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Occupation-based social structure in Binh Duong Province, 1999-2009

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ABSTRACT

Binh Duong has rapidly transformed during the period 1999-2009, from a agricultural province to industrial one. The paper explores the shift of occupation-based social structure of Binh Duong during that period. Using the data sets of Census 1999 and 2009, the paper analyses the evolution of the occupational figure in Binh Duong by ten occupational categories and four occupational strata, and the differences in this figure by residence, gender, ethnic, and religious variables. Findings show that the occupational structure of Binh Duong is more developed than the one of the Southern Key Economic Zone. Its change in rural areas is more significant than in urban areas. There are not considerable differences by gender, ethnicity, and religiousness. The findings are suggestive for a further analysis using the data set of Census 2019 on the evolution of occupational figures in Binh Duong during the previous twenty years (1999-2019).

Keywords: *Binh Duong, occupational structure, occupation-based social structure, occupational strata, social structure*

1. Introduction

The Southern Region of Vietnam, and its larger one, the Southern Key Economic Zone is the most developed socio-economic region of the country. According to its Master Plan, the zone consists of the four sub-zones: Ho Chi Minh City, the Northeastern sub-zone (including the province Binh Duong, Dong Nai, and Ba Ria-Vung Tau), the

Northwestern sub-zone (including the province Tay Ninh and Binh Phuoc), and the Southwestern sub-zone (including the province Long An and Tien Giang) (Prime Minister, 2014). Thus, Binh Duong is a province in the second sub-zone, where the industry is highly developed, after Ho Chi Minh City only.

The paper aims to identify the occupation-based social structure in the period 1999-2009. In 2017, we analyzed the occupational structure of the Southern Key Economic Zone by the urban-rural and ethnic dimension (Cường & Lợi, 2017a, 2017b). Using the analytical framework in those papers, the evolution of the occupational structure in the province Binh Duong during the period 1999-2009 is described in this article.

The article includes four parts. Following the introduction, the second part outlines the theoretical notion, data sources, and methods. The analysis of the state and the changes of the occupational structure in Binh Duong 1999-2009 by urban-rural areas, gender, ethnicity, and religiousity is implemented in the third part. Finally, some comments on the occupational structure in Binh Duong and suggestions for further research are done for the concluding part.

2. Theoretical framework and methods

2.1. Conceptualization of Occupation-based Social Structure

The term “structure” has been used in social sciences since the nineteenth century, borrowing from the construction and biology. Karl Marx’s historical materialism supposed that there is a real structure embedded in society, namely, the economic structure. A class structure is directly generated from society’s economic structure by which both all superstructures are divisively determined. At the end of the nineteenth century and early the twentieth century, Max Weber suggested the term social stratification to conceptualize the social structure in the real world. Accordingly, beside the economic factor (ownership of economic means), social status and power should be considered. The social standing is the evaluation of community on the positions in social structure, which are closely related to occupational positions in the system of labour divisions (Wilterdink and Form).

Paralelly with the above mentioned theoretical buildings, the statistics has rapidly developed since the early nineteenth century to response to the increasing demands of the social administration (Desrosières, 2015). One of the important issues of statistics is to quantitatively measure the distribution of a population into different socio-economic categories (About the evolution of this statistical task in the typical case of Britain, see: Kirby, 1999: 6-23). Generally, the classifications of the official social surveys are a particular combination of class, status, and occupation factors.

After 1945, international sociologists have paid more attention to the official statistics on classes and occupations. Some ones suggested several classifications using Marxian

and Weberian theory but also elaborating measurable analytical frameworks in the real world. The major two schemata are acknowledged in the history of social stratification research, namely, the framework suggested by Erik Olin Wright and by John Harry Goldthorpe et al in the 1970s (Payne, 2000: 20-54). Almost the classifications so far are more or less notable influenced by these seminal schemata, especially the schema of Goldthorpe et al. And all classifications are characterized by the variable of occupation.

