

A Study on the Impacts of Propaganda on the Construction of National Attitudes among Vietnamese Millennials

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Abstract

This study briefly will explore the terms nationalism and national attitudes in the aspects of nation branding and propaganda theory, which brings up a modern and up-to-date way of seeing national attitudes. It also shows the interrelation between Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes and the impacts of propaganda involved various media. The findings of this study will be used as a reference to the current stage of Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes and identities.

The survey was conducted in Ho Chi Minh city of Vietnam during October to December, 2018. The means, standard deviation and percentage were being tabulated and analyzed using One-way ANOVA and Regression with the significance level of .05. The result revealed the following points:

Vietnamese millennials, having different demographic factors in relations to gender, educational level, income, awareness towards national news, and travel frequency, did not have significant different *national attitudes* in respect to *national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority, and*

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nationalism. However, respondents with difference in occupation, especially those working in governments, had significant different national attitudes compared to those who were working in corporates.

Vietnamese millennials' media exposure in regards to *media exposure to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and credibility of the media* significantly influence their national attitudes. Especially, the credibility of media was the key influence on their perceived national attitudes in the fast changing decade of media.

The participants perceived their national attitudes were influenced by *their exposure to nationalistic propaganda on 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh and sea security*.

In 4.0 era, Vietnamese millennials have more tendency to approach information sources and the viewers' media literacy increases. Therefore, single directional messages hardly maintain their affects like before. There is a need of open and transparent communication, research and discussion.

Keywords: Nation, National Identity, National Attitude, Propaganda, Media Exposure

การศึกษาผลกระทบของโฆษณาชวนเชื่อเรื่องการสร้างทัศนคติ เกี่ยวกับชาติในกลุ่มประชากรชาวเวียดนามรุ่นมิลเลนเนียล

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้จะค้นคว้าโดยสังเขปนิยามของคำว่า ชาตินิยมและทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติ จากแง่มุม การสร้างภาพลักษณ์ประเทศและทฤษฎีโฆษณาชวนเชื่อ ซึ่งสามารถสร้างวิธีที่ทันสมัยและเป็นปัจจุบันสำหรับการมองทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติ อีกทั้งยังแสดงให้เห็นความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างทัศนคติ เกี่ยวกับชาติของประชากรชาวเวียดนามรุ่นมิลเลนเนียลและผลกระทบจากโฆษณาชวนเชื่อที่เกี่ยวข้อง ในสื่อต่าง ๆ อีกด้วย ผลการวิจัยจะสามารถนำไปใช้อ้างอิงสถานะปัจจุบันของทัศนคติและอัตลักษณ์ แห่งชาติในกลุ่มประชากรชาวเวียดนามรุ่นมิลเลนเนียลได้

ผลจากการแจกแบบสำรวจในครัวเรือนที่ ประเทศเวียดนามระหว่างเดือนตุลาคม ถึงธันวาคม ค.ศ. 2018 ที่นำค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐานและร้อยละ มาสร้างตารางและวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยวิธีการวิเคราะห์ความแปรปรวนทางเดียวและการวิเคราะห์การถดถอย และกำหนดนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ 0.5 ผลการวิจัย มีดังนี้

ประชากรชาวเวียดนามรุ่นมิลเลนเนียล ที่มีปัจจัยประชากรศาสตร์ต่างกันด้านเพศ ระดับการศึกษา รายได้ ความตระหนักรู้ว่าระดับประเทศและความถี่ในการเดินทาง ไม่มีทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติ อันประกอบด้วยความรู้สึกกับชาติ ความชอบชาติ ความภูมิใจในชาติ ความชอบชาติตนเองมากกว่าชาติอื่น ความคิดว่าชาติตนเองดีกว่าชาติอื่น และชาตินิยม โดยมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ อย่างไรก็ตาม ผู้ตอบแบบสำรวจที่มีอาชีพต่างกัน โดยเฉพาะที่รับราชการ มีทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติต่างกันโดยมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติกับผู้ที่ทำงานในบริษัทเอกชน

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การเปิดรับสื่อของประชากรชาวเวียดนามรุ่นมิลเลนเนียม เรื่องการเปิดรับสื่อโฆษณาชวนเชื่อ การเปิดรับสื่อรายวันและความน่าเชื่อถือของสื่อ ส่งอิทธิพลอย่างมีนัยสำคัญต่อทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติ โดยเฉพาะความน่าเชื่อถือของสื่อซึ่งเป็นอิทธิพลหลักด้านการรับรู้ทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติในยุคสมัยที่สื่อมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างรวดเร็ว

ผู้ตอบแบบสำรวจรับรู้ว่าทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติของตนได้รับอิทธิพลจากการเปิดรับโฆษณาชวนเชื่อเชิงชาตินิยม 5 ประโภคของประธานาธิบดีโญจิมินห์และการรักษาความปลอดภัยน่าน้ำทะเล

ในยุค 4.0 ประชากรชาวเวียดนามรุ่นมิลเลนเนียมมีแนวโน้มที่จะเข้าหาสื่อข้อมูลและมีการรู้เท่าทันสื่อมากขึ้น ดังนั้น การส่งสื่อข้อความทิศทางเดียวกันไม่สามารถส่งผลลัพธ์ได้เหมือนดังเดิม จึงมีความจำเป็นต้องจัดให้มีการสื่อสาร วิจัยและอภิปรายแบบเปิดและໂປร່ງສີຕ່ອໄປ

คำสำคัญ : ประเทศชาติ อัตลักษณ์แห่งชาติ ทัศนคติเกี่ยวกับชาติ โฆษณาชวนเชื่อ การเปิดรับสื่อ

1. Introduction

“The nation: it is an imagined political community-and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”¹. This study was inspired from this concept of Anderson. As mentioned in the abstract, in 2000 year of the history, Vietnam had surpassed a lot of prolonged wars and only had a few years of peace. It was said that Vietnamese identity was fragmented. It also was reformed and promoted by the governments for political purposes. That involved the use of propaganda in different messages and formats. This study contributes to the previous research about Vietnamese nationalism and to Vietnamese government and private sectors working in media and communication, nation branding, and international relation. Furthermore, it helps to see the dependency level of Vietnamese millennials in decision making of daily life issues, and how each millennial citizen actively involves, judges, and makes decision in the formation of certain attitudes. At the governmental level, it will give some insight on how Vietnamese perception of nation can be maintained, constructed and reconstructed across the public’s mind. The result will be used as a reference to come up with national plan to empower and leverage collective power from Vietnamese millennials to solve national essential issues and to build up the desired nation for all. In this study, there are three research questions to focus on:

1. How do Vietnamese millennials’s different *demographic factors* in regard to *gender, occupation level, educational level, income level, care about national issues, and travel frequency* influence their national attitudes?
2. How do Vietnamese millennials’ *media activity* in regard to *daily exposure on media, media exposure to propaganda, and credibility of media* influence their national attitudes?
3. How do Vietnamese millennials’ *attitudes towards national propaganda content related to 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh and sea security* influence their national attitudes?

¹ Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities* (3rd ed.). UK: Verso.

To explore these three research questions, this study involved four main variables from the literature review with a questionnaire consisting 46 items, which are equal to 46 questions. Those variables have the reference to the theoretical frameworks of (1) propaganda, (2) nation branding, (3) national identity, (4) nationalism, (5) social identity theory, (6) silver bullet theory, and (7) media dependency theory. In order to conduct the research, six past studies are reviewed:

1. Vietnam cultural policy from the period of Renovation: The preservation of cultural identity in the globalization (Hoang, 2015).
2. Perception on collective national identities: Reflection on the unity of Vietnam in 2016 (Ratilainen, 2016).
3. Vietnamese characteristics of social consciousness and values-national character, differences between North and South, and gaps between the Vietnam War generation and the post-war generation (Shibai, 2015).
4. The propaganda effect? The Chinese media and national identity (Darr, 2011).
5. The media and challenges of national identity in nigeria (Okwuchukwu, Ngozi, & Emmanuel, 2014).
6. National sentiments and attitudes toward minorities (Kelemen, 2000).

Firstly, in “Vietnam Cultural Policy from the Period of Renovation: The Preservation of Cultural Identity in the Globalization”, Hoang (2015) presented her research about Vietnam’s cultural preservation. She made a strong statement about the importance of right understanding of national identity and culture preservation. Furthermore, she insisted the exchange of neighbouring cultures and the diversity of Vietnamese culture, which inherited the characteristics from different countries such as China, France, and the US. Those diverse cultural characteristics reflected in Vietnamese language, cuisine, social norms, traditional customs, and social values shaped the Vietnam’s national identity. It differentiated Vietnam from other countries in the region. In Vietnamese culture, family was always mentioned as a constructive component of ‘happiness’. The unity of family members and members within communities played important role. Especially when Renovation period happened, it promoted national solidarity to build up a desired country. During that period, Vietnamese citizens were

given freedom and actively participated in the process of preservation and development. However, it also brought a consideration of the freedom's level to approach cultural values. To conclude her study, Hoang questioned the weakness in cultural administration at governmental level and addressed the danger of globalization and market economy on traditional values, norms, and beliefs.

