

# A STUDY ON AFFECTING FACTORS OF VIETNAMESE STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH CHINESE LANGUAGE MAJOR CURRICULUM: A CASE OF A UNIVERSITY IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

Luu Hon Vu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Faculty of Foreign Languages, Ho Chi Minh University of Banking, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, luuhonvu@gmail.com*

## Abstract

This study was conducted to identify factors affecting students' satisfaction with a university's Chinese language major curriculum in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Using quantitative research methods, this study conducted a questionnaire survey among Chinese language majors. There are 35 items in the questionnaire. A total of 175 survey samples were collected in this study, meeting the minimum sample size requirement. In this study, SPSS 25.0 software was used for statistics and processing of the collected data. On this basis, the proposed research hypotheses and research models are tested. The research results show that among the four factors of curriculum content, learning resources of the curriculum, correlation between courses and personal consultation, there are two factors that positively affect students' satisfaction with Chinese language majors: curriculum content and personal consultation. Among them, the effect of curriculum content is the strongest (Beta = 0.680), followed by the effect of personal consultation (Beta = 0.197). On the basis of the findings, this study proposes some administrative implications to improve students' satisfaction with the curriculum for Chinese language majors.

**Keywords:** affecting factors; students' satisfaction; curriculum; university; Vietnam

## I. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is a concept that has often mentioned in the field of education, especially in university education. Different researchers have defined the curriculum from different perspectives. However, researchers basicly believe that the curriculum is an overall design that serves education and training to achieve training goals within a certain period time.

According to the "Regulations on the Quality Evaluation Standards of University Education Curriculum Setting" promulgated by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (2016), the curriculum setting includes the following contents: First, objectives, knowledge, skills, attitudes of learners; Second, content, methods, educational

activities; Third, infrastructure, organization, functions, tasks, academic activities. According to Department of Education Testing and Quality Accreditation of the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (2016), the curriculum needs to be supplemented and adjusted regularly based on the opinions of students and related parties. It can be seen that it is extremely important to examine students' satisfaction with curriculum, and it is beneficial to the improvement of curriculum and its quality.

The curriculum for Chinese language majors in a university in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam has been promulgated and put into use many years ago. The curriculum needs to be supplemented and adjusted in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam. Therefore,

this paper aims to investigate the students' satisfaction with the curriculum and its influencing factors. The research results of this paper will be the basis for the adjustment and supplementation of the curriculum of the Chinese language major.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Students' satisfaction

Kotler and Keller (2006) define satisfaction as a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment which resulted from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome against his/ her expectations. Customer perceived value has been defined as "the difference between the perspective customer's evaluation of all the benefits and all the costs of an offering and the perceived alternatives" (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

On the basis of Kotler and Keller's (2006) definition of satisfaction, we define students' satisfaction with the curriculum of Chinese language majors is the psychological state of students' expectations and needs in the process of participating in the study of the major. When students' expectations and needs are more satisfied, students' satisfaction will be higher, and conversely, when students' expectations and needs are not satisfied or only a part of them are satisfied, students' satisfaction will be low.

### 2.2. Factors affecting students' satisfaction

Most of the previous studies discussed Vietnamese students' satisfaction with the quality of training services provided by universities, such as Nguyen, Nguyen and Pham (2012), Nguyen (2013), Ha and Nguyen (2015), Pham (2016), Tran (2016), Vo (2017), Nguyen and Nguyen (2017), M. N. Nguyen and T. T. T. Nguyen (2018), Nguyen and Nguyen (2021). Curriculum was only one of the factors examined in these studies. These studies do not discuss what factors affect Vietnamese students' satisfaction with the curriculum.

At present, there have been some research results on students' satisfaction with the curriculum. Farge, Virieux, and Doury (2000) researched French students' satisfaction with the dental

curriculum. Tessema, Ready, and Yu (2012) looked at overall satisfaction with course offerings among students at mid-sized U.S. public universities and found that five factors—teaching quality, capstone experience, academic advising, overall college experience, and career or graduate school readiness—had a positive impact on satisfaction. Zhou (2016) took the university course satisfaction of college graduates as the research object, using a closed structure and a five-point Likert scale to measure the questionnaire, and found that the overall satisfaction of the students in Shandong province, China, with the curriculum is not high, especially the course system and content. Rossini, Bulfone, Vellone, and Alvaro (2021) conducted a study of nursing students' satisfaction with the curriculum.

