

Female Labour Migration - Rural-Urban, Ha Thi Phuong Tien and Ha Quang Ngoc
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'... or in the process of expansion such as Europe's discovery of Africa and Australia, etc....' p 11

'This [new freedom to travel] has led to a growing movement of workers from their rural homes to the cities, from less-developed economic zones to better-developed ones, without the support or organization of State.' p 11

'Currently, it is common to find women themselves leaving home to seek work in urban area and send money back to their rural families, while their husbands take over the duties of caring for children and looking after the house. It may seem an unusual phenomenon, but it is currently common in Vietnam.' p 12

'Especially, in the process of industrialisation and market-orientated economy, the migration of a large number of rural people to urban areas is inevitable.' p 16

'.... whilst guaranty conditions for employment and lives of rural workers are failed to catch up with the urban counterpart's.' p 18

'... the transition of management structure and development of multi-sector commodity-based economy under State management does not only make the products of labour turn into commodities but also the labour power itself become commodity.' pp 25-26

'The application of technical advance and technology into the agricultural production is a considerable influencing factor on the spontaneous migration of rural labourers to the cities.' p 28

'.... agricultural workers originally having much free time during crops now get much more leisure time and become redundant.' p 28

'... the different level of income between highest household and lowest one is 7.3 times in 1996 increased to 11.2 times in 1998. The different level of living is similar situation. The total income per

head of Hanoian and city dwellers of Ho Chi Minh City often is 5-7 times as much as that of farming labourers in rural areas annually.’ p 31

‘... spontaneous migration has appeared and increased. The meaning of “spontaneous migration” here is out of government programme and planned.’ p 33

‘According to national census 1999, during last 5 years there are 2 million migrants from province to others, of them the significant is the number of migrants to large cities.’ p 34

‘In fact, the number of spontaneous migrants into cities is much higher in comparison with the result of the census.’ p 34

‘This total number is not included the number of people live in pavements of the streets and public places.’ p 35

‘... since 1996 to 1999 the populations of Ho Chi Minh city increase of 1.4 million of people, half of them are spontaneous emigrants.’ p 36

‘..... there is no more cultivated land or its area too small to supply enough employment.’ p 39

‘The Lao Dong newspaper No 74/1999 (8/5/1999) presented the cry for help of a farmer Nguyen Van De..... *“factories, firms are via (sic) with each other to fill up fields. Our land is getting smaller and smaller....”* *“Our ward in previous time was a famous place for cotton and ornament tress. Now people sell land to firms to construct productive units and those who are subject to ground-clearance to rebuild house or some who want to speculate land by saving, reselling to get interests or house building for rent. Households used to plant cotton trees now sell land to build spacious houses, but their children lack job falling into carousal, addiction and prostitution.’* p 41

‘Ms Do Thi Hieu, 20 years old.....said that *there was only 1,3 Saos (1 Sao equal to 360 sq meters) of rice-field per person in her homeland,*’ p 41

'...there was 1 Sao of rice-field per head in his homeland and cultivation is the only occupation there.' p 42

'...there were 5 people in her family, but 4 people were distributed land, the 15-month child was no land distribution.' p 43

'Selling land due to the emergent difficulty or inability to self-operate production

..... Four years ago, his mother got a very heavy sickness and had to sell furniture and 18 Cong of land to treat for her but unfortunately, she was past away.' p 44

'Apart from those who have to sell land due to unexpected difficulties, there are some, especially in the South doing that and moving to cities because they don't know how to organise production.' p 45

'Low value and unstable of agricultural working day, hardship in rural life and permanent lack of cash.

