

RENOVATING BOOK PUBLISHING MANAGEMENT IN VIETNAM IN THE TREND OF GLOBALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION: SITUATION AND SOLUTIONS

Dao Thi Hoan

Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, Vietnam
Email: minhphuc06@gmail.com

Article History

Received: 15/4/2020

Accepted: 21/5/2020

Published: 30/6/2020

Keywords

management, publishing,
printing, globalization,
international integration.

ABSTRACT

In the age of globalization, the development of countries has mutual impact. The ever-growing development of science and technology with the Internet and digitalization as its core, and the development of traffic and transportation have pushed forward globalization and international integration, creating a 'flat' world. Under such a circumstance, the publishing industry is greatly influenced, seeing various opportunities and challenges. This article brings forward some solutions for the renovation of publishing in our country in the light of globalization and international integration. This is not only the responsibility of the units participating in the publishing, printing and distribution market but also the responsibility of the agencies that direct and manage the publishing work.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and international integration is an evitable trend of this age, creating opportunities for developing countries to blend in the world's economy, hence enhancing economic growth and renovating technology. In the mist of globalization, Vietnam actively participates in the global and regional economic organizations. This is the chance for enterprises to seek conditions to grow and compete on international markets, one of which is publishing industry.

Research on Vietnamese publishing industry is pretty diverse in both theory and practice, ranging from the publishing activities to the Party's leadership and the State's management. However, there is no in-depth and detailed research on the Party's leadership over publishing in Vietnam. This writing mainly focuses on solving fundamental issues such as explaining the main factors as well as the requirements of globalization and international integration on the development of the publishing industry since 2004, clarifying the Party's guidance in developing publishing plans, building strategies and goals, clarifying the Party's direction in institutionalizing, building and implementing normative documents on publishing which partly and directly orient and modify the industry; examining; the publishing performance since 2004, analyzing and proposing solutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

During the revolutionary process, publications, along with the press, played an important role of being "sharp weapons" in our fight against the enemy, thus contributing greatly to our cause of national liberation. Publishing plays an increasingly important role in transferring information and is a significant "channel" in undergoing main missions, spreading the guidances and direction of the Party, policies and laws of the Government to the general public, providing scientific knowledge and fighting against wrongful and hostile concepts as well as negative phenomena in society.

Due to the important role of the publishing industry in our struggle for national liberation and development, there have been an amount of research on the publishing industry in Vietnam, on publishing activities and on the Party's leadership over publishing at various levels and scales and from different perspectives including the awareness of Party committees about the role of publishing (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2013; To, 2008; Do, 2017); The institutionalization of the Party's viewpoints with normative documents such as Publishing Law (2012), Directive No. 20-CT/TW of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, Directive No. 42-CT/TW of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, Decree No. 195/2013/ND-CP of the Government, Conclusion No. 23-KL/TW of the

Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, Central Communication and Education Committee (2016), the Ministry of Information and Communication (2017)...; Inspecting, checking, and tackling violations in the field of publishing - printing - distribution, signs of commercializing publishing (with researches by Nguyen An Tiem, 2015); Training, nurturing and enhancing expertise and professionalism of publishing teams (Le et al., 2018); The Traffic and Transport Publishing House (2018)... These studies are diverse in both theory and practice, investigating different angles of publishing, the Party's leadership, and the Government's management over Vietnam's publishing industry which all contribute to the completion of institutions and policies, making them more effective to meet the requirements for national development and international integration.

In general, research on the leadership of the Party have clarified some issues: proving the rationale of the Party's leadership and Government's management over publishing; and mentioning some viewpoints of the Party on publishing. However, these studies have not systemized all viewpoints and guidelines of the Party through its congresses and documents, nor have they systematically and fully analyzed the process of completing these viewpoints and guidelines as well as the directive role of the Party over publishing in the socialist-oriented market mechanism. Research on Government's management over publishing has shown the general situation of Government's management over publishing in the renovation period, analyzing and assessing their performance, thereby proposed some suggestions and solutions to enhance the effectiveness in publishing, printing and distribution. However, these papers have only analyzed the current situations of Government's management over publishing and the performance of specific publishing houses, printing houses and distribution agencies, yet to establish a complete and practical solution to restore order in publishing industry, especially in printing and distribution where there are various existing problems and weaknesses. Research on publishing and its activities has systemized viewpoints on the roles and position of publishing and its activities, introducing peculiar concepts, features, contents and characteristics of publishing in Vietnam; however, it has only studied theories and practices of publishing as a specialised field of science. No research has fully and systematically considered the leadership of the Vietnamese Communist Party over publishing.