In Vietnam, there is currently not much research on students' satisfaction with the curriculum. We found only two studies for T. B. N. Nguyen and V. T. Nguyen (2018), and Nguyen and Luu (2021). T. B. N. Nguyen and V. T. Nguyen (2018) surveyed the perception of final-year students of the Faculty of Commerce - Van Lang University (Vietnam) about the curriculum, with aspects such as organization, relevance, breadth of the curriculum, depth of the curriculum, interdisciplinarity, individual counseling, resources and overall students' satisfaction with the curriculum. Nguyen and Luu (2021) investigated the satisfaction of English majors at Ho Chi Minh University of Banking (Vietnam) with the curriculum, and found that the students were satisfied with the curriculum, were not satisfied with the degree of future career compliance, the depth of the curriculum, the breadth of the curriculum, and the learning resources of the library.

Based on referring to previous research results, we believe that the factors that affect students' satisfaction with the curriculum are as follows: organization of curriculum content, suitability of the curriculum, breadth of the curriculum, depth of the curriculum, correlation between courses, personal consultation and learning resources of the curriculum. Therefore, in this study, we will examine the above-mentioned factors that affect students' satisfaction with the curriculum.

### 2.3. Research model and hypothesis

Based on the above theoretical background, we propose the following research model (see Figure 1):

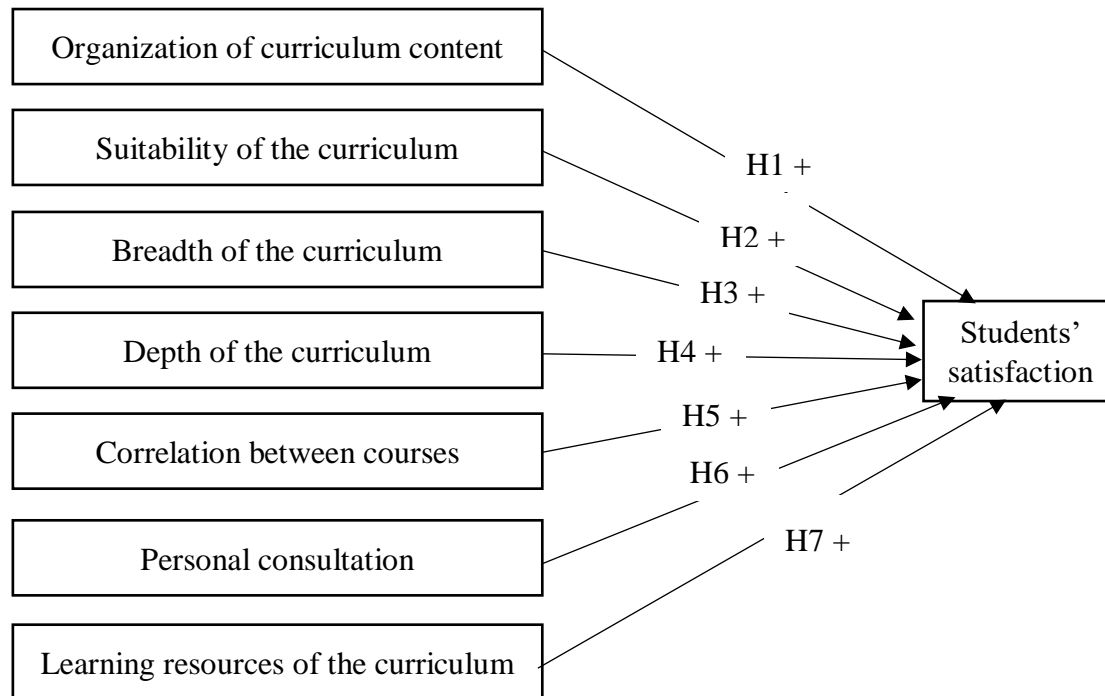


Figure 1. *Research model*

Source: Developed for this study.

