A Decade Review of Divorce in Vietnam

Tran Thi Minh Thi[1]

[1] Institute for Family and Gender Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.
Email: thittm.ifgs@vass.gov.vn

Received on 1 August 2019. Revised on 15 August 2019. Accepted on 2 October 2019.

Abstract: After more than four decades of reunification since 1975, Vietnam has achieved remarkable results in social and economic development. From a very low starting point after centuries of war, the economy has taken off strongly which dramatically improved people's living standard, incomes, infrastructural services, and maintained social stability. The government promoted gender equality through gender equality campaigns, which dramatically improved women's rights and status in the family and in the entire society. With the rapid speed of modernisation recently, the society has untied many old values of family and individual freedom. Marriage and family are believed to experience a significant transition from the traditional style to more modern and liberal characteristics.

Using the annual statistics on all divorces at the Supreme People's Court until 2018 and two district courts in ten years 2000-2009; this paper attempts to examine the prevalence, patterns and how the reported reasons of divorce varied with structural factors, gender, cultural and demographics life course in transforming new and traditional Vietnam in a decade from 2000-2009.

Keywords: Divorce prevalence, divorce age, divorce reasons, divorce initiation, Vietnam.

Subject classification: Sociology

1. Introduction

After more than four decades of reunification since 1975, Vietnam has achieved remarkable results in social and economic development. From a very low starting point after centuries of war, the economy has taken off strongly which dramatically improved people's living standards and maintained social stability. At the same time, the Vietnamese government carries out many activities in the areas of gender equality promotion. The gender equality campaign has dramatically improved women's rights and status in the family and in the entire society. The economic independence and legal setting that prioritised women have made them emotionally more independent and brave enough to walk out of an unsatisfactory marriage.[2]

With the rapid speed of modernisation recently, Vietnam has untied many old

values and models of family and individual freedom. Marriage and family in Vietnam are believed to experience a significant transition from the traditional style to more modern and liberal characteristics. Socio and economic international integration also add values leading to more liberal views on marriage and family. Those structural socio-economic changes might significantly influence people's attitudes towards divorce and largely relax the restrictive legal and administrative procedures of divorce.

Divorce is a major concern of scholars when discussing family issues. The previous studies have identified prevalence and alternative determinants of divorce in different national contexts, which include cultural and demographic, socio-economic, and life course determinants [25]. In Vietnam, recent studies on divorce show that, while divorce has long been culturally discouraged and limited, it has been rapidly increasing in both number and rate after the renovation policy in late 1980s [46]. However, very few studies based on statistical analyses of individual divorce data on the prevalence and patterns of divorce in Vietnam have been implemented. This gap in literature is due primarily to the scarcity of extensive data on divorce in Vietnam until recent years. Many interesting and important questions remained unanswered.

Using a unique approach of divorce data, this paper attempts to comprehensively describe the prevalence and patterns of divorce in contemporary Vietnam. In particular, the study aims to answer more specific questions: What is the prevalence of divorce in Vietnam currently? What are the characteristics of divorcees? What are the reasons for divorce?

2. Data and method

This study analyses divorce prevalence in Vietnam using the annual statistics of the Supreme People's Court until 2018 [4] and computerised every divorce case in the divorce profiles at two district courts in the Red River Delta in the ten-year period from 2000 to 2009. One court is located in the inner city of Hanoi [5], which represents the urban divorced population and the other in Ha Nam province, which represents the rural divorced population [6]. In total, 2,033 divorce cases were reviewed, of which 499 divorced couples live in the rural district, and 1,534 in the urban district.

A divorce court record is registered in two profiles: the Annual Divorce Entry Registration and the Annual Divorce Court Results. The former provides information about couples who apply for divorce, such as the date of the divorce application registration, information about the initiator and the dependent spouse (name, gender, year of birth, and address), marriage year, divorce year, reported causes of divorce, number of children, and other professional notes recorded by the court. This registration profile can thus provide us with the basic demographics and social variables for the study. However, not all cases in the Annual Divorce Entry Registration result in divorce because some couples may withdraw their divorce applications under the reconciliation process or resolve their marital problems by themselves. The Annual Divorce Court Results included the

following information: date of registration entry; date of decision; information about the initiator and the spouse (name, gender, year of birth, address, and so on); number of children; divorce decision about the child custody arrangements, house arrangements, property arrangements (if required); subsidies after divorce; debt responsibility; and court fees. This analysis is restricted to couples granted divorce under the divorce decision.

3. Theoretical approaches

3.1. Marriage and family in Vietnam

Vietnamese families are usually divided into two basic forms, which are traditional and modern family types. Traditional family is a common term when discussing Vietnamese society, which refers to family forms prevailing during the pre-socialist period, so mostly prior to the 1950s. The traditional family was organised under the influences of Confucianism and in a hierarchical order according to age and sex and had several characteristics which may strongly influence marriage and divorce decisions [36]. Scholars often mark 1945 as the ending point of feudal model of the family and marriage institutions, though many traditional forms and values of the marriage and family remain until the following years. The greatest change with a new government was an introduction of a new concept of marriage, which was love marriage, and old-fashioned customs of the feudal marriage were legally and officially brought to an end.

In the last several decades, marriage and family in Vietnam have experienced a significant transition from the traditional style to more modern characteristics. Traditional patterns of prohibited premarital sex, arranged marriage, co-residence of newly married couples with the groom's parents gender inequality, strong patriarchy, having many children, son preference, patrilineal relations, Confucian filial piety under the Confucian cultural heritage have significantly declined [27], [1], [26]. The models of the extended family, nuclear family, the important roles of the kinship system, dominant male head of household, etc. are substantially transitional [8], [22], [23], [26], [37], [39], [45], [49], [47]. At the macro level, changes in the legal systems, gender roles, family institution, and socio-economic development have greatly influenced individual perceptions of the marriage patterns, including divorce [8].

3.2. Modernisation and "shortcut" modernity

Together with social changes, societies have transformed from these "traditions" to types of modernity. For instance, Asian scholars recently developed the concept of "compressed modernity" [12] to express the contemporary Asian situation, which is marked by the simultaneous progression through First Modernity and Second Modernity in a state of "catching-up" in terms of modernisation over a short period of time [40].

The changes in marriage, family and divorce are believed to closely relate to the modernisation process. Previous literature argues that modernisation presents two opposing forces to divorce. At first, socio-economic development, together with modernisation and urbanisation, may reduce the divorce rate. Social changes

associated with modernisation can account for the decline in divorce, including the rise of conjugal family systems, an increase in the autonomy of youngsters, and increased freedom from extended family control - all of which have served to increase the marriage age and expand education, urbanisation, greater freedom in mate selection, and improvements in women's status [19], [20], [21], [25], [34]. However, at later stages of modernisation, socio-economic development increases the incidence of divorce. Most theorists suggest that, in the long run, the trend towards egalitarianism that accompanies modernisation and the replacement of patriarchalism increases the incidence of divorce. The destabilising force of female empowerment is accommodated by Goode's theory, which treats modernisation as the root of the elevated divorce rate [19], [21]. Improvements in women's status create a socio-cultural environment that makes divorce more easily attainable. Women's increasing economic independence, smaller families, and ideological emphasis on self-fulfilment in relationships and on individual choices may shift the tide towards less stable relationships. Industrialisation may reduce the size of families and, hence, increase the likelihood of divorce, independent of its effects on women's social position. Modern marriage based on love and affection may be more unstable than one based on socio-economic needs, among other factors.

Transforming directly from feudalism to socialism in the historical events of wars during the 1950s-1970s, the Renovation, or *đổi mới*, begun in 1986, and the following decades of socialist-oriented market economy with a "shortened" strategy of modernisation and industrialisation, which can be called "shortcut" modernity, the state of Vietnam has had an important role in the formulation of marriage patterns through the introduction of legal documents and other socio-economic development policies. The important roles of the Vietnamese socialist government in marriage pattern formulation can be seen through the introduction of policies and laws on marriage and family and other socio-economic development policies. At the same time, the government carries out many activities in the areas of employment and economic status for women, education and training, health, leadership and decision making, and strengthening the national machinery. The gender equality campaign has dramatically improved women's rights and status in the family and in the entire society. The rapid socio-economic development since the renovation significantly changed people's attitudes towards divorce and largely relaxed the restrictive legal and administrative procedures of divorce [45].

The resulting "shortcut modernity" has led to a social situation in which the dynamic coexistence of traditional and modern elements leads to the maintenance of traditional values, and the perception of new values and knowledge in an internationally integrated context. The unique feature of shortcut modernity in contemporary Vietnam is that it comprises the features of first modernity (i.e. ideology of full employment connected to the achievement/accomplishment principle in work; nuclear families; and a collective solidarity) and second modernity (i.e. industrialisation, a market economy, and cultural globalisation) [9], or "compressed

modernity" in terms of the mutual disparate co-existence of various levels of human existence and transitional values that new institutions have not perfected while old institutions still exist [12].

