

Value orientation for Vietnamese youth in the fourth industrial revolution: a philosophical assessment

Nguyet Thu Doan

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Abstract

The value orientation of youth is essential to national development in the Fourth Industrial Revolution era. The theoretical foundations and real-world effects of value orientation for young Vietnamese people are investigated in this research. Vietnamese Communist Party has always understood the importance of young issues in determining the course of the country. Traditional value systems have to adjust to the new problems brought about by fast technical developments and changing socio-cultural dynamics. In order to guide Vietnamese youth's ideas, ideals, and behaviors, new methods are needed, as this study investigates the theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence around their value orientations. The study gives a thorough evaluation of the existing value environment and suggests ways to promote a balanced value system that combines national and universal values by addressing the ideological trends of presentism and pragmatism.

Key words: Fourth Industrial Revolution, pragmatism, presentism, values, value orientation, Vietnamese youth

Introduction

Youth value orientation is very important in determining how any culture will develop in the future. This relevance is increased in Vietnam as the nation works through the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The values, beliefs, and ideas that youth are developing now will shape their decisions and deeds in the future. The purpose of this research is to investigate, in this setting, the philosophical and practical aspects of value orientation for young Vietnamese.

With reference to a number of philosophical and sociological concepts, the study starts with a theoretical review of values and value orientation. Values are seen as the guiding principles determining the desirableness of things and events, therefore affecting social interactions and human behavior. Following that, we explore Vietnamese value systems both historically and currently, looking at how traditional values have changed and how young people today see them. We examine presentism and pragmatism, two main ideological movements impacting young people today. Because pragmatic theory puts immediate benefits first, judgments made can be made with short-sightedness. Sometimes, ignoring long-term objectives and historical background, presentism emphasizes living in the present. These developments present difficulties for young people to be taught and guided in their value systems.

Our ultimate objective is to emphasize the need to combine national and universal values in a balanced approach to value orientation. While attending to contemporary issues, this strategy should respect Vietnam's rich cultural legacy. Vietnamese youth will be more equipped to handle the obstacles of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and significantly advance their nation by creating a strong and comprehensive value system.

Methodologically, this work combines quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed-methods design. While surveys provide a wider picture of value trends among Vietnamese young, information synthesized from expert and youth interviews provide in-depth perspectives. Value orientations from several generations are contrasted using comparative analysis to show current changes and continuity.

Values and Value Orientations: A Literature Review

Many researchers have focused on clarifying Vietnamese value orientations. Each scholar, coming from different approaches, has different ways of classifying value orientations. According to some definitions, values refer to the usefulness and benefit of an object to a subject. Values are "What makes an object useful, meaningful, precious, in some aspect" (Hoang et al., 1998: 407). Values can also be understood as: "The worth of an object, good or bad, precious or trivial, virtuous or vicious, right or wrong. The quality of an object that makes us like it, love it, that can satisfy one of our inclinations." (Tran, 1966: 86). Another relatively comprehensive definition of values is:

"A philosophical, sociological concept referring to the usefulness, meaning of natural or social objects and phenomena that can satisfy human needs and serve human interests. Here, objects and phenomena are considered from the perspective of whether they are desirable or not, whether they have positive or negative meaning for social life." (National Council for Directing the Compilation of the Vietnamese Encyclopedia, 2002: 97).

By using the concept of values, researchers can encompass the entire living space, not just positive or negative attitudes. Values are the center of human thinking, emotion, and behavior; they have intercultural connections and are determined interculturally; values allow comparisons between groups and within the same group.

