

# Ho Chi Minh's Leadership Style on Renewing the Leadership Style of the Officials in Vietnam at Present

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**Abstract**— President Ho Chi Minh is an extraordinary leader of the Communist Party of Vietnam and of Vietnam nation. His enormous contribution and great cause are in close link with the history of Vietnam revolution in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, the study on Ho Chi Minh's leadership style will contribute to further clarifying his excellent leadership talent; simultaneously, it will provide the important practical and theoretical basis for building the leadership style of the officials in Vietnam in the current period.

**Keywords**— Ho Chi Minh; the leadership style; the officials.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Ho Chi Minh's value and great impact on the Communist Party, the nation of Vietnam and the world are based on a variety of factors, specially his leadership style. He had an exemplarity leadership of a politician and a real scientist, which clearly testifies the dialectical relationship between a sense of class-politics and science and profound humanism of a great culturist. Ho Chi Minh's leadership style conveys particular traits of a great man, a person of "great personality, great intellectual, great courage". As the leader of the Party and a new democratic State in Vietnam for 24 years, he showed his friendliness and closeness which should be followed and applied by others leaders. Thus, it is vital and necessary to clarify the practical and theoretical issues on Ho Chi Minh's leadership style so as to apply in the process of renewing the leadership style of leaders and managers in Vietnam in the current period.

## II. HO CHI MINH'S LEADERSHIP STYLE

Ho Chi Minh's leadership style is a combination of method, measure, and style typically of the leaders whose objects are of lower positions and the masses. To fulfil the leading aim, Ho Chi Minh made use of the efficient, scientific, appropriate and democratic leadership style so as to promote each individual's capacity to the fullest. This leadership style was ignited from the profound view on Marxism-Leninism's dialectical relation between the leader himself and the masses; and Ho Chi Minh life-long's revolutionary morality

In the work entitled: *Correcting the working method* (1947), Ho Chi Minh indicated: "Whatever ways of holding and working, it should be for the interest and the need of the public. Therefore, the ways of holding and working inappropriate to the masses should be corrected or eliminated and the appropriate ways should be made available to the public and can be reported later as long as they work

effectively"<sup>1</sup>. Uncle Ho emphasized: "Our working style should base on the motto: "Originate from the masses and deep in the masses"<sup>2</sup>. He commanded the officials frequently keep close contact with the masses in order to deeply understand their wish, their hope and their material and spiritual life. Simultaneously, the officials should highly respect and appreciate people's constructive criticism, not only teaching but also learning and setting examples for the masses. He emphasized: "Learning but not following the masses"<sup>3</sup>, "not blindly following whatever the public say"<sup>4</sup>. Regarding the leadership, the officials need to thoroughly understand the public's quality, categories them so as to have the effective ways of leading and realize that the public's typical feature is "they constantly make comparison" and their comparisons are often right as they are everywhere and they know everything. Thus, the officials should make use of the public's comparison for themselves. Ho Chi Minh kept asking the officials to find ways to overcome the authoritative and commanding working style. He ordered people-in-charge in different ministries, branches, departments and the Central to frequently examine, address the work right away and fight against the complicated administrative procedures and so many unnecessary meetings.

Ho Chi Minh not only taught the officials the appropriate ways of leading but he himself also made a good example. In fact, thanks to his effective leadership style, he could "put politics into the centre of the masses of the people", mixed himself with the public to really comprehend their opinions.

Ho Chi Minh led the democratic style of respecting the community. This way is an issue of regularity originated from the democratic principle in holding and working of the new style of party. He constantly implemented this while working with the masses, the inferior people, the Politburo, the Party Central Board and different offices of the Party, the state and revolutionary organizations. According to Ho Chi Minh, in the task of leading and managing, if we conduct the democratic

<sup>1</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 286.

<sup>2</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 288.

<sup>3</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 333.