We have seven research hypotheses of this study. They are as follows:

H1: Organizational of curriculum content has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H2: Suitability of the curriculum has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H3: Breadth of the curriculum has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H4: Depth of the curriculum has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H5: Correlation between courses has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H6: Personal consultation has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H7: Learning resources of the curriculum has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1. Scale design

Based on the scales of existing research results, we adjusted and supplemented them, and designed a survey scale for this study. The various factors in the scale are shown in Table 1. All survey items in this study used a five-point Likert scale ranging with 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly agree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

Table 1. *Scale*

Factor	Code	Items
	OC1	The organization of the curriculum is better

Organization of curriculum content	OC2	I always feel that the requirements of the curriculum are clear
	OC3	Administrative work is handled better
	OC4	The way the course offerings are organized allows me to meet the completion criteria
	OC5	Courses in the curriculum are more reasonable arrangements
Suitability of the curriculum	SC1	I feel that the curriculum has provided the foundational knowledge for my career
	SC2	This curriculum is relatively new
	SC3	I can see that this curriculum fits my target job well
	SC4	This curriculum is very suitable for my learning ability
Breadth of the curriculum	BC1	The content covered by this curriculum is relatively broad
	BC2	This curriculum is enough for me to choose the courses I want to study
	BC3	The curriculum offering has the courses I need
	BC4	The curriculum is bread enough to understand my care
Depth of the curriculum	DC1	The content covered by the curriculum has sufficient depth
	DC2	The textbook has been fully processed
	DC3	I can understand what I care about
	DC4	Reasonable distribution of class hours for professional courses
	DC5	If I want to understand what I care about, I get help
Correlation between courses	CC1	I can see correlations between courses
	CC2	I learned a curriculum with a coherent, non-discrete layout
	CC3	The teacher has pointed out the correlation between the courses
	CC4	The courses within the curriculum are complementary
Personal consultation	PC1	Any questions I have about the curriculum offerings will be answered
	PC2	If needed, I will be consulted to help me choose the right course
	PC3	Teachers pay more attention to my personal development
	PC4	I always get inquiries about curriculum offerings when needed
Learning resources of the curriculum	LC1	Libraries of books and magazines related to this curriculum are available
	LC2	The resources of the laboratory are in line with
	LC3	The resources I need will be provided
	LC4	I get useful learning materials from teachers and curriculum

	LC5	I can easily find the materials I need
Students' satisfaction	SS1	I am quite satisfied with the curriculum of this faculty.
	SS2	This faculty's curriculum met my expectations.
	SS3	I will introduce friends and relatives to study in this faculty.
	SS4	I still choose to study in this faculty if there is a similar curriculum in other schools.

Source: Developed for this study.

### 3.2. Sampling procedure

The data used in this study based on a survey of Chinese language students' satisfaction with the curriculum. To collect data, we randomly distributed questionnaires to students of this major using the Google Forms platform in April 2022.

According to Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010), when performing exploratory factor analysis, the minimum sample size of the study must be five times the number of observed variables. The number of items for this study is 35, so the minimum sample size of the study must be  $N = 5 * 35 = 175$ .

### 3.3. Sample size

A total of 175 students responded to the questionnaire and they answered all the questions in the questionnaire. It can be seen that our sample size meets the minimum sample size requirement. Therefore, the sample of this study is representative.

The respondents are between 20 and 26 years old, with a mean age of 21.29 years old, including 10 male students (5.7%) and 165 female students (94.3%) participated in this survey. The percentage of male students participating in this survey is lower than the percentage of female students, which is due to the gender imbalance of students who choose Chinese language majors in Vietnam, and there are always more female students than male students.

### 3.4. Data processing tools

We use SPSS 25.0 software to process all collected data. After encrypting and cleaning all data, we conduct the following analysis steps: (1) Evaluate the reliability of the scale with Cronbach's Alpha, (2) Exploratory factor analysis, (3) Pearson correlation analysis and (4) Regression analysis.

## 4. RESEARCH RESULTS

### 4.1. Cronbach's Alpha

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha

Factor	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Minimum of corrected item-total correlation
Organization of curriculum content	5	0.930	0.781
Suitability of the curriculum	4	0.902	0.733
Breadth of the curriculum	4	0.872	0.594
Depth of the curriculum	5	0.887	0.697
Correlation between courses	4	0.902	0.749

Personal consultation	4	0.926	0.816
Learning resources of the curriculum	5	0.930	0.721
Students' satisfaction	4	0.924	0.792

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 2 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha values for all scales are greater than 0.6, and the corrected item-total correlation for all items are greater than 0.3. It can be seen that the scales meets the reliability requirements (Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2010) and can be used for exploratory factor analysis.

