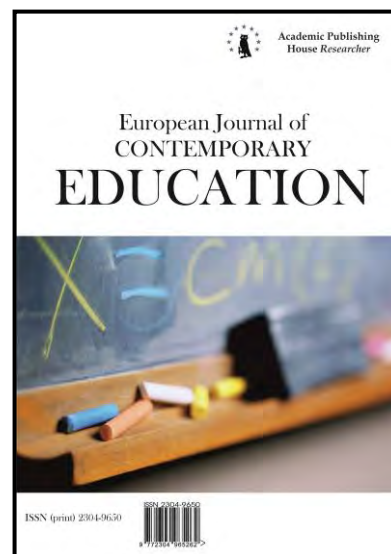




Copyright © 2020 by Academic Publishing House Researcher s.r.o.
All rights reserved.
Published in the Slovak Republic
European Journal of Contemporary Education
E-ISSN 2305-6746
2020, 9(4): 740-750
DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2020.4.740
www.ejournal1.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE! Any copying, reproduction, distribution, republication (in whole or in part), or otherwise commercial use of this work in violation of the author(s) rights will be prosecuted in accordance with international law. The use of hyperlinks to the work will not be considered copyright infringement.



Effects of Socioeconomic Status and University Learning Experiences on Male and Female Students' Leadership Capacity in Vietnamese Higher Education

Minh-Quang Duong ^{a, *}

^aUniversity of Social Sciences and Humanities – Vietnam National University
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Abstract

Little is known about students' leadership capacity in higher education in developing countries such as Vietnam. This research explored gender differences in family socioeconomic status (SES) and university learning experiences in Vietnamese higher education and investigated how family SES and university learning experiences influenced male and female students in terms of leadership capacity. The research used methods of survey questionnaire and documentation. The data were drawn from a longitudinal sample of 513 fourth-year students across five member universities of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. They were then analyzed by data processing, displaying, and drawing a conclusion. The research has two findings. The empirical results indicated that first, overall gender differences exist regarding family SES and university experiences of students and female students came from more diverse SES families and university learning experiences compared with their male counterparts. Second, the findings of this research also revealed that both genders were affected by their family SES and university learning experiences as far as leadership capacity was concerned. The results may be attributed to Vietnamese traditions. Its primary contribution comes from the findings on the development of leadership programs, which was confirmed as the main responsibility of Vietnamese universities. The suggestions connoted for university administrators and policymakers are also discussed.

Keywords: Vietnam, leadership capacity students, family SES, university learning experiences, higher education.

1. Introduction

While Vietnamese university students constitute a considerably small proportion among the national population, Vietnamese higher education institutions undergo various reforms with a core mission to cultivate high-quality human resources to promote the industrialization and

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: duongminhquang@hcmussh.edu.vn (M.Q. Duong)

modernization of Vietnam (Hayden, Lam, 2007; Ngo et al., 2006). However, one big challenge facing Vietnamese higher education is helping students develop competences needed by the employers and the labor market (e.g., problem-solving, teamwork, multimedia communication, leadership capacities). Indeed, university students do not appear to meet the manpower needs for development in Vietnam: businesses frequently complain of the shortage of skilled personnel, especially for management positions (Pham, Fry, 2004; Tran, 2013). In Vietnam, T.L.A. Tran (Tran, 2000) pointed out that capacities of decision making, leadership, problem-solving, timing, prioritizing and information management are highly ranked.

It is clear that very few studies have been conducted in the area of university students' leadership capacity (Dugan, Komives, 2007). Developing students' leadership capacity plays a critical role (Guthrie, Jones, 2012; Morse, 2004) and is one of the most important outcomes in higher education (Komives et al., 2011). Furthermore, J. Kouzes and B. Posner (Kouzes, Posner, 2013) emphasize the importance of equipping all university students with leadership capacity because the ever-changing world constantly requires leaders to face different problems in the future. However, the incompletion of leadership student study prevents the development of leadership capacity which is confirmed to be the main responsibility of universities (Smart et al., 2002).

Various previous studies demonstrate leadership as a social responsibility approach to emphasize the importance of the researches of leadership and the main findings of university. In this research, the social change model of leadership development is used to **measure students' leadership capacity**, which focuses on social responsibility and the benefits of its widespread use in university campuses (HERI, 1996). The model is designed specifically for students and affects the development of leadership programs in higher education institutions.