During the previous three decades, there are more and more researches on occupation-based social structure in Vietnam (Cường, 2015; Cường, 2016; Cường & Sang, 2010; Cường & Dung, 2016; Kính, 2012, 2018; Nghĩa, Tân & Hùng, 2010; Sang & Minh Châu, 2013; Tấn (editor), 2010, 2013).

In this paper, there are some terms which are used changeably such as “occupational social structure”, “occupation-based social structure”, and “occupational structure”. They refer to the quantitative distribution of occupational categories in the whole occupational structure.

2.2. Data Sources and Methods

The analysis in this paper is based on the data sets of Census 1999 and 2009. All people aged 15 years old and above who are working in the time of the surveys are included in the analysis.

A list of ten occupational categories are used in Census 1999 and 2009. They are: 1) Armed forces, 2) Leader, 3) Higher technician, 4) Middle technician, 5) Office staff, 6) Sell services, 7) Skilled agricultural labor, 8) Handicraft labor, 9) Machine operator, 10) Un-skilled labor. In our two papers published in 2017 and in this paper, these ten occupational categories are grouped into four occupation-based social strata as follows: Upper social stratum (including the occupational category 1, 2 and 3 as above mentioned), Higher middle (including the occupational category 4, 5, and 6), Lower middle (including the occupational category 7, 8 and 9), and Lower stratum (the occupational category 10).

In the papers published in 2017, four figures of occupation-based social structure are defined: Pyramid 1 (the rate of Lower stratum consists of 60% and higher), Pyramid 2 (the rate of Lower stratum is less than 60%), Diamond 1 (the rate of Lower middle and Lower stratum is more than 50%), and Diamond 2 (the rate of Lower middle and Lower stratum is less than 50%). The shift from Pyramid 1 to Pyramid 2, then from Diamond 1 to Diamond 2 refers a progressive and desirable change, because it presents the shift of occupational structure from the occupational categories characterized by lower education, less skills, and less paid level to the ones that these three criteria are improved (Cường & Lợi, 2017a, 2017b).

SCHEMA 1. Occupational figures in Southern Key Economic Zone, sub-regions, and Binh Duong by urban-rural areas, 1999-2009.

No.	Region/ Sub-region/ Binh Duong	1999	2009
A	Southern Key Economic Zone	Pyramid 2	Diamond 1
1	Urban areas	Diamond 1	Diamond 2
2	Rural areas	Pyramid 1	Diamond 1
B	Ho Chi Minh City	Diamond 1	Diamond 2
1	Urban areas	Diamond 1	Diamond 2
2	Rural areas	Pyramid 2	Diamond 1
C	Sub-region Binh Duong, Dong Nai, Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Diamond 1	Diamond 1
1	Urban areas	Diamond 1	Diamond 1
2	Rural areas	Diamond 1	Diamond 1
D	Sub-region Binh Phuoc, Tay Ninh, Long An, Tien Giang	Pyramid 1	Pyramid 2
1	Urban areas	Pyramid 2	Diamond 1
2	Rural areas	Pyramid 1	Pyramid 2
E	Binh Duong	Diamond 1	Diamond 1
1	Urban areas	Diamond 1	Diamond 1
2	Rural areas	Pyramid 2	Diamond 1

Source: Bui The Cuong and Vu Manh Loi, 2017a, 2019.

3. Findings and discussions

3.1. Change of Occupation-based Social Structure in Overall

Figure 1 and Table 1 show that the figure of occupational strata in Binh Duong 1999 is shaped in Diamond 1, while this figure of Southern Key Economic Zone is still in Pyramid 2 (Cường & Lợi, 2017a).

