

# Chasing Dreams: Transforming to a Middle-Class Society in Vietnam

Le Kim Sa\*  
Nguyen Cam Nhung\*\*

**Abstract:** *In Vietnam's reform process, the emergence of the middle class is the consequence of the nation's socio-economic development. Recent data on living standard issued by the General Statistics Office showed that, the middle class in Vietnam has been emerged, which provides positive meaning for the Vietnam modern society. In the next decades, Vietnam will be a middle-class society and the focus of policies should be changed, from pro-poor to promoting the middle class and to manage the risks that might pull back the socio-economic improvement. As Vietnam's middle class is newly emerging, the government should have policy to increase this class in both relative and absolute terms. The social and economic challenges raised by the emerging Vietnamese middle class are multi-faceted. Although the middle-income group is in a phase of rapid expansion, it is far from being sufficiently homogenous to feature a shared socio-cultural identity, akin to a middle-class identity. While rapid economic development has resulted in sharp poverty reduction, socioeconomic disparities among the middle-income strata have become increasingly visible in everyday life.*

**Keywords:** *middle class, social mobility, middle society, Vietnam.*

*Received: 14 October 2019; Revised: 25 October 2019; Accepted: 11 December 2019*

## Introduction

The process of socio-economic development since Doi Moi has significantly improved the material and spiritual life of most Vietnamese. People's living standard has improved significantly and is also a manifestation of a new group of population, with a growing number of better-off income and expenditure. For the last two decades, especially from 2000, Vietnam has several remarkable achievements in socio-economic development and since 2010, the country escaped from the "poor and less developed" status to become the lower-middle income one.

---

\* Centre for Analysis and Forecasting, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

\*\* University of Economics and Business, Vietnam National University Hanoi.

In the transition process of Vietnam, the focus of economists (in the world and in the country) on development policies is for the poor. However, this concern needs to gradually change with the development of the middle class as a resource for production and consumption. The emergence of the middle class has positive meaning for the Vietnam modern society.

After decades of official recognition of the structuration of Vietnamese society into different well-identified classes under French colonial rule, the communist ideology brought about by the decolonization wars abolished class-distinction by collectivizing all forms of private wealth and ownership in the mid-1950s, in the northern part, and after 1975 in the rest of the country (Dang Phong, 2005). The social and economic challenges raised by the emerging Vietnamese middle class are multi-faceted (MPI-WB, 2016). Indeed, despite the rapid increase of its size, the political impact of the middle-income group (hereafter MIG) on public policies remains limited (Le Kim Sa, 2018). Furthermore, either does the middle-income strata of the population participate to the definition of socio-economic policies, nor is it distinctively targeted by sectoral public action. In addition, MIG's political influence is further undermined by the fact that the majority of this income group is still vulnerable.

The official discourse prefers using the terms “middle level” or “middle income earners” in order to sidestep the political charge that is associated to the “middle class”. The terms “middle level” or “middle-income earners”, referring to an average household income, are neither precise in terms of income and assets, nor adequate in conveying the sense of educational attainment and occupational status which is traditionally associated with the socioeconomic changes observed in Vietnam. Although the middle-income group is in a phase of rapid expansion, it is far from being sufficiently homogenous to feature a shared socio-cultural identity, akin to a middle-class identity. While rapid economic development has resulted in sharp poverty reduction, socioeconomic disparities among the middle-income strata have become increasingly visible in everyday life.

After 30 years of Doi Moi, one of the important changes is the process of formation and development of the middle class, especially in urban areas that are changing the social structure of Vietnam. Despite impressive achievements in the past few decades, the sustainability and comprehensiveness of the recent development model in Vietnam is becoming a cause for concern. It also creates pressures and creates risks of social instability, which require appropriate policies for the next period after Vietnam is gradually becoming a middle-class society.

