

**SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE RESIDING  
ABROAD: CASE STUDIES VIETNAMESE IN SYDNEY  
AUSTRALIA AND PHILADELPHIA. PA. U.S.**

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**ABSTRACT**

My paper based on the result from 2 case studies Vietnamese in Sydney Australia (2013) and Vietnamese in Philadelphia. PA. U.S. (February 2014). These studies are for longer project titled: Social integration of Vietnamese people residing abroad. Qualitative research with participate observation method were conducted. Beyond day-to-day connections and networks built in society relationship I carried out fieldwork. All helped me gather crucial and sensitive information from their stories and daily participate observations. Findings showed that: 1/ Circumstance under which that an individual or one family decided to leave their homeland to another have become more diverse and complex. 2/ Social integration is one of the main factors affecting decisions of a personal or family's staying home or migrating elsewhere, affecting one's successful and failure. 3/ Social integration is a process and an outcome as well. The integration process of an individual, of a specific immigrant group into his/her host country is characterized by several dimensions, typically aggregated into four distinct categories and generally support each others: economic, legal and social-cultural integration. 4/ heterogeneous needs of different migrant generations are more specifically targeted. Although some of findings, there are still some issues to be discussed such as the most appropriate approach in the study of social integration; Manipulation concept social integration; Examine the impact of social integration to migration intentions with professional development opportunities, income, satisfaction in life as intervening variables and policy implications for social integration of immigrants.

**Keywords:** Social integration, Vietnamese people residing abroad.

## **1. Introduction**

Migration is a common phenomenon, especially in the context of complex globalization, dependency, climate changes, social unrest, natural disasters, the process of agricultural and rural industrialization (farmland narrow, switch jobs, change the mode of production labor organizations, ...)... have impact on the social integration, leading to a personal or family intend to migrate. Researching results showed that social integration is one of the main factors affecting decisions of a personal or family's staying home or emigrating elsewhere.

According to report of Vietnamese Diplomatic Academy, there were about 4.5 million Vietnamese people residing abroad by the year 2012. Among the regions and territories around the world have the Vietnamese people, the United States is one of the countries where many Vietnamese people are living and working (about 2.200.000 people).

According to U.S. Census Bureau 2010 SF1, There was 168,988 Vietnamese people in Northeast Region of which, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with 14,431 Vietnamese Americans (0.9%), belong to 19 large cities with more 10.000 Vietnamese Americans living and working. The majority of Vietnamese Americans of working age, work, pay taxes and contributions; Generations, their descendants have learned in the school system at all levels. According to report of Vietnamese Diplomatic Academy, there were 300.000 Vietnamese in Australia by 2012.

Why is this study important? Study social integration in the relationship with professional development opportunities, income, satisfaction in life as intervening variables, is a question relevant to sociologists, demographers who look at migration patterns and causes which contribute to residential moves. On the theoretical aspect, it will contribute to the growing theories of social integration and social capital. On the practical note, by examining the social integration in the relationship with their impact on community satisfaction, the study will benefit those community organizations whose key emphases are to provide integrative mechanisms.

**2. Review Literature.** Social integration attracted scholars' attention. They mainly focus on some aspects. *First is methodology.* The previously dominant thinking has strongly been challenged by three emerging perspectives in the late 1990s, such as rights-based citizenship, gender and empowerment, and social capital building. These new perspectives enrich their understanding by deconstructing migrants as many social groups with competing needs and facing constraints. The unit of analysis is also changing. On the one hand, heterogeneous needs of different migrant groups, such as children, teenagers, married female migrants... are more specifically targeted. On the other, family as an intact and harmonious entity has been questioned by the rising interest in the power dynamics within families between genders and across generations. New research methodologies, such as ethnography and participatory research; qualitative methods with photos, discourse, narratives, individual and in-depth interview, participatory observation; Deploying different sample method to reach less-accessible migrants, have been experimented with in order to engage and empower the migrants (Sam Wong: 2007).

There are definitions of concept of social integration. Social integration is defined as the harmonious and coherent processing of the structures of a social system (Elif Kısar Koramaz: 2013). This concept is examined more closely as a general sociological concept when integration is explained as a concept may be defined as the stability of relations among parts within a system-like whole (Wolfgang Bosswick and Friedrich Heckmann: 2006). Authors explained that integration of immigrants into a host society should be understood as a special case of social integration. Others have suggested that social integration be conceptualized as structural integration, cultural integration, interactive integration and identifiable integration. These concepts are basic dimensions of integration and are also appropriate for operationalization in empirical research and when developing indicators (Heckmann and Schnapper: 2003).

Additionally, the degree of similarity between native-born and foreign-born adults was measured by quantitative study. The assimilation index can be decomposed along several other dimensions. The index is based on a series of economic, cultural, and civic

factors. These sets of factors can be examined in isolation to produce three component indices. *The economic index* compares the labor force, educational attainment, and home ownership patterns of the foreign- and native-born. *The cultural index* focuses on English-speaking ability, marriage, and childbearing patterns. *The civic index* examines naturalization rates and compares the military service patterns of the foreign- and native-born. (Jacob L. Vigdor: 2008).

*Second is the element impacting to social integration.* With the view of social integration as an indicator of life satisfaction, investigations of the influence of the economic, social, and cultural variables on life satisfaction were conducted in Asia and Europe. Researcher set a unifying theoretical framework for all three domains by defining life satisfaction as a function of aspirations and expectations which in turn are affected by micro- and macro-level variables. Its results showed that, on the micro-level, economic capital is a resource for the actor. On the macro-level, societal economic capital improves the opportunity structure for the individual under certain conditions. Thus, economic capital on both levels positively affects the perceived chances of fulfilling aspirations. As long as the latter remain unchanged, life satisfaction will increase. Social and cultural capital partially followed the same logic. (Wolfgang Jagodzinski: 2009)

Trade openness and transnational corporate penetration are considered as two global determinants of female immigrants' participation into host labor markets. While a cross-sectional analysis indicates that women have been pulled into national labor markets as a result of neo-liberal economic reforms, more dynamic models show that these same forces can also lead to a preference for male, rather than female labor. Moreover, the analyses specify that the effects of trade openness and trade risk on female labor force participation are determined by position in the world-system and region. These results illustrate that arguments about the relationship between globalization and the feminization of the labor force, are too simplistic and neglect to account for the diverse consequences of global economic expansion on gender relations. (Lisa B. Meyer: 2006).

