promote the implementation of the database of the entire TVET sector to connect and share data between institutions and from central to local levels.

- Develop policies and programs to support schools to invest in synchronous technology infrastructure according to the contents of Circular 33

- ***For VET institutes***

- To be more actively and proactively in formulating and implementing digital transformation strategy and implementing green investment

- Develop specific plans and prioritize spending on IT infrastructure investment

- Developing a training form which combines face-to-face and online learning to ensure quality and efficiency.

- Fully equip teachers with teaching equipment and have timely support policies for students with difficult circumstances

- Diversify and innovate methods of promotion and propaganda about distance learning.

In short, distance learning is really suitable and brings many benefits to the stakeholders involved, especially to the learners. Distance learning also shows the advantages of an advanced training method, meeting the requirements of an open and flexible education, quickly and effectively responding to the needs of the labor market. Practice shows that distance/online training is not only a form for institutions to deploy in the current Covid context but will be an inevitable training trend in the future. Therefore, VET institutes cannot stand aside or be slow to develop distance/online training if they do not want to be left behind in the overall development of vocational education, especially in the context of industrial revolution 4.0 and digital transformation are taking place strongly and widely in all fields today.

PART 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH AND SURVEY

1. Context and necessity to assess the implementation of Circular No. 33/2018/TT-BLDTBXH

Digital transformation (DX) has become an inevitable trend that has a total impact and brings new business models, products and services to any organization including training services. The Government of Vietnam has developed a legal framework to guide the implementation of digital transformation. Among the legal documents, Decision No. 749 / QD-TTg dated June 3, 2020 and Directive No. 24 / CT-TTg dated May 28, 2020 of the Prime Minister are very important. In the field of vocational education, digital transformation (DX) can create a new mode of management, administration, as well as learning and teaching. In addition, due to the changing world of work, increasing autonomy and competitiveness in education, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, VET institutes need to initiate DX to develop a more adaptive, flexible, open, and responsive training system to rapidly cope with external factors.

On December 26, 2018, the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs issued Circular No. 33/2018/TT-BLDTBXH on regulating distance and guided training at college, intermediate and elementary levels. The Circular provides specific guidance on developing, organizing and delivering training programmes, training curriculum, teaching and learning resources, training management system, admission, testing and assessment, graduation assessment, accreditation of training subjects, training module and credits. The Circular also covers aspects of technical infrastructure and other factors to ensure distance and guided training in VET institutes such as teachers, supporting staff, management staff, academic policies and responsibilities of related stakeholders. After three years of implementation, DVET conducts this survey to evaluate the effectiveness of distance and guided training in the vocational education sector. Given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, this study also aims to uncover measures for COVID-19 mitigation through distance and guided training practices.

This study also aims to uncover successful stories/best practices of distance and guided training to draw on lessons learnt, or explore the possibility to develop a sandbox model to be replicated for other VET organizations in the future.

2. Objectives and research questions

2.1 Research objectives

Research and conduct activities to collect information in order to assess the actual status and results of implementation; grasp the obstacles and difficulties in the process of implementing Circular No. 33/2018/TT/BLDTBXH dated December 26, 2018 of the Minister of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs on college level training, intermediate and elementary levels in the form of distance learning, guided self-study, and make recommendations for policy improvement.

The research focuses on understanding the remaining issues and related causes, thereby drawing lessons from experience to advise state management agencies and VET institutes to adjust policies and promulgate regulations. appropriate guidelines. In addition, this study also aims to find successful examples / best practices in the form of distance and guided training to draw lessons and recommend the possibility of replicating the best practices. advanced model for other VET institutes in the future.

The overall objective is to evaluate to what extend VET institutes practice distance/online learning and the results, effectiveness, advantages and disadvantages of distance and guided training after implementing the Circular No. 33/2018/TT-BLĐTBXH. In addition, the activity f issues and associated reasons, then draw on lessons learnt and policy advice to help management organizations and VET institutes to adjust and issue relevant guidelines.

2.2 Research question

The study aims to answer the main question "What are the distance and guided training in the VET institutes since 2019" by answering specific questions:

- What are the main outcomes of distance learning and guided self-study in the field of vocational education?

- What is the purpose of VET institutes practicing distance learning?

3. Scope of research

- Research subjects: VET institutes that provide training in the form of distance/online training, managers, VET teachers, students; vocational trainers in enterprises.
- Scope of space: in Vietnam.

4. Research framework and analytical methods

4.1 Research framework

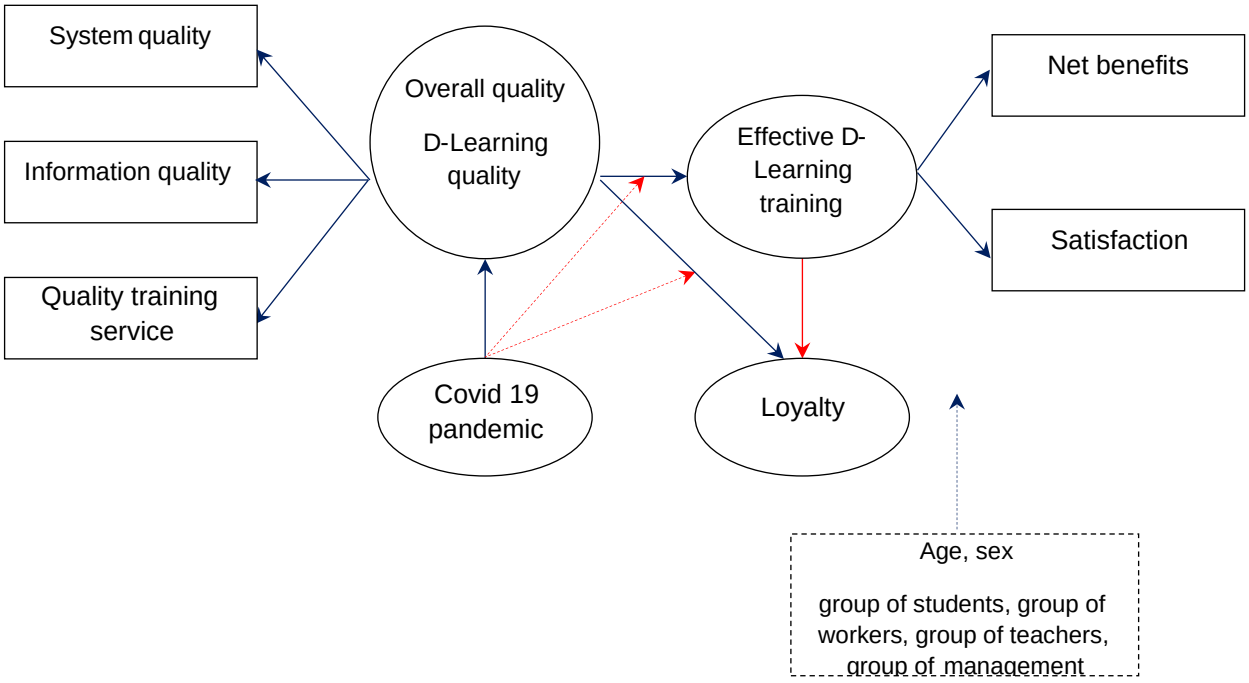
In international documents, Distance learning is defined as a learning environment using information and communication technologies (ICT) as the basis for teaching and learning activities (Nichols, 2008). D-Learning is a method of virtual learning through devices connected to the Internet with a server located elsewhere, where electronic lectures and necessary software are stored to be able to ask questions or give order to online learners remotely. (UNESCO, 2009).

Common forms of training of D-Learning includes: technology-based training (TBT), computer-based training (CBT), web-based training (WBT), online training, and distance training (Zandberg et al., 2008).

The formation and development of D-Learning is associated with the rapid development of IT and the change to adapt to different stages of education and training. From the original educational motto of "teacher-centered", has developed and changed to "student-centered".

In Vietnam, D-Learning approach to the aims of building a learning society, in which all subjects have the opportunity to learn, towards learning anytime, anywhere and lifelong learning. To assess the current status of distance learning as well as factors affecting learning effectiveness, the report uses the following analytical framework.

Analytical framework to evaluate the effectiveness of distance training



Refer to the contents of the Overall Quality Factors in the Appendix

5. Analytical method

5.1 Qualitative Research

The consulting team collected, reviewed and researched all relevant documents and research results to design questions and topics for in-depth discussions and interviews. Survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews and assessments were used as the main tools for data collection. Structured and semi-structured interviews will be conducted with stakeholders of provincial and central vocational training authorities, vocational institutions and enterprises.

Through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders, the consulting team will synthesize opinions and give suggestions, using NVIVO qualitative analysis tool to classify and analyze issues from there are comments on the actual implementation of distance and guided training; evaluate the advantages, disadvantages, existences and causes. On the basis of the findings from the qualitative and quantitative survey, the group will make recommendations to supplement and adjust Circular 33 as well as to develop the form of distance learning in the future.

5.2 Quantitative Research

The report uses statistical analysis techniques to analyze the current status of the elements of the distance learning model, as well as the influence of these factors on the overall quality of the distance learning model. distance, as well as affecting the training results, the training effectiveness of the program.

Collected data will be checked for logic between variables, reliability, outliers, etc. by statistical testing tools such as Cronbach Alpha. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) will be used to construct the component indices. Quantitative models (regression, structural equation models) will be used to analyze the relationship within the research framework.

5.3 Content and method of survey

In order to ensure a systematic understanding of information as well as personal views on the form of distance and guided training in the field of vocational education, research and design survey questionnaires for In-depth interviews and group discussions combined with an overview of collecting documents and secondary information. These are the primary tools for data collection.

