

DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION, CAN THO UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

Abstract

Given the context of Change Management (Management of Change/Managing Change) in education for sustainable development (ESD), especially in educational administration sphere, we all know that it has been introduced worldwide through models based on theories and practices from famous educational experts, educators, professors, school administrators and even scientists. Like other higher education institutions (HEIs) in Vietnam, Can Tho University (CTU) has been on the way to it as well. Yet, its decentralization of educational management from the Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training is just allowed step by step and its management over change implementation is not effective yet. And it is likely that CTU organizational change with participation of change agents really do need new ingredients for its better effectiveness.

In this research, the author would like to propose a model to enhance the effective change management in a HEI, particularly in CTU- a comprehensive institute, Can Tho City, South Vietnam, where the change process has been implemented for about 10 years, despite over 30 years since the Post Vietnam War 1975. Thus, the paper aimed (1) to construct a hypothetical model for enhancing effective change management in HEIs, (2) to verify the model for enhancing effective change management in HEIs, and (3) to propose the model towards effective change management in CTU, Vietnam.

The methods of this study were counted on the mixed one: qualitative and quantitative, through documents, email discussions, self-made questionnaires, structured interviews and observations from the 19 international experts, 86 email respondents worldwide, 51 CTU administrators, and about 120 teachers, office staff and students in this venue as well. And the evaluations of the validity, reliability, feasibility and applicability of the model would be analysed with frequency (f) percentage (%), Mean, Standard Deviation through SPSS for windows and LISREL 8.30 for windows, too.

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The two-thirds of results of the ongoing study revealed that the tentative change management model in HEIs globally with its four main factors: Change Process Management, Organizational Change Managements, Change Agents Management and Change Management in ESD, and its 23 sub-factors, posed high reliability. And about 50% responses from 51 administrators at CTU put a strong need for this venue to have its new change management model along with the global one.

Indeed, the concepts, reliability, feasibility and practicality of this study would surely prove to be a needy model for change management in HEIs, especially in CTU, Vietnam on the drive to the global learning organization in a changing world.

Key words : Change Management, Change Management Models, Educational Administration, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Higher Education Institution (HEI).

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUNDS

Universities as well as schools must be continuously taken part in the process of change or they will not be successful with their students and the ever-changing needs of society (Speck, 1999). In addition, change in schools gets the whole community involved in its process, as Hall et al (2001: 14) state:

“Change processes are easier and chances of sustained success are increased as the school staff understands more about how to use external resources and as those external to the school recognize the importance of their roles in facilitating each school in achieving change success.”

Also, when discussing a change beyond the school, Fullan (2003) expresses that the school environment cannot be improved from the top. And the top can supply with a vision, policy incentives, and mechanisms for interaction, coordination and monitoring, but to recognize this vision. There must

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be the lateral development. He adds that people at one's own level give and receive help in effect, building capacity and shared commitment across schools.

Meanwhile, when change process is being carried out, the roles of the leaders are recognized. Hall et al (2001:27) also put it:

"Change is not only, however, about the implementers – those who will change their practices- but also about those who will facilitate the implementers in doing so."

And in order to get change done, change processes need to have action plans, inspection, control, and even evaluation because when there is careful consideration of the possible components, variations and clusters from the beginning, the process will be more efficient and effective (Hall et al, 2001).

Let us take a look at some models and practices at the university level. First, in the case of Chinese educational settings, Ma wan-hua (2007), in his article about "Globalization and Paradigm Change in Higher Education: The Experiences of China," (Herschock et al 2007: 164) expresses:

"The changes China has undergone over the past three decades are so fundamental that virtually no aspect of social life has remained unaffected. Higher education is no exception."

He adds that at any system level, Chinese higher education has experienced changes with respect to expansion, diversification, massification and commercialization. Also, according to Ma Wan-hua, recently the Chinese Ministry of Education held two Chinese and foreign university president conferences for more awareness of the interplay of local, national, regional and global forces and issues in decision-making for institutional change and development.