3.3. Gender equality and divorce

Researches by feminist scholars worldwide suggest that differences between women and men in the number and types of marriage problems are rooted in the gendered nature of intimate relationships. Compared with men, women have greater responsibility for and spend more time responding to the emotional and psychological needs of their spouses and children as well as monitoring the status of intimate relationships. Women tend to monitor their relationships more closely, become aware of relationship problems sooner, and are more likely to initiate discussions of relationship problems with their partners [44]. Perhaps for these reasons, wives are more likely than husbands to initiate divorce.

Empirical research strongly supports a positive relationship between women's status and divorce in Asian societies. Increases in economic opportunities for women provide the requisite independence for dissolving unhappy marriages. Public opinions towards-divorce women are more open together with modernisation and industrialisation. It is stated that many Asian women are heavily burdened by the dual pressure of housework and childcare duties [35], [29]. For many Asian women, divorce was not an option as it was associated with social stigma or a betrayal to the husband's families a few decades ago. However, with increasing educational attainment, increasing economic opportunities for women and more tolerant attitudes towards behaviours such as delayed marriage and maternal employment, the conventional gender roles in marriage seems to be rather restricting and obsolete to women. Many women now prefer the social and economic independence that they have gained from gender equity in education and the labour market [13], [48].

Some Asian countries share the heritage of or are heavily influenced by Confucianism, which values centre on male domination, filial piety and Collectivist goals over individualistic fulfilment [14], [51]. Under a patriarchal familial system which can be identified by its androcentric values, women often are being viewed as temporary residents of their natal homes. Therefore, marital roles are prescribed by unequal gender ideology inherent of the institution of marriage in East Asia [52].

Vietnam has been strongly influenced by Chinese culture, particularly Confucian ideology, which ensured men's power. Therefore, there is no gender equality in this cultural fashion, though several studies also emphasised high status of women at the practical settings. Gender equality and women's status in Vietnam have been promoted significantly over the years, although it continues to be influenced by the vestige of traditional viewpoints of gender roles and status due to Confucianism. It is expected that there would be gender differentiations in divorce prevalence and patterns, as well as the reasons for divorce, towards increasing the proactive role of women - especially young women - in contemporary settings.

3.4. Familialism, collectivism and individualism

Family is a fundamental unit of Vietnamese society and is in the centre of individuals' relations with the community and the state. As stated, Vietnamese families can be divided into two basic forms: "traditional family" and "modern family". Traditional family is a common term referring to a family form that prevailed during the pre-socialist period, most often seen prior to the 1950s. It is believed that there was strong familialism in the pre-socialist period, which considered a family as an organisation that had the same destiny and compelled family members to engage in activities for the common interest of the family. Familialism places priority on well-being and prosperity of the family over individual freedom and autonomy. Close ties between extended families and communities have had a major influence on individual behaviours. Familialism has organised the collectivist culture of Vietnam, which is strongly orientated towards the family and community. As the feudal system collapsed, familialism gradually degraded, leading to the admiration of a couple-centred structure and a gender-equal, small-family system, as seen in the capitalist system.

It is also important to understand the notions of collectivism (*tính tập thể, tính cộng đồng*) and individualism (*tính cá nhân*) in relation to familialism and modernisation as they are manifested in the interpretation of disparate marriage and family behaviours in contemporary Vietnam. A recent study on collectivism and individualism in Vietnam showed that collectivism prevailed over individualism among Vietnamese as compared with other nationalities, such as the Americans, Japanese, and Koreans, in the early 2000s. However, the dimensions of collectivism and individualism varied according to gender, and sub-cultures of geographical regions. Generally, Vietnamese women are be more collectivist than men, but these two variables are complicated when it comes to different sub-cultures of the North and South, rural and urban areas, and the Kinh (the main ethnic group in Vietnam) and other minorities [2].

In the realm of marriage, family, and kinship, the transitional process of shortcut modernity comprises the maintenance of traditional values and the appearance of new values. In Vietnamese society, nuclear and stem families are increasing while extended family patterns have never disappeared completely. Through the processes of contestation, adaptation, resistance, and negotiation, families turned the transition into a daily reality. These renovations vividly illustrate how families propelled and made possible the transition while living in continuity with the past [8]. In other words, with the influences of modernisation, legal changes, and comprehensive international integration, old and new values, as competing forces, are operating in the realm of marriage and family in Vietnam.

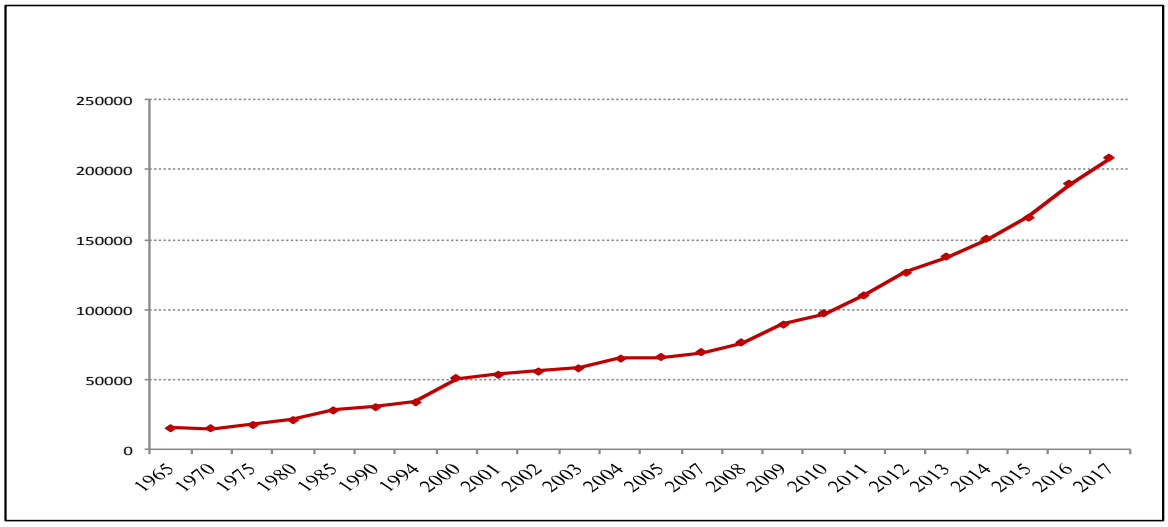
4. Research findings

4.1. Finding 1: Increase in divorce incidence

The number of divorces is gradually rising in Vietnam, and the incidence is much stronger in urban areas than in rural areas, as can be seen in Figure 1. The number of

divorces shows little change in the 1960s and 1970s, at around 15,000 cases per year. Divorce slightly increased in the following two decades of the 1980s and 1990s and has risen fast since the 2000s. In 2000, there were 51,361 divorces in the entire country. This number nearly doubled to 100,000 in 2010 and doubled again in 2017.

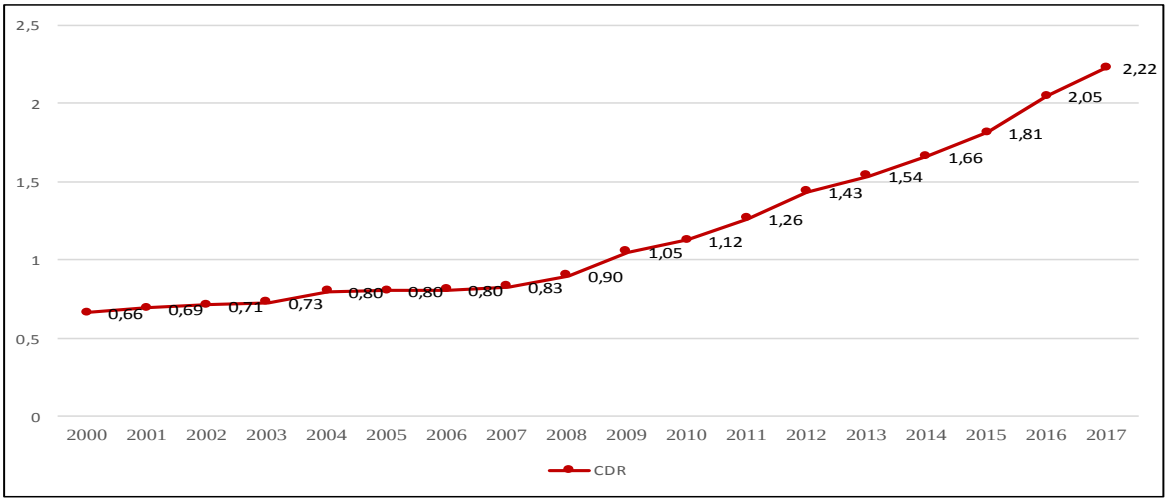
Figure 1: Number of Divorces in Vietnam, 1965-2017



Source: Author calculated from annual statistics on divorce cases of Supreme People's Court until 2018.