One of the first books by a Vietnamese scholar written about traditional Vietnamese values is Phan Ke Binh's "Vietnamese Customs", first published in 1915. The relationships of Vietnamese people were presented by Phan Ke Binh according to 3 layers from the inside out: the family layer ("Discussing customs within the family clan"), the village layer ("Discussing village customs"), and the social layer ("Discussing social customs") (Phan, 1990: 7, 77, 206). The book "Concise History of Vietnamese Culture" by Dao Duy Anh was written in the context of Vietnam being colonized, with Vietnamese people being enslaved, that is, in a context of value upheaval and new-old, East-West conflicts:

"The current tragedy of our nation is the conflict between the traditional values of the old culture and the novelties of Western culture. How this conflict will be resolved is a matter relating to the very existence of our nation. But to resolve it, we must clearly see the true nature of this tragedy, that is, on the one hand, re-examine the content of the old culture, and on the other hand, study the true value of the new culture." (Ve, 1938: VII).

Another one from the earlier works discussing modern Vietnamese value orientations is Nguyen Hong Phong's "Understanding National Character - A Study of Traditional National Character Manifested in Literature, Arts and Life". He studied the core issues of Vietnamese spiritual values, highlighting the intrinsic necessity for Vietnam's victory, and identified five prioritized values as follows: First, collectivism and community; second, emphasis on ethics; third, thrift, simplicity, and pragmatism; fourth, indomitable patriotism and love for peace and humanity; and fifth, optimism. (Nguyen, 1963: 32-36). After Vietnam's reunification in 1975, one of the most important works marking the awareness of an entire era of traditional values was Tran Van Giau's "Traditional Spiritual Values of the Vietnamese Nation." Tran Van Giau summarized seven traditional spiritual values of the Vietnamese people: patriotism, diligence, heroism, creativity, optimism, compassion, and righteousness. (Tran, 1980) After the Doi Moi (Renovation) period began in 1986, the issue of values and value orientations was increasingly researched. The authors of the book "Traditional Values and Contemporary Vietnamese People" emphasized two prominent traditional values:

patriotism and human compassion. (Phan & Vu, 1994: 258, 268). Ho Si Quy affirmed some of Vietnam's superior values in the globalization process, namely love for learning, emphasis on education, diligence, community, and family (Ho, 2006: 199-207). In "The Vietnamese Values System from Tradition to Modernity and the Path to the Future", Tran Ngoc Them classified values according to 5 major characteristics of Vietnamese culture: village communalism, femininity, harmony orientation, holism, and flexibility (Tran, 2016: 155-262).

One of the earliest documents of the Communist Party of Vietnam on the issue of value orientation is Resolution No. 03-NQ/TW dated July 16, 1998, which affirmed that Vietnam's traditional national values include: "The ardent patriotism, the will for national self-reliance, the spirit of unity, the sense of community binding individuals - families - villages - Fatherland; compassion, tolerance, respect for affection, ethics, virtues of diligence, creativity in labor; subtlety in behavior, simplicity in lifestyle..." (Ban Bi Thu - Central Committee, 1998) This issue has been increasingly emphasized and clarified in the documents of the Communist Party of Vietnam up to the present day.

As we have already alluded to before, the concept of value originates from economics, used to indicate the importance of commodities, most clearly manifested in commodity exchange. According to the Marxist-Leninist view, the value of a commodity is the crystallized human labor in that commodity. Later, the concept of value was widely used in other sciences with various classifications.

Milton Rokeach, an American social psychologist, divided values into two types: instrumental values and terminal values, in which instrumental values are modes of behavior, means to achieve terminal values, while terminal values are end-states of existence that a person strives for throughout their life (Rokeach, 1973). Instrumental values consist of 18 components: Ambitious, Broad-minded, Capable, Clean, Courageous, Forgiving, Helpful, Honest, Imaginative, Independent, Intellectual, Logical, Loving, Loyal, Obedient, Polite, Responsible, Self-controlled (Rokeach, 1973). Terminal values also have 18 components: Comfortable Life, Equality, Exciting Life, Family Security, Freedom, Health, Inner Harmony, Love, National Security, Social Recognition, True Friendship, Wisdom, World at Peace, World of Beauty, Pleasure / Leisurely Life, Salvation, Self-Respect, Sense of Accomplishment (Rokeach, 1973).

