

DEVELOPING DA NANG TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DESTINATION PHÁT TRIỂN ĐÀ NẴNG THÀNH ĐIỂM ĐẾN GIÁO DỤC QUỐC TẾ

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Abstract - The Education and Training sector in Da Nang demonstrated average growth rates in Value Added (VA) of 6.39–5.69% and employment generation of 6.11–5.69% during the pre- and post-consolidation periods of 2021–2025. The sector's contribution to Da Nang's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) growth ranged from 3.76–4.07% and 3.67–4.00%, respectively, ranking seventh among 20 primary economic sectors in terms of competitive advantages. This study also proposes strategic solutions to develop Da Nang as an international education destination that not only provides high-quality human resources for Da Nang and the surrounding regions but also positions the city as a premier educational tourism hub in Vietnam's international market. The findings offer policy recommendations for the Vietnamese Government, relevant ministries, and Da Nang municipal authorities to support investment and development in the Education and Training sector, thereby generating spillover effects for Da Nang's economic development.

Key words - International education; Primary economic sector advantage; Educational tourism; Education hub model; Da Nang.

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and international integration, education serves not only as the foundation for national human resource development but also as a critical competitive driver for nations and territories, promoting economic growth and attracting international investment [1]. Countries hosting multiple international education institutions can attract high-quality human capital, foster international research collaboration, generate employment, increase fiscal revenues, and promote sustainable socio-economic development.

In recent years, Vietnam has identified education as a central factor in developing national human resources, stimulating economic growth and enhancing global competitiveness. Vietnam has adopted a development orientation where education and training, alongside with science and technology, are top national priorities. More particularly, the specific objective of Vietnam by 2030 is to become one of the 21 countries achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in order to enable international integration, to enhance human resource quality, and to attract more international students and experts [2].

For Vietnam to develop education and science and technology meeting international standards, it is necessary for localities to develop sufficient institutional capacity, infrastructure and internationalized environment to test and

Tóm tắt - Ngành Giáo dục và Đào tạo Đà Nẵng trước và sau khi hợp nhất giai đoạn 2021–2025 có mức tăng trưởng bình quân về Giá trị tăng thêm (Value Added – VA) là 6,39 – 5,69 (%); Tạo việc làm cho người lao động là 6,11 – 5,69 (%), đóng góp của Ngành Giáo dục và Đào tạo Đà Nẵng vào tăng trưởng GRDP Đà Nẵng lần lượt là 3,76–4,07 (%) và 3,67–4,00 (%), xếp hạng 7/20 về lợi thế của 20 ngành kinh tế cấp 1. Ngoài ra, bài viết còn đề xuất một số giải pháp để phát triển Đà Nẵng thành điểm đến giáo dục không chỉ đào tạo nguồn nhân lực chất lượng cao cho Đà Nẵng và các địa phương trong khu vực mà Đà Nẵng còn trở thành điểm đến tại Việt Nam về du lịch giáo dục trên thị trường quốc tế. Chính phủ, Bộ ngành Việt Nam và chính quyền Đà Nẵng có thể tham khảo nhằm có chính sách hỗ trợ và đầu tư để thúc đẩy ngành Giáo dục và Đào tạo Đà Nẵng phát triển nhằm tạo hiệu ứng lan tỏa phát triển kinh tế thành phố Đà Nẵng.

Từ khóa - Giáo dục quốc tế; Lợi thế ngành kinh tế cấp 1; du lịch giáo dục; mô hình giáo dục làm trung tâm “Education hub”; Đà Nẵng.