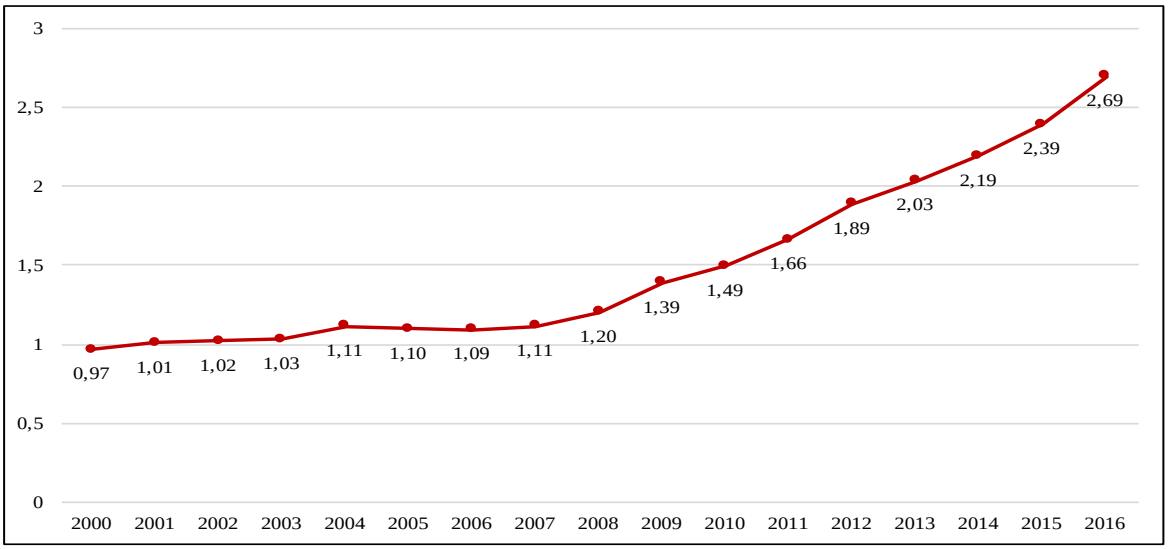
Divorce rates are rising slightly across Vietnam, which are similar to other Asian countries such as China and Singapore [41]. In 2000, the Crude Divorce Rate (CDR) of Vietnam was 0.66 and it increased to 1.05 in 2009 (Table 1) and 2.22 in 2017. The General Divorce Rate (GDR) rose from 0.97 in 2000 to 1.49 in 2010 and continue to rise to 2.69 in 2016. For instance, divorce rates in East Asia are also rising notably. After the late 1960s, when the divorce rate in Europe started rising, an increasing trend was also seen in Japan, which by the 1980s spiked at a CDR of 1.50, and in 2002 recorded an all-time high of 2.30. In Taiwan and the Republic of Korea (RoK), divorce rates started rising from the 1980s. By the start of the 1990s they were closing in on Japan, passing it during the Asian Financial Crisis, with the RoK's 2003 record level of 3.50 almost the same as the US's - 3.60 [41]. In Indonesia, rising were women's labour force participation, educational levels, and self-choice of spouse, and therefore greater commitment to the chosen partners [31]. China experienced rapid increases in divorce rates between 1980 and 1995, which could be attributed to changes in the legal system making it easy to get divorce and changes in the attitudes of the people such that it is no longer a stigma to be divorced especially for a woman [53].

Figure 2: CDR in Vietnam 2000-2017



Source: Author calculated from statistics of population based on the Time-point Population Change and Family Planning Surveys 2011 to 2016; Statistical Yearbook 2017, 2018 of General Statistic Office of Vietnam and annual statistics on divorce cases of Supreme People's Court until 2018.

Figure 3: General Divorce Rate in Vietnam 2000-2016



Source: Author calculated from statistics of population based on Time-point Population Change and Family Planning Survey 2011-2016; Statistical Yearbook 2017, 2018 of General Statistic Office of Vietnam and annual statistics on divorce cases of Supreme People's Court until 2018.

The rises in divorce number and divorce rates are related to urbanisation and modernisation in the society. Vietnam has achieved remarkable results in social and economic development. From a very low starting point after centuries of war, the economy has taken off strongly which dramatically improved people's living standards, incomes, and infrastructural services, and maintained social stability. Economic change has been accompanied by modernisation such as the widespread availability of education, modern transportation, and the mass media. Many indicators of development such as very low level of mortality and almost universal secondary schooling are approaching the prevailing standards. The rapid socio-economic development since the renovation significantly changed people's attitudes towards divorce and largely relaxed the restrictive legal and administrative procedures of divorce [45]. Women generally had high status giving them more autonomy in marital decisions and divorce was relatively easy to obtain [25].

It is noted that, divorce is rising but remains relatively low compared to developed countries. The low prevalence of divorce can be linked to increasing age at marriage, educational expansion, urbanisation and greater freedom to choose marriage partners, as explanation of decline in divorce in other Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia [25], [30], [31], [33], [24].

4.2. Finding 2: Significant differences in divorce procedures of rural and urban areas

Understanding the procedure of divorce can show how society perceives this family event. It is obvious in the society that, divorce procedure constitute different among social groups and settings. In a rural village, marital dissolution is not a single event but is rather a quite complicated process. Previous studies stated that, Vietnamese women are found to be more collectivist than men, but it comes to different sub-cultures of the North and the South, rural and urban areas, the Kinh (the main race of Vietnam) and other minority people. Moreover, collectivism and individualism in the Vietnamese value system differ substantially from behaviours in actual situations [2]. For instance, prenatal diagnosis of Vietnamese women involved participation of alternative subject powers [17], while mate selection is decided mostly by the couples with the consultation with parents' opinions [38].

This study shows that divorce decision is influenced significantly by the collective participation. Divorce is a collective decision involving the direct interventions of family, relatives, and mass organisations, revealing stronger social ties and collectivism. Relatives and family are significant in many aspects of an individual's life in Vietnamese rural society [37]. How strong the collective involvement is in each individual divorce depends on how close the relationship is between the family members and individuals, and the level of individual independence in terms of economic, educational, and social networks. The parental family and relatives constitute a significant support source for the individuals during the divorce procedures. Married women not only identify themselves with their in-laws but also maintain close relationships with their

biological families [39]. Crucial decisions regarding getting married, bearing and rearing children, the marital relationship, and even divorce, are regarded as collective decisions made by the women's biological families. Especially, when women experience problems in their marriage, such as economic hardship, domestic violence, spousal adultery, or conflicts with in-laws, they seek advice, encouragement, and help from their biological parents and siblings. Thus, the divorce decision often results from a common agreement with their biological family [46]. Some forms of family meeting, or even a lineage meeting would be held when an individual wants a divorce. The chair would be a male head of the lineage. They would assess the situation of the marriage, its current problems, and the possibility of reconciliation. Especially, for women, the family meeting also determines issues of childcare and family members' responsibilities for supporting them after divorce.

Reconciliation is the first formal step of intervention attempted by local governments and social organisations to avoid a divorce. At the village level, village authorities, including representatives of the village women's union, village leaders, and the village judiciary visit the couple in their home to encourage them to reconsider the need to divorce. This counselling service leads to surprisingly effective results in several cases, such as husbands refraining from beating their wives or wives withdrawing their divorce applications. When village reconciliation is unsuccessful, that is, it is not possible to meet with the couple, or the couple insist on a divorce, the divorce application is sent to the commune People's Committee to process a standard administrative procedure, beginning with commune reconciliation. The purpose of government conciliators is to consult with the couple to determine if they can withdraw their divorce request, reconcile with each other, and live together happily again regardless of faults [46]. There are several steps at this level of reconciliation. *First*, the reconciliation commission involves one leader of the commune People's Committee and the commune judicial official meeting with the plaintiff and defendant separately to listen to their opinions and expectations. After these two private meetings, a general meeting is held with the couple, the people's committee representatives, the women's union leader, the judicial official, and representatives of other relevant mass organisations [46]. There are high expectations for women to sacrifice their own happiness for the sake of their family, which prevents many divorces [43].

Couples have two possible options after participating in these meetings. *First*, the couple can withdraw their divorce request. The divorce application will then be suspended at the commune level. *Second*, one or both parties may have no desire to reunite and insist on a divorce. In this case, the commune government will produce an explanatory report and send the divorce profiles, including the divorce application, minutes of the meeting, and the case report to the district people's court, which is the deciding authority. The time taken for this process, from when a divorce application received until the reconciliation process occurs and the divorce reported to the district level, ranges from two to six months, depending on how complicated the case might be.

