

## **The Analysis of the Tendency of the Vietnamese Media: Researching on the Construction of Chinese Tourist Image Based on “VnExpress”**

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China is now becoming a fundamental market for the prosperity and growth of the world's tourism economy. It promotes the rapid development of foreign tourism and brings some influences to social life. Chinese tourists are highly concerned with foreign media at home and abroad; the Vietnamese Media is the same. Based on the theoretical framework, this paper analyzes the Chinese tourists report towards the Vietnamese Media “VnExpress” 2018 and discusses the construction of Chinese tourists' image from the three views of macroscopic, the middle, and microcosmic of the news text framework. From there, it shows the tendency and prejudice of the Vietnamese media. The study found that “VnExpress” has a clear tendency; the image of Chinese tourists is full of negatives. At the same time, it indirectly involves events on political issues; Vietnamese media also maintain strong political sensitivity. Moreover, it emphasizes the integrity of Vietnam's territorial sovereignty, the particularity of history and culture, and strengthening the sense of identity of Vietnamese readers.

**Keywords:** Vietnamese media, Chinese tourists, image, tendency

Promoted by the internationalization process; transnational tourism has also become a new wave. In 2018, the number of Chinese outbound tourists reached 148 million, an increase of 13% year-on-year, and the consumption's spending exceeded 120 billion US dollars (more than 800 billion RMB). It becomes the basic market for the prosperity and growth of the world's tourism economy. Due to the excessive number of Chinese outbound tourists and the large spending power, it has attracted the attention of foreign media. The Western media often reports on the uncivilized behavior of Chinese tourists, which leads to the image of Chinese tourists is poor. Foreigners have also formed a stereotype for Chinese tourists. In their perception, the quality of Chinese tourists is low (Wang & Zhang, 2016). China's domestic media – “Sina.com” has not evaded reporting that Chinese tourists have strong consumption power and purchasing power, but overall, their civilization quality is not high (Tan, 2017), occasionally there will be misconduct and illegal behavior, because some Chinese outbound tourists lack awareness of civilization (Li, 2018), lack of intercultural literacy (Wang, 2016).

However, Chinese tourists still have multiple identities. They are the contributors to global economic development, the affluent persons of China's economic development, the rational consumers, the “world citizens” who “do as the Romans do,” and the “darlings” of

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tourist destinations (Hu, 2017). In the US media reports, the arrival of Chinese tourists has destroyed the social order of tourist destinations (Zhang, 2016). Their strong consumption and purchasing power have made them “the culprit” of inflation, which are caused by local times. Trouble and conflict, let countries “Interweaving between love and hate” (Hu, 2017). The “Reading News” and “Daily News” of tendentious Japanese media involve Chinese tourists’ reports, although they are mainly objective, the negative colors are still significant. They use “destruction,” “damage,” “chao” and “unscrupulous behavior” many times, “buy,” “dangerous” and other derogatory terms to describe Chinese tourists (Qiu, 2017).

Similarly, the Thai media also used negative words such as “causing losses,” “manufacturing problems,” “confusing,” “disrespect for the place,” and “bad conduct” to describe the tendency of Chinese tourists (Huang, 2017). It is worth noting that in 2013, the Central Civilization Office and the National Tourism Administration jointly issued the “Guidelines for the Civilization of Chinese Citizens to Travel Abroad” and the Chinese Government’s promulgation of the “Interim Measures for the Management of Uncivilized Behavior of Tourists” in 2015. The quality measures can show that the Chinese government has realized the problem. The uncivilized behavior of Chinese tourists will directly affect the perception of Chinese national image by foreign media and foreign people.

As a neighboring country of China, Vietnam is connected by mountains and rivers and has cultural connections. China is also one of the concerns of the Vietnamese media. In “People’s Daily” - the Vietnamese party newspaper, China is an important and good country, but the conflict of interest and competition formed by the rise of the two countries in the same region had led to negative tendencies when the Vietnamese media reported on China. Reports on China’s economic development have declined significantly, while reports on China’s domestic social issues have shown an upward trend (Li, 2012). When the Vietnamese media reported in China, they were full of contradictions. The Chinese national image was constructed to coexist positively and negatively. It believed that China’s international status, economic and military strength grew rapidly, and cultural influence continued to improve, but China’s domestic social problems significantly, the quality of goods is so serious that it affects the personal safety of the people, the disparity between the rich and the poor, and the outstanding national issues (Huang, 2013).