Secondly, in the research thesis titled "Perception on Collective National Identities: Reflections on the Unity of Vietnam in 2016", Ratilainen (2016) also mentioned about the unity attribute of Vietnamese and used it as a reflection to understand the collective national identity of Vietnamese. It stated an assumption that Vietnamese population might hold a multiple identity set. Eleven in-depth interviews were conducted. It discussed six assertions on collective national identities by examining the perceived unity among Vietnamese towards their country. Firstly, Ratilainen stated that the governmental control was not only on media, but also on all aspects of life, including national identities. Even though political ideology was pushed from top down, it was proved to contribute to the unity of Vietnam. Secondly, there was a few number of interviewees had full understanding of national laws and their duty for their country. Even though some of them did not totally agree on those regulations, they were all aware to follow national orientation as Vietnamese citizens. At third, border issue and economic growth were two factors supporting the unity inside the society. Fourthly, they all shared the same pride of "thousand years of history", which had been used by the government to maintain the national unity. She also showed the disorientation among Vietnamese on making a change in the society, even though they knew that there were social issues occurring and disagreements on national decision at governmental level. Fifth of all, their cognition of identity was influenced by the economic and social class factors. Besides, the division between the North and South Vietnam by political ideology did not exist anymore. It was replaced by the Vietnamese's acceptance towards westernization and globalization. The Northern people showed up to be more conservative while the Southern population was eager to adopt Western concepts. In contrast to that conclusion, there were several articles bringing up the division issue within Vietnamese society. In addition, her research pointed out that the sampling might not be used to generalize the whole population because of their

age range and their location, all from Da Nang - the third important city of Vietnam. In a positive perspective, her thesis's results raised awareness and delivered some certain hints to consider when studying about Vietnamese national identity in a larger scale.

Thirdly, Shibai (2015) summarized that the South was more conscious about politics than the North. The South Vietnamese hold a belief that individuals' well-being decided the rise of a country. However, in his study, the South and the North showed the same viewpoint of economic values and economic-related issues. For Vietnamese, social system affected their perceived values to some extent.

Fourthly, studying about the effect of propaganda in China, Darr (2011) conducted a research by visiting each household and directly asking them questions about propaganda, media use, and perception of national identity. He concluded that one's national identity could be constructed and maintained through the way they consume media with propaganda content. For Darr, male candidates showed more awareness and concern about national attachment and identity. The educational level, job status, and age also affected the strength of attachment. Despite of the cause-effect relation between media consumption and national identity, there were other types of media communicating and providing contents against the propaganda, especially newspaper and the Internet. Darr (2011) argued whether news media actually helped out with national identity formation or destroyed it. According to his research results, traditional media such as radio and television consolidated perceived national identity in citizens' mindsets. In contrast, other media like newspaper, online social networks and the Internet did not contribute to the strength of national attachment. Because media, especially the Internet, in China was under control by the government, most of the media content focused on promoting nationalism, which is defined as the citizens' attitudes when they care about their identity. Therefore, media was said to shape and strengthen national identity, and cause the audiences to psychologically attach to certain presented identity. Furthermore, in his sampling, the young and the oldest were strongly exposed to national identity and mostly feel attached to their nation. That could be explained by the fact that young Chinese were still influenced by propagated schooling while the oldest spent most of their spare time on TV and radio.

Fifthly, another paper elaborated the role of media and the relationship between media use and national identity was The media and challenges of National Identity in Nigeria by Okwuchukwu, Ngozi, and Emmanuel (2014). Socialization in Nigeria happened with the support of education and media. Mass media was always a powerful tool of the government to control and provide the information, bond the authority and the public, and direct the social movements. However, Okwuchukwu, et al. (2014) pointed out the inverse effect of media upon citizens because of the characteristics of media itself. Nation building and the construction of national identity were included in Nigeria's national communication objectives. The expectation was establishing the consciousness and the recognition of national identity, which tied the nation as a whole. Both research from Darr (2011) and Okwuchukwu, et al. (2014) stressed on media's influence, the unity of a country, and the formation of national identity and nationalism. Therefore, it is undeniable that media power and communication are important to nation building. From the two researches, media held within itself propagated content, which aimed to make an impact and acquired media consumers' reactions in return. So, the message contents were purposively designated. Beyond being a notion to orient the society for a common goal, national attitudes and identity were essentially related to the strength of a nation.

Finally, in National Sentiments and Attitudes Toward Minorities, Kelemen (2000) asserted that individual sense of belonging to a nation could be reflected by their attitudes toward that nation. There were 6 stages of attitudes that nationalism was one of them, and also a final result of all. Those attitudes came from a long process of learning, perceiving, and defining and re-defining all the identities, values, characteristics that a citizen was holding. Strong six stages proved a successful nation building strategy. Kelemen applied a questionnaire of nineteen 5-level Likert scale questions addressing six stages of national attitudes of Hungarian: Feeling, Liking, Pride, Preference, Superiority, and Nationalism. Those six stages of national attitudes with related questions were borrowed in this study's questionnaire.

In the history, Vietnamese national identity used to be influenced by Confucianism and, besides, was, primarily based on culture roots, which were built

up surround village power to decide all the norms, values, and customs². Traditional village-centric organization caused difficulty for the French when they found their colonization in Vietnam. Therefore, the French strategically established their own ideology and culture in Vietnam as an effort to defeat the conventional Vietnamese cultural norms and values. Nationalism was spread among the new intellectuals. National attitude, which held political than cultural characteristics, was gradually formed. Studying about nationalism, national attitudes and national identity are always essential to Vietnamese. Because there is no proper research on this topic under the modern time and with the involvement of new media, this study is the first stage to gather all the different sources and start to measure the population.

2. Theoretical Background

In order to study the impact of propaganda on the construction of national attitudes among Vietnamese millennials, the researcher did the literature reviews, which contain similar fields such as nationalism, national identity, national attitudes, Vietnamese characteristics, propaganda, and the impacts of media.

2.1 National Identity and Social Identity Theory

Identity is a concept of self. It answers the question of who you are as a person. National identity can be understood clearly in accordance to social science as a form of social identities that construct the image of a country as a Nation. It explained an individual in the relationship with bigger group composed of many individuals and represents the individual's sense of belonging towards a group³. National identity is a kind of collective identity and contains nationalism as one of its form. It, hence, was stated as "a main goal of nationalist movements, along with national autonomy and unity, given that people seek to create, preserve and die for"⁴. The population of

² Andrian, C. (1988). Political change in Vietnam. *Political change in the third world*, (79), 76-118. US and Canada: Routledge.

³ Nakayama, T. K., & Martin, J. N. (2010). *Intercultural communication in contexts* (5th ed.). US, New York: Mc Graw Hill.

⁴ Smith, A. D. (1991). *National identity*. Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press.

a certain country will share the same language, culture, traditions, norms and beliefs, and consciousness of laws and duties and so on. It is also detected as a ‘collective phenomenon’, it is crucial to understand the cycle, impact, and rise of social movements which resulted into the formation of those beliefs, attitudes, principles, and their commitment level⁵. Group members with obscure national identity and loose national attachment will easily leave their belief-system when absorbing or facing new things by the Social Identity Theory⁶. Another key point of the Social Identity Theory is the recognition process in which in-group members interplay with their group’s values. In our study, that group is the nation and those members are the citizens. The in-group members somehow form certain attitudes towards their group.

2.2 National Attitude

Attitude can be understood as a combination of belief, emotion, and behaviour “towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols”⁷. One’s attitudes proclaim their identity set, express who they are; and, also have certain impacts on the behavior of an individual. Attitudes are formed through learning, experience, social factors, and conditioning⁸.

According to Dekker-Malova Model⁹, nationalism, national attitudes and national identity were correlated. Nationalism was a constitutive part of national attitudes but also a result a formation process of national attitudes. National attitudes decided which identity set the citizens were constructing. In other words, national

⁵ Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities* (3rd ed.). UK: Verso.

⁶ Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In Austin, William G., Worchel, Stephen (2nd ed.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (pp. 7–24.). Chicago: Nelson-Hall. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from http://web.mit.edu/curhan/www/docs/Articles/15341_Readings/Intergroup_Conflict/Tajfel_&_Turner_Psych_of_Intergroup_Relations_CH1_Social_Identity_Theory.pdf

⁷ Hogg, M., & Vaughan, G. (2005). *Social Psychology* (4th edition). London: Prentice-Hall.

