

Secondly, about the household characteristics, the families with higher elderly or children proportion were more likely to be poor. Since the resources in the families must be shared with more members who may not be able to work or earn living while better house conditions as permanent houses showed negatively correlation to be poor.

Thirdly, ethnic minorities older people were poorer than their Kinh Hoa due to their lower level of education, which made them worse off when compared their primary education or less with others who had lower secondary schooling and high schooling were less vulnerable to poverty.

The last issue is the social assistance coverage was still relatively low in Vietnam as they provided support more on the near-poor than the poor in reducing poverty.

In order to help elders to have more income or have a better support system, then this article provides mainly four policies and recommendations.

Firstly, while the age is minor at the official poverty line, it is significant for a near-poor group then the policies should lower the eligible age and increase the allowance in order to help alleviate poverty.

Secondly, due to inequalities among ethnic groups, the ethnic minority had less education level than the Kinh-Hoa ethnic majority. These showed that the minority group was more vulnerable. Therefore, the government must support or implement any policies such as free-school by government support.

Thirdly, since remittance works efficiently on increasing elderly income, then there should be policies that facilitate remittances such as developing mobile payment that allows migrants to send remittances.

Finally, there should be policies that include a gradual increase of the retirement age and a system that supports people to work.

In conclusion, the study mainly focuses on poverty issues in elder due to different regions (compared between rural and urban), scarce resources of big household sizes, inequalities among ethnic groups due to different opportunities in access education level, and inefficient government policies that did not precisely solve the problem.

Merits and Shortcomings of the Article

This article analyzes data to indicate the problems or to tell how each factor affects the elderly poverty by using surveys, indicators, and indexes which have both merits and shortcomings.

The strengths of this article are the clear discussion of issues mentioned that are easy to understand such as the analysis told that they got unexpected results from the model result compared to what they thought it would be, the survey contained rich information on socio-demographics, living conditions, and health characteristics at the household and individual levels which could benefit them to capture more related issues that could affect elderly poverty and also as they use multidimensional poverty index as indicator that have properties of flexibility, choice, and identifications, and the article has a flow conclusion.

In terms of its weakness, since they have a rich information of survey, then it was difficult or impossible to address all elements since poverty is a complex issue and it depends on lots of factors and not just income. Using a multidimensional poverty index can be extremely challenging as it goes beyond a headcount ratio to include the intensive poverty that causes this index to be incapable of measuring inequality among the poor. Therefore, they need to perform good asset mapping in order to find your most appropriate niche. Furthermore, even the article was published in 2021 but they use adopting data from the 2010 and 2016 Vietnam Household Living Standard Surveys which was quite outdated.

Insights Gained and How the Article Relates to the Course

This article related to Module 18 on "The Economy of Vietnam" in the part that mentioned poverty. From what we learned in class, the poverty in Vietnam had significantly reduced from 60% in 1993 to 13.5% in 2014 together with supported policy of the government. This article was an example that showed how government support did improve or help but furthermore showed deeper inside of elder poverty by the effect of other fields such as education, living areas, etc.

This article was well reflected not only on the poverty topic but also what we learn in terms of concepts on the development challenges in Vietnam that could be a good example of how those challenges can affect the elder poverty.

This article has reinforced my knowledge of poverty in Vietnam which well connects this issue with the development challenges both mentioned and further in other related fields.

In my opinion, I found this was useful as from what we learn in Module 18(the economy of Vietnam), it talks broadly about overall of the country in each field like economic that illustrated Vietnam's succession in Doi Moi development that could reduce poverty and dynamic economic growth, economic drivers, and their sector performance of how Vietnam has been developed, but this article showed more on where the government missed or uncovered part and brought the connectivity among sector performance to see how it was important for Vietnam or their government to keep developing their challenges such as scope down in the group of minority

people, from the study it showed that ethnic minority older people were more disadvantaged than younger individuals as they were less able to speak the Vietnamese language, less educated, and less able to migrate. I think this was great as it gave more insightful information which I never think about. Also, it provided a very good recommended policy.

There are two main key issues which are 1. inequality 2. land expropriation and urban sprawl. For the first issue, there are several inequalities that can be seen in the urban form and spatial pattern of Lào Cai as it is fragmented development and low density urban form type. The three sector parts in Lào Cai: northern, central, and southern sector, have different degrees of development. In detail, the northern sector is a border crossing point. It is the hub of economic activities, including large and busy daily markets and it is the key border crossing to China. For the central sector, there are numerous new developments moved and expanded here at the beginning of the 2000s. The southern sector undergoing a housing construction boom since 2010, resulted in infrastructure development. The different characteristics go along with urban form and spatial patterns that are observed by the author as we can see that within one city, there are five clusters that illustrate different degrees of urbanisation and density. Furthermore, according to the 2012 Master Plan that aimed at creating a city for a wealthy population, the city government is willing to promote a modernising development, which is specific to real estate development aimed at upper middle class buyers and ignores the needs of the population, especially farmers and the poor. Moreover, in 1990, urban areas were separated into five classes with one special city. This was supported by the two financial policy tools so it also led to the second key issue as it accelerated the rapid transition of agricultural land to urban cities without considering population density and economic growth. Furthermore, as of 2012, the city continually expropriates agricultural land. Thus, Lào Cai failed to provide enough services with this urban form and therefore led to urban sprawl that the government is not probably controlled and well-planned. The extensive road system with low density development raises serious concerns for the future land expropriation.