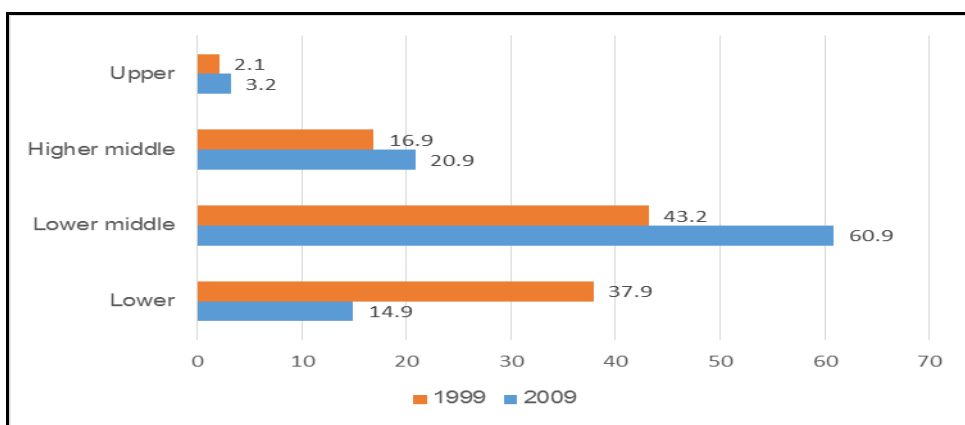


Figure 1. Occupation-based social structure in Binh Duong by occupational strata, 1999-2009, % (Cường & Lợi, 2019).

However, in 2009 that figure of Binh Duong remains in the same diamond, although it is considerably transformed in the lower middle and lower stratum. During the period 1999-2009, the rate of lower stratum is decreased 23 percentage points, from 37.9% to

14.9%, and the lower middle is increased from 43.2% to 60.9% . It is because the rate of category “un-skilled labor” is decreased and the rate of category “machine operator” is increased (the rate of the latter category is increased five folds, from 5.2% to 36.1%). The category “skilled labor in agriculture” is almost not changed and “handicraft labor” is also decreased almost two folds, from 29.8% to 17% . In 1999, the occupational categories having the larger rate include “un-skilled labor”, “handicraft labor”, and “sell services”. But, in 2009, “machine operator” becomes the occupational category with the highest rate in the figure, and it is followed by “handicraft labor”, and “un-skilled labor”.

3.2. Change of Occupation-based Social Structure by Urban-Rural Areas

Table 1 presents the occupational structure by urban-rural areas. In 1999, the figure of urban areas in Binh Duong is shaped by Diamond 1, and it is not changed during the next ten years. Comparatively, the figure of urban areas in Southern Key Economic Zone and in Ho Chi Minh City has been evolved to Diamond 2 in 2009. The occupational structure of rural areas in Binh Duong in 1999 is in Pyramid 2, but in 2009 it is developed to Diamond 1. The transformation is occurred in both areas, but it is more significant in rural areas. In 1999, the rate of lower stratum in urban areas is 21.2% , while it is 45.7% in rural areas. In 2009, those rates are 12.5% and 15.8%, respectively. In other words, after ten years, the rate of lower stratum is halted in urban areas, but decreased three folds in rural areas. Accordingly, the rate of lower middle stratum in urban areas is increased nearly six percentage points, but this rate in rural areas is increased 1.54 times. The rate of occupational category “machine operator” in urban areas is increased four times during ten years (from 7.9% to 30.5%). However, this number in rural areas is ten times (from 3.9% to 38.1%). Thus, regarding the occupational structure, the industrialization during the period 1999-2009 is influenced more strongly in rural areas of Binh Duong than in urban areas.

TABLE 2. Structure of working main occupations by urban-rural areas, Binh Duong, 1999-2009

No.	Occupational categories/ Strata	1999			2009		
		Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
A	Occupational categories						
1	Armed forces						
2	Leader	.7	1.3	.4	.4	.8	.3
3	Higher technician	1.4	2.7	.8	2.8	5.5	1.8
4	Middle technician	4.7	7.0	3.7	4.2	6.1	3.6
5	Office staff	.9	1.7	.5	2.6	3.2	2.3
6	Sell services	11.3	19.9	7.2	14.1	19.9	12.0
7	Skilled agricultural labor	8.1	1.8	11.1	7.9	2.5	9.8
8	Handicraft labor	29.8	36.6	26.7	17.0	19.0	16.2
9	Machine operator	5.2	7.9	3.9	36.1	30.5	38.1