A divorce judgment includes several procedures: a divorce application receipt, reconciliation, judgment, and the divorce decision. During the process, the case will be suspended if the plaintiff withdraws the application. The divorce court is open for seven days after the divorce agreement signed by the two parties. After the judge issues the divorce decision, which clearly states the decision about child arrangements, housing and property, subsidies, and so on, the couple is given 15 days to reconsider and oppose the decision in terms of childcare, subsidies, and property division. After that period, the divorce takes effect and the marriage is officially dissolved.

So, divorce is a long procedure that involves many negotiated steps, especially in rural settings, and hence, during the divorce application, spouses have time to reconsider and change their minds. They have more than one opportunity to examine their feelings, assess the situation, and consult with government officials throughout the different levels of marriage reconciliation and counselling. However, sometimes attempts at reconciliation are in vain.

On the contrary, in an urban setting, family relations are not as tight knit, which may lead to more individualism in divorce decisions and less complicated divorce procedures. The couple may not undergo the entire process of meetings, reconciliation, and so on when applying for a divorce but may still seek advice from family members and intimate friends on relevant issues related to the divorce, such as child arrangements and property settlement, and adjustment after the marital dissolution.

Divorce in the 1960s and 1970s was influenced by the Constitution and the first Law on Marriage and Family of 1959, which banned arranged and child marriages, promoted gender equality, protected women's basic rights of property ownership and enabled divorce and introduced modern marriage based on love and intimacy. The Vietnam War may limit the communication of the law and its effectiveness regarding marriage and family. Individuals from several generations served in the country's fight for independence and unification as the number one priority, and the importance of marriage and family came second to these collective priorities. In short, divorce was a taboo before the Renovation (*đổi mới*).

Since *đổi mới*, divorce increases constantly. During this time, the level of modernisation and urbanisation and economic development increased, alongside increasing age at marriage, educational expansion, greater freedom to choose marriage partners and increasingly individualised intimacy, which may account for the increase in the incidence of divorce. It appears that social changes associated with modernisation have eroded traditional norms, which might explain the rise in divorce in many settings. Therefore, after several decades of legal construction of gender equality, education, health, marriage, family, population, etc., the perception of new values in marriage and family such as freedom in mate selection, intimacy, women's rights, and individualism became more important. Globalisation also leads to changing attitudes towards less traditional forms of gender and family relationships. As individuals become more liberal in their marital decisions, and social opinion on divorce become more open, as a result of modernisation, divorce became easier.

4.3. Finding 3: Differential age at divorce by residence settings and sex

The overall trend of age at divorce over the last ten years is that, women divorce at a younger age than men, and rural individuals divorce at a younger age than their urban counterparts. In particular, the mean age at divorce for men is 38 and for women is 34.4, which is a 3.6 year differential. The sex differential of the age at divorce is similar to the age at marriage pattern. It is interesting that the age at divorce of rural women is about 4.5 years earlier than urban women, and rural men also demonstrate about 5 years younger age at divorce compared to urban men. In general, both men and women in rural areas divorce at younger ages than their urban counterparts. For rural divorcees, the mean age at divorce is 31 for rural women and 34.3 for rural men. This is 35.5 for urban women and 39.2 for urban men. Among rural individuals, men often divorce from 32-26 years old and women often divorce from 29-33 years old. The rural sex differential ranges from 2.5-4.7 years. Among urban divorced people, men often divorce from 38-40 years old and women often divorce from 34-36 years old. The urban sex differential ranges from 3-4 years. Recently, mean ages at divorce in urban areas are higher. Whereas, mean ages at divorce of rural women show no change. Urban couples are also expected to be more educated and have skills to maintain happiness as well as to handle marital problems (Table 1).

Table 1: Mean Age at Divorce by Year

Year of divorce	Rural men	Rural women	Rural sex differential	Urban men	Urban women	Urban sex differential	Total men	Total women	Total sex differential
2000	34.8	32.2	2.6	39.6	36	3.6	37.9	34.7	3.2
2001	34.8	32.3	2.5	39.6	36.7	2.9	38	35.2	2.8
2002	32.3	28.5	3.8	38.3	35.1	3.2	36.2	32.8	3.4
2003	35.2	32.1	3.1	40.4	36.4	4	38.7	35	3.7
2004	32.9	29.4	3.5	40	36	4	37.9	34.1	3.8
2005	33.1	30.4	2.7	38	34.6	3.4	37	33.8	3.2
2006	35.7	31	4.7	38.3	34.8	3.5	37.8	34	3.8
2007	32.7	28.9	3.8	40.1	35.9	4.2	38.5	34.4	4.1
2008	36.2	33.1	3.1	39.4	35.7	3.7	38.6	35	3.6
2009	35.2	32	3.2	39.3	35.1	4.2	38.7	34.6	4.1
Total	34.3	31	3.3	39.2	35.5	3.7	38	34.4	3.6
N	499	499		1530	1530		2029	2029	

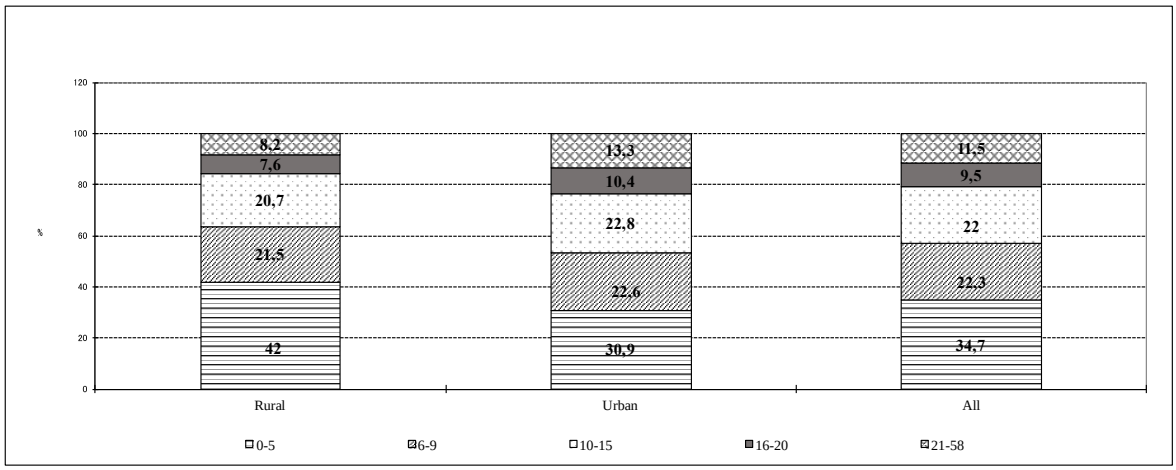
Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

4.4. Finding 4: Divorced couples with longer marriages live in urban areas, while divorced couples with shorter marriages live in rural areas

With respect to duration of marriage, divorces occur more often in the early rather than the later years of marriage [50]. Becker [10] argued that people generally have imperfect information about their partners during courtship but learn substantially more about their spouses after marriage. Consequently, early divorces are disproportionately due to the discovery of basic incompatibility, conflict in values, and personality clashes. Bloom et al. (1985) found a positive correlation between length of marriage and infidelity.

This study showed that, marriage duration is shorter among divorced people in rural areas. Figure 4 shows that 34.7% of couples dissolve their marriage within the first five years; 22.3% divorce within 6 to 9 years; and 22% after 16 to 20 years of marriage. In other words, three-fifths of marriages end during the first ten years of marriage, and the highest percentage of dissolution occurs within the first five years. It is interesting to look at the differences in marriage duration between rural and urban couples. More rural couples divorce within the first five years of marriage than urban couples (42% versus 30.9%). In all the marriage duration categories over six years, a higher proportion of divorces among couples from urban areas than those in rural areas.

Figure 4: Marriage Duration by Rural/Urban Differential, 2000-2009



Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

Table 2 presents the mean marriage duration by social determinants of the divorced population from 2000 to 2009. The mean marriage duration of all divorced couples in the last ten years is 10.3 years, of which the marriage duration of urban couples is longer than that of rural couples (11 years versus 9.1 years). The trend of longer

marriage duration among urban couples can be seen across the entire ten-year period, with 2008 being the only exception.

Urban residence may also influence trends because forces of change such as industrialisation and educational expansion are concentrated in urban areas. Urban couples are typically more highly educated, and may have more opportunities to access mass media and information, and hence, they may be more skilful at maintaining marital stability than rural couples.

