Internet and Covid-19 Pandemic Response Strategies in Vietnam

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Abstract

Vietnam is one of the few countries in the world to effectively control the Sars – Cov - 2 epidemic despite being a neighboring country of China - the first place where the Sars – Cov - 2 epidemic broke out in the world. As of June 10, 2020, the total number of Sars – Cov - 2 infections in Vietnam was 332, with no deaths; From April 16, 2020 to June 10, 2020, 54 days in Vietnam have no cases of infection in the community. This study was conducted to recognize the role of the Internet in supporting Vietnamese families in the Sars – Cov - 2 pandemic, in the context of the government implementing thorough social isolation to control the disease. The main research method used is the method of analyzing documents on the Sars – Cov - 2 coping policy of the Vietnamese government combined with in-depth interviews with parents in families. The research results show that the relevance of the Government of Vietnam policy to respond to the Sars – Cov - 2 pandemic and the supportive role of the Internet for families is very positive.

Keywords: Internet; COVID-19 pandemic; family; economic life; response strategy.

Résumé

Le Vietnam est l'un des rares pays au monde à contrôler efficacement l'épidémie de Sars-Cov-2 alors qu'il est un pays voisin de la Chine - le premier endroit où l'épidémie de Sars-Cov-2 a éclaté dans le monde. Au 10 juin 2020, le nombre total d'infections à Sars - Cov - 2 au Vietnam était de 332, sans décès; Du 16 avril 2020 au 10 juin 2020, 54 jours au Vietnam n'ont pas de cas d'infection dans la communauté. Cette étude a été menée pour reconnaître le rôle d'Internet dans le soutien aux familles vietnamiennes dans la pandémie Sars-Cov-2, dans le contexte de la mise en œuvre par le gouvernement d'un isolement social complet pour contrôler la maladie. La principale méthode de recherche utilisée est la méthode d'analyse des documents sur la politique d'adaptation Sars-Cov-2 du gouvernement vietnamien combinée à des entretiens approfondis avec les parents dans les familles. Les résultats de la recherche montrent que la pertinence de la politique du

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gouvernement vietnamien pour répondre à la pandémie Sars - Cov - 2 et le rôle de soutien de l 'Internet pour les familles sont très positifs.

Mots-clés : L'Internet; Pandémie de covid19; famille; la vie économique; stratégie de réponse.

Rezumat
Vietnam este una dintre puținele țări din lume care controlează eficient epidemia Sars - Cov - 2, în ciuda faptului că este o țară vecină a Chinei - primul loc în care epidemia Sars - Cov - 2 a izbucnit în lume. La 10 iunie 2020, numărul total de infecții Sars - Cov - 2 în Vietnam a fost de 332, fără decese; În perioada 16 aprilie 2020 - 10 iunie 2020, 54 de zile în Vietnam nu prezintă cazuri de infecție în comunitate. Acest studiu a fost realizat pentru a recunoaște rolul Internetului în sprijinirea familiilor vietnameze din pandemia Sars - Cov - 2, în contextul în care guvernul a pus în aplicare o izolare socială completă pentru controlul bolii. Principala metodă de cercetare utilizată este metoda de analiză a documentelor din politica de copiere Sars - Cov - 2 a guvernului vietnamez, combinată cu interviuri aprofundate cu părinții din familii. Rezultatele cercetării arată că relevanța politicii Guvernului Vietnamului de a răspunde pandemiei Sars - Cov - 2 și rolul de susținere a internetului pentru familii este foarte pozitivă.

Cuvinte-cheie: Internet; Covid19 pandemie; familie; viața economica; strategie de răspuns.

1. Introduction

According to information from the Ministry of Health of Vietnam on Ministry of Health website, as of 9Am on 10/06/2020, according to worldometers.info, there are 7,311,631 people infected with Sars-Covid-2 in the world, including 412,997 people died; 215 countries and territories (including 2 cruise ships) recorded Sars-Covid-2. Vietnam with the total number of Sars-Covid-2 infections was 322 people ranked 154/215 countries and territories there are cases of Sars-Covid-2 in the world; ranked 6th in 11 countries with Sars-Covid-2 cases in Southeast Asia, of which there were no deaths. Out of 322 Sars-Covid-2 infected people in Vietnam, there were 192 cases of infection from abroad and isolated immediately after entry, 140 cases spread in the community; the number of cases in concentrated isolation is 8,087 people, the number of cases in the home under medical supervision is 920 people. From April 16, 2020 to June 10, 2020, Vietnam has passed 54 days without new cases in the community. As of June 10, 2020, there are 317 cases have recovered, equivalent to 95.5% of all Sars-Covid-2 cases. Worth mentioning that 49/50 patients with foreign nationality were declared cured. Until Jun 10, Vietnam treated only 15 patients with Sars - Covid-2, in which the worst case was that the British pilot had spectacular health improvements.