In Vietnam, the Vietnamese government manages the news media in a unified manner, and the Ministry of Information and Media of the country is responsible to the national government for the management of the news media<sup>1</sup>. The news media needs to follow the guidance of the Communist Party and state management. The news media activities need to comply with laws and regulations (Do, 2015). Therefore, analyzing the news reports of Vietnamese media-related tourists in China can reveal the image of Chinese tourists constructed by the Vietnamese government and spread to the Vietnamese audience. From there, whether the Vietnamese media has Bias and prejudice when constructing the image.

## **Framework Theory and the Tendency of News**

The framework researching has arisen since the 1970s. Regarding the roots of the theory frame, some scholars believe that clues can be found in two research fields (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). The first is in the field of sociology, which considers the framework as the psychological principle and the subjective process of individual, organizational events. Incorporate the realistic picture of daily life into the framework to understand and respond to the social situations (Goffman, 1974); the second is to form a hypothetical construction of the cognitive process of the individual in the field of psychology. It’s also the fundamental

model; our knowledge is stored in memory in the form of data structures, which is called the framework (Minsky, 1975). The views in these two areas are similar, and they are considered to be a tool that people use to identify the outside world.

Later, the framework began to be used in the field of news communication, and the concept of "Media Framework" emerged as a tool for journalists to package large amounts of information and effectively deliver it to the audience (Gitlin, 1980). The framework can be divided into two levels: "boundary" and "architectural." "Boundary" can be understood as a kind of border, which is the scope of the material; and people use the "architecture" to explain the events in the outer world (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). In the 21st century, the framework theory has been widely valued and applied by journalism communication scholars. After more than 20 years, the research on the theory and methods of framework analysis in communication has not broken through, even blurred (Pan, 2006).

The analysis of news framework can be divided into three categories: discourse, discourse construction, and discourse acceptance. The news framework can be divided into many categories, such as thematic framework and fragmented framework, the strategic framework, and the issue framework (Pan, 2006). From the news, text framework can be divided into three levels: the macroscopic level (the definition of the main subject), the middle level (the main content of the event and the story) and the microcosmic level (the expression of the language or symbol) (Xiao, 2016: 62). The news framework mainly includes the presentation of text content, some keywords, terms, sources, news schema structure, and so on. The framework for news reporting can be presented through syntactic structures, script structures, subject structures, and rhetorical structures (Pan & Kosicki, 1993), extracting the focus of the speaker's narrative or discussion of a news event or topic (Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997), revealing the ideas constructed by news metaphors (Schlesinger & Lau, 2000).

Innis - Canadian communication scholar, believes that there is a bias (prejudice) in the media, which is divided into the prejudice of verbal communication and the prejudice of written communication, time bias and spatial bias (Innis, 2015: 71). The propensity bias theory proposed by Innis is based on the study of the characteristics of the media, focusing on the form of media (Sun, 2016), and does not talk about whether the content of the media has a bias (prejudice or tendency). The same thing, the news media, through different framework settings, will lead to different ideas and different perceptions (Lau & Schlesinger, 2005). It can be seen from this that the news framework and the content of the news report itself also have significant tendencies (Matthews & Entman, 2010).

The "tendency" expressed in the news reports is that the distortion of news mainly includes: (i) distorting through selection (event, news); (ii) distorting by emphasizing (event); (iii) by selecting words "exaggerating" news; (iv) quoting the words of a fabulous authority; (v) downright opinions in the news; (vi) the tendency of the title. Also, this tendency is too strong, contrary to the facts, and to a large extent there is not enough basis to support, and this time formed a media prejudice (Chen, 2009). There is a certain correlation between media performance and the audience response. People can copy the facts, language, concepts, stories, arguments, and opinions of the media reports, thus affecting the public's attitude and cognition of events (Luo, 2014).

## Research Methods

This article is based on the Vietnamese main media "VnExpress" to be the researching object, which is directly managed by the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam. It was officially launched on February 26, 2001, and has been in existence for 18 years.

