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Migration in the Rural Region of the Mekong Delta, Vietnam – Social Issues Need to Be Considered

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Abstract:

The article will describe an overall picture of the migration process, the change in the population structure, the change in the division of labor in the family, the change in the traditional role of emigrating women and the social problems arising from migration in the rural areas in the Mekong Delta both spatially and temporally over the past decade. With the research methods such as the analysis of previous related research reports and the combination of qualitative research methods through in-depth interviews, the article will clarify the problems arising in the places of out-migration of workers to which the previous studies have not really been interested. The research results show that the causes of the change in the population structure in the Mekong Delta region are the process of industrialization and modernization of the country along with the partial impacts of climate change such as the loss of housing due to landslides and the reduction of agricultural land to serve the urban and industrial development. These have adversely affected the economic life of a part of people in rural areas in the Mekong Delta and created a push to force the unemployed workers in rural areas to leave their hometowns in search of new sources of livelihood, especially the female workers. This impact has changed the population structure in the rural families and led to some social problems such as the change in the division of labor in families with migrant women, which increased the family burden and the lack of love and care for the elderly and children who stay at home.

Keywords: migrant women, population, migrant labor, the elderly, children, livelihood.

越南湄公河三角洲农村地区的移民——需要考虑的社会问题

摘要:

文章将描述农村迁移过程的全貌、人口结构的变化、家庭分工的变化、迁移女性传统角色的变化以及迁移

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带来的社会问题。过去十年在湄公河三角洲的空间和时间上。本文通过对前人相关研究报告的分析、深度访谈等定性研究方法相结合的研究方法，厘清前人研究未真正解决的劳动力外迁地问题。很感兴趣。研究结果表明，湄公河三角洲地区人口结构变化的原因是国家工业化和现代化进程以及气候变化的部分影响，如山体滑坡造成的房屋损失和人口减少。农业用地服务于城市和工业发展。这些都对湄公河三角洲部分农村地区民众的经济生活造成了不利影响，促使农村地区的失业工人背井离乡寻找新的生计来源，尤其是女工。这种影响改变了农村家庭的人口结构，并导致了一些社会问题，如流动妇女家庭的分工变化，增加了家庭负担，以及对留守儿童缺乏关爱等。呆在家里。

关键词：流动妇女、人口、流动劳动力、老人、儿童、生计。

1. Introduction

In the process of socio-economic development of each country, the population plays a significant role because the population is both a productive force and a consuming force. Therefore, the size, structure, distribution, speed and quality of the population have a great influence on the socio-economic development process. The more the society develops, the more the birth and the death rates will decrease, and the average life expectancy will increase. As a result, it shows the strong impact of the socio-economic factors on the factors of the population, such as the birth, the death, the marriage and the migration rate (Shatnawi, 2021).

Recently, the Mekong Delta has had a high level of migration, especially the young workers who have migrated to big cities and provinces such as Ho Chi Minh City. Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai, and Binh Duong also joined the labor export to countries such as Korea, China, Thailand, and Japan. It is the massive migration of young labor that has created social problems in rural areas, such as the lack of creative young labor resources in rural areas; the lack of the attention and care from relatives of migrants for the elderly and children, especially the burden of taking care of children on the shoulders of the elderly...As a result, the rural areas have gradually become a place of slow development on both the economy and the social life.

The article focuses on researching and analyzing the impact of the market economy as well as the partial impact of the climate change on the agricultural production, the rural labor resources, the massive wave of migration over the past decade in which the migration of female workers has especially changed the division of labor in rural families in the Mekong Delta.

2. Research Methods

2.1. Secondary Information Analysis

Research, analysis, and use of the national statistical data, the statistical reports from the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, the An Giang Statistics Office, the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of An Giang province, as well as those of some Mekong Delta provinces and many domestic and foreign studies on population and migration.

Some of the content is cited as evidence for the content of the article both in terms of data and opinion of the article.

2.2. Collecting and Analyzing Primary Information

The use of a qualitative research method with in-depth interview tools will shed light on issues of concern, such as the impact of the market economy and the climate change on the lives of rural people, especially the migrant women and their families; the change in the division of labor within the family, such as the production and reproduction and nurturing; the gender issues in the families of emigrant women, the arising social problems and the wishes, aspirations of the emigrant women and their families. During the interview, the article will have additional questions and explore more details of the problem to be researched.