<sup>4</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 337.

ways, respecting and appreciating the public's opinions, then we can promote their activeness, creativity, strength and agreement so as to successfully deal with every task assigned. During his career, Ho Chi Minh set a good example in respecting the collective and their opinions regardless of positions or titles. He predicted the degradation of democracy and the disrespect of the collective within the senior officials. Ho Chi Minh's democratic leadership style completely contrasts with the authoritative command, formalist, extreme democracy or non-government. Ho Chi Minh's ideology shows that the democratic working style respecting the collective should go along with each individual's determination and responsibility. He claimed that: "The leadership disrespecting the collective will lead to a Pooh-Bah's style of work, arbitrary, subjective viewpoint and damage the work. Nobody takes responsibility for the work will lead to an easy-going style, disorder, non-government"<sup>5</sup>.

One particular trait in Ho Chi Minh's leadership style is the scientific sense. He was dedicated, devoted, enthusiastic for the nation, for the people with a practical, specific, scientific working style. He possessed a perfect combination of a revolutionist and a scientist. His leadership style is completely contrasted with a subjective, free, careless, untidy, slow style, wasting time, money and strength; working without planning or strategic vision. Ho Chi Minh pointed out these problems and asked the officials to resiliently overcome them.

To have a scientific leadership style, Ho Chi Minh indicated: "Whenever an issue arises, we need to ask ourselves: Why does this issue arise: How to address it and what may be the result? We have to see and think thoroughly, not hastily and carelessly deal with this issue regardless of its result"<sup>6</sup> and "We should be elaborate and careful in whatever we do"<sup>7</sup>. A decision made should be based on adequate and accurate information with feasible solutions. It should not be implemented by personal extreme opinions but by objective experiences and long-term vision and scientific prediction on the matters concerned so as not to be passive and narrow-minded. The officials who do not pay attention to the long-term goal but the immediate, petty calculation should be criticized.

Ho Chi Minh's scientific leadership style is shown clearly in the following example: whenever a task is fulfilled, lessons are drawn for the coming tasks. The leaders need to utilize the co-workers, followers, assistants scientifically, effectively and frequently supervise the tasks done by those in the inferior positions. Notably, they should know how to take things into consideration under a scientific perspective. As a real scientist, Ho Chi Minh told the officials that "We should have a scientific view on society" and in fact, his own view on everything conveys more or less scientific trait. He often compared things and events in terms of time, space and feature

to distinguish a certain point. He had a profound insight into the data reported. In his writing *Opinions on jobs and books published "good people, good deeds"* (1968), Ho Chi Minh: "Look at this list! I have written down each industry, each gender, each location, the old, the young, the female, the male, the different parts of the country, the overseas Vietnamese... getting prizes and appreciated. These numbers do not mean that the above-mentioned people or industries are better than others. The places with few people appreciated are due to the shortcomings of these places' leaders"<sup>8</sup>.

Ho Chi Minh's particular trait is the perfect combination between theory and practice, speech and action, which set examples for those of inferior positions and the masses. He is a model himself in closely, scientifically combining theory and practice during his leadership of Vietnam revolution. Prime Minister Pham Van Dong stated: "Ho Chi Minh's each and every single word and deed is practical and specific. Whatever he preaches, he practices, sometimes practicing without preaching, his thought is shown through his deed"<sup>9</sup>.

Ho Chi Minh criticized some officials who simply talked hour after hour, day after day but failed to fulfil a simple task and He ordered officials and party members to be consistent in their words and actions and make examples for others. Accordingly, they constantly self-criticise and take responsibility for their words and deeds and willing to listen to others' criticism for improvement. For the Party organization, He stated "The Party needs to frequently examine how its resolutions and directives are implemented. If not, these resolutions and directives are only theory and not put into practice, resulting to people's loss of faith for the Party"<sup>10</sup>.

As the leader of the Party and the State, Ho Chi Minh's leadership style makes great impact on the quality of leadership and prestige of the Communist party of Vietnam, the relationship between the Party and the people, the nationwide solidarity, the personality of officials and party members and the revolutionary associations. In the current time, it is urgent and vital to renew the leadership style according to the ideology of Ho Chi Minh's leadership style.

