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Changes of Social Values in Rural Vietnam¹

Abstract. Transitional developing countries are currently grappling with simultaneous transformations in their economic, social, and political spheres. One approach to understanding potential shifts in social values is to explore how perceptions of economic success (PES) vary in relation to social status and affiliations. This study investigates changes in PES across various socio-political groups and networks in rural Vietnam. The analysis draws on panel data from 2,117 rural households collected through the Vietnam Access to Resources Household Survey (VARHS) in 2012 and 2014. Disaggregated by socio-political groups/networks, results show that engaging in power or connection with power tends to stipulate individuals' endeavors rather than social networks in attaining economic success. In addition, membership in mass organizations such as the Women's Union, the Farmers' Union, or the Youth Union does not appear to substitute for political connections or broader social ties, but instead correlates with a greater emphasis on hard work, often in the absence of significant work experience. These results contribute to the limited body of literature on the transformation of social values in transitional rural societies and offer insights into how perceptions of economic success differ among socio-political groups and networks.

Keywords: Political groups, perception of economic success, social values, social relations, social networks, rural Vietnam.

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Изменения социальных ценностей у сельских жителей современного Вьетнама²

Аннотация. Развивающиеся страны с переходной экономикой в настоящее время сталкиваются с проблемой несовпадения изменений в экономике, обществе и политической системе. Один из способов оценки потенциальных изменений в социальных ценностях — изучение изменений в восприятии экономического успеха (ВЭУ) в зависимости от социального статуса. В статье рассматриваются изменения в ВЭУ в социальных группах сельского Вьетнама. Анализ основан на выборке данных из 2117 сельских домохозяйств, собранных в ходе обследования доступа домохозяйств к ресурсам (VARHS) в 2012 и 2014 г. Результаты показыва-

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ют, что на достижение экономического успеха в большей степени влияет участие во властных структурах или связи с людьми, обладающими властью, чем участие в общественных организациях. В то же время членство в массовых организациях, таких как Союз вьетнамских женщин, Союз крестьян или Федерация вьетнамской молодежи, по-видимому, скорее требует напряженной работы, часто при отсутствии опыта, чем политических или широких социальных связей. Полученные результаты могут внести вклад в изучение изменений социальных ценностей и их различий по социальным группам в сельской местности в развивающихся странах с переходной экономикой.

Ключевые слова: политические группы, восприятие экономического успеха, социальные ценности, социальные отношения, социальные сети, сельский Вьетнам.

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Introduction

China has exerted cultural influence on Vietnam for centuries [Hirschman, Vu Manh Loi 1996; Jamieson 2001; Jayakody, Phuong Pham 2013; Yu Insun 1999]. In addition, other foreign countries have also shaped Vietnamese society — most notably France (Vietnam was a French colony from 1858 to 1945) [Mai Van Hai 2017], as well as Russia and the United States (Vietnam maintained close ties with the Soviet Union in the North and with the USA in the South between 1954 and 1975, and continued such relations thereafter). As a result, Vietnam’s system of cultural and social values is a hybrid of Oriental, Western, and socialist ideologies [Nguyen Thi Nhu Quynh 2016]. For example, Phan Ngoc [1994] mentioned dominant characteristics of Vietnamese, including: studious, intelligent and resourceful, sensitive to any changes, hard-working, adaptable, moderate and simple, and responsible for family. Pham Minh Hac [2003] added that Vietnamese culture is based on the interactions of family — village — nation, and family is the cornerstone of the relationships. Western culture endured new humanist values such as liberty, equality, and democracy since the French colonization of Vietnam [Nguyen Thi Nhu Quynh 2016]. When Vietnam comes to the socialist era of development, the values of prosperous people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization are realized, inspected, and monitored by the nation as a whole [Phan Tan 2015].