Template selection: The article uses the selecting quota template method to determine the situation of changes in the division of labor in the family as well as the gender issues in the families of migrant women.

The sample size of the in-depth interview was 8 households in rural areas of An Giang province, specifically:

- 7 women migrating: 3 women migrating far away (to other provinces) and 4 women migrating near. They are married and aged 18 years or older.

- 8 family members of migrant women: 4 cases are fathers; 1 case is a mother; 2 cases are husbands; 1 case is an old sister. The family members of the women are who live in the same house and use the money sent from migrant women.

In-depth interview criteria for families with migrant women include the following sections:

1. Some socio-economic characteristics of households with migrant women.
2. Changes in the division of labor before and after women who have migrated.
3. Difficulties and wishes, aspirations of women and their families

How to process the data: The content of the interview is recorded and knocked out the word; the interview content will be used as evidence consistent with the analysis content of the article.

3. Research Results and Discussion

3.1. The Reality of the Change in Population Structure in the Rural Areas of the Mekong Delta

The population, which is the quantity and quality of people of a community, residing in a territory (planet, continent, country, etc.) at a given time, fluctuates over time and space. Its fluctuations have a great impact on the lives of individuals, families and society, where the population structure is the division of the entire population into different parts according to certain criteria. The main types of population structure widely used in demography are structures by sex, age, labor, education level, rural and urban areas. The change in the age structure of a country's population is a critical basis for that country to make policies for developing the economy, the labor market, the health care, the

education and the social policies (Tien Giang Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

There are different ways to divide the total population, and each of them serves different and meaningful research purposes in analyzing, evaluating and adjusting the population process in a way that benefits the long-term and stable socio-economic development.

According to the General Statistics Office of Vietnam (2010, 2020), the population in the Mekong Delta has decreased significantly in many provinces, such as Soc Trang, An Giang, Dong Thap, Hau Giang, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, Can Tho, Vinh Long, and Tra Vinh. In Table 1, it can be seen that, in 10 years, there are about 694,660 people in the Mekong Delta region moving out of the rural areas. This is a very large number, which is worthy of being considered.

Table 1. Population in the rural areas of the Mekong Delta (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, 2020). Unit: Person

Population in the rural areas of the Mekong Delta	2009	2019	Population change after 10 years (+: increase; -: decrease)
Long An	1,186,036	1,417,050	+231,014
Tien Giang	1,443,305	1,516,850	+73,545
Ben Tre	1,131,632	1,162,163	+30,531
Tra Vinh	849,316	835,582	- 13,734
Vinh Long	867,907	853,118	-14,789
Dong Thap	1,370,508	1,294,530	-75,978
An Giang	1,534,436	1,305,482	-228,954
Kien Giang	1,233,228	1,235,076	+1,848
Can Tho	405,313	374,614	-30,699
Hau Giang	608,987	546,919	-62,068
Soc Trang	1,042,280	811,103	-231,177
Bac Lieu	632,559	655,598	-23,039
Ca Mau	960,674	923,413	-37,261

3.1.1. Changes in Population Structure by the Age Group

The population structure by age depends on the birth rate, the death rate and the migration level of the population. Among those elements, the migration significantly impacts the age and the sex structure of the rural and urban populations. Since the economy has transitioned from a centrally planned to a market economy, the domestic migration has changed with increasing intensity. In Vietnam, because the working age is set at 15-59 years old, the dependency ratios and aging index are usually calculated for the population within and above the working age, respectively 15-59 years old and from 60 years old.

The number of labor forces aged over 15 in the rural areas in the Mekong Delta in 2009 and 2019.