Researches of D. Bélanger and J. Liu (Bélanger, Liu, 2004), and P.L. Nguyen (Nguyen, 2006) demonstrate that gender and family SES are critical elements influencing the Vietnamese education. The Vietnamese education was traditionally exclusive to the male elites (Horton, 2013). However, this problem has changed with the development of Vietnamese society, especially since the economic renovation in 1986. In recent years, the proportion of female students has been increasing in the 237 higher education institutions up to 51.1 percent in the 2018–2019 academic year (General statistics office of Vietnam, 2018). Meanwhile, the gap between the rich and poor has extended, and family SES has enhanced in importance for describing educational chance and outcome (Bélanger, Liu, 2004). When the family SES is improved and the perceptions of the traditional Vietnamese society change in the positive direction, there may not be a gap between male and female students in terms of opportunities to access education, especially higher education, in Vietnamese universities.

Previous studies notice the relationship between leadership capacity and university environment (Pascarella, Terenzini, 2005; Smart et al., 2002). According to L. Beaman, E. Duflo, R. Pande, and P. Topalova (Beaman et al., 2012), and C.L. Wu (Wu, 2012) agree that classroom engagement, course hours, and **class preparation factors are associated with university students' leadership development. In addition, participation in the students' associations, social service, and sports activities is found to enhance the development of students' leadership (Dugan, 2006; Hansen et al., 2003).** However, the studies of relationships between factors of university learning experiences (such as curricular engagement and co-curricular involvement) and the leadership capacity are relatively sparse.

In view of aforesaid points, the purpose of this research is to explore gender differences in the family socioeconomic status (SES) and university learning experiences of Vietnamese university students and to investigate how family SES and university learning experiences impact on **male and female students' leadership capacity**. This research aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Are there any significant differences in the family SES and university learning experiences regarding gender?
2. How do family SES and university learning experiences affect **male and female students' leadership capacity**?

2. Research method

2.1. Sample

A multipart questionnaire was used to collect basic information about students (gender, family income, the parental education level, and the parental occupation) and obtain data regarding their university learning experiences as well as leadership capacity perceptions.

This research investigated 600 fourth-year students in the five member universities of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCM), which were 237 higher education institutes in Vietnam (General statistics office of Vietnam, 2018). Out of the 600 students, this research was conducted with 513 students whose were self-reported information in higher education research (Gonyea, 2005). It was 85.5 % return rate which exceeded the 30 % response rate for analysis purpose (Dillman, 2000). Considering that this research examined samples of female students (39.4 %) and male students (60.6 %).

2.2. Variables

The dependent variable of this research, leadership efficacy, was constructed based on seven questionnaire items measuring student capacities to develop a common direction in group, help to shape the mission of group, **counting on to do students' part, contribute to the goals of the group**, describe themselves as a cooperative group member, work with others toward common goals, and actively listen to what others have to say. This research measured the reliability of leadership capacity factors of the VNUHCM students through the valuable results of factor loading, total variance explained, and internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's α).

Values of factor loading for items of leadership capacity student factors ranged from 0.704 to 0.852, which were higher than the threshold level of 0.6 (Hair et al., 2009). Total variance explained was 63.88 percent, which was higher than the threshold level of 60 percent and meeting the requirement of a constructed variable for social science research (Hair et al., 2009). The findings of the internal consistency analysis revealed a **Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.901**, which was higher than the threshold level of 0.6 (Hair et al., 2009) and 0.7 (Nunnally, Bernstein, 1994), indicating satisfactory reliability. Based on the above findings, hence, seven factors were acceptable for establishing leadership capacity students in this research (Table 1).

Table 1. Factor analysis and reliability of the seven factors constructing students' leadership capacity in the VNU-HCM

Factors	range of score	factor loading
developing a common direction in group		.852
helping to shape the mission of group		.844
counting on to do students' part		.822
contributing to the goals of the group	1 - 5	.807
describing individual as a cooperative group member		.793
working with others toward common goals		.763
actively listening to what others have to say		.704
Total variance explained (%)		63.88
Cronbach's α		.901

Note: Data were analyzed with principle component analysis.

The independent variables of this research encompassed 3 categories: gender, family SES, and university learning experiences. Family SES consisted of family income, parental education, and parental occupation (Clarke-Stewart et al., 1994). University learning experiences contained 5 factors, including teaching approach, assessment of learning outcomes, curriculum emphases, engagement in classroom activities and co-curricular involvement. Table 2 shows the details of operational definitions, means, and standard deviations of the research variables.