#### 4.2. Exploratory factor analysis

##### 4.2.1. Exploratory factor analysis of independent variables

We performed exploratory factor analysis on the independent variables. Extraction method is principal component analysis. Rotation method is varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

In the first analysis, rotation converged in 6 iterations. It was found that the two items WC2 and DC2 did not meet the requirements of factor analysis, so they were excluded.

A second exploratory factor analysis was then performed. Rotation converged in 6 iterations. The results are shown in Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 3. *KMO and Bartlett's test for independent variables*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.953
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4850.816
	df	406
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 4. *Total variance explained for independent variables*

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.952	58.456	58.456	16.952	58.456	58.456	7.710	26.587	26.587
2	1.541	5.313	63.769	1.541	5.313	63.769	4.750	16.379	42.966
3	1.419	4.894	68.663	1.419	4.894	68.663	4.553	15.701	58.667
4	1.019	3.513	72.176	1.019	3.513	72.176	3.918	13.510	72.176

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 5. *Rotated component matrix for independent variables*

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
SC1	0.767			
OC4	0.756			
SC3	0.749			
OC5	0.741			
SC4	0.741			
OC2	0.731			
OC1	0.698			
SC2	0.663			
BC3	0.624			
OC3	0.580			
DC1	0.577			
DC3	0.554			
DC4	0.530			
BC4	0.523			
LC1		0.819		
LC5		0.807		
LC2		0.799		
LC3		0.788		
LC4		0.558		
CC2			0.778	
CC4			0.764	
CC1			0.727	
CC3			0.695	
BC1			0.560	
PC4				0.784
PC2				0.769
PC3				0.700

PC1				0.628
DC5				0.522

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 3 shows that, Bartlett test results have a very high level of significance for Sig. is 0.000 and the coefficient KMO is 0.953 ( $> 0.5$ ). Table 4 shows that the Eigenvalues stop is equal to 1.019 and initial eigenvalue's cumulative % is 72.176%. Table 5 shows that the load factor is valid from 0.522 to 0.819. This result shows that, exploratory factor analysis is appropriate (Hair et al., 2010), four factors are generated, as follows:

The first factor consists of fourteen items: SC1, OC4, SC3, OC5, SC4, OC2, OC1, SC2, BC3, OC3, DC1, DC3, DC4 and BC4. This factor is a combination of organization of curriculum content, suitability of the curriculum, breadth of the curriculum and depth of the curriculum. These items are related to the content of the curriculum, so we name this new factor curriculum content (CuCo). Mean (CuCo) = Mean (SC1, OC4, SC3, OC5, SC4, OC2, OC1, SC2, BC3, OC3, DC1, DC3, DC4, BC4) = 3.9396, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.959.

The second factor consists of five items: LC1, LC5, LC2, LC3 and LC4. They are all elements of the original learning resources of the curriculum. Therefore, it is still named learning resources of the curriculum (LC). Mean (LC) = Mean (LC1, LC5, LC2, LC3, LC4) = 3.7006, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.930.

The third factor consists of five items: CC2, CC4, CC1, CC3 and BC1. These items are related to the correlation between courses, so we still name this new factor correlation between courses (CC). Mean (CC) = Mean (CC2, CC4, CC1, CC3, BC1) = 3.9977, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.896.

The fourth factor consists of five items: PC4, PC2, PC3, PC1 and DC5. These items are related to personal consultation, so we still name this new factor personal consultation (PC). Mean (PC) = Mean (PC4, PC2, PC3, PC1, DC5) = 3.9463, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.928.

These four factors will be used to analyze the effect on the satisfaction of the curriculum.

#### 4.2.2. Exploratory factor analysis of dependent variable

We performed exploratory factor analysis on the dependent variable. Extraction method is principal component analysis. Rotation method is varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

The results show that the four items of this factor have very high convergence. These items all have load factors from 0.883 to 0.915, the Eigenvalues stop is 3.262, initial eigenvalue's cumulative % is 81.542%. Sig. is 0.000 and the KMO coefficient is 0.817. This result indicates that the satisfaction scale reaches convergent value (Hair et al., 2010). Students' satisfaction (SS) has Mean (SS) = Mean (SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4) = 4.0443, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.792.