⁸ Retrieved from <https://www3.nd.edu/~rwilliam/xsoc530/attitudes.html>

⁹ Dekker, H., Malova, M., & Hoogendorp, S. (2003). *Nationalism and its explanations*. Paper presented at the first Dutch-Hungarian Conference on Interethnic Relations. Wassenaar: NIAS.

attitudes are the presentation of national identities. The relations among identity, attitudes, and behaviour of both individuals and groups lead the human behavior¹⁰. By Dekker-Malova Model, the national attitudes are measured by six indicators, including nationalism, feeling, liking, pride, preference, and superiority varied in terms of effect (negative, neutral, and positive) and their intensity. At the very young age, one was motivated by family, school, and the surrounding society to love their country by experiencing the food and language, old stories, anthems, or visiting attractions (see Figure 1). From that foundation, individual had tendency to search for more “positive self-identity” to develop their attachment to nation or, higher, nationalism. In short, when the citizens care about their national identity as the members of a nation, they form their national attitudes. Attitudes can be changed based on the context and to fulfil an individual’s needs and motivations¹¹.

Those six indicators in Dekker-Malova Model are used in this study to examine six stages of Vietnamese millennials’ attitudes towards propaganda message, social context and national issues will be strategically asked.

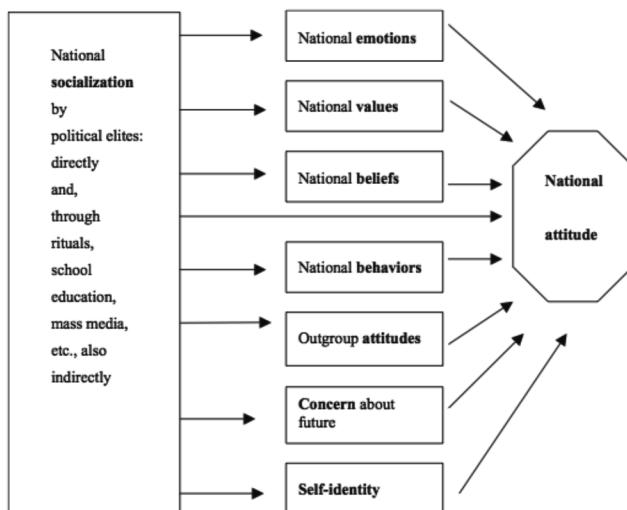


Figure 1: National Attitudes Explanatory Model¹²

¹⁰ University of St. Andrews (n.d.). *Identity, self, and social categorization*. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://mavorlab.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/attitudes-action/>

¹¹ Retrieved from <https://www3.nd.edu/~rwilliam/xsoc530/attitudes.html>

¹² Dekker, H., Malova, M., & Hoogendorp, S. (2003). *Nationalism and its explanations*. Paper presented at the first Dutch-Hungarian Conference on Interethnic Relations. Wassenaar: NIAS.

2.3 Propaganda and Magic Bullet Theory

During the modern history of mankind, propaganda became a powerful tool used by several countries such as the Nazi state, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Lasswell¹³ mentioned constantly about the political intent of propaganda when defining about it. According to him, propaganda communicates to manipulate. Special symbols are used to shape the collective attitudes of individuals, so that they are going to acknowledge the same direction and respond in the ways that propagandists have planned before.

In a larger point of view, Jaques Driencourt asserted, “everything is propaganda”. In his opinion, modern world is composed by political and commercial activities. Those activities persuaded the public audiences with their own evidences¹⁴. Ellul insisted Jacques’s idea that propaganda should be considered as a “socio-political phenomenon”, not just be criticized in the morality term.

In the modern perspective, O’Donnell and Jowett¹⁵ refused to criticize negativity and positivity of propaganda, but studied in the perspective of communication that critically analyzes the message, the context, the audiences, and, the most important element, their responses upon the messages. They repeated the ‘intent’ of propaganda through several historical events. Through their explanation, because of wars and religions, propaganda did not keep it neutrality anymore. It appeared negatively in the public perception as a mind-control and brainwash techniques.

In terms of communication, an event involving senders, message, and audiences can be understood as a communicative process. Propaganda can be understood as a linear ‘informative communication’, in which the audience’s response is not towards to message, but expresses through actions following what the senders desire at the beginning. It represents the Magic Bullet Theory known as Hypodermic Needle Theory by Lasswell’s book *Propaganda Technique in the World War* published in 1927.

¹³ Lasswell, H. D. (1927). *Propaganda technique in World War*. US: University of Michigan.

¹⁴ Driencourt, J. (1950). *La Propagande, Nouvelle Force Politique*. Pp. viii, 282. Paris: Librairie Armand Colin.

¹⁵ O’Donnell, V., Jowett, G. S. (2015). *Propaganda and persuasion* (6th ed.). USA: Sage Publication.

That focused on the process of injecting a specific idea into audiences' mind by using media. The audiences consume the media passively and vulnerably. In other words, "the magic bullet theory graphically assumes that the media's message is a bullet fired from the media gun into the viewer's head"¹⁶. However, because not everyone can have equal access to media, the intended message affects differently on different groups of audiences. By considering the propaganda technics as communicative and persuasive strategy, this study refers the communication model. The roles of the information source (senders), the channels, the message's content, and the audiences (receivers) should be examined. Due to the limitation and the sensitivity of the topic, we are going to focus on the content of message and the audience's' viewpoint, not the governmental control, nor arguing about the truth of information.

During the history of prolonged wars, Vietnamese governments in different periods well-applied propaganda into their political strategy. Those propaganda targeted to deliver various messages such as: (1) Celebrate the independence and unity of Vietnam, (2) Compliment the Communist party and President Ho Chi Minh, (3) Together develop national economy, (4) Collaborate to solve ongoing social issues, (5) National security alert, (6) Promote international collaboration and relations, (7) Guiding to build up social values, (8) Promote some global trends for social good. In compare to previous periods, the topics about national protection and gratitude to President Ho Chi Minh and Communist party are kept in the agenda¹⁷. Currently, among those, the spirit of President Ho Chi Minh and the territorial were the communal worry among the Vietnamese interviewees. Therefore, this study is going to use the sample propaganda banners, which contain that two topics, territorial security (Figure 3) and national ideal directions following President Ho Chi Minh's words of wisdom (Figure 2).

¹⁶ Berger, A. A. (1995). *Essentials of mass communication theory*. London: SAGE Publications.

¹⁷ Srichampa, S. (2006). Vietnamese propaganda reflections from 1945-2000. In 1st World Congress on "The Power of Language". Bangkok, Thailand. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://sealang.net/sala/archives/pdf8/sophana2007vietnamese.pdf>



Figure 2: “Five Statements of President Ho Chi Minh” (Love the Country, Love Other Vietnamese. Study Hard, Work Hard. Solidarity and Discipline. Take a Good Care of Yourself. Humble, Honest, and Courageous)¹⁸



Figure 3: Islands and Ocean are the Blood Ties of the Nation¹⁹

¹⁸ VNU University of Economic and Business (2013). *The creation of 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh for children and adolescence*. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://ueb.vnu.edu.vn/newsdetail/hthcm/9114/xuat-xu-cua-5-dieu-bac-ho-day-thieu-nien-nhi-dong.htm#.WW3vhdOGOb9>

¹⁹ VNU University of Economic and Business (2013). *The creation of 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh for children and adolescence*. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://ueb.vnu.edu.vn/newsdetail/hthcm/9114/xuat-xu-cua-5-dieu-bac-ho-day-thieu-nien-nhi-dong.htm#.WW3vhdOGOb9>

2.4 National News and Media Exposure

Exposure is the state and the context that a person receives, interacts, or directly or indirectly connects to the sources of information²⁰. The information can get the audiences by different media form and through various media channels. Media exposure of each audience differs in relation to the personal background, the frequency, the duration, and the media content. When diverse media forms emerge, the users can access to many sources and have a chance to be exposed to other users' activities, to compare, and to develop their own media literacy. Recently, the media consumers have equal power to media producers in selecting the information and being exposed to the messages upon their needs, interests, and gratifications. Therefore, people involved in new media are media users, not media consumers anymore. They interact towards the media message and also with other media users²¹.

On the construction of national identity, Tsai found out that Taiwanese national newspapers across the country had a significant impact on the Taiwanese perceived identity. The phenomenon was called "media ideology". So, each mass media channel sets particular agenda such as which stories they covered and how they covered them to its audiences. Tsai argued that audiences being exposed to specific media content hold certain national identity accordingly²². This logic supports the concept of Anderson about national identity and nation building. That a nation is "socially constructed community" and national identity is "not fixed". On the other hands, because of the globalization attribute of new media in the modern life and the freedom of choice and access to media, media users refer to the type of information which support their perception of their country. Thus, they choose media, which comfort their belief.