Table 2. Age group in rural areas of the Mekong Delta (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, 2020). Unit: Person

Age group	Year	
	2009	2019
15-19	1,293,153	865,280
20-24	1,271,866	720 641
25-29	1,256,534	961 807
30-34	1,126,391	1 098 017
35-39	1,055,288	1 112 703

40-44	984,975	1 007 568
45-49	789,451	938 315
50-54	652,741	897 263
55-59	509,943	723 332
60-64	297,580	572 061
65-69	237,982	448 541
70-74	209,933	247 609
75-79	174,969	171 281
80-84	107,836	126 811
85 +	77,147	123 609

In Table 2, it can be seen that the number of people in the rural areas of the Mekong Delta between the ages of 15 and 34 has decreased significantly. The number of people aged 35 and older in the rural areas tends to increase. This can be explained by the fact that young people migrate more than those aged from the middle age onward. Young labors not only have many opportunities, many options, and good health that are flexible and responsive to the market economy, but also are very active and like to migrate to look for new opportunities for themselves and for their families.

According to the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations, in 2012, along with the process of industrialization and urbanization, the situation of young labors leaving agriculture and rural

areas to the city and going abroad to earn a living is increasing due to low income, land is shrinking. The development of the market mechanism with the attraction of big cities has created a flow of labor from rural to urban areas. The difference in job opportunities and living standards between regions and provinces creates the premise for migration and labor mobility. Besides, the current situation of farmers leaving their fields is an alarming manifestation because it greatly affects the balance of productive forces in the countryside. The young labors almost all go to find jobs elsewhere, so in the countryside, the remaining are mainly the elderly and children. This situation causes many localities to suffer from a serious shortage of labor, especially during the seasons.

The change in the population structure of the farmers in the Mekong Delta leads to not only the rich -poor division, but also the changes in culture, lifestyle and the value of life in the rural areas. That is the origin of the complex phenomena in the social relationships generating evils and negative phenomena, breaking good traditions, breaking the traditional community connections inherent in rural areas. A part of the farmers, mainly the elderly, retirees, policy families, and disadvantaged people in rural areas did not promptly adapt to the market economy, with a new value scale appearing from their psychological insecurity.

Additionally, the aging process of the population in the Mekong Delta is happening faster than the national average due to the high out-migration of young labors. The elderly dependency ratio will increase over the next two decades. Combined with many factors, the Mekong Delta will face the medium-term problem of an aging population and along with impoverishment, as the first rural-urban migrants do not enter the urban labor market and return to live in the countryside.

Climate change has negatively impacted the economy of agricultural and aquaculture producers in the Mekong Delta, causing many coastal households to look to the Southeast region to make a living. In the research report of Anh et al. (2016), it was shown that climate change affects social groups in different aspects, including migration. Migration is the main cause. Every year, the Mekong Delta loses more than 1 million people displaced due to drought, sea erosion, mangroves, seasonal, or permanence migration for improving personal livelihoods or sending money back to support families and communities at home because of environmental degradation and climate change.

3.1.2. *Changes in Population Structure by Sex*

In the past, the migration process was highly concentrated in men. However, recently, due to the variety of occupations and the convenience of the process of moving, more and more women have joined in the wave of migration from the countryside to the big cities.

During the industrialization process, the narrowing

of agricultural land to build factories and other service works is inevitable. Reducing farmers' arable land, changing the labor structure in rural areas, transferring purely agricultural labor to other labor, creating more product value and added value, reducing the proportion of agriculture in the economic structure should have been done. However, the narrowing of agricultural land for massive industrialization and urbanization has created adverse impacts on people's lives in rural areas, especially farmers who are in shortage of livelihood capital.

The qualitative research results of the study showed that the reasons for women's migration are their difficult economic circumstances, low level of education and lack of professional skills, so it is difficult for them to find a high-income and sustainable job. Meanwhile, they live in the rural areas that lack factories, enterprises, and establishments that create many jobs on the spot due to the limitations of infrastructure, and many other objective factors have affected their difficult economic life and families.

In the recent years, the Mekong Delta region has supported the funding for constructing models, promoted the application of scientific and technical advances in production; actively mobilized people to change the structure of crops and livestock to improve the incomes of people, but in fact, the raising of income on the basis of unstable agriculture, especially the precarious prices of agricultural products, has made the work of hunger eradication and poverty reduction unsustainable. Women decide to migrate only for improving their economic life and their families, especially for access to educational opportunities for their children.

Most women migrate due to the lack of human capital such as low levels of education, unstable employment status, and high number of family members. Additionally, because of the lack of financial, material and natural capital, the migrant women and their families are quite passive in the process of escaping poverty at home. Therefore, the migration to big cities such as Ho Chi Minh City, Bien Hoa, and Dong Nai is a vital livelihood strategy for themselves and their families.