3. METHODS AND RESULTS

3.1. Research methods

In this writing, we use the following research approaches:

- Theoretical research method: analyzing and synthesizing theoretical bases (collecting documents from the General Statistic Office, documents, reports, Resolutions and Directives stored at the Department of Archive under the Office of the Party Central Committee, the Central Communication and Education Committee, the Ministry of Information and Communication, and the Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution).
- Experience summary and application: forming directions and solutions to solve the issues.

3.2. Research results

3.2.1. The impact of globalization on Vietnam's publishing

Although traditionally printed books still hold the fundamental role in publishing, they are no longer the only products of the industry. There has been a significant shift with the competitive advantage to the side of digital books, which has led to the appearance, popularity and booming in forms of e-commerce such as consuming, marketing, and distributing books online. These activities are not limited in time and space; transactions in copyrights and trading e-books are all done swiftly, easily and conveniently via the Internet... The impact of globalization on Vietnam is strong and likely to keep growing in the future. This context not only gives rises to advantages for publishing but also set new requirements in managing this field.

For the publishing industry to meet these requirements and tasks in the new context, publishing management officials need to apply digital technology advances of the 4th Industrial Revolution to build facility for open science and technology in which the entire publishing process from contacting authors to building plans for topics, editing, proofreading, publishing, distributing and receiving feedbacks from readers are digitally connected through the Internet. These are considered to be the urgent requirements for publishing because without renovating fundamental infrastructure and facility, the publishing industry can hardly meet the new demands and tastes of readers, making our national publishing further lag behind our regional and worldwide peers.

3.2.2. *The current situation of Vietnam's publishing industry over the recent period*

From 2001 to 2019, in the implementation of the viewpoints and guidelines regarding publishing put forth at Party Congresses IX, X, XI, and XII, the Party Central Committee has directed to renovate the Government's management over publishing through directives and decrees. On that basis, the Government, ministries and sectors have built and organized strategies, plans, policies for developing the publishing industry; related authorities have issued many normative documents on publishing and copyrights in publishing activities.

On August 25th 2004, the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee (9th tenure) issued Directive No. 42-CT/TW on improving the comprehensive quality of publishing activities, detailing the Party's viewpoints and guidelines on directing the publishing activities in the new period. This Directive emphasizes "*building Publishing into an economic - technological industry that is fully and sustainably developed. Suitable policies and mechanisms need to be made to ensure publishing's effective operation in the socialist-oriented market economy*", "*renovating, upgrading and gradually modernizing technical infrastructure and facility in publishing...; applying information technology advances to modernize the editorial process and publication management in accordance with international practices*"... (the Secretariat, 2004). To provide favourable conditions for publishing to develop, take part in international integration, create a legal corridor as well as increase effectiveness in management work, and deal with arising problems in reality, the Publishing Law was promulgated by the 11th National Assembly (2004); continued by the Law on Amendment and Supplementation of some articles of the Publishing Laws of 2008 and 2012.