#### 4.3. Adjustment of research models and research hypotheses

Based on the results of exploratory factor analysis, we made modifications to the research model and research hypothesis.



The revised research model is as follows (see Figure 2):

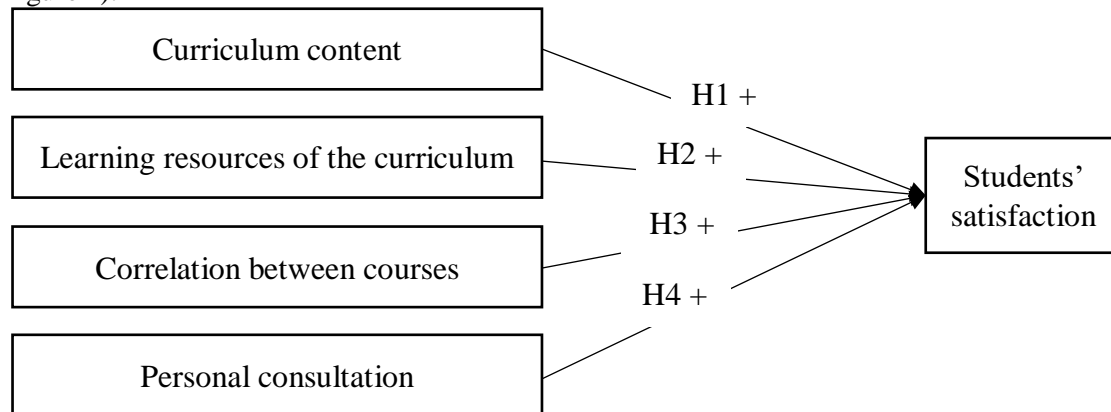


Figure 2. *Modified research model*

Source: Results of data analysis.

The research hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Curriculum content has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H2: Learning resources of the curriculum has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H3: Correlation between courses has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

H4: Personal consultation has a positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum.

#### 4.4. Research model validation

##### 4.4.1. Pearson correlation analysis

The Pearson correlation analysis of independent variables (CuCo, LC, CC and PC) and dependent variables (SS) showed that there was a significant correlation between them. The lowest correlation coefficient is 0.673, the highest correlation coefficient is 0.846, and all meet the statistical significance (Sig. <0.01). This shows that, there is a close correlation between the independent variables (CuCo, LC, CC and PC) and the dependent variable (SS) in the model (see Table 6).

Table 6. *Correlations*

	SS	CuCo	LC	CC	PC
SS	1	0.846**	0.673**	0.682**	0.753**
CuCo	0.846**	1	0.737**	0.762**	0.791**
LC	0.673**	0.737**	1	0.652**	0.700**
CC	0.682**	0.762**	0.652**	1	0.753**
PC	0.753**	0.791**	0.700**	0.753**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Results of data analysis.

##### 4.4.2. Regression analysis

In order to identify factors affecting the satisfaction of curriculum, we conducted regression analysis with independent variables (CuCo, LC, CC and PC) and dependent variable

(SS). The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9.

Table 7. *Model summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.858	0.736	0.730	0.34378	1.934

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 8. *ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.127	4	14.032	118.725	0.000
	Residual	20.092	170	0.118		
	Total	76.219	174			

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 9. *Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.388	0.178		2.177	0.031		
	CuCo	0.680	0.080	0.642	8.501	0.000	0.272	3.681
	LC	0.051	0.058	0.054	0.889	0.375	0.415	2.411
	CC	0.003	0.070	0.003	0.047	0.962	0.354	2.827
	PC	0.197	0.069	0.205	2.869	0.005	0.305	3.282

Source: Results of data analysis.

Table 7 shows that the regression model has R square coefficient is 0.736, adjusted R square coefficient is 0.730. The adjusted R square value indicates that the model explains 73.0% of the change in the satisfaction variable. Table 7 also shows that the Durbin-Watson value is 1.934, in the range from 1.5 to 2.5, the model does not exist for first order series autocorrelation.

Table 8 shows, F value is 118.725, Sig. equal to 0.000. Table 8 also shows that the sum of squares of the regression (56.127) is greater than the sum of squares of the residual (20.092). This indicates that the model explains most of the variance of the dependent variable.

