

The Vietnamese Values System: A Blend of Oriental, Western and Socialist Values

Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen¹

¹ Faculty of Education, Monash University, Victoria, Australia

Correspondence: Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia. Tel: 61-401-008-931. E-mail: quynh.nguyen@monash.edu

Received: May 17, 2016

Accepted: July 6, 2016

Online Published: November 24, 2016

doi:10.5539/ies.v9n12p32

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v9n12p32>

Abstract

Values education has been discussed extensively in many parts of the world in the context of the dramatic changes associated with globalization which directly affects the set of human values. Vietnam is a developing country with an intermixture of cultural heritage and social-economic transformation. In order to achieve the goal of becoming a modernized and industrialized country, the Vietnamese government is setting the development of human resources as priority. In line with the enhancement of advanced industrial knowledge and skills, Vietnamese should be fulfilled with value codes to meet the requirements of the international labour market, to keep the specific 'Vietnamese' characters and to develop sustainably. The content of values education should be addressed to be promoted in families, schools and society. It is thus the aim of this paper to explore the Vietnamese values system. The first section of this paper discusses the notions of values and values education. The following section presents a brief outline of the Vietnamese cultural and historical context. It suggests that irrespective of the changes of historical flows, Vietnamese values still retain traditional values. Holding the same cultural features with other Asian countries, the Vietnamese values system is impacted by the thoughts of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Additionally, Vietnamese adapt Western values from the French and American. Under the management of the Vietnamese government, socialist values are promoted as key rulers of social well-being and prosperousness.

Keywords: values, values education, Vietnamese values system, oriental values, western values, socialist values

1. Introduction

All over the world, governments are paying attention to the developments of their young citizens in an attempt to pass on a shared code of values mainly through schooling (Taylor, 2006). As a consequence of global fluctuation, social shifts and scientific-technological improvements, changes in values systems cannot be avoided or, more seriously, values are in crisis (Halstead, 2007). International policy makers and agencies have first considered which types of values are promoted in school and society. Then other issues to confront are how to teach these values and why.

Vietnam, in an effort to catch up with the speed of globalization, specifies that human resources play the key role in national development strategies. The Vietnamese government determines that education is an efficient way to transfer values to future generations. The notion of values education is explicitly shown in the National Goal of Education which identifies core values for Vietnamese society as follows: "To train Vietnamese in morality, health, knowledge, aesthetics and career; loyalty with the ideals of national independence and socialism; to form and nurture personality characters, abilities and qualities of citizens that can satisfy the mission of country's construction and protection" (Socialist Republic of Vietnam [SRV], 2005, p. 1). However, the government is confused and trapped with vast issues such as what, how and why particular values should be promoted. Other problems conclude which traditional values are in conformity with the new era but still hold unique national characteristics and which universal values should be acquired by youngsters who sufficiently have knowledge and skills to become international citizens. Moreover, the authorities are also faced with questions such as which democratic values can bring prosperity and well-being for Vietnamese and how to do that in school and society at large. Before planning a national strategy for values education, the first steps that must be taken is clarifying the values system for Vietnamese in the current time.

2. Definitions

2.1 Values

In discussing the term “value”, it is often regarded as being good, right, worthy and important according to individuals. However, value can not be understood solely as an abstract (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1966). Hill (1991) argues that a value is not only just a belief and/or an emotion. Additionally, there is a high level of connection between values and behaviour. Halstead (1996) suggests that values are used as general instructions to action, the reference of choice-making or behaviour assessment. Golden (2002) suggests there are three elements of values - “cognitive, affective and behavioural components” (p.5). That is, values affect the way we think, feel and behave.

Values are closely tied with culture and community (Johnson, 2010). Turkkahraman (2014) argues that values are culturally produced, related to the context in which they are developed and enacted. Moreover, values are social criteria that regulate individual behaviour. Yet different cultures have different values and some values regarded as good in one culture may be bad in another one (Zajda, 2009) and vice versa. Although it can be argued that the human race shares universal values (Golden, 2002), there are also unique values for each individual, group or culture (Singh, 2015). Thus, any understanding of the values which are introduced into schools, organizations or institutes, needs to be traced back to the context of community and society.