### **1. The Emergence of the Vietnamese Middle Class**

In a country where social inclusion is the main objective of economic policy, rapid economic growth and structural change have increased household consumption and sharply reduced poverty, while, in the same times, increasing inequality of income and of economic opportunities across social groups and regions (OECD, 2014). In parallel with the policies

aimed at promoting economic growth, the Vietnamese government undertook major reforms in the social sectors such as education, training, public health and health care, labor and employment and social security policies. Vietnam was one of the first developing countries that had Socio-Economic Development Strategies (SEDS) and Socio-Economic Development Plans (SEDP) in which the economic, social and environmental pillars were all included and given due consideration, with the overall goal of taking the country out of low income status. The SEDP 2011- 2015 was prepared with three distinct pillars covering economic development, social development and environmental protection. As a consequence, the country's views on national development evolved substantially to include intrinsic sustainability objectives and further emphasized the importance of social development in parallel with economic development.

The current SEDS (2011-2020) insists more on the linkages and trade-offs between rapid economic development and sustainable development. It reaffirms the need for maintaining a rapid growth rate and reducing development gaps with other countries, while also insisting the quality of growth. The SEDP 2011- 2015 was prepared with three distinct pillars covering economic development, social development and environmental protection. As a consequence, the country's views on national development evolved substantially to include intrinsic sustainability objectives and further emphasized the importance of social development in parallel with economic development.

Owing to strong economic growth, phased and managed trade liberalization as well as poverty reduction policies targeted directly towards the most disadvantaged groups, Vietnam has achieved impressive records in eradicating extreme poverty and poverty during the last two decades. The progress in reducing poverty of Vietnam is considered as remarkable success as at the GSO-World Bank national poverty line, the poverty headcount rate fell from 20.8 percent in 2010 to 9.8 percent in 2016, having declined by nearly 4 percentage points in the two years between 2014 and 2016 (World Bank, 2018). The depth of poverty has also improved throughout the nation, suggesting that sufficient improvements were made in the living standards of the very poor.

Table 1. Poverty trend by region (as headcount rate), 2010-2016

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b><i>Vietnam</i></b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>-3.8</b>
Rural	27.0	22.1	18.6	13.6	-5.0
Urban	6.0	5.4	3.8	1.6	-2.1
<b><i>Regions</i></b>					
Red River Delta	11.9	7.5	5.2	2.2	-3.0
Northern Uplands	44.9	41.9	37.3	28.0	-9.3
North Coastal Central	23.7	18.2	14.7	11.8	-2.9
Central Highlands	32.8	29.7	30.4	24.1	-6.3
Southeast	7.0	5.0	3.7	0.6	-3.1
Mekong Delta	18.7	16.2	9.8	5.9	-3.9

Source: World Bank (2018).

Despite huge achievements in income and asset poverty reduction, the country still faces multiple challenges. Without new efforts, broad-based poverty reduction is likely unattainable, and this group needs to be the central focus of the Government and society in national poverty reduction strategies in the upcoming period.

The Vietnam Human Development Report 2015 (VASS-UNDP, 2015) has confirmed that the emerging middle class in Vietnam has undergone significant changes in the population structure in recent years. In early 2018, the World Bank identified households divided into 5 economic classes based on daily consumption (USD/person/day calculated by PPP 2011). Five classes are defined as: (i) extreme poor, living on less than 1.9 USD/day; (ii) moderately poor, consuming from 1.9-3.2 USD/day; (iii) people who are economically vulnerable and consume 3.2-5.5 USD/day; (iv) economically safe, spending US \$ 5.5-15 per day; (v) global middle class, living on US \$ 15 per day. Two last groups, (iv) and (v), are referred as the "consumer class" because they have enough income to cover daily expenses, able to absorb income shocks, and consume some amount of non-necessity goods and services.

This is a successful part of Vietnam in transforming from agricultural to non-agricultural economy. As the rise of the middle class will change the face of consumption and change social aspirations, the focus of poverty reduction and prosperity sharing will shift from "fighting extreme poverty" to "improving quality of life" and support the development of the middle class. The ability to rapid job creation and the transition to wage employment is promoting positive results of poverty reduction and shared prosperity.