The survey participants (invited to focus group discussions, in-depth interviews) are key stakeholders including: central and provincial management agencies (DOLISA), VET institutes and enterprises.

The content of the assessment includes the elements mentioned in Circular 33, including: Training programs, textbooks, teaching and learning resources, training management system, enrollment, testing and assessment, and assessment. graduation prices, ICT infrastructure, teachers, support staff, managers, vocational trainers in enterprises and students. Policy review on the development of distance learning forms the focus of the study.

To ensure the objectivity of research and GIZ's data protection policy, no personal data is allowed to be collected and analyzed.

In order to collect all information accurately and objectively in order to collect information to serve the assessment of the implementation of distance learning activities and guided self-study according to Circular 33/2018/TT- MOLISA, the study conducted a survey using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

6. Scale and method of survey and information collection

In general, the consultants will conduct 14 focus group discussions with 4 schools and 9 DOLISAs, 36 in-depth interviews and organize a technical workshop to collect input from the stakeholders; Quantitative information will be collected from at least 30 provinces participating in the online survey.

6.1 Qualitative Survey

(i) 14 Group discussions (1 meeting at national level and 13 meetings at local level) will be conducted with participants:

– At national level:

+ DVET (Representatives of the Director Board departments and staffs)

+ VET experts and representatives of vocational and occupational associations

- At local level:

+ DoLISA: Representatives of director boards, leaders of vocational training department.

+ VET institutions: Representatives of rector boards and functional and academic departments and students

+ Enterprises: Representative of director boards, staffs in charge of training in the enterprise/ in-company trainers

(ii) 36 In-depth interviews (4 meetings x 9 provinces) will be conducted with:

– VET institutions: teachers/staff (in charge of e-learning) and VET students (at college, secondary and intermediate levels)

– Enterprise: trainers in the enterprise

Tentatively surveyed locations: Ha Noi, Hai Phong, Lang Son, HCM City, Vung Tau, Lam Dong, Can Tho, Ninh Thuan, Thanh Hoa, Dong Nai

(iii) Quantitative survey will be conducted in 30 expected provinces with:

- Leader of Vocational Training Department in DoLISA

- Head of faculty in VET institutions
- Teachers/staff (in charge of e-learning) in VET institutions (including 11 partner TVET institutes/colleges of GIZ) and enterprises.
- Students in VET institutions (at college, secondary and intermediate levels, including 11 partner VET colleges of GIZ)
- Trainers working in enterprise

In general, consultants will conduct one (01) consultation meeting and 13 group discussions, 36 in-depth interviews and quantitative information will be collected from at least 30 provinces taking part in online survey.

Method: All meetings and discussions will be done online using an online meeting application: Microsoft Team.

6.2 Quantitative survey

The online survey was widely sent to DOLISA, VET institutes and enterprises in 30 provinces/cities. Stakeholder participating in the online survey in the provinces include:

- Leaders and staffs who in charge of VET sector of the DOLISA
- Leaders in VET institutes
- Teachers/staff (in charge of D-Learning) in VET institutions (including 11 GIZ partner colleges) and trainer in enterprises
- Trainees in VET institutions (at college, high school and intermediate level, including 11 GIZ partner colleges)

Method: All survey forms are designed via Google form and sent online to the units.

6.3 The results of implementation

The research team have carried out the survey according to the design, but due to several objective difficulties arising from the reality, there were a few small adjustments, in specific: organize 11/14 of group discussions, include 7 provinces and 4 GIZ project partner VET institutes and focus group discussions (2 group discussions in Lang Son and Ninh Thuan province have change to several in-depth interviews).

The central level consultation was also transformed into in-depth interviews with representatives of 6 units of the DVET: Administrative Office, Department of Formal Training, Department of Continuing Training, Department of Teachers, Department of national vocational and training skills and the National Institute of Vocational Education and Training (NIVT).

In addition, the research team also developed 3 online in-depth interview questionnaires designed in semi-structured form. With GIZ's support, the semi-structured interview questionnaire was sent to the remaining 07 GIZ partner colleges via online format (in addition to the 4 schools that participated in the group discussions). Feedback results from 3 semi-structured forms include:

- Leaders of VET institutes and administrators: 60 responses
- Teachers who are teaching and learning online: 130 responses
- Ministries in charge of IT infrastructure: 22 responses

Results of the quantitative survey

The consultant team conducted an online survey with officials working in departments, officials, teachers and students of VET institutes , officials and vocational trainers in enterprises. As a result, 2,520 responses were received. There were 2,486 responses with sufficient and qualified information used for quantitative analysis through the cleaning process.

PART 2 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY RESULTS

Circular 33/2018//TT-BLDTBXH is hereinafter referred to as Circular 33.

1. Evaluation of the role of Circular 33 and its benefits to the development of Distance and guided training

1.1 The role of Circular 33 for the form of distance and guided training

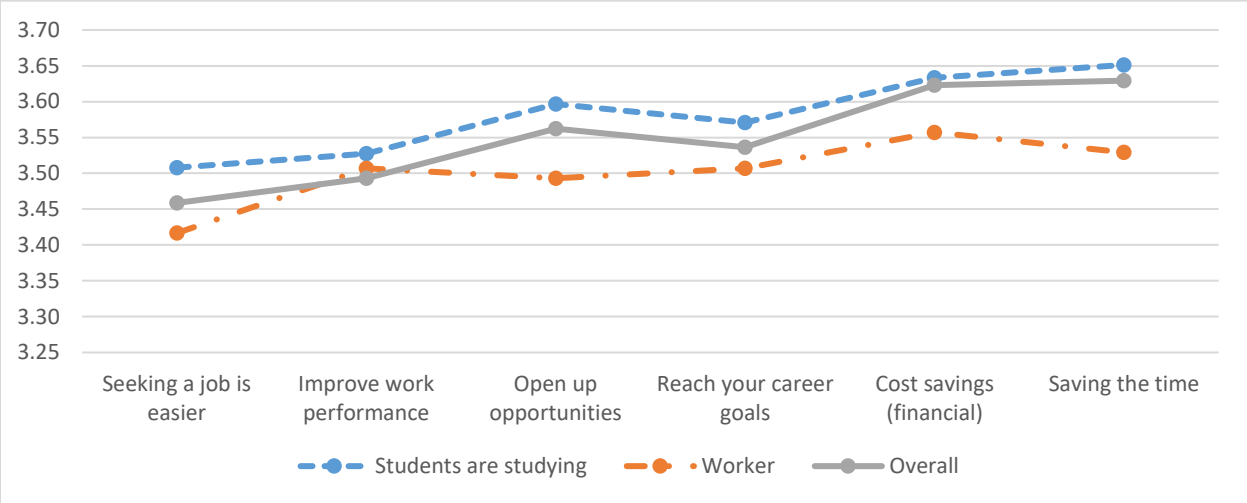
Circular 33 is a document with important content in the context of digital transformation and properly responds to the educational philosophy, creating opportunities to access vocational education for all subjects with learning needs.

Through group discussions and in-depth interviews with vocational education managers at DOLISAs, leaders and managers of VET institutes , and business representatives, most of them confirmed that Circular 33 can be considered as a document with important content, which properly meets the educational philosophy of creating opportunities to access vocational education for all subjects with learning needs and meets lifelong learning needs. In case Circular 33 is widely implemented in practice, advantages and benefits will be brough to learners such as cost saving, learning with flexible methods suitable for personal needs, capacity and family conditions.

The results of a sample survey of about 2500 people including stakeholders (officials, teachers, managers of relevant departments/faculties; representatives of VET institutes ; representatives of enterprises; representatives of the DOLISA; students and employees) shows benefits from distance/online learning in saving costs, time and creating development opportunities for employees. In general, students who are studying have higher expectations for the benefits of distance/online learning than those who are working. *However, both groups do not really believe in access to jobs due to their psychology and inefficient communication activities.*

Figure 1. Assessment of benefits from distance learning

(unit: points/maximum 5)



Source: Calculated from survey data of the project

The important contribution of Circular 33 is to create a legal basis for public and private VET institutes , enterprises/companies with providing training services can expand objects of enrollment, improve their competitiveness as well as flexibility, adaptability to the needs of the labor market.

The circular is appreciated to have a relatively complete set of requirements/elements to apply the form of distance/online learning to the practice.

However, in reality, the implementation of Circular 33 has been still difficult due to VET institutes' limitation of digital technology infrastructure; human resources and communication.

VET institutes participating in the survey said that they have applied the Circular, but not having any foundation of the articles/regulations in the Circular to comprehensively implement the form of distance training and develop a full form of distance/online training to be able to issue diploma/certificate to their students. Although there are doubts about difficulties and challenges of distance training as a new reluctant way to implement in the context of Covid pandemic, most of the representatives of VET institutes give positive assessment on advantages of the legal basis of Circular 33.

1.2 Benefits and the necessity to maintain and develop the form of distance/online training in vocational education

First of all, as mentioned, *Circular 33 is the legal document for recognizing the form of distance/online learning, creating opportunities for those who cannot go to school but keep studying at the vocational education institute* that they choose with certified learning process. This type of training have brought practical benefits to learners, namely saving tuition fees (travel and accommodation) for students in remote provinces and localities. With a flexible training time, distance/online learning is especially suitable for those who are working with aim to helping them do their job while studying to improve their professional qualifications and skills.