implement advanced education models, creating a ripple effect for national development. Da Nang has advantages in living environment, modern urban infrastructure, smart city orientation and innovation center [3]. Developing Da Nang into an international education destination helps promote socio-economic development in the Central and Highlands region as well as a greater parity in allocation of high-quality training resources nationwide, generating a balance with Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. More importantly, such an orientation also promotes the economic development of Da Nang. In addition, Da Nang becoming an “Education Hub” contributes to the effective implementation of the “cultural diplomacy” strategy and affirming Vietnam’s role in the globalization academic network. The question is how Da Nang could leverage its existing potential to become an international education destination. Previous research on education development in Vietnam employed statistical techniques to describe the current situation of education system and proposed solutions to improve the quality of education in Vietnam [4]. Another research paper by [5] studied the coordination mechanism between universities and businesses to improve the quality of training linked with practical needs for learners. Also, studying learner’s behaviors of using technology in education, previous research by [6], [7], [8] has shown that digital technology, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI), has improved the quality of education

and critical thinking of Vietnamese learners. Although there have been studies on education system development, there are not much systemic research works to propose a synchronized system of solutions to develop education in Da Nang or to become an international education destination. Accordingly, this study will assess the current situation and propose several solutions for the Da Nang city government to refer to when formulating policies to promote Da Nang's development into an international education destination in the future.

2. Methodology

This study approaches the development of Da Nang into an international education destination by analyzing secondary data provided by Da Nang Statistics Office [9] in the fields of: contribution of the Education and Training sector to Da Nang's economic growth, job creation by the Education and Training sector for Da Nang workers in the period 2021-2025 with 2 scenarios: Da Nang before and after provincial merging (Da Nang City and Quang Nam Province) according to the Decision No. 76/2025/UBTVQH15 issued by the National Assembly of Vietnam on April 14, 2025 [10]. (National Assembly of Vietnam, Resolution No. 76/2025/UBTVQH15 "On the rearrangement of administrative units in 2025" Hanoi, April 14, 2025).

- Contribution to economic growth is measured by the proportion of Value Added (VA) in the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), annual VA growth and average VA growth:

+ The proportion of VA in GRDP (d_{VA}) is analyzed by formula (1) in which the higher the value, the greater the contribution of the Education and Training sector to Da Nang's economic growth.

+ Annual VA growth (g_{VA}) is analyzed by formula (2). This indicator, in addition to reflecting the fluctuation of annual production results of the Education and Training sector, is the basis for evaluating the role of this sector in Da Nang's economic growth.

$$d_{VA} = \frac{VA_i}{GRDP_i} * 100\% \quad (1)$$

$$g_{VA} = \frac{VA_i - VA_{(i-1)}}{VA_{(i-1)}} * 100\% \quad (2)$$

Average VA growth is measured by two indicators: Relative growth ($\bar{g}_{VA}$) analyzed by formula (3) and absolute growth ($\bar{\Delta}_{VA}$) analyzed by formula (4). These two indicators, in addition to reflecting the fluctuations in the production results of the Education and Training sector, are the basis for evaluating the role of this sector in Da Nang's economic growth over a research period, specifically 2021-2025 in this study.

$$\bar{g}_{VA} = \left(\sqrt[n-1]{\frac{VA_n}{VA_1}} - 1 \right) * 100\% \quad (3)$$

$$\bar{\Delta}_{VA} = \frac{VA_n - VA_1}{n-1} \quad (4)$$

In which: VA_i ($i=1,n$): Value added of the Education and Training sector in Da Nang.

GRDP_i ($i=1,n$): Gross regional product of Da Nang.

- Contribution to employment is measured by the proportion of employment of the Education and Training sector in the total employment of Da Nang, annual employment growth and average employment growth of this sector:

+ The proportion of employment (d_L) is analyzed by formula (5), in which the higher the value, the greater the contribution of the Education and Training sector to employment in Da Nang.