Vietnam is a neighbouring country of China - the first place where the Sars-Covid-2 epidemic broke out in the world - however, with the consistent and effective policy of the Vietnamese government, together with the cooperation of the people, by June 2020 Vietnam has completely controlled the Sars-Covid-2

pandemic. During the time of the pandemic, the government and the citizen joined together to repel the Sars-Covid-2 pandemic. Through official and informal media channels, the government transmitted information about the disease and the government's policies to preventive measures as well as support for people during a pandemic; in contrast, citizen receive information and strictly implement/adhere to the requirements of the state.

In Vietnam, the number of Internet users is significantly increasing over time, and the effects of the Internet are also multidimensional. Vietnam officially joined the global Internet in November 1997, since then, has become one of the countries with the highest growth in the number of Internet users over the world. Vietnam became the 6th country in Asia and ranked 4/10 in Southeast Asia in the number of Internet users and ranked 17/20 countries with the highest Internet users in the world (Tran Van Cong et al., 2017). According to statistics from the Ministry of Information and Communications on shows that, as of January 2020, there are 18 Internet service providers in Vietnam, the total number of fixed broadband subscribers is 15,153,278. The total number of mobile broadband subscribers (via phones and data cards) is 63,089,684, and the total number of mobile broadband subscribers (via data cards) is 6,386,600. Compared with the internet usage of Vietnamese people, by mid-2015, the rate was 48%, higher than the world average of 45% and the region was 38.8% (Website of Telecommunications Department, Ministry of Information and Communications, 2020).

With a very high rate of Internet users in Vietnam, it can be said that, in the context of strict social isolation, the Internet has played an extremely important role in the transmission and connection of information, supporting the maintenance and development of activities economically, maintaining cohesion of relationships, supporting the implementation of social security for Vietnamese families. This study was conducted to help families have an accurate recognition of the role of the internet in helping families cope with pandemics; these conclusions can be considered as a suitable suggestion for families to have effective ways to use the Internet in the future, and can be considered as suggested solutions for families in other countries in the context of the current Sars-Cov-2 pandemic.

2. Literature review

The Internet has been invented and significantly developed in the past 5 decades, and nowadays plays an indispensable role in almost all areas of modern social life. Living in the world of the Internet, it is vitally a key source of information, mean of communication and the absence of the Internet makes someone considered outdated (Nguyen Van Khang, 2015). Internet is an achievement in the field of information technology and entertainment that affects many aspects of the society such as education, publishing, retail, banking, media services and healthcare. In particular, the Internet as a communication technology may create more interpersonal effects, and be more sophisticated impacts on human connections with friends, family and geographic communities,

on the social system of informal support and assistance, and on the function of groups (Kraut et al., 1999). It can be seen that Internet is an important mean of communication and has a multidimensional impact on social life. We can only foresee the social impact of Internet if we understand how people use it (Kraut, Mukhopadhyay et al., 1999). With the benefits of the Internet, individuals can make computer-based interactions become a complement to face-to-face interactions with their family and friends (Pénard et al., 2013).

Studies show that since the 1990s the Internet has quickly become a popular home technology, the Internet can be used for very different purposes, and the development and social impact of the Internet is unpredictable. The Internet can become household in the future, super advanced information for libraries and schools, virtual shopping centres or home entertainment centres (Kraut et al., 1999). The family is one of the basic institutions of society, Internet has a quite comprehensive impact on the life dimensions of the process of forming and developing a family (Hoang Ba Thinh & Doan Thi Thanh Huyen, 2019). Families have attained positive effects from the Internet such as: educational information, technical knowledge, world situation, connecting with friends but they also have to suffer the dangers from this convenient communication channel. Modern technologies (like mobile phones, Internet with Skype, Facebook, Twitter, Email) provide convenient communication methods that can be used anytime, anywhere; create conditions for family members, especially for parents and children, to close the gap and connect with each other (Dang Van Luan, 2018). In traditional families, the use of information and communication technologies such as the Internet can be associated with high family cohesion because the Internet facilitates the preservation of family boundaries by providing a communication tool between parents and children (Hughes and Hans, 2001). In this case, instead of blurring the boundaries of the family, the Internet contributes to their preservation, facilitating the sharing of information between parents and children through texting and image and information exchange. Young people use technology to connect, or to communicate and this positively helping them organize and maintain relationships with friends, family, and other social relationships. Therefore, face-to-face family communication is replaced not by the total time spent on the Internet but by online activities that are functionally equivalent (Lee & Chae, 2007).

