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IMPLICATIONS FOR SOLUTIONS TO ENHANCE SOCIAL TRUST IN THE VALUE OF DISTANCE LEARNING DEGREES IN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT

Using a quantitative survey combined with a review of relevant literature, this study shows that social trust in the value of distance learning degrees in Vietnam remains at a moderate level (Mean = 2.8161) and is shaped by systemic factors, including unclear training quality (REA3: $r = 0.402$), social bias (REA1: $r = 0.382$), and negative media coverage (REA2: $r = 0.352$). Respondents without prior distance learning experience were more strongly affected by social influences (REA5: $r = 0.477$), whereas respondents with such experience were more influenced by practical factors such as employer interaction (REA4: $r = 0.422$) and training quality (REA3: $r = 0.428$). A further contribution of the article lies in its paired cause-solution analysis and its examination of both the separate and combined effects of proposed solutions. The results indicate that the set of causes substantially explains trust ($R^2 = 0.567$), whereas the set of solutions has low explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.043-0.120$), and their combined effect is almost insignificant ($R^2 = 0.004$). This suggests a gap between high agreement with proposed solutions and actual changes in trust. On this basis, and in comparison with international experience, the study proposes three directions: enhancing transparency in training quality, shifting communication toward real experiences and competencies, and strengthening university-industry linkages to improve social trust.

KEYWORDS: social trust, value of distance learning degrees, distance learning in Vietnam, social trust in distance learning degrees.

1. INTRODUCTION

Distance learning has become an inevitable trend in education, expanding access to learning opportunities for diverse groups of learners (UNESCO, 2020). In Vietnam, in 2023 the Ministry of Education and Training issued regulations aimed at standardizing and improving the quality of distance learning. However, social trust in the value of distance learning degrees remains limited, as reflected in concerns about quality, transparency, and the degree of recognition in recruitment (Hieu Nguyen, 2023; Vietnam Education E-Magazine, 2025). This situation is similar to that in many countries, where online degrees are often evaluated less favorably than traditional degrees (Columbaro and Monaghan, 2009), reflecting a lack of trust in this field (Grossman and Johnson, 2015).

From the perspective of social psychology, this phenomenon can be explained through theories of prejudice and social stereotypes, according to which individuals often form negative judgments based on incomplete information or pre-existing distorted perceptions (Allport, 1954; Fiske et al., 2002). According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), these beliefs not only influence how society perceives distance learning degrees but also affect the behavior of learners and employers. In addition, limitations of the online learning environment, such as insufficient interaction, difficulty in quality control, and concerns about academic dishonesty, also contribute to reinforcing negative perceptions (Hien et al., 2020; Dao Van Hung, 2023). In particular, the transparency of information and communication about training quality is a key factor affecting social trust (Kizilcec, 2019).

Although many studies have examined barriers to and perceptions of distance learning, most have focused on describing the current situation or analyzing influencing factors. Studies that investigate causes and solutions for improving social trust remain limited. Research on university-industry cooperation suggests that such linkages can improve recognition and the value of degrees, thereby enhancing social trust (Hoang Xuan Binh and Ly Hoang Phu, 2020). This research gap and the evidence above indicate the need for an integrated approach to identify the causes of, and effective solutions for, improving social trust in distance learning degrees. This is also the objective of the present study, which combines a literature review with quantitative analysis to expand this line of inquiry and provide a scientific basis for policies aimed at enhancing the credibility of distance learning degrees.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Research procedure

The research procedure consisted of four steps: (1) reviewing theoretical foundations and related studies to identify factors affecting social trust in distance learning degrees; (2) developing a survey questionnaire based on the theoretical framework; (3) conducting the quantitative survey; and (4) analyzing the data using SPSS and Excel to draw conclusions and discuss the findings.

2.2. Survey method and research participants

The study conducted an online survey via Google Forms, using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling. A total of 416 valid responses were collected from December 2025 to January 2026. Of these, 46.2% had previously experienced distance learning (#CO), while 53.8% had not (#KHONG). In terms of sample structure, females accounted for 60.3% and males for 39.7%. The age distribution was concentrated mainly in the 31-40 group (39.9%), followed by those over 40 (23.2%), under 22 (20.3%), and 22-30 (16.7%). Respondents with a university degree constituted the largest proportion (61.5%). Participants mainly came from Ho Chi Minh City (49.5%), in addition to major urban centers such as Hanoi, Da Nang, and Can Tho, and represented diverse occupations, thereby providing a relatively representative basis for the subsequent analyses.