In most societies, the family is the core social unit and the fundamental economic and cultural institution. It serves as both a repository and a transmission mechanism for traditional circular values, while also interacting with emerging cultural norms and practices [Hirschman, Vu Manh Loi 1996]. Therefore, families represent a crucial starting point for exploring societal transformation.

Although Vietnam has long been an agrarian society, it has been undergoing a shift toward a pre-industrial economy in recent decades, with projections suggesting it may

achieve full industrialization by 2050. This transformation has accelerated since the launch of the Doi Moi policy in 1986. Consequently, the rapid changes associated with industrialization and modernization have brought new challenges to development, including growing income inequality, social conflicts, and rural dislocation. As social values are deeply embedded within both cultural traditions and community structures [Johnson, Johnson 2010; Turkkahraman 2014], they too have undergone significant changes. However, relatively little is known about how these values have shifted in rural areas of transitional developing countries — especially those, like Vietnam, where cultural identity is shaped by an interplay of traditional, Western, and socialist influences — and how these changes are affected by households' membership in socio-political groups and networks.

Within the broader landscape of changing social values, the perception of economic success (PES) constitutes a central domain through which such transformations are both reflected and reinforced. As societies shift from collectivist, egalitarian value systems toward more individualistic and market-oriented orientations, economic success becomes a key site where new norms, aspirations, and identities are negotiated [Hofstede 2001; Maldonado Hernández 2008]. In Vietnam, for example, the transition from socialist ideology to a socialist-oriented market economy has generated significant redefinitions of success — from collective contribution and revolutionary virtue to entrepreneurial achievement and material wealth [Nguyen-Vo 2012; Gainsborough 2010]. This evolving perception is deeply influenced by globalization, media representations, and increased exposure to transnational standards of affluence, which amplify the salience of consumption and personal mobility [Baudrillard 2016; Kasser 2003]. Importantly, economic success is no longer merely a measure of income or productivity but functions as a culturally and morally loaded construct that expresses deeper shifts in what is valued in life and society.

In the Vietnamese context, these changing perceptions are particularly salient among the emerging middle class and youth, who increasingly equate success with visible indicators of upward mobility, such as property ownership, foreign education, and career advancement in the private sector [Schwenkel 2011]. This shift often stands in tension with older generations' emphasis on frugality, moral integrity, and public service, thereby revealing intergenerational fractures in the value system. Moreover, the growing prominence of private entrepreneurship and digital labor platforms has redefined legitimate paths to success, sometimes bypassing traditional state-mediated routes like civil service or party affiliation. As such, understanding how economic success is framed and pursued in Vietnam offers critical insight into the deeper value transformations shaping post-reform Vietnamese society [Taylor 2004; Vu 2010].

This study seeks to examine how traditional social values have evolved in rural Vietnam since the renovation in 1986. Specifically, it investigates how the prioritization of social values has shifted in contemporary Vietnamese life. More precisely, the paper focuses on changes in the perception of economic success (PES) in relation to households' socio-political status — including their income levels and involvement in political or mass organizations — based on data from the Vietnam Access to Resources Household Survey (VARHS).

Literature review

The concept of value and social values

The concept of value can be interpreted from multiple disciplinary perspectives. According to Pham Minh Hạc [2010], values manifest in three key aspects: first, as material and spiritual products created by humans; second, as expressions of human dignity; and third, as reflections of the relationship between individuals and the surrounding world.

Values can be categorized as both individual and social in nature [Pham Minh Hạc 2010]. Over time, communities and nations develop a value system aligned with their survival, stability, and aspirations. Social values are those shared by members of a society, encompassing ideals such as peace, beauty, friendship, patriotism, compassion, and national independence [Mai Van Hai 2017]. Mai Van Hai mentioned that through processes of education and socialization, these collective values become internalized at the individual level.

The connection between values and other related concepts reveals that values are embedded in belief systems, shaping individuals' tendencies to respond to objects, people, and events in specific ways [Aspin, Chapman 2007; Golden 2002]. Thus, analyzing beliefs and behavior offers a valuable approach to studying social values.