Social media is examined in the role of supporting knowledge integration from a social

capital perspective. The empirical results provide general support for that social media have the potential to facilitate the formation of employees' social capital indicated by social networking, trust and shared language. These mediating variables will in turn positively affect knowledge integration (Xiongfei Cao *et al.* 2013).

*Third is the impact of immigration on host countries.* Almost results from researches focus on three aspects: demography, social-economic and culture.

*The impact on demography.* Over the last few decades, immigration has transformed metropolitan areas across the United States including Philadelphia City. Global economic shifts have pushed the world's labor markets into unprecedented flux, and international migration now defines more and more people's lives. The Federal Immigration Act of 1965 opened U.S. borders to non-Western European immigration for the first time since the 1920s, and documented and undocumented workers from all parts of the globe have traveled to the United States to fill jobs in a changing economy. Joining these workers and their families, new refugee populations have come to the United States seeking political asylum. Others were resettled here in the wake of the Vietnam War.

During the last great wave of immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Philadelphia has not received as many immigrants in proportion to its overall population as have other American cities of similar size. A stagnant economy in the wake of deindustrialization has limited access to jobs for Philadelphians of all backgrounds and has slowed the tide of immigration into the city. Nonetheless, large tracts of Philadelphia and its suburbs have been internationalized. Immigration is one of the few forces stemming the City of Philadelphia's precipitous population loss and has been an important factor in the small population gains of the greater metropolitan region. Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian refugees had already built vibrant communities in the late 1970s and 1980s in South Philadelphia. The result from a research of the growth and characteristics of the foreign born in the Philadelphia metropolitan area between 1970 and 2006, found that, metropolitan Philadelphia has a diverse mix of immigrants and refugees in which from Asia (39 percent) including Vietnam. (Daniel Amsterdam: 2007).

Over three-quarters of Vietnamese-born Australian live in New South Wales (63,786, or 39.9 percent) and Victoria (58,878 or 36.8 percent)<sup>1</sup>. In Melbourne, the suburbs of Richmond, Footscray, Springvale, Sunshine and St Albans have a significant proportion of Vietnamese-Australians. In Sydney, they are concentrated in Bankstown, Cabramatta, Canley Vale and Fairfield.

*The impacts on Social-economic and cultural aspects.* Immigrants and their children are the future of the American workforce. Their integration into the US labor force — or lack thereof — is a key component of any long-term strategy to maximize the productive potential of the current and future US workforce. (Michael Fix, ed., 2007)

Immigration to Philadelphia has dramatically altered the region's economic, cultural and political life. Many Southeast Asian refugees resettled in Philadelphia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Nearly 75 percent of greater Philadelphia's labor force growth since 2000 is attributable to immigrants. Immigrants' contributions to the labor force are considerably higher in this period than in the 1990s, when just 36 percent of the growth was due to immigrants. The varied immigrant groups—high-skilled professionals, refugees, and laborers from a diverse set of origin countries—bring both opportunities and challenges for policy makers, service providers, and communities throughout greater Philadelphia (Audrey Singer, *et al*: 2008).

Vietnamese, Cambodian and other Southeast Asian refugees in Philadelphia most often found themselves wedged between struggling African American communities and significantly wealthier neighborhoods. A small group of Hmong refugees who resettled in Philadelphia faced so much adversity that they fled the city, mostly for established Hmong settlements in Minnesota and Wisconsin. (Marc Kaufman: 1984)

Studying of the family economies of Vietnamese refugees in Philadelphia from ethnographic perspective, the result showed that refugee households that were more diverse in terms of age and gender were better able to adapt to new economic demands. This research explained "success story" of Vietnamese refugees in the United States, emphasizes the importance of household structure and family ideology to immigrant

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 20680-Ancestry (full classification list) by Sex - Australia

adaptation (Kibria, Nazli: 1994). Vietnamese American economic contribution got positive attitudes toward immigration from Philadelphians (Pew Center for Civic Journalism: 2000) although immigrants have caused small problems in their community.

The Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean immigrant experience in Philadelphia explores the formation of their ethnic identity and provides detailed information about the institutions, social practices, and gender and class dynamics of all three communities. It's emphasized of the fluidity of ethnic identities and they are constructed and constantly reconstructed following changing political and class-based interests and through interactions with forces external to the ethnic community itself (Jae-Hyp Lee: 1998). Immigrants were assessed contributions in restructuring of the U.S. Economy and reshaping ethnic and racial relations in Philadelphia (Judith Goode *et al*, 1994).

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Vietnamese refugees were resettled in the neighborhood. On Washington Avenue today, Pho soup and barbeque restaurants, Buddhist apothecaries, supermarkets, karaoke bars, travel, and medical offices cluster in dense shopping centers that make up the commercial heart as a new Asia-town.

A study about Asian nationalities found that, Vietnamese American has the highest unemployment, lowest income, and least education among these groups (John R. Logan and Weiwei Zhang: 2010). Otherwise, the result research of Manhattan Institute showed that Vietnamese American was one of immigrant groups with the highest integration index. Majority of Vietnamese American are political refugee, so then, their political integration index is highest, cultural and economic integration index as of other immigrant groups. Immigrants from Vietnam, Cuba, and the Philippines enjoy some of the highest rates of assimilation. (Jacob L. Vigdor: 2008)

In short, migration – related issues have attracted attention of scholars for a long time. The definitions of related concepts were offered in which measurement social integration is focused. Perspectives on integration of immigrants became theme of books. Research findings focused on social integration of immigrant and social-economic impacts of immigrants on host countries. Metropolitan areas are home of immigrants. Most of these researches, however, used quantitative research methods. As

we knew, there are limitations on how actual behavior can be inferred from survey data on subjective perception. So, to gain completely picture about social integration of immigrants, information from qualitative methods should be used to complement to results from survey data.