2.3. Research instrument

The study used a self-administered questionnaire structured into four sections to collect information relevant to the objectives of the article.

Section 1 consisted of seven demographic questions covering age, gender, occupation, field, educational level, place of residence, and experience with distance learning. Section 2 included two questions: (1) social trust as observed by respondents, grounded in theories of prejudice and social stereotypes (Allport, 1954; Fiske et al., 2002) and in the reality that distance learning degrees are often undervalued in recruitment (Columbaro and Monaghan, 2009; Grossman and Johnson, 2015); and (2) personal trust, based on the role of beliefs in shaping attitudes and behaviors according to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Section 3 focused on causes (REA) that reduce trust. REA1 reflects the social norm that gives higher value to formal full-time degrees (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Fiske et al., 2002). REA2 refers to the role of media in shaping bias (Allport, 1954; Corrigan, 2000). REA3 emphasizes the lack of transparency in training quality (Kizilcec, 2019; Nguyen Thi Hue, 2024). REA4 concerns the limited contact between employers and distance learners (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). REA5 reflects social influence from people around the respondent (Ajzen, 1991; Turner, 1991).

Section 4 examined proposed solutions (SOL). SOL1 addresses the role of legal regulations (Ministry of Education and Training, 2023; Hieu Nguyen, 2023). SOL2 emphasizes transparency in quality assurance and accreditation (Kizilcec, 2019). SOL3 reflects the role of positive communication in reshaping social perceptions (Allport, 1954; Dovidio et al., 2010). SOL4 relates to fairness in recruitment and the reduction of bias (Corrigan and Watson, 2002; Williams et al., 2003). The variables in Sections 2, 3, and 4 were measured consistently using a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), ensuring consistency in the survey instrument. The survey items are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Summary of variables in the survey questionnaire

Variable code	Abbreviated content	Foundation
GROUP 1: DEMOGRAPHICS		
7 demographic variables: age, gender, current occupation, field, educational level, place of residence, and experience with distance learning		
GROUP 2: SOCIAL TRUST		
Trust1	Society tends to undervalue distance learning degrees	Stereotypes and prejudice (Fiske et al., 2002); social categorization (Tajfel and Turner, 1979)
Trust2	I personally do not trust the value of distance learning degrees	TPB - the role of beliefs (Ajzen, 1991); prejudice (Allport, 1954)
GROUP 3: CAUSES		

REA1	Vietnamese society values formal full-time degrees more highly	Stereotype content (Fiske et al., 2002)
REA2	Negative media/social media coverage of distance learning degrees	Information-based prejudice (Allport, 1954; Corrigan, 2000)
REA3	Distance learning lacks transparency in training quality	Trust and transparency (Kizilcec, 2019; Nguyen Thi Hue, 2024)
REA4	Employers have limited contact with distance learning graduates	Intergroup contact (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006)
REA5	People around the respondent undervalue distance learning degrees	Social influence (Ajzen, 1991; Turner, 1991)
GROUP 4: SOLUTIONS		
SOL1	Legal regulations on the value of degrees	Institutional role (Hieu Nguyen, 2023)
SOL2	Transparent quality accreditation	Trust through transparency (Kizilcec, 2019)
SOL3	Positive communication about distance learning degrees	Reducing prejudice (Allport, 1954; Dovidio et al., 2010)
SOL4	Fairness in recruitment	Reducing stigma (Corrigan and Watson, 2002; Williams et al., 2003)

Reliability testing showed that the group of cause variables (REA) had very high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha = 0.878; corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.649 to 0.778, and no item was removed, indicating internal consistency. The solution variables (SOL) also achieved good reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha = 0.851; corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.668 to 0.744, with no item removed, making the scale suitable for subsequent analyses.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Quantitative research results

3.1.1. Current status of social and personal trust

Using a five-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate greater skepticism and lower trust, the overall sample mean was 2.82 (SD = 1.20), reflecting a moderate level of trust. Notably, 22.1% of respondents expressed high skepticism (from 4.00 to 5.00), indicating that a considerable portion of society still does not highly value distance learning degrees.