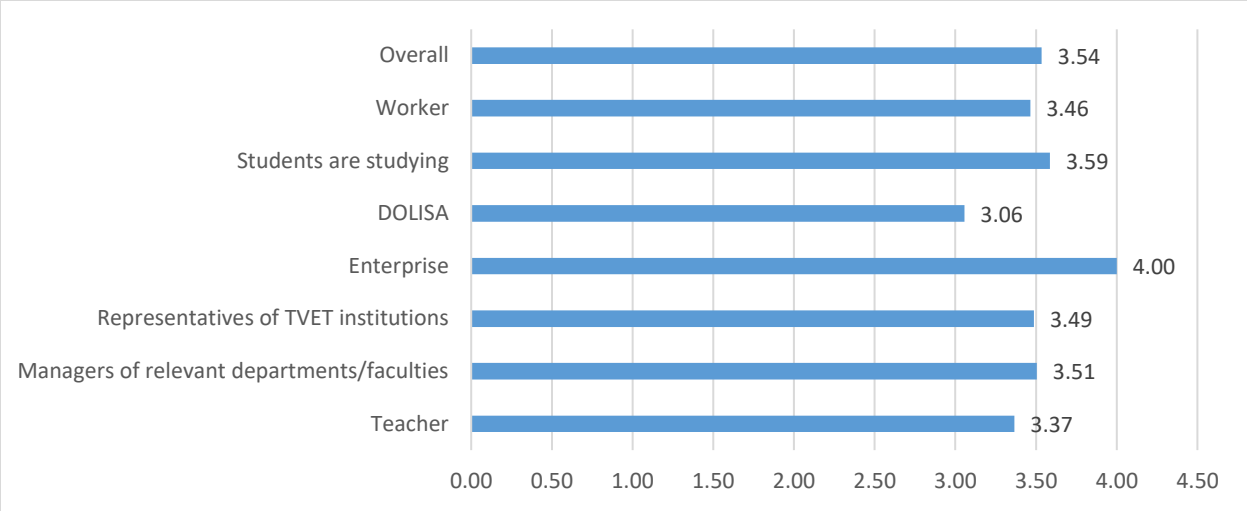
In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic with complicated developments in Vietnam for a long time and no signs of ending yet, online training can be considered as the only way for VET institutes to not have to "close down" and keep maintaining training activities, minimizing interruptions in the learning process for students.

Distance/online training can meet learners' individualized training needs, institutions can be flexible in organizing training. Even if there are only a few students, the institutions will arrange training activities. The form of distance/online learning has clearly demonstrated its benefits and advantages in flexibility and effectiveness compared to the traditional/direct training

In general, the distance/online learning is currently rated above average by relevant stakeholders. Its efficiency is rated to be highest by enterprises, due to the specificity of training in enterprises along with their investment in equipment for distance/online learning activities. On the contrary, state organizations assess not to be high, due to concerns of the adaptability of learners and teachers as well as equipment infrastructure of VET institutes . The others including learners, workers and schools basically rate to be above average because this form of training has responded promptly to the context of social distancing.

Figure 2. Overall performance rating by stakeholders

(unit: points/maximum 5)



Source: Calculated from survey data of the project

Circular 33 has not only broughts benefits to learners but also created conditions for VET institutes to transform training forms in a more flexible and effective manner; promptly respond to labor market requirements and digital transformation. In general, representatives of VET institutes , enterprises and State management agencies show the necessity of reforming training content and materials for subjects; developing a standard database; changing teaching methods alignment with for the digital environment; and recognizing digital competence as one of the criteria of training objectives.

Table 1. The orientation of distance training in the context of digital transformation

(unit: points/maximum 5)

	Representative of VET institutes	**Business representatives**	**State Administration**	**General**
Innovating content and building learning materials for popular majors	3.54	4.18	3.23	3.56
Building a standard database,	3.60	4.27	3.27	3.58

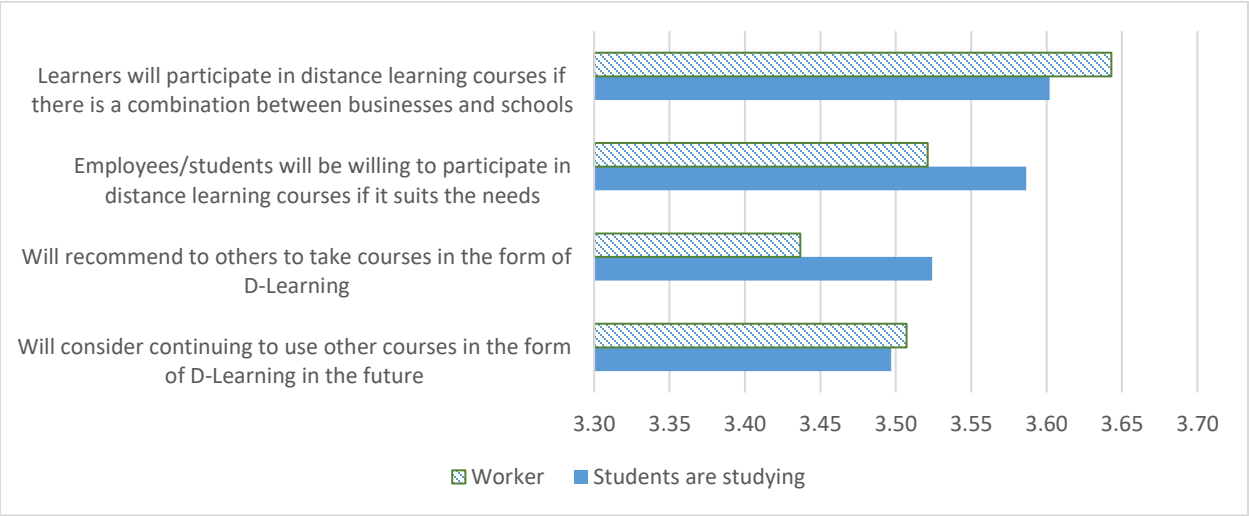
making a digital infrastructure for management innovation				
Changing the way of teaching and learning with new methods in the digital environment	3.66	4.45	3.41	3.59
Building training modules on digital competence, integrating into training programs,	3.66	4.45	3.39	3.60
Recognition of digital competence as one of the graduation criteria/output training objectives	3.58	4.36	3.22	3.61

Source: Calculated from survey data of the project

Based on its advantages and benefits, it is necessary to maintain and promote the development of this training form to contribute to the entire vocational education system in the future.

The form of distance training response to reality is still of interest to employees and learners in the future. Working employees aspire to participate in distance training to acquire knowledge relevant to their job. Learners assess this training form as a appropriate method if there is a combination between training institutions and enterprises. Regarding the spreading of this form of training to the community, those working in enterprises have higher appreciation than those studying because the former understand benefits from hands-on training while the latter group without working experience have lower willingness to introduce this training to others.

Figure 3. Demand for distance training *(unit: points/maximum 5)*



2. Evaluation of distance/online learning implementation

2.1 Enrollment and the process of preparing for the implementation of the training program

The Covid-19 pandemic has provided an opportunity to promote the form of distance/online learning of VET institutes . From the results of the group discussion and survey information, the majority of VET institutes started implementing distance/online training with the most common reason being the affect of the Covid pandemic. Most institutions learned from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020; from the beginning of 2021, they have planned to enroll students via online, provided information on specific enrollment occupations on the school's website as well as sent email to secondary schools, high schools and "potential" enterprises with training needs for their employees.

Changing the appropriate enrollment form in the context of Covid 19 has also been effective for VET institutes . Due to the cancellation and minimization of directly going to localities or organizing promotional events and activities for this year's enrollment along with the transformation into online events, the enrollment has been significantly affected. However, institutions that are proactive and well-prepared for this activity have minimized the negative impact of the pandemic and achieved the enrollment goals in this difficult context.

Table 2. Impact of the Covid pandemic on training activities

	Representative of VET institutes	Business representatives	Representative of DOLISA	Average
The Covid pandemic offers an opportunity to promote the development of distance learning	3.65	4.27	3.38	3.54
The appropriate form of distance learning in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic	3.71	4.45	3.41	3.69
The Covid pandemic motivates the school to focus on investing in distance learning and digital transformation	3.66	4.27	3.39	3.64
Enrolling students for distance learning programs more favorable in the context of Covid	3.47	4.36	3.25	3.63

Source: Calculated from survey data of the project

Besides, before the Covid pandemic, a few VET institutes have implemented distance/online training because of their recognition of learners' n e These are mainly vocational colleges with large training scale, reputation and good "brand" in vocational training, so they have enough resources to invest in developing

infrastructure, equipment and human resources in order to deploy the " distance/online learning" system. The main form is short-term vocational training for students from afar (combining training with vocational education centers in other localities, provinces/cities) and through a model of cooperation with enterprises.

Level of readiness of VET institutes for the implementation of distance/online training

It can be affirmed that the Covid pandemic is an important factor for promoting VET institutes to switch from face-to-face training to distance/online teaching in comparison with the fact that most of VET institutes only conducted direct training for the previous years. During the time of separation, not both students and teachers/staff did not go to school, so some institutions also deployed online training in a passive state. Due to the lack of preparation/readiness, the implementation process coped with certain difficulties. Besides, many objective difficulties and challenges for implementing this form of training were mentioned in a separate section below.

Although deploying in a passive state, VET institutes showed their ability to quickly adapt to the transformation. Specifically, since guiding documents of the DVET issued, most VET institutes have implemented this form of training flexibly and effectively. In addition, these institutions have developed a master plan to maintain this form as well as a plan/strategy for digital transformation in the long term.