In the implementation of Directive No. 42-CT/TW of the Secretariat, Notice No. 19-TB/TW dated 29th December, 2016 of the Secretariat, the Publishing Law; the Plan for development of the publishing - printing - distribution sector toward 2010 of the Ministry of Culture and Information, Plan for Development of the publishing - printing - distribution sector toward 2020 - Vision toward 2030 of the Government, along with many other documents with specific requirements and instructions about publishing, the publishing market has improved in both quantity and quality, specifically as follows:

- *In publishing*: Many high-quality book volumes are published in various categories and topics such as politics, culture and society, science and technology, and economics and business administration in international integration. Publishing activities have grown both in scale and capability. The number of publishing houses rises rapidly from 48 in 2004 to 64 in 2014 (Central Communication and Education Committee, 2016, p.3); all important fields have their own publishing houses. In 2006, 25,989 titles were published nationwide with 226,927 million copies. In 2011, the number of titles increased to 27,542 with 293,723 million copies. In 2017, the figure went up to 28.7 thousand titles with 313.9 million copies, which reduced by 4.5% in the number of titles and 6.1% in the number of copies compared to those of 2016 (General Statistic Office, 2017, p.361); in 2018 there were 33.9 thousand titles and 372 million copies, an increase of 18% in the number of titles and 18.5% in the number of copies compared to those of 2017 (General Statistic Office, 2018, p.391).

By the end of 2015, the total raised capital for operations of publishing houses was 1,915.718 billion VND (3.86 times higher than that of 2004), the total revenue reached 2,143.878 billion VND (1.67 times higher than that of 2004); contribution to Government's budget was 67.744 billion VND; total profit after tax of all publishing houses was around 100 billion VND, an increase by 2.2 times compared to that in 2004; in 2017, the revenue of all publishing houses was 2,892.585 billion VND (an increase of 31.4% compared to that in 2016); contribution to Government's budget was 109.311 billion VND (an increase of 59% compared to that of 2016) (Central Communication and Education Committee, 2016, p.3). Many publishing houses operate effectively and generate profits such as Youth Publishing House (profit of VND 13.700 billion), National Political Publishing House (VND 19.722 billion), Kim Dong Publishing House (VND 30.350 billion), Vietnam Education Publishing House (VND 104.793 billion) (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2018). In 2019, the revenue of the whole publishing industry reached VND 2,775.127 billion (an increase of 10.7% compared to that of 2018); contribution to the State budget was VND 165.412 billion (a decrease of 11.6% compared to that of 2018) (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2019).

- *In printing*: The printing sector has received adequate investment for technological modernization; products have become increasingly diverse, meeting the demand of different target audiences; the process of equitization and the demand for growth of different economic fields have created opportunities for some printing enterprises to expand their investment, install new equipment, modernize their process, enhance production capability, thus meeting demands of orders with high levels of technical and aesthetic requirements. The organization of the printing industry has been restructured. Before 2000, there were 162 State-owned printing houses all over the country; in 2012, that figure was reduced to over 40; in 2013, there were 64 printing houses under 18 ministries and 5 printing houses under sectors and mass associations (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2013, p.163). The revenue and contribution to the State budget as well as annual profit of the printing sector has also gradually increased.

- *In publication circulation*: A large number of companies have witnessed rapid growth, such as publication distribution joint stock companies in Ho Chi Minh City, Thanh Hoa, Ninh Binh, Ha Tinh, Nghe An, and Gia Lai Culture - Tourism Joint Stock Company (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2013, p.165). By the end of 2015, over 90% of publishing houses had their own websites to marketize their brand and introduce their books on the Internet, increasing by nearly 15 times compared to that of 2004; 25% of all publishing houses took part in digital publishing (Central Communication and Education Committee, 2016, p.3). In 2017, the total number of distributed books nationwide reached 415.6 million copies while other distributed publications reached 114.8 million copies; publications for export reached 400,000 books, six million newspapers and magazines; imported publications included 30 million books, over 11 million CDs and DVDs, over seven million newspapers and magazines (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2018). In 2019, the total number of distributed publications was 440 million copies (an increase of 1.6% compared to that of 2018), total revenue was 3,462 billion VND (an increase of 3% compared to that of 2018) (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2019).