Table 2. Population by income groups (USD PPP 2011)

Income group	Non-Kinh		Kinh		Total	
	2012	2016	2012	2016	2012	2016
Extreme poor (less than \$1.9/day)	16.3	11.5	0.6	0.1	3.1	2.0
Moderately poor (from \$1.9-3.1/day)	31.6	25.1	6.0	2.0	10.0	5.9
Economically vulnerable (from \$3.1-5.5/day)	34.1	37.9	29.2	18.5	30.0	21.8
Economically secure (from USD5.5-15.0/day)	16.7	22.5	55.1	64.0	49.0	57.0
Global middle class (more than USD15/day)	1.4	3.0	9.2	15.4	7.9	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: World Bank (2018).

This seemed to a continuous trend if compared to other estimation. Using the same VLSS but from previous period, Le Kim Sa (2017) has estimated the magnitude of the middle class in Vietnam in different measurements. It can be seen that if only by income, the middle class occupies a large share (nearly 72% in 2012) and tends to increase rapidly. However, using the multidimensional approach, the middle class sharply is decreasing in scale with non-income dimensions.

Table 3. Comparison of the development of the middle class through different measurement

Unit: %

<b>Measurement</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2012</b>
Only income (above the double poverty line)	54.2	64.2	58.0	65.4	71.8
Multidimension: income and education	30.5	36.3	35.4	38.9	42.0
Multidimension: income and occupation	21.9	25.8	26.7	40.8	45.3
Multidimension: income and occupation	18.2	20.7	21.3	29.1	31.5

Source: Le Kim Sa (2017).

## 2. Social Mobility of the Middle Class in Vietnam

In the early 2000s, the growth performance in Vietnam has been associated with high absolute income mobility producing both winners and losers. While a majority of households experienced upward income mobility, downward absolute income mobility affected nearly one out of five households. Aside from absolute income changes, relative income mobility was particularly high. Between 2004 and 2008, only 20% of Vietnamese households remained in the same income decile, while 40% of households experienced upward/downward relative income mobility (Table 4). A large share of the poor was able to move up the income ladder, contributing to the rise of the relative size of the middle-income group from 57.1% of Vietnamese households in 2004 to 60.3% in 2008. Although the existing middle-income group remained stable, since 73% of those who were middle class in 2004 remained in this group in 2008, it also attracted a significant portion of the poor (58.5% of the poor in 2004 became middle income group in 2008).

Table 4. Mobility matrix 2004/2008

Group	Poor	Middle Income	Rich
Poor	39.5	58.5	2.1
Middle Income	10.4	73.0	16.6
Rich	2.0	36.6	61.4

*Note: Poor, Middle class and Rich are defined as households with equivalent income below 50% of the median, between 50% and 150% of the median and above 150% of the median, respectively.*

*Source: OECD (2014).*

Paradoxically, the structural transformation in Vietnam has been associated with fairly low mobility in terms of employment status, with a large share of the employed remaining in self-employment. Employment mobility statistics compiled by OECD (2014) indicate that nearly two-thirds of individuals employed in 2004 and 2008 remained in self-employment during this period. Moreover, movements from wage to self-employment were as low as movements from self-employment to wage employment (7% against 8%).

Similarly, Le Kim Sa (2017) made the two-stage comparison shows that the non-middle rate has fallen by approximately 30%. Meanwhile, the rate of entry into the middle class increased sharply between the two periods, with a 6.3 percentage point increase. This is a good signal in the change of middle-class movement in Vietnam, i.e. the rate of joining the middle class is increasing. The larger middle class also explains the fallout from the middle class rising between the two periods.