Second, Prof. Muongmee Suchinda (2007), in his article entitled "The Role of Lifelong Learning and Self-Directed Learning in Educational Reforms in Thailand" poses the needs for educational reforms in Thailand. He states that the educational reform is, among other things, seen as

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a crucial ingredient for building a nation of wealth, stability and dignity, and a capability to compete with others in the age of globalization. He also displays some obstacles which need to overcome as follows (1) strong leadership with clear vision and understanding of the mission of education, (2) politics influencing education, (3) a duty of the government to solve any education problem, (4) a big gap between academics and the general public in the process of educational reform, (5) the main issues of educational reform – change in mentality, behaviour and work culture in education, (6) parents' thoughts about traditional education needed to be reformed, and (7) students' points of view to be considered.

Parallel with this, in the era of globalization, the Vietnamese education is being influenced as other developing countries in the world are. The national education reforms since the early 1990s with many major changes have been seen (Mac Cargo, 2003). Obviously, the country is also facing challenges and opportunities. Firstly, talking about the challenges, Mac Cargo (2003) states that the reforms had resulted in a rapid increase in numbers of students, numbers and types of educational institutions and courses of studies at all levels of education. He adds that; however, the national education system seems to be facing deterioration in quality. Secondly, in the respect of opportunities towards higher education environment, when being asked from Viet Nam News on May 31, 2006, Deputy Minister of Vietnamese Education and Training, Banh Tien Long says that the overall objective of tertiary reform in the next 15 years (the country's global integration plan for education from 2006 to 2020) would be to achieve basic changes in the quality and scope of the system so that it could respond to the socio-economic development and the people's demands for further studies.

At the same token, Quoc Hung (2007), when writing his article entitled "An Overview of Vietnamese Higher Education in the Era of Globalization: Opportunities and Challenges" conveys the five challenges, which include the comparability of quality and standards, the multi-nationalization of higher education, the problem of brain drain, the problem of intellectual property and maintaining a university as a learning organization. And mentioning about the roles of the leaders in the

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transformation in Vietnamese higher education, Quoc Hung (2007) suggests that Vietnamese universities need a radical transformation to improve the quality and effectiveness of education in order to meet the diversified demand for human resources. In the context of Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam, Quoc Hung (2007) also puts out his suggestions on this matter that CTU leaders, in spite of following the directions from the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training, need to empower the practice of educational decentralization at department levels in terms of vision sharing. Actually, CTU, Vietnam is on the way to change management. However, the decentralization is done step by step. The university needs a planned path on the move. And the management of change needs to be taken into account and boosted in the whole process with a strong leadership.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Given the context of Change Management, especially in educational administration sphere along with education for sustainable development (ESD), we all know that it has been introduced worldwide through models based on theories and practices from famous educational experts, educators, professors, school administrators and scientists. Recently, Speck (1999) in her Change Process Model, proposes the involvement of all the stakeholders in the learning community. Her process starts with shared vision, managing transition in individuals from the organization with skills/capacities, incentives/motivation, resources, time, and politics (school board, teachers, and classified unions). The process is the results of collaborative efforts and leadership team coordinates. Then it comes up with action plans. And the evaluation is the end of the process. Lunenburg et al (2001) picture the fundamental principles and concepts about development of administrative theory, administrative processes, and structural framework for education. Meanwhile, Hoy et al (2001) pose "Integrated Model of Organizational Effectiveness" relating to inputs, throughputs and outputs criteria. And as of 2001, in implementing change, Hall et al (2001) get their success with the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (known as CBAM), referring to diagnostic tools: stages of concerns, levels of use and innovation configuration. Briefly, the present-day models are just independent parts in the whole



change implementation. It is necessary for a HEI to have a model for its change management performance.

Meanwhile, Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam on the way to it as well, but its educational decentralization is just allowed gradually. And CTU organizational change with effective leadership actually needs new ingredients. Consequently, in this study, the researcher would find out a model currently employed in the higher education level globally from linking parts of change management processes. Then there would be a survey about how the administration is going on, what the needs for change management are and how effective the change management would be in CTU, Vietnam, where change management process has been in use for over 10 years. (According to the survey, using SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), carried out in March 2009 at CTU from 51 administrators, there were 50% responses requiring a needy change at any part in this venue). Furthermore, there would also be an in-depth judgment between the global and national change management model in choosing a suitable one for its implementation in CTU, Vietnam. Surely, this reveals a solid base, helping construct a model to enhance effective change management performance in the long run, which has never done before.

QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

In general, the study would investigate the following questions:

- (1) What is the effective change management model in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in HEIs?
- (2) How is the effective change management model in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in HEIs verified?
- (3) What is the appropriate and practical change management model in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) proposed to Can Tho University, Vietnam?



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general purpose would be to propose a model to enhance effectiveness of change management in a higher education institution (HEI) in Vietnam, particularly in CTU. Therefore, this paper would specifically aim, as follows:

- (1) To construct a hypothetical model (Global model) for enhancing effective change management in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in HEIs.
- (2) To verify the hypothetical model (Global model) for enhancing effective change management in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in HEIs.
- (3) To propose the model towards the effective change management in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Can Tho University, Vietnam.

And the results of the study would be counted on documentary analysis, questionnaires, interviews, observations and from email discussions globally and nationally, and a Focus Group Discussion with Key Informants at CTU, Vietnam as well.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Hopefully, this study would bring benefits to all those interested in change management issues. For CTU, Vietnam, the HEI directly applying the new change management model would have an ever-done task looking back about their ongoing administration and experiencing a new try out to its effectiveness of the change process. The whole stakeholders of CTU would take part in the circle of change and be more confidence in their actions and results of change. For other HEIs in Vietnam and global scale, they would have a channel and venue to get experiences about the practices of change management. Then in turn, they would have their own models to get better successes on the path to achieve their educational goals.

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For the readers, as a result of the research, firstly, they may have an opportunity to better understand CTU, Vietnam about its practices of change management since the 1990s (Post Vietnam War 1975) and, meanwhile, to obtain some information about the current path of CTU, embarking on implementing change management since then. Secondly, this research might hopefully be a useful reference to the university administrators, office staff, teachers and students else where, when they would like to look for the additional information needed. Thirdly, after reading the research, readers would have another chance to have a new venue for cooperation in the long run for the administrative fields and other related issues within educational circle, especially with CTU, Vietnam. And finally, from taking interest in learning new models, implementing them and creating others, the researchers might see this paper as a strong impetus to engage in a comparative study among levels of education beyond one border in the regional and global environment.

SCOPES OF THE STUDY

The researcher would make full use of his time conducting the paper with the sampling, first, meeting with the international experts (including keynote speakers) at international conferences in Thailand and Vietnam from January 2007 to October 2009, and via email discussions to judge the tentative model and having interviews with some of them (approximately 100 respondents). Second, the self-made questionnaires, structured interviews and observations towards the university administrators, teachers, office staff and students (approximately 120 respondents) might be done at CTU, Vietnam, where the last model would be proposed to be implemented.

Can Tho University (CTU), founded in 1966, is the largest public one, located in the heart of the lower Mekong Delta areas, South Vietnam. The university also lies in Can Tho city, dubbed “capital of Southwest”, 150 km west of Ho Chi Minh city (formerly Saigon). CTU is among the leading universities in Vietnam and has become an important centre of learning, research and technology. Also, CTU closely works with provincial authorities, private and public enterprises and the farming

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communities. These essential links enable this university to create its teaching and research activities in the needs of the local community.

In addition, Can Tho University is a comprehensive university under the jurisdiction of Vietnamese government and the university rectorate. Its missions are (1) to offer undergraduate and graduate training programs to meet current and future educational needs of the residents in the Mekong Delta areas, (2) to conduct fundamental scientific research and to develop applications, (3) to directly serve the needs of the community by spreading knowledge of science and technology and transferring technology, and (4) to assist in developing the regional economy and local productivity by expanding agriculture and bringing scientific and technological advances to local producers. (Source at <http://www.ctu.edu.vn>)

Conceptual Framework

In this part, the paper depicts the framework of the research as shown :

