

Learning about the change of Vietnam women's role today

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ABSTRACT : In recent decades, Vietnam has undergone many changes and achieved great achievements in the fields of economy, politics, culture and society. This includes the change in the role of women in the family and in society. At present, women have actively fulfilled their responsibilities towards the family in giving birth and raising children, managing the family economy and making efforts to participate in economic development as well as state management activities of the country.

Keywords - transformation, role, Vietnamese women

INTRODUCTION

After more than 30 years of Doi Moi (since 1986), Vietnam has undergone many changes in all aspects of social life. To get great achievements in all fields, it is impossible not to mention the contributions of all classes and classes in society, including the great role of women. Entering the process of industrialization, modernization, and international integration, Vietnamese women constantly promote their potential and creativity, actively and actively participate in economic, political as well as political and sociocultural activities. This article focuses on explaining the causes and manifestations of the changing role of Vietnamese women in the family and in society to realize the role of Vietnamese women in today's era.

I. CONTENTS

1.1. Factors that change the role of women

1.1.1. *The first is the process of economic reform that has taken place from 1986 to the present.*

Doi Moi policy was proposed by the Communist Party of Vietnam at the 6th National Congress (1986) in which economic innovation was emphasized as the focus with the following contents: renovation of economic structure (the basic structure of the economy). structure of industry - agriculture; internal structure of the agricultural sector; light industry and handicraft industry; heavy industry and infrastructure; district economic structure; Implement three economic programs including food and food programs; consumer goods program; export program; Building and consolidating socialist production relations, properly using and renovating economic sectors[see 1].

The awareness of the role of economic reform was clearly demonstrated in the next congresses of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Reasonable economic guidelines and policies have brought about clear effects. The scale of the economy increased rapidly, in the first period of Doi Moi (1986-1990) the average annual GDP growth was only 4.4%, in the 1991-1995 period, the average GDP doubled, reaching 8.2 years; all subsequent periods have quite high growth rates; the period 2016-2019 reached an average of 6.8%. People's living standard both materially and spiritually improved markedly, in 1985 the average income per capita only reached 159 USD/year, by 2020 it will reach about 2,750 USD/year.[2].

The Doi Moi process has changed the economic face of Vietnam, turning a backward agricultural country to become an industrialized, modernized country with high growth rate in the region. Along with the economic development process, the industry structure is increasingly diversified, the number of enterprises increases, creating many job opportunities for many people, including women. With the change in the structure of the economy, women have the opportunity to access many new occupations instead of just working in agriculture as before. This changed the role of women in the family as well as in society.

1.1.2. *Policies of the Communist Party and State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam*

Since the birth of the Communist Party of Vietnam (1930), the role of women in the struggle for independence as well as the issue of gender equality has been mentioned. Then, in the 1946 Constitutions of the

Democratic Republic of Vietnam and later Constitutions, they mentioned the equal rights of women in the family and society. Article 26 of the 2013 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam clearly states: "1. Male and female citizens are equal in all respects. The State has policies to ensure equal rights and opportunities for gender. 2. The State, society and family create conditions for women to develop comprehensively and promote their roles in society. 3. Gender discrimination is strictly prohibited" [3, p.21]. This is the highest legal document guaranteeing the citizenship and equal rights of women.