Table 5. Dynamics of the middle class by region, Vietnam: 2004-2006 and 2010-2012

Middle class mobility	Population	Rural	Urban
Non-middle class in 2004 - Middle class in 2006	8.6	7.0	13.6
Middle class in 2004 - Non-middle class in 2006	3.8	3.1	6.0
Middle class in both 2004, 2006	14.7	7.7	35.9
Non middle class in 2010 - Middle class in 2012	14.9	15.4	13.7
Middle class in 2010 - Non middle class in 2012	5.3	5.2	5.6
Middel class in both 2010-2012	36.9	27.5	61.0

*Source: Le Kim Sa (2017).*

As can be seen, the share of middle-class in rural areas has increased sharply between the two periods. But this middle class is also more vulnerable with the fallout rate is half of the urban group for the period 2004-2006, while the middle-class rate is only 25%. In the period 2010-2012, the rate of fallout in the two regions is approximately equal while the rate of middle class in rural area is less than half of the urban in 2010. Thus, the rate of entry to the middle class in rural areas has improved significantly compared to urban areas but is still more vulnerable.

As the World Bank reported the risk of falling into poverty is low and declining as the progress of Vietnamese households as they move up the economic ladder (2018). Economic mobility among the same households over time provides robust evidence of upward movement in Vietnam. About 28 percent of the population moved into a higher economic class between 2014 and 2016, 63 percent stayed in the same class, while only 9 percent fell into a lower economic class. Thus, three times as many people moved up the economic ladder than those who moved down.

Table 6. Transitions into and out of poverty, Vietnam: 2014-16

	2014	2016		Total
		Not Poor	Poor	
Not Poor		97.9	2.1	100.0
Poor		49.9	50.1	100.0

Source: World Bank (2018).

In recent years, very few non-poor households have fallen below the poverty line. While half of households that were poor in 2014 had moved out of poverty by 2016, only 2 percent of households that were not poor in 2014 had fallen into poverty by 2016 (Table 6). The strong movement of households out of poverty, combined with the small share falling below the poverty line, suggest that fewer Vietnamese households are in chronic poverty, and those who escape poverty mostly sustain their gains.

### 3. The still in debate concept of “middle class” in Vietnam

The social classes in Vietnam have been in the process of development with a rather complex, intermittent and often changing structure. The social hierarchy exists in the course of the historical development of social patterns, reflecting the structural inequality of all societies. In the past few years, although not specifically written in the text, fundamental changes were viewed in the Party's direction and government policy to the middle class. From the desire to rapidly build a homogeneous economy of ownership, based on a class point of view that recognizes the objective existence of many economic components, many

forms of ownership attach to a multi-tiered social structure. From the implementation of an average distribution system to the acceptance of income disparities based on the promotion of capital, knowledge, professional skills and management skills, and so one to increase productivity, quality and efficiency in production and business.

Nonetheless, various recent works have endeavored to describe Vietnamese middle classes by focusing on ideal-typical subgroups defined by their specificities and differences in terms of education, occupation, political power (Heberer, 2003; Trinh Duy Luan, 2018a). New groups emerging in post-reform Vietnam have brought social differentiation through new consumption and lifestyles valuing comfort, esthetics and mobility (Hansen et al., 2016). The term 'middle class' in Vietnam has also tended to be used to naturalize the consumer-oriented new practices of middle-class by reference to globalized consumerist benchmarks (Drummond, 2012; King, 2008). Putting together various attributes of the middle class as property ownership in urban areas, education, occupation, ownership of such goods as a vehicle, consumption power, the importance attached to leisure activities, information access and the maintenance of social status (Huong, 2015). On the other hand, values, attitudes and other indicators of class culture beyond income, socio-economic status and consumption have been more rarely addressed (Leshkovich, 2012).

Various issues related to the identification of the Vietnamese groups of intermediary income to middle classes can be found in the literature. On the one hand, common Vietnamese people generally perceive the middle-class category as those "having enough to eat, having enough to save". In fact, two categories of people are being included in this group, those who are regarded as middle class due to their profession, socioeconomic status and education and skills, and those who own property, including small entrepreneurs who take risks and invest in business ventures. On the other hand, scholars have started describing the emergence of new and diversified social groups, including landowners and a nascent urban bourgeoisie, in the 1990s. Still, these social groups had not exactly formed a homogeneous social class in the 2000s (Pham Xuan Nam, 2002).