Table 2. Operational definitions, means, and standard deviations of the variables

Dependent Variable
Student leadership capacity Constructed according to 7 capacity factors of developing a common direction in group, helping to shape the mission of group, counting on to do students' part, contributing to the goals of the group, describing themselves as a cooperative group member, working with others toward common goals, and actively listening to what others have to say. Measured on a 5-point scale, where 1 = <i>strongly disagree</i> and 5 = <i>strongly agree</i> ($M = 3.79, SD = .72$).
Independent Variables
Gender Female = 0, Male = 1
Family SES
Family income: measured annually on a 6-point scale, where 1 = <i>under USD 1,739</i> , 2 = <i>USD 1,739 to under 2,174</i> , 3 = <i>USD 2,174 to under 2,609</i> , 4 = <i>USD 2,609 to under 3,043</i> , 5 = <i>USD 3,043 to under 3,478</i> , and 6 = <i>over USD 3,478</i> ($M = 2.91, SD = 2.12$).
Father education: measured on a 6-point scale, where 1 = <i>elementary school and lower</i> , 2 = <i>junior high school</i> , 3 = <i>senior high school</i> , 4 = <i>junior college</i> , 5 = <i>university</i> , and 6 = <i>graduate degree</i> ($M = 3.76, SD = 1.41$).
Mother education: measured on the same scale as that for father's education ($M = 3.43, SD = 1.44$).
Father occupation: measured on a 3-point scale, where 1 = <i>blue collar</i> , 2 = <i>management/sales</i> , 3 = <i>professional/executive</i> ($M = 1.66, SD = .69$).
Mother occupation: measured on the same scale as that for father's occupation ($M = 1.77, SD = .77$).
University learning experiences
Teaching approach: measured on a 5-point scale, where 1 = <i>never</i> and 5 = <i>always</i> ($M = 3.59, SD = .58$).
Assessment of learning outcomes: measured on the same scale as that for teaching approach ($M = 3.47, SD = .56$).
Curriculum emphasizes: measured on the same scale as that for teaching approach ($M = 3.71, SD = .53$).
Engagement in classroom activities: measured on the same scale as that for teaching approach ($M = 3.20, SD = .54$).
Co-curricular involvement: measured on the same scale as that for teaching approach ($M = 2.42, SD = 1.00$).

Note. Every variable is measured with one question item

2.3. Procedure

This research employed the following data analysis procedure: independent *t*-test, and multiple regression analyses. Independent *t*-test was performed to see whether significant differences existed between male and female students with regard to their own the family SES and university learning experiences. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to investigate the influences of family SES and university learning experiences on male and female student leadership capacity in the VNUHCM.

3. Results

3.1. Family SES and university learning experiences of the VNUHCM students regarding gender differences

Table 3 shows that, overall, gender differences exist regarding family SES and university experiences of VNUHCM students. Regarding family SES, the female students' family SES was substantially more diverse than that of the male students. The *t*-test results revealed that the average levels of mother education ($t = 2.490, p < 0.05$) and parental occupation ($t = 2.236,$

$p < 0.05$ for father occupation; $t = 2.905$, $p < 0.01$ for mother occupation) of the female students were significantly higher than those of the male students. The average levels of family income of the female students and the father education of the male students were also lower than those of the male and female students, respectively; however, the difference did not attain statistically significant levels.

Table 3. Gender difference analyses of family SES and university learning experiences of the VNUHCM students

Factor	Gender	N	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>t</i> -test
Family SES				
Family income	Male	311	3.04(2.25)	-1.814
	Female	202	2.70(1.89)	
Father education	Male	307	3.74(1.40)	.349
	Female	202	3.79(1.42)	
Mother education	Male	311	3.30(1.36)	2.490*
	Female	202	3.62(1.52)	
Father occupation	Male	307	1.60(.77)	2.236*
	Female	202	1.74(.54)	
Mother occupation	Male	311	1.69(.79)	2.905**
	Female	202	1.89(.72)	
University learning Experiences				
Teaching approach	Male	311	3.58(.63)	-.088
	Female	202	3.58(.49)	
Assessment of learning outcomes	Male	311	3.36(.58)	5.446***
	Female	202	3.63(.47)	
Curriculum emphasizes	Male	311	3.62(.50)	4.722***
	Female	202	3.85(.55)	
Engagement in classroom activities	Male	311	3.10(.59)	4.729***
	Female	202	3.33(.41)	
Co-curricular involvement	Male	311	2.27(.98)	4.368***
	Female	202	2.66(.99)	