### **3. Methodology**

**3.1. Terminology.** The term of social integration in this study based on viewpoints of Elif Kısar Koramaz (Elif Kısar Koramaz: 2013) and Wolfgang B. and F. Heckmann (Wolfgang B. and F. Heckmann: 2006). Elif Kısar Koramaz defined that social integration is the harmonious and coherent processes of the structure of a social system. It refers to the degree to which people are integrated to the systems of a social structure. Koramaz said that, although social integration issue is often considered on a regional scale, it is also associated with urban dynamics. Especially in metropolitan cities, it is a process that shapes the opportunities and resources of urban life, such as socio-cultural life, the built environment and urban services.

Concept of integration is examined more closely as a general sociological concept by Wolfgang B. and F. Heckmann. They explained: Integration as a concept may be defined as the stability of relations among parts within a system-like whole. Processes of integration and the resulting degree of interconnectedness or quality of relations within the whole include: i) The process of relating single elements to one another and, out of these, forming a new structure; ii) Adding single elements or partial structures to an existing structure, to form an interconnected whole; iii) Maintaining or improving relations within a system or structure. Integration of immigrants into a host society should be understood as a special case of social integration, to which the concepts of placement, acculturation, interaction and identification can be applied. (Wolfgang B. and F. Heckmann: 2006). Otherwise, Heckmann and Schnapper has suggested that processes of social integration should be conceptualized as structural integration, cultural integration, interactive integration and identifiable integration. Authors argued that, these concepts are basic dimensions of integration and are also appropriate for operationalisation in empirical research and when developing indicators. (Heckmann



and Schnapper: 2003).

Working definition of social integration here is, *social integration* is the stability of relations among parts within a system-like whole. Processes of social integration of immigrants are conceptualized as: structural integration, cultural integration, social integration. Social integration is reflected through processes: Awareness and ability of approaching to diversity (be trained career, go to school to obtain better education,... all make people to be proficiency in English; Acceptance of the laws of the society and adoption of a common set of values of the society,...); Redistribution of social and economic resources (employment, income, socio-economic status,...); Representatives of political voice; Personal security,.... Upon this definition of social integration, topics for in-depth interviewing, narrative, conversation and participatory observation will be built for this study.

**Table 1: Topics of narrative, conversation and observations**

	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Issues</b>
1	Demographic characteristics	Age, marriage, children, education...
2	Migrants' information. Migration intentions	Birthplace, original place, immigration time (When did you settle to abroad? for what purpose was your first time abroad? (For degree attainment: Study in a certain time and resettlement work? Go freely? By what?....), approach (through narratives, memories of milestones as a thrust as a result decided to settle or just random or due to circumstances...)
3	Difficulties and Challenges, Opportunities	Inhabitancy, English proficiency, access job, trained career, go to school to obtain better education...
4	Social integration	- Please, tell me your narratives that from entering American states you have enjoyed what priority policies,...(participate in an English course, be entitled to social assistance when unemployed, being involved in a

		<p>vocational training; introduced first job, a bank loan to be apprenticed,...) to help you integrate into labor market?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Please, take a self-assessment after each time you have access (to enjoy) these policies... that, what does your social-economic position changes like? How do you have to try and efforts to achieve that change? Are you satisfied with the changes that?</li><li>- Do you participate in neighborhood groups, local groups, participate in civic and professional organizations, socio-political organizations?</li><li>- Relationships with close neighbors and the degree of mutual trust between the neighbors over specific signs. For example: thanks considered when going away for a long time, help each repair daily chores, visiting the sick, give - receive gifts on important occasions: holidays, hospitality, joy, ...</li><li>- The level of individual satisfaction with the entire community.</li><li>- The socio-economic transformation: Are there any changes after settlement? opportunities for career / job changes? Now what do you do? (The transfer jobs? Reason for moving? Changes (social position, income, etc.) after each job, etc.) Unemployment? Limited / lack of opportunities in the community? After settlement, is there anyone from your large family come and settle in here?</li><li>- How immigrants connected with host communities to enhance your ability to grow in productive, inclusive, and sustainable ways.</li></ul> <p>+ The level of integration with the environment? (Of the first generation? The second one? The third one?) Compare the</p>
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		<p>level of integration between the generations by three dimensions: social and community integration, residential integration and personal integration. Material life? Spiritual life? Social networks?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Safety in the community related to the daily sense of security and in response to abnormal situations. Crime rate high/low? Coordinating with neighbors to enhance the safety of the neighborhood?</li> <li>+ The level of community participation as a member of the civil works, in community meetings, local faith organizations.</li> <li>+ The experience of the past - had been involved in activities in the community/ organizations/ associations, etc.? Which was most actively involved in groups?</li> <li>+ The current experience - has been involved in activities in the community/ organizations, associations, etc.? What voluntary work is being done?</li> <li>- How do you preserve with your native values: example your orientation about spouse? Friends? Fashion? Cuisine? What language do you speak at home? ....</li> </ul>
	Natives' attitude	How look upon immigrants? Approve of them or not? Treat them friendly or not?
	Self - Orientation	<p>-How look upon yourself, self-evaluate of the importance of active participation in the quality of life.</p> <p>-The benefits derived from these activities? What role did he/she play (function / task) in these activities?)....</p> <p>to what extent assess the importance of these activities related to the level of integration of the individual into the community.</p> <p>-Self – assess opportunities and challenges for the</p>

		Vietnamese American?
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### 3.2. Theoretical approach

There are three main perspectives on social integration in the traditionally social sciences. From cultural aspect, the perspective of assimilation theory has dominated much of the sociological thinking for most of the XX century. This approach saw diverse immigrant groups that are expected to “melt” into the mainstream culture through an inter-generational process of cultural, social, and economic integration (Gordon:1964). Otherwise, multiculturalism approach view multicultural societies as composed of an heterogeneous collection of ethnic and racial minority groups, as well as of a dominant majority group. This view has been used to study social integration of immigrants in the context of the American society. (Glazer and Moynihan: 1970 and Handlin: 1973). The structuralist emphasizes how differences in socio-economic opportunities relate to differences in social integration of ethnic minority groups. (Blau and Duncan: 1967; Portes and Borocz: 1989). All three perspectives provide different views of the same phenomenon of social integration. The opinions expressed in three cultural approaching will be used on the analysis of levels of social integration of immigrants; Comparing levels and dimensions of social integration of Vietnamese abroad to the host country.

