TITLE

MIGRATION OF YOUTH TO HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

Determinants of Mobility and Adjustment Experiences

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Discipline of Geographical and Environmental Studies
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ABSTRACT

As a result of the economic reforms that were introduced in Vietnam in 1986, the country has grown economically. However, due to a bias toward development policies which have been mainly concentrated in urban areas, the economic gap between rural and urban areas has rapidly widened over time. More job opportunities and better living conditions in the city, as well as low productivity in agriculture, have caused people to move to the major cities. Consequently, rural to urban migration has become one of the dominant flows of internal migration in the country in recent years. This migration stream not only has increased in scale but also in its complexity. Particularly, the age of the migrants has become younger as many young people, especially females, become involved in this flow. Moreover, this migration flow has become less selective in terms of education as both more and less educated people migrate. Also, not only the rich but the poor take part in this movement. This thesis considers the determinants of moving and the experiences of young migrants to Ho Chi Minh City in terms of their economic, social and cultural adjustment in order to provide deep insights into the lives of young people when they migrate.

This thesis has used the migration model of Scharping (1997) as the theoretical framework to investigate the decision to move as well as their living experiences in the city. A multiple method approach has been used to the study as both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed. Quantitative data such as secondary data from censuses and data from large-scale surveys at the national and the city levels and primary data from the author’s survey with 300 young migrants were applied. Qualitative data from 25 in-depth interviews with young migrants, 5 with authorities and 5 with migrant returnees were used in this study, to provide detailed information on migrants’ lives.
While the city has attracted a large number of youth from rural areas because of its development advantages, the city’s government has applied policies to limit this flow. Yet, this migration control policy has proved costly and ineffective in restricting the flows of people to the major cities. This policy has created many difficulties for migrants in the city. In addition, low levels of education and limited work skills force many young migrants to work in the informal sector where their human rights are heavily violated. Other young migrants work in cheap intensive-labour factories. Low pay and hard work, but without labour and medical insurance, lead these young migrants to live on the margins of urban society. These findings suggest that if the local people do not accept these migrants, and urban policies make no effort to assistance them, it is impossible for young migrants in the city to be successful in building new lives and careers. Instead of trying to limit rural to urban migration, the national government should put more effort into narrowing the rural-urban gap by improving development in rural areas. More jobs with better pay in rural areas may be the most effective and sustainable way of reducing rural to urban migration flows.
DECLARATION

The candidate confirms that the work submitted here is her own and contains no material which has been accepted for any other degree in any university and that appropriate credit has been provided where reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to my thesis to be made available in all forms of media when it is stored in the University Library.

Hong Xoan Nguyen Thi
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# GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASFR</td>
<td>Age-Specific Fertility Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBR</td>
<td>Crude Birth Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDR</td>
<td>Crude Death Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNSA</td>
<td>Canada’s National Statistical Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS</td>
<td>Department of Investment Services, Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNRE</td>
<td>Department of Natural Resource and Environment, Ho Chi Minh City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECERFSD</td>
<td>Enhancing Capacity to Engender Research for Sustainable Development, Vietnam 2003-2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIU</td>
<td>Economic Intelligence Unit, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFILWC</td>
<td>European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Condition</td>
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<tr>
<td>EWCP</td>
<td>East-West Centre on Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSO</td>
<td>General Statistical Office, Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus/ immunodeficiency syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCMC</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IER</td>
<td>Institute for Economic Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISPST</td>
<td>Institute of Sociology and Population Studies and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIA</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior Affairs, Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPW</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Works, Sai Gon</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACSA</td>
<td>National Assembly’s Committee for Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEZs</td>
<td>New Economic Zones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSI</td>
<td>National Statistic Institute, Sai Gon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC-HCMC</td>
<td>People' Committee of Ho Chi Minh City</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Purchasing Power Parity</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAVY</td>
<td>Survey and Assessment of Vietnamese Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCUK</td>
<td>UK Save the Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMAM</td>
<td>Singulate mean age at first marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO</td>
<td>Statistical Office, Ho Chi Minh city</td>
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<tr>
<td>STDs</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td>TFR</td>
<td>Total Fertility Rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAV</td>
<td>United Nations Agencies in Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Voice of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDIC</td>
<td>Vietnam Development Information Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Vietnamese Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>VWU</td>
<td>Vietnam Women Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<td><strong>Hukou</strong></td>
<td>Household Registration System in Chinese</td>
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**In Vietnamese**

*Chi Cuc Di Dan* Department of Migration, Ho Chi Minh City

*Doi Moi* The economic reforms

*KT1* Permanent registration- non-migrant with household registration residing in the same district of registration
**KT2**  Permanent registration- non-migrant with household registration but residing in a different district of registration

**KT3**  Temporary registration- migrant residing independently or with relatives without registration book, working in formal factories or organisations, 6-12 months with extension.

**KT4**  Floating migrant, residing in a guest house or temporary dwelling, without registration book, 1-3 months or no registration, usually working in the informal sector.

**Ho Khau**  Household Registration System

**Ho Tich**  Birth Registration

**VND**  Vietnam Dong (Vietnam Currency, 1USD = 16,000VND in 2007)
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