RESEARCH ON BUILDING THE PROBATIONARY MECHANISM FOR LEADERS AND MANAGERS AT VIETNAM ACADEMY FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES*

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1. Introduction

At the Journal of Ethnic Studies No. 22 June 2018, in the article “Research on proposal for implementing probationary leaders and managers model at Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities” we mentioned the issues: The concept of probationary; Guiding documents of the Party and State on probationary leaders and managers; Practical issues and problems; Organizational structure and current status of leading and managerial staff of the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities; Proposing solutions to deploy the leaders and managers probationary model at the Nationality Academy. Therefore, in this article, there are issues that we will not cover again, but there are new issues that need additional updates to clarify, especially the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers.

The recruitment and appointment of cadres in general and managers in particular is one of the important and decisive stages in the work of cadres. Therefore, the Director of the Academy has a policy of renewing the selection and appointment in order to get the leaders in management who are mindful, qualified, trustworthy and talented enough to manage the Academy division better. To successfully implement this policy, the Academy needs to systematically and comprehensively study, from which to conduct pilot implementation at a number departments, gain experience and proceed to synchronous implementation throughout the Academy.

2. Study overview

In the country and around the world, there are research works on probationary leaders and managers; There is not much probationary mechanism for leaders and managers, but with the researches we gathered, it can be considered as the first bricks laying the initial foundations for theoretical and practical research on this issue. Probationary mechanism for leaders and managers is shown in dictionaries and scientific works such as: Open Encyclopedia - Wikipedia (2019): “Discussion / What is mechanism”; Tran Thanh (2016) “Mechanism of Party leadership, State management and People’s ownership in Vietnam”, Vietnam Journal of Social Sciences ;, No. 3 (100) - 2016; Assoc. Prof Nguyen Phu Trong, Tran Xuan Sam (2003) “Scientific arguments for improving the quality of staff in the period of accelerating industrialization - modernization of the country”, Chinh tri Quoc gia Publishing House; Dr. Thang Van Phuc and Dr. Nguyen Minh Phuong (2004) “Building a contingent of cadres and civil servants

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The above-mentioned studies more or less refer to the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers:

Firstly, at certain theoretical perspectives such as: the concept of mechanism, the concept of probation, the concept of leaders, the concept of managers, the concept of probationary leaders and managers and the practice of probationary leaders and managers in some agencies has been mentioned. However, the concept of probationary mechanism for leaders and managers is not mentioned; The practice of probationary leaders and managers in some agencies has different implementations, different results.

Secondly, a number of works (both domestic and foreign) have studied, analyzed and mentioned the subjects, time, responsibilities, entitlements, implementation, evaluation and synthesis process of the results of the probationary leaders and managers, and the decision to appoint managers are quite abundance in how to implement but there is no general consensus, therefore it is necessary to have a more complete research for this content.

Third, a number of international research projects have had in-depth studies such as the Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom (giving assessment: “in other countries including the United Kingdom (University College London, 1999) and even in the Republic of Ireland in recent years (Commission for Public Service Appointments, 2011), the leadership and management apprenticeship is considered an essential activity that facilitates the discovery and fostering of talents, and at the same time cost savings, improve the efficiency of the civil service” (Giang, 2019). This is a practice we think it is necessary to study for application in Vietnam and at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities.

Fourth, a number of studies have demonstrated that the practice of probationary leaders and managers in Vietnam has existed for a long time, has been carried out in the 50s, during the period of Vietnam national resistance war. It can be said that, even in difficult times of the country President Ho Chi Minh and the Government are well aware of the importance of this work and have implemented it, Ho Chi Minh and the government has recruited and appointed many competent, virtuous cadres and brought the resistance of national construction to success. So today we implement this content as fulfilling the will of the people.

3. Research method
The authors used the these research methods: synthesis and evaluation method, the survey method according to in-depth interviews and expert methods.

4. Research results
4.1. Concept of probationary mechanism for leaders and managers
From many concepts, we conclude:

Mechanism: “A mechanism is a method or a process to get a job done in a system or organization”.

Probation: “Probation is “role-playing” to get acquainted with the job before being assigned official duties.”

Probationary leaders and managers: “Leadership and management probation is the appointment of a civil servant with appropriate aspirations and qualifications, at a lower level to a leading or managerial position a higher number of units within a given period of time to replace civil servants, management officials or leading cadres currently absent or missing”.