The core of values lies in the relationship between the subject and object, the individual and society, and human development and societal development. Societal development enables human development, and conversely, human development also determines societal development. In the relationship between humans and society, the individual does not oppose or contradict the collective, nor does the individual blindly submit to societal regulations. Instead, individual behavior must always exhibit proactivity and subjectivity.

Values are created and play an important role in the process of humans understanding and transforming nature and society. Different ethnicities and nations, with their unique natural conditions, socio-economic conditions, and developmental histories, have different value systems. The value systems of an ethnicity or nation must be compatible with the history and culture of that ethnicity or nation.

Value orientation is an important domain of value philosophy. It determines the fundamental values and priority levels between values that a particular subject maintains based on their own value conception when facing or dealing with relationships, contradictions, or conflicts. Value orientation is practical; its prominent role is determining and governing the subject's value choices, thus directly influencing the subject itself and the relationships between the subject and other subjects.

Value orientation is a system formed by a group of interrelated values, with a set of correlated principles or standards to determine behavioral patterns, life goals, or

preferred problem-solving approaches for individuals or societies. Since value orientation is a combination of interrelated values, it includes not only value elements but also cognitive, emotional, and volitional components. It reflects the relative importance of particular values among others and forms a complete system. For example, in a society where past, present, and future values are all valued, different individuals or social groups, based on specific historical conditions and cultural traditions, may orient their values more towards the past, focus on solving present issues, or pursue happiness in the future (Hills, 2002: 5).

Since the scholars of functionalist theory introduced the concept of value orientation in the 1950s, there has been increasing research on this topic. Studies not only logically analyze the implications of value orientation in particular societies or groups but also compare related factors that may influence value orientation based on empirical data.

Notable authors who have contributed to the definitions, understandings, and analyses of value orientation include Melvin Lester Kohn (1928-2021), who analyzed the characteristic value orientations of certain classes in society, and Talcott Parsons (1902-1979), who discussed differences in value orientation between traditional and modern societies. Florence Kluckhohn's theory addressed issues and value orientations that all of humanity commonly faces. Although Milton Rokeach's (1918-1988) widely cited value survey did not use the term value orientation, the "value system" in his famous value questionnaire closely aligns with the concept of value orientation.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck summarized five types of value orientation:

1. The conception of human nature (evil, mixed good and evil, changeable).
2. The conception of the relationship between humans and nature/supernature (subjugation to nature, harmony with nature, mastery over nature).
3. The time orientation in human life (past, present, future).
4. The view of the nature of the self (being, being-in-becoming, doing).
5. The conception of relations between human beings (individualistic, collateral, lineal).

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck defined the concept of value orientation as follows:

"Value orientations are complex but definitely patterned (rank-ordered) principles, resulting from the transactional interplay of three analytically distinguishable elements of the evaluative process - the cognitive, the affective, and the directive elements - which give order and direction to the ever-flowing stream of human acts and thoughts as these relate to the solution of 'common human problems'" (Caudill & Scarr, 1962: 55).

When studying value orientations, many studies around the world use culture as an important explanatory variable. Value orientations are influenced or adjusted by culture, including four core values - individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance, reflecting "patterns of thinking, feeling and potential acting." These four values are often used to describe the cultural value orientations of individuals in many places around the world. (Niranjan et al., 2013: 264-265)

In the empirical comparative direction, apart from cultural differences, class is clearly closely related to value orientation, and the relationship between value orientation and other factors, such as gender, occupation, region, etc., is also widely studied by researchers. However, according to many scholars, studying value orientation for youth is important because value orientation not only affects youth ethics and lifestyle, but also has an intimate connection with academic achievement as well as the working and contributing process of youth. This relationship is considered one of the important reasons explaining why different family circumstances can affect children's academic performance and career.

As society becomes more open, the pluralistic values concept becomes popular, and studying value orientation for youth also has profound significance. This is because different value orientations not only shape different behavioral patterns and life goals but also influence youth attitudes toward education, family, work, and social relationships. While schools and official media institutions often emphasize or convey traditional value orientations or the values of the majority (i.e., dominant values), other value orientations or minority values may be overlooked or even excluded. The injustice this causes certainly deserves attention, but potential cultural or value conflicts should not be underestimated either. How to coordinate different value orientations and nurture respect for value diversity, thereby eliminating disturbances in society, is an important issue that needs to be seriously considered.