According to the statistics of this media, the number of readings reached nearly 15 billion in 2017, with more than 40 million readers, which is regarded as a decisive factor in the development of the internet in Vietnam. According to the ranking of Alexa in the United States towards all of News website, the media ranks the second.

This article uses "China" and "Chinese tourists" as keywords to search for all news reports involving Chinese tourists from January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018; after screening, there are 124 articles. Based on the framework analysis perspective, this paper analyzes the three levels (macroscopic, middle and microcosmic) of the news framework, which covers the topic of the report, the report genre, the source of the report, the tendency of the report, and the use of words. Moreover, it presents the image of Chinese tourists constructed in the Vietnamese media and exploring the prejudice of the media.

## Analysis

### The Vietnamese Media Involving the Overall Prejudice of Chinese Tourists

First, from the source of the report and the news, among the reports of Vietnamese media about Chinese tourists, only four news items are news that directly reprints foreign media or social platforms. They include "Newsflare" - the imaging platform and "Nikkei" - Japan Image Economy News Network, "SCMP" - Hong Kong South China Morning Post and "Shanghaiist" - Shanghai People. While the other 120 news reports were compiled by Vietnamese journalists after they collected or collected domestic and foreign media sources.

As for the source of the news, among the 124 news items, 38 news articles were personally collected by Vietnamese journalists. They discovered the problems through Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc., and then reported them. Of the other 86 news, a total of 104 references to sources, a total of 50 news media and websites. The most cited ones are media from the media of Hong Kong - China, South China Morning Post "SCMP," a total of 26 times; "Shanghaiist" - Shanghai People, a total of 11 times. Not only is that, but the news of Western media often cited such as Reuters, CNN, Washington Post, AFP, and AP.

Second, regarding the tendency of reporting genres and reports, most of the Vietnamese media-related Chinese tourists reported in the form of news, specifically: 93 news, accounting for 75% of the total; 29 in-depth reports, accounting for 23.4%; There are only two, accounting for 1.6%. It can be seen that most of this news simply mention Chinese tourists and related events, and generally rarely analyze and comment in depth. As for the tendency of reporting, among the 124 related news, the negative color is extremely significant, with 93 articles, accounting for 75% of the total; 23 neutrality, accounting for 18.5%; while the positive color is very insignificant, only eight articles, accounting for the total 6.5%.

Third, regarding the topic of reporting, news reports about Chinese tourists can be divided into five major issues. The biggest issue is uncivilized behavior involving Chinese tourists. There are 54 articles, accounting for 43.5% of the total, followed by the issue of Chinese tourists. There are 31 papers, accounting for 25% of the total; and there are 25 papers on local social and event issues, accounting for 20.2% of the total. Also, there are not many topics related to the unique behaviors and behaviors of Chinese tourists, which are 10 and four respectively, accounting for 8.1% and 3.2% of the total. Further analysis from the place where the problems occurred, most of which occurred in China (43 articles), followed by Vietnam (34 articles), Thailand (12 articles), Russia (4 articles), Sweden

(4 articles), and there are also reports from nearly 20 countries and regions including Australia, Italy, France, Switzerland, Kenya, and Scotland.

In short, on the whole, the Vietnamese media can see that the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media rarely chooses to directly reprint the news of foreign media when reporting on Chinese tourists, but more often filters news events and indirectly quotes from a very rich source. Foreign news makes the news more in line with the acceptance and ideology of Vietnamese readers. The rich sources of information will make Vietnamese readers more convinced of the authenticity and fairness of the relevant news. At the same time, the Vietnamese media are more inclined to report the uncivilized behavior of Chinese tourists, the deaths and the influence of Chinese tourists on the local society of destinations in the form of news and negative tendencies.

## Reporting the Prejudice of the Content: Image of Chinese Tourists

### *Uncivilized Chinese Tourists*

With the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media, Chinese tourists will have many uncivilized behaviors when traveling in China and abroad. They can subdivide 54 news reports related to this aspect into serious crimes (20), fights (10), Destruction (17) is the most prominent. Others are indecent (2), unsanitary (3), discriminatory (1), and comprehensive behavior (1).