Notes: N = 307 instead of 311 for male students' father educational level and occupation because their parent divorced, passed away, or did not live together, etc.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Regarding university learning experiences, the female VNUHCM students were more engaged in the university learning experiences than their male counterparts. The university learning experiences for assessment of learning outcomes of $t = 5.446$ and $p < 0.001$ (namely oral examination, essay or report, amount of work done, and duration attend classroom), curriculum emphasizes of $t = 4.722$ and $p < 0.001$ (as emphasis on memory, analysis, system synthesis, and skill formation), engagement in classroom activities of $t = 4.729$ and $p < 0.001$ (including go to the library, prepare lesson before class, actively participate in class, and guide friends to complete assignments) and co-curricular involvement of $t = 4.368$ and $p < 0.001$ (such as self-regulatory organization, volunteer activities, international exchange, and management operations) of the female students were significantly higher than those of the male peers.

3.2. Effects of family SES and university learning experience on the male and female VNUHCM students' leadership capacity

In Table 4, Models 1 to 3 were stepwise regression analyses to clearly present the effects of independent variables on the students' leadership capacity in the VNUHCM. Model 4 involved gender-specific regression analyses to further examine gender differences. The results exhibit coefficients of β values, with $\beta > 0$ indicating a positive impact on the leadership capacity and by contrary. These models explained 28.7 %, 65.8 %, 77.2 %, and 98.4 % of the variance of leadership

efficacy of family SES (Adj. $R^2 = .287$), university learning experiences (Adj. $R^2 = .658$), the female students (Adj. $R^2 = .772$), and the male students (Adj. $R^2 = .984$), respectively.

Table 4. Stepwise and regression analyses of variable effects on male and female student leadership capacity of VNUHCM

Factor	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	
	Beta (β)			Male	Female
Gender	-.152**				
Family SES					
Family income		.151***		-.107*	.432***
Father education		.078		.111*	.490***
Mother education		.616***		.431***	-.275***
Father occupation		-.270***		-.135**	-.740***
Mother occupation		-.460***		-.325***	.108***
University learning experiences					
Teaching approach					
explaining the knowledge in books			.159***	.307***	.006
interaction between lecturer and student			-.107*	-.050	-.106*
selecting topics and do report			.212***	.260***	.059
field trips			.094*	-.089	.429***
Assessment of learning outcomes					
oral examination			.085	.204**	1.061***
essay or report			.103*	.352***	-.423***
amount of work done			-.113*	-.057	-.109**
duration attend classroom			.005	-.106*	.278***
Curriculum emphasizes on					
memory			.129**	-.196**	.268***
analysis			.015	.162**	.133***
system synthesis			.005	-.181**	-.012
skill formation			.157**	.115*	-.104*
Engagement in classroom activities					
going to the library			.143***	.206***	.251***
preparing lessons before class			.121*	-.002	.425***
actively participating in class			.322***	.250***	.498***
guiding friends to complete assignments			-.503***	-.350***	-.267***
Co-curricular involvement					
self-regulatory organization			.202**	.224*	.540***
volunteer activities			-.394***	-.282**	-1.747***
international exchange			.281***	-.003	.253***
management operations			-.032	.001	-.025
F	12.01***	41.98***	50.20***	42.50***	491.27***
Adj. R^2	.021	.287	.658	.772	.984

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The findings of this research demonstrated that various family ESE and university learning experiences persisted to have significant relationships with student leadership capacity. Model 1 showed a significant effect of gender on student leadership capacity ($\beta = -.152$, $p < 0.01$). The results of Model 1 indicated that the leadership capacity of the female students was significantly higher than those of the male students in the VNUHCM. Model 2 indicates that most items of family SES, except father education, exerted a substantial influence on the leadership

capacity of the Vietnamese university students. Thereby, students' family finance and mother education yielded positive effects on their leadership capacity ($\beta = .151$ and $.616$, $p < 0.01$, respectively); by contrast, students' parental occupations ($\beta = -0.270$ for father and $-.460$ for mother, $p < 0.01$) were shown as negative predictors of their leadership capacity. However, all items of family SES **significantly benefited the students' leadership capacity in Model 4**.

