

.Research Article

Socio Economic Impacts of Migration On Tho Chu Island Commune Vietnam

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Abstract:

Population arrangement to islands for settlement is one of the important policies in many ways of each nation. This study was conducted to provide an understanding of the current situation and impacts of the migration to Tho Chu Island, Phu Quoc District, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam. In-depth interviews and survey questions were used to collect preliminary data on displaced people, insular living conditions, positive and negative impacts of the migration process on the socio-economic development on the island. They are also supplemented by secondary data which were collected from various sources in research process. The study shows that the migration to the island not only helps to supplement the labor force for the island, contributes to economic and labor structure restructuring on the island but also contributes to diversifying island economic activities and expand the space, enrich the cultural life of the island. However, the process of migration to the island also poses a number of problems for the people and the government on the island.

Keywords: Migration, Island, Affect, Tho Chu

Introduction:

In the current context, sending people to islands for settlement contributes both to asserting national sovereignty and creating a new living environment, building the new economy to create diversity in socio-economic development of the country. Tho Chu is an island commune of Phu Quoc district, Kien Giang province, in which Hon Nhan - one of eight islands in the island commune is selected as a base point of the baseline used to measure the breadth of Vietnam's territorial waters. [1] In 1992, Kien Giang province started the migration to Tho Chu island with 17 households to build a new economic zone. At the

end of 1992 and early 1993, 10 more households were allowed to go to the island and Tho Chau commune was officially established on April 24, 1993. [2,3] Since then, residents living on the island are fishermen and naval officers of region 5 and border guards. In 2012, the island's population was 1,700 people with 513 households, by 2017, the corresponding numbers were 2,042 people with 597 households. [4] This migration process has resulted in profound socio-economic impacts: the civilization of the island, creating a local labor force to exploit the economic potential of the island; on the other

hand, it puts pressure on the authority to provide basic social services such as education, health care, or entertainment, and emerging social problems put pressure on the administrative management... This study aims to analyze and evaluate the current situation of the impacts of migrants on socio-economic development of Tho Chu island commune in order to provide scientific bases for proposing suitable and effective solutions, policies to promote socio-economic development, ensure national security and defense for Tho Chu island commune.

Research Location And Methodology:

Tho Chau Island, also known as Tho Chu, is an island commune in Kien Giang. Tho Chu has the central geographical coordinate of 9°17' North latitude; 103°28' East longitude, about 160 km northwest from Ca Mau cape, and about 100 km southwest from Phu Quoc island. Tho Chu archipelago consists of eight islands: Tho Chu island, Tu Islet, Cao Cat Islet, Nhan Islet, Kho Islet, Da Ban Islet, Xanh Islet and Cao Islet. Among which, Tho Chu is the largest island (13.95 km²) and often inscribed on the nautical charts of many Western ships from centuries ago as Poulo Panjang; Nhan Islet is a small island with an area of about 2,000 m² with the highest point reaching an altitude of 40 m above sea level. This is the A1 point (9°15'N 103°27'E) on the baseline used to measure the breadth of Vietnam's territorial waters. According to the Decree No. 19/CP dated 24 April 1993 by the Government, Tho Chau commune was established. The first households moving here received initial funding support to settle on the island. From the first 17 households, so far, there are more than 597 households with more than 2,000 people. On the island there are kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, military health station, post office, and mobile phone broadcasting stations of Viettel, Vinaphone, mobifone...Based on secondary data sources, reports collected from 2010 to 2017 and primary data obtained through 320 sociological survey questionnaires are used to evaluate and analyze the impacts of migrants on socio-economic development of Tho Chu island. Using SPSS software [5] to process survey data, we obtain the following results:

Research Results And Discussion:

1.1.Current Migration Situation:

+ Subjects of migration and living conditions of Tho Chu island: The majority of residents on the island are people who have moved from other districts and provinces in the mainland (nearly 95%). Only about 5.3% of interviewees say that their families have been living on the island since before 1975 and are considered as natives on the island. This is resulted from the policy on migration to the island in order to exploit the potentials and advantages for socio-economic development and ensure the national security and defense of Vietnam's sea and islands. Also from the survey results, in the 1992-2000 period, the number of households moving to live in Tho Chu is the largest.

