

Norwegian University
of Life Sciences

Master's Thesis 2021 30 ECTS

The Faculty of Landscape and Society (LANDSAM)

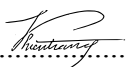
The power of state media and human rights to land: an analysis of media content on large-scale land acquisitions in Vietnam

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Global Development Studies

Declaration Form

I, Trang Thien Nguyen, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

Date: 16/08/2021

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful for having Prof. Poul Wisborg at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences as the supervisor, who spent his time to guide me through to right way to approach this sensitive topic. I am also very grateful for the grant from Fritt Ord Foundation.

I am thankful for the help of Ms Thanh Do and Mr. Anh Dinh in Vietnamese history. I also acknowledge Ms Anh Le for the Vietnamese language interpretation instruction. I am also thankful for Ms Nhi Ha Fröhlich, who provided me with many connections from the media and publication sector. I am grateful for all the individuals and key persons who spent time participating in the research. Their insights are priceless and astonishing.

I express gratitude to my mother, who despite difficult condition, continues to support me to continue my study. I thank my friends for the encouragement halfway across the world. I of course am fully responsible for all shortcomings in this thesis.

Abstract

This research looked into the effect of state media on the discussion of human rights in large scale land acquisitions in Vietnam, considering land as essential for enjoyment of other human rights. The thesis that state media is powerful in affecting public opinion through levels of exposure – is examined by analysing the discourse of state controlled media through content published during 2012-2020, and the consistency between that discourse and public opinion through a survey. The study also involved interviewing a number of government officials and journalists to explain the reason behind that discourse. While the general discourse does not necessarily affect audiences, as the media still has some autonomy and tries to be as neutral as possible, once the government set the objective to control the public opinion through any virtual public space, normally those involved in such spaces would easily submit to that view. It is also worth noting that the discourse molded are government-centered, with incidents and land claimants as substitute and human rights totally excluded from the discussion.

List of Abbreviations

LSLAs – Large scale land acquisitions
SNS – Social Networking Site
HRBA - Human Rights based Approach
UN - United Nations
CPV – Communist Party of Vietnam
NGO - Non-governmental organization
UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
ICCPR - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
HRW - Human Rights Watch

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I. Introduction

The research is about the effect of state media on the discussion of human rights in large scale land acquisitions (LSLAs) in Vietnam. The first section is an overview of the situation. The second section contains details on research objectives. Next is approach and main hypothesis and finally, the structure of the thesis.

1.1. Into the issue

Land grab, land deal, land acquisition or land seizure may all be used as catch-all phrases for (trans)national commercial land transactions that happen in a North-South and even South-South context. Land acquisition contains two main characteristics, change in land use and change in property rights (Borras Jr & Franco, 2012). These changes are driven by global crises in various sectors such as food and energy, with common actors being corporations and national governments (Borras Jr, Hall, Scoones, White, & Wolford, 2011) . Land acquisition is controversial. While some see it as an inevitable process or a practice of neoliberal globalisation (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras Jr, 2013) , land acquisitions often face strong reactions from a wide range of individuals and organisations, such as activists and NGOs, including because of the negative effects on poor, former land users: damaged livelihoods, displacement and insecurity. Factors that lead to these consequences are insufficient characterisation, poor governance, lack of studies on impact and the nature of land acquisitions, which could provide data and insights on initiatives that apply for land deals. When land acquisitions are contested, various media representations tend to be loaded for or against the deals.

In Vietnam, land is owned by the public and managed by the state. There are many weaknesses in land governance which are abused for corruption, as mentioned in various reports (Vo & Thang, 2013). Meanwhile, state media dominates independent media. Therefore, the information of these cases is often incomplete, and the overall discourse is directed to assure that the government has been managing the problem in the most appropriate way, ignoring the fact that the land claimants might suffering.

Recently, the Vietnamese government has been tightening its security control over the public opinion to maintain stability before the 15th National Congress of the CPV. There have been cases of aggression in land conflicts, such as Đồng Tâm. The land dispute has prolonged since 2017, but progressed into violence on January 09th, 2020. The confrontation between police and villagers resulted in four deaths and the arrests of 30 residents made it the second most serious incident since 2012. It has drawn many dissidents, and arrests of independent media personnels, such as Nguyen Tuong Thuy. Thuy is considered a notable activist. He attended a hearing before the US Congress on the lack of press freedom in Vietnam in July 2014. Later, Thuy and other activists formed a humanitarian group “Hoi Bau Bi Tuong Than” to provide support to political prisoners, land claimants and their families. These aggressions and arrests have been heavily criticised organizations such as Human Rights Watch, European Union (EU), as Vietnam and EU were planning on EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA). Some political figures such as Australian MP Chris Hayes issued statements to re-raise the concern of human rights violations. At a politically sensitive time, a debate over Dong Tam and about land deals in general erupted on social media. The audience mostly cite information from either state media and independent media to justify their views on the right to land and compulsory acquisition.

Vietnam is characterised by both land and the media controlled by the government. In most countries, outlets tend to side with different parties or ideologies, providing many perspectives that encourage social progress. For land acquisition, there have been many debates around pros and cons, to justify or reject, or to find a solution to current effects. In a one-party state where the media follow dominant policy lines, viewpoint about certain social issues is more limited. However, after the Dong Tam incident in Vietnam where the media is consistent in describing the incident as a violent revolt, there has been a lot of debate. People divide, following either official “right” or nonofficial “left” perspective (lề phải, lề trái), with the former discourse support the government in general, while the latter poses questions about land governance and treatment of land claimants.

1.2. Aim of study

Having observed the debate on land, I noticed that there is a connection between the narratives of the media and public opinion, therefore, the objective of this research project is

to contribute to the understanding of the role official media discourse has on land acquisitions in Vietnam under a human rights perspective. The primary strategy is to make a case study of state media discourse in relation to recent land acquisitions in Vietnam

The first objective is examining *how* official media discourse shapes the issue of large-scale land acquisitions (LSLAs) with particular focus on how media frame and affect contestations over human rights affected by the land acquisitions.

The second objective is showing what the *effects* of this discourse, particularly on those who lose land and on public opinion.

Thirdly it seeks to *explain* the form of official discourse and the way land deals are presented in state-controlled media.

1.3. Problem statement

Media is powerful. Even in Vietnam, where media is under government's management, an appropriate approach would result in desired effect. It once served as an intermediary between Oxfam's Consultation project on land acquisition and government decision-makers. By shaping the opinion of the community, the media enticed better response from the government, according to the report by Wells-Dang (2013, p. 19). However this is just an outlier case when an NGO is involved. Most of the time, it is an one-way communication where the media assures the audiences that the government is handling social economics issues in the most appropriate way, and land issue is not an exception.

Therefore, the main argument is state media has a certain discourse for LSLAs, and there are several hypotheses behind it. One is that the government sees land acquisitions as a central strategy for economic development and it must be presented in a positive light. Second, it might be used as a tool to cover up negative consequences. The latter leads to the covering up of much information. Such a manipulation is one of the "crucial notions of critical discourse analysis" (Van Dijk, 2006) . There may be many reasons for media's ways of framing the issues. Given current governance problems, the government prefers to cover up negative effects for fear of being criticised, and they would try to solve the matter outside public

attention. The prejudice created by media frameup, which has been called “enemy construction” (Steuter & Wills, 2009) , might be one of the reasons why the effects of land acquisitions are neglected.

1.4. Thesis outline

The second chapter gives more details on the theoretical framework. Human rights approach, first decide how to analyse the content of LSLAs on media, how much does it align to considering land as essential for enjoyment of other rights. It also examines the situation of media sector in Vietnam under the concept “freedom of expression”. Meanwhile, agenda setting theory looks at the relationship between media and the public. Together with human rights, it provides a base to reach the objectives of the thesis.

Chapter III explains research design and method, formulates the research questions, then justify the choice of media content analysis of state media during 2016-2020, survey of Vietnamese citizens, and semi structured interview of key persons.

Chapter IV provides a timeline for land management in Vietnam, the current situation. Chapter V has the same structure but for the media sector of said country.

Chapter VI includes analysis and findings. Following the research objectives, discourse of land acquisitions Vietnamese media comes first, next is the impact of such presentation on audience through quantitative regressions, and finally, results from interviews.

Final chapter is the discussion of the relationship between media and audience in Vietnam, the prolonged debate on land, roles of the actors mainly the land claimants, and conclusion to the results considering different factors arisen during the research.

II. Theoretical approach

The study includes various approaches. Minor sections below explain how can those theories be relevant to land, society, and the media.

2.1. Human rights based approach

2.1.1. Human rights as a theoretical framework

Human rights appeared as early as in Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* as "natural law" imposed by a god, as many classical Greek philosophers tied the term to the existence of such entity. Until the 17th century, Grotius and Locke still maintained similar religious base. Later, Bentham, and Burke were notable for their view of socially constructed rights, while Hobbes suggested a rational view of natural rights as "a claim of entitlement which is derived from nature for self preservation". Currently, human rights are no longer seen as a product of a divine ordering anymore. Instead, the debate goes on between natural rights and the opposition without consensus. Nonetheless, after the establishment of UDHR in 1948 and following documents, these are accepted as the international framework for practicing human rights. Brudner (1985) gives an overview on current human rights as the recognition of individuals from bearer of legal responsibility, normally states, to guarantee rights, following international standards set by supranational entities through declarations and conventions.

2.1.2. Approaches

There are many approaches for human rights, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. It could be well being (Gewirth, 1982) when HR is not a product of morality but to protect human agency, also a common subject of morality and practices but is capacity for agency appropriate for HR to be derived from, or Evolution and human development (O'manique, 1992) as something inherent to human than a moral vision, mostly about the notion of survival, what is needed for survival is relative, depends on each individual and the context. However, the the most common one is to maintain a inherent dignity or human rights based approach (HBRA) emerged after the adoption of UDHR in 1948. According to the United Nations (UN), it is a conceptual framework "for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyze inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress."

Since each UN agency has its own way of implementing the framework following their different roles, in 2003, the UN issued “The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation Towards a Common Understanding Among UN Agencies” that aims for consistent understanding, which indicates that:

“All programmes of development co-operation, policies and technical assistance should further the realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.

Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process.

Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of ‘duty-bearers’ to meet their obligations and/or of ‘rights-holders’ to claim their rights.”

HRBA is one of the three guiding principle of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, beside “Leave No One Behind” and “Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment”. Described as a conceptual paradigm and an operational shift, HRBA is expected to solve conflicts of interest between stakeholders through dialogue. The blend of two values of HRBA is considered reason for its adoption: a mix of intrinsic and instrumental rationale.

2.1.3. Human rights and land

When higher life forms emerged, they started to develop a sense of territory. By successfully claiming and defending a territory, an animal have a safe space to survive with sufficient food and reproduction with less danger. The first primitive tribes did not only considered territory as a possession, but also developed a metaphysical connection towards it. For nomadic peoples, land is their mean for survival even though their occupation of land is short. The ability to exercise human rights and live with dignity often depends on access to land and natural resources. However, there is no standalone right to land. Instead, it is considered as

essential for enjoyment of other rights. International human rights law pays special attention to human rights issues related to land. Accordingly, states are obliged to take measures to protect human rights whose enjoyment depends on access to land. They also must ensure effective remedies when these rights are not met, to maintain the right to access and control of the land, under the enjoyment of other human rights.

Under many circumstances, it is not possible to always satisfy all these requirements. Being an important part of production, land always goes through changes along with the development of the country and region. Industrialization and urbanization for economic development is one of many ways to increase wealth for the nation and people. It is a type of economic restructuring from agriculture to industry and services. Along with this process is restructuring of land use. Beside voluntary land transfer, land is also taken under administrative decision, forcing land users to transfer land to another subject, sometimes the state, against their will. This approach is often called land acquisition. The change of land use structure through land acquisition is considered inevitable, but its consequences cannot be ignored. For previous land users, especially the displaced people, suffer a lot of damage and impacts on enjoyment of basic human rights. Losing productive land, jobs, and place of residence makes their lives indigestible. Therefore, it is important that there is a harmonization between land acquisition and human rights issues related to land.

2.1.3.1. Land acquisition and human rights

Human rights are a multifaceted category with many different definitions. There have been multiple documents on human rights definitions, each of which approaches the problem from a certain angle. But despite being complicated, human rights have also been accepted as the standards by the international community. These norms are the essence of all humane values and are applied to humanity. These standards guarantee that all individuals are protected with dignity and has capabilities to develop themselves.

One of the qualities of human rights is interdependence. This attribute represents those human rights are guaranteed whether in one facet or as a whole. Violation of one right will directly or indirectly affect the security of other rights negatively. In contrast, progress in securing one right will directly or indirectly positively affect the guarantee of another.

Accordingly, considering the special importance of the land for human life, land acquisition also affects a great variety of human rights, and the thesis will focus on rights that are clearly affected.

Effects of land acquisition on right of property

Right of property is essential for any society. This right allows people to have personal possession, and protect them from violation by putting limits on governments and non-government organisations, as seen in the UDHR:

Article 17

- 1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.*
- 2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.*

In addition, although not directly mentioned, but Article 1 of both ICCPR and ICESCR mentioned means of subsistence:

Article 1

- 2. [...] In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.*

Similarly, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (Assembly, 1969) stated that forms of ownership of land and means of production are requirements for social development, with human rights and freedoms as fundamental.

Under such basis, constitutions of most countries conform to long term assurance of rights to property, recognize right to property as human and citizenship right. Its connotations include the free disposition of an individual's property at their will, as no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of it. The state, in the role of the bearer of the obligation, must respect individual ownership by refraining from infringing upon the ownership, use and disposition of the owner. But with the administrative decision imposed by force, the state causes people who have their land acquired, not only displaced, but also lose their homes, the habitat in which they have invested significantly in years or even generations. They also lost possessions that belong to land. In that case, the person whose land is acquired is not free to dispose of the property according to his or her will and will.

Effects of land acquisition on right to work

The right to work is one of the fundamental rights, a foundation for the realization of other human rights, and on an important part, inevitable for human dignity. This right is depicted in many international legal documents, such as UDHR, ICESCR. These are considered international legal standards for the assessment of practicing the right to work. Accordingly, Article 23 (1) of the UDHR states that all persons have the right to work, to be entitled to choose, and entitled to favourable working conditions. Article 6 of the ICESCR with more details:

Article 6

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.

It is easy to notice that the right to work does not only mean the entitlement to a job, but also “an opportunity” with freedom of choice, and the state must guarantee that both should not be deprived from individuals. However, with land acquisition, land users are forced to leave not only their land, but their jobs and their livelihoods. For land users, to be able to continue their jobs or not depend on external conditions created by the state after land acquisition.

Land acquisition can also affect food security in the same way it affects farmers’s lives. In two Reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to food in 2002 (Ziegler) and 2010 (De Schutter) , access to land and land tenure is considered essential for food security. De Schutter (2009) provides another report regarding increasing LSLAs following the 2008 food crisis. The main points were right to self determination and the right to development, which is similar to the UNDRIP.

Similarly, The voluntary guidelines on the Human right to food (Food Agricultural Organisation, 2004) stated that “States should respect and protect the rights of individuals with respect to resources such as land, water, forests, fisheries and livestock without any discrimination. Where necessary and appropriate, States should carry out land reforms and other policy reforms consistent with their human rights obligations and in accordance with

the rule of law to secure efficient and equitable access to land and to strengthen pro-poor growth". Farmers normally have no choice than moving to a new sector unless the state can provide them agriculture land as compensation. In the scenario where they receive another agriculture land slot, the nature of the soil and other conditions would not be identical to the former land they chose. There are many farmers who exceed the age requirements for industrial parks. Therefore, land acquisition affects the right to work as well as food security,

In addition, under standards of mentioned international human rights, it is difficult to consider land acquisition as a development method that can guarantee the right to work. Countries often justify land acquisition for economic development, provide better services, and create jobs for people. However, when they create jobs and provide services to a certain group, it harms the rights of others, here is the person who loses land; or only achieves employment goals but affects others rights. Land acquisition under forced administrative decisions creates unintended social disruption which is not qualified "sustainable development", and also does not guarantee employment rights. In addition, land acquisition also does not guarantee the fundamental political and economic freedoms of individuals.

Land acquisition and the right to housing

Housing is essential needs and human rights. Human rights documents also emphasize that it is one of the essentials of adequate standard of living, as in ICESCR:

Article 11

- 1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.*

According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), similar to the right to work, housing should not be understood only as a physical location, an object, but also being able to live peacefully in such place and be respected with dignity. In General Comment no.4 (CESCR, 1991) CESCR recognised several constituent elements of this right. First, there must be legal rights to land use and production. Second, availability of services, raw materials, facilities, and connection's structure. Third, the cost must be reasonable.

Fourth, habitable. Fifth, accessibility, and finally, in terms of location, housing must be in a position that favours work, medical services, school and other social services, while avoid exposure to hazard that affects human health.

Forced eviction is condemned in Resolution 1993/77 (OHCHR, 1993) as “a gross violation of human rights, in particular the right to adequate housing”. Housing is tied to land, therefore land acquisition will affect the right to adequate housing. Land acquisition with unreasonable compensation, or compensated location with unfavourable conditions can make the matter worse under human rights standards. First of all, land acquisition by legal administrative decision defies land use rights and property ownership – which is one of the constituents of the right to adequate housing. “Land acquisition” itself manifest the will of a powerful party (the state), on land tenants that do not have the right to decide over the land and property they have settled in. They also do not have the option to bargain. Most land users are passive, while the state can take the initiative and decide when do they have to leave their land and houses. Individuals and families live in a state of uncertainty about their future. Furthermore, relocation requires an unknown amount that cannot be predicted accurately. In order to stabilize after land acquisition, people take a long time, especially when they are struggling to earn income. The consequence is in order to secure a suitable place to live, former land users have to cut costs for other needs, even sacrificing some basic needs. This goes against the right to adequate housing, cost for housing needs should not affect the cost of other minimum needs. In addition, not all resettlements can ensure the availability of services, natural conditions, and appropriate infrastructure like where they used to live. Such a new residence is unlikely to guarantee freedom of employment, affects the ability to establish and maintain networks, social organizations, and is therefore not considered a in compliance with international human rights standards.

Land acquisition and rights of vulnerable groups

There are multiple terms when mentioning women, children, older persons or the disabled, such as vulnerable groups, disadvantaged or marginalized groups. In several documentation, CESCR listed several groups in certain conditions. But this is not an exhaustive list, and CESCR requires countries to determine depending on the situation and current solutions to guarantee their rights, as can be seen in periodical implementation reports.

As noted in Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO, 1989): “measures shall be taken in appropriate cases to safeguard the right of the peoples concerned to use lands not exclusively occupied by them, but to which they have traditionally had access for their subsistence and traditional activities.” Both the Convention and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) stressed that FPIC (free, prior, and informed consent) related to decision making related to said type of land is needed. (UN General Assembly, 2007)

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) promotes land rights in a different manner to encourage women’s right in general, such as about equal treatment and resettlement schemes; equal to their spouses on ownership of land and property in marriage. (UN General Assembly, 1979)

Until now, it is clear that under human rights, land acquisition affects the enjoyment of fundamental rights heavily for all. However, in comparison to the rest of the society, vulnerable groups tend to suffer more. Being more vulnerable, they are easily abused, and have more difficulties in getting income for relocation. Sudden changes affect stable routines, affect children’s mental health. Although requiring special needs and have the right to enjoy special protection, when land acquisition takes place, their rights are not guaranteed. Older persons and the disabled are even more affected due to their mental and physical limitations that prevent them from rebuilding their lives. For the poor, they do not have valuable property to get proper compensation and easily fall into deprivation. Relocation is fatal to ethnic minorities as they are unable to adapt where the practices of production and land use are not consistent with their traditions.

In conclusion, land acquisition and relocation affect a lot of human rights, directly and indirectly. In which, the ownership of land and residence are the most affected rights, but it also involves the violation of many other rights, such as security, thus does not maintain human dignity, or in other words, fundamental rights being maintained. Therefore, the analysis of media content is done to answer the question whether the media follow such narrative, placing the land clamants first or else.

2.1.4. Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is first recognized in Article 19 UDHR

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. ". (UN General Assembly, 1948).

The content of Article 19 UDHR is then confirmed and concretized in Articles 19 and 20 of ICCPR. According to ICCPR:

- (1) Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.*
- (2) Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice. (ICCPR, 1976)*

The content of Article 19 of the ICCPR was later clarified by the HRC in General Comment No. 10 adopted at the Committee's 19th session in 1983. According to this document, Article 19 (1) is the absolute right, not to be limited or deprived in any circumstance, including in national emergency. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946 both recognize “freedom of information” as a part of freedom of expression.

However, to the provisions of Article 19, Article 20, the ICCPR mentions some necessary limitations of the right to freedom of expression, according to which, "all forms of propaganda for war, all advocacy of national hatred, race or religion to incite racial discrimination, hostility, or violence must be prohibited by law". Considering these standards, censorship does not always limit freedom of expression. There are contents that can cause real world harm, such as the presence of self-injury or suicide can encourage this unhealthy coping mechanism. People can express disdain and disagreement by threatening or call for violence in a non-serious way, but when speech is used to incite people to attack a certain target, which can be a group that discriminated against, it can create an environment of intimidation and exclusion and limit people's willingness to share freely and represent

themselves, and further encourage the oppression. Promotion of harmful ideologies or activities can lead to contagion that results in further crimes. Censorship in such situation is essential, to protect people from potential harm.

Freedom of press/expression is mentioned in Vietnamese constitution with conditions.

In Vietnamese constitution, the state maintains “favourable conditions for citizens to exercise the right to freedom of speech/ press and for the press to uphold its role; newspapers, journalists operate within the framework of the law and are protected by the State. No one is allowed to abuse the freedom of press, freedom of expression to infringe upon the interests of the State, the legitimate rights and interests of organizations and citizens; newspapers are not censored before printing, transmitting and broadcasting.”