While objects and phenomena contribute to perception and knowledge, subjective experiences — comprising emotions, feelings, and moods — play a vital role in evaluative processes, such as determining satisfaction, dissatisfaction, pleasure, or displeasure [Mai Van Hai 2017]. In this evaluative context, we recognize the significance of values. According to Pham Minh Hạc [2010], experience forms the foundation of one's value system, which is inherently historical and context-dependent. In axiology, the concept of “value” is often linked with “standards,” and sometimes treated synonymously. Standards, though universal in function, vary in form across cultures and are typically associated with human goals, motivations, and desires. These standards are expressed through attitudes and behavior [Pham Minh Hạc 2010].

Social values are an essential component of national values. They reflect interpersonal relationships, are deeply rooted in cultural norms, and are closely tied to community life [Johnson, Johnson 2010; Turkkahraman 2014]. Social values emerge from both productive activities and cultural institutions, and vary across societies, resulting in different evaluations of what is considered “good” or “bad” [Zajda, Daun 2009]. However, many scholars argue that certain values — such as honesty, respect, and justice — are universal among human beings [Golden 2002].

Social values in Vietnam

Traditional social values are a vital and engaging aspect of Vietnamese culture and are reflected in many dimensions of daily life. This paper specifically explores how traditional Vietnamese social values function as a living philosophy by analyzing the perception of economic success (PES).

There are numerous ways of expressing success in society [Phạm Việt Long 2004]. Common markers of success include: (1) Having a wife [for example: “husband is successful and wealthy because of his wife” (*Giàu vì bạn, sang vì vợ*); “a good wife makes

a good husband” (*Vợ khôn ngoan làm quan cho chồng*); (2) Having a son (male chauvinism) [for example, a proverb: “the young rely on a father, the old rely on an offspring” (*Trẻ cậy cha, già cậy con*)]; (3) Hard-working [for example: “no bees, no honey, no work, no money” (or “no pains no gains”) (*Tay làm hàm nhai, tay quai miệng trễ*)]; (4) Social position [for example a proverb: “one mandarin benefits the whole clan” (*Một người làm quan, cả họ được nhờ*)]; (5) Wealth [for example: “nothing venture nothing gains” (*Phi thương bất phú*)]; and (6) Wisdom [for example: “experience is the father of wisdom” (*Đi một ngày đàng học một sàng khôn*)].

Only modest literature analyses the changes in social values as living philosophy in Vietnam in contemporary times. Uan, Thac, and Trang [1995] identified a hierarchy of 20 specific values. The authors found that the orders of priority as follows: peace, freedom, health, job, justice, knowledge, family, security, belief, career, the goal of life, affection and gratitude, self-respect, truth, independence, love, creation, beauty, a prosperous life, and social status. Another study on the value system of young Vietnamese workers and students by Phạm Minh Hạc et al. [2007] results in the scales of six values (happiness, health, knowledge, morality, wealth, and social status) and five values [(1) health, (2) knowledge, (3) confident, (4) intelligent and creative, and (5) responsible].

Vuong Quan Hoang and Tran Tri Dung [2009] highlighted the long-standing social ranking that classifies not only strata of society but also their corresponding dignity, often summarized in the traditional phrase: “Gentry Scholar/Intellectual Official — Farmer — Craftsman — Merchant/Businessman” (*Sĩ — Nông — Công — Thương*). Another proverb notes: “In peaceful times, first come to the scholars, next to the peasants. When running out of rice, first come to the peasants, followed by the scholars”. In this social ranking, the gentry scholar/intellectual official is the highest ranking in the society’s hierarchical system based on meritocracy, only after the king/emperor, and this refers to the role of education, intellectual knowledge, and social positions. The orders align with the traditional Vietnamese fondness for learning (Vietnam is known as “the nation of civilization”) in Vietnam’s cultural identity.