+ Annual employment growth (g_L) is analyzed using formula (6). This indicator, in addition to reflecting the annual employment fluctuations of the Education and Training sector, is a basis for evaluating its role in Da Nang's employment.

$$d_L = \frac{L_i}{L_{DNI}} * 100\% \quad (5)$$

$$g_L = \frac{L_i - L_{(i-1)}}{L_{(i-1)}} * 100\% \quad (6)$$

Average employment growth is analyzed according to two indicators: Relative growth ($\bar{g}_L$) is analyzed by formula (7) and absolute growth ($\bar{\Delta}_L$) is analyzed by formula (8). These two indicators, in addition to reflecting the employment fluctuations of the Education and Training sector, are the basis for evaluating the role this sector in Da Nang employment over a research period, specifically 2021-2025 in this study.

$$\bar{g}_L = \left(\sqrt[n-1]{\frac{L_n}{L_1}} - 1 \right) * 100\% \quad (7)$$

$$\bar{\Delta}_L = \frac{L_n - L_1}{n-1} \quad (8)$$

In which: L_i ($i=1,n$): Employment in the Education and Training sector of Da Nang.

L_{DNI} ($i=1,n$): Total employment in Da Nang.

Subsequently, the study analyses the Education and Training sector's competitive advantages relative to Da Nang's 20 primary economic sectors based on VA contribution to GRDP growth, labour efficiency, and investment effectiveness [11]. This sectoral advantage analysis establishes integrated development models for Da Nang's Education and Training sector, leveraging synergies to position the city as an international education destination.

Based on these findings, the study proposes strategic solutions for developing Da Nang's Education and Training sector through inter-sectoral linkages and multi-stakeholder collaboration involving educational institutions, enterprises, and government authorities to generate composite advantages for international education hub development. The empirical evidence provides a reliable foundation for the Vietnamese Government, relevant ministries, and Da Nang municipal authorities to formulate policies and investment strategies that promote the Education and Training sector's development, thereby generating spillover effects for Da Nang's economic growth in the coming years.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Education and Training sector's contribution to Danang's economy

Table 1 demonstrates that the Education and Training sector's contribution to Da Nang's economy, measured by

Value Added (VA) as a proportion of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) during 2021–2025, remained stable at 3.76–4.07% pre-administrative consolidation and 3.67–4.00% post-administrative consolidation. Although the sector's VA contribution ranks moderately among Da Nang's 20 primary economic sectors, annual growth rates remained consistently positive, ranging from 3.68–8.67% (average 6.39% or 312.872 billion VND annually) pre-administrative consolidation and 3.31–8.67% (average 5.69% or 312.872 billion VND annually) post-administrative consolidation. Notably, during the COVID-19 pandemic (2021–2022), when Vietnam's and Da Nang's economies faced severe challenges, the Education and Training sector sustained positive growth, demonstrating its resilience and stabilising role in Da Nang's economic development – a characteristic recognized in OECD's 2021 education report [12].

Table 1. *The Education and Training sector's contribution to Danang's GRDP 2021–2025*

Criteria		Unit	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Pre-administrative consolidation	Weight in GRDP	(%)	4.07	3.76	3.93	3.91	3.80
	Annual growth	(%)	3.68	4.77	7.85	7.09	8.67
	Average VA growth	(%)	6.39				
		(mil VND)	185.367				
Post-administrative consolidation	VA/GRDP ratio	(%)	3.95	3.67	4.00	3.94	3.92
	VA growth	(%)	3.31	4.10	6.54	5.91	8.67
	Average VA growth	(%)	5.69				
		(mil VND)	312.872				

(Calculations based on the source: Da Nang Statistics [4])

Table 2. *The Education and Training sector's contribution to Danang's employment 2021–2025*

Criteria		Unit	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Pre-administrative consolidation	Labor	(Person)	31509	37735	41526	39641	41503
	Weight in Da Nang	(%)	5.89	6.02	6.56	6.11	6.14
	Average Labour growth	(%)	6.11				
		(Person)	2131				
Post-administrative consolidation	Labor	(Person)	62209	69187	72111	76625	79188
	Weight in Da Nang	(%)	4.70	4.82	5.00	5.23	5.26
	Average Labour growth	(%)	5.72				
		(Person)	3844				

(Calculations based on the source: Da Nang Statistics [4])

Table 2 reveals substantial employment expansion in Da Nang's Education and Training sector during 2021–2025, particularly post-administrative consolidation. Pre-administrative consolidation, employment increased from 31,509 in 2021 to 41,503 in 2025, averaging 6.11% annual growth and representing 5.89–6.56% of Da Nang's total workforce. For post-administrative consolidation, employment grew more significantly from 62,209 to 79,188, averaging 5.72% annual growth (3,844 additional workers annually) and representing 4.70–5.20% of the workforce. Despite a slight proportional decrease during post-

administrative consolidation, the sector continued expanding and playing a vital role in employment generation.