Table 2: Mean of Marriage Duration by Year by Rural/Urban Differential, 2000-2009

Year	Rural	N	Urban	N	Total	N
2000	10.2	49	11.5	87	11.0	136
2001	10.3	48	11.9	88	11.3	136
2002	7.2	50	11.0	92	9.7	142
2003	10.6	50	11.2	100	11.0	150
2004	7.8	55	12.5	125	11.0	180
2005	8.0	40	9.2	146	8.9	186
2006	9.3	49	10.6	160	10.3	209
2007	7.3	49	10.5	123	9.6	172
2008	10.9	58	9.4	22	10.5	80
2009	9.1	50	14.5	24	10.8	74
Total	9.1	498	11.0	967	10.3	1465

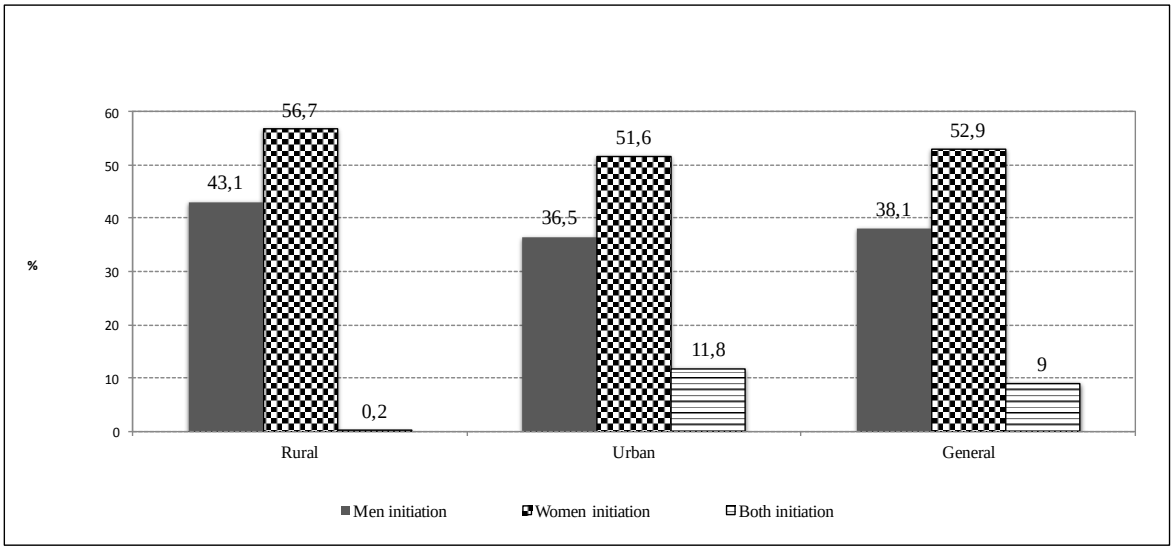
Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

4.5. Finding 5: The dominant trend of women's initiation in divorce

Though the proportion of women and men who are divorced has been gradually increasing over the last two decades since 1989, the levels of increase of women are stronger than men at all ages. As seen in Figure 5, more women than men initiated divorces (52.9% and 38.1% respectively). Reports in both rural and urban areas show higher percentages of women initiating divorces than their husbands, with the percentage being higher in rural districts. In addition, the proportion of joint initiation is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. The result of higher divorce initiation among women supports the results of a previous study by the IFGS (2006), which showed that the proportion of wives initiating divorce is twice as high as that of their husbands (47% compared to 28.1%). The proportion of divorce initiated by both the wife and husband is 13%. The percentage of divorces initiated by wives increased yearly from 2000 to 2009. As shown in Figure 6, the percentage of divorces initiated jointly by the husband and wife was much higher

in 2000 than it was from 2006 to 2009, while in the more recent period, which is from 2006 to 2009, almost all divorces were initiated by one party. One possible reason is that a divorce was more difficult to obtain in the past; thus, couples were encouraged to apply for divorce together to make the procedure less complicated.

Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of Initiating Person in Divorce by Rural/Urban Differential, 2000-2009



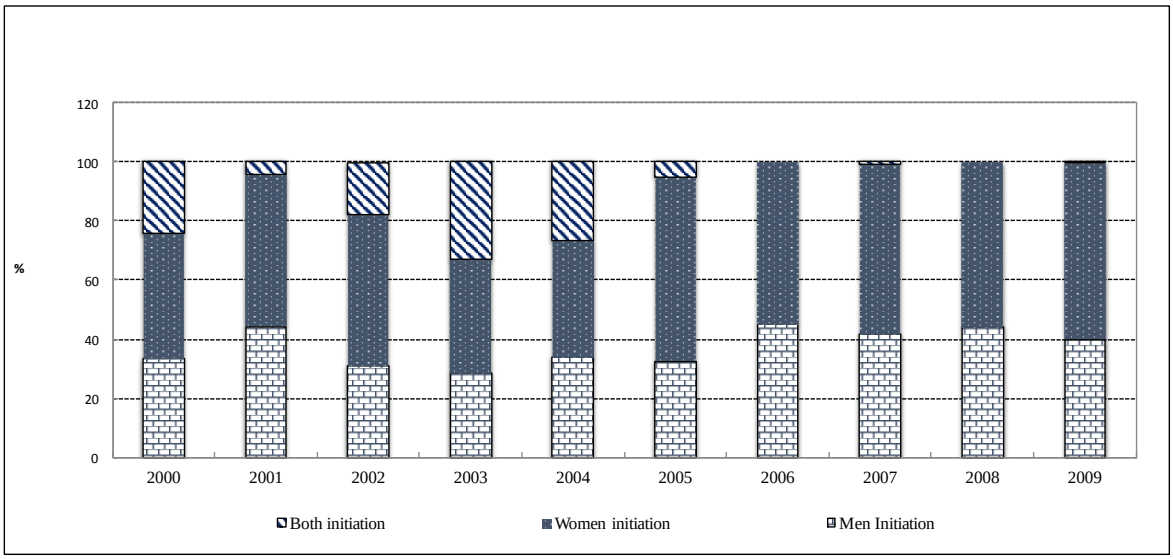
Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

The above pattern corresponds to gender equality and greater independence of women in marriage and family in the Asia. For most Asian societies, sex division of labour in marriage and family remains the norm; men are usually the leaders and breadwinners whilst women are subordinates and homemakers. However, with increasing educational attainment, increasing economic opportunities for women and more tolerant attitudes towards then behaviours such as delayed marriage and maternal employment, the conventional gender roles in marriage seems to be rather restricting and obsolete for women [18], [15], [52]. Women's higher economic independence has changed the nature of the marriage and family relations, which, in itself, makes changes to characteristics of family life, making it more democratic and equal.

One of the possible reasons why divorce initiation is becoming higher among women is that they have more self-control in their marriage life than before because of increasing gender equality in Vietnam recently. Empirical research strongly supports

a positive relationship between women's status and divorce. Today, younger generations of women have more opportunities to receive higher education and therefore attain a higher socio-economic status than that of their mothers and grandmothers. Improvements in women's status create a socio-cultural environment that makes divorce more easily attainable [7]. For many Asian women, divorce was not an option a few decades ago, as it was associated with social stigma or betrayal to the husband's family. It is expected that there would be gender differentiations in divorce prevalence and patterns, as well as the reasons for divorce, towards increasing the proactive role of women, especially young women.

Figure 6: Percentage Distribution of Initiate Person in Divorce by Year, 2000-2009



Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

4.6. Finding 6: A trend toward higher individualism in divorce

It is obvious that marriage is universal, familialism remains significant but individual freedom increases, in the context that informal control of families and kinship on individuals are weaken due to the pressure of social and residential mobility in Vietnam [47]. In the theoretical groundwork for liberalism and the socialist-oriented market economy, individualistic culture is believed to increase in Vietnam.