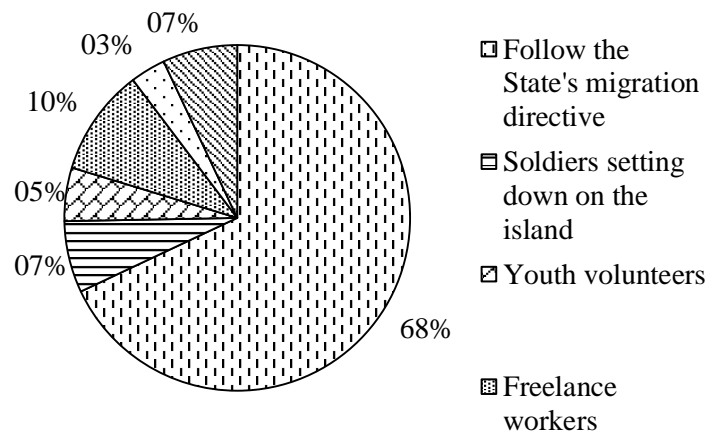


Figure 1: Subjects of migration to Tho Chu Island (Source: 2018 survey results)

Since the majority of residents on the island have moved from other places, the composition of migrants is quite diverse. Nearly two-thirds of the residents moving to the island follow the state's migration scheme, while freelance workers account for only 10%. Other migrants account for a low proportion (figure 1). This shows that the migration process on this island has been proactively implemented by the local government and the migration scheme has been managed well, thereby providing appropriate support and investment.

+ Reasons for moving to the island According to the survey results, the reasons people choose to move to the island are mainly because they hope to have favorable conditions for production and business (29%), legalize their families (26.7%),

receive housing support (25%), and receive capital support (9%)...

+ Jobs, incomes:

No specific income level is confirmed, but up to 69.3% of migrants believe that their jobs and incomes on the island are getting better than those in their former places of residence. Only 5% of migrants have the current incomes on the island lower than their previous incomes. This figure belongs to elderly people living alone and those who face risks in labor and production or have not found suitable jobs. Thus, basically, about two-thirds of respondents are satisfied with their jobs and incomes on the island. It can be seen that, unlike when migrating to big cities or central districts where competition for jobs and incomes is fierce, when migrating to the island, with the state's support, migrants may find jobs with better incomes.

+ Places of residence:

55.7% of respondents say that the life on the island is much better than their former places of residence. Meanwhile, nearly one third of respondents say that the living conditions are still the same. The rest says that the living conditions on the island are worse (accounting for 12.0%). The fact shows that, since the island is far from the mainland, construction materials transported to the island are much more expensive than those in the mainland; therefore, the construction of houses is often difficult and expensive. This is an issue that the government should pay attention to in order to have policies to support residents in housing for them to settle down.

+ Children's learning conditions

Regarding the children's learning conditions on the island, 85% of respondents are satisfied with the learning conditions on the island for grades from kindergarten to secondary. However, students who wish to attend High School or study higher level must go to the mainland to continue their studies. This is a significant obstacle in improving the quality of local human resources for Tho Chu Island and also a common situation in the small islands of Vietnam.

+ Health services

Regarding healthcare services, about 70% of migrants in Tho Chu say that the health services on the island meet their common healthcare needs. Meanwhile, for high-quality health services,

people have to go to the mainland to receive health care. In fact, a number of health facilities in Tho Chu have been equipped with some modern equipment but still in small quantity and especially there is a lack of doctors and medical staff in terms of both quantity and quality.

1.2. Impacts Of Migration:

3.2.1. Positive Impacts:

3.2.1.1. Additional Workforce For The Island:

In 2017, the population on Tho Chu Island was 597 households with 2,042 people, mainly fishermen who have migrated to the island since 1992. 34% of the surveyed households have 2 people of working age, 40% of households have 3-4 people of working age. Thus, about three-quarters of the interviewed households have 2-4 people of working age. This is the source of workforce for the cause of construction, socio-economic development and island protection. The survey results show that 58.7% of respondents (total 320 votes) are male. This means there are more male workers migrating to Tho Chu than female workers. This result is not consistent with migration theories but reasonable in the context that Tho Chu is a front-end island of Vietnam with many difficulties in terms of traffic and socio-economic conditions. Those who are selected to migrate to the island must have more advantages in terms of health and ability to withstand difficult living conditions.

