Innovation in Vietnamese Higher Education Teaching Methods - Approach from Rational Choice Theory

Nguyen Van Hiep1*, Pham Ngoc Tram2

1Thu Dau Mot University, Binh Duong 75109, Vietnam
2Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Thu Dau Mot University, Binh Duong 75109, Vietnam

Received September 15, 2020; Revised November 7, 2020; Accepted November 19, 2020

Abstract Education and training at all levels in Vietnam are considered the national priorities, along with science and technology development. Innovation in higher education teaching methods in Vietnam has been implemented for many years and is based on selecting, inheriting traditional teaching methods, and absorbing and applying modern teaching methods to meet social needs. Rational choice theory is an approach used by social scientists to understand human behavior. In recent years, this method has been widely used in many fields: society, economy, politics, culture, religion. The main purpose of this article is to provide an overview of the rational choice theory, on which basis to apply in innovating higher education teaching methods in the context of Vietnam's renewal and integration. Applying rational choice theory to innovate higher education teaching methods in Vietnam focuses on three main issues: (1) The rationale in educational choices; (2) Maximize the benefits of learners; (3) Highlighting students' choices requires teachers to renew their thinking about how to teach, taking learners as the center to promote student initiative. The role of the teacher in the dynamic and intelligent university environment of the twenty-first century is not only the imparting knowledge but also as a guide, problem-raising person, and maximizer of self-study and independent thinking of students with the support of information technology, communication, and modern equipment and teaching facilities. The article concludes with some guidance that lecturers should follow.

Keywords Innovation, University Teaching Methods, Rational Choice Theory

1. Introduction

Education and training at all levels in Vietnam are considered the national priorities, along with science and technology development. The traditional method of teaching has been used in Vietnamese universities for the last decades. Accordingly, the lecturer outlines the framework, raises suggestions, and discusses key issues related to the problem with the students. By doing so, the lecturer takes the main role in searching, creating, and even thinking on behalf of the learners. The learners are followers.

Innovation in higher education teaching methods in Vietnam has been implemented for many years and is based on selecting, inheriting traditional teaching methods, and absorbing and applying modern teaching methods to meet social needs. The rational choice theory with core contents related to the field of education and innovation of higher education teaching methods, such as the rationales in educational choices; maximization of learner benefits; highlighting students' choices. Therefore, with this study, in the context of innovation and development of Vietnamese higher education, we will analyze theoretically and practically...
how to apply this theory to the innovation of higher education teaching methods in Vietnam.

2. Literature Review

Rational choice theory is derived from several philosophies, economic theories, and other theories in social sciences [1, 2], with the concept that human nature is selfish, so every action is directed towards what is beneficial for oneself.

The rational choice theory was approached very early by Vietnamese scientists as a specific method of sociology. The proponent of this theory is an American sociologist George Homans (1961). In the 1960s and 1970s, some other scientists like Blau [3], Coleman [4], Cook and Emerson [5], and Knottnerus and Guan [6] extended and contributed to the development of this theory. Many studies in the last two decades employed the application of the rational choice theory. Wallace and Wolf [1] from the perspective of "rational choice" state that in a scarce society, it is impossible to have all the goods, positions, or spiritual values that people want so human behaviors are dominated by: (1) The human wants to rationally maximize his interests and make decisions based on his or her preferences and priorities; (2) The more of one thing an individual has, the less he or she likes it; (3) The prices of goods and services sold in the free market are determined directly by buyer and seller preferences. The thesis of Andersson [7] which studies the decision-making and risk-taking in academic environments, states that the choices made uncertainly will raise the question of rationale in decision making. Based on the rationality analysis coming from social circumstances, the author explains how students make their educational choices.

Shanks, et al. [8] conduct a survey in the education sector about the student's choice in the learning task. The research results have clarified many problems with rational choice theory. Vanberg [9] outlined several principles in the approach of rational principle and rational hypothesis; and emphasized the purpose of human behavior, to solve the problem, we must take rationality into account to avoid possible mistakes. Herfeld [10] states the potentials and limitations of rational choice theory and argues that this research theory can be applied to the analysis of individual choices across economic fields, discrimination, education (human capital), crime, addiction, family (marriage, divorce, fertility), and altruism. Knottnerus and Guan [6] analyze rational choice theory from a sociological point of view. Porta and Keating [11] introduce many different approaches to social science research, including analyzing the rationality of choice; and compare different methods.