In the 1990s, with increasing democratization, right-based approach and capabilities approach are adopted largely by the World Bank’s agencies and researchers (Van Dam *et al.*: 1992. Sen: 1992). Right-based approach on social integration emphasized enhancement the capacities of immigrants so that they can access the resources of the host country. The term ‘empowerment’ is used to measure changes of immigrants after social integration to host country. Empowerment is viewed as both a process and an outcome by many researchers. It’s said that, distinctions between a process and an outcome are necessary for operational implications. An emphasis on process of empowerment leads to a focus on organizational capacity building or an increase in participation of previously excluded groups in the design, management and evaluation of development activities. An emphasis on outcomes of empowerment leads to a focus

on economic enhancement and increasing access to economic resources. A framework was developed to provide some useful distinctions between different degrees of empowerment. (Longwe: 1991)

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank presents an analytic framework of empowerment that is rooted in both conceptual discourse and measurement practice. The framework suggests a conceptualization of empowerment that can focus development interventions and can guide the measurement and monitoring of empowerment processes and outcomes (WB: 2007).

However, it will not be possible to use all elements of the framework for every application. In this case of studying social integration of immigrants to the host country, all elements of the framework are used to build topics for in-depth interview, observations, analyzing their narratives (Table 1). We hope that, the information obtained from the qualitative research will contribute to better clarify the quantitative research results, give us a complete picture of the social integration of immigrants into the host country.

### **3.3. Data**

For the purpose of this study, the scope of the research is limited to exploring case studies of the immigrants. Migration is a sensitive issue. There were some scientists who did not collect the true information from immigrants. So, one of most our interest is that how can we contact research subjective and get their trust. Social integration of immigrants is a sensitive issue too. To access true information and voluntary participation to research, we made acquainted, creating the familiar to research subjective. The first is of the Vietnamese in Cabramatta, NSW Australia on September 2013. The second is of Vietnamese in Philadelphia. PA. US on between of January and February 2014. With introduction of our relatives and friends, some Vietnamese families invited us being in their homes for days. We told them study's aims and ethical principles in research. We have become their friends and gained their trust. We connected 22 people of eighteen years and older, employed in both skilled and less-skilled occupations with different in English skills. There are 11 people belong to 3 families including from 1 to 3 generations. Beyond day-to-day talking and daily

observation we regarded ourselves as listeners with respectfully and as participatory observers. All helped us gather crucial and sensitive information from their narratives and behavior. We respect their thinking and feelings. Noting was adopted instead of recording.

Research participants were recruited at various resources. Snowball sampling was generally conducted to reflect immigrant's diverse social circumstances. The process of finding research participants was similar in both locations. They were informed of the aims of the research and their consent was obtained prior connections taking place. Table 2 below shows socio-demographic characteristics of research participants quoted in this paper.

**Table 2. Selected characteristics of research participants quoted in the paper**

<b>Sample Coded</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Previously status before settled</b>	<b>Labor market status</b>	<b>Settle status</b>
1	Female	Over 56	Divorce-Spouse of country of residency	Student	Primary school teacher	Family Reunions
2	Male	Over 56	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	University Teacher	Professor of University	Guarantor
3	Male	Over 56	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Pupil	Driver	Boat people
4	Female	Over 56	Widow-Spouse citizenship	Peasant	Housewife	"Engagé in <u>Nouvelle-Calédonie</u> , <u>Vanuatu</u>
5	Female	36 - 55	Single	unborn	Nurses retired	The second generation -

						Niaouli at Nouvelle Calédonie
6	Male	36 – 55	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Student	Professor/ researcher	Settled after graduated
7	Female	Over 56	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Primary school Teacher	Tailor	Boat people
8	Male	Over 56	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Engineer	Protector in primary school	Family Reunions
9	Female	40 – 55	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Teacher of Russian/ Interpreter	Housewife	Family Reunions
10	Female	40 – 55	Marriage-Asians Spouse	accounting	Self- employee	The second generation- Niaouli at Nouvelle Caledonie → return VN 1960 → Legal emigrating to Australia 1980
11	Female	Over 56	Widow-Spouse country of residency	Doctor	Employee full-time	Family Reunions

12	Female	Over 56	Widow-Spouse citizenship	Housewife/ Small trader	Employee full-time → Barber	HO
13	Female	26 – 39	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	student	Bank staff. IT Engineer → Stay-at-home Mom	HO
14	Female	26 – 39	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	pupil	Employee full-time/ Engineer	HO
15	Male	26 – 39	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Baby	IT engineer	Boat people
16	Male	26 – 39	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Baby	IT engineer	Boat people
17	Male	Over 56	Single	Priest	Priest → Professor	Freely settled
18	Male	18 – 25	Single	pupil	Student	Legal emigrating
19	Female	18 - 25	Single	pupil	Student	HO
20	Female	26-39	Single	pupil	PhD. Director of NGOs	Boat people
21	Female	40 - 55	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	student	Unemployed	Boat people
22	Male	40-55	Marriage-Spouse citizenship	Primary teacher	Employee	humanitarian reasons

- *All names of participants have been coded.*
- *Source: own elaboration*



Narratives shared by voluntary research participants ranging from one hour to two and a half hours, were conducted of which some repeatedly and the same topics schedule was built (showed in table 1). Listening respectfully their narratives, sometimes supplemented with creative techniques which were tailored to enhance exploration of research problems and questions.

The nature of the research topic reinforced the need to use qualitative research methods. The research participants were purposefully selected. United States and Australia relatively differ from each other in terms of immigrants' settlement reasons (See Table 2). As literatures, most Vietnamese people reside in the U.S. because of political reasons after 30<sup>th</sup> April 1975. Contrary to U.S, Australia is destination of Vietnamese immigrants by varied reasons including Vietnamese boat people.