Additionally, international migration coming from the marriage between the Vietnamese women and Chinese or Korean men and from bringing their children back to their homelands after their divorce generates many legal problems that need to be resolved. The migration and its issues in the Mekong Delta require synchronous and long-term strategies, plans, programs, policies.

The Mekong Delta is rich in the potential development of agriculture, food industry, processing, and tourism and creates many job opportunities for female workers. But now, this region faces many risks from the climate change, the agricultural land acquisition for other purposes, which leads to many consequences affecting the lives and jobs of people in

the agricultural areas, especially the female labors. Therefore, the female workforce leaves the locality to work far away quite a lot and the women working in industrial zones still face many difficulties in terms of time to take care of the family, salary (not enough to live and take care of their children). Additionally, a part of women aged above 35 years old can no longer work or cannot apply for jobs in companies and factories. Therefore, they must return to the locality to do freelance jobs to earn a living, but their lives are difficult due to their unstable incomes.

Table 3. Population aged 15 and over by sex of the Mekong Delta in 2009 and 2019 (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, 2020). Unit: Person

Age group	Male		Female	
	2009	2019	2009	2019
15–19	679,977	448,994	616,176	416,286
20–24	669,826	378,645	602,040	341,996
25–29	648,776	498,085	607,758	463,722
30–34	577,518	570,169	548,873	527,848
35–39	539,496	573,291	515,792	539,412
40–44	498,127	515,851	486,848	491,717
45–49	380,883	478,257	408,568	460,058
50–54	291,784	448,380	360,957	448,883
55–59	234,998	341,901	274,945	381,431
60–64	132,639	245,008	164,941	327,053
65–69	93,754	198,877	144,228	249,664
70–74	81,551	105,759	128,382	141,850
75–79	72,215	62,543	102,754	108,738
80–84	44,639	45,910	63,197	80,901
85 +	27,123	47,701	50,024	75,08

Family life is simple with the traditional assignment of the wife's role associated with the housework and scope of activities mainly in the family and relatives. Therefore, women's expectations about economic contribution or promotion in a woman's work are lower than those of men. When society begins to industrialize with the urbanization, the gender role model has changed and redistributed between the husband and the wife. The production in an industrialized society pulls the women out of the housework to join into the social workforce because of the increased demand for equal rights between men and women in all sectors. Such family transformation has created certain positive opportunities for women. At this time, husband and wife do the same jobs whether outside or inside the family like sharing the housework or taking care of children in the family.

Nowadays, gender stereotypes have had a certain change, for example, women and men are equally key economic players. However, in the reproductive roles such as doing the housework, taking care of the children and the elderly, women are still expected to do better than men. The change in the gender stereotypes is more evident in the families of migrant women, where there is a reallocation of domestic labor in the family.

3.2. Factors Affecting Population Structure

The two main factors affecting the migration decision of rural workers are the shift to the market economy and the climate change in the Mekong Delta in general and An Giang province in particular. Some studies have shown a close relationship between the market economy and population structure. As the market economy changes, it will pull the change in population structure in different directions and vice versa, the change in population structure will inhibit or promote the development of the market economy in a certain space and time. Additionally, the population structure often moves over time. It can increase or decrease depending on the changing direction of factors of birth, death and migration.

The migration directly affects the population structure. The out-migration of a part of the population from a certain region reduces the size of the population of the region and vice versa, the number of in-migrants will increase the population size in the region. The age and sex structures of the population are also heavily influenced by migration. The sex ratio between different ages in the population has many cases of significant disparities due to the intensity and selective nature of migration.

It can be affirmed that the change in the population structure of any region is also influenced by the above factors. But depending on the economic and social conditions, the impact of these factors for each region and each country will be different.

The Mekong Delta is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to environmental degradation and the consequences of climate change. This is an area with a high population density, fertile land and a highly dependent on agriculture and fishing. These economic activities are seriously threatened by climate change, which has created a large wave of migration in this region in search of alternative livelihood opportunities. Most of the migrants here are spontaneous. In the surveyed rural areas, on average, two out of three households have one or more members who have migrated within the past decade, these migrations lasting more than a year should be considered long-term migration. Urban areas in the Mekong Delta and especially key urban areas such as Ho Chi Minh City are deemed attractive destinations for migrants (International Organization for Migration, 2016, p. 23).