Farmer is the second position and indicates the role of agricultural activities and earnings from land, whereas craftsman is the role of traditional custom activities in rural communes. Furthermore, merchants, consisting of traders and entrepreneurs, have long been ranked lowest in terms of social dignity. However, trading is a valuable source of wealth as reflected in the old proverb: “One cannot get rich without engaging in trade” or “nothing venture nothing gains” (*Phi thương bất phú*).

So far, to the best knowledge, little has been known about the changes in social values as a living philosophy in a rural area within the context of a developing country in transition, where the culture is a mixture of traditional values, western ones, and socialist orientation, and how these changes are affected by changes in socio-political groups/networks.

Data source and method

The paper employs the Vietnam Access to Resources Household Survey (VARHS) dataset for the years 2012 and 2014. This dataset resulted from a collaborative project among several Vietnamese agencies, including the Central Institute for Economic



Fig. 1. Site surveys. *Source:* Author's creation.

Management, the Centre for Agricultural Policy, the Institute of Labor Science and Social Affairs, and the Development Economics Research Group at the University of Copenhagen, and Danish International Development Agency [Brandt, Tarp 2017]. The survey was conducted across 12 provinces in Vietnam (Fig. 1). The analytical sample used in this study includes 2,117 panel households from rural Vietnam observed in 2012 and 2014, total of 4,234 observations. This dataset has been widely used in research on rural Vietnam [Ngo, Q.-T. et al. 2020; Markussen, Ngo Quang Thanh 2019; Ngo, Q.-T. et al. 2019].

The household questionnaire collects information on general characteristics of household, agricultural activities, employment, income, consumption expenditure, political connections, and rural society. This paper primarily uses descriptive analysis of the data related to the Perception of Economic Success (PES). Specifically, the paper uses the Mann-Whitney test, which is a non-parametric statistical test used to compare two samples or groups from the same population. The null hypothesis (H0) in a Mann-Whitney U Test is that the two populations are equal, whereas the alternative hypothesis (H1) is that the two populations are not equal.

Analysis and discussions

General PES

PES reflects individuals' and households' social attitudes, which structure social relationships and networks in Eastern societies like Vietnam and China [Dalton et al 2002; V. B. Pham 2013]. The general overview of PES is illustrated in Figure 2. The less the average value is, the more critical the chosen answer is.

Figure 2 depicts that the most influential factor that may affect “how economically successful a person is” is “hard-working”, the second most influential one is “education”, and the third one is “work experience”. Having personal relationships with people in powerful positions is only in the middle of the spectrum. This indicates that modern values — such as hard work, educational attainment, and work experience — are

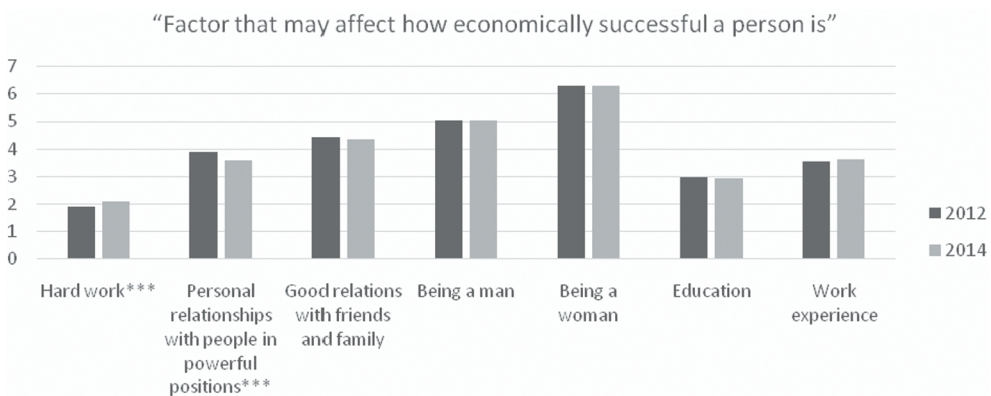


Fig. 2. Components of PES, 2012, 2014. Note: *, **, and ***: Significant at 10 %, 5 %, and 1 % level, respectively. Type of test: Mann-Whitney test.