²⁰ Sullivan, E. D. (2009). Selective exposure (ed.). *The SAGE Glossary of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (p. 194, p. 465). SAGE Publication.

²¹ Chen, G. M. (2012). The impact of new media on intercultural communication in global context. *China Media Research*, 8(2), 1-10. Retrieved February 1, 2018, from http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1012&context=com_facpubs

²² Tsai, C. (2016). *Mass media and national identity*. Retrieved February 1, 2018, from https://editorialexpress.com/cgi-bin/conference/download.cgi?db_name=RESJunSymp2016&paper_id=253

Consequently, their media exposure is selective and not eventual²³. Depending on the perspectives, there is always an argument whether media comes first to create the perception of nation, or the perception of nation is a concrete value that searches for suitable media to strengthen it. However, when vast changes happened every day in the modern world, the interplay between human and media occurs. One keeps affecting and changing one another.

National news in Vietnam are broadcasted on television by official national broadcaster VTV, following by other famous channels like VTC, HTV. For radio, Vietnam has one main well-known VOV. For newspaper, there are 10 famous mainstream ones - Báo Đảng, Công An, An Ninh Thủ Đô, Hà Nội Mới, Lao Động, Nhân dân, Sài Gòn Giải Phóng, Thanh Niên, Tiền Phong, Tuổi Trẻ²⁴. Because of the new media social change and high-technology devices, online newspapers and online social platforms such as Facebook and Youtube become more familiar with Vietnamese media users especially the Millennials with 73% spending their time for social media²⁵. Hence, national news are not only spread out by national channels, but also on the Internet.

2.5 Media Dependency Theory

Media Dependency Theory (MDT) was first introduced by Defleur and Ball-Rokeach in 1976. MDT examined the impacts of mass media on target audiences. It indicated that media, audiences and social system are in dependence relationship with each other²⁶.

²³ Darr, B. (2011). *Nationalism and state legitimization in contemporary China* (Thesis Dissertation, University of Iowa). Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2771&context=etd>

²⁴ Media of Vietnam (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_of_Vietnam

²⁵ Nielson. (2016). *The Millennials: Unlock a generation of potential*. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/nielsenglobal/vn/docs/Reports/2016/The%20Millennial%20-%20Unlocking%20a%20generation%20of%20potential.pdf>

²⁶ DeFleur, M., & Ball-Rokeach, S. J. (1976). A dependency model of mass-media effects. *Communication Research*, 3(1), 3-21.

In Media Dependency Theory, people as media audiences always search for more information on media to support their decision making process. It does not mention whether media consumers are active or passive, but criticizes based on three degrees of dependency. Those degrees vary from:

- Audience totally depends on media for satisfaction of individual needs;
- When facing changes, especially fast changes or changes that require people to adjust or change, audience will yearn for more information on different media. Informational media supports and consults individual in time of changes;
- Audience becomes active and not only depends on media to explain his/her concerns and consolidate their beliefs, practices and behaviours. The substitute sources reduce the level of media dependency.

In a group relationship, the audiences' media exposure influences their sense of belonging towards groups. Moreover, group members will use communication media to reassure their group's perceived values. As a consequence, audience behavior is changed in relation to the media content and how they use it.

Propaganda targets the formation of individuals' attitudes and then expects certain behaviours in return. It is required to be consistent and solid over time²⁷. Therefore, propaganda can be seen as a strategy and a method in national socialization. By the emergence of new media, national socialization gains more impact. Individuals have more sources to affirm their positive national attitudes. Therefore, the national feeling, liking, and pride might be formed faster than with national media. This study will fill the gap in Perception on Collective National Identities by Ratilainen (2016)²⁸ by examining national identity in various groups (in terms of genders, hometown, education levels, etc.) of Vietnamese millennials. Additionally, it tends to add on

²⁷ Ellul, J. (1973). *Propaganda: The formation of men's attitudes* (Kellen, K., Lerner, J., Trans.). NY, US: Vintage Books Edition (Original work published 1965).

²⁸ Ratilainen, A. M. (2016). *Perception on collective national identities: Reflections on the Unity of Vietnam in 2016*. Utrecht University, Netherlands. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <https://dspace.library.uu.nl/bitstream/handle/1874/340060/Thesis.pdf?sequence=2>

Shibai's research (2015)²⁹ in perspective of nationalism, nation identity and attitude besides the aspect of national characters and the differences between the North and the South Vietnamese. It is hard to conclude the whole Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes by asking direct questions in the survey. However, applying Dekker-Malova model into the questionnaire will help to reveal what collective attitude sets they hold by seeing propaganda and what their personal feeling by observing other information source. This research plans to draw an overview of how Vietnamese millennials feel, perceive, and form their sense of belonging to Vietnam and the extent to which they are proud of being Vietnamese.

There are 3 hypotheses examined in this paper which are:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Vietnamese Millennials who have different *demographic factors* in relations to gender, educational level, occupation, income, awareness towards national news, travel frequency have significant different *national attitude* in respect to national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority, and nationalism.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Vietnamese millennials' *media exposure* to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and credibility of the media significantly influence their *national attitudes*.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Vietnamese millennials' *attitudes towards nationalistic propaganda* significantly influence their *national attitudes*.

²⁹ Shibai, K. (2015). Vietnamese characteristics of social consciousness and values -national character, differences between North and South, and gaps between the Vietnam war generation and the post-war generation. *Behaviormetrika*, 42(2), pp. 167-189. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/bhmk/42/2/42_167/_article

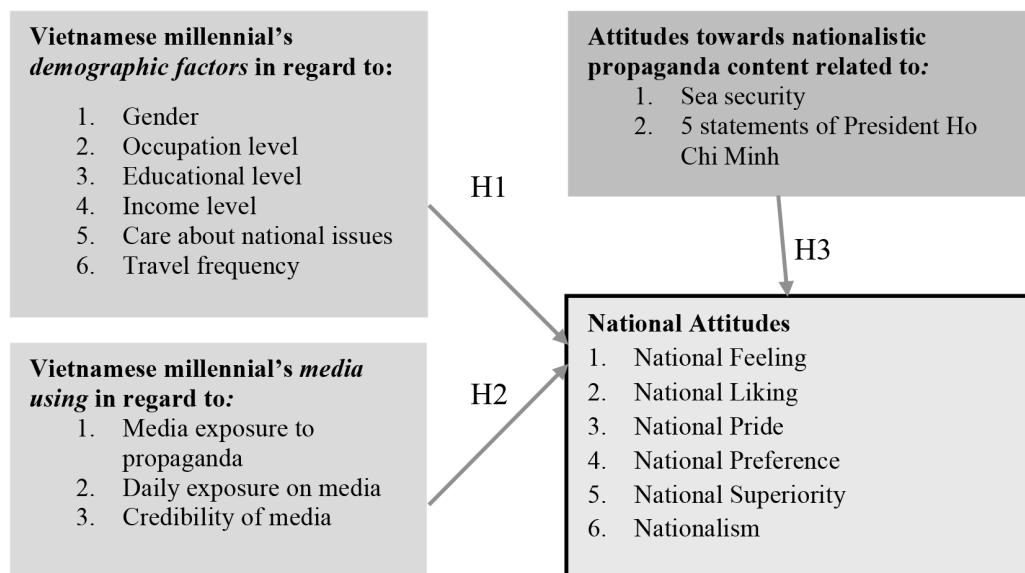


Figure 4: Theoretical Framework: The Independents and Dependent Variables Involved in those Three Hypotheses

3. Research Methodology

The study used non-probability sampling techniques and convenience sampling. It aims to the certain population of Vietnam, who are millennials. This target population only covers 30 percent of Vietnamese population. The quantitative survey was conducted around Ho Chi Minh City. The participants' birth years are from early 1980s to the end of 2000s. They might currently be living inside or outside Vietnam, but had been raised under Vietnam's educational system in primary school, secondary school, high school, or even in college level. They might currently be working in the companies or corporates, or studying in the university. The final number collected was 171 valid answer sheets within three-week timeframe.

Firstly the questionnaire adopted the nationalism scale as used in the study "Nationalism and Its Explanation" by Dekker, Malova, and Hoogendorn (2003)³⁰.

³⁰ Dekker, H., Malova, M., & Hoogendorn, S. (2003). *Nationalism and its explanations*. Paper presented at the first Dutch-Hungarian Conference on Interethnic Relations. Wassenaar: NIAS.

Dekker, Malova, and Hoogendorn conducted three research pieces about nationalism among Dutch people, Slovaks, and Basque people in their home country from 1994 to 1996, which concluded Cronbach's alpha from .75 to .96. They applied Dekker-Malova's model of nationalism to create a table of survey questions describing six stages of national attitude. The questionnaire will be translated into Vietnamese. Secondly, two propaganda messages will be shown to the respondents with questions referring to the propaganda model of Jowett and O'Donelle (2015)³¹. The questions aim to figure out how the respondents interpret the propaganda messages and whether they feel the propaganda persuasive. Last but not least, according to previous studies on media use to carry propaganda and their effects on audiences' behavior, the habit of using media and exposure to media with propaganda messages should be examined during the research. The results will be compared together to conclude their correlation.