Besides the benefits that the Internet brings, it is undeniable that there are negative effects on individual users, family life and the whole society. Many scientists around the world have argued that Internet abuse is widespread in many countries and has positive and negative effects on users. Perspectives on the influence of the Internet on users are also multidimensional and are evaluated from different social and humanity approaches such as Psychology, Sociology, Social work, Education or Economics. The Internet has brought great benefits to many people, but it is also a concern due to its harmful effects, especially for adolescents (Pham Thi Thuy Linh, 2017). Scholar Greenfield (2014) has countered the idea that as long as Internet is used wisely and reasonably, we can fully enjoy the great benefits of the virtual life and overcome the negatives. He lists a range

of disadvantages resulting from excessive use of the Internet, such as sensory disorders, attention retention issues, lack of deep thought and critical thinking (cited by (Phạm, 2017). In fact, it is paradoxical that the more connected users are on social media, the lonelier they feel (Turkle, 2017) and the messages from online have no value in emotional support, compared to other verbal communication means (Seltzer et al., 2012). Accessing Internet from mobile devices not only changes the way people communicate, but also affects the way users find and use information to address their daily needs. Moreover, it can change the method, content and meaning of individuals' communication behaviour to each other. The involvement of the Internet in personal life such as online entertainment and social networks at home become more convenient, but this convenience also makes each person forming new habits that reduce the direct communication between family members or creating new ways of communication (Nguyen Ha Vy, 2016). The author Le Tran Hoang Duy et al. (2017) also stated that the quality of communication from families using technology equipment quite often is low and has correlation with the purpose of using that technological equipment. The excess use of technology by children out of parental permission will lead to anxiety and punishments that parents can apply to resolve the problems. Additionally, in the current technological age, concerns such as parents abusing technology equipment and not spending adequate time with their children also lead to a loose and distant parents-children relationship (Nguyen Thi Hong Hanh, 2017). In reality, the conveniences of modern technology are also gradually making the distance of relationships become more distant (Dang Van Luan, 2018). Ling and Haddon (2008) have demonstrated that the negative use of Internet - connected devices as reliance on the phone can also negatively affect relationships.

Studies on the role of the internet in supporting families in prevention and response to epidemics have not been mentioned much in the world as well as in Vietnam. Study of Lemire Paré et al., (2008) confirms the importance of the credibility of information on the frequency of Internet use as a preferred source of information on personal health. It also shows the potentially influential role of the Internet in the development of personal knowledge of health issues. Diseases lead to strict social isolation, in which context, the Internet becomes a very important factor to connect people, maintain social relationships as well as social order, contributing to maintain economic and welfare activities for children and families. Technology became essential during the COVID-19 pandemic. During a time of isolation and social distancing, the world relied on technology to learn, live, and stay connected. Technology is best used to leverage and maintain social, physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual wellbeing for children, in an environment where children are co-engaged with an adult (Goldschmidt, 2020).

3. Method

In order to identify, locate and create a secondary database for the research topic, we conducted a search of publications by keywords (Internet and family,

Sars-Covid-2 epidemic, response strategy) in professional journals, magazines and newsletters. There are a total of 34 well-searched online databases and indexes, focusing mainly on *Google scholar*, *ResearchGate* and many other trusted websites, such as libraries of universities, website of Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry and Trade. In addition to the updated documents on the webs, we also look for printed documents, typed files in the computer to collect the most appropriate secondary source for synthesis and analysis.

In addition to the method of aggregating and analysing secondary resources, we conduct in-depth interviews to collect qualitative information related to perceptions/assessments of parents in the families that use internet on the influence/role of the internet on Vietnamese families during the COVID-19 pandemic in Vietnam. A total of 30 in-depth interviews for parents between the ages of 35 to 60, each of the in-depth lasted for 60 minutes.

4. COVID-19 pandemic response strategies and the role of the Internet

4.1. COVID-19 pandemic responses strategies of Vietnamese Government

The COVID-19 pandemic response strategies through consistent policies and measures implemented in Vietnam that has great results in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic are:

1. Cases of infection and suspicion of infection of Sars-Covid-2 virus are handled according to the Diagram 1:

2) Strict implementation of isolation to prevent the spread of Sars–Covid-2 pandemic, including isolating entire community (village/commune/neighbourhood) if it is found from 2 people infected with virus and socially isolated in the peak of the epidemic is based on the principle of the separation between families, villages, communes, districts, provinces if appropriate; workshops, production plants must ensure a safe distance, wear a mask, disinfect and disinfect according to regulations. Every citizen is required to stay at home, only to go out in case of necessity such as buying food, food, medicine, emergency. Factories, production facilities, business establishments, essential goods are not closed; people keep a minimum distance of 2 meters when communicating etc.