On the whole, in the presentation of the media, Chinese tourists are mostly doing damage to the local environment at domestic and foreign. They ignore the eyes of others in public places such as temples, parks, and zoos. Taking pictures of birds, throwing stones at animals, riding on a 1000-year-old stone horse, climbing on a large Buddha statue, etc., not only received media attention but also caused anger among residents. Chinese tourists lack legal awareness and intentionally or unintentionally violate the local laws.

The pursuit of the cause is not only that the local law is not known, but that the Chinese tourists themselves know it and even commit serious crimes in their own country. For example, they bought the wrong ticket but deliberately said that there was a bomb on the plane so that the entire flight would re-check security, resulting in flight delays, or 22 Chinese tourists illegally making fake bank cards and online gambling in Vung Tau, Vietnam. Not only is that, but the news that Chinese tourists were arrested for stealing and deception also a concern of the media. They stole a suitcase worth 5,000 dollars in Thailand or stole the money in the temple merit box. These acts were exposed by the media. At the same time, Chinese tourists have a bad temper and often can't control themselves. When a conflict occurs, it is easy to solve problems with their fists, which has affected the local social order and public security issues.

### *Chinese Tourists Who Often Get Problems*

In 2018, the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media had 31 reports of Chinese tourists' deaths, including traffic accidents (9), illnesses or injuries (6), deaths (6), rejections (4), and be harmed (2), be discriminated (1), kidnapping (1), missing things (1), and comprehensive (1). It can be seen that Chinese tourists often have hidden dangers of personal safety when traveling abroad. Shipwrecks, crashes, food poisoning, and other accidents often occur. Because the safety supervision and management of local tourists is still lax, many small travel agencies in China have neglected safety issues because they want to reduce reception expenses and increase profits. This is reflected in the Vietnamese media quoted by Thai

media reports. The Thai media said that the Jeep Island shipwreck accident was a disrespect for China travel agencies and ignored the Thai security regulations, which led to sad things.

At the same time, there are also many reports that Chinese tourists are injured or killed for some reasons when traveling in China. This shows that the Vietnamese media reported that Chinese tourists sometimes tend to pay attention to the problems of Chinese tourists and Chinese travel agencies themselves. Their behavior causes troubles and bad consequences for themselves.

Also, in September 2018, three Chinese tourists were brought to the cemetery by local hotel security when they traveled to Sweden, which attracted the attention of the media and the public. However, it is worth noting that the media coverage of the Vietnamese media is neutral. The focus is not on the reception of local hotels in Sweden or the behavior of Chinese tourists, but rather the reaction and reporting of the media in Sweden and China. Shape it as an event that caused diplomatic issues on both sides. It can be seen that the Vietnamese media tends to expand things to some extents.

### *Chinese Tourists Who Hurt the Local Community*

Among the 25 news reports related to local issues, there are 16 reports with negative tendencies, six reports with neutral tendencies, and only three reports with positive tendencies, which can explain the negative impact of Chinese tourists on the local community of tourist destinations. The impact is more significant. Most of the reports related to social issues involve Vietnam (7 reports), Cambodia (3 reports), and Thailand (3 reports).

First, the number of Chinese tourists coming to Vietnam has soared in recent years, the number of small tourist agencies has increased, and competition among travel agencies has become increasingly fierce. Since then, they have continuously launched "0 RMB traveling" service to Chinese tourists. Chinese tourists who come to Vietnam for flight tickets, accommodation, and catering are free. However, this kind of service will have many hidden dangers and traps. The tour guide will bring tourists to various places with a high consumption to force them to buy things and earn back the money and profits. Therefore, tourists will feel bored. A bad impression on the destination directly affects the local tourism industry. Not only that but because of the large number of Chinese tourists, the local management in Vietnam can't keep up, causing Chinese tourists to pay directly in China via RMB, Alipay, or WeChat. It has seriously affected Vietnam's economic and tourism development. At the same time, it has also attracted the attention of the national and local government.