With such definitions, the thesis will analyse the official discourse towards land deals, to see if there is actual human rights realisation, and how free the press in Vietnam is compared to the international standards, as well as its own law.

Some governments are more strict than others in censorship, which depends on type of regime and culture. In one-party states, content in most forms are state-owned. How does censorship in Vietnam work, with what and why a certain type of content is considered harmful, or what are the interests of the state, is explored further with the data to consider whether it pose a human rights violation.

2.2. Agenda setting theory

Agenda setting theory is used to explore the mass media- audience relationship and how both sides interact and affect each other. Therefore it is relevant to the objectives of discovering how the state media choose to portray LSLAs to the people and its effect.

Agenda setting theory was originally suggested based on “need for orientation” (NFO) (McCombs & Weaver, 1973). McCombs & Weaver argue: “At the psychological level, our major theoretical assertion is that every individual has a need for orientation. Each individual feels some need to be familiar with his surroundings, both his physical and cognitive

environment.” They established several studies on groups with various level of NFO and found out each group is affected by media exposure differently. There are three models on awareness, priorities, salience and three types of agenda setting on policymaking, media and audience (Rogers & Dearing, 1988). This may be used to analyse how agenda setting affects people. According to Rogers & Dearing (1988), the press and the media create a different reality, where repeated reports on certain issues lead the audience into perceiving those as more important than the others.

Based on the 1968 Chapel study on voters, the original authors recently updated the theory into seven facets (McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 2014). The first three being the three levels of agenda setting, namely basic, attribute and network agenda setting, to explore the impact on objects of attentions, attribute of these objects and networked public agenda. The next three are NFO, consequences and origins of agenda setting, and finally “agendamelding” a term coined for the unconscious process of how human personalise the information they receive from the media to create their own version of reality. There are previous studies about personal factors being an independent variable to agenda setting, such as their own need of information can interfere with the media agenda, as a result audience get more sceptical (Matsaganis & Payne, 2005, p. 384). Personal experience can also affect how one perceive external input (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 60).

Considering Vietnamese media that goes under a censorship process before getting published, there would be certain policy narratives for different matters of the society, including land acquisition. Using media theory, the research explores how it is presented on Vietnamese media in the previous section, and research questions with methodology below.

III. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The research is influenced by different standpoints. Land claimants are considered on the downside, mostly because of the nature of land acquisition, therefore I search for a social emancipation, which is commonly expressed through transformative paradigm, as it addresses inequality. However, transformative paradigm only describes the situation. A hint

of constructivism would help to understand why things are shaped in a certain way, under certain circumstances, such as how the media adjust themselves under state control, how do people view human rights issues regarding land acquisition upon exposure to that media content. The involvement of multiple paradigms is called *interpretative paradigm*. It promises possibility of comprehensiveness and completeness (Gioia & Pitre, 1990) provides understanding subjective experience of individuals and also the social environment they are in (Burrell & Morgan, 2006)

3.1.1. Case study

Ragin describes the basic operation of case study as “casing”, where cases “bring operational closure to some problematic relationship between ideas and evidence, between theory and data. Casing, viewed as a methodological step, can occur at any phase of the research process, but occurs especially at the beginning of a project and at the end” (Ragin, 1992). The simplified thesis assumes that controlled media can shape public opinion, with the evidence from data collection.

However, it is not possible to comment on this phenomenon, until the final stage of the research. According to Ragin, this would follow the understanding of case as theoretical constructs, when cases are made “Neither empirical nor given, they are gradually imposed on empirical evidence as they take shape in the course of the research”. In addition, cases are conventions “theoretical exists primarily because of collective scholarly interest...[cases] are the collective products of the social scientific community and thus shape and constrain the practice of social science”. This perspective correlates with bringing a conceptual framework as in section II into data analysing. Case study also fits the need of using multiple data sources, and also during the analysis, as there are “subsequent choices to make about persons, places, and events to observe” serve as attributes for the original case of interest. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 130). This means interviews and survey will provide in-depth understanding.

3.1.2. Analytical method

First, *how* official media discourse shapes the issue of large scale land acquisitions will be a content analysis covering themes such as goals of land acquisitions in relation to government plans; the relations to investors and agro-businesses; the relations to civil society; the role of affected communities and their rights. The usage of language, or *discourse* can shape reality through language as human express their thoughts through the choice of words and grammar, which is known as the Sapir Whorf hypothesis (Johnstone, 2017, p. 77), thus shape identities of these subjects and their actions, therefore portray them in different ways. The data for this step are articles of state media in the period of 2016-2020, how they described cases of land acquisition and involved parties's actions, and to see if there is a certain pattern where some are put in a more disadvantaged position than others, or actions of some are justified in an unfair manner, such as violence. During this analysis, I also identify my standing with human rights as a guiding theory. There have been several studies on representation of human rights being distorted in several domestic settings. An analysis of Hong Kong media shows notable modifications of wording that potentially changes perception of the readers (Cheng & Lam, 2010). Another study on Israeli human rights discourse suggested that there are certain molds on the term "rights" when it is imported to local setting (Gordon & Berkovitch, 2007). It is worth noting that both suggest context plays an important role in the discourse. This context contains different forces such as institution, culture, socio economic and probably "in group interest". There are also competing discourses, but under state control, it is unclear if there is any other narrative.

In the chapter about social roles, Johnstone notes that "People constantly create and renegotiate relationships with each other in the process of interacting, via discourse moves that make claims to equality or inequality, affiliation or detachment, trust or skepticism. But there are situations in which social roles are relatively fixed in advance, and in which people are expected to use and interpret discourse in relatively pre-set ways" (Johnstone, 2017). Being a citizen of the country, it is not difficult to ignore the specific cultural context where the smallest details, for example pronouns can be used to define power relation. Exploring this can contribute additional details, that state media does not only censor, they can still broadcast complete information but with specific wording

The second part is to document and understand the *impact* of the media discourse on human rights. To do this, I will examine other media sources and public opinion. This includes a second research strategy, namely a survey that measures public attitudes to land acquisition

actions, outcomes and policies. The analysis will seek to show how the media representation public attention to the victims, which may include presenting them as the source of the problems. Then the victims receive little support within the country, even when fundraising or similar activities are done by reputable organisations. There is an argument that the media identifies and shapes the audiences with certain criterias “news media in particular, routinely decide what’s in the best interest of the public, usually based on nothing more than musings at editorial team meetings and inklings about what typical members of the public are like and would expect from the mass media” (Coleman & Ross, 2010), and that they target certain groups with better living conditions such as office workers, students in urban areas that make up the majority of the population of the country. They amplify some opinions that are relevant to these groups, but classify dissenting voices as a minority when in fact the issue is far more common than the extent to which they declare in the press. How they define their target to have an effective “echo chamber” rely on background, living standards, education. However, some people does not only find state media satisfying. With increasing dissident voice through social media, they would likely further explore beyond that. Therefore, the survey will collect this nominal data, their exposure to state media as well as unofficial media, their position on land acquisition and measure their degree of agreement.

Finally, the thesis will examine various hypotheses, as for *why* the media works in such way. Interviews of key persons such as journalists or government officials will be conducted for more insight. As suggested above, the effect on audience in this case cannot be simply investigated through only media- audience relationship. The media in this case, managed by the state, is anything but first under heavy political influence. Central Propaganda Department of the CPV declares that political nature is essential for national press. There are also some concern about “commercialising the press” so both businesses and the press can rely on each other to survive, however there are little opinion about the press being a platform of speech for the citizens. There are questions that only people with direct involvement can answer, such as if there is some power hierarchy behind the scene that is more profound, with the press being merely a tool rather than a force in the society? Or the press is in control and deliberately shaping the public for their own interest? The interview consists of open ended questions, beginning with the policy of broadcasting sensitive news, if land acquisitions are considered in the category, then to the process of censorship and wording.

3.2. Research method

3.2.1. Background

To gain more understanding, the research reviews land issues through many sources, such as Vietnamese Land Law and clarifications, updates, debates on updating and updated law over time released on government portals. There is no difficulty in finding access or explanations of certain points in those documents, since real estate market in the country is always busy and the people constantly need support on completing the transaction without any issue as the Vietnamese Land Law is relatively new. A timeline of land management and land law is presented with remarks drawn from various sources, from comments of key persons on the media to literature from CSOs. Similarly, media law and human rights are reviewed in a similar manner, but lean more on international documents for comparison. This whole context is not presented in a sole chapter, but serves as background throughout each topic.

3.2.2. Media analysis

Subject

To understand the current position of land acquisition and human rights in the country, the research uses mainly official sources, which vary from direct state media from the Vietnamese government to private sources that are still under censorship, typically websites from ministries, especially the Propaganda Committee. However, only official media is analysed. Official media is defined as licensed by the State, or run directly by the state, while unofficial media ranges from international sites (BBC, CNN) to independent Vietnamese media abroad (thoibao.de, Viethomes.co.uk...)

Notable points to concentrate on are land policies, the state's view of planning and their response to concerns that the current land management regime is not optimal. Also, the way they report on land dispute events is equally important. Not only how the government's behavior is painted, but also how they portray the people who lost their land, whether their protests such as protests and lawsuits are considered appropriate. What is more important if those incidents are reported or not, so unofficial sources such as foreign media are useful to get additional “forgotten” information.

Range

From 2012 to 2020, articles are collected, are sorted by time, divided into eight files from January to December. Selected articles must contain land acquisition as background or at least a highlight, concerning policies or happenings at the time. This would exclude unnecessary data. Moreover, since the Vietnamese media is under government management, there are identical, “quoted” articles from site to site, which results in a reasonable amount of work. Data is divided into two corporas, first one from 01/01/2016 to 30/06/2016, the second corpus from 30/06/2016 to 31/12/2020, with a split at the same time a new government emerges after election.

Data analysis

The data will identify the discourse through quantitative mean first. Classifying the numbers of topics and genres, types of title and chapeau based on frequency gives a description of how the media interact with audience, what kind of information they are trying to convey. However, quantitative method would omit a lot of text, while context that is made of by word choice, grammar is very important in discourse analysis. Grammar plays an important role as it shows the narrative of what is the norms, the rules of how things are talked about (Johnstone, 2017). This can be identified through repeated choice, as only repetition would cumulate effects. For example, according to the same author, social relations and discourse affect each other, but under some circumstances, one group might have more power than others, which can be explored through *participant framework*. The framework identifies forms of address, *footing* technique, stance and styles used to shape the roles. Therefore, I focused on these details and kept track of them through coding. It is important to notice changes in wording over time, as a land claimant can be called “the accused” but later addressed with honorific when it is the local officials who were found guilty. Changes in stance and styles might also possess more latent meaning, such as potential adjustment of policies, attitude of the government and what they want to convey through the messages.

These factors in text are called collocation and semantic preference. They can deliver implicit message for readers, such as perceptions and attitudes of journalists. “To see which choices of words, structures, modes of evaluation, and intersections of voices have been taken up in

this way, we need to study many texts, and it becomes necessary, for practical reasons, to find mechanical ways of identifying patterns of interest across the texts” (Johnstone, 2017). Currently, there are no

3.2.3. Survey of media exposure

An online survey will be done to measure the discourse’s effect, with participants are Vietnamese currently living in Vietnam. For a large population, I would use Slovin formula with confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 5%, which results in a sample size of 384 people from a probability sampling (simple random sample). Beside background information, the survey will be designed to find out the level of media exposure, the “need for orientation” including desired information from the media, and finally their attitude and expected behaviour related to LSLA.

Most of the population is surrounded by “approved” official news outlets, but it does not mean that state media is completely dominant. As mentioned in Literature review and conceptual framework, a certain part of the population with difference background might be sceptical and choose to access external, private or foreign media for further information (unofficial), but some would stick to official media. As a results, they are influenced differently by the same agenda. All data are collected through Qualtrics, a professional tool designed to process surveys. Data are coded, then run through regressions with R software to find out if there is connection between exposure and time spent for each type of media with their judgement of human rights situation on LSLAs cases

Analysing quantitative data is not enough to answer the RQs, especially the third one. The insight from that would not be sufficient, therefore I would conduct a semi-structured interview on journalists that worked or currently working for state media as it would provide more insight on why the media shape LSLA in a certain way.

Currently Vietnam is suffering a second wave of the pandemic and is issuing lockdown, therefore both the survey and interview will be conducted online. Vietnam is one of the countries that have highest number of social media users (64M/100M population by July 2017), so it is supposed to be easy to reach out to participants. However, social media users

decrease along the age range, as the elders often hesitate in using technology products and this will create a shortcoming in data, makes it more of a non-probability sampling carrying all the disadvantages such as population's representation. Finally, to combat the echo chamber effect on social media, proper investigation is needed to avoid the tendency of picking sample from the researcher's circle, who may share the same personal view on the topic.

The reason for a mixed method approach lies in the nature of the sub-RQs. Discourse analysis would be the most reliable way for news articles as it would give a better insight in media frameup and its intention towards the audience. For such a large population, an absolute qualitative interview can take very long when there is a time limit for the thesis, therefore a certain quantitative part is more suitable. Data collection is less difficult, but still gives more insight and time to explore different models. Finally, mixed method approach research rarely encounters offset as two methods complement each other (Bryman, 2016, pp. 643-644) .

3.2.4. Interviews with key persons

Once involved in Vietnamese media sector, I received support from former colleagues to contact reliable informants who work directly with land policies and media management. Before interviewing, all informants requested confidentiality which was performed, concerning their comments on such sensitive matter in the country. Normal journalists and officers are easier to discuss with. In Sinosphere culture, someone labelled as a "student" are generally considered to be less knowledgeable, so they need to be guided, to know how things are processed on the field. So beside the interviews, I also received several advices on how to look at media data, from the original creators. Those interviewees at higher positions are more skeptical. One of the informant is currently the editor in chief, and following the social hierarchy it is somewhat difficult to ask for a clear disclose of their stance as they tend to give generic answers. It is similar to governmental personnels, one need to be careful while posing questions to those with a title and the information given are limited. Aside this largest drawback, one advantage of this interviewing process is being a native, which means no translator needed and the information is delivered and analysed at highest accuracy. All interviews were conducted digitally, voice calls only that lasted for 15-20 minutes.

IV. Land management in Vietnam

4.1. About the country

Vietnam is a country located on the eastern edge of the Indochinese peninsula, in the centre of Southeast Asia. The total area is 331,212 km², the country shares 4,639 km land boundaries with China to the north, Lao and Cambodia to the East and 3,444 km of coastline, facing Gulf of Thailand, Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea.

After a millennium of annexation by the Chinese Han Dynasty, Vietnam had its first monarchy in the beginning of 10th century AD, followed by other successful dynasties until the French colonisation in 1884. Vietnam proclaimed independence in 1945. The First Indochina war from 1946 to 1954 ended with the Paris Agreement, dividing the country into North Vietnam under the CPV, and South Vietnam as a member of Western bloc during the Cold War. South Vietnam suffered instability as it was a new government. There were internal conflicts between the executives as well as in diplomacy with the US, its greatest ally. People's dissatisfaction was handled poorly and the prolonged war with the North slowly weakened the country, while the North, grew with support from its allies. Finally, the North unified the two regions in 1975, placing the country under Communist rule.

The CPV maintained a centralised economy until the 1986 reform called a “Renovation” to a “Socialist oriented market economy”. The changes before the new millennium have helped Vietnam catch up with the world not only in economics, but also in industries like technology and manufacturing and processing and is now one of the countries with the highest rates of growth. With a population of 96 million people, mostly working age, the country is vibrant with large-scale projects from infrastructure to technology. However, cultivable land only account for 20% of total area, so development projects mainly take place in suburban, densely populated areas. Although being an “old” country, Vietnam has endured many political changes since the 19th century, and economy is still undergoing integration and change including in the relations and balance between state and other types of ownership. Therefore, Vietnamese law and the constitution continue to undergo change, and this is especially true of land law.

4.2. Land history

Land in Vietnam has attracted many researchers due to its complexity both in law and process. Research has addressed various themes, particularly land reform and land corruption.

Le, Toan, and Nguyen Hung Quang (2014) give a summary of the history of land law in Vietnam and its current issues. During colonisation, the French's attempt to establish a new system of land ownership led to violence and resistance. After independence in 1945, the government applied a collectivisation policy until formal nationalisation took place under the 1980 Constitution. A notable event during this period is the Land Reform in 1953–1956 by Viet Minh. This is a controversial matter. The CPV itself declared some success, but also admitted it was a mistake that led to many unjust deaths (Vietnam Government Portal, 2020). The reform also received criticism on policy and process (Moise, 1976). The first Land Law was passed in 1988, with some expansion in 1993, then 3 amendments in 1998, 2001 and 2003 regarding land value and land use. Collectivisation that lasted from 1945 to early 1980 was inefficient and caused economic setbacks and a food security crisis.

Decollectivisation began in early 1980s, followed by the 1988 Land Law, at the same time of Đổi Mới (Renovation) that aims for “Socialist-oriented market economy”. This struggle between socialist doctrine of common land ownership and liberal private property, together with vague land law and processes, create many difficult issues. First is unfair land valuation and compensation. Second, the “Public versus Private Appropriation”, where the state decides land allocation as “land belongs to the people” in the name of development, leads to conflicts. Finally, corruption is common especially during the process of issuing Land User Right and House and Land-Attached Assets Ownership (LURHOC). A report by the World Bank (Alcaide Garrido, et al., 2011) also mentioned the matter especially on land acquisitions, with the argument that corruption mostly happens between investors and government officials, leaving the previous owners helpless. As a results, protests and petitions are happening more often.

To, Mahanty and Wells-Dang (2019) provide a timeline with different insights into policy narratives, mostly on the revised 2013 Land Law, and how the pro-concentration narrative sparked a new pro-poor counter narrative. While the former follows an agribusiness model that require accumulation, then investment for large scale production to avoid ‘ineffective’

subsistence-based production due to land fragmentation, the latter points out potential abuse between the state and investors, leaving former smallholders to experience pauperisation. This narrative is frequently used by investors known as “interest group” that influence the government for private gain. Therefore, the authors suggested that the pro-poor narrative is a better option to improve the agriculture sector, as it gives a wider picture to provide better treatment to all parties involved, instead of relying solely on pro-concentration. However, the land-concentration narrative remains dominant and leads to many conflicts.

In addition, army-based economic entities also abuse loopholes to make profit (Dang, 2017). Although they declare the project purpose as development, their projects are questionable as these investors are privileged, such as confidential transaction and tax exemption, and normally these projects do not seem to follow original designated purposes. Dang also pointed out weaknesses in the Land Law that allow manipulation and put farmers in a disadvantaged situation as they are not actual landowners and receive low compensation, while those investors gain a larger amount due to change in land use, and no support for livelihoods after land confiscation. The result is resistance, sometimes violence, by the victims.

4.3. Current situation of land management

As stated in previous sections, reforms and fast development in Vietnam are followed by many issues, mostly land disputes over “hot spots” (Gillespie, 2011) According to the author, the root cause is about property right and property use. The Land Law “were not drafted to reflect the self-regulatory traditions that most urban residents turn to when deciding what they can and cannot do with land. Consequently, courts face a dilemma in resolving land disputes: Do they uphold state laws that disregard local regulatory traditions and risk losing social relevance, or do they apply community notions of situational justice that undermine rights-based land laws?” Gillespie (2011) also cited social constructionism and systems theory in order to explain the main struggle between the two dialogical contests, such as distributive justice and procedural justice, or localism and centralism and how one of them can become more dominant than the other.

In a thesis on compulsory land acquisition in Hue, Nguyen Quang (2015) mentioned current land legislation as a problem, where the land belongs to the people, but they only have “use

rights” while the State has the right to govern. Therefore, land acquisition is unavoidable. It is supposed to be beneficial, but in reality there is an imbalance in the distribution of benefits and costs between different groups. There is also unfairness in participation between them in the process, with government officials being more active while affected people are in a passive role.

A similar narrative is seen in the case of North-western rubber plantations (Dao, 2015), where the matter is addressed in a more critical manner. While not generalising to all land acquisitions in the country, Dao pointed out that, “People's land rights and ownership have been distorted”, at least in this case. In details, the collaboration between large corporations and the state “takes away the land and control people” by holding their “red books” (So Do – LURHOC) so they are unable to change the situation.

For peri-urban Vietnam, Labbé (2016) concentrates on the Third Land Reform in the 2000s with four regulatory changes on revoking and allocating land use rights, new land evaluation mechanism, land use control decentralisation and Law on State Budget “in favour of urban-industrial expansion and against agriculture, leading to unequal development and social problems”. As a result, several high-profile conflicts over land exist and expressions of dissent have been on the increase.

V. Vietnamese press

5.1. Structure

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam follows “Collective leadership - Marxism–Leninism - Ho Chi Minh Thought”. Judiciary consists of Supreme People’s Court, State Prosecutor, and is accountable to the National Assembly, the executives, including Prime Minister, deputy Prime Ministers and cabinet members are approved and monitored by the National Assembly in a 5-year term. The constitutional structure of Vietnam is greatly influenced by the CPV. CPV members account for a large proportion in the National Assembly. (464 of 483 seats). CPV holds a Party Congress once every 5 years. Politburo and Central Committee are responsible for agenda setting. Any plans by CPV will be prioritised by the whole system. However, being an important body, the National Assembly is still proactive in questioning the government on various topic, including sensitive issues.

Media outlets might be private or public, censorship is inevitable. While it is a common practice around the world, especially in the case of limiting suicide and self-injury content to protect the society's wellbeing, politically censorship is more pervasive in one-party states, as they tend to adhere to standards from a responsible ministry and are audited frequently.