2.2 Values Education

Moral education, character education, ethics education, civics education and citizenship are internationally understood as the different names for values education (Leo, 2012; Lovat & Clement, 2008; Lovat & Toomey, 2009). Not only in schools but all activities and all relationships demonstrate the values that underpin the society in which the interactions are taking place. Values education can appear in family, schools, clubs, churches, companies, youth organization and so forth. In society, values education encourages reflection on choosing and exploring chances and duty commitment. It also develops values preferences and instructs individual attitudes and behaviours that meet societal requirements (Taylor, 1994). The process of learning and teaching in values education focuses on content that can meet the requirements of a particular society (DeNobile & Hogan, 2014). On the journey of socialization, societies have to seriously consider which values are chosen and transferred to their members. Without values and social values system, a society fails to be happy (Turkkahraman, 2014). In addition, values education is the purposeful endeavour to assist people to obtain the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that promote “more personally satisfying and socially constructive lives” (Kirschenbaum, 1995, p. 14).

3. The Historical and Cultural Context of Vietnam

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic and multilingual country located in South-East Asia with an area around 326 000 km² and a population of approximately eighty million. Vietnam shares its borders with China in the North, Laos and Cambodia in the West and the Pacific Ocean in the East. The first Vietnamese kingdom called Van Lang was established in 2879 BC and was ruled by King Hung (Le, Phan, & Ngo, 1997). From 11 BC to 938 AD, the country was first invaded by the Chinese at both political and cultural level. The mixture of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism became blended with Vietnamese animistic beliefs (He et al., 2011). After being defeated by Ngo Quyen and Le Hoan, the Chinese were driven out of Vietnam in 939.

From 1009 to 1527, Vietnam became a strong nation with developed agriculture and unique culture under the administration of four Vietnamese dynasties namely Ly, Tran, Ho and Le. The Vietnamese Kings adopted Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism as the basis for civic governance, educational examination and social relations with a focus on family ties. The smallest unit of government in Vietnam was the village with their own rules together with the state laws. These principles regulated all relationships between each person with their families and within the village. From that socio-economic structure, the spirit of solidarity and mutual support fostered the idea of collectivism (Le, 2014). Other notable cultural features of these times concerned the creation of Vietnamese writing (called chu Nom), the establishment of the first Vietnamese University (called Quoc Tu Giam) in 1070 and the first national examinations in 1075 (Le et al., 1997).

From the sixteenth to eighteenth century, the country plunged into a series of civil wars when the Kings of the Le dynasty were powerless. Vietnam was divided by two Lords with the Nguyen in the south and the Trinh in the north. Vietnam was enlarged toward to the Mekong River Delta in the south with Nguyen Hue’s struggle for independence over invaders (Pham, 2003). In the seventeenth century, Alexandre de Rhodes, a French missionary developed the Romanized version of written Vietnamese known as Quoc Ngu and this was used as the official national language until the present day (He et al., 2011). Vietnam was unified in 1802 under a single

ruler with the Nguyen dynasty. However, the French colonial powers increased their invasion in the south and by 1885 they had conquered the whole of Vietnam. The French replaced the Chinese based Confucian legal and administration systems with a Westernized system.

In 1930, Ho Chi Minh founded the Communist Party of Indochina and introduced the thought of Marxist-Leninism into Vietnam. This led to the end of French colonialism in 1945. After that, Vietnam was divided into the south influenced by the Soviet Union and the north impacted by the United States of America. In 1975, Vietnam gained total independence, unified the north and the south and adapted socialism as the basis for government, a situation that continues up to now. Since 1986, economic renewal has brought remarkable changes in all fields: political, social, cultural and international relations (He et al., 2011; T. C. Nguyen, 1999). In addition to the development of the market oriented economy and social improvement, the 1986-Renovation promotes Vietnamese culture and civilization. The current Vietnamese government has focused on the important role of native culture as motivation for socio-economic development (Pham, 2003).