Probationary mechanism for leaders and managers: “The probationary mechanism for leaders and managers is a method of giving a definite term of rights to officials associated with specific responsibilities and tasks to clearly see the leadership and management capacity before the official appointment.”

4.2. Guiding documents of the Party and State on probationary leaders and managers
The leadership and management probationary entitlement is only recognized to implement the earliest in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Regulation on Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs was implemented in 1972 (according to the Prime Minister’s Decision on December 14, 1972) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs implemented the probationary rules from 1978, and until the year 1992, the implementation process is a fairly basic finishing step. At that time, the Ministerial Assistant Regulation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed and implemented the leadership training entitlement up to the Deputy Director level and the Deputy Head Department level leader was the division leader; especially, there are cases where experts who show outstanding competence, excellent performance are also candidates and are appointed to the position of probationary Deputy Director (The Government Council, 1992). This
Regulation has clearly defined both working regime and remuneration for probationship. This can be said to be the first and the earliest ministerial agency to implement the probationary leaders and managers in Vietnam.

At the Fourth Conference, the 11th Central Committee of the Party Central Committee adopted the Resolution on “Some urgent issues on building the Party today”, which identified: urgent issues on building the Party “if not repaired will be a challenge to the Party’s leadership role and the survival of the regime”. One of the urgent issues is “building a contingent of leaders and managers at all levels, especially at the central level, to meet the requirements of the cause of industrialization, modernization and international integration.” (The Party Central Committee, 2012a).

The Resolution of the Fourth Central Conference, the 11th Session on Party building, proposed 4 groups of synchronous solutions, including solutions for organization, cadres and party activities, which specifically pointed out the piloting the recommendation and probationary entitlements for leaders and managers: “... piloting the empowering of party-level party secretaries to select and introduce to elect standing committee members; chiefs are responsible for selecting and recommending for election and appointing deputies; piloting the recommendation and leadership and managerial regimes; implement the process of introducing personnel in the direction that those proposed to be promoted or appointed must present the proposal or action plan before the competent authorities consider and decide”(The Party Central Committee, 2012a). The Central Resolution assigned the Central Organizing Committee “to coordinate with the Party Affairs Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs in guiding the experimental implementation of the recommendation, leadership and managerial training regime”.

In the Politburo’s Plan No. 08-KH / TW of March 12, 2012, on the “implementation of the Resolution of the Fourth Central Executive Committee Meeting (Session XI)”, the content, method of implementation and implementation time continues to be confirmed. The Central Organizing Committee was assigned many important contents such as: “Collaborate with functional agencies in formulating the authority and responsibilities of the head of the Party committees and organizations; formulating criteria for officials’ titles and criteria for evaluating cadres as the basis for the planning, management, training, fostering, arrangement and use of staff; regulations on ensuring democracy, openness and transparency in cadre work; renovating the process of selecting, promoting and appointing cadres in the direction of democratic expansion so that cadres expected to promote and appoint are self-introduced, showing their qualifications and capabilities; regulations to ensure progressive opportunities for those who have defects or are judged to have failed to fulfill their tasks, but have actually made efforts to strive, have achievements and are trusted” (The Party Central Committee, 2012a).

Regarding the probationary entitlement, the Politburo’s Plan No. 08-KH / TW of March 12, 2012 further determined that the Central Organizing Committee “cooperates with the Party Affairs Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs in guiding the experimental implementation of recommendation, probationary leaders and managers appointment”. Currently, the Central Organization Board and Party Affairs Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs are urgently instructing to complete the elaboration of documents guiding the implementation of the recommendation, probationary mechanism for leaders and managers across the country.

In Decision No. 1557/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister, dated October 18, 2012, Approving the Project “Promoting reform of civil service and official entitlement”, Article 1, Clause 5, Section c, record: “Pilot implementation of probationary mechanism for leaders and managers”.

These can be said as important documents that clearly show the views of the Party, the direction of the Government, the Prime Minister on the work of cadres, including the probationary leaders and managers, a content showing the democratic, public in order to have enough time to evaluate personnel (probationary personnel) both theoretically and practically before appointment.