The state-owned press plays a major role in governance and society. The article for Journal of Democracy "Breaking the News: The Role of State-Run Media" (Walker & Orttung, 2014) provided insight into how state-run media works in countries such as China, Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Iran, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, with Vietnam also being on the list. According to the authors, except in Cuba, North Korea and Turkmenistan, where the media is under total domination, other regimes apply "effective control" that involves media discourse to appropriate and justify policies and actions, while disregarding other alternatives, ideologies or forms of government. The method used is sending certain messages for certain audiences. For the elites that form the regime, it is a show of strength to guarantee benefit, quid pro quo towards business sector, or warn rival factions from inside the government. The discourse tends to drive the public away from political matters, create an impression that those are government's responsibility and encourage passive political participation. For internet users, regimes use censorship by blocking sites that are considered harmful, or information that poses a threat to the government. The last, and most unwanted audience is opposition of the system. Dissidents are considered problematic individuals or organisations that could harm the society, and the government shows that similar actions will not be tolerated using punishment. While this method might be extreme, in reality, several individuals identified as opposition party members have been caught and convicted of bombing in Ho Chi Minh city (Reuters, 2018) .

In Vietnam, tactics to control media are frequently used. Abuza (2017, p. 2) reports that the government issued " a large number of vaguely worded, catchall laws and decrees to control content on the Internet". Almost every state sector has their own media presence, but all contents are reviewed by Ministry of Information and Communications, so that they would not cross the boundaries of tolerable content. The regime employs "online warriors" to fight criticism and shape public opinion, for example accusing critics of being terrorists or traitors, and arguing that a change in the system is not necessary. Although these operations are successful in decreasing the popularity of opposing opinions, Abuza (2017, p. 7) notes that

without a “Great Wall”, private, citizen journalism is still influential to those who can gain access to the blocked websites through techniques such as VPN.

The Vietnamese media is described as “a tool for managing society...a state-sanctioned watchdog that can keep a check on the growing power of decentralized bureaucrats, state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and rival party factions while appeasing popular discontent against the regime itself (Cain, 2014, pp. 92-94). The author provided further insight by stating that the relation between press and the state is not a “dichotomous framework of a watchdog press versus an authoritarian state” but “newspaper operations are partially free...it would be unwise to downplay the media’s own agency in pursuing stories outside of elite direction, whether out of the pursuit of profit or a commendable desire to see justice done”, which means that the media can be used by different factions of the CPV to get more influence in the society. This is understandable in countries where the single party in power might be internally divided. Cain (2014, p. 87) mentioned Tien Lang affair, a high profile land acquisition case in Tien Lang district, Hai Phong, Vietnam. Here the owner, Doan Van Vuon was forced to leave the land before the lease expired. Major media accused Vuon of being a criminal and ignored the fact that the local officials violated the land agreement, as his resistance might raise question about the state’s capacity and legitimacy. However, later when another faction of the party came to power, the local officials that belong to the other faction were punished. A similar dynamic is noticed in cases such as Vinashin, one of the biggest corruption cases with the total embezzlement amount of US\$11.5 million. Therefore corruption exposure are described as internal purges than exposure in favour of the people.

McKinley (2008, p. 16) mentions the contradiction between the freedom of speech and the fact that criticising the Party is an offence under the Constitution and in the Media Law: “The Media Law states that “no organisation or individual is permitted to limit or obstruct the operation of the media or journalists” and that the media should act as a “forum for the people.”, but the media is also “the mouthpiece of the Party”, giving journalists dual and potentially conflicting responsibilities”. The author argues that the media is a tool for political activities and to solve the party’s internal conflicts, through the PMU18 case that included embezzlement, bribery at the same scale with the Vinashin case. Finally, McKinley (2008, p. 22) describes several impacts of state controlled media: lack of information and journalists being unwilling to reveal if there is any to avoid punishment. As journalism in Vietnam is constrained by politics, there is no common Code of Ethics, except the new 10

articles of Professional Ethics of Vietnamese journalists, issued in 2016, with the first article states “fully grasp and deepen the principle of: absolute leadership of the Party over press activities.” (Vietnam Journalism Association, 2017)

5.2. The press and land

With such limitations in journalism, and land acquisition being a sensitive issue, reports on the topic meet many difficulties. Kerkvliet (2014, p. 31) argues that reports on land acquisition are ambiguous, stating: “Few Vietnamese media outlets would cover the demonstrations, because officials frequently intimidated journalists and others showing interest in the protests. On at least one occasion, the protesters themselves rescued local journalists from club-wielding police.”

According to the report by Wells-Dang (2013, p. 19) , Vietnamese media has played an essential role as an intermediary between Oxfam's Consultation project on land acquisition and government decision-makers, and also shape the opinion of the community to entice the government's response: “Vietnam’s state owned media and growing informal blogosphere have reported on land issues to the extent possible, despite efforts by some government agencies to restrict coverage or shut down the most outspoken blogs. However, “ Land issues are often “complicated” and “sensitive”, since they drive at the heart of the intersection between economic interests and political power” (Wells-Dang, 2013, p. 3). From the summary of media reports on various land acquisition cases, only one out of five results in criminal charges towards local officials, but the victim also faced a similar situation. Finally, public opinion on victims are either ambiguous or negative as they are indifferent to the system in general, or particularly to problems with the Land Law given that “Vietnamese citizens do enjoy limited land rights” (Wells-Dang, 2013, p. 20).

Rights related to land is mentioned by Sikor and Hoang (2016, p. 217) as a part of applying REDD+ so that “people’s rights, needs, and visions”, especially indigenous people are respected. Sikor and Hoang (2016, p. 219) also notes that when Vietnam constitution recognises that all citizen regardless of ethnicity receive similar socio-political and cultural rights, self-determination and collective rights of a certain groups were ruled out. As a results, forestland allocation leads to dispute. This is not a new phenomenon, when Sikor

(2004, p. 76) observed Black Thai community's resistance against land allocation as their previous livelihoods were interrupted. Otherwise, academic resource on human rights violation related to land acquisition in Vietnam is scarce. Information is mostly available as reports and articles from civil society organizations (CSOs). Amnesty International is always up to date with incidents, such as the recent deadly clash between the police force and villagers in the Dong Tam land dispute, criticising the government for the use of violence, incommunicado detention, and social media repression (Amnesty International, 2020) . Human Rights Watch also addressed worsened freedom of expression starting since 2018, with harassment towards activists such as Do Thi Minh Hanh, Nguyen Duy Tan and Do Huu Thoai. They are all involved in or speak up for victims of land acquisition.

VI. Analysis

6.1. Media content analysis

Media content are collected manually along the use of search engines for various reasons. First, sorting the results by “News” includes all sites that are registered digitally as news source. In reality, only sites that are licensed by the Vietnamese government are deemed appropriate for the study. Such sites include the number of license on the homepage. Secondly, using keywords do not always guarantee relevant information, however using the site's function that return articles with such topics labeled when using correct “tags”. Finally, towards the end of the data collection stage, it is easy to notice that some cases are not tagged, or presented in totally different wording and requires other investigation method.

6.1.1. Topics and genres

This chapter examines the interactions between journalists through their discourse - articles. The transmitter are journalists. They are not simply individuals, but representatives of media agencies and organizations. Therefore, the real transmitter of press discourse is the media, the newsroom.

6.1.1.1. Topics

Scanning the media resulted in 425 articles, spreading along two corporas. They are categorized by content; Each article is classified according to the type of title, sub-title (chapeau). As a result, they are classified into these major topics:

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>2012-2016</i>	<i>2017-2020</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	76	52	128
2	Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	43	65	108
3	Discussing government's role of maintaining justice for land deal	26	18	44
4	Land claimant fined/ prosecuted for their responses	21	40	61
5	Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	15	8	23
6	Condemning land claimants' responses	9	20	29
7	Land deals criticized by local people	7	8	15
8	Official documents regarding land deals	5	8	13
9	Questioning the current Land Law	2	2	4
	<i>Total</i>	205	220	425

Table 1 Topics on LSLAs

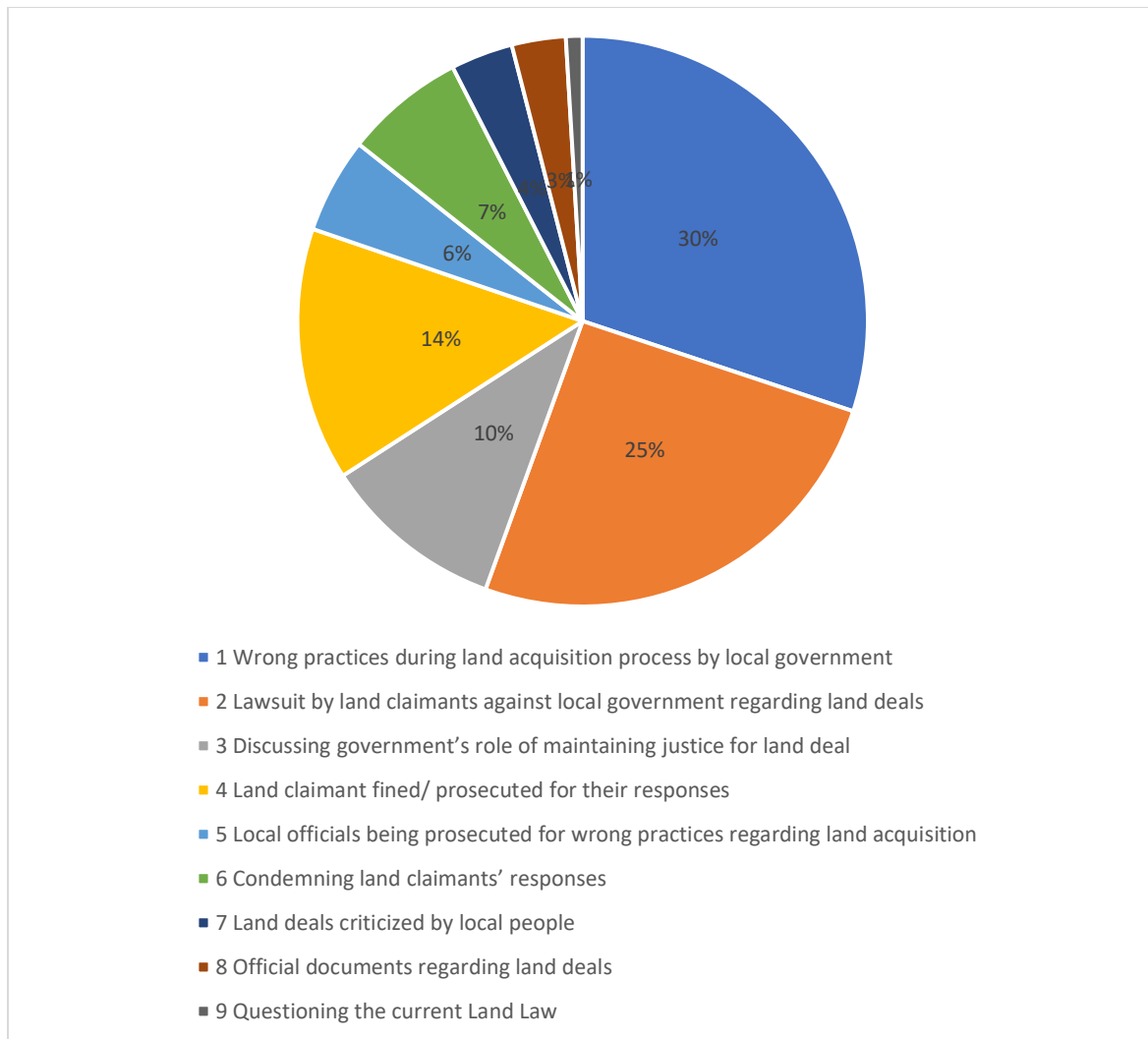


Figure 1 Percentage of each topic

Looking at the chart, it is easy to see that the most popular topics are:

- (1) Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government
- (2) Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals and
- (3) Discussing government's role of maintaining justice for land deal.

The content and format of these topics are detailed and rich, with copies of legal documents as evidence, articles written in infographic format, or presented in timeline, plus live photos taken at the site where the disputes take place. With the theme (3), journalists (or indeed newsrooms) ask questions and encourage stronger actions from the central government, taking evidence from two topics (1) and (2). In other words, the transmitter argued that local officials act individually and not closely regulated. The three topics with the least articles represent the voices of the people, directives, or official letters, and question the current

ineffective land management, instead of criticizing the supernatant and superficial resolution in the three most common topics. The number of articles concerning local officials or land claimants are moderate.

It should also be noted that, not every two articles on the same topic have interactions, it is possible that the writer is independent of each other and does not interact with each other. Therefore, when making statistics on interaction, I consider (1) publication time of articles and (2) hyperlinks. The publication time of articles indicates which articles are published first and which articles are published later (Articles are listed in chronological order of publication in each journal). Subsequent articles may have subject interaction with articles published previously. The second form of topic-based interactive articles is hyperlink. Articles are listed by hyperlinks for intentionally subject interaction at the discretion of journalists and editors. Based on the links in the articles, I also gathered articles with topic interaction.

Hyperlink is the ability to allow connection from an electronic newspaper website to any other article on that web page and to any web page on the Internet. With the hyperlink system, each article is located by an address and linked to another article via a link. Hyperlinks organize information into layers, creating relationships between the latest information and the previous. E-newspaper discourse links and interacts with topics in three ways: **(a)**- creating topic (in the original article), **(b)** maintaining the topic (same as the previous article), **(c)**topic development (in addition to maintaining topics, extend the discussion). It is important to emphasize the subjective interaction between the articles. Therefore, linking a specific topic with joins of the language will not be addressed. This means that there will be no analysis if the hyperlinks that only contain similar words and sentences, but mainly analyzing the thematic links of the texts together, how it is created, maintained, and developed.

Interaction between is based on the topic of the articles. Articles related to each other by the same topic will interact with each other. Since the time frame for the thesis is 2012-2020, all hyperlinks outside of these ranges are removed.

<i>Topic</i>		<i>2012-2016</i>			<i>2017-2020</i>			<i>Total (percent)</i>		
		a	b	c	a	b	c	a	b	c
1	Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	58	11	7	33	18	1	91	29	8
2	Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	23	15	5	51	9	5	74	24	10
3	Discussing government's role of maintaining justice for land deal	14	9	3	12	5	1	26	14	4
4	Land claimant fined/prosecuted for their responses	13	5	3	37	2	1	50	7	4
5	Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	8	4	3	5	3	0	13	7	3
6	Condemning land claimants' responses	5	3	1	13	6	1	18	9	2
7	Land deals criticized by local people	5	2	0	6	2	0	11	4	0
8	Official documents regarding land deals	5	0	0	8	0	0	13	0	0
9	Questioning the current Land Law	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>		134	49	22	166	45	9	48%	15%	5%

Figure 2 Interaction types

Looking at the table above, topic creation accounts for 48%, followed by topic development and development at 15% and 5% consecutively. The unique point to emphasize through topic interaction is the change in focus between articles on the same topic. While the articles were aimed at a common audience, the focuses were different in each article. The change in information focus is the point that makes the news attractive and different and shows the process of information exploitation of journalists.

For a specific example, CafeF (2016) reported on the case of land management violation in Binh Phuoc. There are many changes of focus along this chain of information. First, the topic creation “The Government Inspectorate discovered many land violations in Binh Phuoc” emphasized on newly discovered violations, without pointing out who is responsible for it. Next, the article is linked with “Discipline 6 officers have committed land violations”- shifting the focus to governmental officials, then “Many local violations related to land management”, stressing that the violation is done by local governance. This example shows topic engagement with a change in information focus. Below, I will analyze three types of topic interactions in turn (creating, maintaining, and developing topics) while also pointing out the change in information focus in articles.

- **Topic creation**

Topic creation is the first activity that conducts topic interactions. It is journalists who create the original topic of the original article. Due to the nature of creating this kind of topic interaction often takes place in the first articles. Specifically:

- (1) Many violations uncovered in land management in Tra Vinh (thoibaotaichinh.vn, 2019)

The Government Inspector points out illegal land projects in Thai Binh
(NLD, 2019)

- (2) Thai Binh: People prosecute the government for “tricking” them into giving land to private company. (PhapLuatPlus, 2016a)

Thai Binh: Taking land from the people, the government has to issue a decision to recover. (PhapLuatPlus, 2016b)

- (3) Distorted planning, land use: The people and the State all lose together. (TuoiTre)
The role of the State in regulating land interests should be more focused
(thoibaotaichinh.vn, 2019)
- (4) Hanoi police prosecuted the illegal arrest of 38 people in Dong Tam (VNExpress, 2017)
Sentencing the Dong Tam case (PLO, 2020)
- (5) Violations related to the Dong Tam land case (Hanoi): Nearly 30 officers were found guilty (TuoiTre, 2019)
Violations in land management in Dong Tam: Disciplinary action for nearly 30 officers (LD, 2019)
- (6) Hanoi President Nguyen Duc Chung: 'Mr. Kinh takes advantage of the complaint in Dong Tam to stir up' (Thanh Nien, 2019)
Dong Tam case: The defendants repeatedly poured gasoline and burned 3 police soldiers (Tuoi Tre, 2019c)
- (7) Opposing enforcement of land acquisition, Quang Nam people became entrenched in their homes (Lao Dong, 2018b)
Hundreds of households in Hanoi oppose the collection of land for parking (Vietnamnet, 2017b)
Dong Nai: People oppose land acquisition in Long Hung (Vietnamnet, 2019)
- (8) Hanoi announced the end of inspection for Dong Tam case (Kinh Te Do Thi, 2017)
Hanoi ends the land inspection in Dong Tam commune (Dang Cong San, 2017)
- (9) Some shortcomings of the law of Vietnam on the term of use of agricultural land and direction of improvement (Tap Chi Tai Chinh, 2018)
Revise Land Law to prevent profiteering and corruption from land (Tuoi Tre, 2017b)

These articles are the sample for topic creation. They set up the keywords for chains of articles (1) land management, violations ; (2) people, prosecute, decision; (3) state, management, role; (4) prosecution, illegal, sentencing; (5) disciplinary actions; violations, officers; (6) take advantage ; assaulting government officers; (7) People. Opppose, land deals; (8) Announce, inspection, case; (9) land law, shortcoming, revise.

- **Topic maintenance**

Topic maintenance is repeating a certain thing within the articles (which is mentioned in the first article, and is responsible for creating the starting theme for the whole chain of articles). Talking about a certain thing or event causes articles to interact on topic with each other. Therefore, in these articles, keywords and key phrases are often repeated over and over. Topic maintenance often happens within one website.

For example, the incident of “forced eviction in Tien Lang” with Doan Van Vuon as the famous land claimant, the first to use violence as a response, after the initial report “Forced land acquisition in Hai Phong: Six people were shot and wounded” (NLD, 2012a) the site NLD made a tag for the whole topic, with different focus each article.

- (1) “Request an explanation from Tien Lang district” (NLD, 2012i)
- (2) “The case of Tien Lang: It is necessary to re-determine the crime of Mr. Vuon (NLD, 2012h)
- (2) “Tien Lang- Are Vuon brothers actually guilty?” (NLD, 2012f)
- (3) Tien Lang land acquisition: “Why don’t you report when your house is destroyed?” (!)(NLD, 2012e)
- (4) Land acquisition in Tien Lang: The Prime Minister will review (NLD, 2012d)
- (5) Land acquisition in Tien Lang-Hai Phong: The enforcement was wrong! (NLD, 2012c)

In these articles, the phrase contains “Tien Lang land acquisition” is always put first. Around this subjects, the journalists explored different contents, such as voice from local congressmen, comment of local officer, opinion of professional lawmakers, announcement from central government, from below to above. To create connection, the chapeau always repeats “Tien Lang land acquisition” as a reason for the article, for example:

- (1) Hai Phong City's National Assembly delegation has just asked **Tien Lang** district to explain 3 issues related to the forced eviction and illegal **land acquisition** of Mr. Doan Van Vuon.
- (4) The Prime Minister asked to clarify whether the **land allocation, acquisition and enforcement** are in accordance with the law? If wrong, who is responsible

(5) Prof. Dr. Dang Hung Vo, former Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, commented as above and affirmed that he was ready to confront the authorities **of Tien Lang**.

- **Topic development**

A simple way to understand maintaining and developing a theme is to add one or more topics related to a given topic together with the original (theme development). This development follows the necessary and sufficient criteria of logic to ensure that the articles containing them are subject related to each other.

Usually, interspersed with articles with a topic persistence (subject A), the journalist develops the issue and creates other articles with broader and deeper topic development (subject B). In which, A and B are logically related. For example:

- (1) The case of Tien Lang: Lessons on Party reorganization (NLD, 2012g)
- (2) From the Tien Lang case, reviewing the Land Law (NLD, 2012b)

Excerpts from these articles:

(1) Reporter: Sir, looking at the Tien Lang case, it seems that from commune to district level, governmental personels have inherent weaknesses and shortcomings, as Central Resolution 4 concerns?

- Mr. Pham The Duyet: [...] I very much agree with the conclusion of Central Resolution 4 **that a large part of governmental officers and party members have deteriorated in morality, lifestyle, political ideology** ... But what I care about is the tendency to manifest. The ugliness is now more and more evident and serious. This is a very worrying thing, a very serious warning about the downturn situation in the Party.

(2) Mr. Duong Trung Quoc: The Tien Lang incident was like a **warning shot for land allocation system**. Therefore, it is likely that not only Doan Van Vuon but also many people are in similar situations. I have approached quite a lot of land lawsuits, all of which are just about the **government exercising the right to take farmers' land back**.