4. The Vietnamese Values System

Vietnamese are affected by five main values layers which are traditional values, Confucian and Taoist values, Buddhist values, Western values and Socialist values as shown in Figure 1:

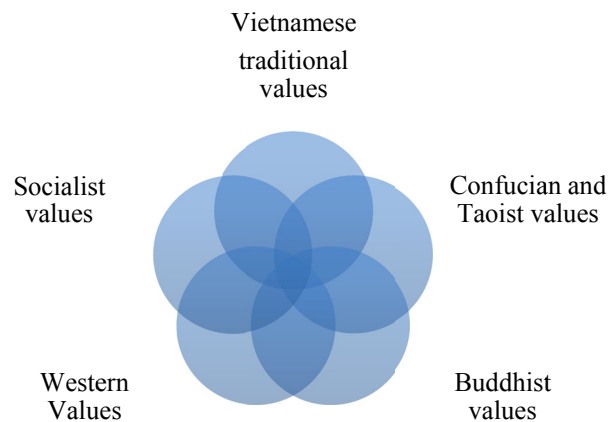


Figure 1. Multi-layers of Vietnamese values system

4.1 Traditional Values

The history of Vietnam's formation highlights patriotism as a prominent part of traditional values (He et al., 2011; S. Q. Ho, 2015; T. C. Nguyen, 1999; Pham, 2003; V. G. Tran, 1980). It is a spiritual symbol of national independence that shifts differently during each stage of history. In times of war patriotism was shown via the solidarity and unity needed to beat the colonial forces while in times of peace patriotism was expressed by positive contributions to national development in political, social, commercial and cultural fields (T. C. Nguyen, 1999). In addition to patriotism, V. G. Tran (1980) addresses six core values of Vietnamese thinking. They are diligence, heroism, creativeness, optimism, charity and devotion. Overriding all time shifts, these are still basic values of the Vietnamese at the present time (Pham, 2003).

Dao (2000) considers seven key values of Vietnamese traditional culture as follows. Vietnamese value memory skills; fondness for learning; diligence; tolerance; love of peace; sacrifice and the ability to replicate the work of others. When studying the characteristics of Vietnamese, H. P. Nguyen (1963) describes the core values of Vietnamese people as community-collectives, moral respect and frugal ability, reality, patriotism, love of peace, humanism and optimism. N. Phan (1994) claims other dominant characters of Vietnamese are studious, intelligent and resourceful, sensitive to any changes. They are hard-working, adaptable, moderate and simple. They have close bonds with fatherland, relatives and family. Vietnamese parents care for their children more than for themselves. The most typical characteristic of Vietnamese is responsibility for family, living or dead, past, present and future. The sense of responsibility is expressed by public opinion, moral doctrine and traditional value (N. Phan, 1994). Many Vietnamese culturologists have agreed with Nguyen Van Huyen that Vietnamese culture is based on the connection of family-village-country and family is always the cornerstone of any

relationship (Pham, 2003). In 2001, The World Values Survey by the World Bank conducted in Vietnam confirmed that familial values are the most important (Dalton, Pham, Pham, & Ong, 2002). It is the “family-village-country” values concerned with unity, cooperation, solidarity, harmony and tolerance that shape the collectivism which is the core value of Vietnam.

The Fifth Central Resolution of the Vietnamese Communist Party in 1998 concluded that the Vietnamese values system comprises six values groups which are patriotism, self-strengthen spirit of nation; sense of community (individual–family–village–nation); compassion, tolerance and respect for morality and gratitude; hard work and creativity; dedicated communication and simple lifestyles. However, the Ninth Central Resolution of the Vietnamese Communist Party in 2014 changed, recognizing that the Vietnamese values system includes patriotism; self-strengthen spirit of nation; compassion; honesty; solidarity; hard work and creativity (S. Q. Ho, 2015). After fifteen years, it can be seen that some values including sense of community (individual–family–village–nation), dedicated communication and simple lifestyles no longer appear. This might be due to the change to a market economy and the high level of urbanization in Vietnam. In order to improve life circumstances and seek better job opportunities, Vietnamese rural people, especially youngsters tend to move to big cities. This leads to significant change in the village population structure in the country. In the past, most in a family were peasants and they lived and worked together. At present, a family can have farmers, workers, scholars, officers, teachers, doctors and so forth (T. D. Nguyen, 2010). These economic and social changes not only affect the family but also the perception, point of view and positions of each member. It also breaks the old relationship of individual–family–village–nation. Pham (2007) affirms that there have been remarkable changes in values orientation among youngsters. They have a tendency to shift from spiritual values to material values, from community benefits to individual benefits, from respect for the poor to respect for the rich.