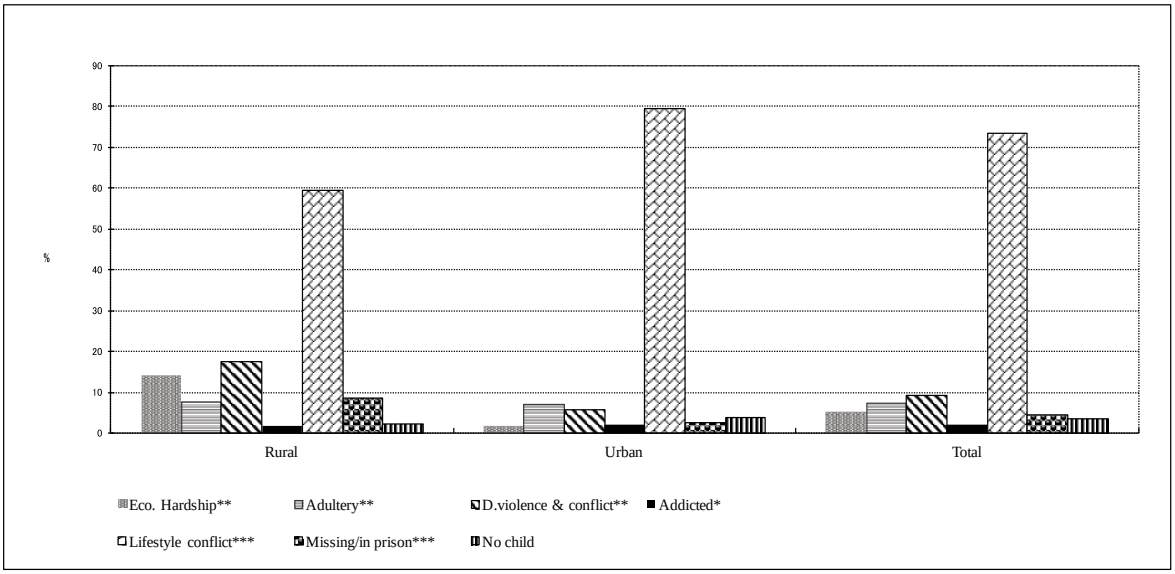
In this study, an increasing number of couples end their marriages due to "modern", or individualistic reasons, such as lifestyle disputes. Lifestyle differences have become the major reason for divorce

in Vietnam. This may be a sincere reason for divorce, which implies the Vietnamese are becoming more individualistic, or it may just be an excuse to carry out divorce procedures in a setting where obtaining a divorce has become easier.

Figure 7 shows that, among the divorced population, the most universally reported reason for divorce was a lifestyle conflict, which accounted for 73.6% of divorces. Within this population, the proportion of urban couples citing this reason was higher than it was among rural couples (80% versus 60%, respectively).

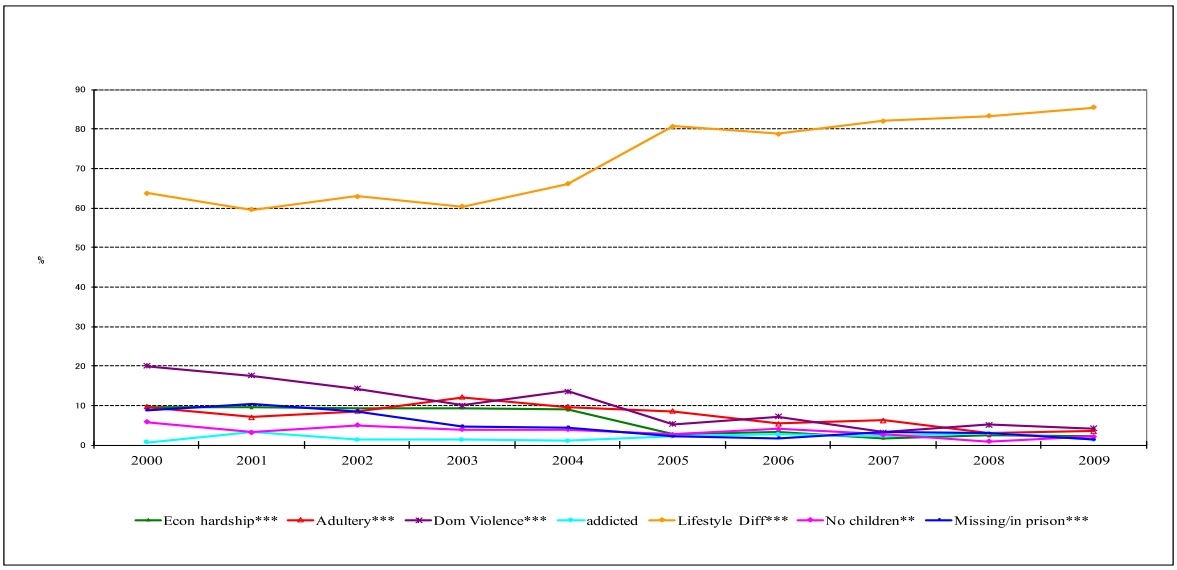
The pattern of divorce due to lifestyle differences tends to increase by years. As Figure 8 shows, divorce due to lifestyle conflicts has gradually increased in the ten-year period under study. In 2000, only 63.7% of couples asked for a divorce because of lifestyle conflicts. In 2006, the percentage increased to 78.8%, and it peaked at 85.4% in 2009. There was a sharp increase in the percentage of divorces resulting from lifestyle conflicts in rural areas. In 2000, only 45.8% of couples reported lifestyle conflicts as the cause of divorce. By 2008 and 2009, the percentage had nearly doubled. Meanwhile, the number of divorces in urban areas due to lifestyle conflicts was high in 2000 (73.6%). The percentage increased slightly in the following years, rising to 86% in 2009 (Figure 8). Divorce due to lifestyle differences is the highest among those with a high socioeconomic status and the lowest among those with a low socio-economic status (Figure 9).

Figure 7: Reported Reasons for Divorce, 2000-2009



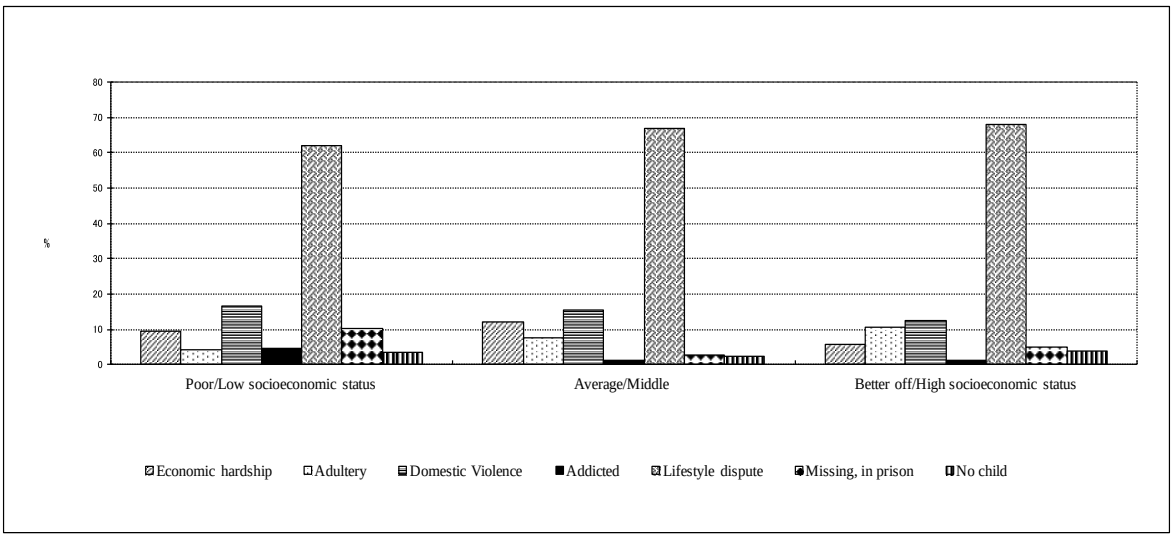
Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

Figure 8: Divorce Reasons by Year, 2000-2009



Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

Figure 9: Divorce Reasons by Wealth, 2000-2009



Source: Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

As “lifestyle difference” is increasingly cited as the major reason for divorce, it may be a real reason for divorces, which means Vietnamese people are becoming more and more “individualistic”. On the other hand, this reason could be citied just as an excuse to carry out divorce procedures in a “modern” setting in which divorce has become easier. Case studies of divorced people reveal that “lifestyle differences” sometimes hides actual reasons behind the divorce, such as family conflicts, adultery, etc. Even so, there are shadows of lifestyle differences in hidden reasons. For example, couples may be so different in lifestyle and viewpoints that conflicts and domestic violence arise. There is evidence from this study that lifestyle difference is an individualistic reason for divorce - that it is part of the process of modernisation and more likely to be a characteristic of people in a modern setting, such as an urban area, high socio-economic status, or among people who were older age at marriage.

Adultery is more likely a modern reason for divorce. Figure 7 indicates that adultery ranks third among the causes of divorce (7.2%). There is no significant difference between rural and urban couples in this regard. The percentage of divorces that cite adultery as the reason was highest from 2000 to 2005, and then, the percentage dropped remarkably in the following years. It is interesting to note that divorce resulting from adultery was extremely high in rural areas at the beginning of the 2000s and was relatively high in urban areas.

Why divorce due to adultery seems to increase? Rindfuss and Morgan’s (1983) stated that a quiet but profound sexual revolution was taking place in Asia. Sharing a very common culture heritage and in the open period, it is reasonable to suggest that the Vietnam family is experiencing such a quiet sexual revolution which in turn may have a strong influence on traditional ideas about virginity and faithfulness in marriage. Individuals may be more and more open-minded about sexuality, love and happiness. They can seek an extramarital relationship and be ready to dissolve their marriage. It is explained why the adultery is higher in more modern settings, such as in urban areas or among couples of a high socio-economic status. These individualistic reasons of divorce in Vietnam are similar to many other societies. For instance, in the 1990s, Japan sees the returning of the divorcing society. Grounds for divorce include retaining adultery, malicious desertion, unknown whereabouts, and the no-fault provision. In the late 1990s, the image of divorce as a positive step of liberation for women was especially promoted in print media as divorce with a smile or happy divorce [16].