3) Strengthen communication activities to transmit information, policies and measures of the Government about COVID-19 pandemic, and disseminate useful knowledge and information to help individuals prevent epidemics in family. In addition to online media outlets and conventional text messages, the MOH also utilized two Vietnamese social networks platforms, Zalo and Lotus, to disseminate information on combating COVID-19. Average of 50 million users a day on Zalo and about 2.2 million active users on Lotus. Lotus' posted 100,000 messages between 1 February and 19 March and recorded 400 million pageviews a month; while Zalo's sent over 1.1 billion messages from the beginning of the outbreak to mid-March (Nguyen Hong Kong, Ho Manh Tung, 2020).
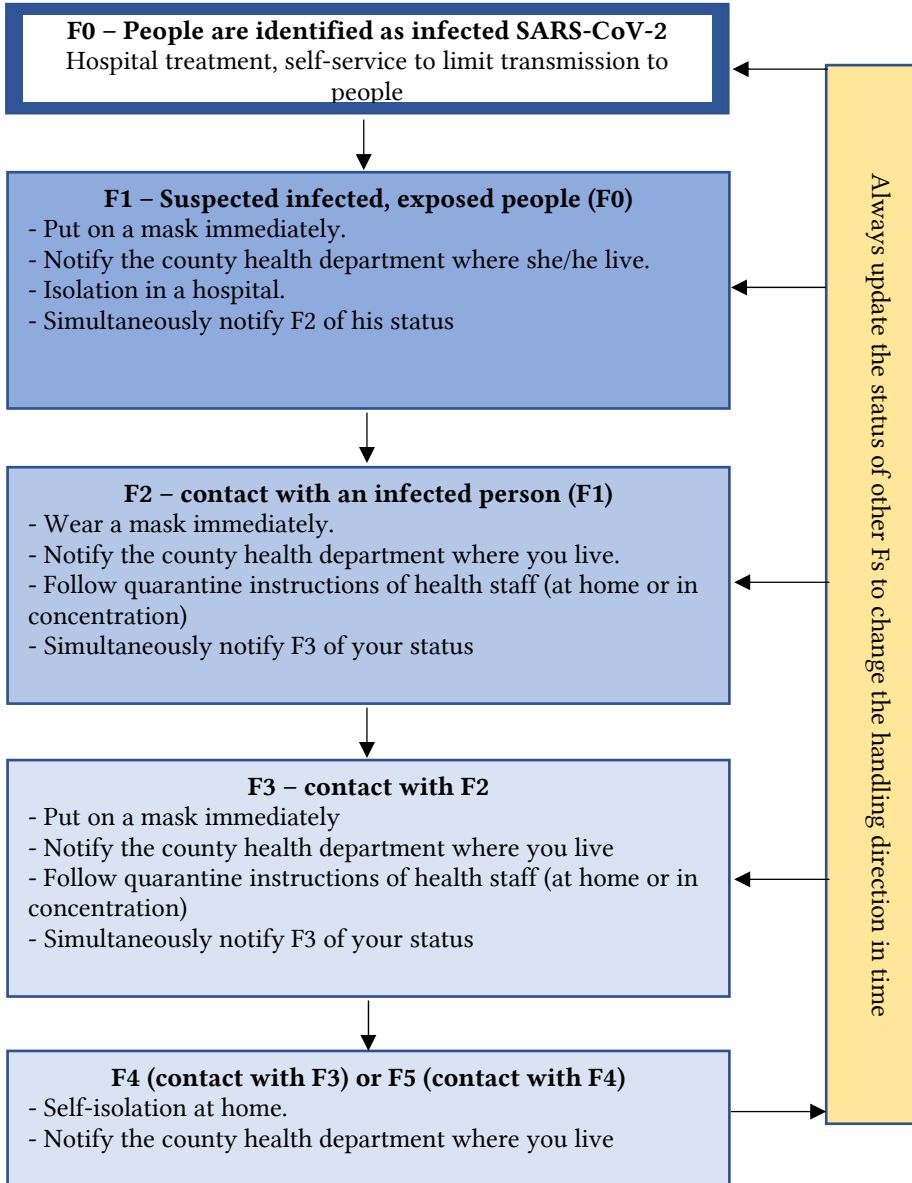
F0 – People are identified as infected SARS-CoV-2
Hospital treatment, self-service to limit transmission to people

