

Issues Surrounding Children's Safety in the Relocation Projects in the Historical Old Quarters of Hue City, Central Vietnam

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1. Research background and objectives

Doi Moi introduced in 1986 led to Vietnam's economic growth, and Vietnamese cities have been urbanized rapidly. It has been forecasted that Vietnam's urban population will increase rapidly over the next 15 to 30 years - more than doubling by 2020 (World Bank 2011).

Hue City is the capital city of Thua Thien-Hue Province, located in the central Vietnam. The population of Hue City reached 346,070 in 2012, making it the sixth largest city in Vietnam. Hue was the old imperial capital of the Nguyen Dynasty, which lasted from the beginning of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. The Complex of Hue Monuments, which lies in the old city area and around the city, was recognized as a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1993. Since that, millions of visitors, both domestic and foreign, come to Hue City. An urban development plan designed to turn Hue into a metropolis is being implemented in Hue City. In order to deal with further growing population and tourists, the government has the plan of city reorganization, implementing the relocation projects which make residents in the city center move to suburban areas.

This paper examines the issues caused by the relocation projects in Hue city, illustrating several case studies of relocation projects in Hue city, and aims to suggest important measures, in particular for children's safety.

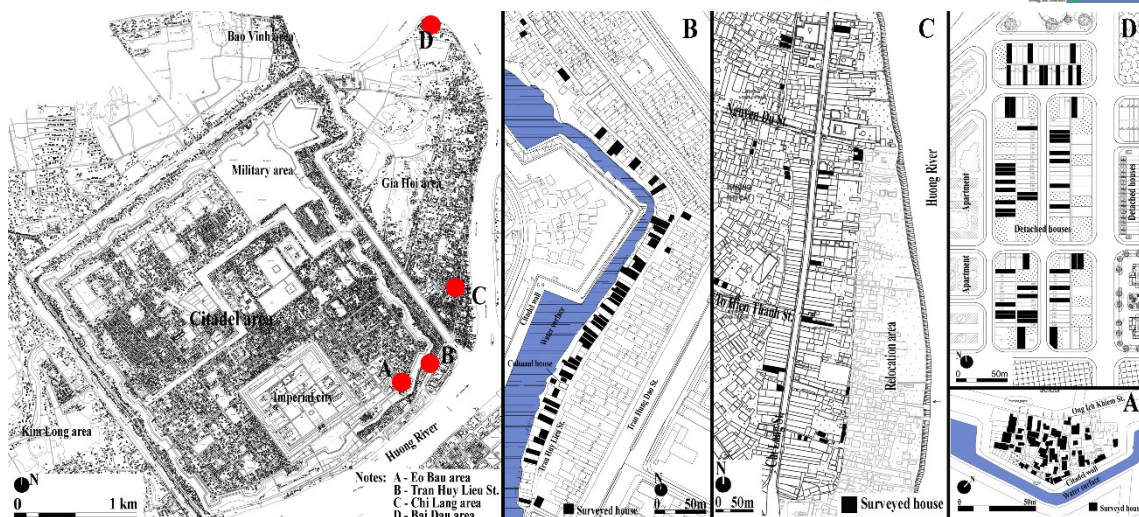
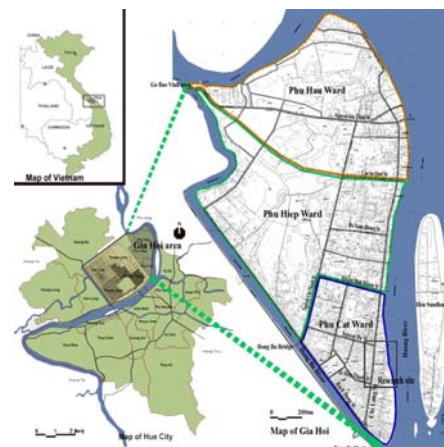


Figure 1. Research sites of Hue city (developed by Tung Ngoc Nguyen)

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2. Research Methods and research sites

Field surveys, interviews and questionnaire surveys were conducted in the four areas of the relocation projects in historic old quarters of Hue city, in order to identify issues surrounding children's safety. The research site A in Figure 1 is Thuong Thanh and Eo Bau within the Citadel wall, with the survey of 50 households. The research site B is along Tran Huy Lieu Street outside and near the Citadel wall, with the survey of 50 households. The research site C is along Chi Lang Street, with the survey of 43 households. The research site D is Bai Dau, with the survey of 51 households, which is the relocation site of Chi Lang residents. The surveys were conducted from August 2013 to January 2014.