Topics of discourse, narratives and observations were composed carefully in view of the main research questions, namely: Who are Vietnamese immigrants? How did the social integration impact to development opportunities (quality of life) of each individual and the community in which they live? Social integration here would like to emphasize that career development opportunities open to each individual; Arrival opportunities for a better life, more quality... By what indicators is social community integration reflected? How did social community integration create the effect of residential satisfaction? After decades of living, learning and working, Vietnamese families have 2-3 generations living abroad, to what extent of their community integration? What have the immigrant community contributed to their community where they live? Have they received from the community in proportion to their socio-economic contribution? How did social integration create the effect of local resident satisfaction.

Case study using mainly qualitative data and additional quantitative data bring the study of the dynamics and depth of analysis. Quantitative data will be relied on available literatures. Qualitative information will be collected from narratives and participatory observation.

#### **4. Results**

**4.1. Vietnamese Diaspora Profiles.** The circumstances under which that an individual or one family decided to leave their homeland to another have become more diverse and complex (showed in Table 2). As literatures, before 1975, the Vietnamese people in the U.S. are spouses or children of U.S. soldiers in Vietnam or are students, merchants settled in the U.S., an estimated 15,000 people (American Community Survey: 2007). Up until 1975 there were fewer than 2,000 Vietnam-born people in Australia<sup>1</sup>. When war in Vietnam ended in 30<sup>th</sup> April 1975, many Vietnamese were studying and working abroad staying employed, did not return to Vietnam for many reasons. Some Vietnamese girls married foreigners. After getting married they were allowed to settle in the country of her husband.

*I was an abroad student in 1974 in Perth, Western Australia. I then moved to Sydney. After 30-4-1975, I remain in Australia to work. I guaranteed for the whole family to settle here (Narrator 6. M. Australia).*

*I met and loved him when he was an Australian expert, working at media agencies in Vietnam. After getting married, I was allowed to come to Australia. (Narrator 1. F. Australia)*

After the Republic of Vietnam Government collapsed of the April 30, 1975, ending the Vietnam War, the first wave of refugees started in the spring of 1975, including about 125,000 who mostly intellectuals families. They are the U.S. government shipped by air to the bases in the Philippines and Guam, and then move to the refugee centers throughout the United States. These refugees, initially did not receive public acclaim of the United States, an opinion poll in 1975 found that only 36 % of Americans approved of the Vietnamese immigration.

*I was a priest. The war ended I with 20 more people in my family evacuated to the U.S. immediately. It was a very hard time. We were given only \$ 300 per person. Nothing else was for us. We must take care of our own life. (Narrator 17. M. Philadelphia. U.S.)*

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<sup>1</sup> Note however, that before 1976 Vietnam was not separately recorded as a country of birth for settlers so the Australian Bureau of Statistics is unable to provide an exact picture of settler intake prior to this time.

President Gerald Ford and other officials to support refugees in a powerful way through the Indochina Migration and Refugee Act in 1975, which allows them to immigrate to the United States in a special position. The Vietnamese refugees were scattered settlements throughout the country. However, in a few years, most of them were resettled in California and Texas, two states that have a population of Vietnamese Americans is higher than others.

War ended, Vietnam united in 30<sup>th</sup> April 1975. Australia, being a signatory to the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* agreed to resettle its share of Vietnam-born refugees under a refugee resettlement plan between 1975 and 1985. In 1976 started the second wave of Vietnamese refugees for the mid-1980s. Approximately two million people became refugees, crossing the small narrow boat, extremely dangerous before sudden wind waves of the South China Sea. They are “boat people – thuyền nhân”. They usually are in the refugee camps in Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong or the Philippines, almost waiting for resettlement in a third country as Norway, Australia....

*....I used to be teacher at a primary school. My husband was also a teacher of Russian at Foreign Languages University Hanoi. We arrived in Australia by crossing the sea road, the whole family (my husband and 2 children, my 2-year-old son before walking down the ship but ship was at sea too long - one month, because it must visit the islands China to take fresh water to drink, ... that when the ship to Hong Kong my boy must learn to walk again. Then we were sent to Australia (Narrator 7. F. Australia)*

*At that time, I was too young... I obeyed my mother gone but did not know where to go. If someone asked me now crossed the border by boat, I will never agree ... It was terrible, could not have imagined... (Narrator 3. M. Australia)*

As a result of the 1982 agreement between the Australian and Vietnamese governments (the *Orderly Departure Program*) which allowed relatives of Vietnamese Australians to leave Vietnam and to settle to Australia, mainly due to Australia's family reunion

scheme (Australian Social Trends -4102.0: 1994), over 90,000 refugees were processed, and entered Australia during this time. From 1991-93, Vietnam-born immigrants had reached 77 per cent of the total intake of Vietnam-born arriving in Australia. In 2001-2002, 1,919 Vietnam-born immigrants and 44 humanitarian entrants settled in Australia.

*My husband and his family fled to the United States since childhood by boat. Now he could not remember how to be here because then he was too small (Narrator 13. F. MD. U.S.)*

The U.S. Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980 to reduce the limit immigration, while the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam accepted Orderly Departure Program (ODP) proposed by the United States, under the control of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This program allows some people to leave Vietnam legally for family reunions and other humanitarian reasons. Between 1981 and 2000, the United States receives 531 310 refugees from Vietnam. According to 2007 survey, Vietnamese American female ratio of 50.5 percent and 49.5 percent male, and the average age is 34.5, compared with 36.7 for the entire U.S. population (American Community Survey: 2007). Otherwise, Vietnamese Australian is young community of which 50 percent people are under 35 years old and 68 percent of them belong to 15-60 years old - the most active group (The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS): March 2001).

*My husband moved from North to South Vietnam in 1954. He was Army Colonel of Vietnam Republic. The war ended in 1975, he had had to study in concentration camp for 5 years. Expires in prison, he returned to Saigon. He learnt accounting, then combined with some friends, conducting timber sawmill; He crossed the border by boat 2 times but failed and he arrested to prison. I was small trader, raising 3 children. 1993 my family emigrated to the U.S. as a HO - refugee. At that time, my grown daughter was 20-year-old. She was a student of Open University in Vietnam; my young daughter was 8 years old. She was at 2nd grade. My son was more 21 years old. He wasn't allowed to emigrate to America. He is in Viet Nam with wife and his two sons (Narrator 12. F.*

MD. U.S.)