4.3. Practical implementation of probationary mechanism for leaders and managers in some ministries and agencies

In Vietnam, the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers has been implemented in a number of ministries and agencies, of which the earliest can be said is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry have had the probationary rules for department level since 1972 until now.

Next is the Government Inspectorate, which issued Plan No. 1929 / KH-TTCP on August 22, 2013, promoting reform of civil service entitlements at Government Inspectorate. In Part III, Section 7, Point b, the aforementioned provision, write: “Research and apply the leadership probationary mechanism in accordance with the characteristics of the inspectorate, before appointing the official position”. In 2014, the pilot program was implemented for department heads, and the like. In 2015 and subsequent years, keep researching and applying the probationary entitlement to leaders and managers”.

The Government Office has also conducted
leadership probationship such as Deputy Director of the Department of Enterprise Innovation, Deputy Director of the General Department, and an Deputy Director of the International Convention Center before being appointed to senior leadership positions.

The Ministry of Information and Communications issued Decision No. 248 / QD-BTTTT of March 5, 2019, providing for deputy probationship of departments of the Ministry of Information and Communications.

Although the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs does not have any documents regulating the leadership and management probationary entitlement, the form of assigning responsibility by decisions for the Department of International Cooperation and the Ethnic Newspaper is in fact similar to an apprenticeship for leader and managers positions, which have been implemented at the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs in the past time (assigned to take charge, familiarize themselves with the work, before considering the official appointment).

Similarly, when the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities was founded on August 8, 2016 and appointed many department leaders at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities in October 2016, the Academy also issued a number of similar decisions as the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, in particular: The following 8 divisions have no leader, only appoint deputies and assign them to take charge of the divisions, as follows: (1) Faculty of Basic Sciences, (2) Faculty of University Preparation, (3) Faculty of State Administration of Ethnic Minority Affairs, (4) Faculty of Ethnic Minority Culture, (5) Division of Personnel and Organization, (6) Division of Science and International Cooperation, (7) Division of Political and student affairs, (8) Information - Library Center. However, at the time of writing, only one department which is Faculty of University Preparation is in practical implementation, while the other 7 divisions only issue oral assignments by May 2019. The remaining above-mentioned divisions will be issue official documents. Thus, the Academy is similar to the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, although there are no regulations on probationary leaders and managers, but the form of assigning responsibility with the above-mentioned decisions is another form of probation has been implemented in the past.

4.4. Implementing the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities

Regarding the policy of allowing the mechanism for probationary leaders and managers has been expressed in a number of Party Resolutions, such as: In Resolution No. 4 (Session XI) on Party building with important content regarding the work of cadres and organizational solutions, the policy has been mentioned: “Pilot recommendation, leadership and managerial training entitlement...”. This is a new policy aimed at creating a breakthrough to build a contingent of leaders and managers to meet the requirements of the renewal process; supplement and complete regulations and mechanisms; limiting the shortcomings in the selection of leading and managerial officials in our country today. However, up to now, the number of civil servants and officials working under the leadership and management probationary regime is not much. Because all levels, sectors and localities have psychologically waiting for the higher level documents to guide specific implementation. A number of other agencies and units have pioneered the pilot implementation, in general, there has not been a specific document on specific subjects, conditions, standards, time, benefits... and responsibilities of probationary leaders and managers.

Party committees and authorities have not had or have not agreed on the mechanism of inspection, supervision, implementation process, evaluation criteria for probationary leaders and managers during and after their participation in implementing this policy. Specifically: where are their authority and responsibilities? If they do well in the position of leadership, management, will they be considered for promotion, appointment to the corresponding position right after that? If they do not complete the task, even there are mistakes and shortcomings when practicing leadership, management, how to discipline them? Where are the responsibilities of leading and managerial trainees? How are the qualifications, competence and evaluation of the effectiveness of the probationary leaders and managers?...

Some issues related to this policy should be further clarified, such as the coordination mechanism, the connection between the leadership and management probationary regime and the recruitment of leadership and management titles; the chief regime selects the deputy deputies; grounds and conditions guaranteed to proceed; The relationship and uniformity between the leadership and managerial probation regulations and the current regulations on recruitment and appointment of leading and managerial officials need to be carefully considered.