.... a rural agricultural working day is more or less 10,000 VND/day.' p 45

'Every wedding party and funeral (unavoidable) if taking part and/or having meal they have to compliment and support from 20,000-50,000 VND to the householder. Besides, they also have to pay additional fees for their children's education.' p 47

'Due to agricultural production of seasonal manner with too much idle time; high demand of getting money; and low income from agricultural production forced the rural labour force to find job in cities.' p 49

'...it is not hard to do farming work now anymore. In fact, we just look after, and other works such as cultivating or harvesting, my children can do gathering. the repairing work we can hire others.... all work over 3 Saos of land been done by hiring.' p 50

'Due to the risk of crops, weather disasters, pest, and crop failure that female workers have to leave home to earn living in cities.' p 50

‘Some female migrants have relative in illness, they need money for treatment, some women have husband or children being opium addiction, indent, others is devised, someone were slighted by their children and become homeless...all of these reasons push them out of their village to cities to earn living or hind the destiny.’ p 52

‘... her husband was in crazy of gamble.’ p 52

‘...no property, no children - under such a miserable hurt, she decided to leave her village for Hanoi to find job to relieve her sorrow.’ p 53

‘The expansion of the market economy and changes in thought and lifestyle of rural people in line with negative and positive terms of influencing on labourers make up decisive reasons to their movements to cities.’ p 54

‘To afford their children’s tuition fee or their living and studying cost.’ p 64

‘.... many mothers and sisters are willing to devote themselves to their children/younger sibling’s studying at university.’ p 54

‘To self-affirm and escape out of miserable life in rural areas.’
p 57

‘It is simple that is her hobby to avoid miserable fieldwork.’ p 57

‘Moving to cities to get married.’ p 58

‘.... men especially the younger are increasingly moving to cities resulting in ever-increasing gender inequality.’ p 59

“I’m from Y Yen, Nam Ha, not beautiful, 29 but not yet engaged. Th.’s uncle asked me to marry Th. Our simple marriage was organised in my village. When I have my first son, we both moved to Dong Xuan quarter to live.” said Mrs. C, Th.’s wife in the article “Poor rural girls marrying city’s men”. It must be mentioned here that Mr. Th, 35, unemployed. living in a cramped house at Hang Gai, his mother suffers from mental disease but he still surprisingly

gets married. [Hong Lien, Metropolitan Women, dates 29/4/1998.]
p 59

‘... less women have to wait for job in pavement and streets than male workers do.’ p 64

‘... she had to run away because her prissy aunt.’ p 65

‘..... female workers are willing to do anything provided legally; they want to earn money by all means even heavy, unwanted and dangerous work.’ p 66

‘...to build up civilized and modern cities, there is much to be re-planned and modernized; manual works is to be wiped out as such: waste materials collecting, vending.’ p 67

‘Working as vendors: This is one of selections that immigrated female workers make at most when they move to cities, because it does not need much capital, knowledge and complicated transport means, but it requires their industriousness and to great extents it is rather unsuitable to their situations, conditions and nature.’
p 68

‘Working as newspaper and lottery ticket sellers:.....sometimes they gave her the out-of-date tickets, and she was often received the complaint from buyers.’ p 70

‘Working as junk traders:they unofficially lend a hand and become out of self-conscious for stealers.’ p 71

‘Working as waitress and receptionist in restaurants, services places:only young, beautiful and agile worker are recruited, otherwise they have to do such hard works as washing up, clear-up.....works that female spontaneous migrant labours do as hairdresser’s, massage, tidy-up bedrooms in the hotel are very prone to the matter of sexual violation and become prostitute, unless they determine and self-control.....she [Mrs. Nguyen Thi D] worked for refreshment shops, she had to run away because she was forced to indulge in familiarities with customers. On the contrary, if they agreed that meant they were shifted from the true labourers into illegal work.’ pp 71-72

‘Working as porters:..... labourers often are imposed strict terms by gang of ruffians and have to pay for the *standing-position fee* for them.’ pp 72-73

‘Working as scavenger:..... Their work is dirty and trashy. They suffer the poisonous gas and risk of anti-personnel and infection for their body. In addition, rascal groups impose their strict regulations for them and force to contribute for practising there.’ p 73

‘Working as house servants: the worker are still looked down and disregarded and young women can be victims of body and sexual violation. In contrary, some servants take advantage of householder’s trust to steal or break up emotional life of their family - illegal relation with the lord or his children.’ pp 73-74

‘... [employee-employers relationship] most other cases have no contract and no following the Stare’s (sic) regulations for women.’ p 76