According to the survey (Audrey singer, *et al*: 2008) of Bookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, Philadelphia has resettled nearly 33,000 refugees, primarily from 10 countries (1983 – 2004) including Vietnam with 7,140 – 21.6 percent of total people (after USSA: 15,312 – 46.4 percent). In Philadelphia, there are 16,268 Vietnamese Americans – after Chinese (except Taiwanese) - 32,773 people and Indian – 20,809 people by 2010. Vietnamese including three largest Asian American ethnic groups have had significant growth with 25 percent. Vietnamese is one of the largest Asian American ethnic groups in Philadelphia of which, 60 percent of Vietnamese Americans immigrants are citizens. Vietnam becomes the top Asian countries of birth for immigrants obtained legal permanent resident (LPR) status for 2002-2012. (Asian Americans Advancing Justice: 2013)

**4.2. Social integration.** The first result from the analysis of the gathered qualitative material was that, *social integration* of Vietnamese American immigrants is reflected by their access to the economy and labor market, education systems, the housing system, welfare state institutions and full political citizenship as called by theorists are structural integration, cultural integration and social integration.

**4.2.1. Structural integration.** A study about Asian nationalities founded that Vietnamese Americans have the highest unemployment, lowest income, and least education among these groups (John R. Logan and Weiwei Zhang: 2010). Otherwise, the result research of Manhattan Institute showed that Vietnamese Americans were one of immigrant groups with the highest integration index. Majority of Vietnamese American are political refugee. They are supported by priority policy of American Government consequently, 60 percent of Vietnamese American are citizens in Philadelphia. Their political integration index is highest, cultural and economic integration index as of other immigrant groups. (Jacob L. Vigdor: 2008).

*At the beginning we all were enthusiastic about new things. We thought all expectations becoming right now....gradually challenges were recognized by us. It was very difficult, no house, no job, no money... nothing. Whole family had to live in the basement of my friend's house.*

*Life was very difficult. I and husband went to school to learn English and joined a training course of assembly of electronic components in 3 months (Free). Then we were recruited to work in one company. Salary is more than \$ 4/1 hour. We have worked hard, hard, for days and always extended-work 4 hours / day. Daily we came back home at 12 pm and rarely having dinner all together because of everyone had to work hard for survival. (Narrator 12. F. MD. U.S.)*

*I remembered the first day I met the boss of company, I quickly answered his questions. He was very pleased. I worked hard, to be honest with all confidence... He created good conditions for raising my revenue. Because each extended time wages were paid twice, only 3 years after settling in America we have purchased a private house (Narrator 12. F. MD. U.S.)*

Everyone who has a degree from a university or higher in Vietnam are unable to exercise their professions due to difficulty translating their credentials, limited English proficiency, lack of legal status.... Consequently they could not get a job right with their qualifications. Those who have money to learn again at the University, would like to get a stable job. Those who have not money would like to get unskilled & unstable job, low paid.

*It was a hard time. I had graduated from college degrees, but unrecognized in Australia. I had to study again and I was admitted to study at University of Sydney (Narrator 1. F. Australia)*

As other immigrant workers abroad, a distinctive feature of Vietnamese immigrants in Philadelphia and in Australia as well is that, they have a higher tendency toward entrepreneurial activities than the U.S.-born. Self-employment is a traditional immigrant path to economic prosperity because it offers a relatively easy way to enter the labor host market.

*I used to be a teacher in Vietnam. Here I was owner a sewing workshop (investment 5 sewing machines, overlock machine) received sewing the clothes that sold in the shop; When having the big contract I had to hire*

*people who sewed at home. I had to work very hard at sewing workshop for child support. My husband was a university teacher in Vietnam. When he came into the Australia, he had to study at the University (IT) again. Then he can find employment. (Narrator 7. F. Australia)*

On Washington Avenue today, Pho soup and barbeque restaurants, supermarkets, karaoke bars, travel, and medical offices cluster... are owned by family businesses of Vietnamese Americans. There are differences cross-generations by comparability. Most of the first immigrant generation used to be soldiers, older age, unprofessional training... Residing abroad, to apply for a job, they met very difficulties. Some are self-employment, low income, instability career, low social-economic status. Some do unskilled, labor-intensive service jobs which hold little hope for advancement or long-term security. The second immigrant generations are attended into educational system at all level. Most of them got high educational achievement, high English proficiency. They can access social-economic status and resources society to enhance quality of life and enjoying modern style life.

*It was said: "...should not leave them for the college, just to nail, you will have money right now, even much money". I replied: "I will support my children to study as long as they did not want it" And I always say jokingly: "a slave is raising two children in college". As settlement in the U.S., I would dream of learning to be teacher but not implemented because children's development is my priority. When everything in family was relatively stable, the oldest girl to college of Information System and Business sectors again. Now she obtained two degree of master (Narrator 12. F. MD. U.S)*

*My husband used to be a teacher in Vietnam. He had to study at the University of Australia (IT ) again; The children are grown up,... They were in college... We have stable career, stable jobs and stable income. I have been Guarantor for nearly 40 people including my brothers, sisters and relatives who migrated to Australia. (Narrator 7. F. Australia)*

Immigrant children have many opportunities to access the U.S. education system but the

child would not be successful if he or she do not try to learn and without the support of their parents.

*The success rate is 50-50. Many parents with high pressure work often take their children to schools... It's enough. They didn't care how they learn at school. Then, many children often become damaged, or follow his/ her bad friends, no job... (Narrator 13. F. MD. U.S.)*

Despite immigrants' labor force participation rates as similar as to the total native born population, immigrants remain economically disadvantaged relative to the native-born white population.

