

Factors That Affect the Psychological Aspect of Cultural Conflict Among Vietnamese Youth

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Abstract

The study analyzed a number of factors affecting the psychological aspects of cultural conflict among young Vietnamese. To achieve this goal, in this study we surveyed 739 students at three universities, including 2 universities in Hanoi city and one university in Tuyen Quang province, Vietnam. Research results have shown that objectivity and subjectivity are two factors affecting psychological aspects in young people, of which subjectivity has the strongest impact on change. On this basis, the study gives a number of recommendations to help young people resolve cultural conflicts more effectively.

Keywords: Psychology, Youth, Influence, Aspects, Vietnam.

1. Introduction

Cultural conflict is a complex issue. There are many factors affecting cultural conflict in general and the psychological aspects of cultural conflict in particular. The studies on cultural conflict are viewed from the perspective of culture, sociology, philosophy and psychology. From the perspective of culture, sociology, philosophy, the research shows the manifestations of cultural conflict in the current globalization context. From the perspective of psychology, studies show that cultural conflict is the conflict between the values of traditional cultures (indigenous cultures) and the values of new cultures, between the traditional cultural ego and the ego of the new cultures. Through previous studies, perception, emotions and behavior are the psychological aspects of cultural conflict that are most clearly shown. Psychological aspect is the psychological manifestations (such as perception, emotion and behavior) of the age from 15 to 30, reflecting the intense conflict between cultural ego coexisting within the subject. This makes it difficult for young people in life.

2. Literature Review

The researchers that laid the foundations for cultural conflict research is R.E. Park, E.V. Stonequist, J.W. Berry, etc. Although calling cultural conflict by many different names, but they all agree on the conditions of cultural conflict occurring. According to Berry, cultural transformation is a process of cultural and psychological transformation due to cultural contact between two or more cultural communities and individuals within that community (Berry, J. W. 1997). According to Rosenthal, differences in cultural values represented by different cultural groups is the source of cultural conflict. For young immigrants, for example, the original culture is represented by the family, while the target culture is represented by the school, the friends and the society.

This conflict of values between these groups leads to cultural conflict among young people. Therefore, according to Rosenthal, cultural conflict can be studied as parent-child conflict (Rosenthal, D. 1985).

Some later authors such as Gil, Vega, Smokowski, Dennis, etc. Given that generational conflicts do not fully reflect value conflicts, we must instead study individual perceptions of generational conflicts. Specifically, they measure the level of conflict among family members in the process of adopting a new culture, feeling bored because others do not sympathize with the new culture they have adopted, and feeling feeling uncomfortable having to choose between two cultures. These authors find that perceptions of generational conflict have a stronger effect on family relations and personal psychology than on generational conflict (Gil, A. G., etc 1994).

B.L. Sung said that cultural conflict among American youth immigrating from China stems from the difference between American culture and Chinese culture. Although she does not directly define cultural conflict, the types of cultural conflicts that she brought up in her research derive from this value difference (Sung, B.L. 1995). Group of authors like Rosenthal, Sung, Inman, etc. consider cultural conflict as a form of value conflict. The authors who have gone in this direction have called cultural conflict with different names: cultural conflict (Lee), bicultural conflict (Rosenthal, Chuang), cultural mutation conflict (Gil, Vega, Dennis), cultural value conflict (Inman, Varghese, Wasim); (Lee, LS 1985).

Inman emphasizes the importance of cultural values in cultural conflict. He criticized previous studies which did not reflect the aspect of cultural value in the study of cultural acclimation in general and cultural conflict in particular, but only mentioned the external manifestations (such as language behavior, food choices, etc.); (Inman, A. G. etc 2001)

Factors That Affect the Psychological Aspect of Cultural Conflict Among Vietnamese Youth

In Vietnam, cultural conflicts between social groups are often manifested in the form of conflicts between the culture of the majority group and subculture. Subcultures are systems of meaning expression, forms of expression or lifestyle created by disadvantaged groups in society to deal with systems that dominate the society (Pham Hong Tung, 2008). According to the author Vu Dung, the process of cultural reception and integration took place quite strongly between the culture of the Kinh people and the cultures of the indigenous peoples. This process is so strong that people do not seem to recognize the conflict between the cultural values of the Kinh people and the cultural values of the local ethnic minorities (Vu Dung, 2009). Likewise, the adoption of new values sometimes detracts from traditional values if we do not pay attention to conservation (Duong Phu Hiep, 2011).