In summary, the research questionnaire 5 main sections with 2 filtering questions at the beginning to select right sampling. The filtering questions required participants to confirm that they were born during the time period from 1980s to 2000, and grown up in Vietnamese culture. The rest four sections cover 4 main key points, including demographics, nationalism and national attitudes, exposure to propaganda, and media use, which are also 4 sections of the questionnaire consist 46 items.

3.1 Pretest

Before the main survey, a pretest of 30 samples had been done through online form. The online form format was exactly the same with the questionnaire in order to examine the reactions whether the translation and terms were easy for Vietnamese to understand well. In the pretest, after combining all variables, the overall Cronbach Alpha is .588, which was not high according to the standard reliability level. The highest Cronbach Alpha was national attitude, .871.

In the initial plan, the questionnaire was assigned by sending the online form as well as offline form directly to the respondents by email and inbox message. However, the turn over response was quite low. Therefore, the procedure was adjusted to be

³¹ O'Donnell, V., Jowett, G. S. (2015). *Propaganda and persuasion* (6th ed.). USA: Sage Publication.

conducted in offline approach with individuals and in group at convenient locations for those participants. The total collected answer sheets were 182 with 11 undone answer sheets. At the result, there were 171 valid answer sheets. The variables were grouped as following:

- Exposure to propaganda: on TV, radio, newspaper, and social media;
- Media exposure: exposure to TV, radio, newspaper, and social media;
- Credibility of media: credibility of TV, radio, newspaper, and social media;
- Attitude (comprised of understandings and opinions) towards propaganda content: of President Ho Chi Minh and of sea security;
- National attitudes: feeling, liking, pride, preference, superiority, and nationalism.

Following the completion of the questionnaire, the raw data was input into excel file with a specific code book and imported into SPSS for statistical analysis process. The presentation of results comprises of descriptive demographic data, the research findings, and hypothesis testing results.

Table 1: The Cronbach's Alpha of Each Statement were examined to see the Reliability of the Pretest and Main Survey of 171 respondents

171 Respondents of Main Survey		
Item's Name	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach if Item's Deleted
Exposure to Propaganda	.906	.801
Media Exposure	.863	.801
Credibility of Media	.842	.811
Attitude towards Propaganda	.565	.704
National Attitude	.985	.738

According to Table 1, the overall Cronbach Alpha for the questionnaire is .809, with the cronbach alpha of .906 for exposure to propaganda, Cronbach Alpha of .863 for media exposure, Cronbach Alpha of .842 for credibility of media, Cronbach Alpha of .606 attitude toward propaganda, and Cronbach Alpha of .989 for national attitude. All parts have Cronbach Alpha higher than .70 except for the attitude toward propaganda which is quite low.

3.2 Descriptive Analysis

The demographic summary of one hundred seventy one Vietnamese millennials including 82 male (48 percent) and 89 female (52 percent), who took the questionnaire survey, describes six factors: gender, educational level, occupational status, income level, awareness level of national issue, and travel frequency.

In details, the results of the participants' *occupations* show that there were 60 students (35.1 percent), 79 corporate employees (46.2 percent), followed by 17 government employees (9.9 percent), 9 business owners (5.3 percent), and 6 others (3.5 percent), respectively. According to the findings, in term of the *educational level*, majority of respondents achieved college degree (89.5 percent), followed by master degree (9.4 percent) and doctoral degree or higher (1.2 percent), respectively. None of participants have degree lower than university. The descriptive data also identified that the two highest ranges of participants' *incomes* were lower than and equal to 5 millions VND (36.3 percent) and from 11 millions to 20 millions VND (41.5 percent). There was a small number of participants who earned 5 millions to 10 millions VND monthly (14 percent); followed by a minority who earned from 21 millions and more (8.2 percent). In accordance to the survey, the large number of respondents *cared about national issues* (74.9 percent) while the rest (25.1 percent) did not. Regard to the *travelling frequency* out of the country, the majority rarely travelled within a year (87.7 percent), followed by more than 2 times yearly (10.5 percent), and only a few participants travelled frequently (1.8 percent).

3.3 Data Analysis

For the first hypothesis, independent variables are respondents' demographic factors including gender, occupation, educational level, income level, caring about

national issues, and travel frequency (Ordinal and nominal scale). Dependent variable is Vietnamese millennials's national attitude comprised of national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority and nationalism (5-likert scale). One-Way ANOVA statistical analysis was applied to test this hypothesis.

For the second hypothesis, independent variable is media exposure of Vietnamese in regard to media exposure to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and credibility of the media (5-Likert scale). Dependent variable is Vietnamese millennials' national attitude comprised of national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority and nationalism (5-Likert scale). Analysis of Regression was applied to examine the influence of media exposure on national attitude among Vietnamese millennials.

Last but not least, in the third hypothesis, independent variable is the attitude towards propaganda content in regard to 5 statements of Ho Chi Minh President and Sea Security (5-Likert scale). Dependent variable is Vietnamese millennials' national attitude comprised of national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority and nationalism (5-Likert scale). Analysis of Regression was applied to examine the influence of attitude towards propaganda of 5 statements of Ho Chi Minh President and Sea Security on national attitude among Vietnamese millennials.

The hypotheses will be analyzed by using One-way ANOVA and Regression.

4. Findings

4.1 Findings of Descriptive Analysis

These findings below showed the frequencies of media exposure, exposure to propaganda content, the credibility of media, the attitudes towards propaganda, and the national attitudes by observing 171 respondents.

The descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of daily media exposure (Mean=3.46, SD=1.04). Respondents was most frequently exposed to radio during a day (32.7 percent, n = 56), followed by newspaper (28.7 percent, n = 49); 22.8 percent of participants (n = 39) said that they most

frequently watched TV; and 21.6 percent of them (n = 37) used social media frequently; 14.6 percent of 171 participants (n = 25) never used social media; and, 11 percent of them (n = 19) never watched TV. Percentage of participants who did not read newspaper (6.4 percent, n = 11) and did not listen to radio (7 percent, n = 12) nearly equal.

For exposure to propaganda, the descriptive findings revealed that majority of respondents had medium level of exposure to propaganda (Mean=3.66, SD=0.99). Participants were most frequently exposed to propaganda content on social media in the previous week (37.4 percent, n = 64), followed by newspaper (29.2 percent, n = 50), TV (24.6 percent, n = 42), and radio (17.5 percent, n = 47), respectively. Only 1.8 percent (n = 3) said that they never saw propaganda content on social media. 2.3 percent (n = 4) were never exposed to propaganda on radio. And, the same percentage of participants (4.1 percent, n = 7) admitted not seeing any propaganda on TV and newspaper.

Participants perceived the credibility of various media differently. The descriptive findings found that majority of sample had medium level of trust for media (Mean=3.08, SD=0.68). All participants perceived that TV, radio, newspaper, and social did contain some credibility for their own. In the other words, none of 171 participants thought that any of TV, radio, newspaper, and social media was not trustful. The majority of participants expressed their neutral trust for all media with 63.7 percent (n = 109) voted for TV, 56.1 percent voted for newspaper (n = 96), 55.6 percent voted for radio (n = 95), and 52 percent (n = 89) voted for social media. Moreover, according to Table 9, 10.5 percent of participants (n = 18) perceived that newspaper had the highest credibility, followed by radio (9.9 percent, n = 17), social media (8.8 percent, n = 15), and TV (7.0 percent, n = 12), respectively.

Thirty one percent of respondents (n = 53) strongly agreed and 33.3 percent (n = 57) agreed on their understanding of five statements of President Ho Chi Minh. Twenty three point four percent of the respondents (n = 40) had neutral voice, followed by 12.3 percent (n = 21) disagreed. And, none of respondents had strongly disagreement on the content and the importance of 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh (0 percent, n = 0). In understanding the content of sea security propaganda,

32.2 percent (n = 55) agreed that they understood, followed by 23.4 percent (n = 40) strongly disagreed, 28.7 percent (n = 49) had neutral answers, 12.3 percent (n = 21) disagreed, and 3.5 percent (n = 6) strongly disagreed, respectively. The majority of participants had a neutral opinion about the importance of sea security (60.8 percent, n = 104). The findings found out that 5.8 percent of the respondents (n = 10) had the strong agreement on its importance, followed by 19.9 percent (n = 34) agreed. Only 13.5 percent (n = 23) disagreed on the crucial role of sea security, but none of them showed the strong disagreement on that.