‘Na and Lien said that they have to wake up at 5 am in the morning and stop working at 11 pm.’ p 78

‘..... when the owner went to two girl’s village to take them to hanoi, she promised many things such as to see them as the daughters, they would be satisfied in working, eating....when they work there for a month, they receive 100,000 VND per person.....”*it is clear that it very difficult to become the owner’s daughter.*” p 79

‘Some owners always adopt the employees as their relatives, and they come to help the owner’s family. To do so, they want to avoid the social blame and the control of the authorities. The owners do not want their employees to contact with stranger and talk with anyone about the agreement between employer and employees.’ p 79

‘In some cases, to keep hired female workers, employers held their wage and gave them just a small part of it, only when they came back to hometown and/or the new year came was the wage paid to them totally.’ p 80

‘Many employers asked hired female workers to work for them in fixed time. In case of desiring to shift or move to other employers who were more suitable, the employer would deduct partly or even wholly the wage when the agreement was *reachable*.’ p 81

‘The owner over 40 years old always teases mischievously with the “niece”. one night, the owner’s wife woke up; she didn’t saw her husband anywhere in the house. And then she found him sleeping together with the “niece” without any clothes in the top floor of their house. Miss T. was got a sound beating but she too afraid to inform anyone. She was expelled from the owner’s house in the next morning with some small change.’ p 84

‘... because of “simple” and out of authority control, there are some risks may come to labours, especially to, young, beautiful and less experience female labours. They may become good baits of prostituted trade and become the prostitutes or become the “servant” of some old men who is eager for concupiscence, but they cannot escape.

Female labourers working in the market always have to pay for someone illegally, even some female labourers collect something in dumps have to pay for someone that so-called “Cai” as some articles have mentioned.’ p 88

‘... they have broken the Directive No 36/CP of Government, sometimes they are fined by police and kept all of goods and shoulders, pole..... but they still work as street vendors and always worry for fined.’ p 89

‘... it is clear that *for the same work men’s income may be slightly higher than that of women but they set aside less than women.*’ p 95

‘... *they did not come into any social welfare, all their life depends to markets..... The spending way of migrants sometime to be seen as parsimony by some city dwellers who is not sympathetic.*’ p 96

‘... the studies showed that the health and disease status of female spontaneous migrants labours has existed a problem.’ p 96

‘... they are not big and often slim with black skin. This fact stated for their work hard and less on health care themselves.’ p 96

‘Most of the migrants have to buy laboured instruments and protective equipment for themselves in the limited economic condition formerly. therefore, in many cases, workers do not use the protective equipment.’ p 102

‘Working in the joint venture can obtain the higher income than that paid for other occupations in past time, however, their health is affected quickly.’ p 102

‘...a Taiwan joint venture company:.... *“the working intensity is rather high (10 hours/day), sometimes I have to work overtime....There is no medical insurance in the company....The labour insurance is totally absent, whenever the accident occurs, the workers have to take the whole responsibility, and if they have to take leave, they have no payment for that.”* pp 102-103

“Everybody gets black like African [working as scavengers]”. p 103

“We are afraid of getting sick. The bus station is very dirty, water stagnating and damp and with a lot of mosquitoes. Our customers are all kinds including smugglers, drug addicts. If we are ill, we have to work in backward areas, so we are often getting more tired, even sicker.” p 109

‘No few girls working as house servants had to leave because they couldn’t stand the humiliation, some even had to suppress their resentment and leave with a big belly of pregnancy. More unfairly, they are suspected to be not faithful. Houses’ owners often carefully watch all movement and use of household goods of hired workers. they are considered to be stealers, even become betrayers if possible.’ p 109

‘It is also necessary to mention here the case of not few women, especially young girls going to big cities who are induced to get into social evils. Such makes high the increasing trend of HIV inflection (sic) in our relatives and community, affecting their health in particular and that of the community in general.’ p 110

‘....” *our health is much better as we are gaining weights and getting fair complexion* [house servants]. However, it is very few.’ p 112

‘For the employers, they know the way they implement is illegal on labour regulations but for the business purpose, they did not give the insurance issue in contract.’ p 113