Through the above studies, it is easy to see that researchers define cultural conflict as conflict between value systems of an individual or a social group, but this value conflict can identify a way more clearly on an individual level. Therefore, the above studies tend to deeply explore, deeply analyze individual psychology in analyzing cultural conflicts. From the intergroup conflict in Rosenthal's study, cultural conflict has gradually been reflected through the perception of the subject. Moreover,

the conflict between the cultural values internalized by the subject becomes the individual values in the research of Sung, Inman or later researchers. The nature of the process of internalization of value is the nature of the process of socialization, this is the characteristic of cultural conflict from a psychological perspective.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Sampling method

Quantitative survey was conducted on students at three universities, including Foreign Language University of Hanoi National University (ULIS) and Hanoi National University of Education (HNUE) and Tan Trao University (TTU). At each school, 200 coupons are distributed to students from different disciplines and academic years. The total number of votes collected is 541. We remove 2 cases (numbers 80 and 420) that do not fully answer 80% of the statements measuring the level of cultural conflict, ie the main dependent variable of the study. Thus, the number of satisfactory votes for analysis is 539 votes. In addition, the topic also interviewed 150 people in depth from 3 universities. In which, there are 15 lecturers and 135 students (each school 5 lecturers and 35 students). The distribution of research objects in the practical survey is summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Total number of respondents

Object	Number of participants	Percentage %
1. Object of quantitative survey (Questionnaire)	539	72.9
2. Qualitative survey (In-depth interview)	150	20.2
3. Objects of experimental impact	50	6.9
Total	739	100.0

Thus, the total sample survey of the topic is 739 people, including 539 quantitative survey students; 150 lecturers,

students for qualitative survey and 50 students for impact experiment.

Table 2. Sample structure selected for survey

Characteristics		Number (N = 739)	Percentage %
1. Gender	Male	219	29.6
	Female	520	70.4
2. School year	Year 1	300	40.5
	Year 2	219	26.9
	Year 3	220	32.6
3. School	ULIS	257	34.7
	HNUE	250	33.8
	TTU	232	31.5

(Source: The survey data of the study)

3.2. Data collection methods

- (i) In-depth interviews, 150 cases (15 lecturers and 135 students) to find out about opportunities to be integrated with Western culture and how to resolve student cultural conflicts.
- (ii) Use the Likert scale to measure survey questions with conventions: (1) cultural continuity scale, (2) cultural cohesion scale, (3) cultural conflict scale, (4) personality scale, (5) family unity scale, (6) cultural acculturation pressure scale, (7) respondents' personal information. Based on actual data on cultural conflict among Vietnamese youth collected in this study, the manifestation levels of cultural conflict among young people are divided as follows: GPA from 1 to 2.26 (low); GPA from 2.26 to 3.24 (average); GPA from 3.24 to 5.0 (high).
- (iii) The data was entered into SPSS 20.0 software and cleaned up to ensure the accuracy of the input. The data describing the current situation is analyzed by the statistics describing the mean, standard deviation,

and frequency. Compare the variable data using ANOVA analysis and post hoc test if the F result of ANOVA is statistically significant. Evaluate the impact of the influencing factors using linear regression. Impact assessment of impact experiments using Crosstab analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The influence of subjective factors

4.1.1. The influence of exposure to cultures

The degree of cultural exposure is divided into two aspects: the degree of exposure to Vietnamese culture and the degree of exposure to Western culture.