Source: Author's calculation from VARHS 2012–2014.

considered among the top three most important elements for successful people. These findings, on the other hand, resonate with some traditional social values such as hard-working, education and intellectual knowledge, in the old Vietnamese sayings “Gentry Scholar/Intellectual Official — Farmer — Craftsman — Trade/Businessman”, and wisdom “Experience is the father of wisdom”. Interestingly, the value placed on social status in such a proverb as “One Mandarin benefits the whole clan” only occupies a middle position in modern rural Vietnam.

PES by income quintiles

Table 1 shows PES by income quintiles, such as the first quintile (the poorest), the second quintile (poor), the third quintile (middle), the fourth quintile (rich), and the fifth quintile (the richest). The more the average value is, the more critical the chosen answer is. Observation from the 2014 survey shows exciting changes, in which “personal relationships with people in powerful positions” rose to third place, surpassing “work experience” in most quintiles (except for the richest). This underscores the continued importance of social and political relations in transition economies like Vietnam and China.

The number of T-testes in Table 1 is calculated to clarify the significance between income quintiles. While “hard work” is the essential component, there are significant differences between (1) the middle and the richest (2) the rich and the richest in 2012. Moreover, there were differences between (1) the poor and the middle (the rich or the richest) in 2014 and (2) the poor and the middle (the rich or the richest). The rich and the richest place less emphasis on “hard work” than the poor and the poorest. The rich and the wealthiest press less importance on choosing “hard work” than the poor and the poorest do.

No significant difference between 2012 and 2014 was found in choosing “personal relationships with people in powerful positions.” However, concerning the choice of “good relations with friends and family,” there are significant differences between (1) the poorest and the middle, (2) the rich and the richest in 2012 and 2014, and (3) the poor and the richest. Thus, the rich and the wealthiest press less importance on choosing “good relations with friends and family” than the poor and the poorest.

Regarding “being a man,” significant differences exist between the richest and the rest. In contrast, for “being a woman,” variations are more complex: differences appear between the poorest and middle/rich, between the middle and richest in 2012, and between the middle and rich, as well as rich and richest in 2014. For the choice of “education”, the middle stressed more importance on education than the poorest in 2014. However, in 2014, the rich and the richest stressed less significance than the poorest.

Regarding the “work experience” choice, the richest evaluated it as less important than the poorest, the poor, the middle, and the rich in 2012 and 2014. In addition, the poor stressed more importance than the poorest in 2014. Moreover, the middle and the rich were less stressed than the poor in 2014.

Overall, the rich place less emphasis on individuals’ efforts, such as hard work, and social networks, such as “good relations with friends and family,” and more on education and work experience than the poor.

Table 1. PES by income quintiles (Qs), 2012, 2014

	2012					2014				
	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	5 th Q	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	5 th Q
Hard work (Choice 1)	1.91	1.88	1.85	1.86	2.03 χ^* , δ^*	2.02	1.98	2.22 α^{**} , β^{**}	2.20 α^* , β^{**}	2.24 α^{**} , β^{***}
Personal relationships with people in powerful positions (Choice 2)	3.90	3.88	3.90	3.91	3.96	3.55	3.62	3.52	3.68	3.67
Good relations with friends and family (Choice 3)	4.34	4.42	4.51 α^*	4.45	4.36	4.23	4.27	4.35	4.41 α^*	4.52 α^{***} , β^{**}
Being a man (Choice 4)	5.08	4.95	4.98	5.00	5.14 β^*	4.92	4.85	5.02	5.08 β^{**}	5.27 α^{***} , β^{***} , χ^{***} , δ^{**}
Being a woman (Choice 5)	6.37	6.32	6.11 α^{***} , β^{***}	6.23 α^*	6.34 χ^{**}	6.31	6.20	6.34	6.19 χ^*	6.35 β^* , δ^*
Education (Choice 6)	2.91	3.00	3.12 α^*	3.01	2.90 χ^*	3.24	3.14	2.88 α^{***} , β^{**}	2.87 α^{***} , β^{**}	2.68 α^{***} , β^{***} , χ^*
Work experience (Choice 7)	3.57	3.62	3.63	3.63	3.34 α^{**} , β^{**} , χ^{**} , δ^{***}	3.73	3.95 α^*	3.66 β^{**}	3.57 β^{***}	3.27 α^{***} , β^{***} , χ^{***} , δ^{***}
Number of observations	424	423	424	423	423	424	423	424	423	423