- *Meeting the requirement for globalization and international integration, book import and export sector has achieved gradual development*: Since 2004, books have been exported into markets in America and Europe, later to Italy, China, and Singapore. Book and newspaper export turnover reached 2.5 million USD in 2005 and came up to 3.3 million USD in 2009; in 2012, the total export and import turnover of books and newspapers increased to 23.42 million USD. For FAHASA company, their revenue in 2012 was 1,500 billion VND, of which imported titles reached 6.5 million USD; nearly 23 million books and 31 million cultural publications were distributed. In 2016, their revenue reached 23.76 million USD, of which their import was 19.86 million USD, export reached 3.9 million USD; more than 400,000 books and 6.8 million newspapers and magazines were exported (an increase of 3% compared to 2015) (Ministry of Information and Communication, 2017, p.4). In 2019, total export and import turnover was 27.45 million USD (an increase of nearly 4% compared to 2018), in which import reached 23.25 million USD, export reached 4.2 million USD (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2019).

Vietnam's exported publications cover a wide range of topics, including literature, culture, art, tourism, sceneries, war such as *Wandering through Vietnamese culture*, *Dien Bien Phu: Rendezvous with History (Vo Nguyen Giap)*, *the Diary of Dang Thuy Tram*, *Forever the age of 20*, *Scenic Hanoi*, and so on. Digital publications start to appear with a wide spread and influence on the readers. Customers and readers have more chances to approach and select information as well as products, services and brands on the market. The number of digital titles has reduced: the number of registered E-books was 1,100 titles in 2015 and nearly 1,900 in 2016. However, this number in 2017 reduced to only 137 titles registered and legally deposited (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2019).

The promotion and organization of book fairs have attracted much interest and investment. The awareness of book publishing and publishing agencies and State management agencies on the role and importance of book promotion has shown positive changes. Book promotion activities, especially book fairs in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, have attracted readers of all ages, increasing sales and contributing to the growth of reading culture. At the same time, Vietnam has actively participated in book promotion activities, such as La Habana International Book Fair in Cuba, the international book fairs in the Russian Federation, in Frankfurt, Germany; the introduction of Vietnamese books at Vietnamese Cultural Centers in France and the Czech Republic has been organized; a book exhibition in the United States on the occasion of "Meeting Vietnam" event is held; annual conferences of the ISBN Association

in Korea; collaboration with the China Government Agency of Press and Publication to organize the Chinese book fair in Hanoi... (the Ministry of Information and Communication, 2012, p.16).

- *Copyrights protection in the trend of globalization and integration is an obligatory requirement for Vietnam publishing industry*: On 26th October, 2004, Vietnam officially became a member of the Berne Convention. This is considered as the beginning of the integration process for Vietnam in copyrights and thereby open a future of partnership in copyrights and related rights protection in order to push growth in creative industries of Vietnam. In 2005, the Intellectual Property Law was issued, including regulations that aligned with regulations of the Berne Convention. To align the industry with the situation of economic growth and changes in social relationship relating to intellectual property, in 2009, the Intellectual Property Law was amended and supplemented. Along with the Intellectual Property Law, other specialized laws such as the Publishing Law, Press Law, Cultural Heritage Law and regulations related to copyrights suitable for each sector were also promulgated; the Civil Code, Criminal Code, Customs Law and Law on Dealing with Administrative Violations also have regulations with regards to copyrights and related rights depending on the characteristics and adjustment of each law.

To meet the new requirements, the staffs working in the publishing field need recruited in order to adapt to the process of globalization and international integration. They get access to modern and creative technology, thus greatly contribute to the development of the publishing industry. Up to March 2018, nearly 1,300 editors have been given editorial practicing certificates.

3.2.3. *Causes of limitations in Vietnamese publishing industry in the recent period*

Within 15 years (2004-2019), publishing, printing and distribution activities have recorded important development, significantly contributing to the communication of the Party's guidelines and directions, and the Government's policies and laws, serving well assigned political tasks and programs for socio-economic growth in regional and national levels. Through books exported to other countries, the publishing industry has contributed to promoting the image of Vietnam and the Vietnamese people and culture to international friends. Accordingly, we provide the world and overseas Vietnamese with accurate information about our achievements in national renewal, tightening the bond between overseas Vietnamese and their home country. At the same time, Vietnam's publishing industry has played an important role in pushing forward the integration process, exploring, and making international valuable publications available to domestic Vietnamese readership.