Tables 1 and 2 collectively confirm that Education and Training constitutes a sustainably growing economic sector providing stable employment and mitigating economic shocks from unforeseen events such as COVID-19, thereby maintaining Da Nang's economic growth [12]. This evidence provides a compelling rationale for Da Nang to invest in education development, generating spillover effects across other economic sectors through human capital knowledge enhancement and innovation promotion to increase social labour productivity [13], while establishing the foundation for developing Da Nang as an international education destination.

3.2. Competitive advantages of Da Nang' Education and Training sector

Table 3 presents the ranking of competitive advantages of Da Nang's economic sectors based on VA growth, labour productivity, and investment efficiency [11], revealing that the Education and Training sector achieved an average score of 9.4, ranking seventh among 20 primary economic sectors. Although not among the leading sectors such as Information and Communication (rank 1) or Wholesale and Retail Trade (rank 2), Education and Training belongs to top one-third of advantaged sectors, demonstrating relatively high capacity. This indicates that Education and Training has transcended its traditional social role to become a critical component of the urban economic structure, particularly given Da Nang's strategic orientation towards a high-quality service economy based on innovation [14].

Considering that some sectors with strong physical infrastructure, such as Accommodation and Food Services (rank 11), no longer possess high competitive advantage, integrating Education and Training with top-performing sectors like Information and Communication (rank 1), Wholesale and Retail Trade (rank 2), and Financial, Banking and Insurance Activities (rank 3) could create an ecosystem centred on an "education hub" model, progressively developing towards a "global education hub" as successfully implemented in Singapore [15]. Furthermore, combining Education and Training with Transportation and Storage (rank 4) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (rank 10) could establish an "education tourism" model integrating cultural exploration, recreation, and education to generate composite advantages through inter-sectoral linkages, similar to the successful educational tourism model developed in North Cyprus [16].

Developing Da Nang as an international education destination benefits from favourable policy conditions established by the Communist Party and the Vietnamese Government, targeting comprehensive international integration with international integration in science, technology and innovation, culture, society, tourism, environment, and education and training as a strategic priority [17]. Specifically, Vietnam aims to join the group of 21 countries achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for education quality by 2030 [2]. Notably, the University of Da Nang is among four universities (including Vietnam National University Hanoi,

Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, and Hanoi University of Science and Technology) selected for priority investment to achieve Top 150 Asian rankings by 2030 and at least one discipline ranked within the global Top 100 according to prestigious international university rankings [18], establishing a favourable foundation for developing Da Nang as an international education destination. Beyond policy advantages, Da Nang's Education and Training system, centred on the University of Da Nang with seven member universities, one Vietnam-UK Research and Training Centre, possesses multidisciplinary training capacity and international collaboration capabilities adaptable to emerging global education trends, including Financial Technology (Fintech) at the University of Economics and Semiconductor Microchip Design at the Vietnam-Korea University of Information and Communication Technology. Several institutions with substantial historical legacy have provided high-quality human resources for over 50 years (University of Science and Technology; University of Economics), while the University of Da Nang has fulfilled its regional university mandate for 30 years through multidisciplinary training. This demonstrates Da Nang's substantial pool of highly qualified personnel with advanced academic credentials (Professors, Associate Professors, PhDs) at a considerable scale – a critical advantage for developing international education and training.