58 percent of Vietnamese Americans have limited English proficiency (LEP) than all other racial and ethnic groups. There are 8,700 LEP Vietnamese Americans of which 85 percent Vietnamese American seniors have the highest rates of limited English proficiency among Asian American ethnic groups. 48 percent of Vietnamese Americans adults have a high school diploma and while Asian American adults are more likely than other racial groups to have a college degree, only 9 percent of Cambodian and 13 percent of Vietnamese Americans are college graduates. Consequently, 59 percent of Vietnamese Americans are low-income. The per capital income for Vietnamese Americans is \$13,747, similar to that of Latinos (\$12,214); And 31 percent of Vietnamese Americans live in poverty, rates similar to that of Blacks or African Americans (30 percent). Chinese and Vietnamese American senior poverty rates are also among the highest (39 percent and 38 percent, respectively).

Despite high homeownership rates, the majority of Vietnamese (60 percent) and Cambodian American (51 percent) households with mortgages are spending 30 percent or more of their household income on housing costs. Over a third of Vietnamese American households with mortgages spend at least half of their household incomes on housing costs. The majority of Cambodian (55 percent) and



Vietnamese American (53 percent) renters are struggling to find affordable housing and are paying 30% or more of their household incomes on rent (quoted from Asian Americans Advancing Justice: 2013. p.40-44 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010. Table B25091. Table B25070.)

**4.2.2. Cultural integration** is reflected by an individual's cognitive, behavioral and attitudinal change.

*All the excitement, joy and expectations initially disappeared quickly. I miss home, miss friends in Vietnam. Everything will become strange, different from what we are familiar. I cried all day. Fortunately, I went with my family, having father and mother and brothers who I can share the feelings with them....(Narrator 19. F. Philadelphia. U.S.)*

For all of Vietnamese American, special the old, English language is a big obstacle for them in the daily communication.

*Language was a big problem. I knew little English language (...) and banking system in those times. When you wanted to withdraw money you had to write a check in English and there could be no mistake (Narrator 17. M. Philadelphia. U.S.).*

Many young considered themselves Americans, spoke English as their mother tongue and pursued education in America and had relatives in America. They explored that they were not recognized as Americans by other Americans through connections in really life. Such misrecognition triggered a shift in their identity. They started to perceive themselves ethnic Vietnamese from Americans and to socialize with other Vietnamese immigrants.

In our local field research, many young Vietnamese-American college students wish to be recognized for their unique Vietnamese culture, rather than be grouped under the umbrella "Asian" ethnicity or, even worse, be conflated with Chinese culture. In many Little Saigon, the interlaced and often interdependent relationship between the Vietnamese and Chinese American communities is complex and contentious (Lieu

2011:47 in Ariel Diliberto: *In South Philly, Subtly Staking Territory*.  
December 14, 2011).

The commercial Vietnamese centers in the major cities as in Cabramatta Sydney, Melbourne, Philadelphia, Maryland... are not just a place where practice economic activities but also a place to meet cultural needs of Vietnamese community abroad. First of all, it is expressed in architecture of Ben Thanh Market - a symbol of native Vietnam. Vietnamese were there to talk with Vietnamese fellows, to be heard Vietnamese language, to be eaten Vietnamese foods... and making friend, getting acquainted with girl friend or boy friend. Choosing native spouse to get married is still the preference of majority (showed as table 2) and supported by Statistic data and observations.

*If you intend to get marriage with foreigner spouse at that time, you were discouraged (...) they will not even attend your wedding ceremony*  
(Narrator 5. F. Australia)

**Table 3. Birth Place of Partners of Vietnamese Bridegrooms and Brides  
in Australia (1999-2000)**

		Bridegrooms			
		Australian	Vietnamese	Others	Total
Brides	Australian		43		
	Vietnamese	161	<b>1602</b>	260	2023
	Others		216		
	Total		1861		

*Source:* Marriage and divorces, Australia (Catalogue 3310.0) The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) September 2000.

According to U.S. Census Bureau, there are 88 percent of Vietnamese Americans who are most likely to speak Vietnamese language than English at home (Asian Americans Advancing Justice: 2013). In 2001, the Vietnamese language was spoken at home by 174,236 people in Australia. Vietnamese is the sixth most widely spoken language in the country after English, the Chinese languages, Italian, Greek and Arabic (Australia-Catalogue 3310.0-ABS. February 2001).

While the number of immigrant students in Philadelphia public schools has increased, resources supporting language access, bilingual staffing, and bilingual programs have plummeted. Bullying and racial harassment have become central concerns. In 2010, following a mass student boycott, the U.S. Department of Justice entered into a groundbreaking settlement with the school district, addressing issues like antibias training, reporting, and language access. This settlement has been a model for similar settlements nationwide holding schools accountable for addressing bias violence and harassment (quoted from Asian Americans Advancing Justice: 2013. p.41)

Vietnamese Buddhist temples such as Bo De Temple in Philadelphia, Cao Dai Temple in Wiley Park, New South Wales can be seen everywhere that Vietnamese communities abroad living. They are crowded in Holidays, special on Tet Holidays. Attending temple or church is an essential need of the Vietnamese, helping their balance life.

**4.2.3. Social integration.** It is an interactive process between immigrants and the host society. Immigrants are learning step by step a new culture, acquiring rights and fulfilling obligations, gaining access to social-economic status, building personal relationships with members of the host society and forming a feeling of belonging to, and identification with host society. However, to access above status, one of the most determinant factors is that host society must to open up institutions and grant equal opportunities to immigrants.

*As refugees, we were entitled to preferential fees of learning. However, I had tried very hard and achieved high scores, meeting all requirements of the school. When working in a bank, I would like to get a higher degree. And then I got scholarship from the bank. I had to achieve high points. If not high points, not meeting their requirements I had to refund for them. I tried my best and got 2 degrees of master. (Narrator 14, F, MD. U.S.)*

Philadelphia boasts one of the largest Vietnamese populations on the east coast site of U.S. and the Vietnamese were the largest foreign-born group in South Philly east of

Broad Street following Mexican immigration from 2003 (Austin Argentieri and Ariel Diliberto: 2011). They established businesses and a community life. It is defined as the act of not only creating a space for Vietnamese social life and enterprise, but also forming an identity strong enough to go beyond community cohesion to generate political leverage (Aguilar-San Juan, Karin: 2008:10).