10	Un-skilled labor	37.9	21.2	45.7	14.9	12.5	15.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
B	Occupational strata						
1	Upper (A1+2+3)	2.1	3.9	1.2	3.2	6.4	2.1
2	Higher middle (A4+5+6)	16.9	28.6	11.4	20.9	29.2	17.9
3	Lower middle (A7+8+9)	43.2	46.3	41.7	60.9	52.0	64.2
4	Lower (A10)	37.9	21.2	45.7	14.9	12.5	15.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N	354095	112753	241341	946974	252596	694378

Source: Census 1999, 2009.

Notes: Pyramid 1 is featured by the rate of lower stratum at 60% and above; Pyramid 2 by that rate at less 60%. Diamond 1 is featured by the rate of the lower half part (the lower middle stratum plus the lower stratum) at higher 50%; Diamond 2 by the rate of the lower half part at less 50%.

3.3. Change of Occupation-based Social Structure by Gender

Research questions are here that how the occupational structure in Binh Duong is differed by gender and whether its difference is changed during the period 1999-2009. The findings indicated in Table 2 are surprised. In 1999, the rate of higher middle stratum of female group is so higher than that of male group (24.5% compared to 10.1%). And the rate of lower stratum of female group is considerably lower than that of male group (33.3% compared to 41.9%). Thus, at the end of the 1990s, there was no difference by gender in Binh Duong, regarding the social stratification by occupation. Even the status of female group was somewhat better than that of male group. Looking into occupational categories, it is because the female labors work mainly in occupational category “sell services” (the rate of female labors in this category consists of 17.3%, while this number in male group is only 6%). The rate of female labors in occupational category “middle technician” and “office staff” is also somewhat higher than that in male group.

However, it is quite different in 2009. There are almost not any differences among all occupational strata. The rate of higher middle stratum in male group catches up the rate in female group because it is doubled after ten years (from 10,1% to 19,2%). The rate of lower middle stratum in both groups is increased 1.5 folds, consisting approximately 61%. The rate of lower stratum in both groups is significantly decreased, equivalent about 15%. These changes in occupational strata are caused by the strong shifts in the occupational categories. During the period 1999-2009, the male rate in category “sell services” is increased two folds, the female rate in “handicraft labor” is strongly decreased (from 30.0% to 9.5%). Especially, the rate of category “machine operator” is strikingly increased in both groups. This number in male group consists of 8.6% in 1999 and 28.5% in 2009 (increasing 3.3 times), while this number in female group is 1.3% in

1999 and 43.9% in 2009 (increasing 33.8 times in ten years). This striking growth of this occupational category results in the rapid development in the foreign and domestic private manufacturing sector during the 2000s in Binh Duong.

TABLE 3. Structure of working main occupations by gender, Binh Duong, 1999-2009

No.	Occupational categories/ Strata	1999			2009		
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
A	Occupational categories						
1	Armed forces						
2	Leader	.7	.9	.4	.4	.6	.3
3	Higher technician	1.4	1.6	1.3	2.8	2.9	2.7
4	Middle technician	4.7	3.6	6.0	4.2	4.2	4.3
5	Office staff	.9	.6	1.2	2.6	2.8	2.4
6	Sell services	11.3	6.0	17.3	14.1	12.2	16.1
7	Skilled agricultural labor	8.1	7.2	9.2	7.9	8.6	7.2
8	Handicraft labor	29.8	29.7	30.0	17.0	24.2	9.5
9	Machine operator	5.2	8.6	1.3	36.1	28.5	43.9
10	Un-skilled labor	37.9	41.9	33.3	14.9	16.1	13.7
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
B	Occupational strata						
1	Upper (A1+2+3)	2.1	2.5	1.7	3.2	3.5	3.0
2	Higher middle (A4+5+6)	16.9	10.1	24.5	20.9	19.2	22.8
3	Lower middle (A7+8+9)	43.2	45.4	40.6	60.9	61.3	60.6
4	Lower (A10)	37.9	41.9	33.3	14.9	16.1	13.7
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N	354095	188016	166078	946974	480281	466693

Source: Census 1999, 2009.