Despite important progress, there are still weaknesses in our publishing activities: we have not reached our target number of copies per person per year as the stated goal; the number of valuable titles is not high; some limitations are not properly settled. The capability, scale and expertise of publishing houses remain limited and the organization model is not yet suitable. Government's management in publication is not effective in some aspects, especially in digital publication. Many supervising organizations have not strictly and effectively managed their publishing houses. Publishing technology in Vietnam has failed to catch up with the advances of the world, and consequently our human resource is not yet capable of meeting professional requirements. Although the number of titles and their copies gradually increases every year, the number of violating titles has also risen. In 2016, the Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution handled 179 faulty publications from various publishing houses (114 of which had content violations); in 2017, 155 violating publications were handled (of which 101 had content violations, 5 with errors in lexical and spelling, and 49 violated various stipulations of the Publishing Law). In addition, publishing houses themselves dealt with 36 violating publications of their own and reported to the Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution (Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution, 2018).

The main cause of these weaknesses come from the fact that some management authorities have not fully understood the position, role and peculiar characteristics of publishing activities; nor have they provided appropriate solutions to create favourable conditions for the development of the publishing industry. Many emerging theoretical issues in publishing have not been researched and clarified. The collaboration between State management agencies and supervising authorities is still limited. The State management over publishing has not been carried out synchronously; there is no suitable mechanism and policy to improve publishing conditions; legal regulations in copyrights protection still have limitations. The competence and expertise of some management officials, editors and workers in the publishing industry have yet to satisfy the requirements for publishing activities in the new context.

Currently, nearly ten thousand Party members are studying and working abroad, and over four million overseas Vietnamese are living abroad. How can these Vietnamese communities have regular access to the Party's guidelines, Government's policies as well as in-depth research on domestic situations, national history, culture, traditions and customs, and the national tradition of brave struggle of the country and its people? This is the urgent task set for the publishing industry in actively carrying out its function in communicating the guidelines of the Party and Government's policies and laws to the Vietnamese overseas communities. In face of the demand of reality, there need to be fundamental solutions for the publishing industry to fulfil their tasks amidst the trend of globalization and international integration.

3.2.4. Some solutions to renovate the current publishing management in Vietnam

First, it is necessary to develop a suitable mechanism for collaboration between directive authorities, State management authorities in publishing, supervising authorities and publishing houses, printing houses and distributors: Under the leadership of the Party organizations, the process of directing the publishing work among agencies has been implemented in a synchronous and practical manner. The work of state management on publishing has experienced major changes. Hence, following up the content of the administrative reform, the management has promoted the roles and responsibilities of the units involved in publishing, printing and distributing. Decentralization has been promoted in the direction of increasing the role of macro management and enhancing the responsibility of the publishing agency.

Second, it is imperative to modernize publishing activities: The system of publishing houses should be restructured to ensure appropriateness and effectiveness; incapable publishing houses with multiple violations should be resolutely dissolved; the organizational structures and working procedures in concerned units should be completed, clarifying the powers and responsibilities of each position, especially the leadership; the management over collaboration activities and activities of representative offices should be improved; digital publishing should be developed.

Third, publishing management work should be renovated in the direction of strengthening the role of planning, orienting, and building a legal system for publishing activities - a peculiar field of business and production. The legal system related to publishing should be accomplished, in which due attention should be paid to finalize the legal framework to ensure copyrights protection in civil code, administrative law, and criminal code. At the same time, a system should be devised to control competition and ensure a healthy and stable book market. Especially, disputes in the fields of publishing, particularly copyrights, need to be handled in court in order to suit international practice.

Fourth, it is required to plan, restructure, and consolidate training facilities of the publishing, printing and distribution sector in the direction of modernity and competence on par with regional levels. *The Plan for development of publishing, printing and distribution toward 2020, with vision toward 2030* should be strictly followed. Publishing has witnessed changes in both physical presentation of the books and publishing methods, resulting in the requirements for suitable changes in the human resources of the publishing industry. Promotion activities at domestic and international book fairs should be enhanced. Training and fostering human resources in publishing should be consolidated.