4.2 Findings of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Vietnamese millennials who have different *demographic factors* in relations to gender, educational level, occupation, income, awareness towards national news, travel frequency have significant different *national attitude* in respect to national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority, and nationalism.

At the SPSS results, One-Way ANOVA analysis revealed that respondents' gender did not significantly influence their national attitudes, including national liking ($F_{(1)} = 3.641$, $p > .05$), followed by national superiority ($F_{(1)} = 3.641$, $p > .05$), nationalism ($F_{(1)} = 3.170$, $p > .05$), national feeling ($F_{(1)} = 2.038$, $p > .05$), national pride ($F_{(1)} = 1.658$, $p > .05$), national preference ($F_{(1)} = 1.565$, $p > .05$), respectively.

The result also revealed that some occupation significantly influence on national attitudes in aspect of national pride ($F_{(4)} = 1.998$, $p > .05$) and national superiority ($F_{(4)} = 2.799$, $p < .05$). On the other hands, Table 13 showed that respondents' occupation did not significantly influence their national attitudes, including national liking ($F_{(4)} = 2.799$, $p < .05$), followed by nationalism ($F_{(4)} = 2.348$, $p > .05$), national feeling ($F_{(1)} = 1.599$, $p > .05$), and national preference ($F_{(4)} = 1.595$, $p > .05$), respectively. According to the PostHoc Test's LSD in the SPSS result, some respondents who are governmental officers expressed differently on national feeling ($I-J = .58153^*$, $p < .05$), followed by national liking ($I-J = .58153^*$, $p < .05$), national superiority ($I-J = .58153^*$, $p < .05$), nationalism ($I-J = .52718^*$, $p < .05$), national pride ($I-J = .48474^*$, $p < .05$), and national preference ($I-J = .46811^*$, $p < .05$) in comparison to the respondents who are corporate employees.

For the respondents' educational level, it did not significantly influence their national attitudes, including national liking ($F_{(2)} = 2.269, p > .05$), followed by national superiority ($F_{(2)} = 2.269, p > .05$), nationalism ($F_{(2)} = 1.336, p > .05$), national pride ($F_{(2)} = .756, p > .05$), national feeling ($F_{(2)} = .709, p > .05$), and national preference ($F_{(2)} = .634, p > .05$), respectively.

Also, for the respondents' income difference, it did not significantly influence their national attitudes, including national liking ($F_{(3)} = 1.422, p > .05$), national superiority ($F_{(3)} = 1.422, p > .05$), national pride ($F_{(3)} = 1.250, p > .05$), nationalism ($F_{(3)} = 1.219, p > .05$), national preference ($F_{(3)} = 1.207, p > .05$), and national feeling ($F_{(3)} = 1.087, p > .05$), respectively.

For the respondents' care about national issues, it did not significantly influence their national attitudes, including national feeling ($F_{(1)} = .681, p > .05$), national pride ($F_{(1)} = .672, p > .05$), nationalism ($F_{(1)} = .659, p > .05$), national preference ($F_{(1)} = .553, p > .05$), national superiority ($F_{(1)} = .045, p > .05$), and national liking ($F_{(1)} = .045, p > .05$), respectively.

For the respondents' travel frequency, it did not significantly influence their national attitudes, including national liking ($F_{(2)} = 1.116, p > .05$), national superiority ($F_{(2)} = 1.116, p > .05$), nationalism ($F_{(2)} = .662, p > .05$), nationalism ($F_{(2)} = .662, p > .05$), national feeling ($F_{(2)} = .278, p > .05$), and national preference ($F_{(2)} = .215, p > .05$), respectively.

Hypothesis 2: Vietnamese millennials' *media exposure* in regard to media exposure to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and credibility of the media significantly influence their *national attitudes*.

A regression was calculated to predict national attitudes based on media exposure of Vietnamese millennials in regard to exposure to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and media credibility. According to Table 17, the results of the regression indicated that the model explained 49.6% of the variance and that the model was a significant predictor of national attitudes ($F_{(3,167)} = 54.758, p = .000^b < .05$). When examining the constructs of media exposure, Regression found out that all media

credibility ($B^- = .310^{**}$, $p < .05$), exposure to propaganda ($B^- = .308$, $p < .05$), and daily exposure to media ($B^- = .225^{**}$, $p < .05$) contributed significantly to national attitudes. These findings also suggested that media credibility had the highest influence on the national attitudes, followed by exposure to propaganda and daily exposure to media.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Vietnamese Millennials' Media Exposure Comprised of Exposure to Propaganda, Daily Exposure to Media, and Media Credibility as Predictors of their National Attitudes

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.456	.235		1.935	.055	-.009	.921
	Exposure to Propaganda	.308	.046	.395	6.758	.000	.218	.398
	Daily Media Exposure	.225	.044	.303	5.100	.000	.138	.312
	Media Credibility	.310	.066	.274	4.711	.000	.180	.439

a. Dependent Variable: National Attitudes

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.725	3	16.908	54.758	.000 ^b
	Residual	51.567	167	.309		
	Total	102.292	170			

^a Dependent Variable: National Attitudes

^b Predictors: (Constant), Exposure to Propaganda, Daily Media Exposure, Media Credibility

Hypothesis 3: Vietnamese millennials' attitudes towards nationalistic propaganda significantly influence their national attitudes.

A regression analysis was carried out to investigate whether attitudes towards nationalistic propaganda could be significant predictors of national attitudes. According to Table 18, the results of the regression indicated that the model explained 52.8 percent of the variance and that the model was a significant predictor of national attitudes ($F_{(2,168)} = 93.842$, $p = .000^b < .05$). Both constructs of nationalistic propaganda, which were the attitudes towards the 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh ($\beta = .517$, $p = .000$) and attitudes towards sea security ($\beta = .423$, $p = .000$), contributed significantly to Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes. The finding suggested that their attitudes towards 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh had highest influence on their national attitudes.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Vietnamese Millennials' Attitudes towards Nationalistic Propaganda about the 5 Statements of President Ho Chi Minh and the Sea Security as Predictors of their National Attitudes

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.009	.245		.037	.970	-.475	.493
	Attitude Towards President Ho Chi Minh's 5 statements	.517	.063	.472	8.151	.000	.392	.642
	Attitude Towards Sea Security	.423	.062	.394	6.811	.000	.300	.546

a. Dependent Variable: National Attitudes

ANOVA ^a						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	53.976	2	26.988	93.842	.000 ^b
	Residual	48.315	168	.288		
	Total	102.292	170			

^a Dependent Variable: National Attitudes

^b Predictors: (Constant), Attitudes Towards President Ho Chi Minh' 5 statements, Attitudes Towards Sea Security

5. Discussions

5.1 Summary of Descriptive Findings and Discussion

The findings of one hundred seventy one participants' demographic with 52 percent females and 48 percent males pointed out that the majority were corporate employees, followed by students, government employees, business owners, and others, respectively. Almost everyone achieved college degree, followed by master degree, and doctoral degree or higher degree, respectively. The most common monthly salary that was around 11 millions to 20 millions Vietnam dong. This group might be mostly corporate employees. The second rank of salary were the group who earned lower than or equal to 5 millions Vietnam dong' and the group who earned 5 millions to 10 millions Vietnam dong. The reason could be because the second big group of participants were students and government employees. The group who had salary from 21 millions could be business owners. Those findings of income could explain the travelling frequency of Vietnamese Millennials. With the majority had income from 5 millions to 20 millions, it might took them a long considering time for travelling abroad. In the findings, 87.7 percent of the sample rarely travelled out of Vietnam followed by those who travelled out of Vietnam more than 2 times per year (10.5 percent) and who travelled frequently at least once per month (1.8 percent) respectively. However, despite the differences of genders, occupations, educational levels, incomes, and travelling frequency, the findings showed that the majority of the sample cared about Vietnam's national issues and only 25.1 percent of participants did not care about Vietnam's national issues.

Besides demographic data, the findings also revealed about the exposure to propaganda, daily media exposure, media credibility, attitudes toward propaganda, and national attitudes.

The descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of *daily media exposure*. When examining the level of daily exposure of each media, the results pointed out that they had high level of *exposure for radio*, followed by other media in medium level, including *newspaper, TV, and social media*. From the results, it means that media is a part of Vietnamese millennials' daily life. They still have

tendency to expose to radio and newspaper. It can be explained by the transformation of radio platform recently to catch up with the audience and social change. Radio is now opening on the Internet, such as Youtube and on site, and created into another version—podcast or streaming. The content builders for radio also expand their content type, change their story flow and tone of voice to match with ongoing trend; also input more community engagement on each topic³². Despite the growth of social media, radio is still on the top effective channel for marketing and communication. It can be explained by the growth in number of people using public transportation and grab car to commute in Ho Chi Minh city. While commuting by cars or public transportation during the traffic jam, Vietnamese tend to be exposed to radio. It can also come from the habit of listening to online media of officer while working.