When talking about the Mekong Delta, we think of the richest delta in Vietnam, but looking back at the development practice in the past decade (2010-2019) does not show that. With the advantages of being favoured by nature (terrain, soil, mild climate) and abundant labor resources, the Mekong Delta is considered the rice bowl, fruit bowl, and fishery bowl of the whole country when this delta contributes 50% of rice production, 95% of rice exports, 70% of fruits, 65% of aquaculture production and 60% of the country's

export fish output. However, drought, salinity, landslides, flooding, environmental pollution and other impacts of climate change have been having a heavy impact on the Mekong Delta region. Along with that, many internal problems arise in this region: the quality of growth is decreased, labor productivity is low, the economic structure is not really stable, and the competitiveness of enterprises is not high. Along with these are the internal problems of this region, such as, the quality of human resources is limited, migration to big cities and economic centers is increasing (Tien Giang Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

Identifying the potential and important position of the Mekong Delta, over the years, the government has issued many policies for socio-economic development of the Mekong Delta, but in the reality, these policies have not met the requirements of developing this delta (Tien Giang Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

Socially, the Mekong Delta in general has been successful in reducing poverty, but the people's living standards are still lower than the national average. As of 2018, the poverty rate in the Mekong Delta was 5.2% according to the Government poverty line and 5.8% according to the multidimensional poverty line. However, the GRDP per capita of the Mekong Delta is about 80% of the national average and the trend of isolation is increasing, especially compared to the Southeast region. The number of migrants out of the Mekong Delta in the last decade has been nearly 1.1 million, larger than the population of some provinces in the region and equivalent to the natural population growth of the region. Besides, the quality of education does not keep up with the other regions. Due to the difference in living standard and economic opportunities of the Mekong Delta compared to other places, the Mekong Delta region has the lowest immigration rate and the highest emigration rate (usually to Ho Chi Minh City and the Southeast region) compared to the whole country.

The transformation of economic structure in the innovation process and the transition from a bureaucratic, subsidized centralized economy to a socialist-oriented market economy inevitably lead to the transformation of the social structure in general and the population structure in particular. In addition to the achievements by the transformation of economic structure, such as the transformation of population structure, the labor force in rural areas is increasing, contributing to the rapid increase in human resources (this is a critical factor important role in the production force, actively promoting production development), the above transformation also leads to consequences that need to be resolved, which is the problem of employment for the rapidly growing labor force in the province. When production materials and other material conditions are limited and the labor force develops rapidly, there will be a surplus of labor in rural areas and accompanied by spontaneous migration from rural

to urban areas (People's Committee of An Giang Province, 2014).

Meanwhile, the process of accumulating agricultural land for various purposes has left a part of farmers without productive land. The ability to solve jobs in rural areas is still limited, so some rural laborers face many difficulties in finding jobs locally. Along with that is the unstable market price, the product has high input cost while the selling price is low; erratic natural disasters cause productivity to be not guaranteed and stable (An Giang Statistics Office, 2019). This is the reason why rural workers go to big cities in search of jobs and sources of income.

The transformation of the economic structure has led to a strong shift of labor between the fields in general and migrant workers in particular. Under pressure from economic and environmental risks, small-scale agricultural production is increasingly facing difficulties in ensuring a minimum profit and maintaining a stable life for farmers. The increase in inequality, the absence of productive land, and labor migration, especially into urban areas, are the most significant consequences. At the same time, the current secondary and tertiary economic sectors in the Mekong Delta are currently unable to take on the former agricultural workforce. This is also a reason that motivates workers to decide to migrate. As a result, the migration is increasing.

In 2009, the unemployment rate calculated for the working-age population of our country in the rural area in 2009 was 3.0%, but by 2019, the percentage of unemployed people in this area had decreased to 3.0%, due to many factors, including migrating to big cities to live and look for work.