Therefore, from the wrongful forced eviction, the journalists maintained the topic by mentioning the unlawful practice, then develop this topic into other topics, with the first being spontaneous actions of the local officials, then the second questioning current land management. These articles, normally called “feature articles” contain both topic maintenance and topic development. Therefore, from this model, except the last three topic that were not developed, the other six are expanded as follow:

Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	➔ There should be stricter punishment	➔ Central government need to manage more closely	➔ Land Law needs to be changed
Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	➔ Central government needs to take action	➔ There are too many shortcoming in land management	
Discussing government’s role of maintaining justice for land deal	➔ Central government needs to take action		
Land claimant fined/prosecuted for their responses	➔ There should be stricter punishment against rebellion		
Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	➔ The central government needs to implement better measures and punishment to protect the Party’s image		

Condemning land claimants' responses	➔ Hostile foreign organizations are increasingly agitated by inciting people to cause trouble.		
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Table 2 Topic continuity and development

From theoretical viewpoint, development of the topic gives the articles a profound philosophical dimension. The problems are recognized from the root and explained, then closed with a convincing conclusion or solution. The topic development in the articles therefore always attracts many readers' interaction. Articles on the same topic have an interaction with each other. The three types of topic interactions are: topic creation, theme maintenance, and theme development and maintenance. Subject (content) interactions will lead to category (form) interactions. From the above, topic maintenance is diverse, as each topic is explored from different viewpoints. But this is not the case with topic development, as all the conclusion/ solution are mainly directed towards the central state. The reason for this is explained in the Interviews with key persons.

6.1.1.2. Genre

Genre interaction shows the change in form of discourse under the influence of interactive relationships. In the process of information extraction, corresponding to the information that needs to be expressed, journalists will choose the appropriate categories. The interaction on the subject of information content leads to genre interaction.

425 articles are grouped into these main, most common categories:

- **News:** the most basic, concise, fastest type that reflects the events, and also updates on those events, or reports of official voice on the event.
- **Interviews:** the genre of presenting a conversation between a journalist and one or a group of people about an issue. This conversation is a direct or indirect question-and-answer; which

can also be considered partly “news” as adding new happenings on an event, but not as influential as official voice from the government.

- **Opinion/Editorials:** It can also be analysis, assessing an issue, with mainly intelligence and critical thinking. These are not considered “news”, and mainly used for topic development.

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>News</i>	<i>Interviews</i>	<i>Opinions/Editorials</i>
1	Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	101	8	19
2	Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	72	32	4
3	Discussing government’s role of maintaining justice for land deal	0	15	29
4	Land claimant fined/ prosecuted for their responses	43	9	9
5	Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	20	3	0
6	Condemning land claimants’ responses	29	0	0

7	Land deals criticized by local people	2	13	0
8	Official documents regarding land deals	13	0	0
9	Questioning the current Land Law	0	2	2
<i>Total (percent)</i>		66%	19%	15%

Table 3 Genres

This table shows that news accounts for the majority. Interviews and opinions have a similar share of the pool. The interaction of these genres are below:

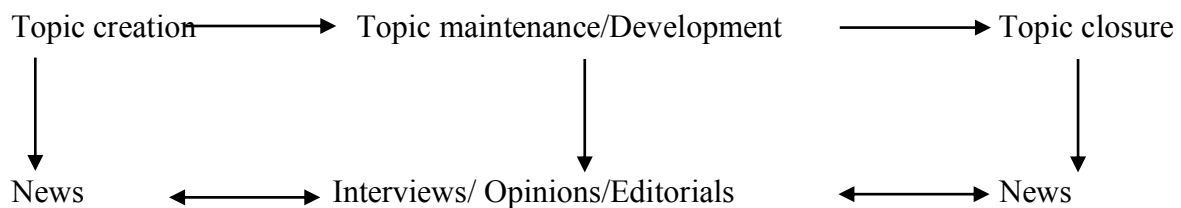


Figure 3 Interaction between genres

Most topics begin and end with the same genre. The “news” genre with its features of short, quick standout plays a role in opening and closing all information. The middle process features numerous narrative interviews and comments. They can fully describe the events while giving many objective and subjective opinions, evaluating multiple dimensions around it. It is also the art of extracting information of journalists. In short, genre interaction is also the interaction between discourses, therefore journalists always have to find an appropriate genre for the event. As each genre has its own advantage, all contribute to the diversity of the media, it seems that the other two, which contains other voices are not favoured, and plain news/ reports are what made of the Vietnamese media on land acquisitions.

As can be seen above, most topics are written in news form, with the exception of (3) mostly opinions/editorials. For topics (2) and (7), interviews are dominant as these are mainly field

interviews, directly citing affected people, emphasizing their proactive role as "troublemakers". Similar to the topic development stage, the main types of articles at this stage are opinions/editorials which are quite rare. It can be concluded that the majority of news articles are not developed, or are reported in a one-way fashion to limit outside opinions, if any, are also cited crudely, with unsightly images, and seem to less important than news stories where the spokesperson is an official.

6.1.2. Structure of content

In journalism, journalists demonstrate their power in creating press discourse. Moreover, these discourses have an impact not only on readers but also on society through public opinion. The participation of journalists entails the voice of the public, as well as insiders and relevant authorities. Using the example of Tien Lang acquisition case above; the use of violence was highly unusual, and the media posed questions for local authorities of how did they allow such escalation, followed by many opinions from lawmakers, government officers and even the Prime Minister. Following the information on the topics, not all cases were resolved in the direction of journalists, especially large scale land acquisition. Only small cases where small private business who acquired land through local government's permission, opposed by local people – were resolved in favour of the land claimants. These are usually suspended projects where the local government took advantage of the price difference between compensation and investment, and the business involved usually often cannot afford to complete the project as planned.

To create effects, the media interacts with the readers. A journalist is the person who has the right to talk about all issues in society. Their articles always have a certain impact on readers. The first is the impact of information (information reception in the article); followed by the cognitive and emotional impact (changing the readers' opinion) and finally the impact on behavior, action (call for action). It creates, first of all, an immediate effect (causing public opinion, changing the reader's thinking, perceptions of something). Still the example of Tien Lang, information regarding the topic stirred up opinions from the society, attracted a lot. To do this, the journalist has used many factors to effectively interact with readers, all manifest through the structure of the content.

6.1.2.1. Title

The title and chapeau are the two most obvious at creating interaction and building the discourse for the article. There are many types of titles: the *confirmation title* is responsible for confirming the existence of certain events and phenomena in objective reality; *questioning title* both suggests a reader's judgment on a pressing issue and promises a relevant answer below; the *call to action title* entice readers towards a certain necessary thought, action ... under the writer's view of the problem; *quotation title* gives the reader the reliability of the source provided; *sensational title* ignites the curiosity of readers; *attractive title* is vivid with the use of new and unique expressions, expressions, images. Criteria to identify these types of titles are only relative, because in fact there will be titles that can be classified into many types of titles. Here, they are sort by the type of title that stands out, making it easier to identify.

	<i>Title type</i>	<i>Example</i>
1	Confirmation title	Dong Tam case <i>is a lesson</i> for both state agencies and the people
2	Questioning title	Has Hanoi government paid Dong Tam people back yet?
3	Call to action title	Dong Tam case <i>need to be resolved</i> in an absolute and fair way
4	Quotation title	Mr. Nguyen Duc Chung on Dong Tam case: <i>"It is important to take the law seriously"</i>
5	Sensational title	Delegates debated fiercely about <i>how</i> to understand Dong Tam case
6	Attractive title	District official <i>'closed his eyes'</i> while issuing the wrong LURHOC in Dong Tam
7	Commenting title	The press <i>has truthfully reported</i> the incident in Dong Tam

Table 4 Types of title

In details, the number of each types are below:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	60	6	5	24	13	7	13
2	Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	32	1	2	26	9	25	13
3	Discussing government's role of maintaining justice for land deal	4	3	3	22	0	0	12
4	Land claimant fined/ prosecuted for their responses	42	0	5	0	3	8	3
5	Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	15	0	1	0	3	4	0
6	Condemning land claimants' responses	0	0	0	1	21	6	1
7	Land deals criticized by local people	3	2	0	6	3	1	0
8	Official documents regarding land deals	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Questioning the current Land Law	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>		173	12	16	79	52	51	42

Table 5 Types of title for each topic

From this table, the percentage of each title type is presented below

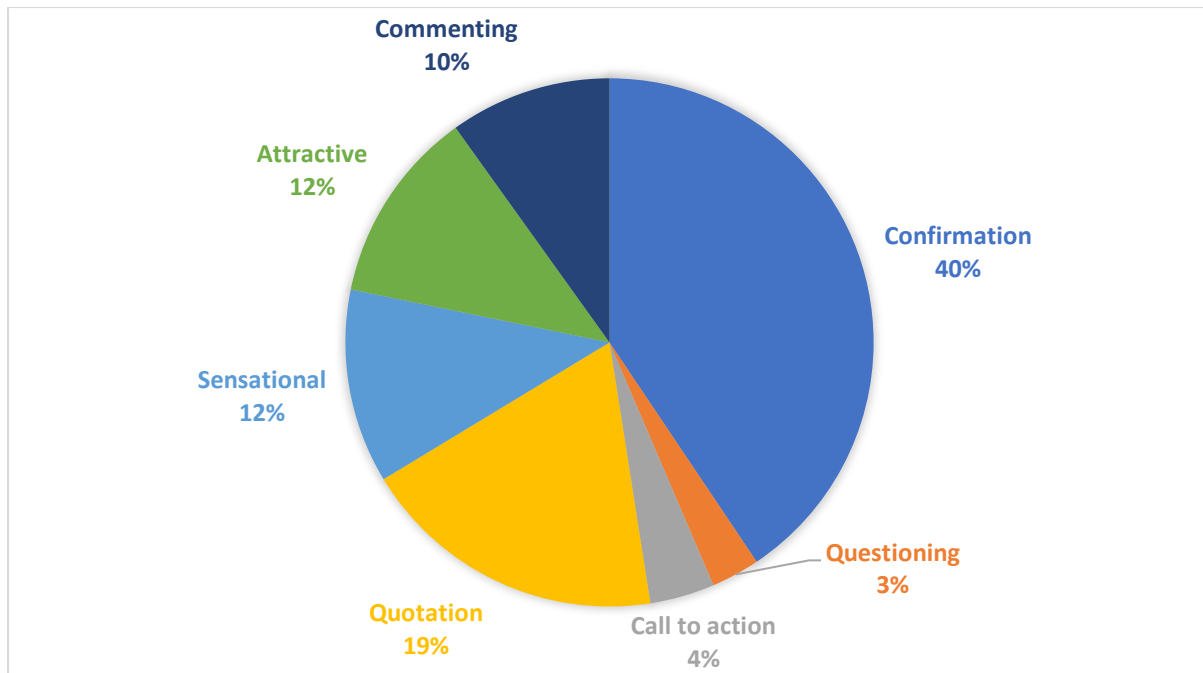


Figure 4 Percentage of each type of title

Looking at the chart, of all articles, the confirmation type appears the most (41%). This type of heading is usually complete and quite specific: Information is the key element that stands out and takes up almost all of it. The more information the title covers, the more lack of co-display of online media will be overcome. Because online headlines often appear without context. In printed newspapers, elements representing information of an article are displayed simultaneously on the newspaper page. However, in electronic newspapers, the elements representing article information (photo, title, cover, official text ...) cannot appear on the page at the same time due to limitations on the interface of the computer screen. The information that e-newspaper readers see is the latest, and brief information that the newspaper provides mainly by the headlines on the homepage. In this way, the title ensures there is something "worth reading" that the public can choose from as soon as they scroll through the home page of a newspaper or help the "reader make a choice" that is when the reader reads the title and then can return to read the content of the whole article.

Moreover, in this type, the author just stated the event with a calm and objective attitude, giving all discussion and evaluation to the reader. This gives a sense of freedom and stimulates the discussion and evaluation of readers; urge readers to read more information to respond, thus interact with information. Besides confirmation, quotation title is placed second (19%). This type of title is often the direct quotes of the characters in the interviews. The

subjects of quoted sentence are usually celebrities, experts of the field in question, people involved in or related to the problem or event. Their opinions and views are of great interest to many people, so titles of this type create the feeling that the author's source is completely accurate and reliable.

On an article posted 07 July 2017, NLD quoted Hanoi Chairman “The promise to Dong Tam people will be verified over time!” This is the comment he made while asked about being as fair as possible considering the the people’s right to maintain their livelihoods. From this title, it is implied that whether the promise is kept or not – is unsure. When using the quotation, the author always tries to find the best ideas and presented it in the most attractive way. There are many ways to "make headlines" like taking only one part of a quote:

- (1) The Dong Tam case: The defendant expects the court not to “hit a man when he is down.” (Dan Tri, 2020)
- (2) Defendants on Dong Tam case: "Mr. Le Dinh Kinh promised to share 200m2 of land to each person" (VOV, 2020)

In the first case, the original context was “The defendant sincerely apologized, as he commented that the application of the 1981 regulations on land was too outdated while the land policy has changed many times and it affected the judging process. But from this title, reader would assume that the defendant was asking for leniency on his crime. For the second case, the original quote was “This is our land, if we can secure it, we will share 200m2 of land to each person”, however from this title, the journalist created an impression that the person intentionally claiming the land for profit, but in fact he believed that he was exercising his right. Such impression entices the reader’s emotion and curiosity to click on the link. In short, the title is the first element that shows the information and the impact of the text on the reader. In the headlines, particularly electronic newspapers, journalists always tend to seek out reactions to ensure the criterion: attract attention, provide main information at a glance, help readers to choose articles, making readers want to read.

6.1.2.2. *Chapeau (Sub-title)*

Based on meaning and purpose, the chapeau (or sub-heading) can be divided into these types:

(1) Naming: naming the problem, event or phenomenon that will be presented in the article, accompanied by a comment. (a)

(2) Summary: the most core information related to the content, from which an overview of the problem or event is reflected. (b)

(3) Cause: Stating the incident that motivated the author to write the article. (c)

(4) Portrait: sketches certain features of the main character of involved (d)

(5) Descriptive: Descriptive images create an image with sound, color, and light. (e)

(6) Argument: giving impressive numbers or facts that can attract the attention of the reader. They are often in causal relationships with the problem or event being reflected. (f)

(7) Storytelling: listen to the author tell about a certain story (g)

(8) Feeling and thoughts: reflects the author's personal view (h)

(9) Continuity: as a follow up for the title (i)

After investigation, the percentage of each type are listed below:

<i>Types</i>		<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>
1	Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	2	76	1	0	12	8	23	0	6
2	Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	4	37	0	32	12	13	9	0	1

3	Discussing government's role of maintaining justice for land deal	0	34	2	0	0	0	0	7	1
4	Land claimant fined/ prosecuted for their responses	0	41	0	9	0	0	0	0	11
5	Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	0	14	0	9	0	0	0	0	0
6	Condemning land claimants' responses	0	9	0	13	0	0	0	4	3
7	Land deals criticized by local people	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
8	Official documents regarding land deals	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Questioning the current Land Law	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Total		6	232	4	63	24	21	32	11	32

Table 6 Types of subtitles for each topic

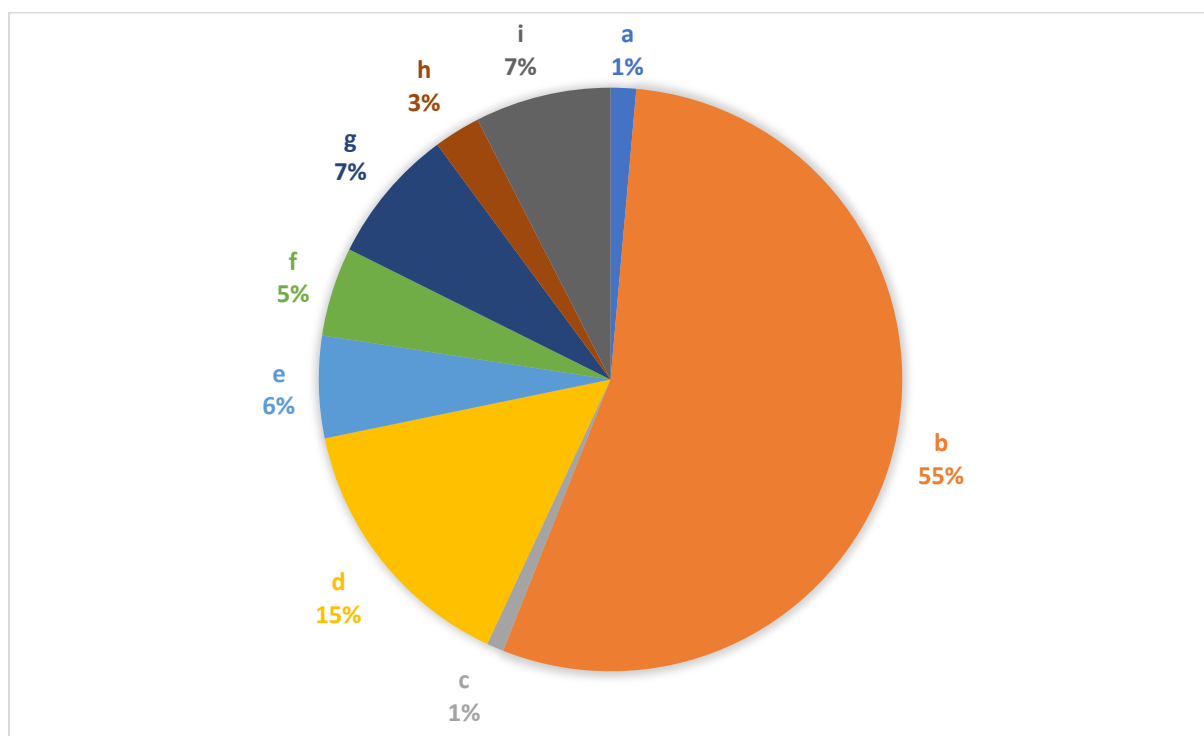


Figure 5 Percentage of subtitle type

- **Notable sub-title styles**

From the chart above, summarizing sub-title stands out with 55%, followed by portrait at 15% and storytelling together with continuity at 7%. Causal and feeling/thoughts are almost nonexistent at 1 and 3% consecutively. Summarizing style with the most core information of the article has met the readers' need of fast but complete information.

Some example for summarizing chapeau:

- (1) “Dong Tam case: will be resolved in an absolute and fair way” - Minister, Government Spokesperson Mai Tien Dung affirmed that the case will be resolved thoroughly, fairly and strictly for both people and officials.(Tuoi Tre, 2017c)
- (2) “Conclusion of Dong Tam investigation: The land belongs to the military” - Hanoi City Inspector officially announced the conclusion on the management, use and handling process of the land known as Mieu Mon airport in the territory of Dong Tam commune on the morning of July 25 (Tuoi Tre, 2017a)
- (3) “Soc Trang woman spent her whole life asking for her land back” - In January 1975, Mrs. Chau Thi Yen Nhi had just bought this land, hoping for a peaceful life. All of a sudden, the whole land was acquired by the state ". Up to now, the land is still abandoned. Now at her 70s, she still repeatedly reapplied but has not yet been replied. (Dan Tri, 2018)

These chapeaus summarize the content of the article perfectly, of who is involved in the speech/ investigation and what is the conclusion. Most articles that use portrait chapeau are about certain individuals, such as land claimants and local officials. The second one is mixed with portrait type.

- (1) “Suffering because from living on agricultural land” - Although living in the city, these residents are miserable without electricity, water, and even household registration. (Tuoi Tre, 2018)

- (2) “Businessperson paid tens of billions to acquire land along Tam Ky coast” – How did a mysterious woman - a local business owner – get tens of thousands of square meters of coastal land into her hands. (Vietnamnet, 2017a)

The first chapeau portrays the situation of people living on agriculture land with certain difficulties, and the second asks questions about the background of mysterious land buyer. With stories related to long term land dispute with involvement of the government, journalists also use storytelling style:

- (1) “Thu Thiem litigation: A lot of troubles” – Since the beginning, continuous changes in planning lead the case from one lawsuit to another lawsuit, stacked up to be a hot mess after decades (NLD, 2018b)
- (2) “ 29 households in the Thu Thiem urban area came to Hanoi for lawsuit” - Leaving their hometown, 29 households living in the planning area of Thu Thiem new urban area (District 2, Ho Chi Minh City) went to Hanoi to try to sue. Tired, depressed, they told the story of their lawsuit Hanoi in tears. (Lao Dong, 2018a)

For events related to land acquisition, the Vietnamese press mostly summarizes, or focuses on certain subjects such as land claimants or local officials to draw attention of readers. Few chapeaus question the law, or create debate about the role of central government or the model of land governance.

6.1.2.3. *The organization of content*

Main content is the most important part of the article. It is organized, arranged through prominent structures. According to the data, the most used is the inverted pyramid structure, where journalists organize information in a way that brings the most important and most meaningful elements to the forefront, followed by less important and less meaningful details. For e-newspapers, the competition is tough. In order for readers to click the link for the content of the article, it is necessary to bring in the best (or most engaging) first. More details will be developed later. Therefore, journalists have always followed such “golden principle” when writing so that their products can attract readers, be competitive and highly interactive.

- For example, the inspection results of Dong Tam case:

Title: Disputed land belongs to the military, Mr. Le Dinh Kinh's claim is incorrect

Chapeau: The Hanoi Inspectorate has issued a conclusion of disputed land in Dong Tam commune (My Duc district). According to that, Mr. Le Dinh Kinh's claim is incorrect

First detail: The entire land belongs to the military

Second detail: There is a lack of management in the area that led to the dispute

Third detail: There is no agricultural land

Fourth detail: Military land needs to be reacquired

Final detail: Investigate, clarify and strictly handle violating individuals.

In this case, we can see that the most important information that entices readers is who is right and who is wrong in this land conflict, whether it is the people or the state. Next, the article clarifies that this land is not agricultural land at all, is it just a mistake in management that causes people to misunderstand, and encroach on and use the land illegally. The conclusion is that there will be an investigation and handling of individuals who cause the above violations. The article begins with information that appeals to the audience, then gradually provides details that develop the subject of the news. This is a method of gradually increasing the amount of information available. In conclusion, headlines and chapeau are the easily identifiable parts that “hit” the eyes of the reader to influence them. However, the depth of the text, the content of the article with different information structures is the part that determines the nature and depth of the interaction. For the discourse to have effects on the audience, it is important to pay attention to choice of words and grammatical structures. To analyse all article manually requires the help of software, which is presented below.