Table 2. Statistics on trust in the value of distance learning degrees, overall and by group

Score level (Trust_MEAN)	Experienced group (n=192)	No-experience group (n=224)	Overall sample (N=416)
Level 1.00 (Very low)	32 (16.7%)	24 (10.7%)	56 (13.5%)
Level 1.50-2.00	40 (20.8%)	40 (17.9%)	80 (19.2%)
Level 2.50	40 (20.8%)	39 (17.4%)	79 (19.0%)
Level 3.00 (Average)	24 (12.5%)	43 (19.2%)	67 (16.1%)
Level 3.50	16 (8.3%)	26 (11.6%)	42 (10.1%)
Level 4.00-5.00 (High)	40 (20.9%)	52 (23.2%)	92 (22.1%)
Mean	2.7083	2.9085	2.8161
Std. Dev	1.26918	1.13914	1.20359

The experienced group (#CO) had a mean skepticism score of 2.71, lower than that of the no-experience group (#KHONG), which was 2.91. This indicates that respondents who had not directly experienced distance learning tended to maintain stronger bias and distrust. By contrast, practical experience among respondents in the #CO group appeared to reduce skepticism to some extent, although the proportion selecting the “very skeptical” level (Level 1.00) in this group was still 16.7%, higher than that in the #KHONG group (10.7%). This suggests that some learners still encountered psychological barriers after completing distance learning programs.

Trust in distance learning degrees also differed across most demographic characteristics (Sig < 0.05). Men (3.06) showed higher skepticism than women (2.64). Notably, managers (2.15) and human resource personnel (2.47) expressed the deepest distrust, while the under-22 group (3.39) and students (3.31) showed a markedly more open attitude than the 22-30 group (2.60). This is consistent with the theory of generational and social-status differences proposed by Fiske et al. (2002) and with Columbaro and Monaghan’s (2009) observation regarding employers’ stricter evaluations.

3.1.2. Causes

3.1.2.1. Overall perceptions of causes

Table 3. Summary of descriptive statistics and repeated-measures ANOVA for the cause variables

Cause (REA)	Overall Mean	Mean #CO	Mean #KHONG	% Agree & Strongly agree	Sig. (overall)	Sig. (#CO)	Sig. (#KHONG)
REA1: Vietnamese society values formal full-time degrees	3.531	3.625	3.451	60.10%	0	0.04	0

REA2: Negative media coverage	3.502	3.5	3.504	52.20%	0	0.04	0
REA3: Unclear quality	3.481	3.458	3.5	55.80%	0	0.04	0
REA4: Employers have limited contact	3.327	3.458	3.214	46.10%	0	0.04	0
REA5: Evaluation by people around the respondent	3.115	3.333	2.929	42.30%	0	0.04	0
REA_MEAN	3.391	3.475	3.32	—	—	—	—

The overall sample showed a moderate-to-fairly high level of agreement regarding the causes (REA_MEAN = 3.391). The societal preference for formal full-time degrees (REA1 = 3.53; 60.1%), negative media coverage (3.50), and lack of transparency in quality (3.48) were key factors shaping trust (Hofstede, 2011). Repeated-measures ANOVA ($p < .05$) further confirmed differences between groups: the #CO group emphasized social norms (3.625) and bias from employers and people around them (REA4 = 3.458; REA5 = 3.333), which is consistent with the theories of Goffman (1963) and Fiske et al. (2002). Conversely, the #KHONG group focused on media influence (3.504) and unclear quality (3.500), aligning with Kizilcec (2019).

3.1.2.2. Mechanisms that form, maintain, and reinforce the lack of social trust

For this aspect, Pearson correlations between causes and trust and partial correlations were conducted:

Table 4. Summary of Pearson correlations between causes and trust, and multiple regression with REA3 as the dependent variable

Cause (REA)	Group	Pearson (Trust_MEAN)	Trust1 (observed social trust)	Trust2 (personal trust)	Beta (Regression) (REA3 dependent)
REA1: Social bias	Overall sample	.382**	.131**	.530**	.407**
	#CO	.330**	-.033 (ns)	.566**	-.239**
	#KHONG	.453**	.310**	.530**	.722**
REA2: Media	Overall sample	.352**	.118*	.490**	-.300**
	#CO	.346**	.090 (ns)	.484**	-.014 (ns)
	#KHONG	.360**	.149*	.511**	-.311**
REA3: Unclear quality	Overall sample	.402**	.346**	.373**	—