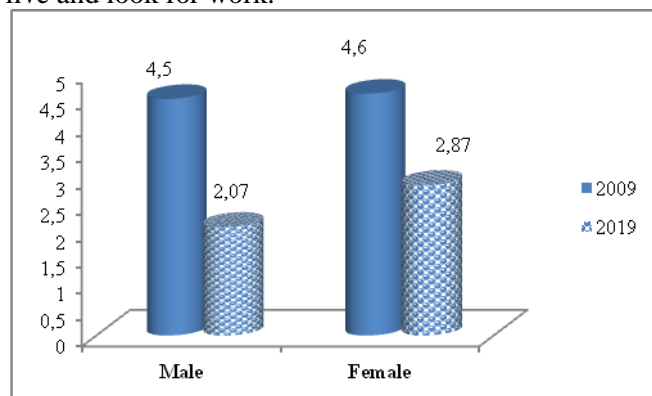


Figure 1. Proportion of unemployment by sex in 2009 and 2019
(General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, 2020)

Lan (2012) analyzed the relationship between agricultural production and labor migration in the Mekong Delta. The results of the analysis show that the surplus of seasonal labor, the lack of productive land, the lack of work in rural areas, and the unstable factors in agricultural production are considered important causes of migration. Additionally, the quality of migrant workers in the Mekong Delta is not high; the destination is mainly Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong. Therefore, many people in the working age have a lack of work, lack of opportunities for career development,

days of work and low wages (United Nations, 2012).

ActionAid International in Vietnam shows that the migration decision is the result of interaction between push and pull factors. The market economy context contributes to solving many workers' problems; the quality of life of the population is constantly improving. Parallel to that is the development of industries and services that need more female workers has created a trend of feminization of migration. The development of the market economy has created the attraction of labor moving to big cities and industrial zones. Besides, the downside of the market economy is the deepening division between the urban and rural areas. While urban areas are constantly expanding and developing, rural areas are constantly shrinking and the ability to create jobs is low. Rural areas have abundant labor resources, unemployment and underemployment rates of people in rural areas are high and the economic life of a poor part of the population in rural areas is increasingly difficult. Because of these factors, rural areas have created a push, pushing workers to move to large cities and industrial parks in search of jobs and stable income (ActionAid International Vietnam, 2012).

Particularly, the qualitative research results also show that the reason leading to the decision to migrate of poor women in rural areas in An Giang province, as in the case of Ms. N.T.K.L and Ms. B, is the fact that the family has small land while the price of agricultural products output is low. It is not enough to cover the daily life of the family, so Ms. N.T.K.L decided to discuss with her husband, children and relatives to choose a migration solution to seek new opportunities to improve the family economic life.

"In my hometown, life is not developed, in the city it is easier to make money, and the income is twice as much as in my hometown. I'm just going alone. My husband is staying at home gardening. My job is sewing and this is a righteous job, making money without pressure. In the countryside, people working all day earn less money. In the city, it is possible to earn more money a day. Life here is much easier to make money" (Ms. N.T.K.L., 44 years old, tailor).

"My family's life is now better. For example, in the countryside, I am poor. Now, I have moved to the city, I earn more money, the regime here is better. Go to work, save some money, and then go back to my hometown to open a shop to sell something. In the miserable life in the countryside, there was no job, no money, the children studied and cared for him to eat and study, so he left. Generally, life in the countryside is very difficult, the family does not have any land, wants to work in the countryside to be close to parents and relatives, but it is too hard to go out to find a job" (Ms. B., 38 years old, worker).

The United Nation's 2012 Gender and Remittances report showed more detail about the benefits that migrants bring to themselves and their families:

deposits can satisfy the needs of a part of rural community members. Remittances contributed to poverty alleviation for each household in particular and significantly changed the face of the countryside where they go, helping increase income and demand for services and contributing to investment in building rural infrastructure, step by step improving economic, cultural, and social life of the locality, creating a close connection between rural and urban areas. In terms of gender, that is a step forward in recognizing and valuing women's values, the community has a more shared view of women who go to work far away, especially unmarried young women, and new social values are regularly updated to create a close connection between rural and urban areas (United Nations, 2012, p. 20).