From the above concepts, we can understand value orientation as the construction of prioritized values, from many different value concepts into a superior value conception. From a social perspective, this superior value conception is the superior values selected, constructed, and promulgated in a community or culture; from an individual perspective, this superior value conception is acknowledged, chosen and internalized by the individual, forming their personality structure, which then functions to guide evaluations of things, arouse attitudes, guide and adjust behavior. In life and work, all human decisions and behaviors are guided by a certain fundamental thought and value. Value orientation can, therefore, also be seen as the overall guiding beliefs for human actions, choices, and decisions in different situations.

Value Orientation for Vietnamese Youth Today

According to the 2019 population census, as of April 1, 2019, Vietnam's population was 96,208,984, of which the youth population was 22,898,886, accounting for 24.6% of the total population. However, for various reasons, the proportion of Vietnam's young workforce is decreasing (Central Population and Housing Census Steering Committee, 2019: 62). According to Article 1 of the 2020 Youth Law, youth refers to Vietnamese citizens from 16 to 30 years old (National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2020). Thus, Vietnamese youth includes those born roughly from 1994 to 2008, of which about 40% are from the 9X generation and 60% from the 2K generation (also called 10X). If Generation Z is considered those born around the mid-1990s to the early 2010s, it seems that all of Vietnam's current youth belong to Generation Z, sharing many common characteristics of Generation Z globally.

The generation of Vietnamese Youth was born when the Renovation achieved major successes, and the Vietnamese economy entered a period of rapid growth. Today's youth did not experience the so-called subsidies and planned economy, but were born reaping the fruits of Renovation, enjoying better material conditions. Growing up, they accompanied the development of the Internet, so their perspectives are more open and diverse. This generation has more material and spiritual choices, while their ways of thinking and worldviews are also more diverse and comprehensive.

President Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam paid special attention to youth affairs, building ethics for youth, and linked to that was providing value orientation for youth. President Ho Chi Minh affirmed the role and mission of youth for the nation: "Youth are the future masters of the country. It is true that whether the country prospers or declines, is weak or strong, largely depends on the youth" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011a: 216). To be worthy future masters of the country, youth need to prepare themselves spiritually and physically: "For youth to be worthy future masters, they must currently temper their spirit and strength, must go to work to prepare for that future" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011a: 216). The foundation of value orientation, according to President Ho Chi Minh, must be "Chí công vô tư" (absolute justice and no prejudice; or very just and equitable, by no means partial or corrupt), putting common interests,

the interests of the country and nation above narrow individual interests. It is impossible to determine the right value system if the value subject only pursues individualism. Therefore, he demanded the elimination of individualism. He repeatedly emphasized:

"Youth must fight against selfishness, only caring about personal interests and a personal lifestyle. Fight against the pursuit of enjoyment and avoidance of hardship. Fight against the disdain for labor, especially manual labor. Fight against laziness and extravagance. Fight against a fawning lifestyle, arrogance, deception, and boastfulness" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011b: 265).

Ho Chi Minh further explained this issue: "Individualism gives birth to the thought of fame and fortune, only wanting to be this lord or that lady. Then the thought of fame and fortune gives birth to its child, and its child gives birth to its grandchild...that is the two disdains: disdaining manual labor and disdaining manual workers; and the two fears: fearing hardship and suffering" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011c: 399). Therefore, Ho Chi Minh affirmed: "To fix individualism, when doing anything, don't think of yourself first, but think of your compatriots, of all the people. We have a saying that when there is hardship, you should go first; when enjoying, you should go last; in all tasks, think of the common interests first and personal interests later" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011c: 400).