3. Urbanization in Hue

Table 1 shows population in urban areas and rural areas of Hue city from 2003 to 2012. Since 2009, rural areas of Hue city have disappeared, and all areas of Hue city have been urban areas. Population and population density of Hue city have continued to increase. On the other hand, birth rate has continued to slightly decrease, and death rate has continued to slightly increase.

Table 2 shows statistical data of criminal cases from 2007 and 2013. According to the data, the number of criminal case has been increased from 263 in 2007 to 401 in 2013. Table 3 shows statistical data of traffic accident from 2008 and 2013. The number of traffic accidents has been increased from 133 in 2008 to 482 in 2013.

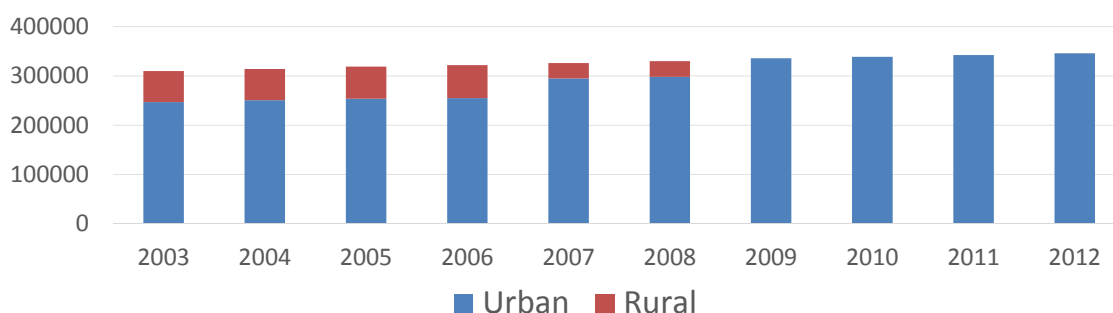


Figure 2. Population in Hue city from 2003 to 2012

Table 1. Statistical data of criminal cases from 2007 and 2013

| Year | Number of criminal case | Number of died person | Number of injured person | Damage cost (billion VND) |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2007 | 263 | 6 | 24 | 2.4 |
| 2008 | 263 | 3 | 42 | 2.5 |
| 2009 | 266 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2010 | 279 | 2 | 48 | 12.5 |
| 2011 | 336 | 1 | 39 | 5.4 |
| 2012 | 382 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2013 | 401 | 5 | N/A | 20.8 |

Table 2. Statistical data of traffic accident from 2008 and

| Year | Number of accidents | Number of died person | Number of injured person | Damage cost (billion VND) |
|------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2008 | 133 | 21 | N/A | N/A |
| 2009 | 287 | 28 | N/A | N/A |
| 2010 | 234 | 35 | 235 | 12.5 |
| 2011 | N/A | 29 | 18 | 5.5 |
| 2012 | 686 | 41 | 461 | N/A |
| 2013 | 482 | 37 | 407 | 1.26 |

3. Relocation projects in Hue

The site A, "Eo Bau" and "Thuong Thanh" areas are officially designated as displacement sites by Hue people's Committee. According to the plan, the project period is from 2006 to 2010. However, it has not implemented yet. In the site B along Tran Huy Lieu St. in Phu Hoa ward, Hue people's Committee develops a project to relocate all residents to the other place. However, there is not a regular document about this project. In the site C, 545 households, in the "Relocation area" between Chi Lang St. and Huong river in Phu Cat ward, had been relocated to several areas. Some people relocated from the site C live in Bai Da (the site D). The relocation project was implemented in 2007, 2008 and late 2009. The vacant sites after the relocation projects will become possession of each local people's committees and each ward, and new tourist routes will be developed there.