Although social stratification has considerably evolved since the late 1980s, the notion of 'middle class', as well as the officially preferred term of 'middle level', has remained problematic in Vietnam for various reasons. First, 'middle level' refers to household income and does not presume that homogenous values, educational attainment or occupational status are similar and enable identification (Nguyen Vo Thu Huong, 2004). As underlined by Earl (2014), Vietnam's new middle classes are diverse in origins and have experienced a qualitatively different path involving postcolonial development, post-war setback and postreform re-emergence. Second, describing social class in occupational terms can be misleading in a Vietnamese society in which the perception of social differences has been disrupted by economic reforms. Although the new economic conditions introduced by Doi Moi and subsequent reforms took place at the different levels of social stratification between classes, social groups, regions and branches, they have been particularly acute in rural areas, where a fairly large share of the Vietnamese lower middle class works and lives (Le Kim



Sa, 2017). The surveys of social structure and labor occupation have revealed significant changes in the division of labor in the rural areas imposed by the transition to market economy (ILO, 2018). The two groups that characterized for the pre-reform period of centralized administration, i.e. the collective farmers of the State and the co-operative farmers, are now part of the more diversified social structure, including farmer households self-controlling production and business. However, these perceived changes interfere with inherited perceptions of the scale of relative socioeconomic positions. As mentioned by Earl (2014) mentions that some agricultural households that are classified as 'middle class' peasants today were formerly considered as 'rich peasant', that is higher class, before the concept of middle class emerged to consciousness.

Clearly, the reconfiguration of the position and role of the 'old' and new social groups along the course of economic and social development needs to be more consistently identified (Hoang Chi Bao, 2008). For example, the pre-revolutionary 'petty bourgeoisie' category, referring to educated urban professionals like doctors, engineers, or teachers, that has survived in large cities actually describes a very heterogeneous group in terms of occupation and preferences, most of them being far from those traditionally featured by middle classes (Earl, 2014). Symmetrically, although the emerging group identified as business persons, comprising owner or managers of private enterprises, liability limited companies, joint-stock companies and private household businesses, obviously has a great potential of socioeconomic transformation (Le Kim Sa, 2015), it hardly can be defined as a social group both because of its heterogeneity and its weak willingness and capacity to coordinate and influence public policies (Turner and Nguyen, 2005).

The recognition of the objective existence of many forms of ownership, of many economic components and of many forms of distribution is the foundation of the thinking of a social structure consisting of various classes, middle class. Still, the term "middle class" is largely avoided in the country. The official discourse prefers using the terms "middle level" or "middle income earners" in order to sidestep the political charge that is associated to the "middle class". The terms "middle level" or "middle-income earners", referring to an average household income, are neither precise in terms of income and assets, nor adequate in conveying the sense of educational attainment and occupational status which is traditionally associated with the socioeconomic changes observed in Vietnam.

#### **4. Changes in social values in the social transformation**

Although the term "middle class" is widely used, the rapid growth of middle-income consumers should not be seen as equivalent to the formation of a new class in Vietnamese society. Social values remain influenced by tradition and are sometimes heterogeneous between the different categories of the middle-income group.

The heritage of socialist values in Vietnam seeks to combine traditional and universal values and the material and technical culture, in the respect of people-nature, people-peo-

ple, people-organization relationships, and under the monitoring of the community and society (Tran, 2015). Recent economic change and massive move of youngster to cities to find better job and life opportunities have nevertheless hurt this mix of traditional and socialist values, with Vietnamese people. As a result, the socioeconomic structure and values within families have become increasingly heterogeneous and the traditional relation between individuals, their family and their village are disrupted (Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen, 2016). In line with the inherited collectivistic culture, both parents and their adolescent children still respect universalism, conformity, and benevolence in contrast to power and stimulation. Still, values of the youngest and urban people tend to move fast away from the collective and spiritual values acquired through education to the individualistic and material values characteristic of an open capitalist country (Phan, 2015). Sharp intergenerational divergence now affects higher-order values, with the parents still valuing conservative norms as security, conformity, studiousness, filial piety and diligence, while their children give preference to openness and change, autonomy, hedonism and riskiness values, as is typical for a more individualistic culture (Truong Thi Khanh Ha et al., 2015).