Note: *, **, and ***: Significant at 10 %, 5 %, and 1 % level, respectively. α , β , χ , and δ : compared with the poorest, the poor, the middle, and the rich, respectively. Type of test: T-test.

Source: Author's calculation from VARHS 2012, 2014.

PES by party membership and the household's political position

As Dalton et al. [2002] note, modernization in transitional societies blends institutionalized social networks such as community groups, political organizations, cultural groups, and other associations and traditional institutions such as family and village into coexistence and interactions. Social relations lead to social networks, which are key components of civil society [Yamamoto 1996; Abuza 2001; Shi 1997]. One way to assess the potential changes in social relations is to examine whether these changes in the PES vary systematically across socio-political groups [Dalton et al. 2002]. In Vietnam, social relations have long shaped personal and family lives [Taylor 2016]. Moreover, social relations have remained central to what dominates Vietnamese behavior in the modern era [Ibid.].

Table 2 shows PES differences by party membership and, in general, the pattern of economic success by the party membership is consistent with what is observed for income quintiles.

Table 2 also presents PES by the household's political position, defined as a household member who holds any office or other positions of public responsibility in the commune or higher levels of government. The pattern of economic success by the household's political position is consistent with what we observe for income quintiles, and party membership.

Table 2 also shows PES by the political position of household members. The household with a political position stresses less importance in terms of "hard work",

“being a woman” in 2012, and “being a man” in 2014 than the household without a political position. In contrast, the household with a political position stresses more importance in terms of “personal relationships with people in powerful positions,” “work experience” in 2012, and “Education” in both 2012 and 2014.

Overall, engaging in power or connection with power puts less importance on hard work and being a man/woman and more on education and work experience. No social/political networks, such as relationships with people in powerful positions or good relations with friends and family, are found to be significant between the member and the non-member.

Table 2. PES by party membership and the household political position, 2012, 2014

	Is the household head a party member?				Household with a political position?			
	2012		2014		2012		2014	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Choice 1	1.90	2.23	2.12	1.97	1.87	2.62	2.12	2.33
Choice 2	3.93	3.71	3.60	3.61	3.93	3.56	3.61	3.64
Choice 3	4.45	4.29	4.35	4.43	4.42	4.29	4.34	4.56
Choice 4	5.03	5.35	5.02	5.27	5.03	5.14	5.01	5.36
Choice 5	6.28	6.45	6.28	6.38	6.26	6.60	6.27	6.39
Choice 6	2.95	2.59	2.98	2.79	3.01	2.42	2.99	2.51 ^{***}
Choice 7	3.52	3.50	3.66	3.56	3.56	3.55	3.66	3.21 ^{***}
Number of observations	1766	120	1766	146	2023	94	1999	118

Source: Author’s calculation from VARHS 2012, 2014. Number of observations: 4234.

PES by memberships of the Women’s Union, the Farmers’ Union, and the Youth Union

Table 3 explores PES by membership in the Women’s Union, the Farmers’ Union, and the Youth Union. We find no significant differences between the membership and the non-membership of the Women’s Union, the Farmers’ Union, and the Youth Union in terms of “personal relationships with people in powerful positions,” and “good relations with friends and family” in both 2012 and 2014; no differences in terms of “hard work” for the Women’s Union membership, “being a man” and “being a woman” for the Women’s Union membership, and the Farmers’ Union membership, “education” for the Youth Union membership, “work experience” for the Women’s Union membership, and the Youth Union membership.