3.2.1.2. Contribution To Workforce Restructuring And Stabilization Of Economic Development Of The Island:

Most of the people moving to Tho Chu have met the basic needs of the island's manpower, concentrating mainly in economic activities such as: civil services, fishery, maritime transport, especially service-trade and construction sectors which tend to increase, contributing to promoting economic and workforce restructuring on the island. According to the Report on socio-economic development situation in 2017 and directions and tasks in 2018 by the People's Committee of Tho Chu commune, in recent years, the socio-economic situation of the island commune continues to be stable and developed; many socio-economic targets continue to be reached and exceeded compared to the plan. The island's economic activities, mainly with the participation of the

migrants, have made a great contribution to such development. According to the poor household criteria, at the end of 2017, Tho Chu had: 14 poor households (accounting for 2.09%), decreasing by 4.03% compared to 2016. [4,6] Households living on the island have a stable life and settle down on the island. 81% of households say that their primary occupations remain unchanged compared to 5 years ago. We filter out households whose primary occupations change over 5 years, and then compare the occupations before and after 5 years to find reasons. As a results, among the remaining 19% of households (households with changed occupations), some households have switched from fishery and fishery services to small business and paid employment, while others who are doing small business switch to tourism services. Some households in which their members are unstable salaried employees, after 5 years, have stabilized their jobs. The reasons for occupational change compared to 5 years ago mainly include: Old age, which makes them unable to work hard or offshore (fishery, fishery services, farming), their wish to increase income and develop family economics, and job requirements,...

3.2.1.3. Contribution to the diversification of island livelihood activities

The survey results show that about 90% of migrants work in the informal sector, contributing to the economic growth of the island. The main livelihood activities (figure 2) selected include: fishery, fishery services, paid employment, civil services, tourism services, other occupations (small trade, business...).

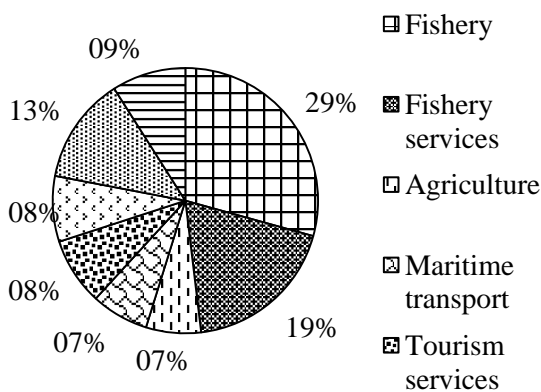


Figure 2: Livelihood activities in Tho Chu (Source: 2018 survey results) More than 70% of respondents say that their families

only have 01 economic activity generating income for the families. 26.0% (i.e. More than a quarter) of respondents say that their families have 02 income-generating economic activities. The number of families having 3-4 income-generating economic activities accounts for a small proportion (2.7%). Among the total number of interviewed households, about 90% of households are engaging in economic activities. This partly shows that the production activities are taking place vigorously in Tho Chu... The remaining households are not engaging in economic activities due to: old age, no job demand. The unemployment rate on the island is also very small: accounting for 1.7% of the total number of households.

3.2.1.4. Expansion of space and enrichment of cultural life on the island:

In Tho Chu, in addition to the permanent residents, there are fishermen of about 300-500 boats (with around 1,000 workers) from other localities alternately coming to temporarily stay for offshore fishing activities, forming the cultural diversity, both livelihood culture and environmental culture. These fishermen mainly live on boats anchored in Bai Dong and Bai Ngu but often have economic and cultural exchanges with the residents on the island. These fishermen have a significant influence on the redistribution of workforce, contributing to the island's economic growth. In addition, each resident or group of residents, or community has a lifestyle containing cultural, spiritual, and ethnic elements that they will bring when coming here. Adaptation and integration take time, and occur quickly or slowly depending on cultural, socio-economic differences between the place of departure and destination. It is the migrants who contribute to enriching the cultural life of Tho Chu island commune.