Lovett [12] applies rational choice theory in explaining social phenomena. Bonwell and Eison [13] with the active learning theme, a reference, states some important directions for this research. Aboluwodi [14] seeks a new orientation to teaching and learning approaches in higher institutions in Nigeria and emphasizes the need for a paradigm shift from the teaching of "what to think" to "how to think". Kennedy [15] focuses on professional development programs. Saunders [16] conducts a test by letting students identify and compare their diverse motivations to the widely assumed motivations of selfishness and individualism. By doing so, students gain important critical thinking skills, and this, in turn, facilitate their confidence about their abilities to learn. Hoai, et al. [17] address the advantages and disadvantages of the autonomy in developing curricula that can be granted to member universities and faculties that belonged to Vietnam National University (VNU). Van Tien and Hoi [18] discuss the advantages of the industrial revolution 4.0 and how to innovate teaching methodologies in Vietnam University nowadays. Nguyễn Văn Hiệp [19] has provided valuable knowledge about innovative aspects of higher education teaching methods according to the philosophy of positive integration, many of which reflect rational choices. Chien [20] analyses teaching activities in China and indicates that apart from a reliance on traditional Chinese teaching, some more student-centered teaching is also identified.

Thus, innovation in higher education, in particular, is a problem that many scholars and governments of many countries are interested in. Most research and teaching innovation programs at the higher education level of the countries are aimed at training capable and dynamic individuals to contribute an important step to develop even in humanities, practically or theoretically, incorporate or government management, whether locally, nationally, or internationally. Teaching at higher education level aims to teach learners with basic knowledge, independent analytical spirit, dare to think and think methodically.

The purpose of the higher education teaching environment is to train successful individuals and responsible citizens. Graduates feel confident in understanding a wide range of issues and experiences in university or real life, regardless of any major. The main purpose is to train them into “responsible citizens”, who take responsibility for themselves first, then family and society.

However, the innovation of teaching at the higher education level also requires lecturers to take time in exploring and creating a lot in the process of design, preparation, and use of pedagogical options and situations to lead and evoke students to learn, and to think. To be successful with new methods, teachers have to be proactive in the curriculum, constantly learning, and always apply existing knowledge into practice.
3. Discussions

3.1. Rational Choice Theory - Some Issues Related to Education and Innovation of Higher Education Teaching Methods

Rational choice theory is built based on behavioral research because all complex social phenomena are controlled by human actions. According to this theory, all human acts arise for some purpose, or provide them with the greatest benefit or satisfaction based on the options available - and also for their highest personal benefit. As McNabb [21] says:

"Rational choice theory is a way of explaining human behavior. It is based on the idea that individuals rely on rational considerations to achieve results consistent with their personal goals."

Therefore, to be able to better understand the behavior of the whole society, the "rational choice" states that it is necessary to study an individual's rational decisions.

According to Green [22], the rational choice theory is to understand human behavior. Homans [23] gives six propositions of rational behavior including: (1) The success proposition (The more often an action is followed by a reward, the more likely a person will repeat the behavior); (2) The stimulus proposition (If the previous occurrence of a particular stimulus has been the occasion on which an individual's action has been rewarded, then the more similar the current stimulus is to the past one, the more likely the person is to repeat the action); (3) The value proposition (The more valuable a particular reward is to a person, the more often he will perform a behavior so rewarded); (4) Rational proposition (individuals will choose the actions for which the greatest value or ability to achieve results); (5) The deprivation-satiation proposition (The more often in the recent past an individual has received a particular reward, the less valuable any further unit of that reward becomes); and (6) The expectation proposition (the subject would be pleased if his or her expectations were fulfilled and vice versa).

Thus, the theory of rational choice is a way of explaining human behavior, starting from a certain purpose. And standing in front of choices, they will learn information, costs, benefits ... in the direction of benefit as much as possible - "maximizing benefits"; all actions are self-centered, benefit-centered. This is exactly what McNabb [21] mentions:

"Faced with the options they already know about the costs and benefits, people will act in a way that gives them the most benefit."

The rational choice theory states that everyone tries to proactively maximize their advantage in all situations and minimize their losses at the highest level. Therefore, using the rational choice theory, each individual must calculate the details, to make the most rational decision. In other words, the extreme rational calculation will determine human behavior, reason will be the driving force when making choices so that the results achieved are maximizing the satisfaction or profit of each individual.

Rational choice theory is a social science method that behavior in society reflects the law of maximizing benefits. In human society, as the commodity economy develops, while manufacturers aim to maximize profits, consumers have the goal of maximizing interests. Every individual's decisions are aimed at maximizing their interests.