4. Findings of the surveys

There are several issues founded on the surveys. Firstly, safety problems is getting worse, as Hue city has been urbanized. According to statistical data of Hue People's Committee, number of criminal case has been increased from 263 in 2007 to 401 in 2013. Number of traffic accidents has been increased from 133 in 2008 to 482 in 2013. From the questionnaire survey to the new relocation residence of the site D, the most serious issue in the surroundings of children is traffic accident (16%), disease (16%), and crime (14%). In the site C, it is lack of playground (28%) and flooding (14%). Secondly, in the point of communication with neighbors, a percentage of respondents talking with neighbor everyday is 56% in the site C, and 35% in the site D.

In other words, relocation projects destroy communication with neighbors and community linkage. Meanwhile, relocation projects improve living environment and access of open spaces.

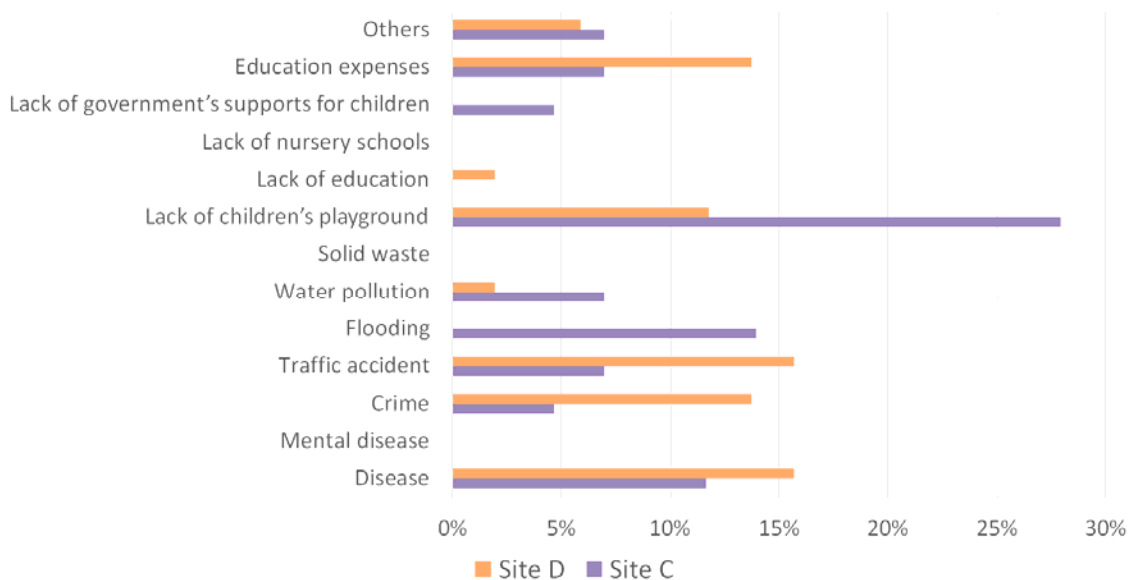


Figure 3. The most serious issue in the surroundings of children

5. Role of small alley as community space for children's safety

According to the surveys, several urban issues are founded. Rapid urbanization negatively impacts on community linkage and increase crime and traffic accidents. Accordingly, children's playground and open space for leisure decrease. These issues interrelate. In order to solve these

issues, it is important to sustain and revitalize community cohesion. For community cohesion, open space for local community is necessary.

According to the survey, the residents living in small alley share a semi-public space. The small alley among those households serves as multi-functions. The alley can be the place for children's playground, recreation and exercise of residents, chatting, having meal, and small markets (Figure 6). The residents often sit in the small alleys, and it is almost like a big living room of the community.

According to the survey, safety is the most important factor for community space of interviewees in this area. Convenience is also another important factor for community space because the location of area is convenient for their living activities such as shopping, working, and studying.



Figure 4: The community's use of the small alley for their community activities.

6. Conclusion

Through the analysis of statistical data, field surveys and questionnaire surveys, it found out that there are advantages and disadvantages from the relocation projects. From the viewpoint of tourism and landscape, the relocation projects have an effect on renovation of cities. However, from the viewpoint of safety problems and community linkage, relocation projects negatively affect residents. For children's safety, it is necessary to find measures to solve negative issues.

Keywords: *children's safety, community linkage, urbanization, relocation, historical city*

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