In terms of correlation, the degree of exposure to Vietnamese culture and Western culture are positively correlated with cultural conflict. In which, the coefficient r between the level of exposure to Vietnamese culture and cultural conflict is $r = -0.033$, $p = 0.45$; The coefficient r between the level of conflict with Western culture and cultural conflict is $r = 0.108$, $p < 0.05$. Thus, only the

Factors That Affect the Psychological Aspect of Cultural Conflict Among Vietnamese Youth

positive correlation between Western cultural exposure and cultural conflict is statistically significant. The younger Vietnamese people are exposed to Western culture, the more likely they are to encounter cultural conflicts.

Previous studies have shown conflicting results on the relationship between cultural conflict and the degree of cultural adoption. On the one hand, background studies such as Berry et al. (1987) and Torbiorn (1982) showed an inverse relationship between these two variables. Immigrants increase exposure to a new culture (target culture) will reduce social difficulties and increase life

satisfaction. Although the authors do not directly measure the impact of new culture exposure on cultural conflict, a better understanding of the new culture helps immigrants to have perceptions appropriate to their new living situation, thereby helping them to have more positive attitudes and behaviors more suitable to the new culture and reduce the level of cultural conflicts.

Analysis of in-depth interview results in this study also shows that urban students (HNUE) - those with more exposure to Western culture think that they are easy to reconcile between Vietnamese culture and Western culture than mountainous students (TTU).

Table 1. Regression coefficients of factors affecting all aspects psychology of cultural conflict in students

Factors		Coefficient b	t	p
Subjective factors				
1. The degree of cultural exposure	The degree of exposure to Vietnamese culture	-0.007	-0.18	0.85
	The degree of exposure to Western culture	0.055	1.42	0.16
2. The level of cultural attachment	The level of cultural attachment to Vietnamese culture	-0.001	-0.04	0.97
	The level of cultural attachment to Western culture	0.04	2.01	0.04*
3. Personality	Extroverted personality	-0.067	-1.92	0.05*
	Open personality	0.017	0.41	0.68
	Conscientious personality	-0.102	-3.09	0.00*
	Agreeable personality	-0.113	-2.76	0.01*
	Distracting personality	0.041	1.21	0.23
Objective factors				
1. The degree of unity in the family		-0.073	-2.34	0.02*
2. Pressure of cultural acculturation	Language pressure	0.030	1.74	0.08
	Discrimination pressure	0.104	4.06	0.00*
	Pressure on relationships with cultural groups	0.127	4.64	0.00*
	Pressure on social isolation	0.057	2.89	0.00*
R2 = 0.34, F(14,503) = 18.30, p<0.05				

Note: *: p < 0.05

In contrast, mountainous students believe that between the two cultures there is little similarity and difficult to reconcile. The awareness of the similarity between cultures is an important basis for the reconciliation between the two cultures, thereby reducing cultural conflicts.

On the other hand, studies by Ward et al (Ward & Kenedy, 1992, 1993; Ward & Leong, 2000) have shown a positive relationship between the degree of exposure to target culture and cultural conflict. When studying cultural conflicts on different groups of immigrants (Chinese, Malaysian, New Zealand) with Singaporean culture, this group of authors found that increased cultural exposure to Singaporean culture (destination) will lead to increased cultural conflict among immigrants. The reason is that the increased exposure to the target culture at the same time increases the pressure on cultural acculturation, thereby increasing cultural conflicts.

In this study, we also find a similar relationship between exposure to Western culture and cultural acculturation. Specifically, there exists a positive relationship between the degree of Western cultural exposure and intercultural

pressure (r = 0.125, p < 0.05). Young people who are regularly exposed to Western culture feel that they are under a lot of social pressure to behave in a Western way, they often disagree with previous generations because they like Western culture, and others appear to dislike or make it difficult for them to behave in a Western way.

Perhaps for the young Vietnamese, it is these cultural acculturation pressures that have a strong impact on cultural conflicts, beyond the influence of perception of cultural similarity. In the context of Vietnamese youth cultural integration, when there are no clear cultural standards (unlike young migrants, who consider the target culture a standard culture, which must be followed if they want to adapt in the new society), the pressure on cultural acculturation becomes the social norms that guide their cultural acculturation. Therefore, in the case of Vietnamese youth, increased exposure to Western culture increases the level of cultural conflict.