A factor creating the pull is the trend of "feminizing the migration process." On the gender level, some authors believe that, in the past, going to work far away to earn money was considered the responsibility of men. Nowadays, women have become an important part of the urban migration flows with an increasing number, participating in all fields such as business, trade, services, industrial production in the city. There have been changes in gender stereotypes and norms. Contributing to the family economy has also helped to gradually recognize the role and power of women. They have been able to make decisions, at least to make their opinions before opportunities to improve family economic conditions and social advancement opportunities (United Nations, 2012, p. 60). In factors of push, many studies have shown that the accumulation of land for many non-agricultural purposes has caused farmers to lose productive land and lack jobs; the economic life of a part of the poor people is difficult. Meanwhile, the ability to create jobs in rural areas is still limited. It is these objective factors that have prompted farmers to decide to migrate to urban areas in search of work to improve the difficult economic situation of their families, including women.

According to the 2005 Viet Nam Population and Housing Census results of the General Office for Population and Family Planning of Vietnam, economic factors, first of all income and employment, are still the main drivers of the process of labor migration. Despite risks in crop production and livestock production, the price drop to the limit of agricultural products on the market, rural labor cannot rely on rice grain. The huge income disparity between rural and urban areas has prompted farmers to voluntarily leave their fields and move to the city to find work. The process of moving labor to urban areas has significantly reduced the pressure on human resources and jobs in rural areas. The shift of agricultural labor to places with seasonal needs has solved unemployment and created new sources of income.

Discussing the push as an important factor affecting the migration decision of female workers, Dang Nguyen

Anh said that migration decisions are often made when households have gone through and are suffering difficulties. On the one hand, structural factors affecting migration decisions include the need for labor resources, low wages received mainly by female laborers. This is evident in the characteristics of labor markets with high levels of segmentation at both the place of departure and destination. Investment in industry and agriculture is generally low, due to a surplus of labor and a lack of arable land. On the other hand, gender roles and individual characteristics can balance out the macrofactors that affect migration decisions. It is worth noting that this trend increases with the increasing voice of women in migration decisions. The feminization of migration will continue even though social attitudes and perceptions about female migration are still slowly changing in Southeast Asia (Anh, 2016, p. 2).

3.3. Migrant Women's Social Problems from the Change in the Division of Labor Within The Family

The high migration reduces the population and labor resources. The percentage of the population of the Mekong Delta in the country has decreased from 22.4% in the 1989 census to 17.9% in the 2019 census. In the decade, from 2009 to 2019, the region's population has only increased to more than 82,000 people, with a rate of increase of 0.05%. While urban areas increased by 0.98%, rural areas decreased by 0.24%. The provinces with a decreasing population are all strong in producing food and fishery products. An Giang, Soc Trang and Ca Mau have negative population growth rates of 1.16%, 0.75%, and 0.1%/year. The provinces with population growth are those with industry and services that attract much investment, including Long An, Tien Giang, and Can Tho with population growth rates of 1.625%, 0.54%, and 0.39%/year in 10 years.

Migration accelerates population aging and shrinks family size. The 2019 census shows that the total number of households in the country is 26.87 million, an average increase of 1.8% per year. The Mekong Delta has 4.8 million households, of which 1.23 million are in urban areas and 3.57 million in rural areas. Household size has also decreased from 4.0 to 3.5 people/household. The number of households with 4 people accounted for 25.6%, 3 people accounted for 22.5% and 2 people was 17.5%, while households with 5 people accounted for 12.3%, only slightly more than 1 person households (10.5%) (Dung, 2020).

The analysis results from qualitative data with 8 migrant women and their families (who remained) in rural areas of An Giang province showed that most female migrant workers had relatively low family backgrounds in terms of education level, economic potential, and community resources. They are mainly unskilled workers. Although they live in rural areas, these families do not have land to increase their income. Among the 8 surveyed women, there are 6 cases before out-migrating, their main occupation was as a hired

laborer, working for brick kilns, cutting rice, and mowing grass for households in the area, surrounding areas, or traditional handicrafts. The average monthly income is only enough for living expenses for an individual in one day. Generally, the families of women who out-migrate lack livelihood capital and ability to create jobs and escape poverty and face many difficulties and obstacles. To improve the economic life of themselves and their families, they decided to out-migrate and mainly out-migrated with their husbands. Elderly parents are the ones who stay to take care of the house and children. From here, the change in the division of labor among family members, which has existed for many generations, is now different, creating a disturbance in the families of women who have out-migrated in rural areas of An Giang.