6.1.3. Content analysis

6.1.3.1. Representation of people and events

The ideology can be expressed through the discourse through different ways, such as how the media represent actors by using active or passive voice to shift the focus to the agent or the patient. They can use a transactive sentence to clarify both, or write it in passive way to hide the agent. Nominalization refers to converting the action into a noun to hide both, or using

intransitive verb, with the purpose of omitting the real cause. Coding 425 articles with 9 topics gives the results below:

		<i>Active</i>	<i>Passive</i>	<i>Nominalization /Intransitive verb</i>
1	Wrong practices during land acquisition process by local government	471	127	824
2	Lawsuit by land claimants against local government regarding land deals	572	213	462
3	Discussing government's role of maintaining justice for land deal	78	35	352
4	Land claimant fined/ prosecuted for their responses	12	599	83
5	Local officials being prosecuted for wrong practices regarding land acquisition	78	97	99
6	Condemning land claimants' responses	211	5	45
7	Land deals criticized by local people	49	123	2
8	Official documents regarding land deals	7	115	31
9	Questioning the current Land Law	2	7	48

Table 7 Word/grammatical choices of the media

For the first topic, incidents are mostly mentioned without an actors. The writers did not only want to omit who caused the violations, but also hide who discovered them. It is normally written generally as “complained by the people” or “according to reporters” . Sometimes, they wrote in active voice, directly points out who violated, but it is only in the case when the the central government, or committees with certain functions belong to the central government issued the official inspection results.

- (a) A series of violations land management - According to the inspection of land management and use in Lam Dong province, there are some shortcomings and violations; **Slow implementation of the adjustment** of land use planning to 2020, the **land use plan for the period between 2016 – 2020** was inappropriate, causing difficulties in the implementation of land allocation and land lease. In addition, there are also violations of off-budget projects, such as **monitoring** the cost, **handling of violations** of projects that are behind schedule. (Thanh Tra, 2020)
- (b) Review the mistakes in Thu Thiem: **Discipline many leaders - The HCM City Committee has issued many decisions** and plans to implement the project with false adjustments, inconsistencies, even signs of contravention of the Prime Minister's direction, causing harm, frustration, complaints and denunciations of residents. (Vietnamplus, 2020)
- (c) Disorder of land management in Hoai Duc district: Agricultural land turned into factories - **Following the reporter** to Hoai Duc, the current situation of violations in land management and illegal construction on agricultural land in some communes in Hoai Duc district, Hanoi is still complicated and tends to increase. **According to the people**, the construction was suspended once due to violation, but after a while, the enforcement stopped for an unknown reason. (Doi Song & Phap Luat, 2014)

For the second topic, active instances mostly refer to land claimants that start a lawsuit. Nominalization is also common and refers to the suffering of people, the wrongful eviction, the unfair compensation. However, the patient for passive instances are not about defendants, but also mostly about the land claimants whose land, livelihoods were taken. In some case, it is the *decision* of the government that get sued, when in fact the lawsuit is made against them as they take the land without reasonable legal base.

- (a) Saigon Safari project: People hope for a fair settlement - Mr. Nguyen Van Son **had land acquired** for the project. He has eight children living together in a house that **has been downgraded** that could collapse at any time. Mr. Son said: " We do not know when our situation **will be resolved** by the government..." (Tuoi Tre, 2019a)
- (b) Temporary living condition makes people in Thu Thiem suffer - Mrs. Nguyen Thi Huong's family (temporary residence in An Loi Dong ward) **is trapped in a confined**

and unsanitary condition, with regular power can water cut. The most frustrating thing for her is that the area **is temporarily isolated**, far from the city center, difficult to travel, especially when shopping and taking children to school. (VTV, 2018)

- (c) “Land-related lawsuits: Difficulties” - **Ms. H. sued a decision** signed by the Chairman of District 2 People's Committee with the content in response to her complaint regarding 6 m² of land. Because **she disagreed** with the plan presented in the decision, **as she needs** a road leads into her home, not compensation money. (NLD, 2018a)

In the third topic, nominalization is also common. In these articles, similar to the first topic, authors mainly refer to the act of management and law practice, with government always occupied by “role”, as an euphemism, not directly the entity. They also use mostly passive voice when mentioning changes of such actions. Active voice is rarely use, mostly in instance of dissidents.

- (a) “The role of the State in regulating land” - In Vietnam, land economic policies in general and to mobilize land revenues for development in **particular have been continuously adjusted**, creating positive changes in **state management of land**; Land revenues **have become** an important source of income for many localities to invest in infrastructure and promote economic development [...] There are many **shortcomings in land acquisition**, compensation and management. For example, with projects, **people do not agree** with investors' compensation because **they think** that **investors benefit a lot**, while investors think that they have to spend a for infrastructure. (Tuoi Tre, 2019b)
- (b) “Violations in planning and land use: The people and the State suffer together” In many places, the huge benefits from land acquisition, conversion of land use, and adjustment of **planning have fallen into the pockets of investors and officials** [...] Land allocation, land lease, land sub-lease, and land use conversion; **the practice of these processes** are very complicated, difficult to control, and even do not comply with the law [...] The majority of the National Assembly **requested** the Government to urgently research and propose amendments shortcomings in land regulation. (TuoiTre)
- (c) “Preventing loss of land resources” - Experts and **managers have analyzed**, assessed, exchanged views and identified limitations in the management of land, natural resources and current environmental problems in Vietnam., especially the

shortcomings of policies and the management of land and natural resources as well as **the control** of environmental pollution.(Bao Chinh Phu, 2018)

In the next topic, it is clear that passive voice was commonly used. Much less prominent is nominalization, when the authors stated the sentence or the act of sentencing first, normally on the headlines. In very rare case did they use the court as the agent in issuing sentence.

- (1) “**Rejecting** Doan Van Vuon’s appeal” – [...]Therefore, Mr. Vuong's family's request to sue decision No. 461 is unfounded, so this **appeal was rejected**. (Tuoi Tre, 2014)
- (2) “Dong Tam case” – **Two sentenced to death**” The two accused, Le Dinh Cong and Le Dinh Chuc (both the sons of Mr. Le Dinh Kinh) **were determined** to have a leading role of organizing the act of fueling and killing 3 soldiers, **so they received** death penalty (Tuoi Tre, 2020)
- (3) “**Prosecution of** 29 defendants in particularly serious case (NLD, 2020)
- (4) **Proper sentence needed** for the murderers in Dong Tam – “**There must be a commensurate** sentence as an example for those who intend (VTC, 2020)

Except the fifth with a fair share of each categories, the (6) and (7) topic are quite clear about the agent and the patient, who are land claimants as those who committed violence, and land deals as the criticized subject by the people. The final category questioning Land Law mostly hide both agent and patient, only highlighted the incidents and the problems without stating who should be responsible for admendments proposed in the articles. From this finding, it is fair to say that the image of land claimants are prominent, in contrast, the government is rarely mentioned directly, except in the case of local authorities who committed violation. The heavy use of nominalization and passive voice suggests that the authors want to avoid real actors that could play a pivotal role in land problems.

6.1.3.2. Evaluation of people and events and choices of words.

The media uses various expression to show their attitude about the agents involved in the events. It varies from critics to appreciation (Martin & White, 2003). However, the attitude can be implied. First, it is important that how they label the parties and the events. The information is also divided into two corpora (2012-2016 and 2016 to 2020). For such large

amount of content, the software specialised for qualitative data ATLAS.ti was used to help with the coding. However, ATLAS.ti has not supported Vietnamese language yet, therefore further manual coding was done to ensure accuracy.

First, the research identifies how the media label actors involved in LSLAs by different choices of wording. All are written in original language with raw English translations/explanations.

<i>Actors/Objects</i>	<i>2012-2016 Frequency</i>		<i>2016-2020 Frequency</i>	
<i>Land claimants</i>	Nông dân (Farmers)	71	Nông dân	45
	Người dân (The people)	619	Người dân	407
	Đối tượng(subject)	84	Đối tượng	238
	Cá nhân(individual)	18	Cá nhân	32
	Hộ dân(Household)	56	Hộ dân	45
	Hộ mất đất (Land claimant)	21	Hộ mất đất	15
			Những kẻ gây rối (Troublemakers)	98
			Bị can (The accused)	56
			Kẻ (<negative> subject)	76
			Tội phạm (criminal)	61
<i>Government</i>			Côn đồ (delinquent)	32
	Nhà nước (the State)	48	Nhà nước	154
	Chính phủ (the government)	87	Chính phủ	102
	Cấp có thẩm quyền (Those who are in power)	132	Cấp có thẩm quyền	110

<i>Companies/Contractors</i>	Địa phương (The local – implies local government)	192	Địa phương	150
	Nhà thầu (Contractor)	4	Nhà thầu	6
	Công ty (Company in general)	5	Công ty	7
<i>Land acquisitions</i>	Nhà đầu tư (Investor)	123	Nhà đầu tư	101
	Dự án (Project)	699	Dự án	723
	Cưỡng chế (Eviction)	191	Cưỡng chế	205
<i>Other context/actors</i>	Thu hồi đất (Land acquisition)	381	Thu hồi đất	408
	Quy hoạch (Planning)	326	Quy hoạch	213
	Tái định cư (resettlement)	152	Tái định cư	128
<i>Other context/actors</i>	Giải phóng mặt bằng (land clearance)	93	Giải phóng mặt bằng	104
	Đất (Land)	340	Đất	401
	Đất sử dụng sai mục đích (Land used wrongly)	31	Đất sử dụng sai mục đích	582
<i>Other context/actors</i>	Lấn chiếm (land encroachment)	22	Lấn chiếm	95
	Tài sản (Property)	33	Tài sản	43
	Quyền lợi (Rights)	83	Quyền lợi	92

Table 8 Different choice of wording towards actors and events involved in LSLAs in two periods

In Land Claimants category, "nông dân" (farmers), "người dân, cá nhân (people) hộ dân, hộ mất đất (households) are neutral and common during 2012-2016, with "đối tượng" (subject) has a hint of negativity. Into the next period, mention of "subject" spiked while other slightly decrease. There are new negative terms, such as "những kẻ gây rối" "kẻ", "côn đồ" (delinquents), or as severe as "bị can", "tội phạm" (the accused, criminals).

There are no change to the Government and Contractors category, only an increase in the mention of "nhà nước", "chính phủ" (state, government) due to the subject calling for the central government to take action. Specially, there is an euphemism “địa phương” (the local) which is used frequently to refer to local government, as if to hide this actor or lower the severity of any wrongdoings they commit.

Land acquisitions are described as "dự án" (clearance project) and "quy hoạch" (planning) more than the actual terms, mostly to avoid the coercion tone.

Context of land varies, with usage of "lấn chiếm" (invasion) and "sử dụng sai mục đích" (land used for wrong purpose) are more frequent during 2016-2020, since many projects were met with strong reactions of the people and thus drew the media's attention. Surprisingly, there is no mention of “human rights” only “rights”. These will serve as the lexical term to analyse how the media put it in context.

	2012-2016	2016-2020
<i>Number of articles</i>	205	220
<i>Total wordcounts</i>	261646	372613
<i>Instances of “rights”</i>	165	219
<i>Instances of words refer to land claimants</i>	869	1105
<i>Instances of words refer to government</i>	459	516
<i>Instances of words refer to companies/contractors</i>	132	114
<i>Instances of words refer to the media itself</i>	154	243

Table 9 Instances of lexical terms for reference.

	2012-2016		2016-2020	
<i>Đảm bảo (guarantee)</i>	21	12.7%	18	8.2%
<i>Bảo vệ/bảo hộ(protect)</i>	14	8%	25	11.4%

<i>Thực hiện(practice)</i>	12	7%	14	6.4%
<i>Công dân(citizen)</i>	35	21.2%	31	14.1%
<i>Của người dân(of the people)</i>	12	7.02%	23	10.5%
<i>Chính đáng (rightful)</i>	31	18.7%	27	12.3%
<i>Nghĩa vụ(duty)</i>	54	32.7%	94	42.9%
<i>Trách nhiệm(responsibility)</i>	22	13.3%	41	18.7%
<i>Lạm dụng(abuse)</i>	19	11.5%	67	30.6%
<i>Của mình(of themselves)</i>	29	17.6%	74	33.8%
<i>Pháp luật(Law)</i>	41	24.8%	30	13.7%
<i>Tuân theo/chấp hành(Obey)</i>	43	26%	56	25.6%
<i>Hiến pháp(Constitution)</i>	39	23.6%	52	23.7%

Table 10 Patterns of co-selection with “rights”

At N-1 position, “rights” are tied with verb such as “guarantee”, “protect”, “practice” as actions from the government, while “practice”, “obey” and “abuse” is used as actions from the people. At n+1, it is associated with “citizen” and “of the people”. Therefore, rights described in LSLAs context are citizen rights and is tied to the constitution and local law, not universal human rights. This point is made clear during the second corpus, with a surge in mentions of responsibility and duty. “Abuse” of rights unfortunately, is mostly used for land claimants, went from 11.5% to 30.6%, as the government, or the new faction, were taking more strict measure against dissidents.

For example, this article reads “Beware of conspiracies and tricks to take advantage of the Dong Tam incident. Bad individuals have abuse the information to cause misunderstandings, thereby calling and recommending international human rights organizations to speak up and intervene.” (CAND, 2020)

In another case, land dispute is a dispute of rights and obligation: “Land dispute is a dispute over the rights and obligations of land users between two or more parties” (Luật Việt Nam, 2019)

<i>Responses</i>	<i>2012-2016 Frequency</i>			<i>2016-2020 Frequency</i>		
	Land Claimants					
<i>Cling to</i>	Bám trụ	90	10%	Bám trụ	72	7%
<i>Cry for help</i>	Kêu cứu	72	8%	Kêu cứu	140	13%
<i>Blame</i>	Đổ lỗi	32	4%	Đổ lỗi	80	7%
<i>Beg for</i>	Xin	46	5%	Xin	44	4%
<i>Demand/ask for</i>	Đòi hỏi/yêu cầu	50	6%	Đòi hỏi/yêu cầu	128	12%
<i>Trick</i>				Lừa mị	44	4%
<i>To cause violence</i>				Bạo loạn	48	4%
<i>To cause trouble</i>				Gây rối	112	10%
<i>Stir up</i>				Làm loạn	48	4%
<i>Terrorise</i>				Khủng bố	60	5%
<i>Crime</i>				Tội ác	72	7%
<i>Agitaion</i>				Kích động	124	11%
<i>Moral degradation</i>				Thoái hoá biến chất	36	1%
<i>Reactionary</i>				Chống lại	72	7%
	Government					
<i>Handle</i>	Xử lý	96	21%	Xử lý	126	24%
<i>Persuade</i>	Vận động	135	29%	Vận động	36	7%
<i>Support</i>	Hỗ trợ	126	27%	Hỗ trợ	63	12%
<i>Resolve</i>	Giải quyết	36	8%	Giải quyết	24	5%
<i>To do something wrong</i>	Làm sai	93	20%	-	57	11%
	Contractors					
<i>To do something wrong</i>	Làm sai	23	17%	-	25	21.9%

Table 11 How the media represent the actors's actions

Using the terms from Table as reference, ATLAS.ti is used to find out co-selected words used for n+1 positions, whether verbs or adjectives to describe their activities. Land claimants'

response are described in simple way during 2012-2016, repetitive words especially from the title, such as "bám tru" (clingy) "kêu cứu" "khóc than" (cry for help) "xin" (ask for) to "đòi hỏi" (demanding with an unjust manner). "Cry for help" is an overwording, stressing on the miserable condition of land claimants. However, into 2016-2020, the severity increased as more negative terms are used, "causing trouble" (làm loạn, gây rối), evoke (kích động), and even "crime" "terrorism" (tội phạm, khủng bố) and the most severe, "reactionary" which is a term commonly used for traitors. These are clearly dysphemism in different scales, depending on the case. Government's reactions, both local and central are limited to neutral terms, which generally mean "solve", "support", and in rare occasions, "violation". Contractors category has a share of the last term. Although taking more space in the discussion, the government and contractors are portrayed less severe than the land claimants, with various actions, mostly negative along the timeline.

6.1.3.3. *Representation of knowledge and other voices*

Next, representation of knowledge refers to how confident the media is about their information, and if they are open to argument. The media represent themselves with a limited vocabulary, mostly "we" "our reporter/s". These are lexical terms used as reference to find co-selection words at n+1 and n-1.

	2012-2016	2016-2020
<i>Thông tin (give information)</i>	23	32
<i>Nhận thấy(notce)</i>	18	19
<i>Quan sát thấy(as observed)</i>	15	11
<i>Nhận được (according to information received)</i>	21	25
<i>Theo như(according to)</i>	13	31
<i>Có vẻ(might be)</i>	17	21
<i>Dường như(it seems that)</i>	13	31
<i>Cho rằng(assume)</i>	9	5

Table 12 Representation of knowledge.

At $n+1$, words such as "give information" "observe" "notice" "receive" are prevalent. They sometimes omit themselves from the discussion, and open the paragraph/sentence with "it seems that", might be or quoting experts "according to". The media rarely express their opinions, with less than 20 use cases of "assume" (supposedly) and rather portray themselves as passive receptors.

6.1.4. Section conclusion

Looking at how the press manage the topics, there are several conclusions to be made. In general, land problems are mainly explained by the irresponsibility, or willful disobedience of local officials when titles put location first, emphasizing the locality of the problem. It is worth noting that the news about punishing people who lost their land far outweighed the news about disciplining officials who did wrong. Citizens are also criticized, and described as people who unnecessarily initiate conflicts. For example, when they also emphasize on the role of the people in taking the initiative to sue, however, the tone of the voice tells the audience that these are minor conflicts and civil disputes that are not too important. It is important to look at things from a larger len, for example in terms of the legitimate rights of citizens. The state is also sometimes brought up in the discussion as a regulator. The two topics with the least number of articles are land-related texts, which are mainly announcements of minor amendments to the law, or legal analysis in a professional tone that few ordinary readers may be interested in. In addition, the media's shift towards attacking the people is clear in the second corpus.

Next is the management of the above topics. It can be clearly seen that the topic creation takes up the majority, rarely addresses the issue directly but uses an evasive tone, with little mentions the actors "Many violations uncovered at [location]" This is followed by articles covering the next developments, without a clear assertion of right or wrong. Finally, topic development. Journalists have pointed out that these repeated violations are a sign of the need for change, but they do not see land as an independent issue, but only as a manifestation of officials' deterioration in character and behavior that may affect the image and prestige of the Party/State. They also mainly emphasize how these officials manage rather than the legal system that is at the heart of the matter. There is almost no connection between the situation of the land clamaints and those violations. Unlike the ambiguous image of the state and

officials, the image of the people is described more clearly and clearly not in a positive way. however, journalists also needed a reason for public reaction, so they cited "provocation" by third parties for which there is little evidence. These are organizations described as "reactionary" that want to overthrow the current state. With this process of presenting information, the centre of the matter is clearly not the land clamaints, but the threat of the state's image being tarnished.

Further analysis of word choices in the content strengthens the initial observations of topic and genres above. While the central government is associated with neutral terms, newsrooms are more fair when reporting local officials' wrongdoings. They also make effort in giving favour to land claimants, but only in rare occasions where land claimants are used as statistics for the topic of management and punishment of local officials. In most cases, they are troublemakers and even criminal for demanding basic needs, and the discussion is always about ensuring the power and credibility of the state in practicing law.

6.2. Survey results

6.2.1. Types of variables

<i>Variable name</i>	<i>Coding</i>	<i>Nature of variable</i>
<i>Age</i>	18-35=1, 35-50 =2, >50=3	Continuous variable Control variable
<i>Interest</i>	Not interest in LSLAs=0, Interest in LSLAs=1	Control variable
<i>Religion</i>	Traditional belief=1 Monotheism =2, Buddhism=3, None/Other=4	Nominal variable, Control variable

<i>Involvement in LSLAs</i>	Yes=1, No=2, Unsure=3	Categorical/Control variable
<i>Education</i>	Elementary school =1, Secondary/Highschool=2, Undergraduate=3, Graduate or higher=5,	Categorical/ordinal variable, Independent variable
<i>Trust in official and unofficial media</i>	(Not at all, 2, 3, 4, very much)	Categorical/ordinal variable Control variable
<i>Time spent for two types of media</i>	(Not at all, 2, 3, 4, very much)	Categorical/ordinal variable Control variable
<i>Workplace type</i>	State related =1, Private =2, Self-employed =3 Retirement =4	Categorical/ordinal variable, Independent variable

Table 13 Coding for variables

6.2.2. Data validity and reliability

The questionnaire was revised several times to guarantee an appropriate, usable data. The main objective of this study is whether the interaction between the audience and the media affects their judgement on human rights situation of large scale land acquisitions. There is also a possibility that background of the respondents also does the same, therefore that information was collected as independent variables and added along the regression models, to satisfy the “concurrent validity”. However, these information cannot be used to draw more insight whether there is a connection between their background and interaction (time and

trust) towards the media since those background informations are too specific towards LSLAs.

While fixing the randomization for data balance, unfortunately I only paid attention to age group so it reflects the actual population (around 68% for 15-64 group and 7% for 65 and above), but other factors such as education and religion do not. The questionnaire got more attention from the group with university education and above, while this portion is smaller on total population. Similarly, religious group accounts for almost half of the sample size, while religious group only accounts for 13.7% of total population. The sample size was compared to 2019 population and housing census by the government (Vietnamese General Statistics Office, 2019) These shortcomings show in data analysis.

There were a total of 898 respondents , but 342 respondents did not finish the survey, marks a 69,9% completion rate. Respondents are asked to click “Agree” twice two conditions: they understand the letter of information and agree to share their religion - as it is required by the legal basis for processing special categories of personal data about religious beliefs is "Explicit consent (art. 9 nr. 2 a)". Finally, they are asked to sign their name for storage purpose, in case a respondent decides to withdraw. However, 136 respondent clicked “Agree” then proceed to write “No”. These responses are excluded as it is impossible to establish proper consent.