	#CO	.428**	.402**	.344**	—
	#KHONG	.377**	.289**	.413**	—
REA4: Limited employer contact	Overall sample	.366**	.283**	.368**	.617**
	#CO	.422**	.335**	.393**	.870**
	#KHONG	.335**	.231**	.390**	.156*
REA5: People around the respondent	Overall sample	.338**	.198**	.395**	.104*
	#CO	.241**	.098 (ns)	.306**	.280**
	#KHONG	.477**	.310**	.573**	.278**
Regression model	$R^2 = .567$ (overall sample) / $R^2 = .882$ (#CO) / $R^2 = .644$ (#KHONG)				

Note: ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; (ns): not statistically significant. In the final column on the right, REA3 is the dependent variable in the regression model.

The data indicate that the lack of trust in distance learning degrees primarily stems from REA3 (unclear training quality), which had the strongest correlation in the #CO group ($r = .428$; $p = .000$), consistent with Kizilcec (2019). The #KHONG group was more strongly influenced by social factors through REA5 ($r = .477$) and REA1 ($r = .453$), while the #CO group was less affected by people around them (REA5: $r = .241$) but more strongly influenced by employers (REA4: $r = .422$). Notably, REA1 was strongly associated with personal skepticism ($r = .530$ -.566), while in the #CO group the relationship was no longer significant ($r = -.033$; $p = .654$), which is consistent with Goffman (1963) and Fiske et al. (2002). In addition, the regression model ($R^2 = .567$) showed that REA4 was the strongest predictor ($\beta = .617$; $p = .000$), exceeding REA1 ($\beta = .407$), while media had a negative effect ($\beta = -.300$), reflecting the decisive role of the labor market. In other words, if employers do not change their attitudes, efforts by educational institutions to improve training quality will not be strong enough to reverse the current negative direction of influence. When information becomes saturated, learners tend to depend less on media and shift toward judgments based on real experience.

Table 5. Summary of partial correlations among causes

Correlated cause pair	Overall sample (r)	Group #CO (r)	Group #KHONG (r)
REA1 & REA2 (Social bias - Media)	0.644	0.779	0.51
REA1 & REA5 (Social bias - People around the respondent)	0.596	0.782	0.349
REA2 & REA5 (Media - People around the respondent)	0.672	0.824	0.535
REA3 & REA4 (Quality - Employers)	0.625	0.909	0.391

REA2 & REA4 (Media - Employers)	0.54	0.417	0.653
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The partial correlation results for the overall sample show that REA2 & REA5 had the highest correlation ($r = .672$, $p = .000$), followed by REA1 & REA2 ($r = .644$, $p = .000$), forming a reinforcing cycle of negative trust among media, people around the respondent, and social bias, consistent with Goffman (1963). In the #CO group, correlations were clearly stronger (REA2 & REA5: $r = .824$; REA3 & REA4: $r = .909$), while the #KHONG group was more influenced by the media-employer relationship (REA2 & REA4: $r = .653$), in line with Kizilcec (2019).

3.1.3. Solutions

3.1.3.1. Effectiveness and individual impact of each solution on trust

Using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression, the results for the proposed solutions showed that all solutions received high levels of agreement (Mean = 4.06-4.50). SOL2 was particularly prominent (M = 4.50; #CO: 4.67; #KHONG: 4.36), confirming the role of quality transparency. However, only SOL3 had a clear positive effect on trust ($\beta = .281$; #KHONG: $\beta = .296$), consistent with Kizilcec (2019). Conversely, SOL4 was negative in the #KHONG group ($\beta = -.314$), and SOL1 was negative in the #CO group ($\beta = -.302$), suggesting that administrative solutions may increase skepticism if they are not grounded in quality.