2.2 Organizing distance/online training

Subjects and occupations suitable for distance/online training:

First of all, distance or online training is suitable for all learners at all levels of training, including new graduates from secondary or high school online training. Most of the opinions agree that the form of distance/online learning can be suitable and trained online with almost 100% duration for IT- related majors, namely Network Administration, Graphic Design, Programming, Data processing and 2 non-technical majors as Foreign Languages and Business Accounting (which can be trained remotely with up to 80% of the training content while some practical

contents related to the accounting system of enterprises or companies can be trained for students through going to schools).

In most VET institutes , all general subjects and theoretical contents are taught by teachers during the time of separation when both teachers and students cannot go to school. For colleges and intermediate schools, the transition to online training does not take much time, especially those that have already carried out activities on "digital transformation".

Box 1: Implementing digital transformation to create an environment for online training

Over the past time, the school has carried out activities in digital transformation, such as development and application of software to manage training programs - training results, training records; online enrollment, human resource, financial management and facilities; development of electronic libraries; digital materials, lectures; application of software to teaching and learning online; deployment of a number of simulation rooms in the fields of Electrical, Mechanical, Welding, Mold Manufacturing; review and update of the content of knowledge, skills and technology to meet requirements of digital transformation and Industry 4.0 into the program to train students; application of electronic office software to connect with public agencies and units in the province, etc. The above activities have contributed to helping schools save time, human resource and costs, thereby improving their capacity, management efficiency and quality of human resource.

Source: In-depth interview with school officials of Ba Ria - Vung Tau Technical College of Technology

- ***Online training at VET institutes***

In fact, most occupations are only partially trained remotely/online while practical contents require students to go to school; thus some suggestions mention to the change of the name of the training form into “ c o m b i n e d t r a i n i n g ” face-to-face and online teaching, training in the application of digital technology software to reflect the broader connotation/meaning based on the current situation.

Applying the provisions of Circular 33 in developing regulations on the implementation of distance /online training in VET institutes

To implement online training, schools have base and applied a number of provisions of Circular 33 and official documents guiding the implementation of online training of the General Department of Vocational Education and Training (Official Dispatch No. 1301/LDTBXH-TCGDNN dated 14th April 2020 regarding guiding the implementation of management, organization of teaching, testing and evaluation in online training) to develop regulations on organization of online training (Issuing internal documents about online learning; Exams, assessments, online tests...). However, the VET institutions and are mainly the Regulations on online training with the conditions that they apply in the context of natural disasters, pandemics, social distancing, leading to the inability of face-to-face training, not a regulation for the form of distance/online learning.

Regarding the specific regulations and implementation guidance of Circular 33, through the survey, three articles are applied to develop regulations in vocational training institutions, namely Article 3. Training programs and textbooks; Article 4. Distance and guided learning materials and Article 5. Distance and guided training management system.

VET institutes develop specific regulation for ensuring the quality of online training, particularly

- *Regulations for teachers when performing class management*: Teachers take attendance at the beginning of the class (and at the end of the class), ask students to turn on the camera during the lesson, take screenshots and send them to the quality assurance department about number of students "present"; If the student is absent without reason, the teacher shall notify the homeroom teacher to send notices to the parents; Teachers send online reports on problems arising in the teaching process.
- *Regulations on quality assurance*: Every week, the quality assurance department staff will attend classes to assess the teaching quality, discipline situation and learning attitude of the students.

- *Regulations on reward and handling of violations*: Students with good academic performance, diligence, participating in award-winning contests (online) will be rewarded by the school with encouraging scores or rewards...; Students who violate classroom rules or fail to complete and submit homework/homework on time will be dealt with in the form of: points deducted, written review or suspension from online learning (1-3 days).

❖ ***Online training at enterprises***

- In fact, enterprises/companies often do not train technical professions that require high costs for investing in infrastructure and equipment such as mechanics, electricity, construction. In contrast, enterprises/companies "compete" with VET institutes in popular occupations related to Information technology such as Software Development, Software Design, Graphic Design, Programming...; Accounting and Foreign Languages.
- For Enterprises applying distance training in the past time, they take advantage of their strengths of information technology infrastructure as well as facilities and equipment for training activities. Some large companies have implemented online training methodically with effective training strategies, development of training programs and digital learning materials to statisfy their needs. Training contents and levels of learners (employees) are classified in the training process and staff are assigned with specific training responsibilities. Therefore, the implementation of online training has obtained positive results and achieved set goals.

Box 2: The model of training cooperation with enterprises of Nguyen Huu Canh Vocational Training School

Training majors in Industrial and Civil Electrical (intermediate level)

On October 4, 2021, a training course was opened with 24 trainees - who are employees in 7 enterprises operating in the same field of electrical equipment production, repair and construction of electrical works. In order to meet practical needs, the school organizes training with a flexible time frame in line with the working schedule of employees and enterprises. Class time is in the evenings from 6 am to 9 pm, from Monday to Saturday. The school focuses on theoretical training in the online form and coordinates with enterprises to implement practical training. Teachers participating in the training not only have solid expertise but also have "hard" skills because they teach experienced and skilled workers.

Students practice in different positions of 7 enterprises. This gives learners a rich experience in professional practice as well as being able to practice their skills in a number of job positions. Although they have to work during the day, because the students are all mature and have a clear motivation to study (to improve their qualifications, have the opportunity to increase their salary), the students always have a positive attitude in learning. In this training model, employees who participate in learning have the most benefits because they can still maintain their jobs and incomes by participating in training and earning (training cost sponsored by enterprises or for learners who have just graduated from grade 9 will be sponsored by the State).

2.3 Training programs and methods

As mentioned, because institutions do not conduct distance learning but only convert theoretical content from face-to-face training to online, basically, the content of training programs does not change. Teachers use lectures previously designed on Powerpoint to edit and "refresh" some content to suit the online format. However, the teachers have also been very active to redesign some of the content and improve their lessons to be more attractive to students. Specifically, teachers refine theoretical content, present it in a concise and simplified manner so that students can easily grasp and remember key issues. Teachers try to collect or self-produce video clips to illustrate and create vividness for the content of the lesson. In addition to the teaching time in class, teachers spend a lot of time guiding students to find and study materials, and at the same time more closely monitor students' "self-study" process through regular assign and correct specific assignments.

The change in teaching methods of teachers in distance/online learning

In-depth interviews with teachers who are directly teaching online for students today show that teachers are aware that the roles and responsibilities of teachers have definitely changed compared to before. First, for distance/online training, because students can now find out knowledge on their own from many sources online, the role of teachers in transmitting knowledge will no longer be as important as in traditional training methods. However, the teacher's assessment showed that most of the students still lack the skills to "screen information" and "reflect" on the information received. At this time, the teacher acts as a guide for students to have the opportunity to practice that skill, helping students find and select accurate and

effective information within the time limit. Teachers must orient learners in the entire learning process, the role of guiding and checking learners so that learners can grasp the teacher's knowledge should be promoted. Therefore, teachers also need to actively self-learn more digital knowledge and skills to be able to develop professional teaching competence, to speak the same "language" with students for more effective interaction. More importantly, even though teachers do not directly meet and give lectures, they still have to find ways to connect and exchange in order to capture the psychology and inspire students.

During the Covid 19 pandemic, with VET institutes conducting online training, their training contents are evaluated to be consistent to the digital transformation by stakeholders (such as students, training institutions, management agencies and enterprises). Teaching staff, leaders in the department, the faculty, the school as well as employees working in enterprises, students have the same assessment. The online training content is assessed to be appropriate for the job. In general, the contents are quite easy to understand, the knowledge is updated and especially vivid when applying images and videos to training lessons (see Table 2, Appendix 4).

Box 3: Contents of teachers' online training method

To conduct an hour of online teaching, teachers often have to spend a lot of time preparing, often taking at least twice, three times as much as preparing for a face-to-face lesson (classroom teaching). For example, for the introductory content for the practical lesson on "Electrical Connection", it takes about 3 hours to redraw the circuit diagrams (for compatibility with the school's training equipment), while if using visual props to teach students, the teacher asks short questions and require students to respond quickly (students feel like participating in a game, not being tested), creating excitement for students when learning. Although it takes more effort, in return, teachers are also updated, learned more teaching software, teachers' digital skills are increased, including older teachers. Most importantly, the training form ensures students' acqui
case of not using face-to-face teaching.

Source: Summary of the results of in-depth interviews with teachers

Teachers at the schools cooperated with the project of GIZ have been trained to use the training management software - LMS (supported by GIZ) that is assessed as to be easy-to-use. They can put many lectures on the system, conduct tests, manage the progress and time that students put their assignment into the system. However, in terms of pedagogical method for online teaching, teachers mostly exchange and give suggestions to each other. There are still many teachers who have not been trained in digital pedagogy and express their desire to study officially.

- Digital learning materials

Digital learning materials are considered as one of the most important factor by VET institutes . Students at the intermediate or college levels are still not able to search for materials on their own. Currently, institutions still require teachers to compose "standard" lectures so that students can look up within the "scope" of their knowledge and capacity, then consider expanding study other documents. The institutions express their desire to have a shared digital database for teachers and students of VET institutes . However, VET institutes take into consideration the right to use and share documents, the issue of permission to use materials (for example, who can be only viewed, when can data be downloaded) related to permission from the author for the right to use. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a master plan from the beginning on regulations on the mechanism for building, contributing and sharing the right to use this digital database to facilitate the training institutions in deploying the distance/online training.