As noted by to Le Ngoc Van et al. (2016), neither the survival of the traditional family value system, nor the power of the new values brought about by industrial society should be underestimated, according. The reduction in the average size of the households in Vietnam has accelerated during the last inter-census decade. The decrease in average household size is not only due to the reduction in the average number of children per couple, but also to a gradual process of household fragmentation taking place in the country, larger and more complex households becoming less frequent and the share of smaller households rising (GSO-UNFPA, 2016).

Still, solidarity within extended family remains a reality, except that interaction is now organized at distance through new technologies. In addition, the shift to a market economy in Vietnam has created a transitional socio-economic environment, with many factors amplifying social stratification. These factors include an imperfect legal environment facilitating the use of power by particular groups to their own benefit and providing some branches with advantage or special positions. Growing feeling of unfairness could undermine the willingness of individuals or some social groups to enter the market economy and further feed conservatism in some parts of the society and of the middle class, like in rural areas (Trinh Duy Luan, 2018b). On the other hand, if not addressed, this growing feeling of discontent could also increase the willingness of the most progressive parts of urban middle classes to self-organize and claim for a more flexible and transparent legal environment.

## **5. Concluding remarks**

In Vietnam, although small but the middle class is gradually forming. This consequence reflects the development of the market in Vietnam. Market mechanisms have enabled people to free themselves to material and non-material assets, of the individual or of the family,

to escape poverty and become members of the middle class. It is the market mechanism that liberates and increases the efficiency of the use of these resources, creating economic growth and social progress. The market mechanism has made a part of people become richer and developed the society. The existence of the middle class is evidence of the correctness of developing a market-oriented economy.

The formation and development of the Vietnamese middle class is indispensable in the socio-economic development of the country and is creating a living space in society. Diversification and increased demand have changed the way people live in this class, resulting in meeting those needs that affect the supply of products and services for their needs. However, the middle class of Vietnam has only increased in scale, but not quality assurance. In other words, rising incomes do not translate into education, occupational skills, or labor.

Besides, the middle class became more diverse in composition and contributed significantly to the development of the country. This suggests that a middle-class economy is already well-established in Vietnam. However, the size of the middle class of Vietnam is not large enough and stable to be a driving force for the endogenous growth of the economy. In other words, the transition to an endogenous growth model, based on domestic consumption, cannot happen quickly. Therefore, the state must promote its regulative role in stabilizing the macro to create a healthy environment for the development of this class. At the same time, it is important to have policies that foster the middle class from improving health care, upgrading infrastructure, investing in universities and technical training, and addressing disparities on income and education.

### References

- Dang Phong. 2005. *History of Vietnam's Economy 1945-2000*. Social Labor Publish House, Hanoi.
- Drummond, L. 2012. *Middle Class Landscapes in a Transforming City: Hanoi in the 21st Century*, in Van Nguyen-Marshall, Lisa B, Welch Drummond, Danièle Bélanger. *The Reinvention of Distinction Modernity and the Middle Class in Urban Vietnam*. ARI - Springer Asia Series. Springer.
- Earl, C. 2014. *Vietnam's New Middle Classes: Gender, Career, City*. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Gendering Asia series, No. 9, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press.
- GSO and UNFPA. 2016. *The 2014 Vietnam Intercensal Population and housing survey: Population sex-age structure and related socio-economic issues in Vietnam*. Vietnam News Agency Publishing House, Hanoi.
- Heberer, T. 2003. *Private Entrepreneurs in China and Vietnam: Social and Political Functioning of Strategic Groups*. Leiden: Brill.
- Hoang Chi Bao. 2008. *Social Changes in Vietnam after 20 years of Doi Moi*. Paper presented in the Third International Conference of Vietnamese Studies, Hanoi.
- Huong, L.T. 2015. *The middle class in Hanoi: Vulnerability and concerns*. ISEAS Perspective, 8, 1-11.
- ILSSA-ILO. 2018. *Labour and Social Trends in Vietnam 2012-2017*. International Labour Organization: Hanoi.