‘Besides, due to out of health service system, some social diseases among migrants are not controlled, excavated and treated, it became the source for dangerous epidemic. Therefore, we should have hospital for poor people, reduce the fee for examination and treatment for poor people. Organisation the volute of physicians and come to places where many spontaneous emigrants' residence. To propaganda and agitate emigrants understand the importance of health protection is that not only for themselves but also for whole society. To make known a plan of unit social disease and agitate for family planning among emigrants.’ pp 115-116

‘...(the illegal-lived area) that it has many social problem such as temporary-living areas are place for social evils, such as drug, prostitute, criminals..... *“his group has many house for rent, some female migrants become prostitute to earn money to send for their family”*.’ p 117

‘... while there are many others have to wander and live in public places or pavements. They are new migrants or have not a job yet, have to lead the life of wandered, being affected from sunlight, rainy, cold wind and make a bad nature screen for cities.’ p 121

‘Lacking cultural and intellectual life, female labourers are limited in social contact with urban people, and they do not participate in social actions of urban people. They are not allowed to attend the meeting group or mass organisation of urban people. Beside relation in working, the intellectual relationship of female labourers is exchange in small group of migrants who come from same village, and hire the same house about the way to learn any information about their families at their native village.

Because of their situation in cultural life, they are limited in knowledge and full grasp. There are some sad stories among female

spontaneous migrants such as become superstitious, have a blind belief in something. The story happened in Hanoi on watchnight of the year 1999-2000, many female spontaneous migrants from Ly Nhan - Ha Nam living in Hanoi who have Catholic belief in someone say that watchnight was end of the World. Therefore, they all cry because they have to die while they stay far from home and they are not baptised before they die. It is not few, especially young female labourers limited in social relation, low level of education, so they are dragged in to illegal action such as drug, prostitution.....’
p 124

‘To limit the development of activities which employ casual workers and manual means and occupying the pavement; to regulate the standard and conditions to serve for the workers who work as receptionists.’ p 130

‘Except some female do illegal works like working in bar “*karaoke om*”, “*Bia om*” or some other ones go to city with the harder from their family such as they are divorced, or be cheated, most other female migrants have close relationship with their family and relatives on matters, money as well as sentiment.’ p 138

“*I am a woman, I can drink pipe water if I am thirsty and eat rice with salt even I can stand with hunger, hardship, but man cannot.*”
p 142

‘..... what measures being used, the improving life for women (whether emigrate or not emigrate) is the end purpose of emigrant policy and socio-economic development of rural area of Vietnam. in other words, emigration is motive force of economic development and be contributed to make quality in social life.’ p 148

‘... the contribution of migrants to strengthen the economic development, especially in current market mechanism.’ p 152

‘..... *creating the labour competitiveness.*’ p 152

‘Flocking of rural people from provinces into large cities made these cities in overloaded situation on communication, environment, housing.... and some social evils especially in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city. It is affected to health of people, urban screen and

urban security. Besides, it creates labour competition and reduce real economic value of labour power, its effects to implementation of general socio-economic objectives of the cities.’ p 153

‘Especially, the rate in some districts as the districts No 3, No 4, No 5 and No 11 is over 50,000 people per Sq. km, which may be the densest in the world.’ p 154

‘Naturally, they appropriate public land to build illegal houses.’ pp 154-155

‘In Ho Chi Minh city sometime the competition in finding jobs between migrants and city dweller’s makes the economic value of labour power is reduce.’ p 157

‘The different level of salary between migrants and city’s dwellers become loss a huge amount for country’s economy when increasing in using the migrants labour force foreign enterprises.’ p 158

‘In order to competition and get high income, migrants reluctantly appropriate the road, make traffic jamb or through litter over streets, lakes and sewage to make environment polluted. On May 1995, Government had issued Direction No 36/CP named Solution of “*clear pavements, through streets*” that effects to small traders, streets vendors, but it is very difficult to implement thoroughly, so there is traffic problem on rush hours.’ p 159