F1 – Suspected infected, exposed people (F0)
- Put on a mask immediately.
- Notify the county health department where she/he live.
- Isolation in a hospital.
- Simultaneously notify F2 of his status

F2 – contact with an infected person (F1)
- Wear a mask immediately.
- Notify the county health department where you live.
- Follow quarantine instructions of health staff (at home or in concentration)
- Simultaneously notify F3 of your status

F3 – contact with F2
- Put on a mask immediately
- Notify the county health department where you live
- Follow quarantine instructions of health staff (at home or in concentration)
- Simultaneously notify F3 of your status

F4 (contact with F3) or F5 (contact with F4)
- Self-isolation at home.
- Notify the county health department where you live

Always update the status of other Fs to change the handling direction in time

Diagram 1

4) Required medical declaration for the whole population to follow up the situation of epidemic transmission; when detecting an outbreak, immediately localities must be speedy, determined, mustering all resources and with all solutions thoroughly handling the epidemic.

5) State employees using information technology working from home; only those cases that are really necessary as required to work at the office; strengthen

online meeting organization. The head is responsible for the infection of officials and employees by not strictly complying with the regulations on prevention and control of disease in the workplace.

6) Basically stop the operation of public passenger transport. Minimize the movement from one locality to another.

7) Implement procedures and strict management, avoiding cross-contamination in hospitals.

8) Implementing VND 62,000 billion relief package for the poor, the unemployed, the beneficiaries of the state preferential treatment, small businesses affected by the COVID-19 epidemic.

9) Temporarily suspending international flights and stopping entry for foreigners entering Vietnam. The return of experts, business managers, Vietnamese people are welcomed from abroad have to mandatory 14 days intensive isolation, sampling, testing and health monitoring.

10) For all levels of schooling, make online learning and shorten the content of the curriculum.

11) Always ensure food sources, provide free food for isolated communities and in isolated isolation areas; people infected with the Sars-Covid-2 virus get free treatment.

All information on disease outbreaks, measures, policies, and disease prevention communication is transmitted in several ways: the most mainstream is through state-run television and radio - the official mouthpiece government's, via banners, pictures in public places and via the Internet. It is easy to see that the remaining communication channels are limited by either space or time, but for the Internet, users can access information about the disease and other content anywhere, anytime. This outstanding advantage makes the Internet a channel for families to receive information much, quickly and diversified compared to other channels. Therefore, the Internet becomes a strong connection of family members to the outside world in terms of social isolation without leaving home.

4.2. The role of the Internet in the family and economic life

1. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic affected every aspect of family life and all family members. The virus disrupted life as we know it, the effects of which we are only beginning to realize. It would not be unusual for adults and children to feel an impact on their sense of wellbeing throughout this time (Goldschmidt, 2020). Although the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families in different regions is different, the effects are more or less inevitable. In this context, the Internet plays its role to support the family very actively. „*The support of the Internet for each family is huge and comprehensive; without the Internet, our family really do not know how to cope with the pandemic?"* (In-depth interview No. 21, male 45 years old).

2. Internet connects family members: in social isolation, all activities of family members are focused more in the family context. „On the positive side, families seem to be spending more time together" (Goldschmidt, 2020). When

families have a lot of time together, all activities in the family become more engaged, especially between parents and children. Caregivers can share time with children viewing television or using educational apps. „Co-engagement with media and 'co-viewing' is optimal for learning and spurring conversations (and thereby helping to develop vocabulary and more in-depth understanding) around new content" (Takeuchi and Stevens, 2011, p. 10). In this case, the Internet creates an integrated space for family activities, especially entertainment activities, parents and children play games, listen to music or perform creative games from the Internet. „*Our family has a lot of difficulties having to leave the kids at home for a long time. This has never happened before, but in another aspect social isolation allowed my family to spend more time together. I used to play online games with my kids, my wife watched movies with them. My two kids really like the melody and the image of the song „Ghen Covy" so the whole family dances together to the song*" (In-depth interview No. 17, male 45 years old). Besides, due to isolation requirements to ensure the control of the spread of pandemic, many families members have time separated from the family, or unable to return home. In situations where family members must be isolated or unable to return home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Internet provides connectivity utilities such as video chat, messaging, voicemail. „*My son studied in Hanoi, because of social isolation, so he could not return home. Every day, I make video calls to ask about my child's situation and remind my children about measures to prevent* COVID-19 pandemic. *The video calls are very easy and we can still communicate, see each other every day*" (In-depth interview No. 9, female 49 years old). The geography distance is shortened because people can still see each other from online calls. The isolation period allows people to connect with their families and the world around the Internet, thus reducing boredom.