Fifth, inspection, examination and settlement of violations should be strengthened: It is necessary to complete and closely supervise the implementation of the publishing procedure, enhance management in digital publication, and strictly follow copyrights law.

Sixth, extensive international cooperation, coordination and integration in science and technology, publishing techniques should be expanded in order to diversify publications, enhancing the internal capacity of Vietnam's publishing activities. It is imperative to enhance and expand extensive international cooperation and integration in terms of science-technology with countries having advanced publishing industry to improve Vietnam's publishing capacity in general as well as its digital and electronic products in particular.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization and international integration, publishing activities require open information technology facilities; publishing houses, printing houses and distributors need to prepare all required conditions and capability

to shift to digital publishing; the manuscript quality should be enhanced through active and intense research for topics to promptly response to readers' need; the application of scientific and technological advances should be encouraged; the staffs involved in editing, printing and distribution need to be trained; marketing strategies should be developed, selecting specialized publishing fields to build their own brand; the use of websites, building visibility, brand recognition, and development strategy should be strengthened for concerned units. That is not only the mission of participants in the publishing, printing and distribution market but also the responsibility of concerned management authorities.

REFERENCES

- Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution: *Report at the Conference on publishing work in 2018*.
- Authority of Publication, Printing and Distribution: *Report at the Conference on publishing work in 2019*.
- Central Communication and Education Committee (2016). *Report on 10-year implementation of Directive No. 42-CT/TW of the Secretariat on improving comprehensive quality of publishing activities*.
- Do, T. Q. (2017). Copyrights issues in publishing activities nowadays. *Culture and Art Magazine*, 391, 25-30.
- General Statistics Office (2017). *2017 brief Statistical Yearbook*. General Statistics Office.
- General Statistics Office (2018). *2018 brief Statistical Yearbook*. General Statistics Office.
- Government (2013). *Decree No. 195/2013/ND-CP dated 21st November, 2013 on Detailed regulations on some articles and methods for implementation of the Publishing Law*.
- Le, T. G. (chief editor), Nguyen, N. S., Pham, Q. H. (2018). *Editing - Publishing specialized books for traffic and transport*. Traffic and Transport Publishing House.
- Ministry of Information and Communication (2012). *Summary report on publishing and distribution activities in 2011 and implementation of assigned tasks in 2012*.
- Ministry of Information and Communication (2015). *Summary report on publishing and distribution activities in 2014 and implementation of assigned tasks in 2015*.
- Ministry of Information and Communication (2017). *Summary report on publishing and distribution activities in 2016 and implementation of assigned tasks in 2017*.
- National Assembly (2012). *Publishing Law*. National Political Publishing House.
- Nguyen, A. T. (2015). In dealing with setbacks in current publishing activities. *Education and Communication Magazine*, 3, 14-19.
- Nguyen, A. T., Nguyen, N. (2013). *Organization, management and policies in publishing in some countries - Experience for Vietnam*. National Political Publishing House.
- Nguyen, H. V. (2012). *Vietnamese publishing in the context of market economy and international integration*. Time Publishing House.
- The Secretariat (2003). *Directive No. 20-CT/TW dated 27th January, 2003 on publishing and distributing theoretical, political books in the new situation*.
- The Secretariat (2004). *Directive No. 42-CT/TW dated 25th August, 2004 on improving comprehensive quality of publishing activities*.
- The Secretariat (2017). *Conclusion No. 23 KL/TW dated 22nd November, 2017 on enhancing guidance and management, promoting the role of press, publishing in preventing, and pushing back degradation in political mindset, morality and life style, "self-transformation", "self-evolution" within the system*.
- To, H. R. (2008). *Making real, strong and firm changes in publishing*. People Daily, 13th March, 2008.
- Traffic and Transport Publishing House (2018). *Some documents of the Party and Government about publishing: Organization and management of publishing in Traffic and Transport Publishing House*. Traffic and Transport Publishing House.