‘beside, another question should be concerned is female migrants in general and young, single females in particular when coming to city, due to difficult in finding jobs, seducement and traps of life at the city, the easy to become a victim of social evil such as prostitute that public’s voice has mentioned.’ p 160

“*We must practise thrift in eating and wearing because we always thinking about the children, they need food and money for education.*” p 161

‘..... they will get married at their native village and then depend on their husband’s family.’ p 164

'In fact rural-urban migration is "strategy" for remaining and development of rural households.' p 164

"children in her commune suffer a lot, they don't have good condition for studying and playing. Therefore, I try to invest for my brother in studying so that he can have a better life in the future...in the village, everybody are low level of education so I did not recognise the suffer of us, it is clearer when I come here, Hanoi people earn money very easily because they have knowledge and skill." p 166

'This has caused changes in gender mechanism is such migrating localities and many accompanying complex social issues such as adultery, divorce, and early marriage....' p 167

'At some local the parents worry for their children will meet difficulties in looking for boy/girl so they ask their children marriage at the adolescent ages.' p 168

'Even students from the countryside entering universities and professional education do not want to come back to their villages to live.' p 168

'It is hard to measure the balance of the amount of earnings brought back home over lacks family sentiments. It is also harder to know whether or not their family is better off, happier, less absurdly quarrelling, and their children get access to better education condition.' p 169

'The family split cause disadvantages not only to female migrant herself but also to the husband at home. Several cases that the husbands, who are sad or having no job at home, slide into gambling and drinking wine by using money hard-earned by the wives.' p 170

'Even when having capital migrants tend to use it to speculate land or lend it at high interest rates leading to pressures between the rich and poor and widening the intra rural inequality, this is a factor driving rural people to leave their homes in order to catch up with neighbours.'" p 170

‘... migration flows are consequences of socio-economic changes created by the national renovation.’ p 171

‘They [migrants] are seen as a large force with strength and cheap-paid workers,’ p 173

‘In the past in many communes, there were some activities like knitting basket, doing chumming (fishing means)... yet since the commodity economy has been developed, the plastic goods are dominant on the market, consequently knitting activity is wiped out.’ p 184

‘... when the market economy is developed, it creates the strong wave of spontaneously immigrated female workers in cities to look for job.’ p 185

“..... socio-economic system plays the very decisive role for rural/urban flow. I do not repeat the difference of the living standard between rural and urban areas that absorbs the people to flock to the cities, but I have to remark to the shifting from collective economy system (cooperatives) into household economy in line with the reallocation on land for households and its scarcity for cultivating rice - a main life source for farmers. The unemployment in rural area and the demand for cash in daily life are the fundamental factors to increase the rural/urban flow.” p 189

‘.... majority of scientist reach to a judgement that *doi moi* policies promote directly or indirectly on immigration process, therefore, methods that purely targeted to control and limit immigration is very difficult to achieve.’ p 190

‘The income got from works in cities can help them to develop household economy, increase the living standard and create the capital for household economy as well as the hunger alleviation in the locality. With their experience and accumulated money, they attribute to shift the labour-production structure in rural areas, and it changes the way of thinking and doing and cultural-spiritual life there. Migrant labourers bring about these contributions, besides they also have other backsides influencing on rural areas.’ p 191

“..... the demand factor for the various manpower and cheap-paid workers in urban areas is met by the supply factor of labour resource and unemployment in rural areas” p 192

‘..... the slow improvement of infrastructure in rural areas also makes local people try to get out of their homeland.’ p 199

‘This is an unfair and incompatible matter when the State and Party are planning to enhance the development of multi-faceted market economy with the direction of socialism.’ p 201

‘.....whenever having any problems in production or in a stage of stagnation, they will be received no regard, be put into prostitute or social evil (of which some dismissed women does not go back to countryside but still stay in cities and become sexual workers, drug trafficker or fall into other social evils).’ p 207

‘To this end, the main working members in household are needed to equip with knowledge on production sectors, business management in parallel with the funding to enable them to start business of the small-scale on business, food-processing, craft and home craft industry.’ p 209

‘At the present, the number of farmers having possibility of producing but not yet allocated or owned little land, even no land is upward trend.’ p 210