For conclusion and suggestion, this paper demonstrates the method to measure the urban form in order to help identify the problems of the existent urban planning, increase knowledge of urban patterns, and suggest new ways to achieve sustainable urban form, especially in rapidly urbanising countries. Moreover, this can assist the planner and policy maker to create more appropriate spatial plans and can apply to the other such as secondary cities that Vietnam aims to develop to reduce demographic pressure on large cities. The evidence of urban extensive, low-density and fragmented development in Lào Cai city emphasizes to the point that there is a need of revising urbanisation policy in small cities of Vietnam. The result points out which area could be more densified and suggests concentrating on areas that are the most urbanised but low density that should develop public transit rather than only expanding roads in order to avoid urban sprawl. This would help to deal with contemporary issues related to urban planning as well.

Merits and Shortcoming of the Article

In my opinion, they are good at choosing the title to attract readers. The obvious merits are the flow of the content that the authors can make it continually go in the same story and has a clear explanation and easy reading for overall contents. They provide extremely complete detail, especially on the part that measures the urban form and provide relevant evidence. The author can greatly visualize the clustering approaches in different areas in Lào Cai. Since the author using the information from various source, this make the paper more accurate and reliable as we can see that their findings corroborate with previous studies of various related research such as the studies of small cities in Vietnam of Adenwala and Turner (2020) and Saksena et al. (2014) and studies in mid-sized cities of Iran by Zanganeh Shahraki et al. (2011). In addition to the process that they use indicators and various tests to find the urban form and pattern, I think they use deliberate and rigorous methods to compare to gain the most efficient and accurate results for its analysis. They choose qualitative and quantitative study that match the method that must be used in those parts. This paper obviously indicates the key issues, illustrates the problem that can make readers think further like the inequality of development in certain places as within one province there are different degrees of urbanisation and accessibility of services, and provides suggestions that can be used in reality. They use numerous different sources in various years from long past information till recent so this may be a good resource that gathers information from time to time since this study may use the past information to research. All in all, the paper is beneficial, well-written, and could be used for further research, especially on the planners and policy makers that it will be valuable data.

In contrast, for the shortcoming part, since it is the methodology to measure the urban form and it is the study of a specific area, which is Lào Cai, it may be a narrow scope. There are some terminology and jargons, which the general person or people who do not study in related fields may not know. Although using various related research from previous studies like studies in mid-sized cities of Iran has become a merit, it can be a shortcoming as well since there are various considerable factors that we need to be aware of. For example, the geography of countries that are not the same as we can see, since the countries that are located nearby like CLMV obviously are not the same as in Laos that are mainly mountainous. Thus, if the author thought that it can use other remote countries to do this research, the author may provide more evidence that can make the reader comply with or agree with them in the paper to be more consistent.

Insights Gained and How the Article Relates to the Course

According to the Module 9, I have learned about the urban growth and how cities expand, which it is consistent with in the paper that I read that more than a half of the world's population are living in urban cities and this paper emphasize that it also more than a half that live in small

urban cities and there is a need for sustainable urban planning and development controls. Moreover, there are several urban forms and spatial patterns for the cities to expand and the unavoidable thing is the urban sprawl that is hard for control, which those of Lào Cai city have faced as well, creating a low density and lack of public infrastructure. Certainly, it creates positive and negative impacts and enormous challenges. According to Module 10, the graph that illustrates the proportion of population that separates the urban and rural population makes me more visualise about the overall population in the country and the paper makes me know that even the small city of Vietnam, it also urbanizes. Furthermore, Lào Cai city is a very good example to make me understand more about this module. It is the admirable representative of the development of small towns and the emerging urban growth center in the module since it is a small town that rapidly urbanizes due to it being the border town and town along the economic corridor in the GMS program as in Module 3. It really strengthens my understanding.

The article is really useful and makes me clearly understand the issues. It enhances my understanding that urban form and spatial pattern create various direct and indirect effects so the planner and policy makers need to be strongly well planned about this. Moreover, I have learned that the Vietnamese government is trying to urbanize more even in small cities. The location of the city is one of major factors that contributes to the great impact and the different degree of urbanisation. Obviously, even in one province, it has inequality of urban development so the government needs to be more focused, well-planned, and make a sustainable plan to avoid bad impacts.