3. The Internet provides information about the disease, how to prevent and receive feedback from users. „A proactive communication strategy was in place from the very beginning, utilizing various platforms such as online news sites, low-cost text messaging, user-friendly apps, local community loudspeakers and pandemic awareness campaigns" (Nguyen Hong Kong & Ho Manh Tung, 2020). YouTube videos, the quick update news on Sars-Covid-2 situation, the App to support users in the room avoiding COVID-19 epidemics is seen as an abundant source for every family to have effective access and use to their family's safety. For example, in the United States, the App 2020b has published instructions for primary care providers to access during the COVID-19 boom. The App 2020c launched a tele-mentoring COVID-19 emergency readiness and response program in March. COVID-19 Project ECHO (Extension for Community Health Care Outcomes) model TM „is a tele-mentoring platform that uses videoconference technology to connect a multidisciplinary team of specialists with primary care providers in local communities" (App, 2020c). In Vietnam, popular App include: App COVID-19, App NCOVID and App Vietnam health declaration. App COVID-19 has 10 main functions: 1) Interacting with people to send notices, 2) Disease outbreak update, 3) Global disease map, 4) Medical assistant, 5) Doctors advise, 6)

Voluntary medical declaration; 7) Prevention, 8) Search for health facilities, 9) Emergency call, 10) News (Department of Information Technology, March 13, 2020). App NCOVID for Vietnamese people to make voluntary medical declarations, App Vietnam health declaration for people who enter Vietnam to declare health. „*I returned from Europe in mid-March 2020, when I passed the customs gate at the airport, I filled out the medical declaration at the request of the airport staff. However, I think the Voluntary medical declarations are very important, so in addition to home self-isolation, I also require family members to make medical declarations so the government can control information about the disease situation. It is good for my family and the community*" (In-depth interview No. 1, male 43 years old).

4. In addition to the apps, the YouTube channel is also a very significant source of information about disease, how to prevent and share meaningful family activities during the COVID-19 epidemic. „Ghen Covy" song wrote and spread on You Tube to encourage family remedies for Covid that quickly became the hit of every home, especially for children and teenagers with 51,073,418 views. Besides, updated information on the disease situation is updated continuously on the Internet, send via Zalo and Lotus network messages to help families receive information quickly and promptly. At the same time, the experiences on epidemic prevention, organizing, arranging family activities, meaningful and humane activities in the family during the Sars-Covid-2 period were shared as an encouragement family together through the difficult period of the pandemic.

5. The Internet supports tele-working and promotes online buying and selling: the global outbreak of the Covid-19 epidemic has not only caused a medical crisis, but also a cause of serious crisis for the economy and labour market, Vietnam is also in that spiral. In the wake of the epidemic, immediate solutions are proposed and implemented to help maintain the work and income for each family.

For state workers, the government allows officials to use information technology to work from home (Prime Minister, Directive No. 16 dated March 31, 2020). With the support of the Internet, work can still be run without forcing workers to go to work. Online meetings have also been strengthened in place of face-to-face meetings, which facilitates participation of all workers, even in isolation. Supporting, solving and connecting jobs through the Internet is not only a useful solution during the epidemic period, but also creates a habit of fully utilizing the benefits of technology to promote development and still save time.

For self-employed groups and workers in private enterprises, the epidemic has a great impact on their work and life. In Viet Nam, the Covid-19 epidemic, which appeared from the end of January 2020, had a great impact on the situation of production, business and employment of workers, resulting in reduced labour market participation, unemployment and underemployment increased. According to the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, workers in informal employment, unpaid workers, low-income workers, young workers and elderly workers are vulnerable groups by COVID-19 epidemic. The results of the quarter I/2020

labour force survey showed that the labour force participation rate recorded a record low over the past 10 years with about 75.4 percentage of the population aged 15 and over participating in the labour force, decreased by 1.2 - 1.3 percentage points from the previous quarter and from the same period last year. Unemployment increased, the underemployment rate of working-age laborers was the highest within the last 5 years; the unemployment rate in the quarter I of 2020 was 2.22 percentage, up 0.07 percentage compared to the previous quarter and 0.05 percentage compared to the same period last year. As of mid-April 2020, nearly 5 million workers were affected by the Covid-19 epidemic (Minh Khoi, 2020). This situation forces workers in each family to be active and proactive in seeking employment opportunities and income sources to ensure the maintenance of the family's life. Many families have participated in online trading to earn an income including enough items from clothing, housewares, cosmetics, daily food. The Internet helps them connect with customers and promote products faster without spending on advertising, office space, labour. *„My family had a lot of difficulties during the pandemic, my husband going to labour export in Korea but the work affected by COVID-19 epidemic. I just worked in an industrial park near my home but was laid off in accordance with the company's policy due to a 1-year contract. The epidemic affected my family's income very much, so during the COVID-19 epidemic, I started an online sales business. The trade was convenient because I didn't have to rent an office or a warehouse, the income from online business also helps my family meet the basic needs*", (In-depth interview No. 12, female 39 years old).