Table 6. Summary of statistics, correlations, and multiple regression of solutions on trust

Solution (SOL)	Indicator	Overall sample (N=416)	#CO (N=192)	#KHONG (N=224)
SOL1: Regulation on equivalent degree value	Mean	4.06	4.29	3.86
	Pearson (r)	-0.074	-.184*	0.024
	Regression (beta)	-0.132	-.302**	0.158
SOL2: Quality transparency	Mean	4.5	4.67	4.36
	Pearson (r)	-0.084	0.129	-.174**
	Regression (beta)	-0.062	0.223	-.221*
SOL3: Enhanced communication	Mean	4.38	4.5	4.29
	Pearson (r)	0.048	0.051	0.066
	Regression (beta)	.281**	-0.015	.296**
SOL4: Fairness in enterprises	Mean	4.35	4.5	4.21
	Pearson (r)	-0.088	0.102	-.186**

	Regression (beta)	-.171*	0.123	-.314**
Coefficient of determination	$R^2 = .043$ (overall sample); .096 (#CO); .120 (#KHONG)			

However, the explanatory power of the model remained low ($R^2 = .043-.120$). Individual solutions were not sufficient to explain variations in trust, making it necessary to further examine the synergy effect when multiple solutions are applied simultaneously.

3.1.3.2. Effect of combining multiple solutions on trust

When synergy effects were considered, all solutions had very high correlations with the composite variable SOL_MEAN ($r = .808-.852$ for the overall sample; #CO: .676-.934; #KHONG: .825-.864), reflecting respondents' strong agreement with the overall system of solutions. However, R^2 was nearly zero (overall sample: .004; #CO: .000; #KHONG: .006; $p > .05$), showing that combining the solutions did not create a significant effect on actual trust.

Table 7. Integrated correlations showing the synergy of solutions for trust

Participants	Statistical indicator	SOL1	SOL2	SOL3	SOL4	SOL_MEAN
Overall sample (N=416)	Correlation (r)	.846**	.847**	.852**	.808**	$R^2 = .004$ ($p=.205$)
#CO (N=192)	Correlation (r)	.803**	.761**	.934**	.676**	$R^2 = .000$ ($p=.953$)
#KHONG (N=224)	Correlation (r)	.861**	.864**	.825**	.842**	$R^2 = .006$ ($p=.263$)

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; SOL_MEAN represents the combined set of all solutions.

This means that although respondents supported the proposed solutions at the attitudinal level, trust did not change correspondingly. This is consistent with Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, according to which a positive attitude does not necessarily translate into trust or behavior if supporting practical conditions are absent.

3.1.3.3. Correspondence between causes and solutions

The regression results comparing the cause variables and solution variables in relation to trust lead to the following interpretation:

Table 8. Comparison between causes and solutions

Comparison dimension	Main cause	Corresponding solution	Status	Overall sample
Labor market	REA4: Employers have limited contact	SOL4: Fairness in recruitment	Corresponding	beta_REA4 = .617 (strongest); M_SOL4 = 4.35 (very high)
Social perception	REA1: Bias toward formal full-time degrees	SOL1: Regulation on equivalent value	Contradictory	beta_REA1 = .407 (strong); beta_SOL1 = -.132 (negative effect)
Channel of influence	REA2: Negative media coverage	SOL3: Positive communication	Corresponding	r_REA2/Trust = .352; beta_SOL3 = .281 (the only leverage point)
Foundation of trust	REA3: Unclear quality	SOL2: Transparent accreditation	Corresponding	R ² _REA = .567; M_SOL2 = 4.50 (broadest agreement)

The results show both correspondence and contradiction between causes and solutions. REA4 (employers) had the strongest effect ($\beta = .617$, $p = .000$), while SOL4 also received high agreement ($M = 4.35$). Similarly, REA3 (quality transparency) was an important factor, and SOL2 (transparent accreditation) achieved the highest mean ($M = 4.50$), indicating that respondents correctly identified both the problem and the direction for resolution. Communication also showed clear correspondence: REA2 ($r = .352$) was paired with SOL3 ($\beta = .281$), suggesting that this is one of the feasible solutions. However, REA1 (social bias) had a strong effect ($\beta = .407$), while SOL1 (equivalence regulation) had a negative effect ($\beta = -.132$), indicating that administrative solutions alone are insufficient to change social bias.