The Communist Party of Vietnam always emphasizes building ethics, culture, lifestyle, and values for youth. The Resolution of the 7th Party Central Committee Plenum (10th tenure) on strengthening the Party's leadership over youth affairs during industrialization and modernization clearly stated the objective:

"To continue building a generation of Vietnamese youth imbued with patriotism and national self-reliance; firm in the ideals of national independence and socialism; with revolutionary ethics, legal obedience, cultural living for the community; capable and qualified for international integration; healthy, knowledgeable, skilled and industrious in collective labor, becoming good citizens of the country" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2008: 43).

Patriotism is the most important value in the Vietnamese value system and one of the top values that youth value orientation needs to aim for. Here, we also clearly see contents closely tied to values and requirements for value orientation, such as self-reliance, independence, socialism, revolutionary ethics, culture, community spirit, etc. The 11th Party Congress also clearly stated

"To do well in political and ideological education, traditions, ideals, ethics and lifestyle; create conditions for the young generation to study, work, recreate, develop physically and intellectually. Encourage and urge youth to nurture great dreams and aspirations, take the vanguard, be creative, and master modern science and technology. Form an excellent youth force in all fields, faithfully and outstandingly inheriting the revolutionary cause of the Party and nation, making an important contribution to accelerating industrialization, modernization, and building and defending the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011: 242-243).

The issue of determining value orientation and the mission of youth in the present era is increasingly receiving attention and clear guiding documents from the Party and State, such as the Youth Development Strategy for 2021-2030, which sets out the overall objective:

"To build a comprehensively developed generation of Vietnamese youth imbued with patriotism, self-reliance spirit, national pride; with

revolutionary ideals, aspirations, desires to rise up and build the country; with ethics, civic consciousness, law-abiding; healthy and with a healthy lifestyle; cultured, knowledgeable, educated, with life skills, careers and jobs; with a will for self-reliance and entrepreneurship, dynamism, creativity, mastery of science and technology. Develop a high-quality young human resource to meet the requirements of rapid and sustainable development of the country and international integration. Promote the spirit of dedication, vanguard role, volunteerism and increase youth responsibility in the cause of national construction and defense" (Prime Minister, 2021: 2).

These are important guiding viewpoints and suggestions for determining and implementing value orientation for Vietnamese youth in the new period.

The formation of a person's value conception certainly cannot be separated from the context of the times and a certain social living environment. Among these, the mode of social production and the economic status that person is in will have a decisive influence on the formation of their value conception. The current generation of youth pursues practical happiness and high quality of life, prefers jobs they are interested in, and values enjoyment and leisure living while also valuing personal privacy.

Society is created by humans - in other words, humans build and transform society. Therefore, human development is unified with the formation of external conditions for that development process, which is the process of social practice. Human development is socially determined, but social existence itself is a product created by humans in practice. Throughout their historical process, humans constantly introduce regulations and build norms, but humans also constantly rely on their unique creativity to break out of established social relations, free themselves from regulations, transcend norms to self-perfect and develop as the subject of history. Creative activity transcending social norms is the effort of individuals.

Value orientation encompasses the structures related to interpersonal relations, including aspects such as emotions, beliefs, ideological systems, and behaviors. Individualism holds that the individual is the basic unit of survival, characterized by a high spirit of self-reliance. Individuals often feel lonely and distanced from the collective, paying little attention to others' opinions. When individual goals do not align with group goals, they rarely follow collective goals and are ready to openly conflict and confront others.

In contrast, collectivism posits that the collective or group is the basic unit of survival, providing material and spiritual security. There is a sense of dependence on a particular group, and "we-consciousness" is prominent. Most individual action goals conform to group goals, valuing others' opinions and often following others, especially those in authority. Collectivism emphasizes group harmony and tries to avoid conflict, believing that any outcome is caused by the group and sharing responsibility among everyone.

In the realities of Vietnamese social life, it must be affirmed that the development of society and human development, the development of the collective and the development of individuals within that collective, have a dialectical relationship inextricably linked - as society develops, people develop; as the collective develops, individuals develop, and vice versa. In Vietnamese society, society and the individual, community, and individuality have a two-way, tightly bound relationship. The current value tendency emphasizing the individual differs considerably from the traditional ethical conception and value criteria emphasizing the collective over the individual and the community over the individual.