4.7. Finding 7: Traditional divorce remains

If we carefully consider the real reasons for divorce through interviews, it becomes clear that there still exist domestic disputes based on traditional family ideology. It has become easier for Vietnamese people to obtain divorces in the process of modernisation. However, it also means that people can get divorced more casually for traditional reasons. The most profound evidence of the influence of traditional reasons for divorce is the number of divorces due to domestic violence, which

ranks second (9.2%) among all reasons given for divorce, but there is a large difference between rural and urban couples.

Over the ten years, the percentage of divorces ending because of domestic violence was significant but decreased sharply, especially since 2005. In 2000, approximately 20% of couples divorced because of domestic violence. As the Law against Domestic Violence to Women has taken effect, the situation is gradually changing. Until 2009, only 4.2% of divorces resulted from domestic violence, which still ranked second among the reasons but significantly declined (Figures 6, 7 and 8). The trend however does not simply mean that domestic violence in Vietnam is declining. In some cases, husbands often do not want to register domestic violence as an official reason for their divorces because it is disadvantageous to them to do so, as it is now clearly defined by the state law as against the law. Although gender equality and freedom from violence are guaranteed under the law, inequality and violence persist in most communities and in institutions entrusted with overseeing and implementing the law [3].

Domestic violence usually implies husbands beating wives. Women generally do not request a divorce the first time they are beaten by their husbands. According to this study, divorce occurs when the violence is severe, systematic, and unchangeable. There are many reasons for domestic violence. Women accept the violence to try to keep the family peace, for the sake of the children, or out of the shame they would feel if others learn about the violence. Therefore, many husbands give themselves the “right” to control their wives by using violence if their wives do not obey or satisfy them.

Divorce due to economic hardship is another dimension of the traditional style of divorce. Among the divorces in this study, 5.4% of couples divorce due to economic hardship (Figure 6). There is a huge difference between rural and urban areas in terms of divorce due to economic hardship. A very small number of urban couples divorce for this reason, but the percentage is significantly higher in rural areas. Therefore, economic hardship is a significant reason for marital breakup in rural areas, although it is not a significant reason for urban couples to divorce. Figures 3 to 7 indicate that the percentage of divorces caused by economic hardship changed slightly during the ten-year period studied. At the beginning of the 2000s, economic hardship accounted for the highest percentage of divorces, whereas it accounted for the lowest percentage of divorces by the late 2000s. Since 2005, economic hardship as a cause of divorce has dramatically decreased. The percentage of divorces reported as being caused by economic hardship dropped to only 1.8%, 2.5%, and 2.1% in 2007, 2008, and 2009. This seems to correspond well with the recent economic growth in Vietnam.

5. Conclusion

Divorce in Vietnam is increasing in both number and rate. The upturn is much stronger in urban areas than in rural areas. The trend is similar to that of other Southeast Asian countries, but remains low compared to developed countries. At the

same time, modernisation, accompanied by the infiltration of egalitarianism, the improvement of women's socio-economic status, and the expansion of individualism, explains the increasing number of divorces in Vietnam. State policies and strategies on marriage, family, population, and gender equality; socio-economic development; the international integration of socio-culture; and mass media institutional settings along with increasing individualisation are significant factors influencing this trend towards divorce. Social changes associated with modernisation have eroded traditional norms. Women's increased economic independence, a smaller family size, and ideological emphasis on self-fulfilment in relationships as well as individual choice may shift the tide towards less stable relationships.

Modernisation has brought autonomous ways of life among the Vietnamese. Since the 1950s, the position of Vietnamese women has significantly improved in many aspects. Gender equality and increased independence for women in marriage and family resulted in the dominant trend of women initiating divorce. The socio-economic miracle following the country's opening to the outside world and the Renovation begun in 1986 have dramatically changed social mores, and divorce no longer carries the social stigma it once did. Vietnam's transition to a market economy and modernisation also began to reshape lifestyles and values, including those regarding marriage and divorce. Socio-structural and legal changes under the increasing modernisation process have caused individuals to adopt more liberal values towards marriage, family, and divorce than before. Collectivism is weakening while individualism becomes stronger. Individualism, which used to be weak in traditional society, has become one of the most influential factors in the rising divorce rate. With material comforts vastly improved, people are no longer satisfied with marriages that merely fulfil the need to carry on the family line and require women to obey and sacrifice.

It has become easier for Vietnamese people to get divorced due the process of modernisation. However, this also means that people can get divorced much easier for traditional family reasons. In rural areas, divorce procedures are more complicated, and collective decision-making occurs with the direct intervention of those who possess relevant power, such as family members, extended families, and mass organisations, revealing stronger social ties and collectivism in rural areas. Of these, local governments and social organisations play significant roles in individual divorce decisions through their intervention efforts to achieve reconciliation and through receiving and preparing divorce profiles at the commune level. In other words, divorce is a long and complicated process, with attempts at reconciliation, counselling, and the intervention of family, lineage, village, and commune authorities. Other factors involved in divorces are co-habitation arrangements, tensions in the relationship between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law, vestiges of polygyny, and parents' influence in mate selection.

There is a competing force between modern and traditional influences on the reasons for divorce. The most profound evidence of the influence of traditional reasons for divorce is the second-place

ranking of domestic violence among all the reasons for divorce. Divorce due to economic hardship is another dimension of traditional divorce. Economic hardship is a significant reason leading to marital dissolution in rural areas, and it influences marital quality, explosive tempers, and irritable behaviour, as well as promotes interactional difficulties. Another traditional style of divorce is divorce due to childlessness, which shows the value for children among Vietnamese people.

It is worth noting that couples in urban settings are more likely to divorce for lifestyle differences and adultery, which constitute a more open-minded viewpoint of their marriage and happiness. More couples are ending their marriages for "modern" reasons, resulting from greater individualism. The marriage duration is shorter among divorced people in rural areas while the majority of people who divorced for individualistic reasons (i.e. lifestyle differences) are couples who live in an urban area, have a high socio-economic status, and marry at an older age. This tendency may arise owing to the conflict between the greater social pressure to maintain the traditional values of family and an increasingly open viewpoint rooted in modernisation that make people ready to dissolve their marriage.

Divorces in Vietnam report both traditional and modern styles, and some are transitioning between the two processes. The disparate co-existence of various levels of traditional, transitional, and modern values in a context that new institutions have not perfected and the continuing existence of old institutions is the general model of divorce in contemporary Vietnam.

Note

[2] Acknowledgement: The paper is from the research: *Divorce in Southwestern Vietnam: Situation, Socio-structural Causes and Consequences,* coded 504.05-2016.04, funded by the NAFOSTED.

References

[1] Trần Đình Hượu (1991), "Gia đình truyền thống Việt Nam với ảnh hưởng Nho giáo", *Những nghiên cứu xã hội học về gia đình Việt Nam*, của Rita Liljestrom và Tương Lai (đồng chủ biên), Nxb Khoa học xã hội, Hà Nội, tr.25-47. [Tran Dinh Huou (1991), "Traditional Families in Vietnam and the Influence of Confucianism", *Sociological Studies on the Vietnamese Families* by Liljestrom, Rita and Tuong Lai (co-authors), Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, pp.25-47].

[2] Đỗ Long, Phan Thị Mai Hương (đồng chủ biên) (2002), *Tính cộng đồng - tính cá nhân và "cái tôi" của người Việt Nam hiện nay*, Nxb Chính trị quốc gia - Sự thật, Hà Nội. [Do Long and Phan Thi Mai Huong (co-authors) (2002), *Collectivism, Individualism and "the Self" of the Vietnamese Today,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi].

[3] Nguyễn Hữu Minh và Trần Thị Vân Anh (2008), *Bạo lực gia đình trên cơ sở giới ở Việt Nam: Thực trạng, diễn tiến và nguyên nhân,* Nxb Khoa học xã hội, Hà Nội. [Nguyen Huu Minh and Tran Thi Van Anh (2008), *Gender-based Domestic Violence in Vietnam: Current Situation, Developments and Reasons,* Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi].

[4] Tòa án Nhân dân Tối cao (2018), *Thống kê thụ lý và giải quyết các vụ việc hôn nhân và gia đình sơ thẩm các năm.* [Supreme People's

Court, Vietnam (2018), *Annual Statistic Records on Receiving and Handling Marriage and Family Cases in the First Instance*].