Nowadays, the rational choice theory is applied not only in the fields of economics (investment, tax, consumption, savings, insurance) but also in the fields of education, marriage, birth, migration, crime ... with many different levels. In research and teaching subjects in social sciences and humanities, the rational choice theory is increasingly used in many disciplines: sociology, evolution theory, political science, tourism, public policy.

Rational choice theory often begins with a review of the selection behavior of one or more individual decision-making units as mentioned in Andersson [7]:

"Remarkably, educational options made based on uncertainty are the prospects in the risky labor market. Educational choices must also correspond to values of self-realization - starting from the ideology of the high modernity (personalization) variable that makes the decision even more difficult."

According to Andersson [7], in contemporary society, one of the most crucial decisions is about education and the choice can affect the whole life of a person. Because education does not just teach people how to make a living, or give them income source but also aspiration, honor, towards the true values of human in society and make people more responsible for themselves [7].

Therefore, the role of higher education becomes more important in orientation, choosing a career, awareness of social values, grasping necessary skills in life, analytical skills to adapt to an increasingly rapidly changing world, which relies on interdependence to solve problems of political, economic and social practice ... To achieve a level of awareness, especially understanding and application the methods to avoid useless costs while stimulating the career to develop in the micro direction and enhancing the professional value in society, there is no better environment than the university environment. An effective higher education environment, with positive teaching methods, will have a direct impact in helping the graduates to work scientifically, with high specialization.

For the benefit, students will decide what major, when, how, and which school to study to bring the maximum benefit. Therefore, it is required that schools must build principles of behavior with learners, according to the principle of maximizing benefits. In modern education, "benefit maximization" is considered as the operating principle and the governance principle governing the behavior of every department, individual, to meet the goal of maximizing the interests of students.

One of the leading solutions to "maximize the benefits"
of students is to innovate teaching methods. Higher education Vietnam has maintained for too long a rigid traditional teaching method, which is a teacher-centered, curriculum-based teaching method. With this method, the teacher forces students to listen, to think in the way of the teacher; the lecturer decides and students must follow; students have no choice. Although traditional teaching methods allow teachers to show and teach their knowledge, aiming to make students understand and memorize knowledge, this method pays little attention to developing thinking, training skills, and training attitudes for learners. It leads to the situation that most of the students learn passively and graduates do not meet the job requirements.

3.2. Higher Education in Vietnam - The Limitations of Teaching Method

The lecture-centered teaching method has existed for a long time [13]. The current method of higher education teaching in Vietnam still maintains a rigid and popular way of the traditional teaching method - the presentation method. The scientific basis of this approach is that when information and knowledge reach the learners' brains, they are converted and stored in memory, which can then be retrieved as needed (Details in Table 1). In practice, there are still teachers who have successfully applied the presentation method.

However, the traditional teaching methods in which teachers speak - students listen; teacher reads - student writes have revealed some limitations: discourage the active role of learners; passive learning affects the learning ability and concentration; discourage multidimensional information exchange; Lecturer's one-way communication stops them from controlling the time that learners spend on studying and deeply memorizing the content presented. To study well, learners must listen, take notes, try to remember to repeat the knowledge taught because the final exams, graduation often require recalling memory; Learners must use memory a lot, which leads to fatigue, stress, and pressure.

In thinking, most students and some university lecturers still consider the university as a "general" level, "level four", still maintain a one-way knowledge transmission of learning and teaching such as: "cramming learning", "following the curriculum", being afraid of "not following" the lesson plan. The teacher teaches "what a teacher has", regardless of whether the student "needs" or not; the learner is forced to "accept" - absolutely no choice for the learner. As a result, the quality of Vietnam's higher education is becoming worse, the graduates are unable to meet the requirements of the regional and international labor market. It is difficult for the graduates of Vietnam to work in countries with relatively high incomes such as Singapore, Japan, Germany ... If they want to work in those countries, they have to learn more, update more with their knowledge, skills, which takes a lot of time, effort, and money. Meanwhile, Vietnamese who graduated from universities in these countries will be invited to work by organizations, including Vietnamese universities. This is one of the reasons why Vietnam's overseas study "movement" takes place strongly in the context that education is a product of society, learners have the right to choose.