As for reliability, Field (2012) suggested a second testing. It should work for indicators such as time spent and trust in media types as they can lead to change in final judgement in case the correlation is proved. However it is difficult for this population as the time limit and questionnaire structure do not collect a mean of contact and other information are soon anonymized after finishing the project. Therefore it is fair to say that this is a bias sample, thus generalization if questioned. This issue can be resolved by working on the survey first then other steps (media data and interviews) so it would result in a better sample.

6.2.3. Assumption

Normality test developed by Shapiro and Wilk (1965) is considered appropriate in most situations. $W = 0.89087$, $p\text{-value} < 2.2e-16$, the variable Judgement is not normally distributed as $p\text{-value}$ is close to 0.

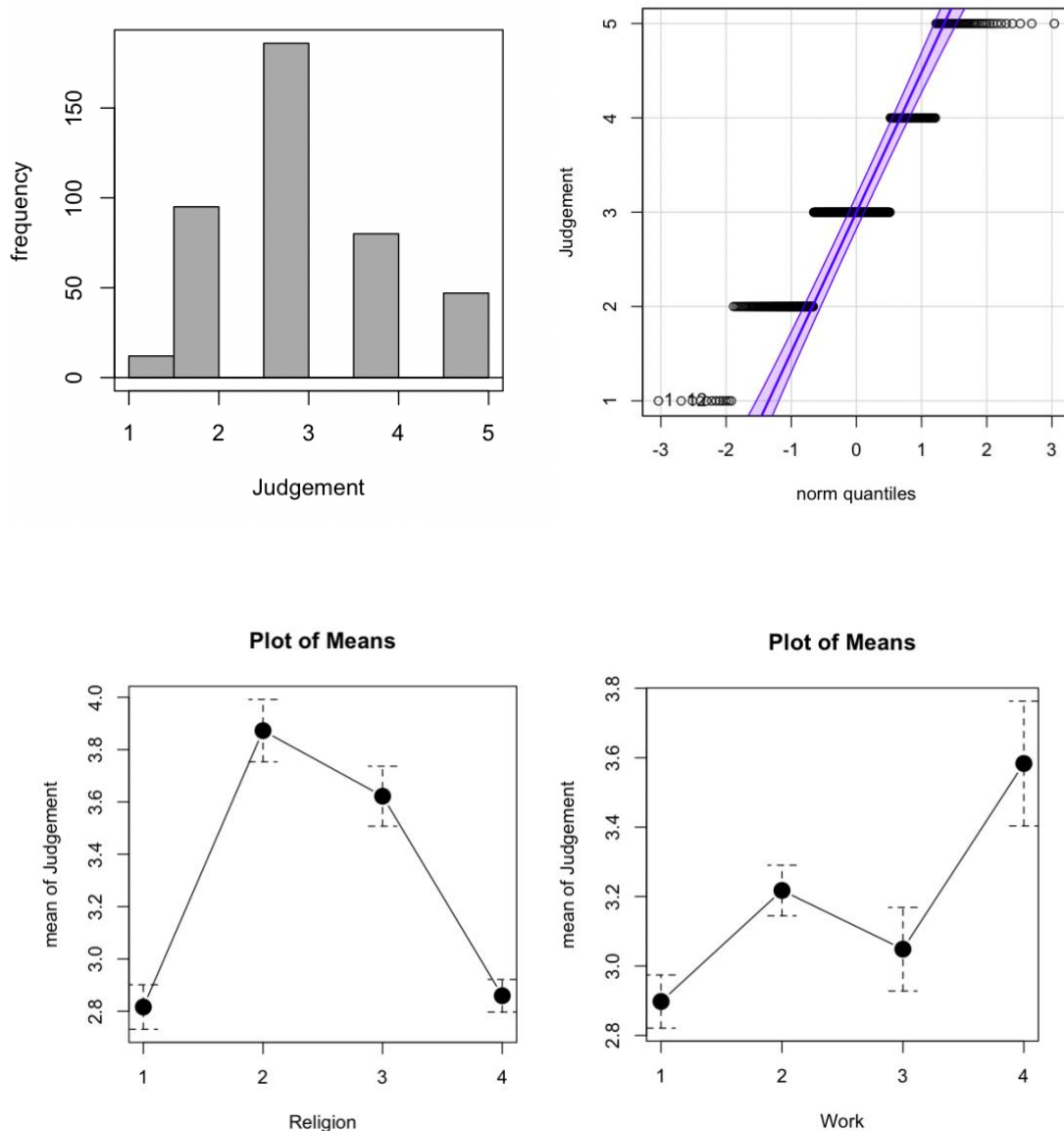


Figure 6 Assumptions

Test of homoscedasticity for the variables “Religion” and “Workplace type” with slightly significant $P\text{-value}$ of both being 0.01, indicates homogeneity of variance is violated. This means that there is a notable difference between each religions and workplace type when judging about human rights violation of LSLAs.

6.2.4. Descriptive statistics

<i>n</i> = 420	<i>Min</i>	<i>1st quartile</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>3rd Quartile</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St.D</i>
<i>Judgement</i>	1	2	3	4	5	3.13	0.98
<i>Time for official media</i>	1	2	3	4	5	3.19	1.09
<i>Time for unofficial media</i>	1	2	3	4	5	2.50	0.99
<i>Trust in official media</i>	1	2	3	4	5	3.22	1.03
<i>Trust in unofficial media</i>	1	2	3	4	5	2.86	1.01

Figure 7 Meaningful descriptive statistics for the categorical and nominal explanatory variables

6.2.5. Graphic description of the data

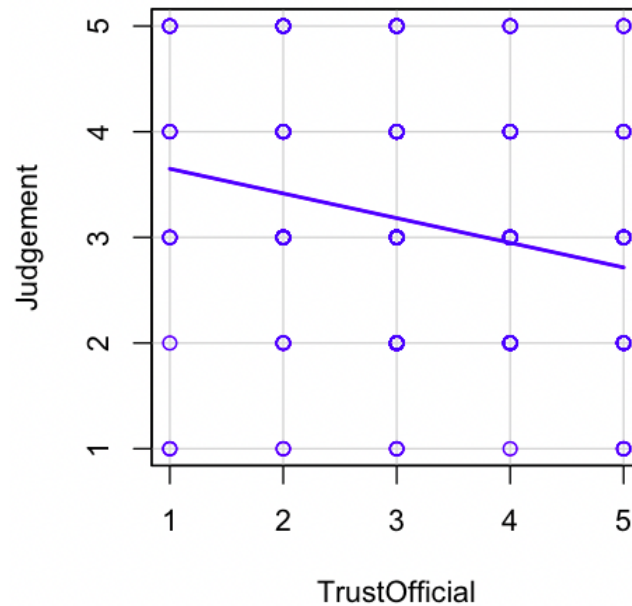


Figure 8 Scatterplot between trust of official media and judgement of human rights situation

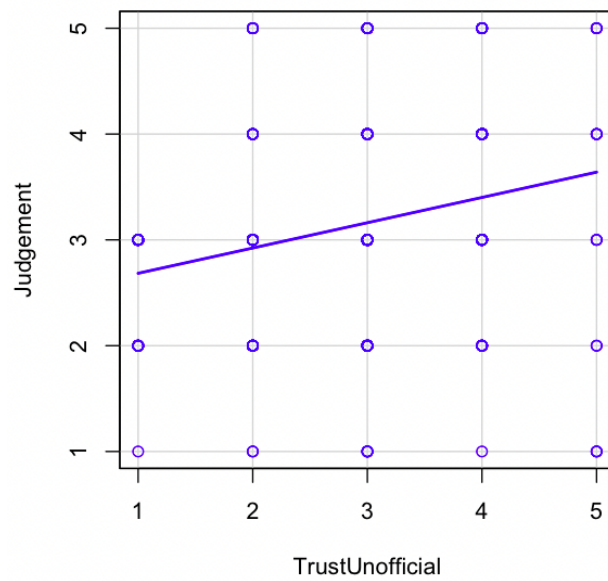


Figure 9 Scatterplot between trust of unofficial media and judgement of human rights situation

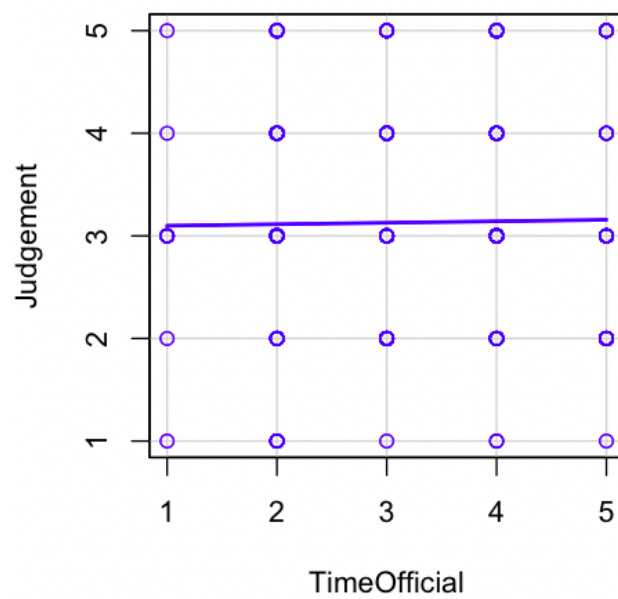


Figure 10 Scatterplot between time spent for official media and judgement of human rights situation

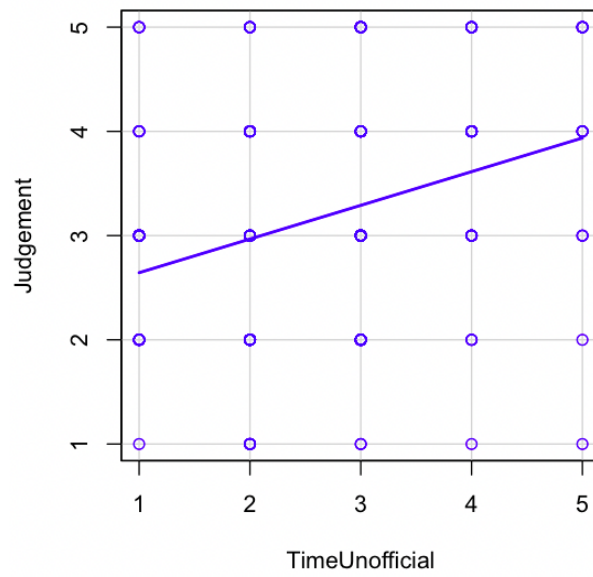


Figure 11 Scatterplot between time spent for unofficial media and judgement of human rights situation

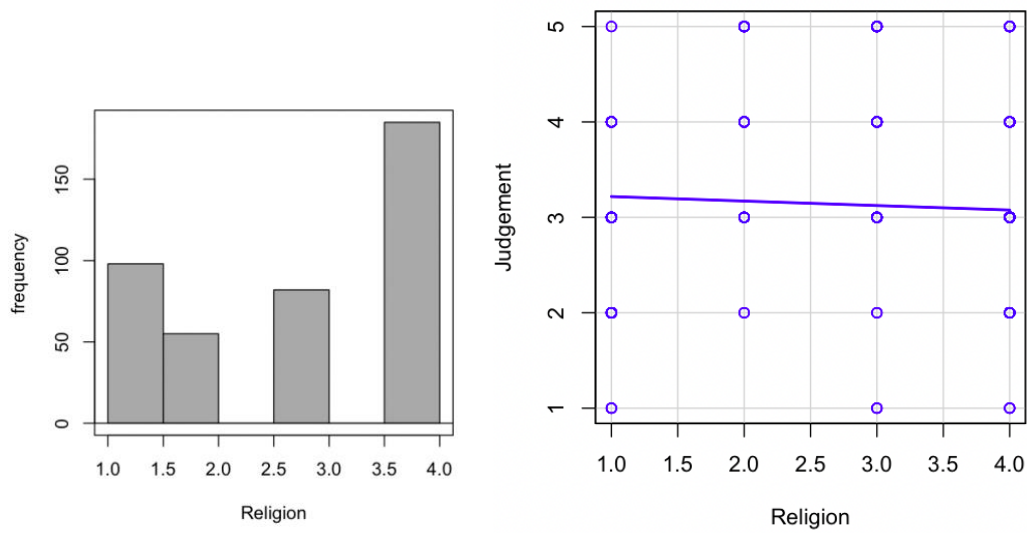


Figure 12 Frequency distribution and scatterplot of judgement between religions

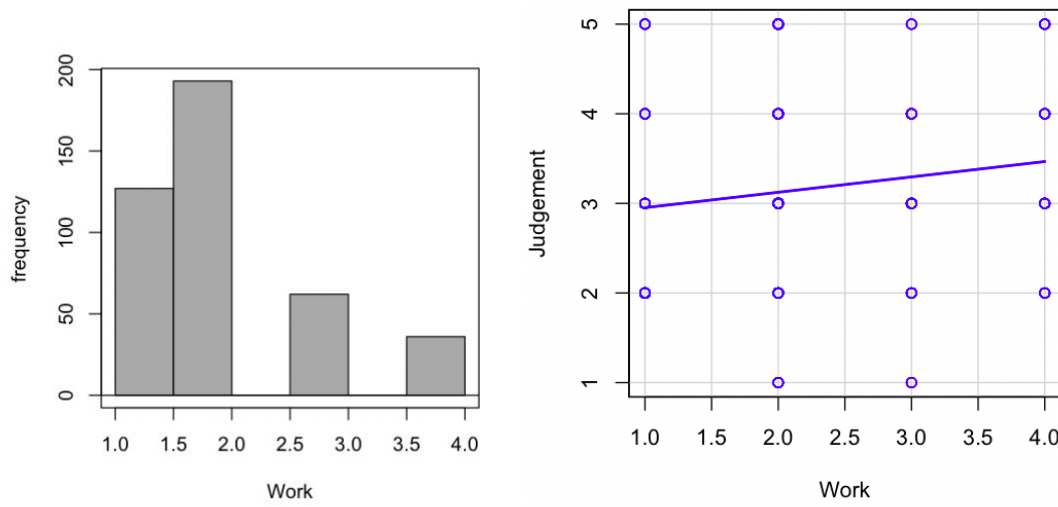


Figure 13 Frequency distribution and scatterplot of judgement between workplace type

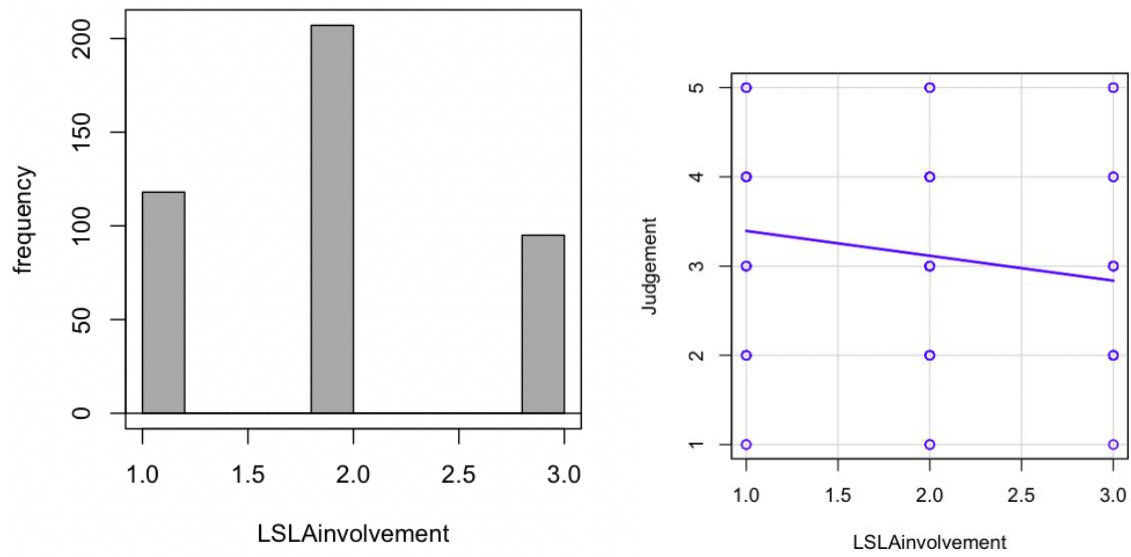


Figure 14 Frequency distribution and scatterplot of judgement between involvement in LSLAs