2.4 Technical infrastructure

Through consultation, it was found that VET institutes have basic equipment to serve distance/online training for theoretical subjects and related theoretical subjects of the practical part. However, the overall assessment of the temporary IT infrastructure only partially meets the needs of distance/online teaching. For example, the institution has a computer room that is insufficient to meet the number of students, and the school's wifi network is not covered the whole school. Some institutions do not have their own distance learning management system, and are currently outsourcing training management services.

Most institutions deploy online training activities through the LMS Moodule training management system. In fact, the facility has been still in the development stage, the LMS Moodle system has not been refined and managed all the functions of Moodle. Online lessons are carried out through free of charge and easy-to-use software, namely Google Meeting, Zoom, MS Team...

Box 4: Combined training model at Ly Tu Trong Vocational College

The school's training program composes of 30% of theory, 70% of practice, of which 40% students practice and study at enterprises. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to ensure the quality of teaching and learning, the school has applied virtual reality teaching methods for students to practice some subjects. Currently, the school has virtual reality rooms such as virtual reality room for car repair, virtual reality room for repair and maintenance of elevators - escalators, virtual reality room for computer hardware. Virtual hands-on teaching and learning will create a hands-on teaching and learning environment similar to actitivies at enterprises.

The school has researched and designed its online teaching system through digitization technology based on the Moolde platform (LMS) to apply online teaching and learning and make a plan to develop virtual practice rooms. There are many activities and solutions such as information collection from parents and students to record, discuss, encourage interested families, create better conditions for equipment and internet connection to help students study online in an effective way. The Board of Directors organizes meetings to listen to difficulties and problems of teachers and students in online teaching and learning, hence the Board gives solutions to overcome outstanding problems and develop a technical group to deal with technical support for teachers and students.

The school has arranged "three-on-the-spot" for students to practice both at school and at enterprises. Schools and enterprises support food, accommodation, contact with medical facilities for COVID-19 vaccination, and provide living and learning conditions for students during the period of practical study and internship.

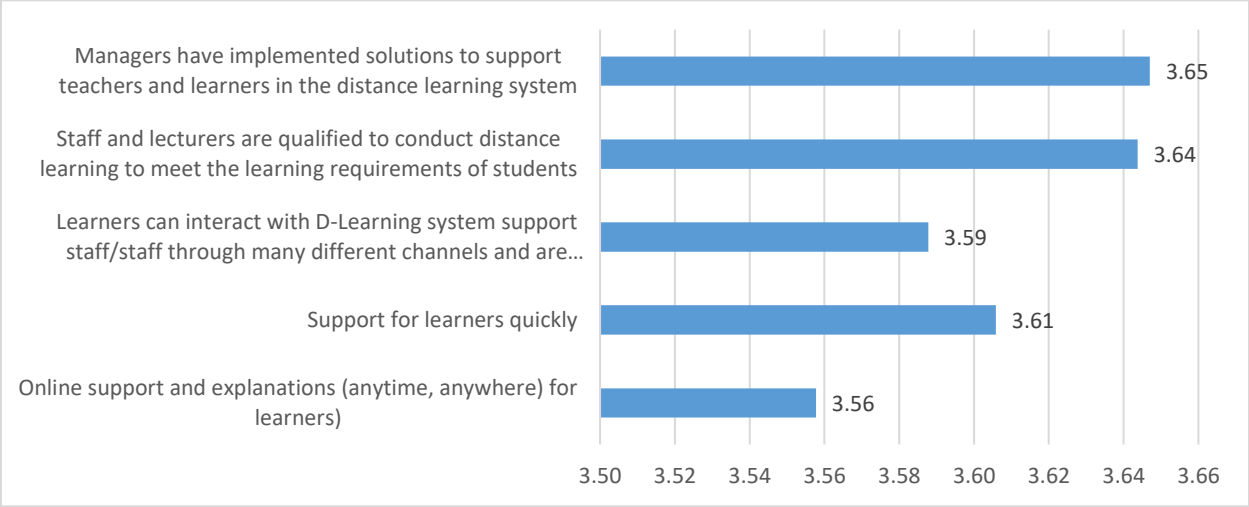
Source: Discussion with leaders and teachers of Ly Tu Trong Vocational College

2.5 ***Administrators and teachers***

In general, the management staff and teachers are evaluated relatively well when conducting distance /online learning activities. The strong points are to

support learners in the distance learning process on a regular basis and the teaching staff who are capable of conducting distance learning and meeting the requirements of the students. However, the assessment score is reported to be not really high (reaching 3.6 and 3.5 out of the maximum score of 5), showing that the teaching staff still face certain difficulties when implementing the distance/online training activities.

Figure 4. General assessment of staff supporting the implementation of distance training



Status of training and retraining for teachers:

From 2018 to present, the DVET has coordinated with the International Labor Organization (ILO) to organize a virtual integrated course for 25 teachers; with the German Federal Organization for International Cooperation (GIZ) to implement training courses on digital pedagogy for 180 teachers. Currently, the DVET is coordinating with GIZ to deploy digital pedagogical training courses for roughly 600 teachers and administrators. The General Department is coordinating with the Organization of Francophonie International (OIF) to develop an online capacity building program for vocational education teachers who are expected to pilot the training program in 2022.

Through the competition "Designing online teaching in vocational education" at the lecture conference in 2021 and practice over the past time, it can be seen that the teaching team has actively and actively innovated their teaching methods,

transformed from formal directly to online, contributing to maintaining training activities of VET institutes in the context of complicated developments of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, there are still certain difficulties and limitations, especially for teachers at VET institutes in remote areas, areas with extremely difficult socio-economic conditions due to lack of facilities, material, equipment and technical basis. In addition, many teachers have not been trained in modern teaching methods and digital pedagogy, which greatly affects the transformation of organization form and training quality.

Box 5: Evaluation of the capacity of vocational education teachers through the lecture conference in 2021

The National Vocational Education Teacher Training Conference in 2021 was held online for the first time with more than 400 teachers coming from 55 localities and 06 ministries and branches, who confirmed their readiness and capacity of the teaching staff in innovating teaching methods to adapt to the current context. Especially, within the framework of the National Conference of Vocational Education Teachers in 2021, the DVET in collaboration with the German Federal Organization for International Cooperation organized the contest of "Designing online teaching in vocational education". The contest attracted more than 600 teachers to participate in the grassroots competition (Round 1) from more than 50 localities in Vietnam.

Source: Department of Teachers - General Department of Vocational Education

Orientation for vocational education training development, including teachers and lecturers serving distance training in the period of 2022-2025

In the draft of Vocational Education Development Strategy for the period of 2021-2030, with a vision to 2045, the solution of "Development of vocational teachers and managers" is identified as the key to achieve strategic goals and objectives and In the draft project "Digital transformation in vocational education to 2025, with orientation to 2030", the tasks of fostering and updating digital knowledge, skills and digital training methods for vocational teachers are defined as important solutions. This shows that the DVET always attaches great importance to capacity

development, completion of professional knowledge and pedagogical skills for vocational education teachers.

In order to meet the needs of training, fostering and improving the use of IT technology/digital skills and digital pedagogy for a large number of vocational education teachers, the most effective method is utilized through online training courses for teachers. When teachers become learners, they will better understand and realize students' difficulties during online learning. Therefore, teachers will be more conscious when applying "digital pedagogy" skills in combination with program improvement and teaching methods innovation so as to satisfy the capacity and requirements of students.

2.6 Students

- *Students of VET institutes*

- *Suitability of students in online training:* distance training is a suitable form for most learners with average capacity and economic conditions and those who live in remote and rural areas. Distance learning has many limitations for those who are disadvantaged students with vision and hearing disabilities and those with difficult economic circumstances cannot afford to buy learning devices, even a smartphone and pay for internet connection costs.

- The majority of teachers commented that College students with their basic knowledge of high school subjects combined with ability to use IT proficiently can absorb knowledge from online lectures. In addition, they have the ability to self-study,so teachers do not face any difficulties or obstacles in teaching college students in various fields. For intermediate level students, this form of training has less effective, but it's still generally acceptable. For students of grade 9+, there exist difficulties in the process of online learning at home. Learners are still young with the spirit of self-study being not high, which means that teachers spend a lot of time on classroom management, reminding students to study and do exercises along with teaching and instruction activities.

- *Student's receptive ability*: According to teachers, at any level, there are students with good and bad absorbing capacity, depending on their sense of learning,

learning conditions and method of teaching; typically, students with relatively good and good learning performance usually absorb in a faster way than those with average level. However, the level of students' acquisition mainly depends on their learning attitude. Online learning clearly reflects the "differentiation" of students' qualifications. Specifically, in the classroom, there are two groups, including the group of students with a good sense of learning who have both a positive learning attitude and good learning performance. These students are self-disciplined and listen to lessons in class (online), always complete exercises assigned by the teacher. Meanwhile, students lack concentration and excitement in learning cope with difficulty in knowledge absorption even having support from their teacher.

In addition, learning equipment has a relatively significant impact on the quality and acquisition of lessons by students. Students using computers during online training receive information and do practice better than those with smartphones because there are some specialized applications that cannot be run on phones (such as drawing graphics, data processing). However, in fact, many students who do not have personal computer lead to limitations in learning

- *Learners who are employees working at enterprises*

The employees participating in the training are aware of the practical benefits that they will acquire from distance training, so their self-discipline and initiative in learning seem to be better than students at schools. In addition, they have hands-on experience and skills to absorb theoretical subjects in an effective manner.