Despite the average cost for a year of study in the US is about 35,000 USD and to get a bachelor's degree, students have to spend about 150,000 USD, many Vietnamese students are still willing to pay the cost because they lack confidence in the domestic higher education. That leads to more and more students going abroad to study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Traditional teaching methods</th>
<th>Innovating teaching methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notion</td>
<td>Learning is the process of acquiring and comprehending, thereby forming knowledge, skills, thoughts, feelings.</td>
<td>Learning is a process of constructivism; students explore, discover, practice, exploit, and process information, ... self-develop knowledge, competence, and quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Pay attention to provide knowledge, skills, techniques. Learn to deal with exams. After the exam, the learned knowledge is often forgotten or rarely used.</td>
<td>Focus on forming competencies (creating, cooperating, ...) to teach scientific labor methods and techniques, teach how to learn. Learn to meet the demands of life now and in the future. What learned are essential, useful for students themselves, and social development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>From textbooks + lecturer</td>
<td>From a variety of sources: textbooks, lecturers, relevant scientific documents, experiments, museum, practice... associated with: - Knowledge, experience, and needs of students. - The real situation, local context, and environment - Issues that students care about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Methods of teaching, imparting knowledge one way</td>
<td>Methods of searching, investigating, and solving problems; interactive teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of organization</td>
<td>Fixed: Limited to the classroom, the teacher is facing the whole class</td>
<td>Mobile, flexible: Study in class, in the lab, in the field, in reality ..., study individually, study with friends, a study in a group, the whole class is facing the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compilation by the authors
If we conceive that training is also a kind of service in which products are people who meet the requirements of highly qualified human resources of society, then clearly the product of training depends very much on factors such as training programs, a training school, training of soft skills, ... but one thing that plays a leading role in the training method. In other words, to improve the quality of higher education in Vietnam, one of the inevitable paths is to innovate teaching methods - this is a requirement of objective reality [24]. The application of teaching methods and forms of teaching organization of universities in the world is often very flexible, based on the spirit of promoting the role of learners, creating maximum conditions for learners to learn and study by themselves. The current popular conception of Vietnamese universities is to teach learners with as much knowledge as possible so that they can have a solid foundation upon graduation, so the role and position of students are not interested. Teaching methods and forms are still quite out of date. The results of a field survey by the National Academy of Sciences in 2006 included the following comments on Vietnam's teaching and learning methods:

“The teaching method is ineffective, relies too much on presentations and lacks of active learning skills, resulting in less interaction between students and lecturer inside and outside the classroom; too much emphasis on memorization of knowledge without emphasis on conceptual learning or high level of learning (analysis and synthesis), which results in superficial rather than intensive learning; students learn passively” (quoted from Phạm Công Nhật [24]).

And:

“The innovation of teaching methods in higher education in our country today is sometimes only pharisaic. Teaching devices, such as projectors, videos ... are only aids to improve the quality of teaching, the most important thing is the realization that education must be creative and responsible. It is shown through the improvement of methods and curriculum that has not been focused” (quoted from Phạm Công Nhật [24]).

The above-mentioned fact, although not fully and substantially reflected in current higher education teaching methods, is also a reminder that Vietnam's education sector needs immediate solutions to innovate higher education teaching methods, otherwise, the national education will fall behind other countries in the region and around the world.

3.3. Applying Rational Choice Theory to Innovating Higher Education Teaching Methods

Currently, the search for a new teaching method to improve the quality of higher education in Vietnam is the concern of those interested in education. In our opinion, innovating higher education teaching methods does not mean removing all the values of the old method, but selecting and inheriting the traditional method. At the same time, applying the value of new methods to the innovation of higher education teaching methods to make them flexible, diversified, updated with methods and degrees of advanced universities in the world. Applying some of the views in rational choice theory to innovate higher education teaching methods also has that meaning.

The rationale in educational choices

Choosing a major in the increasingly open university admissions is a challenge for learners because choosing a major means of choosing for themselves a future. However, in a real situation, many students cannot identify the appropriate major. Many young people, because of family pressure, the "trend" of the crowd, and from immature perceptions, assuming that pedagogical students can only be a teacher, studying economics will surely be rich, studying medicine will not be unemployed, ...

Before choosing a major, learners will be consulted by schools, friends, relatives, family. The consequences of the wrong choice are also warned, such as loss of time - money - gray matter; limited excitement, cool down the desire to challenge oneself and conquer difficulties, from which leading to unhappiness, or worse, dissatisfaction, and so on and tying oneself into a vicious circle.