4.2 The Influences of Confucianism and Taoism

The Chinese invasion brought Confucianism and Taoism to Vietnam as national philosophy in politics and social life. Even when Vietnam was independent Vietnamese feudal kings retained Confucian and Taoist thoughts as an effective tool to control Vietnamese society. Confucianism and Taoism was transferred through Chinese books and was used to educate Vietnamese from small students to the elites (Le, 2014). Although these books are no longer used at the present Confucianism and Taoism still has influence on Vietnamese social hierarchy of virtues and relations.

4.2.1 Confucianism

Confucianism has shaped the four basic principles of Vietnamese traditional values systems which are obligation to the family, desire for reputation, fondness for learning and respect (Huynh, 1987) The family is the central heart of social life in Vietnam and filial piety with parent and duty with other siblings are compulsory. Children have to obey their parents absolutely; the famous saying which conveys this idea is “The fish without salt must be rotten and a child who does-not obey his parents must be a bad one”. A child is educated that they are indebted by the birth, upbringing and education provided by their parents. Thus they have to take care of their mothers and fathers when they are old. The ways in which Confucianism has affected Vietnamese family structure can be revealed through the role of Vietnamese women. A good woman has to follow three basic tenets: she must obey her father when she is daughter; she must obey her husband when she gets married; she must obey her son when her husband dies.

With Vietnamese, reputation is more important than any material values. A famous proverb says that “A tiger leaves his fur after death; a person leaves his good name”. People pursue their good name not only when they are living but also after death. Good reputation can be acquired either by heroic achievements, by intellectual performances or by moral virtues. The two former are difficult for most people but the last can be attained through daily life with righteousness, modesty, generosity, ignoring material benefit and sense of humour.

Studios attitude is considered a significant value that Vietnamese have benefited from Confucianism. An ideal man is described in the phrase “Hong va Chuyen” that means he has good knowledge and morals. In the past, Vietnamese ordered the social class as follows: the scholars, peasants, artisans and traders. That means the teacher holds number one position in society’s eyes. Vietnamese society values and respects someone who gains high levels of education. Learning is the basic step to rise higher in social ladders and work opportunities.

At home, one is expected to practise respect for grand-parents, parents and siblings. In community, respect is expressed to elderly people, teachers and those are in higher positions. Regardless of their education, finance and jobs as long as someone is old, they have to be respected. Unlike Western people who adore youth, Vietnamese are proud of their age. That explains why children have few rights. Due to the high expectation of respect from others, people in ancient Vietnamese society paid a great deal of attention to social status. It can be seen through

a party in a village where there were many tables ordered from low to high. The highest were for elderly man such as grandfathers and oldest sons. The medium was for young men who have sons and the lowest for women, children and men who do not have sons. If there was no space in the main room, women and children had to sit in the kitchen.

In education, Confucianism still has profound influence on school leadership, learning and teaching, the relationship between teachers and students and family education. Schools are based on authoritarian leadership following the hierarchical structure of school administration and moral leadership by using personal position and prestige to interact with subordinates (Truong, 2013). Influenced by Confucian doctrines, Vietnamese learners study by memorizing the textbook contents and following teacher direction without thinking. That strongly affects the passive learning style of Vietnamese students at present with teacher-centred lessons. Vietnamese students lack problem solving skills as well as effective teamwork and cooperation (He et al., 2011). With regard to teachers, Vietnamese students must respect and obey them absolutely. The position between teachers and students resembles that between parents and their children. In the classroom, they do not have open dialogue or active feedback from the students. In the present era of globalization, this educational stereotype limits activeness and creativity and makes Vietnamese students struggle to reach the level of international education quality. In family education, strict discipline and physical punishment are applied to teach children. It is said in a famous saying that “Beating children is to love them; spoiling children is to hate them”. These styles of family education are far different from Western ways.

4.2.2 Taoism

Taoism has as its central, philosophy harmony between human and human, human and nature. It is not difficult to explain why Vietnamese accepted Taoism naturally because most Vietnamese in ancient time were farmers. Thanks to Taoism, Vietnamese tend to avoid conflict and are tolerant in all social relations. Vietnamese ancestors often educate their children in this ideas through a proverb “One thing you endure, nine things you will receive”. However, the shortcomings of Taoist doctrines are resignation and inaction thereby enhancing passive learning and studying. It also avoids interference with nature and developing science and technology (He et al., 2011).