Table 3. *Ranking the Competitive Advantages of Economic Sectors in Da Nang [6]*

N0.	Code	Economic sector	Mean	Rank
1	A	A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	12.4	17
2	B	B. Mining and quarrying	13.1	20
3	C	C. Manufacturing	10.2	9
4	D	D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	11.9	13
5	E	E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	13.0	19
6	F	F. Construction	12.3	15
7	G	G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	7.4	2
8	H	H. Transportation and storage	8.7	4
9	I	I. Accommodation and food service activities	11.1	11
10	J	J. Information and communication	6.1	1
11	K	K. Financial, banking and insurance activities	7.6	3
12	L	L. Real estate activities	12.0	14
13	M	M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	9.1	5
14	N	N. Administrative and support service activities	9.8	8
15	O	O. Activities of Party and activities of membership organisations	12.6	18
16	P	P. Education and training	9.4	7
17	Q	Q. Human health and social work activities	9.2	6
18	R	R. Arts, entertainment and recreation	10.6	10
19	S	S. Other service activities	11.3	12
20	T	T. Hiring activities do housework in the household	12.3	15

4. Solutions to facilitating Da Nang to become an international educational destination

This study's strategic approach advocates integrated development combining Education and Training with complementary sectors to generate composite advantages exceeding individual sectoral benefits, creating “learning-experience-exploration” linkage that delivers comprehensive added value for international students.

Policy Framework and Special Mechanisms Enhancement. Develop a comprehensive 'International Educational Tourism' strategy for Da Nang integrated within socio-economic development planning and education internationalisation strategy; Implement investment incentives for international training institutions, affiliated campuses, and short-term training centres. Explore Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models in international education; Improve public services related to international affairs and international students through a pilot “one-stop” mechanism for international students and experts (visa, residence, administrative services); facilitating international training programme implementation and attracting international experts to study, research, and work in Da Nang.

Education Tourism Hub Development. Develop an integrated “Education Tourism Hub” model with the brand message positioning Da Nang as a destination for “Experience – Explore – Learn” for international learners. Da Nang should plan and invest in upgrading the Da Nang University Village Project [14] into an “International Education District” integrating dormitories, research centres, and multi-functional cultural-entertainment zones with comprehensive support services. This will enable training institutions to develop short-term programmes combining experiential tourism (summer schools, cultural immersion, study tours). Promote preferential mechanisms for linkages between educational institutions and travel enterprises in designing and implementing “study and explore” research and experiential products in Da Nang. Combining training with marine, ecological, and cultural tourism enhances experiential value and extends international student stays in Da Nang.

Quality Enhancement and International Standardisation. Elevating and internationally standardization of training programmes constitutes not only an internal institutional requirement but also a strategic pillar for positioning Da Nang as a regional high-quality education centre. Da Nang can provide material support and recognition awards based on indicators including: scale of English-medium programmes, dual degree partnerships with prestigious universities, number of internationally accredited programmes (AUN-QA, ABET, AACSB), and annual recruitment of international faculty and experts. To ensure effectiveness, Da Nang should establish an Internationalization Performance Index (IPI) applied uniformly across training institutions. Annual evaluation results will inform budget allocation and award decisions. This approach creates healthy competition among institutions while ensuring efficient use of public resources. Performance-based support policies contribute

to enhancing Da Nang's competitiveness and attractiveness for international students in the long run.

Education Brand Communication Enhancement.