3. Evaluate advantages and disadvantages in the implementation process

3.1 Advantages:

Science and technology progress plays an important role in supporting and promoting the implementation of online training forms. The software that supports online training is considered user-friendly and most of the software are free, so it is accessible to training institutions. The teachers grasp and apply these softwares in a prompt way, so they do not have many difficulties in teaching theoretical content.

As mentioned, although it is undesirable, the fact that the Covid pandemic has created a "favorable" like a strong push for most VET institutes and enterprises to quickly convert training form into online. Through practical experience, institutions and teachers have learned many lessons to gradually overcome the limitations and promote the strengths of online training. From there, schools will create a basis to continue to maintain training in the new context, even when the Covid pandemic comes to an end.

In the trend of digital transformation, VET institutes have also been improved in awareness as well as have access to and capacity in planning, thereby serving as a basis for synchronous investment implementation. infrastructure system for digital transformation, creating favorable conditions and environment for the development of distance learning.

3.2 Difficulties and challenges in the process of implementing green investment

Although the training program has several advantages and benefits as mentioned, it is mainly due to the impact of the Covid pandemic that this form of training has only been applied by institutions recently because there are many difficulties from objective and subjective reasons

Objective difficulties:

- *Due to practical requirements for vocational training of vocational education*: According to the general discussion, the biggest limitation/difficulty to the form of vocational training is that the field of vocational education has many technical occupations with a focus on technical training. Practical skills, so in many professions it is very difficult, even impossible to apply remote "virtual" practice instruction for students. The most advanced virtual reality technologies currently cannot fully simulate/support practical skills. At the same time, for many professions, students also cannot afford to prepare materials and equipment to practice at home. Therefore, distance learning will not be able to be the mainstream training method of these professions.

- *Due to the specificity of assessment in the profession*: For practical training and when testing and evaluating both teachers and learners, it will be difficult to

determine the accuracy of the operations if they are not practiced on distance/online training. This can be considered an important limitation because in case examinations are not guaranteed to be accurate and fair, assessment of the capacity of learners cannot be assessed precisely and even impact on the reliability on training quality.

- *Unsecured study conditions for students with difficult economic circumstances:* In big cities, most students have computers or smartphones, so online learning is relatively easy and common. However, trainees who attend vocational training in rural areas are from more disadvantaged economic backgrounds, families cannot afford to buy equipment (computers, phones) and connect to the internet, so they often share phones with family members or share with their neighbor's internet network. Therefore, it is difficult for these students to fully and effectively participate in online learning sessions like other students.

Besides, even for students who already have enough equipment, they still often encounter problems that reduce the efficiency and quality of online training, particularly an unstable or broken connection or the impact of the external environment (the school environment at home is not quiet,leading to their distraction) …

Subjective Difficulties

Regarding perception: Through the discussion, it is found that some leaders and staff of VET institutes do not see this as a feasible form of training with practical benefits to the grassroots, but still considered as a temporary measure used by the school, when the pandemic is over the direct teaching method will be utilized. Therefore, schools will not spend a lot of resources on investing and developing online training systems or E-learning.

In addition, the name of the form of training is not attractive, inadvertently creating barriers and restricting the target audience. Some representatives of VET institutes participating in the discussion said that it would be very difficult for schools to enroll students if they used the name of 'distance training' because many parents would have a "afraid" mentality and would not want to register "distance training" for their children. For apprenticeships who have just graduated from middle school and

even high school, their parents often want their children to go to school directly not only to acquire knowledge and skills but also receive better learning management from schools.

Difficulty in IT infrastructure investment: To deploy effective distance learning requires synchronous investment in technology infrastructure (including 6 components as stated in the Circular), however, this will be very difficult for many public VET institutes with limited budget. On the part of VET institutes , only a few schools are relatively fully equipped with equipment, facilities and technology infrastructure (virtual classrooms) for online training activities. Meanwhile, synchronous investment not only requires large resources but also needs a long-term plan and vision for this activity.

-Some teachers have difficulties in applying information technology to teaching, the incompetent use of online learning software, which leads to ineffective teaching.

- Most of the contents and learning materials have not been 'digitized', so both teachers and learners have only learned at a basic level and faced many difficulties to improve their level.

Finally, the difficulty for the implementation of the form of distance training is that the opportunities for development among institutions are not equal. Specifically, large cities/provinces have both modern and adequate technological infrastructure with trainees have more secure economic conditions and at the same time are familiar with online training at the high school level, so the large VET institutes (high-quality vocational colleges) in the cities and economic regions will take more advantages to deploying this form of training. Meanwhile, VET institutes in remote rural areas, especially VET institutes will face more disadvantages and find it difficult to "compete" with large urban schools in implementing this form of distance/online training. The gap will be widened between the "strongs" of VET institutes. Therefore, "weaker" vocational training institutions need to research and select specific occupations, subjects, and training content - which are strengths to be able to deploy online training in aim to avoiding lagging behind on the development path.

PART 3 SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Through the process of synthesizing, analyzing information and assessing the situation of implementing the form of distance training and guided self-study, it has been shown that most VET institutes and enterprises participating in the field of vocational education are currently implementing online training. Therefore, in order to put Circular 33/2018 into practice as well as promote this form of training, the consulting group proposes the following recommendations:

3.1 Recommendations to put Circular 33/2018 into practice soon and promote distance and guided training

3.1.1 For the DVET and the local state management agencies in charge of vocational education and training

Recommendation 1: Improve policies, regulations and guidelines

- First of all, the relevant units of the DVET (the Department of Continuous Education as the focal point) need to soon agree on and supplement and amend a number of contents of Circular 33 in accordance with the current context and the new situation. Supplementing regulations in training organization, assessment and recognition of online training results...; Refer to the research results, recommendations of the expert group and synthesize the comments of the delegates of the Technical Workshop to comprehensively adjust the content of the circular.
- Actively develop documents guiding the implementation of the Circular in a timely manner (right after the revised Circular is issued). Specifically, develop specific regulations and guidelines for a number of issues that are of interest to VET institutes and enterprises participating in vocational training and encounter problems in the implementation process such as: regulations on technical infrastructure systems and application software used to deploy distance training; Mechanism to encourage the contribution, use/exploitation of digital learning material database; Regulations on online tests, exams and assessments; Method and content (form) on enrollment registration/reporting training results in a simple and effective online form.
- Review relevant documents and regulations and propose directions for adjustment and correction (if necessary) to ensure consistency and

accuracy between documents and ensure effectiveness for implementation. For example, consider and amend a number of articles of the Circular regulating the working mode of teachers, including content related to online training to remove the current limitations and shortcomings in the current regulations regarding the working mode of teachers, to be in line with the trend of digital transformation and online training in the current and future context.

- Timely, fully and synchronously issue a legal corridor on digital transformation, complete and implement the "Digital transformation project in vocational education in the period of 2021 - 2025, with a vision to 2030" to create favorable conditions for VET institutes to implement in a uniform and effective manner.

Recommendation 2: Promote digital transformation, create favorable opportunities to deploy distance / combined training

- Increase communication on digital transformation strategies in the field of vocational education in order to *raise awareness and responsibility of management agencies, VET institutes , staff, lecturers, students and the community about the role and benefits of digital transformation in vocational education,* at the same time, integrate propaganda, provide information and guiding documents on the implementation of distance training.
- Innovate communication methods, effectively and safely use social networks and combine the use of other media to widely spread information about successful examples in implementing distance/combined training, gradually changing awareness, interest, creating consensus and support of learners, VET institutes , enterprises and the whole society for this form of training.
- Promote the complete implementation of the database system of the entire vocational education sector to connect, communicate, and share data from central to local levels, schools, and be synchronous with national databases on vocational education and other specialized databases, contributing to shaping the become a national open database.

- Develop policies and programs to support schools in investing in network infrastructure, synchronous IT equipment, and highly interactive VLE/LMS learning solution systems; laboratories, virtual workshops, smart classrooms, digital learning materials development equipment; ensure a smooth, stable and secure network environment; create equal learning opportunities among regions with different socio-economic conditions.
- Regularly train and foster human resources (managers, lecturers, staff) with knowledge and skills in using IT, information security skills, skills in effective exploitation and use of information technology to apply for teaching and management. Right from the first years, it is necessary to focus and prioritize training and fostering on digital pedagogical capacity and modern teaching methods for teachers to ensure that the teaching staff can best adapt to the context of digital transformation in vocational education, maintaining and ensuring training quality in the new normal.
- Develop mechanisms and policies to promote the development of digital learning materials at all levels and occupations, in association with the connection and sharing of learning materials between localities and schools; forming digital learning material databases, open learning material databases for the whole industry, linking with the world, meeting the needs of self-study and lifelong learning.
- *Implement a pilot model of a shared platform*: Encourage VET institutes and enterprises to cooperate in researching and deploying shared platforms, especially building a digital learning material database. In the current period, piloting the common digitization platform at 11 partner schools of the GIZ project to learn from experience, then gradually replicate it to deploy to the entire vocational education system.

Recommendation 3: Increase the investment of resources for the conditions to ensure the implementation process

- Step up the construction of technology infrastructure: The MOLISA and the DVET cooperate with telecommunications and digital technology corporations to build a synchronous digital technology infrastructure and transfer technology, equipment to VET institutes with reasonable funding,

build a preferential and supportive mechanism for VET institutes in remote districts and difficult economic areas, creating favorable conditions for VET institutes and apprentices.