Notably, educational options are made on an uncertain basis as the future outlook in the labor market is always risky. A research result of Andersson [7] indicates that the rationale in educational decisions is derived from personal interests:

“In modern society, individuals are said to decide how they live their lives. One of the most important decisions that individuals face in this aspect is an educational choice” [7].

And that choice is based on two basic criteria: personal interests and social needs. In personal interests, economic values and aspirations are valued. However, the rationale in the choice of disciplines depends on society and context [7].

What and how to help learners cope with the risks involved in choosing a major? According to Andersson [7]:

“In everyday life, we are faced with existential questions such as What to Do? How to act? Who's Who? life become a risky endeavor, when individuals are faced with many choices, motivating learners to accept risks and challenges. It is necessary to convince them that taking risks will bring positive results in the future despite the uncertainty associated with this action. To aggravate decisions, this future must be understandable, that is, it must be seen as a potential future and the outcome is related to the decision made”.

From the above analysis, it shows that lecturers must master students' majors, grasp the rapidly changing society and context, and train them in basic skills and knowledge and creative thinking, adaptability when the job changes continuously to avoid the risk of rejection. The requirement to renovate teaching methods here is that the lecturers not only teach students what they have but must teach students to create new things. In which, it is necessary to teach how to learn, how to self-study, how to research, how to solve practical situations ... to learn to compete, to work. Depending on the subject, teachers must have a method of creating orientation and excitement for students.

Lecturers should not manipulate and orient students differently from their chosen majors, because that will make them confused, precarious, and easily put students in the state of "stuck" in the previous choice or stress and anxiety. This not only affects the mood and health of students, sometimes, it also ruins a whole learning journey. The lecturer must guide students to access information, a new understanding of learning, which is the process of self-transformation and enriching by choosing to import and process information obtained from their surrounding environment. Must clearly define the active position of students, student-centered, increase interaction to promote their autonomy.

Maximize learner benefits

For a long time, some subjects in some instructors did not fully provide the requirements and value of the subject, especially if the subject is necessary, to help students - especially the subjects are not in the major of the student.

A prevailing current situation in Vietnamese universities is a student's interest in general subjects in compulsory political theory. These subjects have a very specific goal of teaching learners with a worldview, scientific methodology on the basic contents of philosophy in general, Marxist-Leninist philosophy in particular, knowledge in Ho Chi Minh's thoughts, the revolutionary way of the Communist Party of Vietnam, through which creatively apply the acquired knowledge into scientific and practical awareness activities, raising the sense of responsibility of citizens of the great mission of the country. In practice, most lecturers of these subjects, upon request, only clarify the subject, method, and meaning of the subject; while the benefits of each subject to the major are almost "uncertain". Even for some new majors, it is unlikely that (some) lecturers in general subjects of political theory can understand, especially new subjects in Vietnam such as logistics, an international certificate in audit, marketing - communication; food quality and safety; robot and artificial intelligence; textile materials, ...

Thus, the core content of the rational choice theory applied in the education sector is "maximizing the benefits" of learners in innovating higher education teaching methods in Vietnam is clarifying the benefits of the learner for each subject. When this problem is solved well, other contents can be conveyed well to learners, creating conditions for improving the quality of university teaching.

In the current university context with many options, teachers not only have to know "how to teach" but also to "educate". "Teach": teach correctly, with appropriate progressive methods. "Educate": is an art of comfort; gently persuade and entice learners through the benefits of the subject, according to the motto "maximizing benefits" of learners.

Highlight students' choices

This is a proposition in rational choice theory, rational proposition (individuals will choose the actions for which the greatest value or ability to achieve results). According to Vanberg [9], rational propositions are considered as the core in the social sciences. The rational choice approach always assumes that individuals pursue what they consider reasonable in what Vanberg [9] says:

"Rational choice theorists often share the notion that human behavior is self-interested in the sense that people seek to promote what they consider to be in their interests, putting out the limitations they must have to face" [9].

Vanberg [9] argues that the general notion of the rationale of human actions forming and developing in a certain sequence is the purposeful, future-oriented actions of their own. Each action represents a choice, in a certain situation or context, to achieve the desired outcome. Personal predictions or expectations are based on beliefs, judgments. According to the rationalist principle, "the human concept of action is rational, based on the individual's purpose (or correlation) and beliefs (or basis of access) at the time of action" [9]. In nature, the individual's preference or belief in the rationality principle is justified when it is consistent with their preferences and beliefs, at the time of choice as indicated by Binmore [25]:

"A rational person with a strong belief will use his ability to choose a highly actionable action that maximizes the desired benefit."