4.3 *The Effects of Buddhism*

Following the footsteps of Indian sailors and traders, Buddhist monks came directly to Vietnam during the first century A.D (Van Hao Le, 2014). At this time, Vietnamese suffered poverty and misery and were open to accepting the thoughts of Buddhism with Karma which helped to release them from pain. Buddhist philosophies guided the notion of equality, sacrifice, good deeds and life directions which matched the needs of the national spirit (V. K. Nguyen, 2013). After restoring national independence, Buddhism had great impact on the political vision and sense of the Dinh, Le, Ly and Tran dynasties. In some feudal dynasties (for example the Tran and Dinh dynasties), Buddhism became the national religion and many prominent monks had positive contributions in the development of the country as the teachers of the princesses and advisors of the kings. One of the Tran dynasty kings, Tran Nhan Tong (1258-1308) insisted on passing the throne to his son and becoming a monk (Van Huu Le et al., 1697).

Like other religions in Vietnam, Buddhism cannot keep the same features as its origins and it blends with indigenous culture and tolerance with other religions. Buddhist thoughts can be seen in the philosophy and practices of morality, social and political relations, Vietnamese languages, folk songs and poetry, literatures, customs, theatre art and visual art (Thich, 2012). Tu Bi, the spirit of sympathy, tolerance, benevolence and heartedness are the first values that Vietnamese accepted from Buddhism. Additionally, Tu An, another values category built in a sequence consistent with development of the emotional psychology of the Vietnamese includes grace with parents, teachers, nation and other human beings. These points show the same spirit as Confucianism. The Vietnamese also deeply believe in Karma, the causes and the effects of rules. It is believed that each individual's destiny is decided by what he did in his previous life and what he does in this life will affect his next life. This belief strengthens the desire to self-perfect and self-improve as well as encourages people to be charitable. However by commending their fate to the Supreme Lord Buddha, the Vietnamese are less interested in challenging themselves and they are often afraid of change.

In education, Vietnamese students are educated at an early age in the values inherited from the spirit of Buddhism such as love for people, help for friends and forgiveness. In each class, students raise funds to help poorer students with the philosophy of “the good leaves should cover the bad ones”. Vietnamese students also learn Buddhist moral lessons in the folk stories where the But (Buddha) appears as an old fairy man. The fairy narratives (e.g. Tam Cam, Thach Sach, Cay Tre Tram Dot, Trau Cau and so on) often convey the message of compassion, goodness, sharing and the causes and effects of rules. Taking the Tam Cam story for example, Tam

is a beautiful, gentle, honest and hard-working girl. Her parents died early and she has to live with a cruel stepmother and lazy stepsister. Everyday Tam must work hard from dusk to dawn without respite and she is always beaten fiercely by her stepmother. However, Tam has never expressed her anger and always obeys her stepmother and loves her sister. This point shows the ideas of tolerance and forgiveness in Buddhism. However, Tam's sister, Cam, is a selfish, ugly and jealous girl who always tries to harm Tam. Ultimately, a handsome prince marries Tam and they live a happy life in their palaces. Cam and her mother suffer a tragic ending and live miserably for the rest of their life. The causes and effects of rules in Buddhist thoughts can be seen here, like these famous sayings "who does good things will meet the good things" and "who sows the wind will reap the whirlwind". Moreover, the But character in this story is the image of Buddha who always appears in time to help unfortunate people. That conveys the spirit of support and charity for people.

4.4 The Impact of Western Values

Vietnam had first contact with Western culture in the sixteenth century through missionaries and trade. However, it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century, that Western values really influenced Vietnam by the wave of French colonization. Overriding all the negative impacts of the war, the Western values broke the revolving developmental circle of a traditional agrarian country (Do, 2005). In the main cities, the French built infrastructure such as national roads, railways and modern bridges. The industry of consuming and processing also emerged and the notion of modern citizenship gradually formed at the same time but in the country the self-management of small villages remained. On the one hand this kept the characteristics of folk culture but on the other hand it limited the development of rural areas.

Western culture introduced new humanist values such as liberty, equality and democracy to the old Vietnamese feudal society. Moreover, it helped to promote personal awareness as it considered individuals of value, arguing that the development of the individual is not in opposition to but support for the development of society (Do, 2005). The awakening of personal consciousness created significant changes in most social relationships, especially toward women. With the introduction of the worker class into society, Vietnamese women engaged in most types of careers such as babysitters, sellers, cooks, miners, workers and so forth. In addition, the French educational policies created a new class of educated women who worked as teachers, journalists, secretaries and poets. The notion of equality liberated Vietnamese women from the kitchen corners and their low position in Confucian thoughts.