6. Facebook is a social network that has helped 90 million businesses worldwide use free tools like opening pages, texting etc., to find new customers, hire employees and interact with the community (Thuy Duong, 2019). Facebook offers the ability to promote economic development. Accordingly, Facebook contributes greatly in shaping the appearance of Vietnam's e-commerce. Thousands of traders from small to large have benefited greatly from this social network (Thuy Duong, 2019).

7. Survey results of Vietnam Department of E-Commerce and Information Technology with people having online shopping in 2016 showed that 58% of internet users have ever purchased online (Tran Thi Kim Phuong, 2018). By January 2020, the outbreak of Sars-Covid-2 had changed the shopping habits of many consumers, moving from direct to online. In a recent survey conducted by Nielsen Vietnam and Infocus Mekong Mobile Panel, 25% of respondents said they have increased online shopping and reduced direct shopping activities (Ha Anh, 2020). According to Worldpanel research, online shopping prevailed and exploded impressively. More people shop online than usual since the official announcement of the disease in Vietnam. This trend has led to a sharp increase in orders at Vietnamese e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Tiki, Lazada. For example, Tiki, recently, there were times when the floor generated 3,000 - 4,000 orders/minute, many items had to be continuously stored. Retail businesses also quickly adapt to business during the season when many businesses like VinMart,

Saigon Coop, Big C, Lotte, AEON also put products sold at supermarkets to sell online (Ha Anh, 2020). „*Buying and selling via the Internet is risky, but in the case of COVID-19 pandemic it is a good solution. To avoid risk, I often look for reputable sales sites, or buy from acquaintances and compare prices and reviews online. Buying and selling online has the utility of saving time, limiting contact with other people so limiting the spread of epidemics*" In-depth interview No. 5, female 35 years old).

8. Among products that are traded or traded online, food is the most important and important product during the COVID-19 pandemic. Food is an extremely important issue for every family, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. „*Families may be more stressed than ever. Today most adult jobs that have survived the pandemic are those that can use computerized technology, are in healthcare, education, or those in food distribution*" (Carruthers, 2020). For rural areas of Vietnam, most families can afford food and food in a short time; however, in urban areas, all food sources depend on trade. Social isolation causes people's markets to close, and supermarkets stipulate the amount of food purchased per person / time, creating significant difficulties for the purchase and sale of food by the people during the epidemic. In this context, the Internet helps families find and order food online. That gives people the opportunity to choose the most suitable food source for their families. Statistics of the Ministry of Industry and Trade show that, due to fears of COVID-19 epidemic, sales in Hanoi markets decreased by 50-80%. Meanwhile, the revenue from online shopping through e-commerce floors of some businesses increased by 20-30% (Ha Anh, 2020). „*We live in city that cannot afford to be self-sufficient and proactive in food sources like families in rural areas. All food sources of our family are dependent on commerce. Social isolation forced us to switch to buying food online more. When community markets are closed and supermarket shopping is limited, ordering food online is a good choice. On the other hand, my family also understands very well the risk of Sars-Covid-2 virus infection if they are in direct contact with the sick person, so using the Internet utility to order food is the safest, saves time travel time and gasoline*" (In-depth interview No. 29, female 50 years old).

9. Internet supporting online learning: The Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam has twice adjusted the time frame for the academic year 2019-2020 according to the actual situation of COVID-19 pandemic (Education Communication Center, 2020). Educational institutions maintain liaison between the school and the family, between teachers and students to assign tasks and guide students to self-study through the application of information technology in accordance with practical conditions local and school. „*Online learning is the only and also most optimal option for children in the family when schools are required to close for social isolation. I would rather let my children stay home; it is better than let them go to school in the worried status about the disease. It is okay to the children's miss school for 1 month, 2 months, even 1 year, but if they are infected with Sars-Covid-2 virus then it is very dangerous*" (In-depth interview No. 18, male 45 years old). With this activity, the Internet plays an extremely important role in