3.2. Solutions to enhance social trust in the value of distance learning degrees in Vietnam

Rather than stopping at the survey results or relying on subjective viewpoints to propose recommendations and solutions, we draw on the literature review and compare the findings with international experience. From this basis, we synthesize practical and highly applicable solutions that fit the Vietnamese educational context as follows:

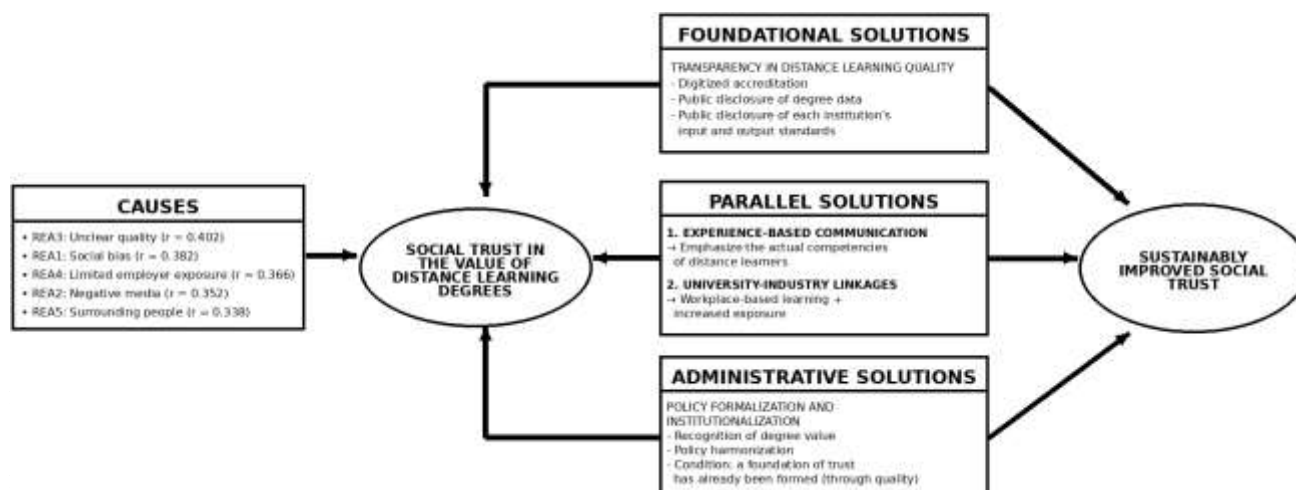
Table 9. International experience and empirical data as a basis for proposing solutions

Objective	International experience	Comparison with quantitative results	Solutions for Vietnam
1. Enhancing quality transparency	Kizilcec (2019) emphasizes the “transparency effect” in reducing skepticism; Goffman (1963) discusses reducing “identity stigma.”	SOL2 (transparency) was rated highest (Mean = 4.50), but its impact on trust was unclear (beta = -.062, ns), indicating high demand but limited implementation effectiveness.	Digitize accreditation; build a system for verifying degrees and training data in real time.
2. Reducing social bias	Fiske et al. (2002): bias arises from perceptions of “competence” and “warmth”; Dovidio et al. (2010): change occurs through counter-stereotypical information.	REA1 (social bias) strongly reduced trust (beta = .722 in the #KHONG group), making it a major barrier.	Develop long-term communication about the competencies of distance learners, emphasizing success stories and 4.0 skills.
3. Communication for attitude change	Allport (1954) and Corrigan (2000): prejudice results from insufficient or inaccurate information; Ajzen (1991): attitudes change when underlying beliefs are reinforced.	SOL3 (communication) was the only solution with a significant positive effect (beta = .281**); REA2 disturbed trust (r = .352).	Use experience-based communication rather than mere description; leverage social media to reduce negative information.
4. Linking with the labor market	Columbaro & Monaghan (2009) and Grossman & Johnson (2015): employers are a major barrier; Pettigrew & Tropp (2006): intergroup contact.	REA4 (limited employer contact) had the strongest effect on trust (beta = .617**); the #CO group reduced bias through real experience (p = .007).	Build university-industry training alliances and increase workplace-based learning to reduce REA4 and improve the effectiveness of SOL4.

