



Patterns and Determinants of Living Arrangements of the Elderly in Vietnam

Associate Prof. Wade Pfau (GRIPS)

Giang Thanh Long (GRIPS & VDF)

wpfau@grips.ac.jp

glong_grips@yahoo.com

This paper was published in the VDF's book *Social Issues under Economic Transformation and Integration in Vietnam, Volume 2*. It seeks to quantify the extent, the evolution, and the determinants of living arrangements of the Vietnamese elderly. The findings provide useful information to social welfare policy makers.

- We use the Vietnam Living Standard Surveys in 1992/93 and 1997/98; and the Vietnam Household Living Standard Surveys in 2002 and 2004.
- Elderly men were more likely than elderly women to live with their children, and they were less likely to live alone or live with others (but no children).
- The elderly at more advanced ages were less likely than the younger elderly to live with their children. They tended to live alone or with a spouse.
- Educational qualifications were not an important factor for the elderly in deciding with whom they would live. Married elderly people were less likely to live with their children. Also, the urban elderly tended to live with their children, and they were less likely to live alone or with others (but no children).
- Significant differences existed between regions in Vietnam. Elderly people in the north were less likely to live with their children than those in the central regions, who in turn were less likely to live with their children than the elderly in the south.
- Some elderly people were employed in salaried work or in agriculture, or were self-employed. The majority of the working elderly were working in the agriculture sector, and they were less likely to live with their children in all comparisons, while the other working elderly did not show concrete trends.
- In general, the elderly living in households with higher per-capita expenditures were less likely to live with their children, though causality is unclear here because large households naturally tend to have lower per-capita expenditures. This factor did not have clear impacts on the decision of the elderly to live with others (but no children).
- Home ownership was a crucial factor for the elderly to decide their living arrangements. The elderly living in households where an elderly person owned the home were less likely to live with their children or others.