What is even more remarkable is the change in the role of production and reproduction of migrant women and other migrant women's family members in rural areas of An Giang province today.

Out-migrating women change roles between family members, which is reflected in all aspects of the material and spiritual life of themselves and their families. In any situation, problems in society have both positive and negative effects; certain advantages and disadvantages. Migrant women must worry about both places, the lives where they in-migrate and lives at home. Migrant women are increasingly under pressure to try to take on economic and non-economic roles in the family. The confusion about gender roles, emotional life of family members, roles between husband and wife, between parents and children is becoming more and more obvious. The burden is on the shoulders of the elderly such as the economy, taking care of children, and not being taken care of by relatives in old age. For example, in the case of Mr. B.'s family and Ms. T.'s family:

"In the past, when my son and his wife, grandson stayed at home, the family of three went to work together, my daughter-in-law worked half a day. At other times of the day, she went to the market, cooked rice, cleaned the house and took care of the children. Outside working hours, I just stayed at home to rest and do nothing. Now, they have migrated to big cities and they have not lived with me, so outside work, I have to do all the housework. Due to my bad health, I only went to the market, cooked rice and washed clothes that day. I don't often clean the house" (Mr. B., 50 years old, employed).

"Children are sent to their grandparents, the older ones work in Binh Duong, the younger children stay home to go to school, and their aunt takes care of them. When I left, my little son cried all the time, so every day, I tried to call home to remind my children, we worry about my son, he may be just playing with his friends without trying hard to study" (Mrs. T., 45 years old, sales).

The process of industrialization and urbanization has had a strong impact on the status of women. They have

directly participated in social labor and generated income for the family. However, while women appear more active in implementing strategies to solve jobs and increase their family income, there are still many men who have not really made an effort to rise up in life. Many out-migration women rose to become the owners of the family. This makes women more confident and enhances their status in society.

4. Conclusion

Over the past decade, in Vietnam in particular and in other Asian countries in general, there have been many studies on migration; however, most of them focused mainly on the status of the destination of migrant workers. Very few studies delve into the changes in the population structure in the rural areas (where many people out-migration), the change in the division of labor in the family, especially the consequences of the change in the traditional roles of women (the wife, the mother, the children). The article focuses on studying the social problems arising from the migration of people in the rural areas in the Mekong River Delta over the past decade.

This article has analyzed the impact of industrialization and modernization of the country along with the partial impact of the climate change, such as the loss of housing due to the landslides and the reduction of agricultural land to serve urban and industrial development, which led to an increase in the migration of people in the rural areas of the Mekong Delta.

Migration also brings benefits to rural families. Nevertheless, the main benefit that people see is that migration brings higher incomes and better job opportunities. This shows that the positive effects are immediate or short-term (such as income, food, employment), while the potential and long-term benefits are not clearly felt by everyone (such as about education, business, investment, credit, etc.).

In the future, the pattern is not full in families with migrant women has been maintained and continued due to each family's livelihood strategies. Like it or not, the pattern is not full in families is still considered the right choice in the transformation of today's society.

Therefore, in the long term, it is necessary to have a strategy for socio-economic development in rural areas of the Mekong Delta in general, especially economic stability and development, to improve the quality of labor resources, to create many opportunities and motivations for all subjects to access and enjoy community resources in the process of starting up and creating.

It is necessary to conduct the consultancy, orientation, and support of households and workers to access policies in the fields of agriculture and services, limiting the female labor force (middle-aged) to leave

their families and homelands to work in industrial clusters, big cities, which is a risk for themselves as well as their children and families.

There should be timely assistance and support for vulnerable elderly groups, with special emphasis on supporting the elderly alone and taking care of children in families with migrant women.

In addition to the results achieved, the article still lacks the analysis of studies on the migration of countries in Asia, especially in some countries with similar cultures to Vietnam. Additionally, the article has not undertaken an in-depth analysis on the side of the migrants outside Vietnam or their families to show the differences between the families with domestic migrants and the ones with expatriate migrants.

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