- Ensure investment resources and implementation funding: The MOLISA, the DVET and the vocational education management agencies in the interested localities, spend funds to support and create conditions for VET institutes to conduct digital transformation strategy quickly and synchronously across all 6 components, thereby creating a digital ecosystem to be able to widely and effectively deploy distance/online training.
- Encourage vocational training institutions to develop combined training courses/programs (distance/online and face-to-face training) in which, depending on the profession and level of training, a minimum duration is specified for practical activities at establishments or enterprises to create opportunities to experience the learning environment and actual production, and at the same time create understanding, connect with teachers and exchange and connect with classmates.
- Organize training courses to improve the capacity of digital technology application and equip digital pedagogy for vocational education teachers to conduct quality and effective distance training.
- Develop long-term policies to support students and teachers with difficult circumstances, in rural and remote areas, to ensure adequate learning and teaching equipment for distance learning; Mechanisms to support and reduce internet connection fees for teachers and learners can effectively deploy distance learning, no students or teachers is left behind.

3.1.2 For vocational education institutes

- Leaders of vocational education institutes need to be aware and learn about distance/combined training and current policy documents and regulations to give critical opinions to perfect the policy.

-VET institutes need to be active and proactive in formulating and implementing digital transformation strategies, creating an environment/ecosystem for the implementation of digital technology-based training models such as the distance

learning method. In particular, VET institutes that have received the support and support of the DVET and international and domestic organizations and projects should consider this as a priority task for implementation (typically 11 partner schools of the GIZ project).

- Institutions develop plans and prioritize funding for investment activities in IT infrastructure, application software to flexibly apply appropriate teaching forms, which can combine face-to-face learning and online to maintain teaching and learning activities, ensure quality and efficiency, and adapt to specific conditions and circumstances.

- Fully equip teaching equipment for the teaching staff or create conditions for teachers to buy training equipment at preferential prices to encourage teachers to invest in teaching more effectively.

- The school needs to pay more attention to students with difficult circumstances, the school spends a part of the budget, at the same time call for support from enterprises, social organizations, partners to expand financial support for poor students but have a sense of learning such as: giving or buying at a preferential price or getting installment payments of learning equipment (computers, phones) combined with a reduction in internet charges for students. In the initial stage of implementing distance learning, the school minimizes costs... in order to create conditions for all students wishing to participate in vocational education.

- Diversify the methods of promotion and communication about distance learning, promote the use of internet communication solutions such as the school's website, and combine information transmission through social networking sites widely but with the ability to control the accuracy and correctness of the posted information.

3.2 Proposal to amend some contents of Circular 33

Through exchange, listening to the opinions of participants from local state management agencies/DOLISAs, VET institutes , enterprises and consulting with leaders of relevant units Regarding specific contributions to amending the content of Circular 33, the general advisory group proposes the following:

(1). Name and scope of the Circular:

- Consider amending the name in the circular on "Distance training and guided self-study" to *"Distance training and training forms combined with digital technology application"*.

- Scope: Do not include the subject "Registered higher education institutions for vocational education activities" into the scope of regulation (need more opinions from the Legal & Inspectorate Department of the General Department of Vocational Education).

(2). Words explanation

Adding some phrases that are basic and common concepts used in the form of distance learning are: online training, Training Management System (LMS), digital learning materials ...and replac Application System with Distance and guided training Management System,.

(3).Content of the circular (from article 3-10)

- Update new regulations and circulars referencing the revised old circulars[1]

- Explain and clarify the regulations on contents such as: the process of proposing and adjusting general subjects (Article 3 on Training programs and curricula); on Learning materials, on Technical infrastructure systems - regulations on ensuring 2 technical infrastructure systems...

- Remove/edit contents that VET institutes said are not applicable in practice and representatives of relevant Departments of DVET said the content is no longer consistent with new regulations (refer to summary of comments).

- Supplement the contents of a number of necessary phrases to ensure consistency in accordance with the prescribed policies and documents (refer to the summary of comments).

(4) Some other suggestions

[1] Circular No. 42/2015//TT-BLDTBXH is replaced by Circular 34/2018/TT-BLDTBXH;
Circular 05/2017/TT-BLDTBXH is replaced by Circular 07/2019/TT-BLDTBXH;
Circular 10/2017/TT-BLDTBXH is replaced by Circular 24/2020/TT-BLDTBXH

- Supplement regulations on methods and criteria for examination, assessment and examination for online training.

- Propose to allow the length of training to be increased by more than 5 hours/day to ensure flexibility and meet the needs of learners (for example, students who need to speed up their learning like employees take advantage of their time to learn more). continuous study time on Saturday, Sunday).

- Review and adjust the regulations on facilities for distance/online training (because 1 virtual training session can serve "unlimited" number of learners...)

- Criteria for monitoring the quality of distance/ online training

- Criteria to evaluate and recognize the training process of learners at different institutions?

CONCLUSION

Distance/online learning and guided self-study are forms of training that help expand access to vocational education for all learners in need, meeting people's lifelong learning needs. Distance learning along with training models that combine face-to-face and online training have gradually become a popular learning model in the context of the 4th industrial revolution and digital transformation taking place strongly in all aspects. When deployed on a large scale, this form of training will create a breakthrough in the number and size of participants, saving costs but still ensuring the quality of training, helping to improve teaching effectiveness. vocational education.

The introduction of Circular 33 has created a legal corridor for VET institutes to deploy new forms of training to meet diverse needs, create favorable conditions for learners and bring benefits to many parties, not only learners but also VET institutes and society. However, due to many difficulties, both subjective and objective, at the present this form of training has not really been applied fully and widely.

To put distance learning into practice, first of all, it is necessary to quickly amend and complete Circular 33/2018, develop specific regulations and guidelines but ensure simplicity and convenience in terms of procedures for VET institutes and businesses to easily deploy. Next, the General Department of Vocational Education and Training and VET institutes need to prioritize appropriate resources, synchronously invest in components for digital transformation, thereby creating a favorable environment for the implementation of distance learning and other forms of training. other forms of training based on digital technology. At the same time, VET institutes need to actively and positively implement solutions to innovate program content, teaching and learning methods, test, evaluate and improve the capacity of vocational education teachers. In particular, it is necessary to pay more attention to supporting students and teachers with difficult economic conditions and in regions, ensure that no one is left behind in any form of education.

In summary, digital transformation is identified as one of the most important tasks and an overarching solution in the process of innovation and development of vocational education. Distance learning is an important piece of the picture of

digital transformation in the field of vocational education. To be able to deploy distance learning effectively, it is necessary to ensure the principle of putting learners, managers and teachers of vocational education as the center, developing digital transformation infrastructure as an important foundation. The successful implementation of distance learning will make a significant contribution to the development of an open, flexible, effective and sustainable vocational education system, meeting the development goals of the country in the new period.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Some concepts from the research overview

System quality: According to DeLone & McLean (2003 .)), Peter & Associates (2008), system quality is the desired characteristic of an information system. For example, ease of use, flexibility, reliability as well as system features such as ease of learning, intuition, sophistication and response time. FollowUrbach & Mueller (2012), the measurement (measure) usually focuses on the usability and performance characteristics of the system. In addition, many studies have used the Davis (1989)' TAM model to measure the system characteristics in this model is "perceived ease of use".

Information quality: For the output quality of the system, DeLone & McLean (2003) believes that the quality of information is a matter of content of the e-commerce system. Web content should be personalized, complete, relevant, understandable and secure if we expect a potential buyer or supplier to initiate an Internet transaction and return to our website on a regular basis. often.Peter & Associates (2008) that information quality is the desired characteristic of system output, that is, management reports and web pages. Examples: relevance, intelligibility, accuracy, uniformity, completeness, spread, timeliness, and usability.

Service quality: Is the effectiveness of the support services provided to the users of the system. DeLone & McLean (2003) considers service quality to be the overall support from the service provider, whether this support is provided by the information system department, a new entity, or outsourced. Poor user support will lead to lost customers and lost sales.Peter & Associates (2008), Urbach & Mueller (2012) all believe that service quality is the quality of the support system users receive from the information system department and IT support personnel. For example: fast response, accuracy, reliability, technical competence and empathy of IT support personnel, user training, support hotline.

Learning is a process that begins with different inputs (teachers, content, students, learning environment) going through a transition (lecture, learner interaction, practice, assessment). feedback) and lead to certain outputs (skill development, knowledge enhancement, job performance enhancement, attitude and behavior change, increase motivation) (Chopra & Associates, 2019).

Effective learning: In this study, Mr Lee & Lee (2008) using “academ performance”, Klobas & McGill (2010) use “student benefits” to meas effectiveness of D-Learning; According to the authorsLee-Post (2009), Yengin & Associates (2011), the results of the D-Learning system (system outcome) are evaluated and measured by two variables, net benefits and learner's satisfaction; Research byChopra & Associates (2019) proposed "Satisfaction" and "Net benefit" are "D-Learning effectiveness" and grouped as a secondary factor.

Net benefits: Follow DeLone & McLean (2003 .)), net benefits are information retrieval, efficiency and quality of decision-making ability, confidence in decision-making, enhancement of user productivity (e.g. employment or higher scores on testing), accuracy of decisions (for example, what are the existing market opportunities) and users' willingness to pay for a particular piece of information; In the theoretical model of DeLone & McLean (2003), the net benefits variable is a combination of two variables of individual impact and organizational impact from previous theoretical models. Personal impact refers to the achievement gained from learning performance, the ultimate goal of the user after completing the course from the D-Learning system. This achievement can be anything like a better score on a test or a better job(Chopra & Associates, 2019). These effects occur when learners can apply the knowledge learned from the D-Learning system to effectively apply it to their work.(Chopra & Associates, 2019).