Second, although Cambodia has attracted a large number of Chinese tourists in recent years, from the perspective of experts and journalists, Cambodia's economy and the lives of ordinary people have been greatly affected. Since Chinese companies invested heavily in Sihanouk, Cambodia; they have attracted many Chinese tourists to come here. They originally wanted to improve the lives of residents, but in reality, it's not. It is because there are too many Chinese tourists, there are many restaurants, accommodations, etc. opened by Chinese people to serve Chinese tourists. Chinese tourists have a strong sense of identity. They will look for the services provided by their compatriots in the local area. This time, the Chinese earned Chinese money. At the same time, the media also stressed that because there are too many Chinese tourists, the number of Western tourists will decline. For these reasons, they made the lives of local people more and more difficult and led to the crisis of social problems.

Third, the shipwrecked accident in Phuket, Thailand, in July 2018 caused nearly 50 Chinese tourists to die. This incident caused concern in the media around the world. Afterward, the Chinese media reported on the safety and hazards of tourism in Thailand many times. The number of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand has fallen sharply. After the accident, a total of 7,300 hotel with the reservations were canceled, directly affecting the tourism industry in Thailand. By the end of October 2018, media reports stressed that the impact of the shipwreck on Thailand's economy and society has become more and more serious. The income of the people has fallen sharply. Many travel agencies are facing bankruptcy. Many hotels that have especially received Chinese tourists are now selling.

In summary, Chinese tourists are an important source of tourists for these tourism countries and a force for promoting the local economy and tourism development. On the contrary, too many Chinese tourists have caused social problems to become more apparent, and the lives of residents have been seriously affected.

### *Chinese Tourists with Unusual Behavior and New Trends*

Although this aspect is only a minor concern of the Vietnamese media, the behavior of Chinese tourists is sometimes very unusual in the media, which makes residents and audiences feel particularly surprised. Chinese tourists who went to Russia in the winter saw a frozen river and took off their clothes and took a bath. They completely ignored the outdoor temperature of minus 62 degrees, making the residents who were lazy to going out feel completely unbelievable. At the same time, to pursue the stimuli, many tourist destinations in China have specially built glass roads, which have caused visitors to visit. But not only that but in some places, they also use the display screen to make the effect of the cracking of the plank road to give visitors a more exciting feeling. These ideas have not only become the attractions in China but also become one of the concerns of foreign media and audiences.

Also, Chinese tourists have also changed in recent years. They have caused many new tourism trends, such as outbound travel on traditional festivals, or a large number of tourists who travel to Hong Kong just to climb to the highest floor of a high-rise building for taking photos. Many visitors go to Snow Mountain in Yulong – Yunnan province to see glaciers. These are the trends that have emerged in China due to the rise of social video platforms such as “Douyin” and “Kuaishou” players in recent years. At the same time, it has also promoted the increasing number of Chinese tourists coming and going. The statistics of 2018 show that there are three Chinese tourists among every ten foreign tourists coming to Vietnam.

## The Media Prejudice and Political Sensitivity

### *The Media Prejudice: the Use of Negative Words*

Excepting for a large number of negative news about Chinese tourists, the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media has a certain prejudice against Chinese tourists. The media's prejudice is also reflected in adjectives and verbs describing Chinese tourists and their behavior. These adjectives and verbs have extremely obvious derogatoriness and generally, appear in the news headlines. Vietnamese readers will be attracted to these headlines before reading the main body of the news report. The adjectives of the title will make them have a negative tendency before reading, which will affect the reader's position and cognition of reading the news.

Using these words such as “faking”, “died”, “stealing”, “arrested on the spot”, “hiding tickets”, “deception”, “panic”, “intentional”, “bad results” to describe the behavior of Chinese tourists, they steal things, deliberately destroy the local environment, not pay attention to health, and even deceive their compatriots. When there are contradictions, they often fight. These behaviors of Chinese tourists make residents “angry,” “blame,” “send away.” The “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media not only uses these derogatory words when describing the uncivilized behavior of Chinese tourists but also focuses on the neutral issues such as the increase in the number of Chinese National Day holiday trips or the sudden increase in the number of overseas tourists during the Spring Festival.

It can be seen that the use of derogatory words in these issues will negatively make the whole news, which is also a prejudice of media reports. It is nothing that the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media often uses the words “Chinese guest” or “Chinese tourists” when it comes to Chinese tourists, while tourists from other countries often use “foreign tourists.” In other words, the Vietnamese media divides tourists into Vietnamese domestic tourists, Chinese tourists, and foreign (other countries) tourists. It can be seen from that the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media has an invisible prejudice against Chinese tourists.