After that, in each period, with each certain task, the Socialist Party and State of Vietnam issued Directives and Resolutions to promote the role of women in the work of the nation protection and construction. Resolution No. 176a-HDBT dated December 24, 1984 "On promoting the role and capacity of women in the cause of construction and defense of the Socialist Fatherland" assessed the great role of women in the construction of the country: Women are a very important social productive force, accounting for 46% of the labor force in the state economic sector and over 60% of the labor force in the collective economic sector. Notably, women account for 70 to 80% of the direct labor force in production and at the grassroots level in the agricultural, consumer goods manufacturing, handicrafts, handicrafts, and other industries. commerce, health, culture and education; 58% of cadres with intermediate degrees and 31% of cadres with university degrees are women" [4]. However, the Resolution also points out some limitations such as: "The promotion of women's roles and capacities has not been paid enough attention, many important and urgent issues are directly related to creating favorable conditions for women. The conditions for women to offer great potential for the immediate and future development of society have not been given enough attention." [4]. Resolution No. 11-NQ/TW dated April 27, 2007 of the 10th Politburo "On women's work in the period of accelerating industrialization and modernization of the country" with tasks and solutions such as: Raise awareness about women's work and gender equality; Building, perfecting and well implementing the legal system and policies on gender equality, creating conditions for the development of women; Building a prosperous, equal, progressive and happy family. Building Vietnamese women with health, knowledge, professional skills, dynamism, creativity, cultural lifestyle, and kindness; Building a team of highly qualified female scientists, female leaders and managers to meet the requirements of accelerating the cause of industrialization and modernization. [5].

It can be seen that the Constitution, laws, resolutions, ordinances, etc. of the Party and State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam have created an important legal corridor to ensure women's rights in key political, economic, cultural and social areas; gradually remove the expressions of contempt and rigor in the evaluation, promotion, and increase the number of women participating in all fields of social life. These documents also create conditions for women to promote their position, improve their capacity and intelligence in the cause of national defense, construction and development.

1.1.3. *Society's perception of the role of women*

The outward expression of Vietnamese society is "respect for men, despise women". The cause of this situation is partly because Vietnam is a country strongly influenced by feudalism and Confucianism, which is deeply rooted in the lives of many generations. Vietnamese people often have the sentence "*Nhất nam viết hữu, thập nữ viết vô*" (one son is yes, but ten girls still consider it none) shows the importance of sons and the son's role in the family. In addition, there are some manifestations of this thought such as women who give birth to boys are valued more than women who give birth to girls; the power of the eldest brother in the family is great; thrones of dynasties passed only to sons, not to daughters; the right to inherit the parents' estate is only for sons, while daughters are not allowed to inherit or can only inherit small properties; job transmission in craft villages is usually not passed on to daughters but to sons or daughters-in-law (sons' wives); the son is studying to take the exam, progressing by the academic path, but the woman is just around the house; Men are allowed to have many wives while women can only marry one husband, even suffer from common husbands without the right to speak out. [6].

However, in folklore there are also many ideas against this concept. Vietnamese people preserve the tradition of respecting women as a national cultural identity. Vietnamese proverbs have sentences such as: first wife, second heaven; his command is not equal to her gong; the deep fields of buffaloes and sows are not equal to the first daughter... showing the important position of a woman. The concept of "respecting men and disrespecting women" has also been criticized by many thinkers in history. Phan Ke Binh commented: "In our custom, most of us oppress women too much. Some people consider their wives to be people who eat people, who are forced to fix bags to lift towels, which is to catch rice to offer water, which is to break onions and garlic, and to catch drills. It's okay for the husband to play like breaking, the wife is a little bummed and has given birth to a lot of garlic; It doesn't matter if a husband moves a bird or a mouse like a demon, if a wife moves anywhere for a while, she will have doubts, which is contrary to the way of justice." [7, p.51]. He also pointed out: "Nature is born with a boy, there must be a girl, someone who takes care of the outside must have someone to take care of the inside, the person with strong muscles and tendons must work hard, the person with weak limbs and soft hands has already had light work, just helping each other to get this and that work" [7, p.50].

With the birth of the Communist Party, Vietnamese society changed from a semi-feudal colonial society model to a democratic state model, where women's rights were recognized and protected through legal documents as mentioned above has a great influence on people's thinking and thinking about the role of women. Today, women are recognized not only in legal documents but also in practice through their contributions in various fields, contributing to changing society's thinking and perception in general, of men in general about the role of women.