In education, the French developed a Westernized educational system which emphasized scientific and vocational education. They taught physics, chemistry, law, biology and geography for students (Pham, 2002). In order to raise educational quality, they used French-style examination and assessment. The colonial education included six-year Ecole Elementaire (Primary education) and four-year Primaire Superieure (Higher primary education). French was the primary language and was used totally at the higher education level. There were three universities (The University of Law, the University of Medicine-Pharmacy and the University of Sciences) all located in Hanoi. They were used for all Indochinese students who came from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (Q. K. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2008). However, the main purpose of the French educational system was to serve the colonial governance. More than ninety-five percent of Vietnamese remained illiterate under the French colonial rule.

4.5 Socialist Values in Present-Day Vietnam

The Vietnamese national values are explicitly shown in the national motto "Socialist Republic of Vietnam: Independence – Freedom – Happiness". The national history is connected closely with the protection of the country from invaders and the past means that Vietnamese absolutely understand the painful position of slaves. First and foremost, independence and freedom are the most important values which are transferred by Ho Chi Minh thoughts such as "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom". On September 2nd, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh started the Vietnamese Declaration of Independence with the basic human rights arguments which are liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These values were recognized and upheld in the Declaration of the American Revolution in 1776 and the Declaration of the Rights of Human and of the Citizen of the French Revolution in 1791. On behalf of all Vietnamese, President Ho Chi Minh declared to the world that "Vietnam has the right to enjoy freedom and independence. It is the truth that Vietnam has become a free and independent country. The entire Vietnamese people are determined to use all their spirit, powers, life and wealth to maintain their freedom and independence" (C. M. Ho, 2002). After that, independence and freedom really become meaningful only when the Vietnamese people are happy with their mental and material life. The President Ho Chi Minh also argued that it is nothing if an independent country has poor and unhappy people. In his *Testament*, Ho Chi Minh reminded the Communist Party of Vietnam that they must have a good plan for

economic and cultural development to constantly improve the lives of the people (Phung, 2010). The value of independence is closely related to the love of peace, not only for Vietnamese people but for all the people of the world.

According to the National Values Survey, code KX-07-04 conducted for Vietnamese citizens from 1992 to 1995, among twenty popular values, peace and freedom were classified as the highest rank with 86.0% and 76.8% respectively (Q. U. Nguyen, Nguyen, & Mac, 1995). In 2000, the World Values Survey performed by the World Bank in Vietnam revealed the unchanged rank for these values (Pham, 2003). Another recent national project, “Systematic values of Vietnam in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration” code KX.04.15/11-15, recommended rule of law, democracy and justice as three official social values in modern times. N. T. Tran (2015) suggests that, in addition to these three core social values, six elite values related to personal values be fostered. They are honesty, bravery, responsibility, cooperation, scientific thinking and professional working.

The national values are also obviously expressed in the goal of socialism in Vietnam which states “prosperous people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization”. Under the lens of socialism, the notion of “prosperous people” is one of the most important conditions for happiness. It means everyone is rich in society and nobody suffers from poverty, disease, joblessness and labour exploitation. The focus on prosperous people is also reflected in the public benefits of social welfare to which each resident is entitled. The “strong country” is shown in the protection of the socialist fatherland, the growth opportunities and international cooperation. The main feature of socialist democracy is everyone has the right to work, rest and enjoy all the results of their labour. Democracy in society means equity in property relations, product processing and economic management and the distribution of labour results. With regard to justice, the Vietnamese Communist Party claims that the democratic socialist system can be completed only when socialist laws and politics are perfected. Justice is based on the building of country belonging to the people, by the people and for the people. Socialism in Vietnam must be a combination between traditional values and international cultural heritages. It is not only the material and technical culture but also spiritual civilization. The civilization is shown in all social relations such as people-nature, people-people, people-organization (H. T. Tran, 2007). The values of prosperous people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization is recognized, inspected and monitored by the community and society as well as international organizations (T. Phan, 2015).

5. Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of this paper, Vietnamese policy planners need to identify which values are appropriated for the Vietnamese people in current times. Then these authorities can foster further steps to encode the values into educational programs; to promote efficient pedagogical methods; to design values education evaluation; to train teaching staff and so forth. First and foremost, the set of Vietnamese values should be clarified. Vietnamese are influenced by five main values layers which are traditional values, Confucian and Taoist values, Buddhist values, Western values and Socialist values. The outstanding values in the traditional values group are patriotism, self-strengthen spirit of nation, compassion, diligence and optimism. The prominent values affected by Confucianism and Taoism are the studious spirit, the obligation with family, desire for reputation, respect others and harmony. The causes and the effects of rules, sympathy, tolerance, benevolence and heartedness are values that Vietnamese take from Buddhist thoughts. Further, the Vietnamese values system is made more diverse by the influence of Western values with the ideas of individualism, liberty, equality and democracy. Finally, the Vietnamese government adds the key values of socialism which are independence, freedom, happiness, democracy, justice and civilization to the whole values picture of Vietnam.

Acknowledgements

My deep gratitude is sent to Dr. Jill Brown, Faculty of Education, Monash University for her sympathy and encouragement.

References

- Dalton, R. J., Pham, M. H., Pham, T. N., & Ong, T. N. N. (2002). Social relations and social capital in Vietnam: Findings from the 2001 World Values Survey. *Comparative Sociology, 1*(3/4), 369-386. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/156913302100418646+>
- Dao, D. A. (2000). *Cultural history of Vietnam*. Ha Noi: Writer Group Publisher.
- DeNobile, J., & Hogan, E. (2014). Values education: What, how, why and what next. *Curriculum and Leadership Journal, 12*(1). Retrieved from http://www.curriculum.edu.au/leader/values_education_what_how_why_what_next,36873.html?issueID=12833

- Do, L. T. (2005). *Vietnamese culture*. Ha Noi: The publisher of Culture and Information.
- Golden, J. P. (2002). *Understanding your personal values*. America: ORA, Inc.
- Halstead, M. (1996). *Values and values education in schools*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Halstead, M. (2007). Foreword. In D. N. Aspin, & J. D. Chapman (Eds.), *Values education and lifelong learning*. The Netherland: Springer.
- He, M. F., Lee, J. C.-K., Wang, J., Canh, L. V., Chew, P., So, K., . . . Sung, M.-C. (2011). Learners and learning in Sinic Societies. In Y. Zhao (Ed.), *Handbook of Asian education a cultural perspective*. New York: Routledge.
- Hill, B. V. (1991). *Values education in Austrlian schools*. Australia: The Australian Council for Education Research Ltd.
- Ho, C. M. (2002). *Ho Chi Minh: Complete collection*. Ha Noi: National Politics Publisher.
- Ho, S. Q. (2015). *Some issues of Vietnam values system*. Paper presented at the Vietnam value system in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration, Ho Chi Minh City.
- Huynh, D. T. (1987). *Introduction to Vietnam culture*. Washington: Eric Clearinghouse.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2010). The impact of social interdependence on values education and student wellbeing. In T. Lovat, R. Toomey, & N. Clement (Eds.), *International research handbook on values education and student wellbeing*. Springer. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-8675-4_47
- Kirschenbaum, H. (1995). *One hundred ways to enhance values and morality in schools and youth settings*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Le, V. H. (2014). Reconizing traditional collective identity for improving the quality of learning in Vietnamese higher education. *International Journal of Research In Social Sciences*, 4(8).
- Le, V. H., Phan, T. T., & Ngo, S. L. (1997). *Complete history of Great Viet {Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu}*. Ha Noi: Publishing House of Vietnamese Institution of Social Science.
- Leo, J. M. D. (2012). *Quality education for sustainable development : An educator handbook for integrating values, knowledge, skills and quality features of education for sustainable development in schooling*. Australia: UNESCO APNIEVE Australia.
- Lovat, T., & Clement, N. (2008). The pedagogical imperative of values education. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 29(3), 273-285. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13617670802465821>
- Lovat, T., & Toomey, R. (2009). Introduction: Values Education—A brief history to today. In T. Lovat, & R. Toomey (Eds.), *Values education and quality teaching: The double helix effect*: Springer. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9962-5>
- Nguyen, H. P. (1963). *The study of national characteristics*. Ha Noi: Social Science Publisher.
- Nguyen, Q. K., & Nguyen, Q. C. (2008). Education in Vietnam: development history, challenges and solutions. In B. Fredriksen & T. J. Peng (Eds.), *An African exploration of the East Asian education experience*. Washington: The World Bank
- Nguyen, Q. U., Nguyen, T., & Mac, V. T. (1995). *Value - pesonality value orientation and values education*. Ha Noi: KX-07-04.
- Nguyen, T. C. (1999). Changes of values during the renovation period. In K. Bunchua, L. Fangtong, Y. Xuanmeng, & Y. Xujin (Eds.), *The bases of values in a time of change: Chinese and Western* (Vol. 16). USA: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.
- 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 Revisiting Agrarian Transformations in Southeast Asia Empirical, Theoretical and Applied Perspectives, Chiangmai, Thailand.
- Nguyen, V. K. (2013). Vietnamese Buddhism at Ly-Tran dynasty history, world - entering capacity and social roles. In A. Tatsuru, & E. Sakamoto (Eds.), *The role of Buddhism in social work: Vietnam and Japan*. Japan: Asia and Pacific Association for Social Work Education.
- Pham, M. H. (2002). *Vietnam's education on the threshold of the 21st century*. Ha Noi: National Political Publishing House.
- Pham, M. H. (2003). Dialectics of national value and the world values: The case of Vietnam. *Review of Human*