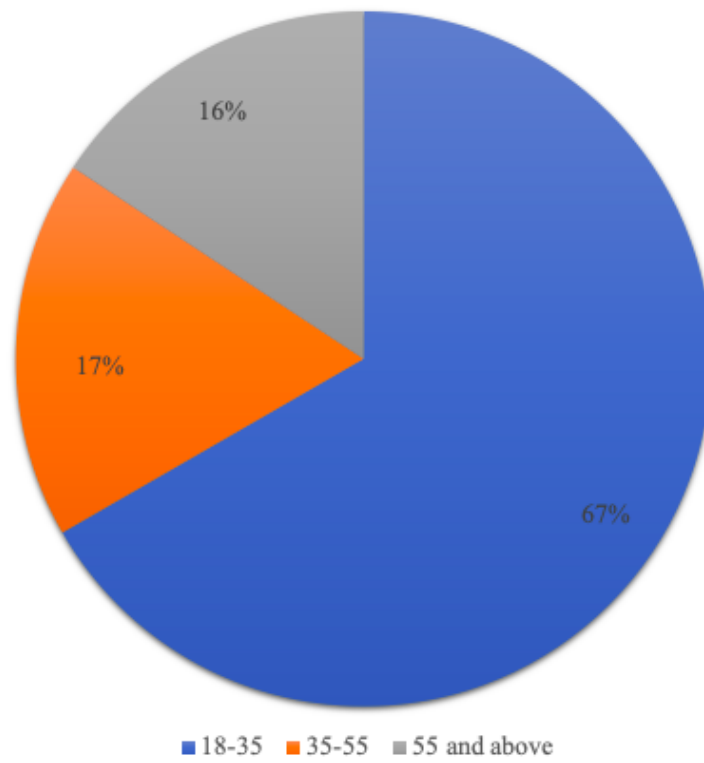


Figure 15 Age groups

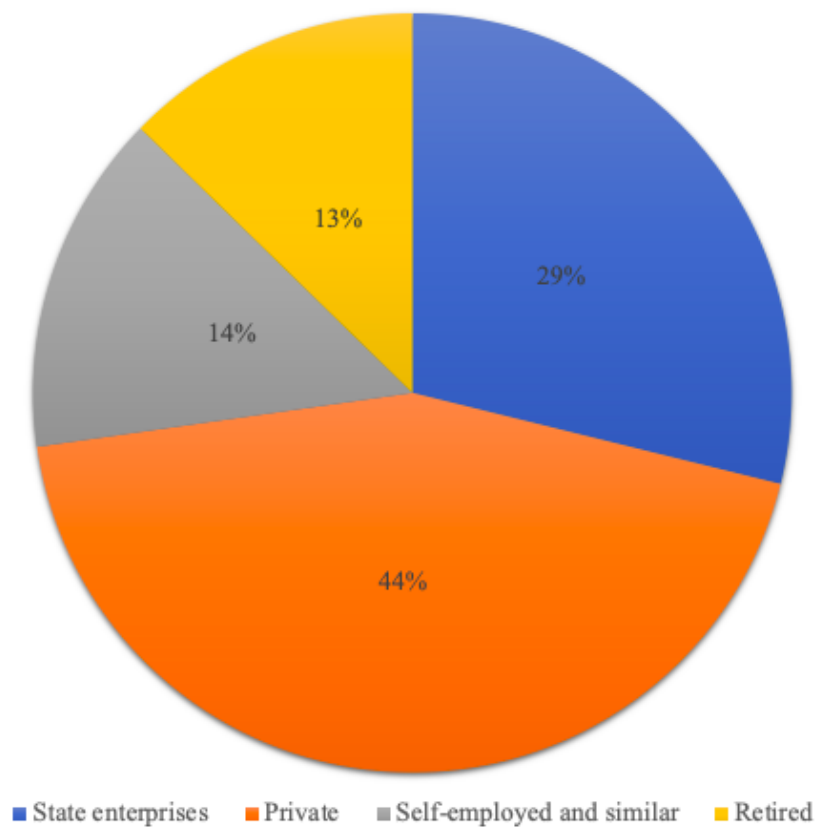


Figure 16 Work groups

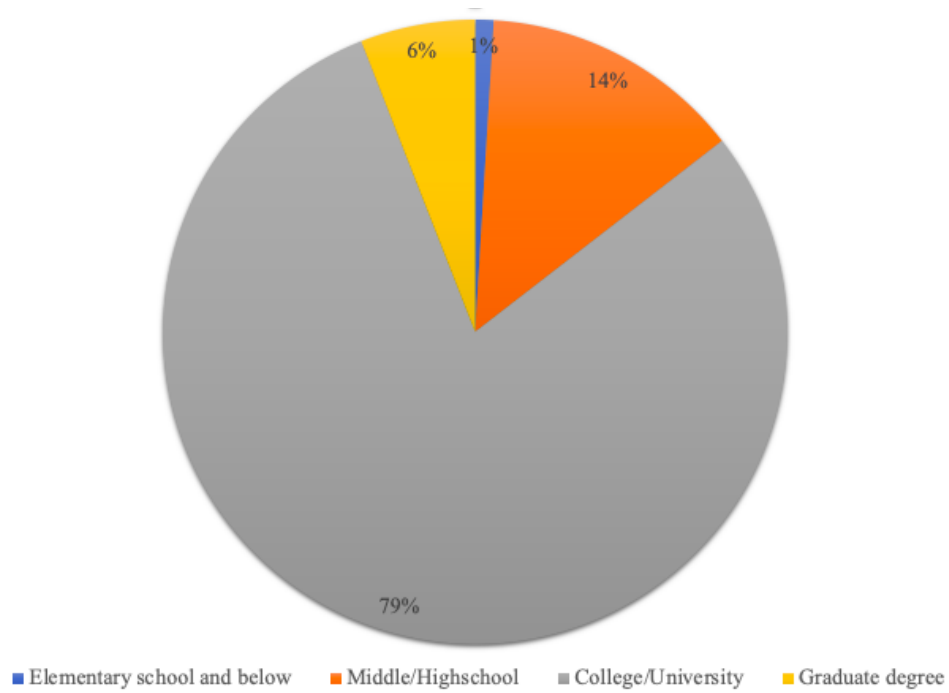


Figure 17 Education percentage

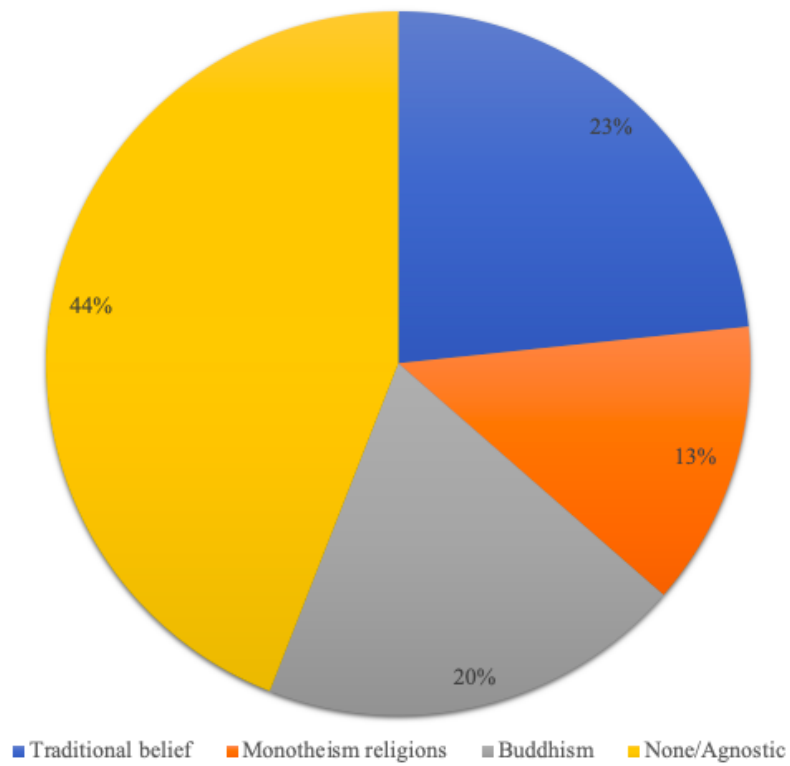


Figure 18 Religions percentage

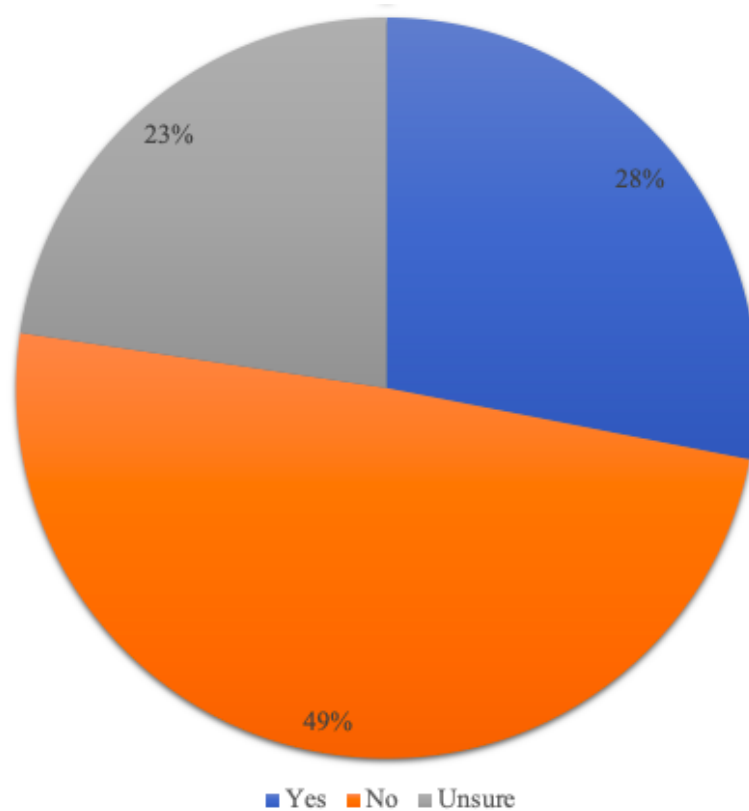


Figure 19 Percentage of people involved in LSLA

6.2.6. Multivariate Regressions

<i>Signif. codes: 0</i>		<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>
<i>****' 0.001 ***' 0.01</i>		<i>Bivariate</i>	<i>Multivariate</i>	<i>Multivariate</i>	<i>Multivariate</i>
<i>**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1</i>		<i>regression</i>	<i>regression</i>	<i>regression</i>	<i>+dummyset</i>
<i>Independent variables</i>	Coef (S.E.)	Coef (S.E.)	Coef (S.E.)	Coef (S.E.)	
<i>Interest in LSLAs</i>	0.44115 (0.04657)	0.41453 (0.04747)	0.236179 (0.050739)	0.22843 (0.05118)	
<i>Age</i>			-0.061094 (0.049902)	-0.09941 (0.05818)	
<i>Continuous variable</i>					
<i>Education</i>			0.038534 (0.090810)	0.03481 (0.09104)	
<i>Continuous variable</i>					
<i>Trust in official media</i>			-0.106499 (0.042853)	-0.10144 (0.04303)	
<i>Trust in unofficial media</i>			0.056456 (0.045654)	0.05272 (0.04570)	
<i>Time for official media</i>			0.035596 (0.039884)	0.13509 (0.04918)	
<i>Time for unofficial media</i>			0.139230 (0.048867)	0.04246 (0.04029)	
<i>Involvement in LSLAs</i>					
<i>Dummy variable set</i>					
<i>(Ref Category = Yes)</i>					
<i>No</i>		-0.18906 (0.10444)	-0.073426 (0.101206)	-0.06068 (0.10206)	
<i>Unsure</i>		-0.34197 (0.12431)	-0.159499 (0.121583)	-0.13270 (0.12287)	
<i>Religion</i>					
<i>Dummy variable set</i>					
<i>(Ref Category = Monotheism religion)</i>					
<i>Buddhism</i>			0.002054	-0.01323	

			(0.156094)	(0.15731)
Traditional belief			-0.611353	-0.61680
			(0.154184)	(0.15575)
None/Agnostic			-0.497428	-0.51605
			(0.150587)	(0.15258)
Workplace type				
Dummy variable set				
(Ref Category = State enterprises)				
Private				0.01185
				(0.10389)
Self-employed				-0.14602
				(0.13718)
Retired				0.18985
				(0.17408)
n=420				
Intercept	2.14257	2.37274	2.737727	2.80888
	(0.11305)	(0.14700)	(0.440048)	(0.45450)
p-value	< 2.2e-16	< 2.2e-16	< 2.2e-16	< 2.2e-16
R2	0.1767	0.1917	0.3073	0.3125
Adjusted R2	0.1748	0.1859	0.2869	0.287

Table 14 Multivariate regressions

Model 1

The first model uses measure the interest in LSLAs and judgement on the matter. The R^2 value is 0.1767, which means the interest can explain 17% of their rating on human rights of LSLAs. The t-value is high, 18.953 far from the critical region of 1.96 ($\alpha=0.05$); and 2.58 ($\alpha=0.01$). Moreover, the F-statistics number of 89.74 on 1 and 418 DF and p-value: < 2.2e-16 also means that the variable is also very significant, while the residual standard error is low 0.8918 on 418 degrees of freedom

Model 2

This model takes on more dummy variable (involvement in LSLAs) into consideration, but it results in the same manner of model 1, which slightly higher numbers: The t-value is high, 16.141, same critical region of 1.96 ($\alpha=0.05$) ; and 2.58 ($\alpha=0.01$). F-statistics number of 32.88 on 3 and 416 DF, and a same p-value: $< 2.2e-16$. The residual standard error is still low: 0.8858 on 416 degrees of freedom

Model 3

One more dummy set (Religion) and main factors the paper mentioned (time spent and trust in different types of media) are included. R2 value spiked up to 0.3073, however the F-statistic and t-value both decrease 6.221 and 15.05 on 12 and 407 DF consecutively, p-value stays at $< 2.2e-16$

Model 4

The final variable, workplace type joins the regression as a dummy set. R2 is almost similar to Model 3 (0.3125), t-value and F-statistics continue to decrease: 6.180 and 12.24 on 15 and 404 DF with a similar p value of $< 2.2e-16$.

6.2.7. Section conclusion

The shortcomings of data collection presented in previous section are shown more clearly after running assumption tests on R Commander. The first, Shapiro-Wilk normality test results can be ignored as it tends to judge large sample as not normally distributed. However, the heteroscedasticity must be addressed, it points out that the value of the dependent variable is non-constant, due to the imbalance in the data. However, the models can still be useful even if assumptions are violated, and the results cannot be used to generalise the whole population.

From the graphic description, it is easy to point out that people have a neutral judgement no matter the amount of time they spend for official media, while for unofficial media, the more time they spend, the more critical they are. There is also a contrast in trust and judgement: people who trust in official media do not believe that there is a human rights problem with LSLAs, while those trust unofficial media have a completely different view. The judgement is also slightly above neutral for religious group, while none/agnostic group is complete neutral. People are also more critical depending on how "far" they are from workplace attachment - the value of Judgement slightly go up as we move along state enterprises workers, to private, self-employed and finally retirement. The judgement is clearly high for those that are involved in LSLAs. This is the reason why it is put early in four models.

For the regression models, their interest and involvement in LSLAs seem to play a large part in their judgment of the human rights situation in land acquisition, especially those who are interested in and connected to the issue. This is probably due to the difficulties they and their families face, as well as interest-based inquiry that makes them pay more attention to the downsides of this activity, while age and education do not affect much. Generally, who spend time and trust unofficial media certainly consider that there are human rights issues in land acquisition. However, being exposed to official media doesn't guarantee a neutral look unless they trust them. For religious groups, all coefficients are negative with monotheism being the reference category, points out that this group has unfavourable opinion. When workplace type with state enterprises as reference is added, it also has the same result, except for those who are self-employed.

There are also several issues with this dataset. The t-value is surprisingly high while standard errors are small, this should not happen, unless the observations are replicated. The F-statistics should go up together with R2 value, however it decreases along four models, which mean the variables added later are little correlated, as the degree of freedom are also reduced. Therefore, it is fair to say that the dataset is problematic, although somewhat shows that exposure and attitude to different types of media affect judgement on human rights situation of LSLAs, thus generalising is difficult, and this result can only be used as a separate observation.

6.3. Interviews with key persons

8 persons, including 4 government officials (labeled as A1 to A4). The first three are currently working in the land industry and directly manage land acquisition activities, including reviewing documents, dealing with contractors, and directing the site clearance campaigns. One has moved to the planning office and only works on paper. The other four are from media sector, two editors-in-chief, one retired, and one employee working for the state broadcaster (labeled B1 to B3). They were informed about the project at the end of 2020 and scheduled interviews in the first half of 2021. Finally, a policy analyst of a well-known social media.

6.3.1. Government officials that worked or currently working in land sector

The interviewees elaborated on how the government view LSLAs, what are the reasons for the land claimants' reactions and how do they consider the ethics of LSLAs. Finally, their information on the policy towards the media regards to news on the matters.

6.3.1.1. *"A political duty"*

"Political duty" is a phrase that is mentioned many times when asked about the state's policy in land acquisition. "Political duty" has no specific definition even in state documents, but in general when an activity is classified as a "political task" it needs to be done quickly. , effectively, need to be propagated to be useful to the collective, that doing them is patriotic. In general, they are propagated one-way to ensure the unity of perception, thought and action, or in other words, there is only one correct discourse for it.

Of the three current officials, to the question "Why is land acquisition and planning considered a political task", they answered that land acquisition is carried out in the name of a political task such as: how, mainly based on the specific cases they have been in charge of:

Interviewee A1- An official in a district in the capital (Hanoi) defines the "political" side of land acquisition: "For example, land acquisition for site clearance is a difficult, complicated, and impactful task. directly to many people, especially houses and places to live, the

implementation process has many diverse and complicated and unpredictable developments, generating many petitions from the people. that officials are not allowed to commit acts of promise, harassment, or corruption Second, they need to maintain a culture of conduct in the workplace when dealing with the public Third, they need to ensure accurately, do not repeat the stages of recovery over and over again, of which the most important is the initial investigation, survey and confirmation of the origin and location of the land to apply the compensation price, because this is what people In addition, they also need to work hard in dialogue with people whose land has been recovered, openly and transparently about mechanisms and policies, and mobilize the people to cooperate in land clearance in a smooth way. If even If there are complaints, denunciations must also be patient. Only then will the people trust the government, thereby maintaining the prestige of the ruling party."

Interviewee A2- Official of a suburban district of Hanoi "In 2021, the government has the policy of "Skillful propaganda in land clearance", the wards have dispatches to call people to register. The district itself is also having a project. For large construction projects, dozens of households are waiting for compensation from the district, but from the beginning they did not agree with the compensation plan, so the leaders called on other authorities such as the appraiser, then The Fatherland Front, set up a group called the Site Clearing Working Group. The team went to each family, then explained to them and informed them little by little about the project, especially the ones with benefits. for the people later, and guide them to check the price by themselves according to the market price, because the state compensates according to the market price, gradually, when convinced, most of them agree to hand over the premises. When many state agencies work together and speed up the planning of the city, we call it fulfilling the political task.

Interviewee A3 - Official of a southern province: "You have to understand that the planning, whether it is a state-owned project or a private contractor's, has shortcomings, such as delay in progress due to unreasonable compensation, mainly because of cost, poor resources, small land fund for resettlement, but in the end, it's for the people.. Building electricity, roads, and stations is also for the people, promoting socio-economic development, then from That accelerates the development of the province, but in order for people to cooperate, it is necessary to propagate and mobilize from state agencies and party committees. The most important thing here is to be closely related to contractors and investors. think about how they can do it on time, or before that, to see if they have the ability to do it or if it's a

suspended project Like some provinces X, province Y, just review the full project, then they can't do it, people waiting for a long time, people don't trust the government anymore. We have to do that step smoothly to get consensus among the people later on."

Interviewee A4 - Used to be an employee in the site clearance team: "In fact, people have very little understanding of the law. They don't understand that these projects are actually grounded and part of it is because of the people. The government actually had to contact them a lot of times, go to the site. This pulled a lot of parties in, including contractors, then those guys from the land fund, not to mention the agencies handling public funding, it's very cumbersome, so the bigger the project, the more it is considered a large-scale political task. Land belongs to everyone in this country, and that fact will not change just because one or two households like they do it in the West. If we agree to their needs, the whole city will look like a battlefield. Although the coercion looks extremely bad, the government at that time has to be decisive. So, it has already turned into a political task, so there is no other way"

Through the following excerpts, it can be seen that land acquisition is no longer a mere matter of the planning industry, but it is described as something great because it affects the prestige of the ruling Party, because although "The people's interests" are mentioned quite a lot, the ultimate goal is still the people's trust in the state, which is expressed through the cooperation in handing over land, how quickly the stages of land acquisition are resolved. Behind "for the people" is an implicit declaration of state power that can turn even the most stubborn households. It is worth noting that only Interviewee A4 refers to Vietnam's land management system, which is public ownership as opposed to private ownership as in some Western countries. Vietnam has just opened up to market economy since 1986, accompanied by the introduction of Western values, replacing the idea of "everybody's business is nobody's business" during the subsidy period. However, collective ownership is preserved, thereby creating a clash with individualism, when the other "one or two households" want their needs listened to.

6.3.1.2. *Willful ignorance as the root cause*

It is mentioned by A4 that difficulties in land acquisitions are partly due to people's limited knowledge of land law. When asked to elaborate what can be additional reasons for their

distrust and their non-cooperation, they replied with additional information on Christian population, and how the local officials can make the matter worse:

“"Actually, this has to understand a bit of history from the war. In the North, people migrated to the South in 1954, then in the South, people migrated abroad in 1975. Land and houses were abandoned. People just moved in, and gradually legalized it. Whoever said this land was mine and this house was mine, the red book was issued to prove the right to use the land. That was before the land law. Later, there was a land law, but people still arbitrarily sold agricultural land to other people to build houses, and then later planning, only the price of agricultural land was lower than the price of residential land. people but even local officials they do it wrong, and then later when doing the project, they have problems"

In addition, A4 also asserts that the current land law itself has many problems, that the use and ownership of land itself is not optimal. The law was also introduced too late, people are used to not being tied to the land, so once the law is enacted, they feel it is not fair, that there should be another sanction that listens to the wishes of the people rather than based on a vague concept of "common interest". They also stated that there is a religious discrimination towards Christian population, as they are not allowed to participate in the government's workforce. Therefore, they do not trust the government and try to avoid dealing with the government, and rather building first without asking for permission, and are overall skeptical to the fairness of compensation.

Officials A1 to A3 also briefly commented on the legal awareness of the people that hindered land acquisition.

"Currently, the legal consciousness of a part of the people is still low. They do not respect the law, the attitude of indifference and avoidance of the provisions of the law still occurs. The main reason is that the Vietnamese people still account for a large proportion in the agricultural sector, all year round focusing on production, animal husbandry, people live and fulfill their responsibilities with longstanding customs and practices. Therefore, awareness is still low in understanding and obeying the law."

"People who refuse to comply are actually because the ability of state agencies and state officials to comply with the law is not high, or in other words, they themselves tolerate

violations of the law, One way or another, building an extra floor that is too regulated, encroaching on more chicken coops and pigsty on farmland, bribery is the way to go. The attitude of contempt for the law comes from that, then they disobedience in even larger matters such as planning. Officials should be exemplary, but they are corrupt, making people look down on the state, affecting the face of the state."

"The people's intellectual level is still low, the disparity between regions, in some places people already have knowledge of the law, but in some places the law is still something far away, Not attached to real life, they are indifferent to the law and for the immediate benefit of individuals, many actions are contrary to the law affecting human activities. Reaching for a gun to shoot at the cadres, then in Dong Tam they burned to death the policemen on duty.

After this, interviewer had to give a hint about people's needs, these three officials repeated that the root cause is knowledge and long-standing "Custom rules the law", and that the "public interest" should be placed first, similar to what A4 explained in the previous section.

6.3.1.3. The only appropriate option.

Since all suggestions of viewing LSLAs under the people's perception did not work, the interviewer needed another tactics, such as questioning about the methods used for measuring compensation, how are they issued, and if there is anything else beside finance, and whether it is justified. Once again, the former officer seemed to willingly provide judgement more than the other three.

"[Compensation is based on people's needs?] I don't think so. The method of compensation, first of all economic, is based on the market price for the type of land there. Sometimes it is unreasonable because many Households have lived there for a long time and built a house on it, it is considered as residential land, but according to the law later, it is agricultural price but has a lower value. This damage measurement method is problematic, it does not cover their needs, but our state always puts the law first, as if it denies everything before it. In that land reform, children and grandchildren denounce their parents and grandparents. Is would be bad to say this, but there might be no morality or humanity here at all."

Meanwhile, the other three officials mostly repeated what presented in the previous sections, with additional phrases of “people’s awareness” and that personal gains cannot surpass public interest. “Public interest” are defined by them are for economic development for national and public benefits is one of the major solutions to create impetus for socio-economic development through projects to build industrial parks, processing zones. export, high-tech zones, economic zones; projects to build new urban areas, rural residential areas, industrial clusters, etc. All have the same conclusion “Everyone is equal before the law, the law is made to create equality, and we should enforce that thinking”.

They also noted that cases of land acquisition for economic development purposes are regulated by the basis of the 2003 Land Law, which was finalized in accordance with the 2013 adjustments. These regulations are an important legal basis for the process of perfecting the law in accordance with the market economy management mechanism, some of them refers to the process as “Land recovery” than land acquisition, is done to create a "clean land" fund for investment projects in the future. They also noted that “clean land” is to avoid interest groups in corrupting the projects, but did not explain further. Interviewee A4 is the only person to mention the downsides as a problems caused by interest groups, which led to the discussion of the media.

6.3.1.4. “The media is wicked”

A4 continued on the "battle" with the media "The reality is that the press does not represent the people as you think. They are partly participate for themselves. There are many times when journalists are at the scene, they They know that there are many inadequacies in land management and in mobilizing people to hand over the land, so they deliberately come to stir things up. The media - is wicked. According to A4, that is the reason why many districts have to mobilize more forces to prevent journalists from coming to the scene, except for journalists from direct state media sites such as Chinhphu.vn. A4 also points out that despite being unified under state control in some aspects, such as providing positive coverage of the ruling party, the press is in fact still a force that is divided by many factions within the party to expose and fight each other.

As for the rest of the officials, they mainly emphasized the priority of covering land in general. Accordingly, the most important thing is to report on changes in policies, new official documents or changes in working procedures with the people. Followed by specific instructions for people to find the right person and the right agency for help when they need to do land procedures. A2 and A3 further commented that in fact, "I don't understand how the press works or people don't care", but it seems that most people are still confused, and then become frustrated while the force is only working. comply with the law. A3 believes that there is a need for more effective propaganda to educate people.

6.3.2. Media personnels

6.3.2.1. *“We need a livelihood too”*

The first subject, B1, is a former editor-in-chief, answered the question directly when being asked about media’s agenda setting, with an additional information of benefiting from bribing and siding with factions. The media know well that land management in Vietnam is faulty, and they take advantage of that situation.