As for Model 3, the findings indicated that university learning experiences were difference associated with leadership capacity of the Vietnamese university students. Most items of teaching approach, except the item of interaction between lecturers and students, yielded positive effects on **students' leadership capacity. For assessment of learning outcomes, essay or report** ($\beta = .103$, $p < 0.05$) and amount of work done ($\beta = -.113$, $p < 0.05$) had positive and negative impact on student leadership capacity, respectively. Two out of four items of curriculum emphases were **positively associated with students' leadership capacity** ($\beta = .129$, $p < 0.01$ for emphasis on memory, and $\beta = .157$, $p < 0.01$ for emphasis on skill formation). All items of engagement in classroom activities found a positive relationship, except guide friends to complete assignments item, which hindered **students' leadership efficacy** ($\beta = -.503$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, self-regulatory organization **and international exchange activities showed positive effects on students' leadership efficacy** ($\beta = .202$ and $.281$, $p < 0.01$ and 0.001 , respectively), but, volunteer activities demonstrated no, ever negative relationship with leadership efficacy of VNUHCM students. However, all the items persistently indicated significant difference effects after university learning experiences (Model 3) was considered across gender subgroups (Model 4).

Model 4 further revealed an intriguing effect of family SES and university learning experiences between the genders. The findings showed that father education ($\beta = .111$, $p < 0.05$ for male and $\beta = .490$, $p < 0.001$ for female) and father occupation ($\beta = -.135$, $p < 0.01$ for male and $\beta = -.740$, $p < 0.001$ for female), respectively, yielded negative and positive effects on male and **female students' leadership capacity**; and the remaining factors of family SES had conflicting effects for both genders.

Regarding curricular learning experiences in Model 4, items of explaining the knowledge in book ($\beta = .307$, $p < 0.001$), selecting topics and doing report ($\beta = .206$, $p < 0.001$), and emphasis on system synthesis ($\beta = -.181$, $p < 0.01$) respectively, yielded positive and negative effects on **male students' leadership capacity, but yielded no effect on female students' leadership capacity**. By contrast, items of interaction between lecturers and students ($\beta = -.106$, $p < 0.05$), field trips ($\beta = .429$, $p < 0.001$), and prepare lesson before class ($\beta = .425$, $p < 0.001$) respectively, yielded **negative and positive effects on female students' leadership capacity**, but identified no effect on **male students' leadership capacity**. Finally, regarding co-curricular learning experiences the data showed that positive activities demonstrated positive impacts on student leadership capacity, whereas passive activities demonstrated negative impacts on both genders in this research.

4. Discussion

Though there are not many previous research studies on student leadership capacity in Vietnamese universities or others in the world, there exist similarities regarding the relationship of student leadership capacity between previous researches and this research. The findings of this research contribute to filling critical gaps in both theories and practices regarding development of gender-specific student leadership for Vietnamese universities in particular and Asian Pacific higher education in general.

Gender differences exist regarding family SES and university experiences of Vietnamese university students. The research of M. Q. Duong, C. L. Wu, and M. K. Hoang (Duong et al., 2019) shows that gender inequalities exist in family SES of Vietnamese university students. There was the opposite result with this research when they said that female students in Vietnam were significantly lower than the average levels of mother education and parental occupation of the male peers. Both male and female students in the Vietnamese higher education institutions came from families across a wide range of socioeconomic strata, whereas the female university students generally came from more diverse SES families (Duong et al., 2019).

The findings of this research echo of Duong et al., which also demonstrates that female students are more strongly engaged with university learning experiences compared to male students (Duong et al., 2019). Similarly, J. Desai (Desai, 2001) and P. Horton (Horton, 2013) also share that Vietnamese female students perform better in university learning experiences than male

counterparts. As an explanation for this result, P.L. Nguyen (Nguyen, 2006) says that Vietnamese families have tended to rapidly withdraw their females, but male families do whatever they can to ensure their sons enter universities longer than female counterparts who do not perform well academically from universities. This might be especially true for Vietnamese society when a man is the breadwinner in his family – financially contributing to the family while his wife does not have to enter the labor force (Bernard, 1993; Vu, 2008). This perspective has created a gap in the family support for learning in university of gender. Male students always receive family support to study in university, because family male students aspire to be able to find good jobs after graduation in order to take care of their small families (e.g., his wife, children and parent). The results of this research also point out that **gender inequalities do exist in university students' learning experiences**, and female university students in Vietnam attainment appears to be more closely related to academic performance than family support.