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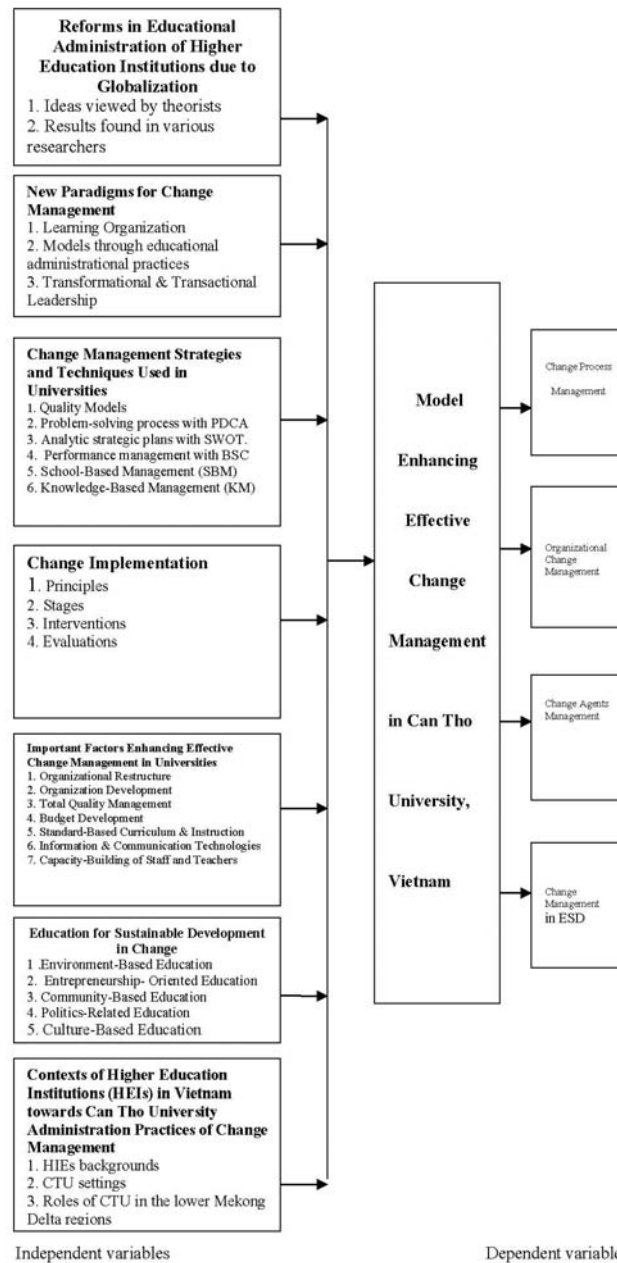


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the study would aim at presenting the procedures based upon the research objectives and the research steps as well, as displayed below:

Phase 1 : Constructing a hypothetical model (Global model) for enhancing effective change management in ESD in HEIs.

In the hope of finding out a model for effective change management in universities globally, there was a document research in higher education settings internationally about change management with change implementation and change processes through theories, models and real practices. From this point, a global tentative model (sometimes called 'global model') for change management was constructed. (Also seen at the result of Phase 1 *at Expected Results of the Study-Figure 2, p.10*)

Phase 2 : Verifying the hypothetical model (Global model) for enhancing effective change management in ESD in HEIs.

Getting the tentative model for effective change management before hand from Phase 1, the authors would send it to an international expert group to be judged. There would be 19 experts to judge 'reliability' (4 from Thailand, 5 from other Asia & Pacific regions, 4 from Europe, 5 from Americas & Canada, and 1 from Africa) in the educational administration field (criteria designed below), joining the judgement group toward the tentative model.

The criteria towards the experts would be supposed as follows: (1) the president/rector, administrator, or director who has been working in the higher education level, (2) the president/rector, administrator, or director who has known about change management and its related issues for about 5 years, and (3) the president/rector, educator, administrator, professor, or director, who has had a lot of experiences of working/teaching/advising in this field for the above 1 and 2 items.