Also, according to the findings, majority of respondents had medium *level of exposure to propaganda*. When examining the level of respondents' exposure to propaganda on each media, the results pointed out that they had high level of exposure to propaganda on *social media* (Mean = 3.84, SD = 1.12) and *newspaper* (Mean = 3.68, SD = 1.12), followed by other media in medium level, including *radio* and *TV*. In overall, it can be concluded that social media is the easiest channel for the propaganda content exposure because of the convenience and the fast spreading speed of the Internet. Audiences on the social media can actively search and be suggested to other information related to the propaganda. It leads to the high exposure to propaganda content. Traditional newspaper, radio, and TV are considered as official national channels, which are strictly controlled and censored. However, by applying the digital platform to newspaper, newspaper nowadays, like social media, easily and quickly reach to target audiences. Moreover, at some points, digital newspaper is more attractive source of information in media consumers' mindset. Newspaper, radio, and TV are considered as official national channels, which are strictly controlled and censored. It explained why the level of exposure to propaganda on social media and newspaper are higher than on TV and radio.

³² Dong, M. H. (2018). Radio broadcasting in 4.0 environment. *NLB Online*. Retrieved December 1, 2018, from <http://nguoilambao.vn/phat-thanh-trong-moi-truong-truyen-thong-40-n9775.html>

When examining the level of respondents' *trust for media*, the results pointed out that they had medium level of trust for all media, including *social media, newspaper, radio, and TV*. It can be concluded that Vietnamese millennials give a high trust on social media and newspaper, which provide two-way communication. The audiences easily express their opinions and interact with the others. That fulfilled their freedom of speech and give them control over the content that they consume (Dong, 2018). For radio and TV, the citizens are fully aware of the national control. Hence, information on radio and TV can be from single point of view.

The descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of attitude toward 5 statements of President Ho Chi Minh. As the results, the participants showed high *level of understanding* the 5 statements (Mean = 3.83, SD = 1.00) and medium *level of opinion* about the importance of President Ho Chi Minh's 5 statements (Mean = 3.43, SD = 0.76). It could be explained that the ideology of President Ho Chi Minh integrated into all stages of education from kindergarten to primary school, secondary school, high school, and up to college has partially affected the Vietnamese. Most Vietnamese agree to the importance of those statements of President Ho Chi Minh.

The descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of *attitude toward sea security*. When examining the level of respondents' attitude towards sea security, the results found that they had medium *level of understanding* the sea security and *opinion* about the importance of sea security. It is true that until recently, sea security is always highlighted by Vietnamese authority in international conferences and on all national news channels³³. That causes Vietnamese millennials stay conscious of national sea security and its impacts on the national security in general.

The *national attitudes*, which consisted of *national feeling, liking, pride, preference, superiority, and nationalism*, were found at medium level in respondents.

³³ Premier expresses concern over fragile security in East Vietnam Sea during ASEAN summit (2019, Nov 3). *Tuoi Tre News*. Retrieved December 13, 2019, from <https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/politics/20191103/premier-expresses-concern-over-fragile-security-in-east-vietnam-sea-during-asean-summit/51750.html>

For *national feeling*, the descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of feeling. When examining the level of respondents' national feeling, the results found that they had medium level of "*I feel I am a real Vietnamese*" and "*I feel like Vietnam is my country*".

For *national liking*, the descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of liking. When examining the level of respondents' national liking, the results found that they had medium level of "*I like Vietnam*", "*I like Vietnamese people*", "*I like Vietnamese language*", and "*I like to be Vietnamese*".

For *national pride*, the descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of pride. When examining the level of respondents' national pride, the results found that they had medium level of "*I am proud to be Vietnamese*", "*I am proud of what other Vietnamese achieved*", and "*I am proud of Vietnam*".

For *national preference*, the descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of preference. When examining the level of respondents' national preference, the results found that they had medium level of "*I prefer to live most of my life in Vietnam than in other countries*", "*I prefer to hold Vietnamese citizenship*" (I prefer to live most of my life in Vietnam than in other countries), and "*I prefer to live most of my life in Vietnam than in other countries*". It could be explained by the fact that most of Vietnamese Millennials recently look for the job opportunities in different countries outside of Vietnam or still prefer to migrate into another country for a better living.

For *superiority*, the descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of superiority. When examining the level of respondents' national superiority, the results found that they had medium level of "*Vietnamese people are the best*", "*Vietnamese nationality is the best*", "*Vietnamese people are the best*", and "*Vietnam is the best country to live in*".

For *nationalism*, the descriptive findings found that majority of respondents had medium level of nationalism. When examining the level of respondents' national superiority, the results found that they had medium level of "*I want Vietnamese*

not to mix with other nationalities”, “I want all Vietnamese to be protected”, “I want Vietnamese not to collaborate with foreign countries”, “I want people of other nationalities to leave Vietnam”, “I want people of other nationalities to leave Vietnam”, “I want all Vietnamese to live in Vietnam”, “I feel each Vietnamese is a member of one big family”, and “I want people of other nationalities to leave Vietnam”.

The results showed that Vietnamese millennials positively express their national attitudes in general. For example, for national pride, they are aware of the talents and achievement of Vietnamese around the world. They feel proud of their nationality consequently. However, the results were expected to be higher. It means that governors and media need to deliver additional reasoning for Vietnamese millennials to raise up their national feeling, liking, and pride. In term of national preference, because of the economic growth and opportunity for travelling or studying abroad of Vietnamese millennials, majority of them easily compare between lifestyle in Vietnam and other countries. Therefore, with a good condition of income, saving, and living in Vietnam, they do not consider living abroad as the only choice for better future. In term of national superiority and nationalism, the levels are medium to high because of the training program integrated the love for country since early-age education of Vietnamese government. Also, the national strategy keeps propaganda content live on in daily life's aspects such as public banners, bandrolls, communal radio, national holidays so on until recently. However, like national feeling, liking, and pride, national superiority and nationalism were expected to get higher level. And, Vietnamese millennials look for more reasoning to fully agree and believe.

Even though the research was not conducted across Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh is quite a diverse city with migrants coming from various parts of Vietnam. Despite demographic factors, the results about national attitudes speak the mutual thoughts of Vietnamese Millennials. As Ratilainen's study about the collective national identity of Vietnamese, the assumption that Vietnamese population might hold a multiple identity set was not proved true. Or the perception about the division of Vietnam might be out of date and not as important as the concept of building a stronger image of Vietnam as a whole.

Looking into the previous study of Hoang (2015) which pointed out the weakness in cultural administration at governmental level and addressed the danger of globalization and market economy on traditional values, norms, and beliefs, we can expect the more involvement from governors, policy markers, and other sectors in the society to stimulate the awareness and understanding of national attitudes among new generations.

5.2 Summary of Hypothesis Testing and Discussion

After collecting and analyzing the survey data of 171 respondents, the hypothesis 1 was partially supported while the hypothesis 2 and hypothesis 3 were fully supported.

First of all, hypothesis 1 was analyzed by One-Way ANOVA with the significance level of 0.05. It revealed that the respondents' *gender, educational level, monthly income, care about national issues, and travel frequency*, except for *occupation*, did not significantly influence their *national attitudes*, including national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority, and nationalism. According to the result, occupational difference among respondents significantly influence the samples' national attitudes in term of national liking ($F_{(4)} = 2.799^{**}$, $p < .05$) and superiority ($F_{(4)} = 2.799^{**}$, $p < .05$). In the PostHoc Test's LSD analysis, governmental employees express their national attitudes differently from corporate employees. To conclude, the hypothesis 1 was not fully supported. Hypothesis 1 findings supported the Perception theory and Social Identity theory, which posited that perception was an active process collecting all information from the surrounding environment by every senses³⁴; and, also, people in a group constructed and reaffirmed their identities by comparing themselves to others within the group⁴⁰. The study suggested that surrounding information from environment and media influenced the way people perceive things. Because of the sensitivity in politic discussion, there was no past study on the governmental workplace or communism conducted in Vietnam. However, the result showed that working environment and job requirement for governmental officers

³⁴ West, R., & Turner, L. H. (2014). *Introducing communication theory* (International ed.). NY: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 8. pp. 35-47.

made some difference in the way those officers shaped their national attitudes. It was explained by various annual trainings on Communist ideology and President Ho Chi Minh's ethic and spirit as compulsory programs. Meanwhile, in the other corporate workplaces, the employees are free to expose to foreign ideology and concepts based on corporate culture and the origin of the brand.