Some issues related to this policy should be further clarified, such as the coordination mechanism, the connection between the leadership and management probationary entitlement and the recruitment of probationary leaders and managers; the system in which the chief selects the deputy deputies; the guaranteed basis and conditions for implementation; The relationship and uniformity between the leadership and managerial probation regulations and the current regulations on recruitment and appointment of leaders and managers need to be
carefully considered.

The main cause of the above situation is: This is a new policy which has not been systematically and comprehensively studied to show the theoretical and practical basis for the implementation of this pilot policy. In fact, there is a psychology of waiting for higher levels to guide specific implementation. The unification of awareness about the implementation of the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers, creating consensus in public opinion has not been given due attention. The unification of awareness about the implementation of the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers, creating consensus in public opinion has not been taken seriously...

This is a right policy to create a breakthrough to build a contingent of leaders and managers to meet the requirements of the renewal process; limiting the shortcomings in the selection of leading and managerial officials in our country in the past, when problems arise, we always conclude that “we have followed the right process” but the results are the same.

In practical terms, in the work of leading officials at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities since its establishment up to now, the Director of the Academy has assigned many deputy-head and equivalent officials, even leading officials in charge of the department. This can be considered as a form of probationary leaders and managers, although it has not been formalized in document and has not called it a form of leadership and management probationship, but it is almost the same.

Another fact to note is that, in the work of leadership since the establishment of the Academy so far has shown the following points:

First, in July 2019 there are only 10 divisions with the head in the total of 19 divisions. In August 2019, 3 new chiefs were appointed. There are 5 divisions without a head. Of the 13 divisions with heads so far, only 5 divisions have deputy heads, and 6 divisions have no deputy. In fact, it raises the issue of needing additional heads and deputy heads as prescribed to assume and complete the assigned tasks according to the functions and tasks of the divisions attached to the Academy. Prior to the final appointment, the divisions heads or deputy heads of the divisions necessarily to be challenged, acquainted and experienced. One of the best challenges is assigning leadership probation, division management and the like.

Second, in the period from the time the Academy was established until July 2019, in the divisions without a head, the deputy heads were assigned to be in charge of the unit and assumed the same position, responsibilities and powers as the head. However, the time of being in charge of the divisions lasts while the benefits of the person assigned to take charge are not entitled to the entitlement of the chief, which is inadequate.

Third, it is during the time when the divisions do not have any heads and deputy heads assigned to run the divisions with the same responsibilities and rights as the heads, and the challenging time is similar to the probationary leaders and managers. Although there is no mechanism for leadership training at the Academy, it is also a requirement for a leadership and management probation mechanism before being officially appointed to the position of head or deputy head of a divisions.

Fourth, stemming from the status of planning, appointing civil servants and leading officials at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities. Pursuant to Decision No. 283/QD-UBDT of May 30, 2017 and Decision No. 403/QD-UBDT of July 6, 2017, approving the title of manager, at department level and the like of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs for the 2016-2021 term of the Minister, Chairman of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs: 41 officials are planned to be deputy manager and equivalent. 13 officials are planned as department heads and equivalent. 5 officers are planned deputy director level and equivalent. 01 officer is planned to be Director General and equivalent. In order to challenge and test the capacity of the planning resources to lead these positions, the Academy is very necessary to assign work under the leadership, management, familiarity with the job, if it can be done and well then appointed.

Thus, from the policy of the Party and the State, from the practice of leadership and management probationship in a number of agencies and the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities, it has been shown that the probationship is a requirement and an objective and important requirement in order to renovate cadre work and satisfy tasks in the integration period and the impact of 4.0 Industry.

With the concept of “Mechanism” and “Probationary mechanism for leaders and managers” as mentioned above, it is essentially a system of elements: the authority that allows it to perform and the person assigned to receive the probationship, probationary leaders and managers tasks, probationary department, probationary period, direction, evaluation... according to a process and the mode of management of the manager in order to effectively achieve the set objectives and renovate the work of appointing cadres and civil servants. Accordingly, the operating mechanism of probationship at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities, according to us, should have the following basic points:

- The unified direction and command of probationary mechanism is a mandatory requirement for the appointment of leadership titles at department level and equivalent at the Vietnam Academy for
Ethnic Minorities. The person assigned to be an apprentice for leader and manager position is in the area of leadership planning at the equivalent level and is approved through document by the leader of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs. Officers who do not complete the probationship are removed from the list of division-level leadership planning and equivalent.