The tentative change management model with a careful explanation would be sent to the 19 experts through the website <http://www.ctu.edu.vn/ChangeManagement> and via the authors' email addresses. It is called "a long distance seminar." The experts would put their answers on a rating

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scale questionnaire with 5 levels: Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, give their feedbacks through email discussions and join the interviews. Comments, ideas and suggestions from the international experts and the questionnaire would be synthesized. And a modified model would then be judged. Descriptive reports from emails discussions would be written. And with the questionnaire, there might be an analysis about Mean and Standard Deviation (SD).

Then 86 email respondents (from 27 countries and territories) were invited to join the website rating the “practicability” of the model via the same 92- item self- made questionnaire with the 19 international experts. The criteria in this part towards would be supposed as follows: (1) the professor, dean, deputy dean, department head, department deputy head, administrator, director, deputy director, researcher, journalist, current MA and PhD student, who has been working in the higher education level, (2)) the professor, dean, deputy dean, department head, department deputy head, administrator, director, deputy director, researcher, journalist, current MA and PhD student, who has known about change management and its related issues for about 5 years, and (3)) the professor, dean, deputy dean, department head, department deputy head, administrator, director, deputy director, researcher, journalist, current MA and PhD student, who has had a lot of experiences of working/teaching/advising in this field for the above 1 and 2 items.

Phase 3 : Proposing the model for enhancing effective management in ESD in Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam.

There would be three sub phase steps totally.

3.1 Studying the present state of the administration and the needs for change management in CTU, Vietnam. This may be a document research. First, there would be a study about Vietnamese higher education settings and its ways to the educational reforms since 1990s, especially towards change management. From this point, the author would have to visualize a change management model at his venue. It would also need a research through documents about CTU administration and the implementation of change management. In addition, a comparison about change management



between CTU with the Global model in Phase 1 would be taken into account in order to finalize one model to CTU condition.

It would be a purposive sampling. Thus, there would be approximately 120 respondents (administrators, teachers, office staff and student leaders). Firstly, the documentary research would be done towards Vietnamese higher education (HE) level and CTU, Vietnam as well, in the issues of organizational restructure, change agents and change process, and then reports would be written about these. Secondly, a self-made questionnaire with a rating scale, consisting of 3 sections with 27 items covering with the factors in the effective change model from the results of Phases 1 and 2 may be employed, used with SWOT analysis. Thirdly, it would come up with observations about implementation of organizational restructure, administrative process, and change process. And finally, the interviews (12 administrators, 7 teachers, and 7 administrative office chiefs) would be done, related to implementation of organizational restructure, administrative process, and change process as well. The data would be collected from documents, the self-made questionnaire, interviews and observations of Vietnam HEIs, and CTU. A mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) would be taken. The qualitative research data dealing with documents, observations, interviews might be done by using content analysis and descriptive reports while the quantitative research data from the questionnaire would be analyzed with Mean and Standard Deviation (SD).

3.2 Constructing a CTU model for effective change management.

For the sake of finding out a suitable model counted on the current change management performance on site, the researcher would create a new model called a CTU change management model. First, a careful judgment from the results of the item 3.1 in Phase 3 would be the foundation to help construct a model. Second, there may also be a reference towards the international change model judged from the international expert group from Phase 1. Finally, a CTU model would be constructed.



3.3 Judging the model for enhancing effective management in Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam.

From the light of the item 3.2 in early Phase 3, the CTU model may be evaluated by the expert group in CTU, Vietnam for its “validity and reliability.” 11 experts from CTU, Vietnam were invited to evaluate the model through a Focus Group Discussion with Key Informants. The criteria towards the experts would be supposed as it was done in Phase 1. The consensus after a three-hour discussion was come to an end. The results from this discussion would be collected and written in terms of a descriptive report. Parallel with this, 11 Key Informants filed out a 92-item self-made questionnaire. Thus, the results would be analysed via Mean and Standard Derivation. Then, about 86 email respondents were invited to join “an online rating” for the questionnaire towards the “practicability” of the model at <http://www.ctu.edu.vn/ChangeManagement>. Surely, the findings would be analysed through Mean and Standard Derivation as well. Finally, the CTU new model would then be set up and proposed to be implemented.

EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE STUDY

First, since the study remains in progress, the following represents just the initial result from Phase 1 of document analysis towards a tentative change model in universities globally.

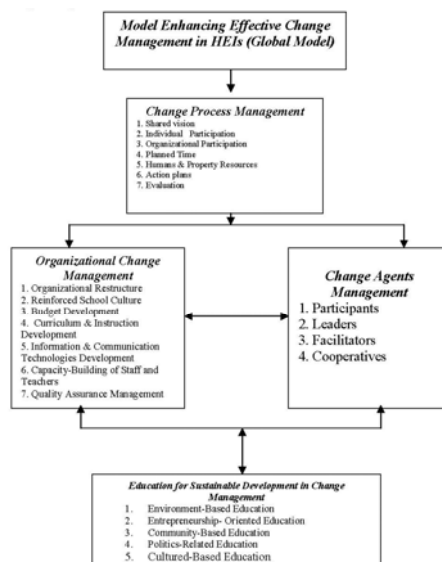


Figure 2. The Tentative Effective Change Management Model in HEIs(Global Model)

Second, for **Phase 2**, there would be tables from the results of the questionnaire referring to the tentative model through Mean and Standard Deviation (SD). Examples, here in this stage, there would be Table 1 with the result of the analysis from 19 international experts rating the Questionnaire, and Table 2, the outcomes of the analysis from 86 international email respondents towards the Questionnaire as well.

Third, for **Phase 3**, in this section, there might be another table (Table 3, p.12) in the first sub-phase, calculating the results of the questionnaire about CTU administration and the needs for change with frequency (f) and percentage 9%) as well. Also, content analysis on the interviews and observations would be presented in terms of descriptive reports in the second sub phase. Especially, CTU change management model would be presented. And, in the third sub-phase, Table 4 & Table 5 would measure the results of the questionnaire rating from 5 levels from 11 Key Informants at CTU, Vietnam, and 86 email respondents from CTU, Vietnam towards CTU Change Management Model as



well. What's more, CTU Change Management Model was presented below (Figure.3 and Figure 4, pp.13&14)

Table 3. Survey about Can Tho University's Present Administration and Needs for Change Management via SWOT analysis.

No	Can Tho Current University Change Management	Strengths (f)	Percentage (%)	Weaknesses (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Shared vision in the workplace (College/School, Institute/Centre and Department/ Office) in university change	41	80, 39	10	19, 60
2.	Individual participation in the workplace in university change	38	74, 50	13	25, 40
3.	Organizational participation in the whole university	35	68, 62	16	31, 37
4.	Planned time in university change	34	60, 78	17	33, 33
5.	Used resources in university change	34	60, 78	17	33, 33
6.	Action plans in university change	30	58, 82	21	41, 17
7.	Evaluation in university change	32	62, 74	19	37, 25
8.	Administrative Restructuring in university change	35	68, 62	16	31, 37
9.	Organization Development in university change	40	78, 47	11	21, 56
10.	Using university quality assurance in change	21	41, 17	30	58, 82
11.	Budget Development in university change	08	15, 68	35	68, 62
12.	Curriculum Development in university change	47	92, 15	04	07, 84
13.	Teaching and Learning Innovation	39	76, 47	12	23, 52
14.	Roles of University Teachers' Union in university change	23	45, 09	28	54, 90
15.	University leadership in university change	41	80, 39	10	19, 60
16.	Workplace leadership in university change	37	72, 54	14	27, 45
17.	University Communist Party leadership in university change	39	76, 47	12	23, 52
18.	Activities of Ho Chi Minh Youth League in university change	36	70, 58	15	29, 41
19.	International affairs in university change	46	90, 01	05	09, 08
20.	Implementation of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) in teaching and learning process in the university level	35	68, 62	16	31, 37
21.	Community-Based Education in university change	30	58, 82	21	41, 17
22.	Politics-Related Education in university change	38	74, 50	13	25, 49
23.	Culture-Based Education in university change	26	50, 98	25	49, 01
24.	Environment-Based Education in university change	21	41, 17	30	58, 82
25.	Entrepreneurship- Oriented Education in university change	09	17, 64	42	82, 25
26.	Capacity-Building of Staffs and Teachers in university change	34	66, 66	17	33, 33
27.	Internal Communication in university change	37	72, 54	14	27, 45