1.2. Changing roles of women in the family

1.2.1. Role of reproduction in humans

The reproduction of people is considered an important and specific function of the family, demonstrating the great role of women in maintaining the race and reproducing the labor force for society. Especially in the feudal system, the Vietnamese attach great importance to the maintenance of the lineage: "One's obligation to the family and ancestors is to pass on the seed to the future to pass on the clan, so morality for the people. To be ungrateful is to commit a great unfilial act." [8, p.103]. In the maintenance of the race, women play a central role. Therefore, in the past, when choosing a wife, men often chose those with good fertility. Women who are unable to bear children are considered guilty, the husband can leave to marry another wife. In addition, from the concept of "respecting men, despise women", a woman must bear the responsibility of giving birth to a son, if she cannot give birth, she must agree to give her husband more wives to have children. This created great inequality for women in feudal society.

Currently, human reproduction is still considered an important role and sacred responsibility of women. Women are cared for and facilitated to carry out pregnancy and childbirth. The rights of women during pregnancy and childbirth are specified in Article 31 of the Law on Social Insurance 2014, accordingly, women are entitled to 6 months of leave when giving birth and an increase in the number of months of leave if having twins or triplets; during pregnancy, they are also allowed to take leave to perform examination and care for the fetus. The responsibility for pregnancy does not stop with the woman, but also with the husband when they are also entitled to leave and benefits when the wife is pregnant [9]. The above legal corridor is the basis for the husband to share responsibility for taking care of the woman during pregnancy and child rearing.

As pointed out above, in the previous periods, childbearing was considered a woman's obligation: to have many children, to give birth to a son, now, that trend has changed when the fertility rate of women decreased (in 2001, the fertility rate was 18.6%, by 2018 it was 14.6%) [10].), the need to have a son, although still there, is not a determining factor in whether the couple continues to live together. Besides, with the achievements of modern medicine, families are more proactive in determining when and how many children they want to have. These factors reduce the burden and responsibility on women in maintaining the family lineage and lineage.

1.2.2. Responsibility in raising children

In the past, parenting was assumed to be a woman's job and responsibility. Therefore, a woman is almost entirely responsible for her children and grandchildren. Vietnamese folk songs have sentences such as: "Children bring children", "Children are like children", "Children are spoiled by mother, grandchildren are bad by grandmother" ... which speak of a woman's heavy responsibility. Education outside the family in Vietnamese society was also quite limited in the past. Usually, mandarins or rich people send their children to school at the age of five, after the age, ordinary people have to go to school until they are eleven or twelve years old, but those who do not have enough money often cannot go to school and have to stay at home to help parents take care of younger siblings, practice business [see 7, p.10].

Currently, with the economic development and the formation of the social education system, the responsibility for educating children is shared with other social institutions. With the school system being expanded all over the country and having all levels of education from preschool to high school, especially preschool education (the number of schools increased quite rapidly, in the 2000-2001 period, there were 8,933 schools, then in the period of 2000-2001, there were 8,933 schools. 2018-2019 is 15,463 schools [10]). The age of children going to school is usually quite early (usually from 2 years old, some preschools even accept children at a younger age). In addition, educational content at each level is diverse, meeting the goals of physical, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic development, personality formation, arousing and maximum development of hidden abilities of students. Children should have somewhat reduced the burden of child education for women.

1.2.3. Economic responsibility of the family

The traditional Vietnamese woman, besides giving birth, raising and educating children, also participates in the family's production: "The wife is not only the one who has to give birth to the husband's family, but also has to work and take care of the housework for her parents-in-law. That's why many times when a son is still young, playing or going to school, his parents also get married for him to have a bride, but they don't work." [8, p.104]. Although the property in the family is the merits of the husband and wife, the decision-making power is still the husband, the wife is only the manager, caretaker and nurturer of that property. [see 7,

pp.48-49]. When the husband dies and the woman remarries, all rights to manage and own the property on her head are lost [see 8, p.100]. It can be said that women in Vietnamese society in the past, although considered as the main labor, contributing to the family's economic development, did not have the right to own property, but completely depended on their husbands and sons.