### III. GRASPING AND APPLYING HO CHI MINH'S LEADERSHIP STYLE INTO RENEWING VIETNAM OFFICIALS' LEADERSHIP STYLE AT PRESENT

It can be confirmed that Vietnam's great achievements after 30 years of renovating, building socialism and protecting Vietnam Fatherland are in close link with the role of "the root of everything" of the officials, including their great effort to overcome the insufficiency and shortcomings in terms of leadership style and train and follow Ho Chi Minh's example. The majority of officials have effective and scientific leadership style with their high specialized knowledge, creativity, persistency and responsibility. Many of them effectively practice the motto: words go along with actions

<sup>5</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 620.

<sup>6</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 279.

<sup>7</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 307.

<sup>8</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 15, page 662.

<sup>9</sup>Pham Van Dong: *Ho Chi Minh – A person, a nation, an era, a cause*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1990, page 64,65.

<sup>10</sup> Ho Chi Minh: *Complete*, The National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, Volume 5, page 290.

and set good examples. However, a small number of officials reveal limitations and drawbacks in working style. Notably, some senior officials are authoritative, arrogant and dictatorial. Some of them undervalue the party trait, the working principle and cover their wrong doings by different colours. Some leaders work simply basing on their own experiences, feelings and routines but not scientifically. Others are devoted to their work but inefficiently due to their lack of scientific sense. There are some officials and party members whose words do not go along with their actions, preach more than practice, preach is not in accordance with practice, etc. All of these drawbacks make people lose their faith in the Communist Party and disregard the country's rules and principles. This fact reflects some officials' weak and ineffective leadership style and their unqualified intellect, moral degradation, over-ambition for power, egoism and individualism. There are objective and subjective causes for these officials' inefficient leadership style. However, it should be pointed out that the main causes are from the officials themselves, their political quality, ethics, self-education and new style training.

Presently, in order to make contribution in building Vietnam officials' leadership style, it is necessary to further educate and raise people's awareness of Ho Chi Minh's leadership style and ideology in close accordance with the implementation of Directive 05-CT/TW on 15-5-2016 by the Central Board of Political Ministry of the Communist Party of Vietnam (Term XII) on "Strengthen learning and following Ho Chi Minh's style, morality and ideology". It is essential for each official to recognize the significance and importance of learning and following Ho Chi Minh's leadership style. Accordingly, the basic standards on each official's leadership style appropriate to their position are specified and identified. The view that Ho Chi Minh's leadership style is deified so it cannot be followed and applied should be eliminated. Simultaneously, it is also urgent to avoid the conception that Ho Chi Minh's leadership style is of only a professional leader, but not of a real scientist with the unity among a sense of party, politics and science in each task and working relation. The leadership style is not born naturally but trained strictly. At present, the objects under supervision and

management are of new development, high intellect, extended relationship, democratic openness and technological achievement. Therefore, it is essential for the officials to train to improve themselves and their specialized knowledge to deal with different situations in a democratic and cultural style. In addition, they need to equip themselves the capacity to collect and address the information accurately and timely basing on the harmonious principle between a sense of party and science. In the formation of leadership style, the officials need to persistently train and practice the revolutionary ethics, fight against individualism, feel shame and torture themselves for their wrong doings in their leadership style. At work, the officials must set good examples, show their insistent attitude, take responsibility and self-criticise for improvement.

The construction of leaders and managers' leadership style should go along with renewing the leadership mechanism and social management. Therefore, this task needs to further perfect and distinguish the Party's leadership and the State's management. The offices and units need to coordinate in working and addressing the issues; avoiding the isolated, partial, conservative working style and the overlapped, prolix and irresponsible work division.

Another important issue is that the leadership style needs to be objectively taken into consideration in the process of employing, changing positions, nurturing and using personnel's. Leaders and commanders of different levels have to come to an agreement on the way to assess the leadership style of each official. The rules and principles of reporting and giving summarizing should be effectively conducted with an aim to timely discovering and overcoming the inefficiency and deviation in the officials' working style./.

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