Satisfaction: Follow Urbach & Mueller (2012), satisfaction is the level of user satisfaction when exploiting the information system, which is an important factor to measure the success of the information system; Student satisfaction is the positive idea or experience of direct interaction with the D-Learning system, measuring the adequacy, effectiveness, and overall satisfaction with the D-Learning system.(Aparicio & associates, 2017).

Appendix 3. **STATISTICS ASSESSMENT BY BASIC Criteria**

Each of the items below is given a score from 1 to 5. The lowest rating is 1

1. Evaluation of system quality

	Officials, teaching teachers	**Relevant managers**	**Representative of vocational education institutition**	**Business representatives**	**Representative of DOLISA**	**Students are studying**	**Labor is working**	**Average**
The D-Learning system has a clear structure, easy to understand, the features of the system are easy to use (through instructions or reading manuals)	3.4	3.6	3.4	4.4	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.50
The D-Learning system has the necessary features and functions for online learning	3.6	3.8	3.5	4.5	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.59
The D-Learning system has attractive features to attract users	3.4	3.6	3.5	4.1	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.47
D-Learning system features and Data are fully integrated and consistent	3.5	3.7	3.4	4.2	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.53
The D-Learning system has features so that users can interact with each other (interact with system managers, interact with learners)	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.9	3.2	3.7	3.5	3.62

D-Learning system with flexible features (easy to customize)	3.5	3.7	3.6	4.3	3.2	3.6	3.5	3.58
D-Learning system works stably, can be accessed anytime, anywhere	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.0	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.56
D-Learning system is secure and safe (by privacy policy, account and password)	3.5	3.8	3.6	4.4	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.64
D-Learning system provides tools to personalize learning, display information suitable for individual learners (set up class schedules, study plans suitable for individual learners)	3.4	3.6	3.4	4.1	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.60
The school invests and prepares very well in digital infrastructure for distance learning	3.6	3.5	3.4	4.0	3.3	3.7	3.6	3.61

2. Quality of information, content of knowledge

	Officials, teaching teachers	**Relevant managers**	**Representative of vocational education institute**	**Business representatives**	**Representative of DOLISA**	**Students are studying**	**Labor is working**	**Average**
The D-Learning system provides content/knowledge related to my work	3.547	3.494	3.496	4,000 won	3.073	3.558	3.394	3.520

The D-Learning system provides easy-to-understand content/knowledge	3.481	3,644	3.562	3.818	3,250	3.549	3.451	3.528
D-Learning system provides updated content/knowledge	3.524	3.554	3.529	4,000 won	3.171	3.603	3.479	3.561
The D-Learning system provides content/knowledge designed in various forms (videos, images, audio, text lectures, etc.)	3.581	3.837	3.530	4.182	3,350	3,651	3.549	3,627
D-Learning system provides content/knowledge with good quality	3.471	3,626	3.496	4,000 won	3.158	3,630	3,662	3.592
The D-Learning system provides the content/knowledge required by learners	3,500	3.554	3.546	3,800	3.175	3.594	3.507	3.558
D-Learning system provides comprehensive content/knowledge (with all the knowledge that learners need)	3.452	3.593	3.537	3,909	3.225	3.590	3.406	3.560

3. Service quality of the training institution

	Officials, teaching teachers	Relevant managers	Representative of vocational education institute	Busines representatives	Representative of DOLISA	Students are studying	Labor is working	Average
D-Learning system supports and explains online (anytime, anywhere) for learners)	3.57	3.71	3.52	4.45	3.20	3.58	3.38	3.56
Learners can interact with D-Learning system support staff/staff through many different channels and are actively supported by them.	3.53	3.61	3.62	4.27	3.28	3.62	3.41	3.59
D-Learning system supports learners quickly	3.50	3.65	3.59	4.45	3.21	3.64	3.49	3.61
Learners of distance learning programs have qualifications and skills that are not (disparate) inferior to other trained workers	3.38	3.22	3.38	4.00	3.26	3.57	3.44	3.52
The school's staff and lecturers are capable of conducting distance learning to meet the learning requirements of students.	3.57	3.65	3.60	4.36	3.10	3.69	3.63	3.64

Managers have implemented solutions to support teachers and learners in the distance learning system	3.52	3.65	3.58	4.09	3.11	3.69	3.53	3.65

4. System intelligence

System intelligence	Officials, teaching teachers	Relevant managers	Representative of vocational education institute	Business representatives	Representative of DOLISA	Students are studying	Labor is working	Average
D-Learning is convenient on different devices such as laptops, tablets, phones	3.50	3.99	3.52	4.27	2.93	3.60	3.30	3.56
The D-Learning system can suggest appropriate materials or knowledge in the learning process	3.31	3.68	3.43	3.91	3.14	3.56	3.34	3.51
The D-Learning system has a virtual assistant to help me find documents and study	3.26	3.60	3.39	4.27	2.90	3.55	3.33	3.49
The D-Learning system has the application of AR (Augmented reality), or VR (Virtual reality) or MR (Mixed reality) tools.	3.20	3.52	3.28	3.80	2.94	3.50	3.16	3.44
The training program is designed to be flexible and suitable for many different audiences. For example: For students or working people, the content has been adjusted to suit the target audience.	3.45	3.61	3.49	4.09	3.05	3.63	3.29	3.57
Training programs linked to contexts or real projects	3.40	3.55	3.38	3.82	3.10	3.59	3.25	3.53

Learners can easily share their knowledge and documents on the system for other students	3.56	3.71	3.52	4.18	2.95	3.62	3.38	3.58
Learners can easily take the initiative in the learning process such as: self-studying lectures, documents, videos, etc.	3.50	3.87	3.54	4.27	3.00	3.62	3.37	3.58

5. Review of benefits

	Officials, teaching teachers	**Relevant managers**	**Representative of vocational education institute**	**Business representatives**	**Representative of DOLISA**	**Students are studying**	**Labor is working**	**Average**
Make it easier to find a job	3,280	3,330	3.364	4,300	2.897	3.508	3.417	3.459
Helps improve work performance	3,320	3.511	3.529	4.273	3,000 won	3.528	3.507	3.493
Helps open up many development opportunities	3.417	3,620	3.579	4.364	3.216	3.597	3.493	3.562
Help achieve your career goals	3.359	3.593	3.508	4.273	3.027	3.571	3.507	3.537
Help save costs (financial)	3,631	3.846	3,783	4.364	3.027	3,633	3.557	3,623
Help save time	3.618	3,839	3,762	4.455	3.132	3,651	3.529	3,629

6. Satisfaction rating

	Officials, teaching teachers	Relevant managers	Representative of vocational education institute	Business representatives	Representative of DOLISA	Students are studying	Labor is working	Average
Feel convenient when joining the D-Learning system	3.46	3.64	3.57	4.20	2.89	3.57	3.46	3.54
Learning in the form of D-Learning has met the wishes of learners	3.27	3.51	3.38	4.10	3.00	3.54	3.49	3.49
Overall satisfied with the D-Learning course	3.37	3.51	3.49	4.00	3.06	3.59	3.46	3.54

7. Demand for learning in the form of distance learning

	Officials, teaching teachers	Relevant managers	Representative of vocational education institute	Business representatives	Representative of DOLISA	Students are studying	Labor is working	Average
Will consider continuing to use other courses in the form of D-Learning in the future	3.373	3.495	3.467	3,900	2,974	3.497	3.507	3.473

Will recommend to others to take courses in the form of D-Learning	3,301	3.579	3.459	4,200	3.237	3.524	3.437	3.498
Employees/students will be willing to participate in distance learning courses if it suits the needs	3.452	3.561	3.521	4,300	3.105	3.587	3.521	3.550
Learners will participate in distance learning courses if there is a combination between enterprises and schools	3.442	3.592	3.520	4,100	3.189	3.602	3,643	3.573

8. Orientation of distance learning suitable for the context of digital transformation

	Officials, teaching teachers	**Relevant managers**	**Representative of vocational education institute**	**Business representatives**	**Representative of DOLISA**	**Students are studying**	**Labor is working**	**Average**
Innovating content and building learning materials for popular disciplines	3.587	3,600	3.537	4.182	3.231	3.575	3.569	3.559
Schools should build a standard database as a digital infrastructure for management innovation	3.438	3.714	3.597	4.273	3,270	3.602	3.549	3.583
Changing the way of teaching and learning with new methods in the digital environment	3,660	3,663	3,659	4.455	3.405	3,600	3.514	3.593
Building training modules on digital competence, integrating into training programs,	3.505	3.724	3,664	4.455	3.389	3.616	3.625	3.602
Recognition of digital competence as one of the graduation	3.495	3,643	3.584	4.364	3.222	3,631	3,638	3.605

criteria/output training objectives								

9. Impact of the Covid pandemic on training activities

	Officials, teaching teachers	Relevant managers	Representative of vocational education institute	Business representatives	Representative of DOLISA	Students are studying	Labor is working	Average
The Covid pandemic offers an opportunity to promote the development of distance learning	3.544	3,765	3.653	4.273	3.378	3.532	3,649	3.536
The appropriate form of distance learning in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic	3.602	3,847	3.712	4.455	3.405	3.717	3.753	3,695
The Covid pandemic motivates the school to focus on investing in distance learning and digital transformation	3.524	3,755	3,664	4.273	3.389	3,655	3,750	3,637
Recruiting students for distance learning programs more favorable in the context of Covid	3,480	3.561	3.467	4.364	3,250	3,677	3,671	3,630

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