In today's Vietnamese family, the male model is the head of the family, all power belongs to men is no longer the only model of existence. Today, the head of a family is a person with outstanding qualities, abilities and contributions in taking care of children as well as contributing to the family's economy. The woman can also be the owner or both husband and wife are the owner and decide on common family matters. In addition, the common property of the family will be owned by both husband and wife as stipulated in Vietnamese law in Article 33, Law on Marriage and Family 2014 and Article 9, Article 10 in the Decree No. 126/2014/ ND-CP. Accordingly, properties formed during marriage are considered common property such as property created by husband and wife, income from labor, production and business activities, yields, income arising from separate property and other lawful income during the marriage; Land use rights that husband and wife have after marriage...[see 11,12] This ensures a woman's rights to the family's assets, and at the same time ensures her rights in the event of a divorce.

1.3. Changing roles of women in society

1.3.1. Participate in the economic development of the country

As we have pointed out above, due to the process of industrialization and modernization, Vietnam has more and more new professions with the participation of women. With more than half of the population, accounting for 47.3% of the social labor force [10] Vietnamese women are present in all fields, in all areas, actively participating in production and business activities in all sectors of the economy, focusing on fields such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and related service activities; manufacturing and processing industry; apparel manufacturing, leather manufacturing and related products (2018 data [10]).

Not only participating in the manufacturing sector, in Vietnam, female-owned enterprises have increased significantly in recent years, from 4% in 2009, to 21% in 2011, and now reaching 25%.[10], the highest in Southeast Asia and ranked 19th out of 54 in the Women Entrepreneurs Index. Some typical female entrepreneurs of Vietnam can be mentioned as: Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Thao (Permanent Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of HDBank, CEO of Vietjet Air), Ms. Thai Huong (General Director of Bac A Bank, Ms. Chairman of TH Group), Ms. Mai Kieu Lien (chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO of the leading dairy company in Vietnam - Vinamilk), Ms. Pham Thi Viet Nga (General Director of Hau Giang Pharmaceutical Company), Ms. Nguyen Thi Mai Thanh (Chairman of the Board of Directors cum General Director of REE)...[13].

In addition, women also play a great role in household economic development, especially in rural, midland and mountainous areas. With the National Target Program on building new rural areas of Vietnam, the authorities at all levels and the Women's Unions of the provinces across the country have taken measures to support women to develop production, practice saving sustainable poverty reduction. Vietnamese women with good traditions such as diligence, tolerance, thrift, and resilience have greatly contributed to promoting the strengths and advantages of the locality to alleviate poverty and get rich for family and society.

1.3.2. Participate in state management

In the trend of integration and development of the country, Vietnamese women have overcome all prejudices and challenges, rose to participate actively in social activities. More and more women are becoming politicians, participating in state management at all levels. The percentage of women participating in leadership and management in the political system is increasing. The percentage of women participating in committees and standing committees at all levels has increased, especially at commune and ward levels[see 14, p.56-57-58] The proportion of women in the National Assembly has also increased over the years, sometimes accounting for more than 27%. [see 14, pp.61-62-63]..... With her working position, the woman has participated in proposing, planning and advising on the development of guidelines, policies and laws for the Party and State and is also the one who implements all undertakings, policies of the Party, laws of the State into real life; contribute to fulfilling the political tasks of agencies, units and branches; contribute to building the Party and building a clean and strong State.

In order to meet the requirements of the job and affirm the capacity of women, Vietnamese women today also have a relatively high level of education and professional qualifications. Many women have doctorate and master degrees and are holding positions from Deputy Director, Director or higher... Women in modern society are always proactive, actively learning to improve their qualifications and quality and effectiveness of work, creating the image of a modern Vietnamese woman "good at domestic work, doing housework".

II. CONCLUSION

With great changes in economy and society in the past few decades, the role of Vietnamese women has changed a lot. Women are no longer assumed to be the ones behind, taking care of men's careers and taking care

of family affairs as before, but increasingly asserting their own capacity in economic, political and social activities. Those changes stem from the ability and bravery of Vietnamese women as well as the impacts of the correct guidelines and policies of the Party and State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. However, women in Vietnamese society today also suffer from many prejudices that affect women's position, role and ability, hinder their efforts in activities, especially political activities and scientific research.

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