Regarding the ability to predict cultural conflicts, the degree of exposure to Western culture can predict cultural conflicts based on the intermediate variable is the degree of cultural attachment (diagram 1).

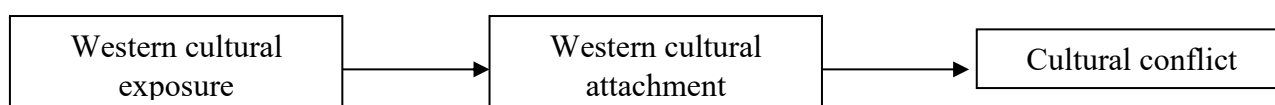


Diagram 1. Intermediate relationship between Western cultural exposure, Western cultural attachment, and cultural conflict

We test this hypothesis by running two separate linear regression equations (see Table 2.29). In equation 1,

Western cultural exposure can predict cultural conflict, but when the factor of Western cultural attachment is

Factors That Affect the Psychological Aspect of Cultural Conflict Among Vietnamese Youth

added to the equation, the change in R2 is significant in terms of statistical. At this time, the degree of attachment to Western culture can also predict cultural conflict, but the degree of exposure to Western culture is no longer capable of predicting cultural conflict. In equation 2, the

degree of Western cultural attachment can predict cultural conflict. When adding Western cultural exposure to the equation, the change in R2 was not statistically significant.

Table 2. Equation for testing the intermediate relationship between the level of Western cultural exposure, the degree of Western cultural attachment and cultural conflict

Equation	Variable	Coefficient b	t	p
1(a)	Exposure to Western culture	0.098	2.42	0.02*
1(b)	Exposure to Western culture	0.039	0.89	0.37
	Western Cultural Attachment	0.077	3.18	0.00*
$\Delta R^2 = 0.019, \Delta F = 0.79, p = 0.00^*$				
2(a)	Western cultural attachment	0.086	3.915	0.00*
2(b)	Western cultural attachment	0.077	3.18	0.00*
	Exposure to Western culture	0.039	0.89	0.37
$\Delta R^2 = 0.001, \Delta F = 0.79, p = 0.37$				

Note: (a) represents step 1 of the equation, (b) represents step 2 of the equation.

The dependent variable is cultural conflict. *: $p < 0.05$

Thus, the degree of exposure to Western culture increases the degree of attachment to Western culture, and this attachment increases the level of cultural conflict among the surveyed Vietnamese youth.

4.1.2. The influence of cultural attachment

The level of cultural attachment shows the attachment of the individual to a certain culture, or the strength of the cultural ego. In this study, the attachment is shown in the degree of attachment to both Vietnamese culture and Western culture.

The survey results show that in general, Vietnamese youth are more closely attached to Vietnamese culture than Western culture. The average score of the degree of attachment to Vietnamese culture is: GPA = 4.19, SD = 0.83, higher than the average score of the degree of attachment to Western culture: GPA = 2.69, SD = 0.96. The difference between the degree of attachment to these two cultures is statistically significant: Md = 1.50, t (532) = 27.10, $p < 0.05$.

The degree of attachment to Vietnamese culture does not have a linear correlation with cultural conflict: $r = 0.008$, $p = 0.86$. Meanwhile, the degree of attachment to Western culture is positively related to cultural conflict: $r = 0.167$, $p < 0.05$. In other words, young people who feel strongly attached to Western culture will experience a higher level of cultural conflict than those who are less engaged

Regarding the ability to predict cultural conflicts, only the level of exposure to Western cultures can predict cultural conflicts: $b = 0.04$, $t = 2.01$, $p < 0.05$. This result, together with the above analysis, shows a direct relationship between the degree of Western culture attachment and cultural conflict. Whether tested alone, with one variable or four other variables, the effect of exposure to Western culture on cultural conflict persists. For Vietnamese youth, the degree of attachment to Western culture is an important factor that can directly predict cultural conflict.

4.1.3. The influence of personality

Personality is measured according to the five-factor theory of personality, including: extroverted personality, open personality, conscientious personality, agreeable personality, and distracting personality.