However, overemphasizing the collective's determination of the individual beyond the individual's tolerance threshold causes the individual to lose motivation and creativity,

and if individuals are afflicted by this, then the collective and society will be as well. This generation has the advantage of linking work and enjoyment, the individual and community, tradition and modernity, nation and internationality. In 2013, the Central Youth Union launched the "Building Exemplary Vietnamese Youth Values in the New Period" campaign with 3 core values of "Pure Heart," "Bright Mind", "Great Aspiration" (Central Youth Union Secretariat, 2013: 2), which were concretized into 12 specific criteria at the 11th Youth Union Congress: 1- Revolutionary ideals, 2- Steadfast bravery, 3- Rich patriotism, 4- Pure ethics, 5- Cultural lifestyle, 6- Law-abiding, 7- Pioneering action, 8- Constant creativity, 9- Continuous learning, 10- Good health, 11- Appropriate skills, 12- Aspiration to rise (Central Youth Union Standing Committee, 2023: 1).

From the perspective of values, value orientation is very important. A stable value orientation will gradually form the pursuit of values and the achievement of a certain value goal. This value goal will become the spiritual drive for youth to strive for. To strengthen education and guidance of values for the younger generation, we must always place value goals at the forefront.

Values are human perspectives in evaluating and choosing life purposes, different things and phenomena in practical activities. Studying youth values is to understand what young people are choosing and pursuing. A characteristic of youth is being future-oriented. Through studying youth's value conceptions, we can observe and understand their important tendencies in social change. Youth are the most dynamic force in social development; their tendencies are closely related to renovation, economic growth, political stability, social harmony, and cultural development. The shift in youth's value conceptions is considered the most pronounced change in social changes caused by the transition process. The concept of value orientation is used to more accurately reflect this dynamic process of change.

As the global economy becomes increasingly integrated and human interaction continues to develop, there will certainly be clashes and conflicts between different values. In particular, the development and application of artificial intelligence and big data, as well as the prevalence of social media among youth, have led to the globalization of information, gradually bridging cultural gaps and accelerating the penetration of value systems. The integration and impact of cultures is unstoppable. This objectively influences the perspective and acceptance of the current youth generation compared to previous generations.

Each generation of youth will face challenges characteristic of their own generation. The immature aspects of today's Vietnamese youth also reflect issues of the times, as well as issues arising in Vietnam's development process. This is precisely the issue that requires proper value orientation to resolve.

Pragmatism and Presentism: Two Challenges for Value Orientation

There are two ideological trends and value orientations that are influencing and hindering the value orientation of Vietnamese youth today: pragmatism and presentism. Pragmatism is increasingly being abused in all aspects of social life. If value orientation follows pragmatism, then value judgments are based on personal benefit as the standard for evaluation and selection. Pragmatism only concerns itself with the effectiveness and benefits of things and events, which often leads to short-term, relative, and instrumental value orientations. (Trinh, 2020: 85; Stroud, 2006) Since reality is always rich and constantly changing, effectiveness and benefits cannot be fixed, leading to continuously changing value choices (Elder-Vass, 2022). This certainly leads to short-termism, relativism, and instrumentalism, causing people to become indifferent to others, lack enthusiasm for grand goals, lose interest in common work, and even gradually fall into selfishness, self-interest, and narrow individualism. Presentism is also manifesting among the youth. Presentism emphasizes the satisfaction of current needs and values present experiences in life, often expressed by

young people pursuing immediate gratification of needs. It advocates not thinking about the past, not worrying about the future, living in the present, and believing that the present is the most important time for young people (Fendler, 2008). The truest happiness lies in the present, in present life experiences, evaluating both the past and the future only from the perspective of present value. As François Hartog (2015) described presentism, it is “a world so enslaved to the present that no other viewpoint is considered admissible” (Hawkey, 2023: 9; Hartog, 2015: XIII).