Table 9 shows that, the independent variables CuCo and PC all met the requirements (Sig. <0.05). In addition, the independent variables have VIF magnification coefficients greater than 2.0 and less than 4.0, proving that the model does not have serious multicollinearity phenomenon.

This result shows that only two out of four factors used to conduct the analysis have an impact on students' satisfaction with curriculum. These are the factors of curriculum content (CuCo) and personal consultation (PC). These factors are positively correlated with the students' satisfaction factor (SS), the regression coefficients Beta are all greater than zero. Curriculum content

factor (CuCo) has the strongest influence on students' satisfaction with curriculum (Beta = 0.680), followed by the personal consultation factor (Beta = 0.197).

After regression analysis, we have regression equation with standardized coefficients as follows:

$$SS = 0.680 * CuCo + 0.197 * PC + 0.051 * LC + 0.003 * CC \quad (1)$$

#### 4.4. Validation results of research hypotheses

Table 10. Summary table of the results of the validation of the research hypotheses

Research hypothesis	Affect	Result
H1: Curriculum content	Positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum	Accept
H2: Learning resources of the curriculum	Positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum	Rejected
H3: Correlation between courses	Positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum	Rejected
H4: Personal consultation	Positive effect on students' satisfaction with curriculum	Accept

Source: Results of data analysis.

The test results of the research hypotheses show that hypotheses H1 and H3 are all accepted. Curriculum content and personal consultation affect students' satisfaction with curriculum. When these factors increase, it will increase the students' satisfaction with the curriculum.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1. Conclusion

Research results have identified two important factors that have the strongest influence on students' satisfaction with a Chinese language major curriculum: curriculum content and personal consultation. In which, the factor of curriculum content is the factor that has the strongest impact on the satisfaction of students about the curriculum (Beta = 0.680), the personal consultation factor has an impact on the satisfaction of students about the curriculum (Beta = 0.197) is lower. The regression analysis also shows that the model has the coefficient R square is 0.736 and adjusted R square coefficient is 0.730, the model can explain 73.0% of the impact of

factors affecting students' satisfaction on curriculum.

### 5.2. Administrative implications

From the above findings, we propose the following administrative implications:

Curriculum content (CuCo) is the factor that has the strongest influence on students' satisfaction with the Chinese language major curriculum (Beta = 0.680). Therefore, when adjusting and revising the curriculum, schools and relevant responsible persons need to pay attention to the content of the curriculum. Before adjusting or revising the curriculum, the school and the relevant person in charge need to interview the students who have graduated to understand the courses they need and their suggestions on the schedule of each course. It can be seen from the open questions of the questionnaire that students hope to learn courses that are secretly related to practical work. They hope that the school can reduce the class hours of language skills classes and increase the class hours of Chinese-Vietnamese translation, Business Chinese and other courses.

Personal consultation (PC) is one of the factors affecting students' satisfaction with the Chinese

language major curriculum (Beta = 0.197). Students do not know much about the curriculum of Chinese majors. They need the consultation of teachers and related personnel, so that they can better understand the goals of each course, and know which courses are helpful to their goal work. Therefore, teachers are not only knowledgeable about the content of the subject they teach, but must understand the curriculum of Chinese language major, so that they can advise students when needed. In this way, they will have a better understanding of the curriculum, which will improve the satisfaction of the curriculum.

Learning resources of the curriculum (LC) does not affect student satisfaction with course offerings (Beta = 0.051). In the current period, the learning resources of students studying Chinese language major are provided by teachers or specialized faculty. The learning resources in the library directly related to the Chinese language major are still very limited. Therefore, if this issue is not paid attention, learning resources in the future may be the factor affecting student satisfaction with the curriculum. Libraries and specialized faculty need to collaborate, build and develop learning resources to meet the increasing learning needs of students, at least having enough learning resources such as textbooks and educational resources. Study materials are covered in subject outlines of the Chinese language major.

Correlation between courses (CC) does not affect student satisfaction with course offerings (Beta = 0.003). Students had the highest satisfaction with this factor. This shows that the correlation between the various courses in the existing curriculum is particularly high. When the curriculum is revised next time, the school and the relevant person in charge need to maintain the relevance between the various courses.

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