Secondly, to test hypothesis 2, Regression analysis revealed that Vietnamese millennials' *media exposure* was a significant predictor of their national attitudes. Moreover, when examining the key constructs of media exposure in regards to exposure to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and media credibility. Regression analysis found that each construct was also a significant predictor of national attitudes of Vietnamese millennials ($p < .05$). The hypothesis 2 was fully supported. The findings supported the Social Identity theory and Media Dependency theory, which posited that people usually and actively searched for information on media to support their decision-making process³⁵ and they held the identity set of the belonged group and easily leaved their old belief during social change³⁶. Media exposure, especially traditional news media like TV and radio, influenced on the audiences' sense of belongings towards a group and reassure their group's perceived values, which primarily decided their attitude towards that certain group. Meanwhile, newspaper and the Internet partially make the national attachment declined³⁷ because they provided audiences more two-way communication and additional sources for reference. The result is similar to the research of Okwuchukwu, et al. on the media power on governance and social movements. The media activities must be considered parallel with the national development plan.

³⁵ DeFleur, M., & Ball-Rokeach, S. J. (1976). A dependency model or mass-media effects. *Communication Research*, 3(1), 3-21.

³⁶ Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In Austin, William G., Worcher, Stephen (2nd ed.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (pp. 7-24.). Chicago: Nelson-Hall. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from http://web.mit.edu/curhan/www/docs/Articles/15341_Readings/Intergroup_Conflict/Tajfel_%20Turner_Psych_of_Intergroup_Relations_CH1_Social_Identity_Theory.pdf

³⁷ Darr, B. (2011). *Nationalism and state legitimization in contemporary China* (Thesis Dissertation, University of Iowa). Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2771&context=etd>

These findings and conclusions are different from Darr's study about propaganda, media use and the national identities in China even though cultural and political environment in both countries have some similarity. In China, males showed more intention on the national attachment and identity. Radio and TV, considered as traditional media, were strictly censored and played as an important tool to direct the consumers' mindset. Meanwhile, other media like newspaper, online social networks and the Internet did not contribute to the strength of national attachment of Chinese.

For this finding, my study suggested that Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes should be frequently sustained by the cooperation of media in term of increasing the frequency and, especially, its credibility. The frequency of content related to propaganda, national news, history, culture, and people should be integrated into media program as daily routine. Also, there should be more interaction between media and its audiences to reduce the misunderstanding and misleading information.

Finally, hypothesis 3 was analyzed by Regression. It revealed that attitudes towards nationalistic propaganda could be significant predictors of national attitudes. In details, examining the attitudes towards nationalistic propaganda comprised of two key constructs, which are attitude towards 5 statements of Ho Chi Minh President and attitude towards sea security ($p < .05$). The regression analysis found that each construct was also a significant predictor of Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes. To conclude, it can be said that hypothesis 3 was fully supported. The findings also supported the Propaganda and Magic Bullet theory, which posited that each propaganda message was injected into audiences' mind by senders³⁸ and expected the audiences' actions towards what senders' desire³⁹. This result also matched with past study about the purpose of nationalistic propaganda as a communication tool of the government to their citizens in communist country and nationalistic propaganda could influence the construction process of national identity among citizens⁴⁰. And the citizens' national

³⁸ Lasswell, H. D. (1927). *Propaganda technique in World War*. US: University of Michigan.

³⁹ O'Donnell, V., Jowett, G. S. (2015). *Propaganda and persuasion* (6th ed.). USA: Sage Publication.

⁴⁰ Darr, B. (2011). *Nationalism and state legitimization in contemporary China* (Thesis Dissertation, University of Iowa). Retrieved January 1, 2017, from <http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2771&context=etd>.

identity is the representation of the their national attitudes formed before. This study suggested that media content creators and national communication department should try to spread propaganda content on specific media channels like radio and TV; and more control on newspapers and social media in order to reinforce and provoke the national attitudes among Vietnamese.

In conclusion, Vietnamese millennials in different demographic factors in relations to gender, educational level, income, awareness towards national news, and travel frequency, except for occupation, did not have significant different *national attitudes* in respect to national feeling, national liking, national pride, national preference, national superiority, and nationalism. In the other hands, their media exposure in regards to media exposure to propaganda, daily exposure to media, and credibility of the media significantly influenced their national attitudes. Also, their attitudes towards nationalistic propaganda significantly made influence on their national attitudes. From these results, Vietnamese millennials' national attitudes could be reinforce or shifted by two sources of information, which were media and working environment. Vietnamese Millennials also depended on media exposure in regards to daily media exposure, exposure to propaganda, and media credibility to adjust their national attitudes. Especially, the credibility of media made highest influence on their perceived national attitudes. Last but not least, the nationalistic propaganda influenced the way Vietnamese millennials perceived their national identities. In a country like Vietnam, when propaganda content on banners, billboards, and media always appear in public area across Vietnam, the media content creators should leverage the effectiveness of propaganda to promote the positive information and stop misleading one.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

Even though it is necessary to study about the propaganda, media and national attitudes, those are still sensitive topics to be publicly discussed in Vietnam according to regulations and laws. Therefore, official information or past studies were limited and depended only on approved ones. This also influenced the participants on their survey process. Since giving opinion about propaganda and politics is sensitive, they tended to mark on positive answers on the questionnaire. Another concern is that

the survey tried to cover many questions; hence, the respondents lost attention in some questions. Casual talk or in-depth interview after questionnaire is a must to really understand the samples' opinions.

The geographic distance also causes a limitation of this study. As many past studies had mentioned, the war caused fragmented division between North and South Vietnam, which, later on, led to the difference in attitudes toward the regime and the perception of national identity. This study was only conducted at some locations in the central district of Ho Chi Minh city in a short time. Therefore, it hardly describes the whole millennials in Vietnam. Also, the locations were in public, so it was hard to describe for the participants the meaning of the survey avoiding their lack of focus and patience on the answering process.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Application

1. Group members holding uncertainty about their national attitudes and national attachment will easily leave their old belief system when they interact with new social movements⁴¹. The study also found out about the relations between national attitudes and media exposure. If a nation is seen as an "imagined political community"⁴², it means that perceived national identity is flexible to be created. Therefore, media creators and practitioners can leverage media to encourage national love inside the next generation of Vietnam and make them united. Also, through media content, they can repel an identity that does not contribute to the national image; or promote an identity that can increase the image of Vietnam. In particular, media channel should come up with more call-for-action message related to country loyalty and national pride. Other programs to showcase success stories of Vietnamese around the world, talk shows of Vietnamese young generation talking about their pride of Vietnam also contributed to provoke the perception of national identities among young Vietnamese.

⁴¹ Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In Austin, William G., Worchel, Stephen (2nd ed.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (pp. 7-24.). Chicago: Nelson-Hall. Retrieved January 1, 2017, from http://web.mit.edu/curhan/www/docs/Articles/15341_Readings/Intergroup_Conflict/Tajfel_&_Turner_Psych_of_Intergroup_Relations_CH1_Social_Identity_Theory.pdf

⁴² Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities* (3rd ed.). UK: Verso.

2. The interplay between media in regards to media exposure, media content, media trust, and its audiences' national attitudes was proven. Since the new decade of media and innovative content emerge, the authorities, ministers, and law makers might need the supports of various media to react in time of crisis, reinforce the national loyalty, and call for action when needed. There is a need to improve the trust level of media and the frequency of exposure to media contained nationalistic story. Media editors should come up with more programs, which have two-way interaction with audiences in order to build up their trust on media. Furthermore, policy makers and authority should appear on media more often, especially in live conference and Q&A session with audiences. It might help to increase the credibility of news.

3. Additionally, except for governmental officers who attend annual training about nationalistic regime and Communism, others working in corporate environment might need to frequently review of national attitudes and be provided information about national direction. There should be a program targeting corporate officers sharing and updating about Vietnam, its direction, and national policies. Later on, comments of audiences should be collected and answered in some live conferences or open talks.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

After this study, there are various recommendations for future research.

Firstly, the demography of participants could be expanded to other provinces across Vietnam, especially in the other four big cities such as Ha Noi, Da Nang, Can Tho, Hai Phong. Generally, the education system is consistent in all public schools. However, the economic stage and accessibility to different media channels might make difference impact.

Secondly, hypothesis 1 showed that the workplace environment could make impact on the perceived national attitudes of millennials. It is easy to understand because for after graduate people spend most of their time in their office. The typical requirements of each job will somehow require them to change their behavior and attitudes to fit in the job description and organization culture. If it is possible, future

research can be conducted in deeper questions focusing on different workplace and job types.

Finally, two nationalistic propaganda such as President Ho Chi Minh's 5 statements and sea security are just a part of many topics related to nation and politics. Future research could be open to examine on other topics and even explore other contents besides nationalistic propaganda. This study can be conducted in both quantitative and qualitative approach, especially by in-depth interview or focus group. It will support the researchers to examine different points of views about propaganda and national attitudes. From that, the study can explain why and how the samples perceived national attitudes; and hidden opinions that they might not easily tell in the quantitative research.

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