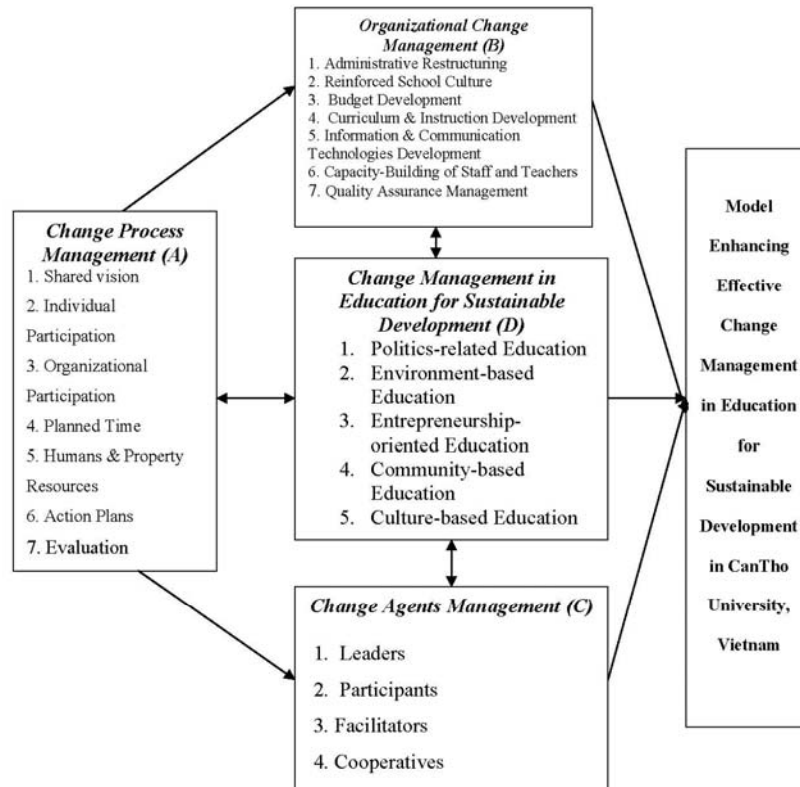


Figure 3. The Tentative Can Tho University (CTU) Effective Change Management Model in Education for Sustainable Development