research, 5.

- Pham, M. H. (2007). The research of personality in innovation period (globalization). *Psychology*, 9(102), 1-5.
- Phan, N. (1994). *Vietnamese Culture and a new approach*. Hanoi: Culture Information Publisher.
- 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, 113-119. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/jss.2015.32015>
- Phung, Q. T. (2010). "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom": Historical significance and practical value. Paper presented at the The Ho Chi Minh heritage in modern times, Ha Noi.
- Raths, L. E., Harmin, M., & Simon, S. B. (1966). *Values and teaching: Working with values in the classroom*. America: Charles E. Merrill Books.
- Singh, P. (2015). Values Across Cultures, Development of. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioural Sciences*, 25, 27-32. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.23045-6>
- SRV. (2005). *The Vietnam Education Law*. Ha Noi: The National Political Publishing House Retrieved from <http://vietlaw4u.com/vietnam-education-law-2005-2009/>.
- Taylor, M. J. (1994). Overview of values education in 16 European countries. In M. J. Taylor (Ed.), *Values education in Europe: A comparative overview of a survey of 26 countries in 1993* (pp. 1-66). Dundee: Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum.
- Taylor, M. J. (2006). The development of values through the school curriculum. In R. H. M. Cheng, J. C. K. Lee, & L. N. K. Lo (Eds.), *Values education for citizens in the new century*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Thich, N. T. (2012, 28/01/2012). *The influences of Buddhism in Vietnamese lifes*. Retrieved August 20, 2015, from <http://thuvienhoasen.org/a14322/anh-huong-phet-giao-trong-doi-song-nguoi-viet>
- Tran, H. T. (2007). *The prosperous people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization*. Retrieved August 26, 2015, from <http://www.tapchiconsan.org.vn/Home/Tieu-diem/2007/450/Dan-giau-nuoc-manh-xa-hoi-cong-bang-dan-chu-van-minh.aspx>
- Tran, N. T. (2015). *The view of Vietnam values system from the survey results in 2014: current situation and proposals*. Retrieved August 28, 2015, from <http://vister.vn/review/social-sciences-and-humanities/528-the-view-of-vietnam-value-system-from-the-survey-results-in-2014-current-situation-and-proposals.html>
- Tran, V. G. (1980). *Spiritual traditions of Vietnam*. Ha Noi: Socio-Science Publisher.
- Truong, D. T. (2013). *Confucian values and school leadership in Vietnam* (Doctor of Philosophy, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand). Retrieved from <http://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10063/2774/thesis.pdf?sequence=2>
- Turkkahraman, M. (2014). Social values and values education. *Procedia-Social and behavioral Science*, 116, 633-638. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.270>
- Zajda, J. (2009). Values education and multiculturalism in the global culture. In J. Zajda, & H. Daun (Eds.), *Global values education: Teaching democracy and peace*. Springer. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2510-4>

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).