Regarding the implementation roadmap, international experience suggests that solutions should be implemented sequentially and in an integrated manner (Kizilcec, 2019) to enhance social trust in distance learning degrees. In the short term, priority should be given to building a system for transparent quality assurance across input, process, and output through the digitization of accreditation and public disclosure of degree data, directly addressing REA3 and establishing an initial trust

foundation. Next, communication should be implemented in parallel and oriented toward experience, rather than merely providing information, with a focus on success stories and learners' actual competencies, thereby reducing REA1 and REA5. At the same time, university-industry linkages should be established through internships and practice-based training to increase contact, thereby addressing REA4, which had the strongest effect (Columbaro and Monaghan, 2009; Grossman and Johnson, 2015). In the long term, once the foundation of transparency has become stable, institutional policies recognizing the equivalent value of degrees should be implemented to consolidate sustainable trust, in line with the educational management orientation of the Ministry of Education and Training (2023). This roadmap ensures not only short-term effects but also sustainable changes in social trust.

Figure 1. Recommended solutions and implementation roadmap for enhancing social trust in the value of distance learning degrees



.428) and REA4 ($r = .422$). Social bias was closely associated with a lack of personal trust (Trust2: $r = .530-.566$), which may affect learners psychologically.

At the same time, the article offers three new contributions. First, it simultaneously examines cause variables, including REA3 (unclear training quality), REA2 (negative media coverage), REA1 (social bias), and solution variables, showing that the cause variables explain trust variation well ($R^2 = .567$), whereas the solution variables, including SOL1 (policy/regulation), SOL2 (quality transparency), SOL3 (communication), and SOL4 (practical linkages), explain only a low proportion of variance ($R^2 = 0.043-0.120$). When all solutions are considered simultaneously, the effect is almost negligible ($R^2 = 0.004$; $p > 0.05$), despite high levels of agreement (Mean = 4.06-4.50). Second, paired comparisons show that REA3 (training quality) corresponds to SOL2 (transparency), and REA2 (negative media coverage) corresponds to SOL3 (positive communication), whereas REA1 (social bias) is not effectively addressed by SOL1 (administrative/policy solutions) and tends to operate in the opposite direction in some groups. Third, the study proposes solutions based on the integration of theory, international empirical evidence, and research data, including enhancing transparency in training

quality, promoting communication based on real experience, and strengthening linkages with employers.

Nevertheless, the study has limitations because it used convenience sampling and self-reported survey data, which restrict the generalizability and objectivity of the findings. Its cross-sectional design does not capture changes in trust over time, and the explanatory model remains limited for the solution variables. Future studies should expand the representativeness of the sample, combine qualitative methods with longitudinal research, and test mediating and moderating mechanisms to clarify the process by which cognition and emotion are transformed into behavior and shape attitudes, including social prejudice, in the context of distance education in Vietnam.

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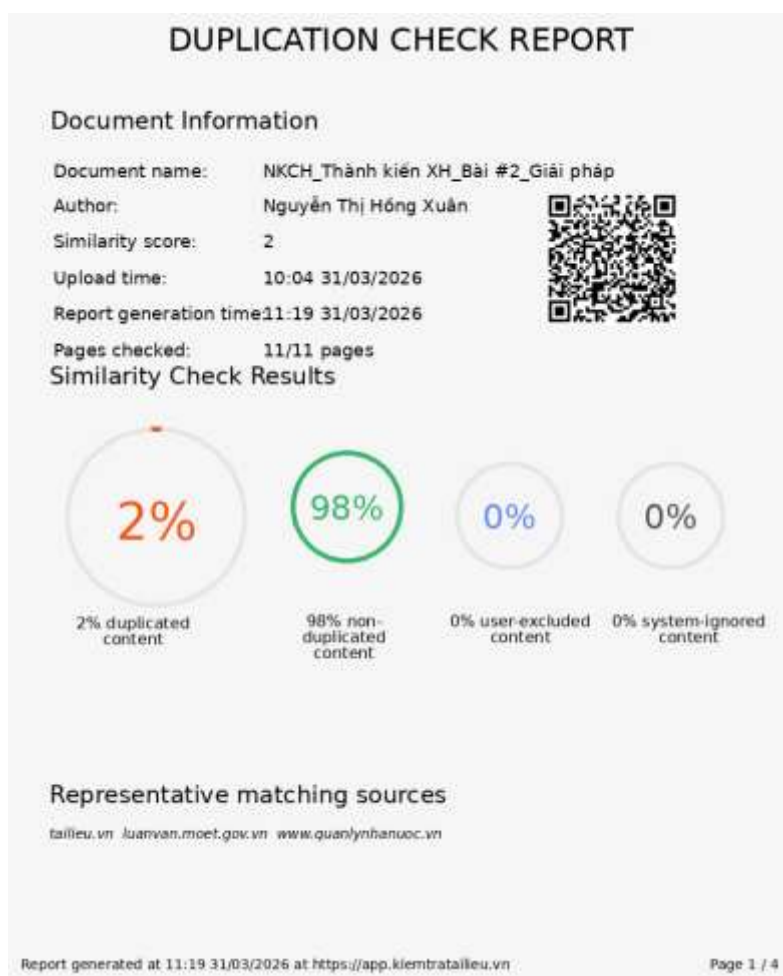
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Appendices