In addition, the Vietnamese media basically related to the end of each report on the uncivilized behavior of Chinese tourists, and most of them are negative events, “VnExpress” will use words such as “before”, “also” and “similar” are also accompanied by news links for readers to click on. Such reporting techniques and methods will once again emphasize the negative behavior of Chinese tourists and deepen the perception of Vietnamese tourists to Chinese tourists.

### *Significant Political Sensitivity*

In the middle of the report, the “VnExpress” reflects the poor quality of Chinese tourists and the lack of local management. This mainly reflects the problems of local tourism supervision and management in China and Vietnam. The two most prominent events are Chinese tour guides distort the history and culture of Vietnam in Vietnam; Chinese tourists wear T-shirts with controversial sovereign patterns while entering the country.

First, on February 28, 2018, on a social platform in China, there was a video about Chinese tour guides distorting the history and culture of Vietnam. She took a tour group to the Da Nang Museum to explain the traditional Vietnamese clothing “Ao Dai,” which originated from the cheongsam of China, although the design style is Vietnamese, is still very similar overall. Also, she also said that “Vietnam used to belong to China, and later it was separated and formed a separate country because of the war.” After the incident, it caused the attention of the Vietnamese media and the Vietnamese people. The local government should give the audience an explanation in the media and severely punish them according to the law.

When the “VnExpress” of Vietnamese media reported on this incident, it also specifically reported the reaction of the Vietnamese people. They said that they were very dissatisfied with the behavior of “distorting.” At the same time, it is mentioned that in June 2016, the Chinese tour guide group sent a lot of propaganda activities to the tourism management department of Da Nang about the Chinese illegally engaging in tour guides or distorting the history of Vietnam in Vietnam, which seriously affected the establishment of Vietnamese society and image. Also, many Vietnamese have sheltered them from these acts. It can be seen that the relevant reports on this matter involve not only social issues but also involve political issues indirectly. By using the word “distorted” to deny the explanation of Chinese tour guides, it emphasizes the independence of Vietnamese countries and the characteristics of Vietnamese culture.



Second, in mid-May 2018, 14 Chinese tourists wear T-shirts with the sovereign controversial map while entering Vietnam. This map excepting the mainland of China; it also includes the East Sea of Vietnam (China named it NanHai). It is currently one of the most important issues in the relationship between the two countries. Although this behavior is illegal in Vietnam, the government of Khanh Hoa province of Vietnam said that there is no corresponding punishment, so it can only be confiscated on the spot and contact the travel agency for accountability. This incident has aroused great concern from the Vietnamese people. Since then, the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a statement re-emphasizing the issue of Vietnamese sovereignty and believes that "this is a fact that cannot be changed."

In these news reports, the Vietnamese media's "VnExpress" will once again emphasize that "nine-dash line" is drawn by China to ask the sovereignty for the whole East Sea. Disregarding the opposition of the international people, it also stressed that the 2016 Standing Court of Arbitration announced that China has no legal basis to demand historical rights for various resources within the "nine-dash line."

## Conclusion

This paper mainly discusses the prejudice of the Vietnamese media based on the framework analysis. The research finds that the Vietnamese media's "VnExpress" has a relatively obvious prejudice in the 2018 Chinese tourists report. It can be seen the prejudice of this media in the report genre, the report topic, the reported tendency, and the report content. Focusing on the use of news sources and quotes from a very rich source of domestic and foreign media to report on Chinese tourists' related events. The media's negative reporting tends to be particularly significant, many uncivilized behaviors and bringing to the local economy and society. The image of Chinese tourists who have a negative impact. The prejudice of the Vietnamese media is reflected in the fact that the media often uses verbs and adjectives with derogatory colors to report on Chinese tourists. Also, the media itself has strong political sensitivity. Due to the historical origins and conflicts of sovereign interests between Vietnam and China, "VnExpress" emphasizes the cultures and history of Vietnam through reports of illegal behaviors and illegal propaganda activities of Chinese tourists. From there, it enhances the sense of identity and national consciousness of the Vietnamese people.

## Note

<sup>1</sup> The Article 7 of Law News - Vietnam 2016

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