The "Study in Danang" communication channel should be perfected in alignment with the strategy of positioning Danang as an international education destination as an integrated destination branding strategy, under the unified coordination of the Danang government. Simultaneously, it is necessary to mobilize training institutions, international education service businesses, and tourism industry to develop a synchronized communication ecosystem to enhance the recognition of Danang's education brand in the international market. A multilingual "Study in Danang" portal should be built as a central platform integrating information on training programs, scholarships, living costs, job opportunities, visa requirements, and living environment. This portal should be directly linked to member universities of the University of Danang and international training institutions in Danang, ensuring data consistency and up-to-date information. Develop and implement digital communication and social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.). Content should shift from administrative promotion to real-life experiences of international students and teachers in Da Nang. Establish an international media cooperation network with study-abroad consulting companies, global educational organizations, and travel agencies specializing in "educational tourism" products. Signing cooperation agreements between the city and the business community will help expand access to prospect international students and scholars. Besides online communication channels, Da Nang needs to host international education conferences, seminars, and fairs to which training institutions must be encouraged to participate; invest in and support educational institutions that offer "Vietnamese language and culture" classes for foreigners. Organize an annual international education-tourism forum in Da Nang to bring together universities, businesses, investors, ranking organizations, and diplomatic agencies. This forum serves both as a tool to promote investment in education and as a platform for developing and positioning Da Nang's education brand in the international market. Developing integrated communication content that promotes the advantages of a safe living environment, reasonable costs, and high quality of life, and attractive natural landscapes, with a focus on elevating and expanding the brand from "A Livable Digital City" to "A Livable Digital City - a Safe Destination for International Education," will enhance Da Nang's position on the international education map.

Tripartite Linkage Model Development. Promote a tripartite "Education – Enterprise – Tourism" linkage model to create an integrated "Education – Experience – Employment" ecosystem. This model enhances training practicality while meeting enterprises' seasonal short-term human resource needs and strengthening Da Nang's competitiveness in attracting international learners. Training institutions, particularly the University of Da Nang, should survey enterprise needs to design programmes aligned with business realities and local

economic characteristics. This facilitates cooperation between schools and enterprises, forming educational tourism products that enhance learning experiences with cultural immersion for international students. Enterprises should embrace cooperation with training institutions through internship recruitment and joint curriculum design; meeting workforce needs while training personnel to international working standards and creating competitive advantages for Da Nang in attracting international students. Tourism enterprises should expand communication of education-related products including "study tours", "summer schools", and "experiential learning programmes" combining professional learning with heritage and marine cultural experiences alongside existing tourism products. For effective tripartite model operation, Da Nang authorities should coordinate through supportive policy mechanisms including: tax incentives for enterprises participating in training, international student scholarship funds, facilitated visa mechanisms, and innovation complexes integrating universities, institutes, enterprises, and creating spaces. Simultaneously, establishing linkage effectiveness evaluation indicators (e.g., international student ratios, post-graduation employment rates, enterprise partnership programmes, educational tourism revenue) will enable policy monitoring, optimization, and inform annual recognition awards for participating training institutions and enterprises.

International Scholarship Fund Establishment.

Establish a scholarship fund for international students and scholars to research and study in Da Nang, financed through Da Nang municipal budget, Da Nang science and technology investment funds, combined with training institutions and the Da Nang business community. Developing and implementing Da Nang's International Scholarship Fund constitutes both an educational support policy and a strategic instrument for knowledge economy development and enhancing Da Nang's competitiveness. If designed with transparency, strategic focus, and integration within the education-enterprise-tourism ecosystem, international scholarships will contribute significantly to positioning Da Nang as a safe, high-quality, and attractive international education destination for students and scholars worldwide.

5. Conclusion

This study has reviewed and identified the contribution of Da Nang's Education and Training sector during the 2021-2025 period in two key areas: Contribution to Da Nang's economic growth, measured by indicators such as the proportion of Value Added (VA) in GRDP, annual VA growth, and commented VA growth; and contribution to Da Nang's employment, measured by indicators such as the proportion of education and training jobs in Da Nang's total employment, annual employment growth, and commented employment growth. Furthermore, several practical solutions have been proposed to develop Da Nang into an international education destination. However, this study is limited to the use of descriptive statistical methods and does not utilize testing methods to measure the factors

influencing the Education and Training sector in Da Nang. Expanding the investigation to include experts evaluating and proposing solutions would increase the reliability of the proposed solutions in terms of scientific validity and feasibility, making them more effective in developing Da Nang into an international education destination.

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