3.4. Change of Occupation-based Social Structure by Ethnicity

It is a little bit surprised with the occupational structure by ethnicity in Binh Duong 1999 (Table 3). The rate of upper and higher middle stratum of the ethnic minorities is approximately doubled than that of Kinh people. The rate of upper stratum of ethnic minorities is 3.8% compared to 2% of Kinh people. The rate of lower stratum of ethnic minorities is 28.0% compared to 38.1% of Kinh people.

However, the occupational figure by ethnicity in 2009 becomes different. The rate of upper and higher middle stratum among Kinh people is higher than that among ethnic minorities. The rate of upper stratum among Kinh people consists of 3.4% compared to 1.3% among ethnic minorities. The rate of higher middle stratum among Kinh people is 21.4% compared to 12.8 among ethnic minorities. Contrastly, the rate of lower middle stratum among Kinh people is lower of twelve percentage points than that among ethnic minorities (60.2% compared to 72.1%). Considering the occupational categories, the rate of “sell services” among ethnic minorities is decreased 3.3 folds during ten years (25.8% to 7.8%), while this rate among Kinh people is increased 1.33 folds (10.9% to 14.5%). It is a striking shift in category “machine operator”. In 1999, the rate of this category is approximately 5% for

both groups. In 2009, the rate of this category among Kinh people is increased 6.8 folds (reached at 35.1%), but it is increased 11.3 folds among ethnic minorities (at 52.1%). Thus, over half of the working people of ethnic minorities works in category “machine operator”.

TABLE 4. Structure of working main occupations by ethnicity, Binh Duong, 1999-2009

No.	Occupational categories/ Strata	1999			2009		
		Total	Kinh	Ethnic minority	Total	Kinh	Ethnic minority
A	Occupational categories						
1	Armed forces						
2	Leader	.7	.6	2.7	.4	.5	.3
3	Higher technician	1.4	1.4	1.1	2.8	2.9	1.0
4	Middle technician	4.7	4.7	4.1	4.2	4.4	1.6
5	Office staff	.9	.9	1.2	2.6	2.5	3.4
6	Sell services	11.3	10.9	25.8	14.1	14.5	7.8
7	Skilled agricultural labor	8.1	8.3	3.2	7.9	8.2	1.9
8	Handicraft labor	29.8	29.9	29.3	17.0	16.9	18.2
9	Machine operator	5.2	5.2	4.6	36.1	35.1	52.1
10	Un-skilled labor	37.9	38.1	28.0	14.9	15.0	13.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
B	Occupational strata						
1	Upper (A1+2+3)	2.1	2.0	3.8	3.2	3.4	1.3
2	Higher middle (A4+5+6)	16.9	16.6	31.1	20.9	21.4	12.8
3	Lower middle (A7+8+9)	43.2	43.3	37.1	60.9	60.2	72.1
4	Lower (A10)	37.9	38.1	28.0	14.9	15.0	13.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N	354095	346354	7740	946974	892430	54544

Source: Census 1999, 2009.

3.5. Change of Occupation-based Social Structure by Religiosity

Research questions are here that how the occupational structure in Binh Duong is different from religiosity and whether its difference is changed during the period 1999-2009. Table 4 indicates that there is no considerable difference between the non-religious and religious population in the occupational structure, but the difference is lightly increased after ten years. In 1999, the rate of upper and higher middle stratum of the non-religious group includes 9.7%, this rate of the religious group is 6%. In 2009, this pattern remains with the gap of more than six percentage points. The gap in category “un-skilled labor” between them is 7-8 percentage points with the lower rate in the non-religious group compared to the religious group. There is significant difference in category “leader”, “higher technician”, and “middle technician”.