For “hard work”, Farmers’ Union members place less emphasis than non-members. In contrast, a household with a Youth Union membership place more. Regarding “education”, a household with a Women’s Union membership stresses more weight than a household without a Women’s Union membership, whereas a household with a Farmers’ Union membership does not. Concerning the choice of “work experience”, a household with the Farmers’ Union membership accentuates less emphasis than a household without the Farmers’ Union membership.

In short, being a member of the Women’s Union, the Farmers’ Union, and the Youth Union might not support the need for political connections or social relations while emphasizing hard work but less work experience.

Table 3. PES by the Women’s Union, by the Farmers’ Union, and by the Youth Union

	HH head/spouse with a Women’s Union membership?				HH head/spouse with a Farmers’ Union membership?				HH head/spouse with a Youth Union membership?			
	2012		2014		2012		2014		2012		2014	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Choice 1	1.91	1.90	2.14	2.13	1.90	1.91	2.20	2.03***	1.91	1.86	2.2	1.7***
Choice 2	3.94	3.89	3.56	3.66	3.93	3.89	3.62	3.59	3.91	3.92	3.6	3.8
Choice 3	4.40	4.43	4.40	4.31	4.41	4.42	4.39	4.29	4.40	4.53	4.4	4.2
Choice 4	5.02	5.04	5.04	5.02	5.07	4.98	5.06	4.98	5.07	4.74***	5.0	5.3*
Choice 5	6.25	6.30	6.25	6.31	6.28	6.26	6.30	6.23	6.30	6.10**	6.3	6.5*
Choice 6	3.05	2.93*	3.00	2.93	2.99	2.98	2.86	3.14***	2.97	3.13	3.0	2.9
Choice 7	3.60	3.52	3.62	3.66	3.54	3.59	3.57	3.75**	3.55	3.64	3.6	3.6
Number of observations	1008	1111	1070	1047	1240	877	1315	802	1860	257	1980	137

Note: *, **, and ***: Significant at 10 %, 5 %, and 1 % level, respectively. Type of test: T-test. HH: household.

Source: Author’s calculation from VARHS 2012–2014.

Conclusion

While Vietnam’s economic development is progressing rapidly, societal structure and social relations are evolving accordingly. One way to assess the potential changes in social values as a living philosophy is to examine whether changes in PES vary systematically with social relations. This paper, therefore, explores the changes in PES as a living philosophy across households’ socio-economic positions and socio-political groups/networks. The analysis is based on a panel-data sample of 2,117 households (a total of 4,234 observations) collected from the VARHS during 2012 and 2014 in rural Vietnam.

The overall picture of PES suggests that modern social values — such as hard work, educational attainment, and work experience — rank among the top three most important factors. The evidence reflects continuity with traditional values such as hard work, education, intellectual knowledge, and wisdom. In contrast, the conventional social value of social position holds only a middle rank in modern rural Vietnam. Disaggregated by income quintiles, the rich and the richest place less emphasis on hard work and good relations with friends and family, while assigning more importance to work experience, compared to the poor and the poorest. When disaggregated by socio-political groups/networks, the results show that engaging in power or connection to power tends to stipulate individuals’ endeavors rather than social networks in attaining economic success. In addition, membership in organizations like the Women’s

Union, the Farmers' Union, or the Youth Union might not support the need for political connections or social relations while requiring more hard work but less work experience. These findings can contribute to the limited literature on social value changes as a living philosophy regarding PES and how they differ across socio-political groups/networks in modern, rural, and transitional developing countries.

Examining the association between PES and socio-political groups/networks does not imply cause-and-effect relationships and thus this is a limitation of the study. In the future, more longitudinal data available can give more details on the causal effects.

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