connecting teachers and students in unlimited space. The online learning is implemented with the program content shortened, focusing on the core issues that have helped teachers and students avoid the pressure. However, difficulties arise for many teachers who have not yet mastered technology in teaching, unstable Internet connection in rural and mountainous areas and a large number of students in poor families not yet eligible for online learning: no Internet connection, no television or smartphone, computer to connect to the Internet. So this is also the stage „The digital divide is more apparent than ever (Goldschmidt,2020).To partially overcome this problem, telecom service providers in Vietnam provided free internet service packages to a number of areas, including schools and concentrated isolation areas. In addition to learning online under the curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam, the Internet also provides other online learning utilities via YouTube and apps. For example, online English learning is more motivated, specialized training courses in specialized fields are also designed to be enhanced in the form of online learning during COVID 19 epidemic. „*Take advantage of the time to isolate me and my children looking for online English teaching videos to practice every day. The Internet helps us access to useful English teaching videos, while taking advantage of free time to improving our English proficiency*" (In-depth interview No. 18, female 40 years old).

Besides the positive side, the use of the Internet without selection and control can also leave some negative effects. Due to a lot of free time, cheap and available internet sources, rich and varied program content, Internet has become an indispensable factor for many people. The Internet can support families in many ways, as analyzed above, but it can also be a factor that negatively affects the family for the following reasons:

1. The source of information is fast, diverse but not strictly controlled; many fake information are confusing to family members; false information can also incite many people to perform inappropriate behaviours such as: hoarding food, excessive food, leading to scrambling situation, scrambling to buy goods at the market/supermarket; increase prices of essential products such as medical supplies (masks, handwash, etc.) and food; sharing untrue information that affects the Government's implementation of policies and measures to cope with epidemics. „*Many people read the news about the COVID-19 pandemic on the Internet and went to buy a lot of food and supplies. I think this is a negative reaction from unofficial information reception by the government*" (In-depth interview No. 18, female 60 years old). The empirical evidence shows that Facebook users interact the most with articles in which the authorities „deal with," „penalize," and „fine" posters of false or unverifiable information on COVID-19 (Nguyen Hong Kong, Ho Manh Tung, 2020).

2. The over-reliance on entertainment channels makes people less likely to communicate directly with each other: The Internet with many interesting and interesting entertainment programs that make family members use it to a large extent reduces activities physical, healthy play outside reality. The over-

concentration on internet utilities also limits the communication of family members. Although thanks to the development of Internet connection, social networks increase online interaction, but also reduce the actual interaction. „*Children and their parents are too focused on the means to access the internet, playing online games so they become lazy in direct conversation. Playing games or watching movies with children does not help much to express emotions directly through eye contact between people*" (In-depth interview No. 17, male 45 years old).

3. Excessive Internet use leads to addiction: „*The Internet keeps the kids in the house in a fun way, but also locked them in a virtual world that is difficult to break away*" (In-depth interview No. 17, female 35 years old). Bratter and Forrest (1985) argued that the term „addiction" should only be applied to cases involving substance use, but in his study, Griffiths (1998) state that, „excessive Internet use may not be a problem in most cases but evidence showed from some limited case study suggests that, for some individuals, excessive Internet use is a true addiction and a genetic concern", even Internet is not addictive, but that some specific Internet applications, especially those with interactive functions, appear to contribute to the development of pathological Internet use (Chien Chou et al., 2005). Children who use the Internet without adult control are at risk of accessing negative information on unhealthy websites, affecting their normal personality formation and psychological development. In particular, many children become victims of online bullying.

4. The quick and convenient access to information leads to the fact that many young people use the Internet a lot and are lazy in thinking. „*The Internet helps people in many respects, but the Internet only provides information fast, not makes people become more smarter*" (In-depth interview No. 28, male 57 years old).

5. Conclusion

It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic had significant impacts on family life and the development of the whole society. The positive responses of the Government of Vietnam have really brought into play, helping Vietnam to reverse the COVID-19 pandemic, becoming one of the typical countries in the region and in the world to achieve tremendous achievements great in the war with pandemics. However, although the epidemic period in Vietnam is not so long, the strict implementation of the government's policies has forced families to adjust or even change their living and operating habits family livelihood. In order for each family to overcome this difficult period, every family member must try very hard in his / her family's condition; and the Internet has really supported families so much in every aspect of life. Although the Internet has both positive and negative impacts, it can be affirmed that the Internet plays an important role in supporting Vietnamese's families to cope with the COVID 19 pandemic in: 1) connecting family and social relations; 2) transmission of information; 3) education and educational support; 4) a bridge to exchange goods and develop household economy; 5) entertainment.

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