Extroverted personality, conscientious personality and agreeable personality have a direct impact on cultural conflicts (see table 3.28). All three types of personality tend to have opposite effects on cultural conflict. In other

words, young students with low levels of cultural conflict are those who have one (or more) of the following personality traits: 1) Extroverted personality: friendly, sociable, self-affirming, passion for activities to find interest, 2) Conscientious personality: orderly, responsible, prudent, 3) Agreeable personality: sincere, selfless, humble.

This result differs from some previous studies on the effects of personality on cultural conflicts. In the study of Benet-Martinez and Haritos (2005), the authors found that confounding personality has a direct impact on the emotional aspect of cultural conflict (due to the concept of cultural conflict in this study. corresponds to the emotional aspect of cultural conflict), while open-minded personality has a direct impact on perception of cultural distance. Other personality factors such as the agreeable personality and the outgoing personality indirectly affect the emotional aspect of cultural conflict, while the conscientious personality has no effect on cultural conflict.

Thus, the results of this study do not repeat the results of previous studies on the relationship between personality and cultural conflict. However, the former personality merits that were indirectly related to the cultural conflict now show a more direct, more pronounced relationship. Active personality factors become factors to protect youth from cultural conflict.

4.2. The influence of objective factors

4.2.1. The influence of the degree of unity in the family

The degree of unity in the family reflects the unity between the parents' behavior and attitudes with the child's behavior and attitudes. The psychological difference between two generations is understood to be the cultural gap between two generations.

In this study, the level of family unity is inversely correlated with cultural conflict: $r = -0.15$, $p < 0.05$. The relationship is not strong, but it shows that the cultural conflict between generations in the family is a reflection of the cultural conflict between the cultural egos of the individual. The research results allow us to predict cultural conflict with $b = -0.073$, $p < 0.05$. The less the unity between the two generations increases, the more cultural conflict increases. In other words, when two generations in the family (parents and children) agree on the view of cultural value expressed through daily

Factors That Affect the Psychological Aspect of Cultural Conflict Among Vietnamese Youth

activities, this unity has the effect of protecting young people from cultural conflict, chemical. This finding is consistent with previous studies on the impact of family unity on cultural conflict.

4.2.2. The effects of pressure arise in the process of cultural acculturation

The pressures that arise during cultural acculturation include linguistic pressures, discrimination, intercultural relations and social isolation.

Among these four types of pressure, the pressure on discrimination, cultural group relations and social isolation have a positive impact on cultural conflict among young people. The more these pressures increase, the higher the level of cultural conflict.

Among these types of pressures, intercultural pressure has the greatest impact on cultural conflict ($b = 127$), followed by discrimination pressure ($b = 0.14$), and finally, is the pressure on cultural isolation ($b = 0.057$).

As analyzed above, the psychological aspects of cultural conflict among Vietnamese youth are most evident in interactions with other cultural groups. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand when cultural acculturation pressure arises when the relationship with different cultural groups has the most direct impact on cultural conflict.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The research results show that the surveyed subjective and objective factors all affect the psychological aspect of cultural conflict in students. Subjective factors influence more than objective factors. Regarding the subjective factor, the more students are exposed to Western culture, the more likely they are to encounter cultural conflicts. The degree of exposure to Western culture increases the degree of attachment to Western culture, and this attachment increases the level of cultural conflict among the surveyed Vietnamese youth. In the personality factor, the extrovert personality, conscientious personality and agreeable personality have a direct impact on cultural conflict. Regarding the objective factors, the degree of unity in the family is inversely correlated with cultural conflict. The relationship is not strong, but it shows that the cultural conflict between generations in the family is a reflection of the cultural conflict between the cultural egos of the individual. Cultural acculturation pressure arises when in relation to different cultural groups has the most direct impact on cultural conflict. On this basis, we make the following recommendations: (i) Universities need to focus on adapting students' behavior in the adoption of new cultural values to help them effectively resolve the conflict; (ii) It is necessary to consider which cultural values to acquire depends on the national cultural traditions and identity, on the family and personal living conditions; (iii) Students need to harmoniously combine cultures, only then can they reduce internal cultural conflicts.

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