- The Party Committee of the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities has a guiding policy, the Director of the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities leads the probationary mechanism, giving opinions on issues related to the leadership and management probationship.

- The affiliated divisions, organizations (trade unions, youth unions) in the Academy are responsible for coordinating, monitoring and commenting on the leadership and management probationary results before officials are appointed. for division head positions and equivalent.

- The probationary period of leaders and managers at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities is from 1 to 3 years, before being officially appointed for at least 1 year.

- The Director of the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities when deciding on the appointment of an officer to the position of leader must base on the results of the probationship, opinions of the departments and organizations in the Academy about the candidate.

- During the period of probationship, the officer assigned to be the leader and manager of the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities is entitled to entitlements and benefits corresponding to the assigned position and responsibilities.

In order to have an effective probationary mechanism for leaders and managers at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities, it is required:

First, it is necessary to have the right awareness and high political will of the Party committees, the leading cadres, party members and civil servants, officers of the entire Academy on probationary leadership and management, as an important contents of cadre work in the current period and in order to comply with the guidance of the Party, the documents of the State in order to renovate and improve the effectiveness of personnel organization at the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities.

Second, promoting the role of the Party committees, authorities, mass organizations and civil servants and officials involved in the implementation of the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers. Implement the coordination mechanism between the party committee, the authorities, and organizations in implementing, commenting and assessing the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers.

Third, creating a mechanism to promote the working capacity of cadres assigned to train leadership and management such as creating conditions for direct participation in leadership and management work; arranging, using and creating a real challenging environment for cadres assigned to train and lead, manage and promote their qualities and capabilities; at the same time, there is a preferential policy for officials assigned to train leadership and management in accordance with the law.

Fourth, it is necessary to develop and issue regulations and related documents to guide the implementation of the probationary mechanism for leaders and managers. Accordingly, focusing on solving some basic issues such as probationary mechanism; The probationship purpose; Probationship objects; Number of probationary personnels; Probationship content; Probationship form; Probationship duration; Probationship conditions and standards; Process of proposal, consideration and recognition of probationary period; Probationary personnel evaluation comments (with evaluation criteria); Interests and benefits of probationary entitlement; Commendation and disciplines; Making use of the probationary results.

Fifth, strengthening inspection and supervision of the implementation of the party organization, the head of the leadership and management probationary entitlement, especially for officials assigned.

5. Conclusion

It can be said that in any agency, any organization, any field, the leader and the manager is always considered a decisive factor to the success, development and flourishing of an agency or organization. In order to have good leaders, a number of Party documents and legal documents of the State have instructed the practice of leadership and management probationship in Party and State agencies and departments. For the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities, since the Prime Minister signed Decision 1562/QD-TTg on August 8, 2016 establishing the Vietnam Academy for Ethnic Minorities, the organizational structure is in the process of construction and completion, the structure of professional qualifications of the contingent of civil servants, officials and employees in general; Public servants and managers in particular are in the finishing process in both quantity, quality and also structure. Therefore, it can be said that having a probationary mechanism for leaders and managers, managing and organizing this mechanism are very necessary. This will give the Director of the Academy enough time to challenge, identify and evaluate both on the theoretical and practical level, the ethics, personality, style, management ability, ability to coordinate things of the candidate will take on leadership position in the future, in order to appoint the right person for the right job.
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**Tóm tắt**

Xuất phát từ yêu cầu thực tiễn của công tác lãnh đạo, quản lý của Học viện Dân tộc; từ chức năng nhiệm vụ được giao; từ các văn bản chỉ đạo của Đảng và Nhà nước về tập sự lãnh đạo, quản lý và những vấn đề đặt ra từ tập sự lãnh đạo, quản lý tại một số cơ quan, đơn vị, Bộ ngành, nhóm tác giả tập trung nghiên cứu các cơ chế tập sự lãnh đạo quản lý tại Học viện Dân tộc, trong đó đặc biệt lưu ý đến điều kiện thực tiễn và tính đặc thù của Học viện Dân tộc.

**Từ khóa**

Cơ chế; Tập sự lãnh đạo, quản lý; Học viện Dân tộc; Lãnh đạo cấp phòng.