Such a worldview and value orientation will certainly pose challenges for the work of education and value orientation for Vietnamese youth today. The thoughts of today's youth are very diverse, fragmented, incomplete, and even chaotic. Young people are searching for a value system that suits them, but there are still many difficulties. Vietnamese youth today and in the near future face many risks regarding values.

Resolution No. 33-NQ/TW on building and developing Vietnamese culture and people to meet the requirements of sustainable national development clearly stated one of the limitations: “The uncritical import, promotion, and easy assimilation of foreign cultural products have negatively impacted the cultural life of a segment of the population, especially the young,” thereby setting forth the task: “Summarizing and building a standard value system for Vietnamese people in the period of industrialization, modernization, and international integration.” Distorted ideologies and deviant lifestyles are not unfamiliar phenomena for many youth groups. This negatively impacts the individuals themselves and poses a danger to society. Moreover, the stability and development of Vietnamese society largely depend on a youthful workforce full of vitality, optimistic ideals, strong willpower, and advanced knowledge and skills, as well as understanding and altruism. The multi-dimensional fluctuations of modern society, the impact of globalization, and technological advances are causing Vietnamese youth to split into groups with different value trends, among which the loss of orientation and direction of a significant portion of youth is a prevailing reality today. Regarding this issue, General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng pointed out:

“There is still a segment of young people losing faith, lacking awareness of legal compliance, living pragmatically, lacking ideals; showing signs of alienation from the nation's fine cultural traditions, and falling into individualism. Although it is only a small segment, these manifestations need to be addressed because if not, they will be the root cause leading to “tự diễn biến”, “tự chuyển hoá” (‘self-evolution’ and ‘self-transformation,’ with the negative meaning) with many consequences for future generations.” (Nguyễn, 2022).

Value orientation determines the character of an individual and also dictates the morality of society. A person with ideals, knowledge, and proper behavioral norms is a good person; similarly, a society with a shared future, scientific and technological advancement, and civilized ethics is a good society. A correct value orientation that is beneficial to society and fosters personal development does not come naturally. Therefore, orienting values and, along with it, fostering a lifestyle of truthfulness, goodness, and beauty for the youth is extremely necessary.

Before his death, in his Testament, President Hồ Chí Minh advised the Party and the State of Vietnam that “Fostering the revolutionary generation for the future is a very important and necessary task” (Hồ Chí Minh, 2011d: 622). To build a new society, we must have new people. Vietnamese society is renewing every day, so the people of Vietnam need to be educated, nurtured, and self-developed in the overall process of national renovation. The youth are not only a core human resource but also truly a pillar in many aspects. Therefore, special attention must be paid to value orientation for the youth in the current period.

Conclusion

In the setting of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, value orientation is very important for young Vietnamese people. In order to represent Vietnam's rich cultural legacy and modern reality, our study emphasizes the need for a balanced value system that combines traditional and modern values. Since young people would be the country's future guardians, the Communist Party of Vietnam has long stressed the need to teach them moral and patriotic principles. The ideological tendencies of presentism and pragmatism that threaten value education must be addressed as the nation experiences fast technological and economic developments.

Youth need a steady orientation in values to be guided toward making constructive contributions to society. This means accepting universal principles that meet the needs of modernity in addition to traditional virtues like patriotism and community spirit. By doing this, young Vietnamese people can acquire a broad perspective that will help them successfully negotiate the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Our results emphasize the need for a comprehensive strategy for value orientation, which combines theoretical knowledge with empirical evidence to comprehend and direct the developing value systems of young Vietnamese people. Taking such a stance guarantees that young people have the moral and intellectual underpinnings required to support both national progress and international integration. If we want to achieve this, we need coordinated efforts from the Party, the State, educational institutions, and society at large to guarantee that the youth are ready to take on the chances and problems of the future.

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Dr. Nguyet Thu Doan
University of Social Sciences and Humanities
Vietnam National University
Hanoi
Vietnam
nguyetdt@vnu.edu.vn
ORCID: 0009-0005-6429-7012