And, Binmore [26] adds:

"The rationalist principle does not exclude any conceivable association of preferences and beliefs, only requires that they are logically consistent with the chosen act".

From the principles of the rational proposition in rational choice, theory shows that man's choice behavior has a purpose, creating rationality. Therefore, in the process of innovating teaching methods at the higher education level, it is necessary to highlight students' choices.

First, focus on learning activity more than teaching activity, making learners express their thoughts and
desires, based on which it creates conditions for them to become an active member, actively participating in matters related to the subject. Should not be limited to the "curriculum" - which are the predetermined framework contents - but must develop lessons in the direction of expanding thinking, applying different methods and approaches to problem-solving. As a teacher, do not be impatient with the fear of "not following lesson plans", but interact to make learners' awareness develop. According to the logic of development, the learner will "enlighten" - highly aware - of the matter under discussion. Or in other words, when the learner understands the problem, you are successful, without having to describe the problem in order, concept, origin, development, ... Second, with any subject being taught at the university, most of them have outlines, monographs, reference materials, many subjects also have the full curriculum, even many textbooks of many different authors. The knowledge presented in the available documents is objective, rich, diverse, multidimensional. It is common for Vietnamese universities that students tend to try to remember facts and problems rather than explore, criticize, contribute, and create knowledge based on their own experience. Thus, the choice of learners is annihilated, making them confused in the amount of knowledge of the subject by the "cramming" of the teacher. And each subject of each instructor continues the process of "cramming", without creating connection and integration of the subjects. Therefore, to innovate higher education teaching methods in the direction of enhancing the student's choice, a teacher must suggest, create conditions for learners to explore, criticize, contribute and create knowledge based on accumulated knowledge, methods, and experiences. Promoting learners' choices is to limit the provision of superior knowledge with little practice; appreciate their activeness and initiative; appreciate learners' appreciation, focus on their true development.

Third, each college student's choice is more than just a reflection of the result of a long process of hard-working; they have the right to take pride in themselves of their choices, even though they know that college is not the destination of human life. They hope that a dynamic, professional learning environment in college will help them achieve their desired goals, “a deeper understanding of specialized knowledge and personal and professional skills to help them to adapt with the rapidly changing needs of life and work” [19]. To ensure this choice, innovating the higher education teaching methods should “transfer from teaching method that focuses on imparting and memorizing knowledge to a deeper education that focuses on application and mastery of skills, such as those that help graduates think critically and evaluate information, solve complex practical problems, and create new, integrated products, processes, and systems, collaborate and work effectively with people, work and create digital media, adapt to cultural differences and be self-learning throughout life” [27].

4. Conclusions

Life is very diverse and abundant. The method to approach and solve a certain problem in life has many different ways; Each method will have certain advantages and limitations. From this study, we want to emphasize the advantages of the method of rational selection and apply some problems in the innovation of university teaching methods in Vietnam today.

Innovating higher education teaching methods in Vietnam is not about completely abandoning old teaching methods, but selecting and inheriting traditional and modern teaching methods to meet social needs, to train students to have comprehensive professional knowledge, master the principles and laws of nature-society, have basic practical skills, can work independently, create and solve problems belong to their major. Applying rational choice theory to innovate higher education teaching methods in Vietnam focuses on three main issues: (1) The rationale in educational choices; (2) Maximize the benefits of learners; (3) Highlighting students' choices requires teachers to renew their thinking about how to teach, taking learners as the center to promote student initiative. The role of the teacher in the dynamic and intelligent university environment of the twenty-first century is not only the imparting knowledge but also as a guide, problem-raising person, and maximizer of self-study and independent thinking of students with the support of information technology, communication, and modern equipment and teaching facilities.

The innovation of higher education teaching methods is an objective requirement of reality and a development engine. With their responsibilities, lecturers must be deeply aware of the role and responsibility to actively participate in the innovation process at university, requiring students to change roles and learning styles accordingly. This innovation process also sets out new requirements for managers in equipping facilities to meet teaching requirements, evaluating and grading students, lecturers. Innovating higher education teaching methods is the duty, responsibility, and also the conscience of each of us in the face of great challenges in the process of national renewal, integration, and development.

REFERENCES


[2] Lê Ngọc Hùng, “Lịch sử và lý thuyết xã hội học (History and theories of sociology),” Nhà xuất bản Đại học quốc gia
Innovation in Vietnamese Higher Education Teaching Methods - Approach from Rational Choice Theory