- King, V. 2008. The Middle Classes in Southeast Asia: Diversities, Identities, Comparisons and the Vietnamese case. *The International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies*, No. 4, pp. 73-109.
- Le Kim Sa. 2015. The middle class in Vietnam: Approach perspective, development practices and policy recommendations. Summary report of ministerial level projects. Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.
- Le Kim Sa. 2017. *Identifying the Middle Class in Vietnam: Measurement and Development dynamics*. Social Science Publishing House, Hanoi.
- Lê Kim Sa. 2018. The role of the middle class for public policy making: international experience and lessons for Vietnam. Summary report of ministerial level project. Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.
- Le Ngoc Van, Mai Van Hai, Dang Thi Hoa, Bui Thi Huong Tram. 2016. *The Vietnamese Value System of Family - A Sociological Approach*. Social Sciences Publishing House: Hanoi
- Le Thu Huong. 2015. The social portrait of urban middle class in Vietnam. ISEAS.
- Leshkovich, A. M. 2012. Finances, Family, Fashion, Fitness, and... Freedom? The Changing Lives of Urban Middle-Class Vietnamese Women. In Van Nguyen-Marshall, L. B., Welch D. and D. Bélanger (eds), *The Reinvention of Distinction: Modernity and the Middle Class in Urban Vietnam*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 95-113.
- Nguyen, T. D. 2010. The stereotypes of traditional norms and values in agrarian society of Vietnam in the new context of market-oriented economy. Paper presented at the Conference "Revisiting Agrarian Transformations in Southeast Asia Empirical, Theoretical and Applied Perspectives", Chiangmai, Thailand.
- OECD. 2014. Social cohesion review of Vietnam. Development Centre Studies, OECD Publishing.
- Phan, T. 2015. Study on current public opinion in Vietnam based on universally value system and core values approach. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(1), 113-119.
- Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen. 2016. The Vietnamese Values System: A blend of Oriental, Western and Socialist Values. *International Education Studies*, 9(12): 32-40.
- Tran, N. T. 2015. The view of Vietnam values system from the survey results in 2014: current situation and proposals. Retrieved August 28, 2018, from <http://vister.vn/review/social-sciences-and-humanities/528-theview-of-vietnam-value-system-from-the-survey-results-in-2014-current-situationand-proposals.html>
- Trinh Duy Luan. 2017. Research on the middle class and middle-class families: From Asian experience to Vietnamese practices. *Sociological Review*, No. 2 (138): 81-91.
- Trinh Duy Luan. 2018. Social participation and activeness of middle-class families in current Vietnam. *Journal of Family and Gender Studies*, No. 3.
- Truong Thi Khanh Ha, Nguyen Van Luot, and J. Rózycka-Tran. 2015. Similarities and differences in values between Vietnamese parents and adolescents. *Health Psychology Report*, 3(4): 281-291.
- Turner, S., and Phuong An Nguyen. 2005. Young Entrepreneurs, Social Capital and Doi Moi in Hanoi, Vietnam. *Urban Studies*. 42(10): 1693-1710.
- World Bank. 2018. *Climbing the Ladder: Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity in Vietnam*. The World Bank: Hanoi
- WB-MPI. 2016. *Vietnam 2035: Toward Prosperity, Creativity, Equity, and Democracy*. World Bank Group: Washington D.C.