3.2.2. Negative Impacts:

3.2.2.1. Pressure On Population, Labor, And Employment:

The migration process enriches human resources, but raises a series of problems: from ensuring health care, education, vocational training to creating jobs, improving material and spiritual lives. It also affects the variation of size, quality and structure of the workforce, putting great pressure on the labor - employment problem. The education level of migrants is one of the factors affecting the quality

of human resources as well as the socio-economic development level of Tho Chu island. Only more than 24% of respondents went to high school, 35.7% finished secondary education and only 12.0% graduated from College-University. The number of people who did not attend school accounts for a relatively large proportion (5.3%). Since the workers in Tho Chu often do not have any qualifications, their jobs are mainly manual workers with the main occupations including preliminary processing of squid and dried anchovies, fishing around the island, aquaculture, small business, husbandry and cultivation.... There is only a small proportion of qualified workers working at state-managed departments. This is a major obstacle in improving labor productivity on the island in the coming time.

3.2.2.2. Investment Pressure:

For households, the need for production investment capital is also an issue that needs to be addressed. According to the survey results, 92.6% of households say that they have only one source of production investment capital, 7.0% of households have two sources of production investment capital. The number of households with 3 sources of capital accounts for a negligible proportion. Among the total number of interviewed households, 58.3% of households say that their capital is self-financed, regardless of how many sources of capital they have. In addition to the self-financed capital, some households borrow capital from credit sources. Only 5.3% of households say that they are using the State-financed capital. 14.3% of households do not have capital for production. Thus, the State's capital support policies have not yet been accessed by a large number of residents on the island, resulting in low efficiency.

3.2.2.3. Pressure On Education And Health:

With respect to the education situation on the island, among the total number of respondents, 59.3% of respondents say that there are enough

schools on Tho Chu Island, while 31% of others believe that there is a lack of schools. Thus, the percentage of people who think that their locality lacks schools is nearly one third. The main reason is that currently there are only kindergarten, primary and secondary schools on the island. To attend high school or study higher level, students must go to the mainland to continue their studies. This is a limitation in the training of human resources on the spot of the government on the island. With respect to health care: More than half of interviewees say that the health care on the island lacks facilities to meet the healthcare needs of the people. Some interviewees say that the State has equipped sufficient facilities on the island, but the qualifications of medical staff are still limited, making these facilities not yet fully exploited. Thus, in general, the health care situation of the people on the island still faces many difficulties due to the lack of facilities and many inconveniences when using health services.

3.2.2.4. Current Difficulties And Basic Difficulties Of Families:

In the survey questionnaires, we list over 10 difficulties that each family faces; however, in the process of collecting the questionnaires to evaluate the results, we will identify the 05 biggest difficulties that the interviewed households face to avoid unfocused data and evaluate the results in a more realistic way. According to the survey results, about 20% of households (one fifth) say that there are no difficulties in living and production. Nearly 40% of households say that their families are facing a major difficulty. About 20% of households say that there are 02 concurrent difficulties they have to deal with. 13% of households determine that they are solving 03 difficulties at the same time, while the rest are households with more than 03 difficulties to face. The main difficulties that the households face include: inability to access capital for production; lack of productive and residential land; lack of

health - education services in descending order of 28.3%, 20.0%, 9.7%, respectively (figure 3).