“Have you ever heard of “scaling news”? When there is a land violations or something that disturb the local people, the reporter will reflect on article number one, quoting a certain lawyer saying this area is illegally planned. Article 2 will say that this violation has been around for several years and no official has taken action. In the end, it will always be the article "Is the government powerless, letting go of wrongdoing?" Usually after three articles, businesses or localities will bribe the newsroom to remove the articles, otherwise the newsroom will continue to develop the topic. These series can often go up to 50 articles”

B1 noted that newspapers will not develop articles in the direction of commentary, construction or making viewers think, but they will follow the formula of how to make businesses and local authorities pay bribes. They also gave an URL to an archive of removed articles due to bribery¹. "It's a pity, because these reporters develop articles very well. However, they do it because the factions are fighting each other, not for the sake of the people.". B1 warn the interviewer of getting into trouble for publishing such information, but

¹ <http://fb.com/baiviet404/>

expressed sympathy: "Actually journalists have to make a living, but the payroll is so low. The media has power, but only upon small businesses. Otherwise they are all under factions, and the greatest, the central government". B1 listed several incidents that all newsroom, despite factions, must publish the information based on one official document issued by the Government Inspectorate.

B2, a reporter working for central government media noted that there are two types of "official media". One that receives orders directly from the government, which includes VTV, Chinhphu.vn, NhanDan, VOV and VNA. These websites/newspaper normally report slower than other licensed media, as they only do that when they are certain which faction is going to lose the fight for power, normally under the Government Inspectorate's written conclusion.

B2 also explains how the media "make a living out of clinging to local officials and enterprises". First, they all have a professional reporter on different types of violations where victims are the people. Normally, after two articles, the related enterprise/contractor would contact and ask to remove it with money. For large enterprises, they make a contract with different newsroom under the name of "Commercial agreement", renew each year to exclude them from the denouncement. However, sometimes the newsroom/reporter can be invasive to bear, which would make the enterprises set up a trap and get law enforcement in to arrest the reporter on site. At a smaller degree, the enterprises would find an expert to file a lawsuit against the newsroom for defamation. These scandals are normally well-covered up, and are prevalent at non-central media. However, sometimes central government media personnels can also get into trouble if they get greedy. Last year, there was an official who was prepared to meet up at the bribery spot, but stopped at last minute after getting a tip from law enforcement, since they have close relation with each other. However, he was asked to resign from the position.

6.3.2.2. *Torn between*

When asked about the true motive for publishing on land violations, B2 noted that "for the people" is only a slogan. In fact, the media has too many other priorities - following the

central government's direction, choosing the right facts to side with, while maintaining a living from harassing private enterprises/contractors. They also commented on audiences' behaviours, through moderating comments on the websites/social media profiles as "passive, in a stasis" and that they do not question the information given.. B1 had a similar comment. "We indeed have the power upon small businesses. Thanks to scaling news that those emerging businesses quickly retreat from harassing the people to give up their land, as they have to negotiate with the people before applying the project. In case the project is delayed, they are also quickly finish the progress after several articles. That is the only time when we are actually doing something that benefits the people".

B2 and B3 also noted that the media has some autonomy in reporting, by writing the articles under a third person perspective, normally under a local official's voice, as to imply there is a problem. "But for LSLAs that involve underground struggle between factions, or ones that evoked a direct guiding document on how to report from the State, we are powerless", B3 concluded.

Interviewer then proceeded with question about putting land claimants' rights first, all three subjects responded that the term "Human rights" has long been presented as a foreign, imported term by the West, and is "villainized" (used English word) through articles about wars with Western countries in Middle East. B2 explained, warned the interviewer about the use of this term "There is no such thing as (universal) human rights, it is an equivalent exchange where the land claimants are at disadvantaged position. In the end, it is the government, the companies who are prioritized in the discussion".

6.3.2.3. *Sophisticated and scattered*

B1 again mentioned "scaling news", noted that it has a new form on social media, as interactions between "Key opinions leader" (KOL):

"One KOL questions a recent event, with comment about the government's role. A second KOL will make another post about the same event, debates that the government is indeed not perfect. A third one then stresses that the state should be more strict in implementing the law. These three posts imply that the problem is not the system or the law, and the reader would

automatically uses it as the reference for anything. It also make the discourse against land claimants as law breakers as reasonable”.

B2 also mentioned KOLs as the reason why the state is not fear of dissent although there are multiple negative articles that directly question the state's ability of management: “There is always a way to bend the public opinion, by making the government humane, they divert the doubt away from the system which are also flawed”.

B3, while giving general answer for other questions, were specifically interested in explaining the discourse with a political viewpoint. They gave several names of influencers, who are paid to lead the discourse on public spaces as: "Those violations happen because the State is not "leftist" enough and has given into neoliberal capitalism and allow corruption to bloom", which is very similar to articles analysed, as they mostly call for action, ask for more radical decisions towards both the people and local officials, instead of questioning the system. It seems that the existence and image of the Party stand above all things, and human rights/ civil rights are pawns in the political game, without true consideration.

6.3.3. Special subject

The special interviewee, X, worked three years as a policy analyst for one of the most well known social networking sites (SNS) in the world. In a team of less than five persons handling the Vietnamese market, they provided information about the deals with government, a hidden censorship process and express the concern over “freedom of speech”. X is the only one person who was not contacted by the interviewer, but got in touch with the interviewer themselves after encountering the survey published on Facebook.

According to X, after being criticized by the public for letting loose of discriminatory and terroristic content, this SNS publicized its entire policy on social networks as a transparency for users. However, X reveals that it is the shortened version, and covers only "less than 10%" of the text used internally. The spirit of the policy of this SNS is to remove content that may lead to real world harm by priorities. The first group includes child porn, terrorism, assassination, threats of violence. The second group can include criminal activities, drug trafficking, drug trafficking, pornography, self harm and suicide, and finally harassment,

bullying, revenge porn and all that have interpersonal nature. Separated from these categories is "International compliance" which removes content deemed sensitive in some countries, such as Holocaust denial content, although not considered a violation worthy of removal, but would be hidden from the countries involved, eg Germany, Israel and Poland upon marking.

Each of the category above has its own hundred-page long document including examples from real contents and action provided as guidance for the manual moderators work in different sites around the world. Manual moderation of such cases is the basis for developing an AI that would automatically remove violating content, and these sites, working along with the headquarters, would debate every week, and make minor changes in the policy twice a month to optimize the process. So far, the AI has made progress, first by auto-dismissal of benign reported content such as "Happy Birthday" or "Congratulations", but there is still much work to do. However, there is a "hidden censorship;" that according to X, will never be put under AI automation. Unlike single content such as texts or pictures, there are several individuals and organisations that the regimes deem "harmful" although some of them are completely legal in the US. The government thus would directly contact the SNS's policy team for a manual international compliance, to hide all these profiles from devices with Vietnamese IP address.

These individuals are normally political refugees that "somehow know a lot of inside information of the ruling party, including how the factions fight, who bribes, where they are trying to manipulate officials to achieve their goals: "It sounds like a conspiracy theory that I believe not many people would trust, sometimes they just read it for fun, like entertainment news about what A-listers are wearing today, but it's true.... So the regime is very scared and tried to silence it. But if you delete it, there is no basis as per the SNS policy, and it is equal to admitting it is real. That's why they use an international compliance policy, which is both reasonable in terms of fighting harmful information that may harm the people, the party and preventing people from reading it"

When asked about international compliance related to land acquisitions, X noted that there is one case where the censored individual revealed many projects that were in fact a method of gaining control of the territory. For example, in the case of Tat Thanh Cang and Le Thanh Hai, they reported it before the official media, in fact because only after that faction lost, the official newspaper received the "green light". But there are many other cases that are forever

shrouded in secrecy, “you just need to find the personal pages of those "reactionary" guys and compare the timeline”. The deal of applying international compliance is of course confidential, it is a way of maintaining the SNS’s business in the country. This mention of “factions” correlated with interest groups mentioned by both government officials and media personels.

Obviously the government has gone beyond borders to control what is allowed for the public to read. In addition, X warned that the survey results published widely on online communities might be manipulated:

"The groups that you posted the survey to, especially Group “M” with about 2 million people participating, is plagued with “red bulls”². You think that group was founded by youngsters so they all think independently, so they have freedom of speech? It's a long way off. That group is actually supported by the big media conglomerates whom the state is behind to shape public opinion. Are most the replies neutral? Or some of them are mostly pro-government, to show that they believe in the government, so the government is right, that is their mindset". X’s prediction is correct in comparison to the data, where the regression shows that there is a certain degree of replication in the responses. Thus, except for the issues of corruption, group interests, and press manipulation that many other studies have mentioned, this is the first time there is evidence that there is a much higher, more advanced level of censorship. There is no other conclusion that the state seek to and is dominating public discourse in general and not just on the issue of LSLAs and it seems that many people voluntarily believe and participate in it.

6.3.4. Sector conclusion

Interviews with seven key persons in two groups show that whether they are government officials or people working in the media industry, they are more or less aware that the shortcomings in the current LSLAs lie in the law. However, in the discourse, they emphasize the human element, whether it is the state, local officials or land claimants. By claiming that "all are equal before the law", the core nature of LSLAs that are harmful is ignored, as is the public ownership system that puts land claimants at a disadvantage. Local laws are young,

² Red bull- “Bò đỏ” is a slang term for those who support the CPV.

man-made, errorable and modifiable by default. Former officials seem more open to sharing their thoughts. Press officers, whether in office or not, appear to be willing to share information, apparently not because of guarantees of confidentiality, but because of land inadequacies, including bribery and corruption. and censorship are so pervasive that it is difficult to trace their identities even though the stories shared are quite specific in terms of place and time. Either way, all this information proves that the rights of the displaced are of little concern unless it is used as a tool for factions in the ruling party to destroy each other. together. As the special subject leaked, beside leaving little autonomy to the press, the state is seeking control over most of the cyberspace, bringing land claimants to a dead end, leaving them with no weight in the discussion about LSLAs.

VII. Discussion

This chapter will discuss the role of the state and the media in the discourse on LSLAs, beginning with the overview of the discourse.

7.1. Flow of the discourse

In the context of one-party state, information about LSLAs in the press is described in an one-way manner, mainly informative, descriptive, and does not seem to be open to discussion or encouraging, prompting readers to think and reflect.

The flow of this discourse starts at reporting the case, emphasizes the wrongdoings, claiming that they will affect the credibility of the state. The land claimants has no presence until the media describes their situation but blames it on local officials and contractors. In case of resistance, they are portrayed with a negative image because of their disobedience, and the only rights they are attributed with is the accompanied with "duty and responsibility" of citizens, i.e. conditional, that they must obey the state before enjoying even their basic needs.

In hundreds of articles, there is almost no recognition of their legitimate needs under universal human rights. Finally, it ends with criticizing the state for being too lenient in law enforcement, allowing wrongdoings from local government, which leads to further

disturbance by the people who “abuse the situation” to cause further trouble, and calls for punishment by the law, with no question to the law itself, or the activities of LSLAs.

In other words, the land is considered not to belong to the people naturally, as the state regulates the land on their own. Paired with policies of urbanization, marketization and infrastructure development the situation has created favorable opportunities for corruption. As a result, millions lost their land and had their houses demolished because the land was in the planning area. The small, symbolic, unfair compensations were blocked by corrupt party members. The ball of responsibility is passed to local government, the contractors, and even the land claimants for “stirring up”. Such conflict over land occupation between the state and the people, the unresolved cries for compensation for decades, the arbitrary, brutal decisions without consideration to land claimants, under a clever concealment that is beneficial to the state, is a violation to the basic rights that humanity has honored.

7.2. The government’s role

The coordinating role of government can be clearly seen in this discourse. Except for small, independent cases, most information about LSLAs is controlled. These cases are often the result of internal conflicts within the CPV, or corruption on a large scale that the government thinks would be better if kept hidden. Censorship takes place publicly, through official correspondence, and should be considered true and complete. Beside official media, the state has found many ways to influence public spaces, including manipulating virtual groups (with groups of up to millions of participants) to censor and spread information beneficial to the government.

They also go further by signing contracts with large SNS to censor dissidents. State control in this case is enormous, and with its expansion showing no signs of abating, the voice of international organizations on human rights or land has little effect, as they are only civil society organizations. As for European and American state organizations, human rights conflict with national sovereignty, and at the same time it could cause a deadlock in foreign affairs. Therefore, a country is not allowed to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, and their reports are only recommendations.

7.3. The media's role

Journalism has very little autonomy in such a state-dominated context. Especially in a situation where discourse is increasingly detrimental to land claimants, human rights in Vietnam are not respected. With a very subtle trick where issues that they consider sensitive such as issues of environmental protection, or freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, civil society, freedom on the Internet and social media, the issue of prisoners of conscience - are all drowned out behind many other issues that they emphasize and allow publicity, such as gender equality or is the issue of homosexuality. People are allowed to gather, discuss and protest publicly for gender equality, but debates or protests related to land were strongly suppressed. This is something to note. Organizations and individuals, or the media need to emphasize that if the state wants to show that it has a "deep" and "up-to-date" understanding of human rights, it should act in an honest and sincere manner, rather than flaunt this while not wanting to show the truth about the others. This might be difficult for state media, but the discussion can start from guaranteeing basic needs of the people, slowly shift the focus to land claimants and socio-economics instead, as the core issue of public ownership is not expected to change in the near future.

7.4. The audiences's place

The discourse itself does not guarantee that the audience will also have the same mindset. Among the survey participants, a lot of people look to foreign newspapers, or Vietnamese newspapers abroad that are not controlled by the state, and it is clear that they have a more critical view on the human rights situation. in LSLAs. Many survey participants who came from the above groups all had almost identical responses, which are neutral or believe that the state has not committed any human rights violations due to virtual space manipulation.

As for the SNS censorship, the survey has not been optimized to draw any conclusions for the entire population of Vietnam, the impact of this is still unclear. The only conclusion that can be made is that the state is finding themselves a new, more effective way to control public opinion through social networks owned by a foreign company, where users may not expect to be censored, and from therefore are more negligent, more trusting of what they read and most

likely will gradually agree with discourse that is harmful to land claimants. Discourse used on social networks is also sophisticated, containing many messages about the political system, suggesting that its shortcomings are due to its people and people can rarely notice.

7.5. Which way for human rights?

Recent LSLAs that led to deaths, people have criticized “there is only law of the jungle” in Vietnam. Without action, critics does not change anything. The people need to fight for their rights. Ideally speaking, the price for human rights will be too high if too few people fight for it, for example only a few hundred, the price to pay is a few years in prison to twenty years in prison or worse, deportation, but that price would decrease to nonexistent if the number is tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people, or even millions who seek to understand the value of human rights. There is also a hope that the heads of the state apparatus, the Vietnamese government will one day truly understand human rights values, when they themselves see the need for reform.

However, those are wishful thoughts, when Vietnam is still under the rule of a one-party regime, and as long as they still has the intention of absolute rule, especially no ruling class wants to lost their power and rights, the people had to change themselves first. Calling for a fight does not mean organizing meaningless protests to be suppressed, or being assertive in speech to get imprisoned. The compliance of a country with international law goes from the lowest level is the commitment to comply with the constitution, to the highest level is the commitment to international human rights.

There is an advantage that provisions on human rights lie in the Vietnamese Constitution, but most people still confuse it with civil rights. There should be clarification to “purify” the mindset, under the name of "propaganda" and "indoctrination", discussing rights within the constitution without triggering the state. Gradually, people can have a sense of human rights. The presence is a perfect time, as the people are becoming more and more sensitive due to the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, they might be more critical about the right to a livelihood, the right to be protected by the government, and question if those are assured.

Furthermore, due to the lockdown, as people take the time to read more and participate in social networks, they might be more aware that multidimensional opinions on recent incidents are frowned upon. From there, they can realize that their rights are limited, or furthermore, it is the land claimants who are put in a disadvantageous position, not the image of the state.

To do this, domestic and foreign organizations can actively connect with the media in disseminating the constitution and encouraging the people to fight legally, and at the same time, call on the state to follow constitutional practice. Simply monitoring the government's compliance with the constitution is similar to their strategy of emphasizing on legal compliance in LSLAs cases, can lead to small but positive changes. When this start is achieved, the people will gradually enjoy the rights and benefits under national law in conformity with international law. From then on, lobbying the government to comply with international law is only a matter of time.

Appendices

Survey form

Media and Land Acquisitions in Vietnam

Q1 Age

- ☐ 18-35 (1)
- ☐ 35-50 (2)
- ☐ >50 (3)

Q2 What is your religion

- ☐ Traditional belief (1)
- ☐ Monotheism religions (2)
- ☐ Buddhism (3)
- ☐ None/Agnostic

Q3 Education

- ☐ High school (1)
- ☐ College/University (2)
- ☐ Graduate and above (3)

Q4 Current job

- ☐ Government firms (1)
- ☐ Private cooperation (2)
- ☐ Self-employed /Business owner (3)

Q5 Job Sector

- ☐ Public (1)
- ☐ Private (2)
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Retirement

Q6 Have you or someone you know involved in LSLAs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Q7 Are you interested in information about LSLAs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q8 Media Interaction

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
I get news from national official sources (VNExpress, Dantri.vn and their social media)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get news from unofficial media, such as independent foreign Vietnamese media (VOA/BBC Tieng Viet, thoibao.de)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Media trustworthiness

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
<p>I trust that official sources (VNExpress, Dantri.vn and their social media provide enough, and transparent information (1)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I trust that unofficial media, such as independent foreign Vietnamese media (VOA/BBC Tieng Viet, thoibao.de) provide enough, and transparent information (2)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 What is your level of knowledge on Vietnamese land history and land law?

	Bad (1)	Average (2)	Good (3)
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 Your opinion on Large-scale land acquisitions and human rights

	Very poor	Poor	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Excellent (5)
From the information I received through the media, and to my own knowledge, the government's practice of human rights on LSLAs case is:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Information Letter for survey

Are you interested in taking part in the research?

“The power of state media and human rights to land: an analysis of media content on large scale land acquisitions in Vietnam”?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to analyse the interaction between the media and audience in the context of large-scale land

acquisitions (LSLAs). In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

In this master thesis, the primary research strategy is to make a case study of state media discourse in relation to recent land acquisitions in Vietnam. First it examines how official media discourse shapes the issue of LSLAs, what are the effects of this discourse and why the media discourse gets this form.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Why are you being asked to participate?

Anyone who is a Vietnamese citizen currently residing in Vietnam, and is above 18 years old can participate in this study as the survey is distributed through social media. The project aim for 400 participants.

What does participation involve for you?

If you chose to take part in the project, this will involve that you fill in an online survey. It will take approx. 5 minutes. The survey includes questions your interaction with the media and your opinion and knowledge on land related matters. Your answers will be recorded electronically»

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

Only the supervisor and the student working on this dissertation can access your personal data. I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data on the research server. Data collection and processing will be done on Qualtrics. Only the age and occupation of participant will be published.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end 16th August 2021. After this point, all data will be anonymised.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Norwegian University of Life Sciences via Poul Wisborg (poul.wisborg@nmbu.no)
- Our Data Protection Officer: Hanne Pernille Gulbrandsen
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email:
(personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader
(supervisor)

Student

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project [*insert project title*] and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in this online survey
- ☐ to share the information about my religion

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 15th May 2021.

(Signed by participant, date)

Information letter for the Interview

Are you interested in taking part in the research?

“The power of state media and human rights to land: an analysis of media content on large scale land acquisitions in Vietnam”?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to analyse the interaction between the media and audience in the context of large-scale land acquisitions (LSLAs). In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

In this master thesis, the primary research strategy is to make a case study of state media discourse in relation to recent land acquisitions in Vietnam. First it examines how official media discourse shapes the issue of LSLAs, what are the effects of this discourse and why the media discourse gets this form.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Why are you being asked to participate?

Anyone who is a Vietnamese citizen currently residing in Vietnam, and currently working for sectors related to the study (land, media and law) is invited directly by the researcher to participate.

What does participation involve for you?

If you chose to take part in the project, this will involve that you do an interview. It will take approx. 20 minutes. The survey includes questions on land and the media under your academic/professional view.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

Only the supervisor and the student working on this dissertation can access your personal data. I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data on the research server. Data collection and processing will be done on Qualtrics. Only the age and occupation of participant will be published.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end 16th August 2021. After this point, all data will be anonymised.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
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- Our Data Protection Officer: Hanne Pernille Gulbrandsen
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader
(supervisor)

Student

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project [*insert project title*] and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in this interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx.
15th May 2021.

(Signed by participant, date)

Interview guide

Interviewing key persons (governmental officials/ journalist/lawyers on Land Law and Land acquisitions)

Beginning

- Greetings
- Self introduction
- Inform the sample about the processing of their personal data

Questions about the participant

- Education sector (Since some might have different background but choose to work in another and it might affect their viewpoint on current affairs)
- Job sector and industry
- How long have they been working in the sector

About Land Law and LSLAs

- Question about their knowledge of Land Law and ask for their opinions. If else, notify them about basic part of Land Law such as “land belongs to the people and the government manage on their behalf” and how do they think about the current land system. If possible, do they want the current law to be revised?
 - Have they heard about LSLAs? If they don’t know, or not familiar with the term, inform them. Ask if they know certain incidents related to land acquisitions. Depend on how much the participant know, invoke their thoughts on resistance of the people who lost land, as to why do they resist, is it reasonable? How about the government’s response, is it reasonable?
- 1) Generic questions on the media

- How important is the media in reporting LSLA incidents? Do they think it shapes the public opinions, or just reflects the crowd?
- Is there any differences in portraying LSLAs between official and non-official media and why? Do they think that one of them report incidents more accurate and unbiased than the other? OR different media type barely reflect different viewpoint. OR serves different interest and there is actually no accurate reporting on everything? In that case, is there any interest that is better than the other “lesser of two evils”

2) End of interview

Thank the participant and remind them of consent/processing data.

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