As in literature, the process of forming Vietnamese identity in Philadelphia has taken the physical form of shopping malls. The Hoa Binh Plaza opened 1990 at 16<sup>th</sup> St. & Washington and then Wing Phat Plaza at 11<sup>th</sup> and Washington was opened later in the decade. The New World Plaza and 1<sup>st</sup> Oriental Supermarket at 6<sup>th</sup> and Washington opened 1998 (Pappas: 2005). Shopping malls have become a common venue for Vietnamese commerce throughout the US.

Walking on the Washington Avenue, Philadelphia you can see commercial centers owned by Vietnamese family businesses. They took advantage disused industrial sites on the Washington Avenue to rebuild. It looks like of be thought that the available open space did not necessitate vertical consolidation into a high-rise structure. The form of small family businesses, as factory jobs were on the decline or they were unable to find work corresponding to their skills as a symbol of the versatility of Vietnamese (Lieu 2011:33) and to create a sense of “solidarity and significance” among the local Vietnamese (Aguilar-San Juan, Karin 2008:3). Most of Vietnamese abroad took advantage of network support.

*Some helped me and some treated me as a competitor (...).I think it was only the first pioneer who had the problem to settle here, but the next people had someone to guide them (Narrator 9. F. Australia).*

*When I came here there were already some Vietnamese families here, so I had some friends who helped me out with the daily tasks like grocery shopping, attend Temple on Sundays, admission for children, .... We had a lot of contacts before I came, it was not that difficult to get around. (...) Through these Vietnamese families I got acquainted with other businesses (Narrator 13, F, MD. U.S.).*

*Tuesday evening I participated in the charity group, in charge of their clothes. After the class at school with the children, exposure and help those who not fortunate also makes me feel more at ease, feel closer to local communities. I am also actively involved in community activities such as volunteering to help the local council election, participating alumni help the new student enrollment (Narrator 1. F. Sydney. Australia)*

*I knew a few friends here. Some of them who came before and were quite well-being settled. This motivated me also. Because for sure one has to have links with some people (Narrator 15. M. MD. U.S.).*

Social mobility of migrants is both vertical and horizontal mobility (Shown as Table 2). The struggle for the Vietnamese population to be recognized in Philadelphia is particularly acute. According to the Office of Property Assessment, approximately half of the properties on and around the 500 block of Washington Avenue, are Vietnamese owned, including several that were sold in the past year. This may in fact indicate that real estate development is for some Vietnamese a way to seek access to the American Dream. (Austin Argentieri and Ariel Diliberto: 2011).

Being and Belonging: Cross-Generations Vietnamese Diaspora. It's said that for the most parts, American history is a story of immigrant children fulfilling their parents' dreams. The first generation moves to American seeking a better life for their families. Majority of parent sacrificed their life for children's future. The second generation learnt to adapt and integrate into the modern world.

Narratives shared from research participants support my remark – majority of expatriate parents do not socialize with native ones, because their lifestyle is different. Majority of Vietnamese parents are not involved in school organized events, and because of work obligations they could not have time after dropping their children off to school in the morning. They are paid-employments or self-employed as nail-workers moms. Gender and work status also influence access to specific socio-cultural resources. Their immigrant situation strengthens preference to relationship with people whose family needs and whose origin are like theirs.

## **5. Conclusions and Discussion**

Reasons of emigration of Vietnamese are determinant factors of scope of their social integration. After 4-1975, the majority of Vietnamese residing in the U.S. and Australia in the status of refugee, who had not been previously prepared about professions, English proficiency, asset, social capital.... Many people emigrated in high risk conditions (pirates, unsafe...). To integrate into host labor market, they faced many barriers. Even Vietnamese migrants with academic and professional qualifications that emigrate to development countries as U.S. and Australia, are unable to exercise their professions due to difficulty translating their credentials, limited English proficiency, lack of legal status.

There are differences in social integration between generations of Vietnamese diaspora. For survival and development, Vietnamese Diaspora learnt to live with the past and the future direction. In general, the more increasingly integrated with the host country (economic integration), the stronger demand for native identity preservation. They learnt to live in the status of both integration & identification.

Examining the dimensions of cultural integration emerged question that whether the choice behavior spouse who is the same ethnic origin or the indigenous is reliable or not; Whether the choice the indigenous spouse of Vietnamese diaspora is evidence or not that he/she adjusts and accepted the host local culture. Everyone has ancestral roots. Everyone has the right to choose the place where they live give them development opportunities. Preserving ethnic identity is a legitimate right of human. To society run effectively, bicultural competencies and personalities are an asset both for the Vietnamese diaspora and for the host society. Perspective of assimilation theory is challenged by right-based approach and capabilities approach. From perspective of assimilation theory, Vietnamese diaspora are expected to melt into the host mainstream culture through an inter-generational process of cultural, social and economic integration. In fact, Vietnamese diaspora are not melt into host country. Although there still exists unequal access to wealth, jobs, housing, education, power, and privilege that leads to unequal levels of income, educational attainment, and occupational

achievement of foreigner immigrants, Vietnamese diaspora specially their second generation are trying their best to reach into the labor market of the host country. They have professions, skilled jobs, high income and social status. This is a resource to support immigrants meet the needs both to maintain the value of their traditional culture and to absorb life style of modern world. When their cultural identity respected that makes sense of satisfaction with life and creates incentives for economic, social activities, contributing to the overall development of the host country.

Right-based approach and capabilities approach are suitable in study *social integration*. If individuals or groups are empowered, they possess the capacity to make effective choices, that is, to translate their choices into desired actions and outcomes. However, the actual degree of empowerment depends on the extent of the actor's ability and the nature of the opportunity structure.

To gain completely picture about social integration of immigrants, qualitative research with photos, narratives, conversation, observations analysis proved to be very useful to help inferring how actual behavior from survey data on subjective perception.

Findings come from information from a small sample. To enhance the reliability and general level, it should be extended scope, locations, content and object of study as well. For example, it is useful to focus on study cross – generations and the second and third generations, who have little Vietnamese, some not yet come back Vietnam but love their ancestors, advantage of educational achievement, no prejudice, innovation.

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