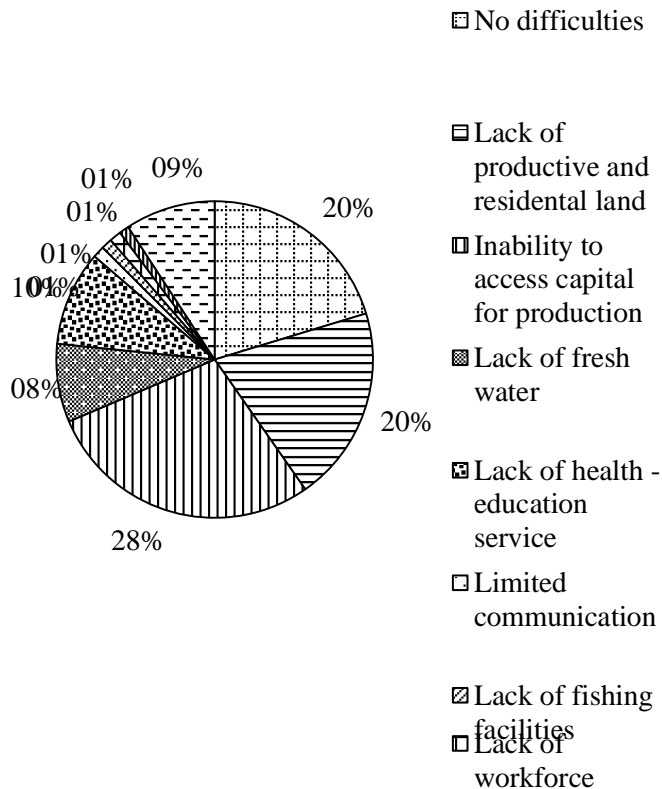


Figure 3: Difficulties faced by households (Source: 2018 survey results)

3.2.2.5. Impact On Population Distribution Of Tho Chu Island District:

Urbanization is necessary; however, island urbanization cannot follow the mainland pattern but needs to be considered with rational integration of narrow space on the floating island and open space towards the sea into a unified territory. With rather narrow living space on Tho Chu island today, the living activities and livelihood activities of the island's residents are concentrated in Bai Ngu. Bai Ngu has a concave arch shape with two protruding points Co Co and Nhan, and a length of about 750m and a width of 15 - 25m. Bai Dong is about 150m long and 30 - 40m wide. On Tu Islet, there are two beaches separated by a sedimentary rock. Tu Islet beach is about 250m in length, 25 - 30m in width, and has not yet been arranged for population and livelihood development. Other islets such as Cao Cat, Nhan, Xanh, Cao, Kho... Have very small area with almost no sandy beach. In that narrow living space together with the need for urbanization, the most appropriate development

direction of urban space - living space and livelihood space is development in two directions: vertically and horizontally reaching the sea by layered structures (including underground and under the sea). That is the orientation for the infrastructure development planning on the narrow ground of Tho Chu island district in particular and other small islands on the coastal island system in general. The present spatial approach spread on a horizontal plane is completely inappropriate in this case. According to that spatial development orientation, the next thing to do is to determine the space capacity to cope with the population growth. The settlement process is always associated with the population growth, both natural and mechanical growth. Therefore, it is necessary to orient the organization of the use of space into fixed and permanent use spaces (buildings with long-term use) and temporary use spaces (buildings with short-term use). The motto of use is to make the most of space and model after the multi-storey, multi-layered and multi-living-organism structure of the tropical rainforest, creating a rich living landscape and increasing service capacities of the urban residential ecosystem itself towards the smart, modern and multi-functional living space – livelihood.

Conclusions:

In evaluating the impacts of migrants on the socio-economic development of Tho Chu island, the article has evaluated from 2 aspects: positive and negative. On the positive side, migrants have increased and rejuvenated the workforce, contributing to island economic growth, diversification of economic activities, economic restructuring, labor restructuring, and enrichment of cultural life of the island...; On the negative side, Tho Chu Island has suffered pressure on population, labor, and employment; pressure in the provision of basic social services, and faced many emerging social and environmental problems... Mechanical growth is a key factor contributing to the population growth on the island. The main livelihood activities of Tho Chu residents include paid employment, civil services, fishery and fishery services... The occupations depending on nature: fishery, agriculture, seasonal employment... Does not generate stable income. The current incomes of the majority of

residents on Tho Chu island district are from salaries of public employees and pensioners who have settled on the island for a long time and from capital sources to support settlement and production development before and after 2000. These residents always have the sense of preserving and developing their capital through service activities. Incomes from tourism and tourism services are very limited in the current context because of the barriers of traffic conditions and entry restrictions, which needs development affiliation solutions. Economic activities on Tho Chu island district need to be oriented towards the combinations of diversity and specialization associated with the characteristics of both open - limited natural resources - humanity, non-resource economic activities and the market; limited internal resources and the ability to affiliate development, island-based livelihoods and marine-based livelihoods, limited resources and huge and expanding resources,... Aiming to ensure sustainable livelihoods for residents on the island.

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