The findings of this research confirm that the leadership efficacy of the female students is significantly higher than that of the male counterparts at VNUHCM, which is supported by C.L. Wu and W. Bao (Wu, Bao, 2013) who report that female students have lead leadership roles at the Chinese elite universities. By contrast, other researches show that woman students have less efficacy and expectations related to leadership in higher education institutes (Adams, Keim, 2000; Boatwright, Egidio, 2003; Duong et al., 2019). This may be because the Vietnamese society has undergone extensive economic and political changes since the commonly known as economic renovation of Vietnam was implemented in 1986. **The research of T.R. Müller (Müller, 2007)** identified that this renovation has been attained the dominant male roles in Vietnamese society. According to **D. Bélanger and J. Liu (Bélanger, Liu, 2004)**, Vietnamese women have been present in various social fields though H.T. Vu (Vu, 2020) admits that the number of women holding leadership positions is still limited compared to that of men. The Vietnamese government, thus, has to secure a designated number for female representation in all levels and fields in order to have a more balanced gender representation in the government system agencies (Munro, 2013). Female Vietnamese students should join holding leadership positions in the university to have the opportunity to participate in leadership roles at the workplace after graduation.

Our research suggests that family SES has a significant effect on the leadership capacity of both genders at VNU-HCM. Meanwhile, the research of Duong et al. (Duong et al., 2019) findings demonstrate that only family SES of female students has positive impacts on student leadership capacity. The previous research discovers the connection between family SES and the student learning outcomes in Vietnamese higher education. Its inconsistency can be attributed to the sample difference. In view of this approach, the research indicates that there are clearly difficulties for poor families when their children attend beyond high school, even specific poor Vietnamese families typically cannot pay for higher education (Bélanger, Liu, 2004). Vietnamese government, thus, has introduced different policies of financial assistance for students of disadvantaged SES families, including tuition exemptions, reductions, scholarships for ethnic minority students, **orphans, war martyrs or veterans' children, etc. In addition, these students are also allowed to** participate in loan programs with low interest rates to support their studies (Tran, 2019). The student loan programs, however, is considered modest for documents, background SES families, time-consuming. Thus, the administration of student loan programs are important, namely building verifiable eligibility standard and reducing the paperwork and collateral required for this program approach.

Similarly, almost items of university learning experiences in this research employed a significant differences effect on the leadership capacity students of both genders in the VNU-HCM. The research of P. M. King (King, 1997) indicated that student leadership development can also be a challenging and important purpose in the university and the increased presence of both curriculum and co-curriculum activities (Astin, Astin, 2000). Vietnamese students overly focus on examinations (Kelly, 2000) and are ignorant of the benefits of co-curricular activities in universities for their competence development (Duong et al., 2019). For teaching approach, the research of B. De La Harpe, A. Radloff, and J. Wyber (De La Harpe et al., 2000) found that student-centered, process-focused approaches and teacher–student interactions (Duong, Le, 2018) are successful procedures for advancing capacities for students of in higher education settings. This finding is inconsistent with that of Duong et al. (Duong et al., 2019), which had negative impact between university library and the leadership efficacy of both male and female students. However,

the researches of J. Bryant, G. Matthews, and G. Walton (Bryant et al., 2009) and K.R. Smith (Smith, 2002) indicated that there is a positive connection between library in the higher education institutions and learning of student are collecting and developing into active learning centers for students.

The fact that this positive influence of library usage was displayed from a top-level of VNU-HCM: increasingly invested infrastructures. Although previous researches have not demonstrated a direct linkage between oral examination, emphasis on analysis, actively participate in class and leadership capacity, we drawn that students with positive effects among these factors may perceive themselves to have leadership capacity. Students participating in the predominantly opposite-gender organizations are perhaps apportioned with more attention and resources (Duong et al., 2019). These results altogether suggested that participating in opposite-gender co-curricular activities could enable students to transcend the division and experiences of traditional gender roles, helping students of both genders freely explore their capacities.

5. Conclusion

This research explores gender differences in family socioeconomic status (SES) and university learning experiences in Vietnamese higher education and investigates how family SES and university learning experiences influenced male and female students in terms of leadership capacity at VNU-HCM. The empirical results have thus addressed the two research questions. It is hoped that the barriers found in this research might be useful for policy makers and administrators to develop leadership capacity programs for students (including curricular and co-curricular activities). To prepare students for the process of international integration, the study urges the VNU-HCM to focus on improving family SES and university learning experiences factors in the process of constructing a holistic intervention to enhance leadership capacity for students of both genders. This study also contributes to filling the gap in the literature of students' leadership capacity in both theory and practice. Further research will continue to explore larger population groups covering all universities in Vietnam and disciplines to accumulate abundant empirical information on the learning experiences and outcomes as well as using other factors which have effects on Vietnamese students' leadership capacity.

6. Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions.

References

- Adams, Keim, 2000 – Adams, T.C., Keim, M.C. (2000). Leadership practices and effectiveness among Greek student leaders. *College Student Journal*. 34: 259–271.
- Astin, Astin, 2000 – Astin, A.W., Astin, H.S. (2000). Leadership reconsidered: Engaging higher education in social change. Battle Creek, MI: W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
- Bélanger, Liu, 2004 – Bélanger, D., Liu, J. (2004). Social policy reforms and daughters' schooling in Vietnam. *International Journal of Educational Development*. 24(1): 23-38. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2003.08.001>
- Beaman et al., 2012 – Beaman, L., Duflo, E., Pande, R., Topalova, P. (2012). Female leadership raises aspirations and educational attainment for girls: A policy experiment in India. *Science*. 335(6068): 582-586.
- Bernard, 1993 – Bernard, J. (1993). The good-provider role: Its rise and fall. In A. Skolnick & J. H. Skolnick (Eds.). *Family in transition* (pp. 117-135). New York: HarperCollins.
- Boatwright, Egidio, 2003 – Boatwright, K.J., Egidio, R.K. (2003). Psychological predictors of college women's leadership aspirations. *Journal of College Student Development*. 44: 653-669.
- Bryant et al., 2009 – Bryant, J., Matthews, G., Walton, G. (2009). Academic libraries and social and learning space: A case study of Loughborough University Library, UK. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*. 41(1): 7-18.
- Clarke-Stewart et al., 1994 – Clarke-Stewart, K.A., Gruber, C.P., & Fitzgerald, L.M. (1994). *Children at home and in day care*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Desai, 2001 – Desai, J. (2001). *Vietnam through the lens of gender: Five years later: Results from the second Vietnam living standard survey*. Hanoi: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

- De La Harpe et al., 2000 – De La Harpe, B., Radloff, A., Wyber, J. (2000). Quality and generic (professional) skills. *Quality in higher education*. 6(3): 231-243.
- Dillman, 2000 – Dillman, D.A. (2000). Mail and internet surveys: The tailored design method. New York: John Wiley and Son.
- Dugan, 2006 – Dugan, J.P. (2006). Involvement and leadership: A descriptive analysis of socially responsible leadership. *Journal of College Student Development*. 47(3): 335-343.
- Dugan, Komives, 2007 – Dugan, J.P., Komives, S.R. (2007). Developing leadership capacity in college students: Findings from a national study. College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership.
- Duong, Le, 2018 – Duong, M.Q., Le, M.T. (2018). The impacts of university activities and teaching methods on leadership capacity of Vietnamese junior university students: A case study. *Rangsit Journal of Educational Studies*. 5(1): 23-36.
- Duong, Wu, Hoang, 2019 – Duong, M.Q., Wu, C.L., Hoang, M.K. (2019). Student inequalities in Vietnamese higher education? Exploring how gender, socioeconomic status, and university experiences influence leadership efficacy. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. 56(1): 110-120.
- General statistics office of Vietnam, 2018 – General statistics office of Vietnam. Statistical summary book of Vietnam. Ha Noi: Statistical Publishing House, 2018.
- Gonyea, 2005 – Gonyea, R.M. (2005). Self-reported data in institutional research: Review and recommendations. In P. D. Umbach (Ed.). Survey research emerging issues: New directions for institutional research (pp. 73-89). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Guthrie, Jones, 2012 – Guthrie, K.L., Jones, T.B. (2012). Teaching and learning: Using experiential learning and reflection for leadership education. In K. L. Guthrie, & L. Osteen (Eds.), New directions for student services: Developing students' leadership capacity (pp. 53-63).
- Hair, Tatham, Anderson, Black, 2009 – Hair, J.F., Tatham, R.L., Anderson, R.E., Black, W. (2009). Multivariate data analysis (6 ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hansen, Larson, Dworkin, 2003 – Hansen, D.M., Larson, R.W., Dworkin, J.B. (2003). What adolescents learn in organized youth activities: A survey of self-reported developmental experiences. *Journal of Research on adolescence*. 13(1): 25-55.
- Hayden, Lam, 2007 – Hayden, M., Lam, Q.T. (2007). Institutional autonomy for higher education in Vietnam. *Higher Education Research & Development*. 26(1): 73-85.
- Horton, 2013 – Horton, P. (2013). Note passing and gendered discipline in Vietnamese schools. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. 36(4): 526-541.
- HERI, 1996 – Higher Education Research Institute [HERI]. A social change model of leadership development: Guidebook version III. College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, 1996.
- Kelly, 2000 – Kelly, K. (2000). The higher education system in Vietnam. *World Education News and Reviews*. 13(3): 5-6.
- King, 1997 – King, P.M. (1997). Character and civic education: What does it take? *Educational Record*. 78(34): 87-90.
- Komives et al., 2011 – Komives, S.R., Dugan, J.P., Owen, J.E., Slack, C., Wagner, W. (2011). The handbook for student leadership development (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kouzes, Posner, 2013 – Kouzes, J., Posner, B. (2013). Leadership Practices Inventory (4th ed). San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Müller, 2007 – Müller, T.R. (2007). Education and gender in revolutionary societies: insights from Vietnam, Nicaragua, and Eritrea. *Compare*. 37(5): 635-650.
- Morse, 2004 – Morse, S.W. (2004). Smart communities: How citizens and local leaders can use strategic thinking to build a brighter future. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Munro, 2013 – Munro, J. (2013). Women leadership in Vietnam: Leveraging a resource untapped. United Nations Development Program. Hanoi, Vietnam.
- Ngo, Lingard, Mitchell, 2006 – Ngo, T.M., Lingard, B., Mitchell, J. (2006). The policy cycle and vernacular globalization: a case study of the creation of Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City. *Comparative Education*. 42(02): 225-242.