Appendix 1. Plagiarism check result

Tool: kiemtratailieu

Result: 2% similarity



Appendix 2. Survey questionnaire used in the article

SHARING PERCEPTIONS OF THE VALUE OF DISTANCE LEARNING DEGREES

This questionnaire serves a university-level study related to PERCEPTIONS OF THE VALUE OF DISTANCE LEARNING DEGREES. Distance education, along with technological advancement and practical social needs, has long become a new trend in education and in society more broadly. However, for various reasons, the value of a degree obtained through distance learning is sometimes not properly recognized. The purpose of this study is to understand the causes affecting trust in the value of distance learning degrees and, from there, to explore solutions for enhancing trust in this form of education.

We hope that you will take a small amount of your busy time to complete this survey. Each of your responses contributes in a small way to making society better. Thank you for helping us complete this research.

NOTES AND COMMITMENTS

1. The researcher commits to using these data only for academic research purposes and not for any other purpose.
2. All of your information will be kept confidential and private; no one except the researcher will have access to it during data analysis.
3. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please contact the researcher by phone/Zalo at 0908842095 or by email at swanxuan@gmail.com.

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Q1. Age*

- Under 22 years old
- 22-30 years old
- 31-40 years old
- Over 40 years old

Q2. Gender*

- Female
- Male
- Other

Q3. Current occupation/role: (if other, please specify) *

- Student
- Staff/Specialist
- Middle manager
- Leader
- Other: _____

Q4. What field are you currently working/studying in? (if other, please specify) *

- Engineering
- Arts, creativity, marketing, events, communication
- Human resources
- Finance and accounting
- Education and psychology
- Healthcare
- Other: _____

Q5. Educational level: (if other, please specify)*

- High school (Grade 12)
- College/Vocational intermediate level
- University
- Master's degree
- Doctoral candidate/Doctoral degree
- Other: _____

Q6. Current place of residence: (if other, please specify)*

- Ho Chi Minh City
- Hanoi
- Can Tho

• Other: _____

Q7. Have you ever participated in, or are you currently participating in, any distance learning program?*

• Yes

• No

SECTION 2: TRUST IN DISTANCE LEARNING DEGREES (1: Strongly disagree, 5: Strongly agree)

Question 1: I observe that society and the community, including people around me, find it difficult to trust or tend to undervalue distance learning degrees.

Question 2: I personally do not trust the value of distance learning degrees.

SECTION 3: POSSIBLE CAUSES (1: Strongly disagree, 5: Strongly agree)

- It is because Vietnamese society values formal full-time degrees more highly.
- It is because the media often reports negatively or inaccurately about distance learning degrees.
- It is because distance learning programs are not transparent regarding input and output quality.
- It is because many companies/enterprises have not had much contact with people holding distance learning degrees.
- It is because I have seen or heard relatives, friends, colleagues, or superiors evaluate the value of distance learning degrees less positively.

SECTION 4: In your opinion, what are the SOLUTIONS for ensuring that the value of distance learning degrees is viewed more fairly?

- Q74. There should be clear regulations stating that distance learning degrees and formal full-time degrees have equal value.
- Q75. Information on quality accreditation of distance learning programs should be publicly disclosed and transparent.
- Q76. Communication about the positive aspects and value of distance learning degrees should be strengthened.
- Q77. Companies should create a fair working environment without discrimination based on the form of degree.



THANK YOU VERY MUCH for taking your valuable time to participate [Hong Xuan].

We wish you a new year full of joy, health, and success.