[5] Tòa án Nhân dân quận Cầu Giấy, thành phố Hà Nội, *Thống kê ly hôn 2000-2010*. [The People's Court, Cau Giay District, Hanoi, *Annual Statistic Records on Cases of Divorce of 2000-2010*].

[6] Tòa án Nhân dân huyện Bình Lục, tỉnh Hà Nam, *Thống kê ly hôn 2000-2010*. [The People's Court, Binh Luc District, Ha Nam Province, *Annual Statistic Records on Cases of Divorce of 2000-2010*].

[7] Amato, Paul and Previti, Denise (2003), "People's Reasons for Divorcing: Gender, Social Class, the Life Course, and Adjustment", *Journal of Family Issues*, Vol. 24, No. 5, pp.602-626.

[8] Barbieri, Magali and Belanger Daniele (2009), *Reconfiguring Families in Contemporary Vietnam*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

[9] Beck, Ulrich (1992), *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, Sage Publication.

[10] Becker, G. S. (1991), *A Treatise on the Family* (enlarged ed.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press White, L. (1991), *Determinants of Divorce: A Review of Research in the Eighties*, In A. Booth Ed, *Contemporary Families: Looking Forward, Looking Back*, pp.141-149, Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations.

[11] Bloom, B. L., Niles, R. L., and Tatcher, A. M. (1985), "Sources of Marital Dissatisfaction among Newly Separated Persons", *Journal of Family Issues*, No. 6, pp.359-373.

[12] Chang Kyung-Sup (2010), "Individualisation without Individualism: Compressed Modernity and Obfuscated Family Crisis in East Asia", *Journal of Intimate and Public Spheres*, Asian and Global Forum, Kyoto University Global COE Program, Pilot Issue, March.

[13] Choe, M. K. (1998), "Changing Marriage Patterns in South Korea, Manson" in K. O., N. O. Tsuya and M. K. Choe (ed), *The Changing Family in Comparative Perspective: Asia and the United States*, Honolulu, Hawaii: East Center, pp.43-46.

[14] Diener, E. and Lucas, R. E. (2000), "Explaining Differences in Societal Levels of Happiness: Relative Standards, Need Fulfillment, Culture, and Evaluation Theory", *Journal of Happiness Studies*, No. 1, pp.41-78.

[15] Ehara, Y. 2005 in Nemoto, K. (2008), "Postponed Marriage. Exploring Women's Views of Matrimony and Work in Japan", *Gender and Society*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp.219-237.

[16] Fuess, Harald (2004), *Divorce in Japan: Family, Gender, and the State 1600-2000*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

[17] Gammeltoft, T. (2007), "Prenatal Diagnosis in Postwar Vietnam: Power, Subjectivity and Citizenship", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 109, No. 1, pp.153-163.

[18] Geertz, H. (1961), *The Javanese Family: A Study of Kinship and Socialisation*, Free Press, New York.

[19] Goode, W. J. (1963), *World Revolution and Family Patterns*, Free Press, New York.

[20] Goode, W. J. (1971), *Family Disorganisation*, in Robert K. Merton and Robert Nisbet (eds), *Contemporary Social Problems*, 3rd ed., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, pp.467-544.

[21] Goode, W. J. (1993), *World Changes in Divorce Patterns*, Yale University Press, New Haven.

[22] Goodkind, Daniel (1997), "The Vietnamese Double Marriage Squeeze", *International Migration Review*, No. 31 (1).

[23] Haughton, Jonathan (1997), "Falling Fertility in Vietnam", *Population Studies*, Vol. 51, Issue 2, pp.203-211.

[24] Heaton, T. B., M. Cammack, & L. Young (2001), "Why is the Divorce Rate Declining in Indonesia?", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 63, pp.480-490.

[25] Hirschman, C. and Teerawichitchainan Bussarawan (2003), "Cultural and Socio-economic Influences on Divorce during Modernisation: Southeast Asia: 1940s to 1960s", *Population and Development Review*, No. 29 (2), pp.215-253.

[26] Hirschman, C. and Nguyen Huu Minh (2002), "Tradition and Change in Vietnamese Family Structure in the Red River Delta", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 64, No. 4.

[27] Hollander, D. (1996), "Son Preference Remains Strong among Vietnamese Women, but Has only a Modest Effect on Fertility", *International Family Planning Perspective*, No. 22, pp.84-85.

[28] IFGS (Institute for Family and Gender Studies) (2008), *Survey on Vietnam Families 2006*: *General Report*, Hanoi.

[29] Inoue, T. and Ehara, Y. (eds) (1999), *Women's Data Book*, 3rd ed., Yuhikaku, Tokyo.

[30] Jones, G. W. (1994), *Marriage and Divorce in Islamic Southeast Asia*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

[31] Jones, G. W. (1997), "Modernisation and Divorce: Contrasting Trends in Islamic Southeast Asia and the West", *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp.95-114.

[32] Jones, G. W. (2003), *The Flight from Marriage in South-East and East Asia*, Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis, Singapore, p.14.

[33] Jones, G. W. (2007), "Delayed Marriage and Very Low Fertility in Pacific Asia", *Population and Development Review*, No. 33 (3), pp.453-478.

[34] Lee, Gary (1982), *Family Structure and Interaction: A Comparative Analysis*, 2nd ed., University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

[35] Lee, Yean-Ju (2006), "Risk Factors in the Rapidly Rising Incidence of Divorce in Korea", *Asian Population Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp.13-131.

[36] Luong Van Hy (1989), "Vietnamese Kinship: Structural Principles and the Socialist Transformation in Twentieth-Century Northern Vietnam", *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp.741-56.

[37] Luong Van Hy (2003), "Gender Relations: Ideologies, Kinship Practices, and Political Economy", In *Post-war Vietnam: Dynamics of a Transforming Society*, edited by Hy Van Luong, Rowman-Littlefield, Boulder, pp.201-224.

[38] Nguyen Huu Minh (2009), *Vietnamese Marriage Patterns in the Red River Delta: Tradition and Changes*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

[39] Nguyen Huu Minh (2011), "Post-Marital Living Arrangements in Rural Vietnam", In *Rural Families in Doimoi Vietnam*, edited by Trinh Duy Luan, Helle Rydstroom and Wil Burhoorn, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

[40] Ochiai, Emiko (2010), "Reconstruction of Intimate and Public Sphere in Asia Modernity: Familialism and Beyond", *Journal of Intimate and Public Spheres*, Asian and Global Forum, Kyoto University Global COE Program, Pilot Issue, March.

[41] Ochiai, Emiko (2011), "Unsustainable Societies: The Failure of Familialism in East Asia's Compressed Modernity", *Historical Social Research*, Special Issue, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp.219-246.

[42] Rindfuss, R. and Morgan, Philip (1983), "Marriage, Sex and the First Birth Interval: The Quiet Revolution in Asia", *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 9, pp.259-278.

[43] Rydstrom, Helle (2010), "Introduction: Gendered Inequalities in Asia", In *Gendered Inequalities: Configuring, Contesting, and Recognising Women and Men*, NIAS Press, Copenhagen, pp.1-21.

[44] Thompson, L. (1993), "Conceptualising Gender in Marriage: The Case of Marital Care", *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, No. 55, pp.557-570.

[45] Trần Thị Minh Thi (2012), "Prevalence and Patterns of Divorce in Vietnam", *Journal of Family and Gender Studies*, Vol. 2.

[46] Tran Thi Minh Thi (2014), *Model of Divorce in Contemporary Vietnam: A Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Divorce in the Red River Delta in 2000s*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

[47] Trinh Duy Luan, Helle Rydstroom, and Wil Burhoorn (co-author) (2011), *Rural Families in Doimoi Period*, English and Vietnamese Edition, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

[48] Tsuya, N. O., Mason, K. O., et al. (2004), "Views of Marriage Among Never-Married Young Adults", in N. O. Tsuya and Bumpass, L. L. Marriage, *Work and Family Life in Comparative Perspective: Japan, South Korea and the United States*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, pp.39-53.

[49] Vu Manh Loi (2011), *Who Are the Household Heads in Rural Vietnamese Families? In Rural Families in Doimoi Vietnam*, in Trinh Duy Luan, Helle Rydstroom and Wil Burhoorn, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

[50] White, Lynn K. (1990), "Determinants of Divorce: A Review of Research in the Eighties", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp.904-912.

[51] Xu, X. and Lai, S. (2002), "Resources, Gender Ideologies, and Marital Power: The case of Taiwan", *Journal of Family*, Issues 23, pp.209-245.

[52] Yang, Wen-Shan and Yen, Pei Chih (2010), *A Comparative Study of Marital Dissolution in East Asia: Gender Attitudes and Social Expectations towards Marriage in Taiwan, Korea and Japan.*

[53] Yi, Zeng and Wu Deqing (2000), "Regional Analysis of Divorce in China since 1980", *Demography*, Vol. 37.