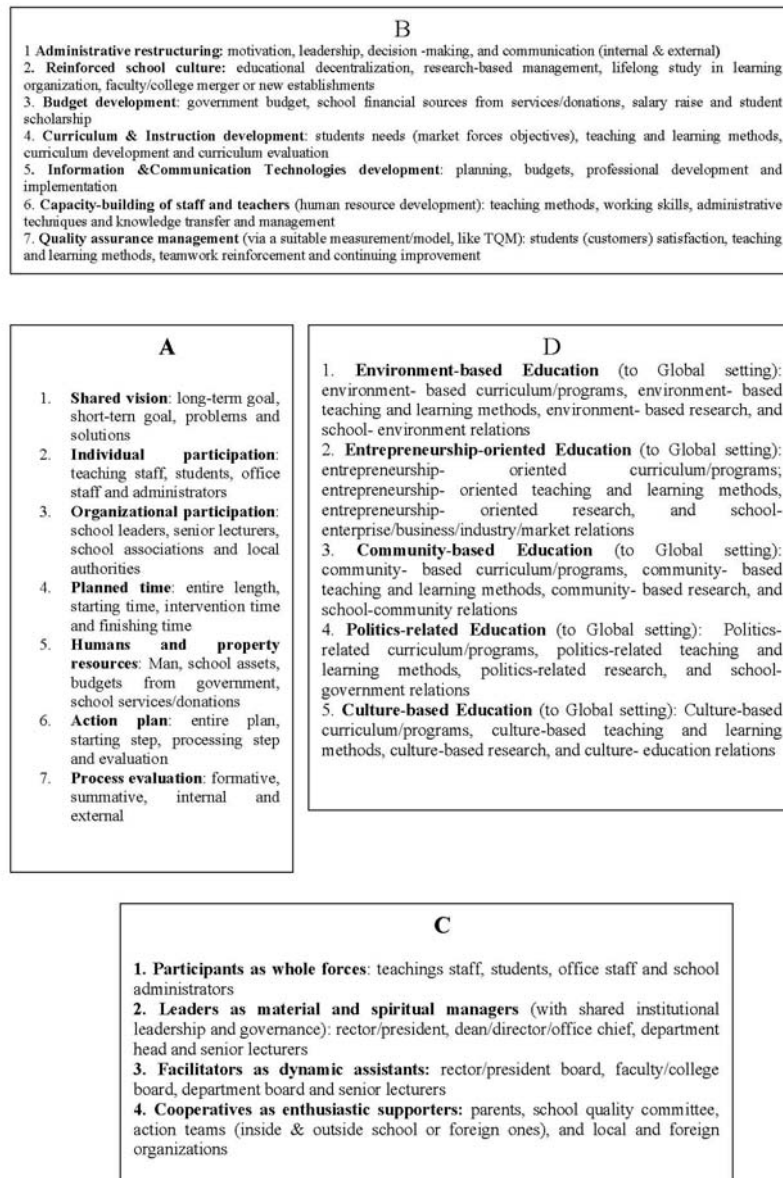


Figure 4. Sub factors of the tentative Can Tho University (CTU) Effective Change Management Model in Education for Sustainable Development

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LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the study surely reveal two things. First, the population just focused on the leaders of each group- administrators, teachers, office staff and students. Really, it may need more respondents to prove more reliable. Second, it was just a proposed model, so R&D (Research & Development) in this sense is just at the second step. It would be a need to have a follow-up study towards the model implemented and evaluated to make sure about its applicability in a real situation.

DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Since two-thirds of the study is underway (It will be finished in December, 2009), the following are just the researcher's partial ideas. First, despite rather significant initial results of change management implementation from the tentative model to be compared with a would-be CTU one, CTU needs educational decentralization from the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training in terms of full implementation of the spirit of a School-Based Management (SBM). Second, CTU surely needs the new ingredients via applying Organizational Restructure (OR), Organizational Development (OD), Total Quality Management (TQM), Capacity-Building of Staff and Teachers (CB), Standard-Based Curriculum& Instructions (SBC), Knowledge-Based Management (KM) and Information & Communication Technologies (ICT). What's more, Naresuan University, Thailand, where the researcher is pursuing his study, may be supposed as a useful reference model for change management to CTU, Vietnam.

Third, the model above itself comes from the theories and practices about change management in general. And finally, CTU Change Management Model is likely to be a 'common framework' for any 'big change', which deals with 'people' and 'organization.' From this point of view, "*Change Process Management*" (in CTU model) with 7 elements must be kept as 'guidelines' and "*Change Agents*" and "*Organisational Change*" would be selected with some 'elements' besides curricula or program to ESD for any 'specific change' in at a particular educational setting. Accordingly, it should be necessary to do a survey at a specific educational institution in order to find

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out a suitable model. Finally, the judgement from the experts towards the new model is certainly a reliable channel to take into account, but through the real implementation at the spot, the model will be readjusted and readapted.

CONCLUSIONS

The concepts, validity, reliability and practicability about a new model for enhancing effective change management in a school climate have emerged so far since the educational reforms at any levels worldwide were on the move and since globalization touched the educational process. In particular, Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam needs a new model for developing its change management process so as to fulfil its educational roles in the Vietnamese learning environment and in the lower Mekong Delta regions as well, and puts its step on integrating into the Asian and global education environment. And the model proposed is the right one so that it is CTU, a leading public university that can be likely to play its crucial role in the drive. Meanwhile, it is certain that any educational institution in a country may choose its suitable model to apply, manage and develop change management process for the sake of its educational goals.

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