TABLE 5. Structure of working main occupations by religiosity, Binh Duong, 1999-2009

No.	Occupational categories/ Strata	1999			2009		
		Total	Non- religious	Religious	Total	Non- religious	Religious
A	Occupational categories						
1	Armed forces				.0	.0	

2	Leader	.6	.8	.1	.6	.8	.2
3	Higher technician	.5	.6	.1	2.5	3.0	.7
4	Middle technician	3.0	3.5	1.5	3.1	3.7	1.2
5	Office staff	.5	.6	.3	.7	.8	.3
6	Sell services	4.1	4.1	4.0	10.8	10.9	10.5
7	Skilled agricultural labor	5.1	5.7	3.4	2.0	2.3	1.1
8	Handicraft labor	4.7	4.8	4.3	8.9	9.0	8.5
9	Machine operator	1.4	1.4	1.2	2.1	2.1	1.8
10	Un-skilled labor	80.2	78.3	85.0	69.2	67.3	75.7
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
B	Occupational strata						
1	Upper (A1+2+3)	1.1	1.4	.2	3.1	3.8	.8
2	Higher middle (A4+5+6)	7.6	8.3	5.8	14.7	15.5	12.1
3	Lower middle (A7+8+9)	11.1	12.0	9.0	13.0	13.4	11.4
4	Lower (A10)	80.2	78.3	85.0	69.2	67.3	75.7
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N	309130	222286	86845	497771	381376	116396

Source: Census 1999, 2009.

4. Conclusions

During the period 1999-2009, the occupational structure in Binh Duong is shaped by Diamond 1, more developed than that of Southern Key Economic Zone, but less than that of Ho Chi Minh City in 2009 (Diamond 2). This figure is significantly changed after ten years, the rate of lower stratum is strongly decreased and the rate of lower middle stratum is increased accordingly. The rate of category “machine operator” (industrial worker) is increased five times in the 2000s, becoming the largest occupational category in 2009. However, the category “higher technician” and “middle technician” remain still low (7%). And the shape of Diamond 1 should be improved in order to move to Diamond 2. The lower half part of occupational structure consists of 75.8% in 2009. When the data set of Census 2019 is available to publics, the present occupational structure of Binh Duong can be analysed for the last ten years.

The industrialization in Binh Duong in the period 1999-2009 has been impacting the rural areas more strongly than the urban areas in terms of the change of occupational structure. From the form of Pyramid 2 in 1999, the occupational structure in rural areas becomes Diamond 1 in 2009. During ten years, the rate of lower stratum in rural areas is decreased three times, the rate of category “machine operator” is increased ten times, consisting of almost 40% in the rural occupational structure. Thus, in terms of occupational structure, the urban-rural gap in Binh Duong is much significantly decreased during the period 1999-2009.

There is almost no gender difference in occupational figure. In 1999, the occupational structure is even improved for female population than that for male population. After ten years, the female rate in category “handicraft labor” is decreased three folds, while the female rate in category “machine operator” is increased 33.8 folds, consisting of 44% in the female occupational structure.

In 1999, it seems that the ethnic minorities are more advanced than the Kinh people regarding the occupational structure. However, in 2009, the Kinh people are advanced than the ethnic minorities, but it is not really considerable. In 2009, the rate of category “machine operator” (namely, industrial workers) includes more than 50% in the occupational structure of the ethnic minorities.

There is no significant gap between the non-religious and religious population in the occupational structure. However, the distribution in the occupational structure among the non-religious population is more or less advanced than that among the religious population. The rate of category “leader”, “higher technician”, and “middle technician” among the non-religious population is noteworthy higher than that among the religious population.

Our two papers published in 2017 and this paper contribute to explore the occupational structure in Southern Key Economic Zone, its sub-regions, and the province Binh Duong. They are a good starting point for the further analysis using the data set of Census 2019 to examine the evolution of the occupational structure during the previous twenty years (1999-2019). Our analytical framework can be suggestive for understanding the changes in the occupational structure in other provinces and regions, as well as in the whole country.

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