Nguyen, 2006 – Nguyen, P.L. (2006). Effects of social class and school conditions on educational enrollment and achievement of boys and girls in rural Vietnam. *International Journal of Educational Research*. 45(3): 153-175.

Nunnally, Bernstein, 1994 – Nunnally, J.C., Bernstein, I.H. (1994). Psychometric theory (2 ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Pascarella, Terenzini, 2005 – Pascarella, E.T., Terenzini, P.T. (2005). How college affects students: A third decade of research. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pham, Fry, 2004 – Pham, L.H., Fry, G.W. (2004). Education and economic, political, and social change in Vietnam. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 3(3): 199-222.

Smith, 2002 – Smith, K.R. (2002). New roles and responsibilities for the university library: advancing student learning through outcomes assessment. *Journal of Library Administration*. 35(4): 29-36.

Smart et al., 2002 – Smart, J.C., Ethington, C.A., Riggs, R.O., Thompson, M.D. (2002). Influences of institutional expenditure patterns on the development of students' leadership competencies. *Research in Higher Education*. 43: 115-132.

Tran, 2000 – Tran, T.L.A. (2000). Management training needs in Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam): Assessment in plastics and textile-garment industries. Unpublished master's thesis, Asian Institute of Technology Bangkok: Asian Institute of Technology.

Tran, 2019 – Tran, T.T. (2019). Access and Equity in Vietnamese Higher Education. In C.H. Nguyen and M. Shah (eds.). *Quality Assurance in Vietnamese Higher Education: Policy and Practice in the 21st Century* (pp. 163-182). Palgrave Macmillan: Springer International Publishing.

Tran, 2013 – Tran, T.T. (2013). Limitation on the development of skills in higher education in Vietnam. *Higher Education*. 65(5): 631-644.

Vu, 2008 – Vu, P.A. (2008). Gender stereotypes in story textbooks for primary school students in Vietnam. Unpublished Master of Education, University of Oslo, Norway.

Vu, 2020 – Vu, H.T. (2020). Female leadership in Vietnam. In C. C. Chao & L. Ha (Eds.), *Asian Women Leadership* (pp. 109-124). London: Routledge.

Wu, 2012 – Wu, C.L. (2012). A Comparison of the Effects of University Learning Experiences on Student Leadership at Taiwanese General and Technical Universities. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*. 21(1): 130-140.

Wu, Bao 2013 – Wu, C.L., Bao, W. (2013). The effects of individual characteristics, socioeconomic status, and political engagement on the attainment of student leadership roles in Chinese university students. *International Journal of Educational Development*. 33: 149-155.