

Nguyen Huu Minh***Age at first marriage in rural areas and influencing factors***

Using the data of the 2004 - 2006 Rural Family Survey in three communes of Yen Bai, Tien Giang and Thua Thien - Hue provinces, the author describes pattern of age at marriage in 3 places and its influencing factors. It was found out that marriage ages of men and women in surveyed areas tend to increase. This trend reflects the transition from traditional pattern of age at marriage to modern pattern due to the impacts of socio-economic and political changes in the past few decades. Factors of modernization, government policy, and more right to decide marriage have contributed to the forming of that trend. High education level and working in state sector play the most important roles in the increase in marriage age. It is also notable that the impacts of these factors on pattern of age at marriage are different between men and women. Government policy and wartime have a significant effect on marriage age. Marriage arrangement by parents still influences women's marriage age but does not have significant influence on men's. It is expected that, in the coming years, marriage age in these areas will increase due to the intertwined effects of modernization forces and government policy.

Vu Manh Loi***Vietnamese Concept of Family: A Case Study in Yen Bai, Tien Giang, and Thua Thien - Hue***

The term "family" perhaps is among the most frequently used words in everyday language as well as in many areas of social life and in social research, but rarely it is clearly defined. The concept of "family" is often taken for granted, as if it is clear for everybody. People often use the terms "family", "family household", and "household" as interchangeable words with implicit assumption that different members understand the meaning of the family in the same way.

This paper presents empirical analysis of how ordinary people in the 3 studied sites in Yen Bai, Tien Giang, and Thua Thien - Hue understand the term "family". It turns out that people have very different understandings about what "family" means and who belong to their families. The analysis shows that critical factors influencing perception about membership of the "family" include sex of the respondents, the distance in term of marriage or kin relations, whether the person under consideration lives in the house or elsewhere, whether s/he belongs to the wife's family side or the husband's family side, region of residence, and education of the respondents. The findings suggest important practical and theoretical implications for family studies in Vietnam.

Le Ngoc Van***Dating and Marriage Decision-making in Rural Vietnam During Reform Time***

Using data from Study of Rural Families in Vietnam, a collaborative research project between Institute of Sociology, Institute of Anthropology, and Institute of Family and Gender Studies and Swedish SIDA (2004-2006), this paper presents description and analysis of changes in marriage pattern in rural areas in Vietnam under the impacts of industrialization and modernization. The marriage pattern is examined in terms of dating and decision making.

Changes in marriage pattern in rural Vietnam is characterized by the transition from arranged marriages to free-choice marriages. In other words, it is the change from reproductive-based marriage pattern to free-choice marriages which are based on love and personal attachments. The pattern choice is not limited to the boundary of a village or a commune, but it is expanded to include people from other communes, districts, provinces, or even other countries. Dating forms that involve introduction by parents or intermediaries are gradually replaced by free-choices without parental involvement. Occupation, economic status, beauty, and love are more emphasized desirable characteristics for the future spouse than moral standards which were prevalent before the Reform.

In term of decision-making, there is a shift from marriage decision by the parents to marriage decision by young people themselves. In the process of transition, there emerges a decision-making model that both parents and children jointly make decision, with children propose marriage pattern and parents approve it. This is the most popular marriage decision making pattern in rural Vietnam today.

Do Thien Kinh

The employment pattern of husbands and wives in Vietnamese rural families

The purpose of the research is to find out more about the employment pattern of husbands and wives in Vietnamese rural families. The research result shows that most husbands and wives in the research sample have income-generating activities, but the proportion of working husbands is greater than the proportion of working wives. The main jobs of husbands and wives are predominantly in the agricultural sector, but the proportion of wives with agricultural jobs is higher than that of husbands. Besides, the proportion of husbands with secondary jobs is higher than that of wives. The wife is predominantly the person who does the housework in the family. From this it may be concluded that the employment pattern of rural Vietnamese husbands and wives at the present time is that the husband is always in a more advantageous situation than the wife in terms of main occupation, secondary jobs and household work. This means that the economic contribution of the husband in the family is more than the wife's. Therefore, the husband is generally the main economic pillar (main bread winner) in the family. More specifically, the husband is the large pillar with support from his wife as the smaller pillar. This is because both husband and wife have jobs providing income and they contribute relatively equally to expenditure in the household.

Nguyen Xuan Mai

Livelihood of households in salt-marsh areas in Southern Vietnam

Salt-marsh areas in Southern Vietnam are poor region. Therefore analysis of livelihood of households contributes to poverty reduction efforts in these areas. The paper presents analysis of livelihood of households using indicators of occupational diversification and income generating activities, employment changes, changes in natural and financial resources such as land, water surface for fishery, credits, etc. In general rural households in salt-marsh areas manage to make full use of existing resources, especially land and labor resources, and take advantages of external environment. Vulnerable groups tend to have livelihood that relies mainly on labor and near-land sea resources. They potentially can exhaust the resources and threat the social and environmental sustainability of the salt-marsh areas. The author provides recommendations for supporting local people, especially vulnerable group in salt-marsh areas, in access to and effective and sustainable use of the households' and community resources.

Nguyen Thanh Liem

Household income and characteristics of migrant children from rural areas

Migration has been used as a likelihood strategy of many rural households to gain more income and diversify risks. As migration usually associates with some costs to enable it, the have are more able to move and the poorest segment of population are not able to move. This paper looks at that relationship and migration pattern from rural areas in three provinces of Vietnam namely Yen Bai, Tien Giang, and Thua Thien - Hue. Using data from "Multi-disciplinary research project on rural families in transitional Vietnam" in 2004-2006, it is found that inter provincial, district and commune migration account for 40%, 52%, and 66% respectively. The proportion of inter district migrant children in Tieng Giang, Yen Bai, and Thua Thien - Hue are 17%, 30%, and 42% respectively. As migration is not the main objective of the project, the data on migration is objective. Those figures are very high and they would challenge current statistics of migration. It is also found that females are no less mobile than males; and migrants have strong links to their homeland. Regarding household income, households with migrant children have significantly higher income than that of households that do not have migrant children. However, the relationship is not linear but it follows a skewed U-shape curve. That means while the richer are able and more likely to move, the poorest also have a strong pressure to move. The poorest segment of population are more likely to move than the middle income group; it is probably because cost of moving in Vietnam has been minized as a consequence of big investment to infrastructure, the rapid development of transportation means, the flourishing of mass-media, and the speedy grow of job market in urban areas in the last one or two decades. The shape of this relationship also raises a warning that migration may have contributed more to increased inequality.